



Higher Education

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When the British occupied the country, higher education was more or less discontinued. College, in the modern sense, started functioning after 1857, when the universities were established, soon after the receipt of the Wood's Despatch.

Even before the establishment of universities, some colleges like Calcutta Madarsa and Banaras Sanskrit College were founded in 1781 and 1791, respectively. The progress of higher English education was slow till 1835. Lord William Bentinck definitely committed the Government to a policy of encouraging this new system. Though the collegiate education progressed steadily, there was yet no idea of establishing a university to co-ordinate the activities in the field of higher education. Attempts to establish a university in Calcutta in 1845 and 1852, failed. The type of university organization that was created by the Act of 1857 was technically known as The Affiliating University. Their main aim was to hold examinations and to confer degrees on successful candidates and the responsibility of teaching was rested on the colleges. The development of colleges was fast after the establishment of the universities. At the time of its establishment, Bengal had 14 colleges, Bombay had 2, Northwestern Provinces had 4 and Madras had 3. In Awadh, the university education was conducted by the aided Canning College Lucknow and La Martiniere College Lucknow. During the first two years of its existence, Canning College was merely a high school teaching up to the entrance examination of the Calcutta University. Its college section was formed in 1856-66, which consisted of eight students. The number of pupils at the end of each year of its existence was as follows: 377 in 1865, 578 in 1866 and in 1867, these numbers increased to 533 in 1868. In 1869 and 1870, there were 621 and 666 students, respectively. This showed the increasing trend of students towards higher classes. Canning College began practically undertaking the whole education of Lucknow by itself. In the field of higher education, the aided Canning College stands as the head of all colleges in the Northwestern Provinces and Awadh. Though technically aided, it held the place of a Government college in the Awadh Provinces. It was unparalleled to any college in the United Provinces and matched only to the Muir College of Allahabad. The colleges of Awadh were affiliated with Calcutta University, but some rules of the Calcutta University were very much inconvenient to the students of these provinces.

The Calcutta University was far from these provinces and it was difficult for the students of the Northwestern Provinces and Awadh to appear in Calcutta to obtain their B.A. degree because the scholars had a prejudice against wasting a lot of time while traveling because it was expensive. However, all three requests of Lieutenant Governor were not accepted. Thus, this inconvenience discouraged higher education in these provinces. A vernacular newspaper published the rules of



Calcutta University pointing out hurdles in the progress of the candidates to obtain a degree and also reported that these reasons made the students take little interest in their examinations. Traveling presented serious difficulties and cooled their ambitions. They would rather be without a degree instead of undergoing such a difficult task. The difficulties of administration and curriculum of Calcutta University compelled the people to demand a university. Therefore, a proposal for the establishment of a university for Northern India was put forth in the year 1869. Sir William Muir was of the opinion that a separate university was necessary for the examination of students of Northwestern Provinces and Awadh.

On 1st July, 1872, Lord Muir founded a central college as a nucleus at Allahabad in a rented building and the formal establishment of a university at Allahabad was effected in the year 1887, by the passing of an Act XVII of 1887. The people of these provinces came forward to contribute money liberally in aid to the proposed University at Allahabad. This was a clear indication of their interest in higher education. According to the university rules, there were three methods of entrance to collegiate education in connection with the provincial universities. The first was the ordinary matriculation examination conducted by the university itself, secondly, the final school examination conducted by the university and lastly the High Standard Examination of European Schools, which was conducted by the university to entitle every student who could obtain the ordinary certificate for the privilege of matriculation but to pass in English and Mathematics was a must. Affiliating universities had no direct contract with the real task of teaching. They were only an administrative body. However, elaborate regulations and examinations of the universities alone could not adequately guarantee the continued efficient teaching of the institutions. After the establishment of Allahabad University, majority of the students from these provinces went for the Allahabad University Examination. The number of students increased very rapidly both in Canning College and Allahabad University. In the year 1890-91, Canning College sent 9 students for M.A., 31 for B.A. Degree and 77 for intermediate examinations. The total strength of the students in the year 1890-91 was 117 in the Arts Department. The course remained predominantly literary. Too many students continued to flock the colleges. The whole aim of secondary education almost became the preparation of the students for the university entrance examination. The policy of the Government, detrimental to the expansion of higher education was very much criticized by the public of the Northwestern Provinces and Awadh. Higher education was already very backward in these provinces and the economic position of the middle class of these provinces was such as they could not afford higher education on their own expenses. However, the Government denied that it had hampered the progress of higher education. It was true that these provinces were backward in the field of higher education. One of the reasons behind this backwardness was that the policy of the Local Government in these provinces in the matter of the recruitment of the public services was unfavorable.

The Bengal Government had thrown open the subordinate judicial and executive services to the graduates of the Calcutta University. Their appointment in these services made higher education



very popular in that province and largely improved the tone of services. However, in these provinces, the condition of the graduates was pitiable. Out of 167 graduates of these provinces, only three or four succeeded in entering the judicial and the executive branches of the public services and the rest were reduced to employment in the Education Department. One newspaper, The Hindustani, also gave the figures of employed graduates of these provinces in public services. Out of 189 Deputy Collectors and Assistant Commissioner, only two graduates and out of 202 Tahsildars, only one was a graduate while there was not a single graduate in the whole Police Department. The Education Department was the only one in which highly qualified Indians found some opportunity of employment. Whereas, the rules laid down by the government to other ordinary Indians limited them to a lesser amount of salary. This paved the way for a breakdown between the Indians and the Government for its partial policy. The grades which the Government decided for the graduates were so low that a highly educated graduate could not be expected to seek employment in this department, the pay scale being Rs. 250, as a starting salary but not to exceed Rs. 700 a month. The Vice-Chancellor of Allahabad University expressed his view on the convocation of Allahabad University on the deterioration of higher education in these provinces. He said that “this was another setback in the system of education imparted in the colleges which did not help the students in obtaining a livelihood. The North-Western Provinces and Awadh were so backward in all respects that there was hardly a vision of advancement and civilization of people. For all the affairs, the Local Government was responsible which was slow in taking proper measures at all the right moments. The other reason of the deterioration of higher education in these provinces was the expensive education system. A student’s expenses amounted to Rs. 95 per year as a burden on the Government. A student generally took nine years to qualify for the entrance examination. The completion of school studies amounted to Rs. 855, whereas a student’s private expenses came to about Rs. 120 per year which amounted to Rs. 1,080 in nine years. By adding this sum to the former total expenses on a student came to about Rs. 1,935. At Agra, Allahabad and Banaras colleges, the tuition fee of a student was Rs. 1,610, Rs. 1,149 and Rs. 685 per year respectively. Therefore, the average cost of a student in these provinces in the college department was Rs. 1,148 per year and a student generally took five years in obtaining the M.A. degree. The expenses of this period amounted to Rs. 5,740 in Agra College. The spare paid by the Government was Rs. 485 in Banaras College and in Muir College at Allahabad was 1,149 and the rest of the amount was paid by private endowments and contributions. The total expenditure for obtaining the M.A. degree amounted to Rs. 7,240. Thus, the cost of education in government schools and colleges was so high that it was beyond the reach of a middle class person. In the year 1895, the Government of these provinces decided to increase the fees of schools and colleges. The enhanced fee for the B.A. classes was Rs. 10 and for the M.A. class to Rs. 12 per month. The government was ready to take as much as Rs. 12 a month from a student as the college fees. However, it was difficult for a graduate to secure a post of even Rs. 20 a month. The Government’s policy to increase the tuition fee in the



colleges compelled hundreds of boys of poor parents to give up their studies. The Northwestern Provinces and Awadh were far behind the other provinces except Punjab in the field of expansion of higher education.

When Lord Curzon came to India, he introduced many reforms in university and collegiate education. However, regarding higher education, his belief was that efficiency must be the first and paramount consideration. It was in the interest of India that comparatively a small number of young men should receive a sound and liberal education than that of a large number would pass through inadequate courses of instruction leading to a deprecated degree. Curzon was determined and tightened control of British Government on Indian Universities. Lord Curzon felt that higher education in India developed some serious defects and reforms were necessary. He further felt that from sheer lack of courage, his predecessors had allowed university education to go beyond the control of the government and that it felt unreformed. The Indian universities would develop into nurseries of discontented character and stunned brains. The Act of 1857, which led to the establishment of the first three universities, provided that the Chancellor, the Vice Chancellor and the fellows would be appointed and declared to be a body corporate to be known as a university. These people and such others as might be appointed fellows were to constitute the senate of the university. The senate was entrusted with the entire management and supervision of the concerns and property of the university. The Indian University Act of 1904 came into force in the United Provinces of Agra and Awadh also. The passing of the University Act in 1904 marked an era in the history of collegiate education. The University Act introduced the system of residential colleges. The difficulties which the University Act of 1904 increased for the people was regarding the proper hostels for students. Even in large cities, very few hostels existed. This system hindered the progress of education. However, despite the opposition of Indian people and the press, rules were introduced regarding the hostels throughout the country. Under the University Act of 1904, the Government introduced license system for hostels of private institutions in the United Provinces of Agra and Awadh. The new hostels were built at Canning College and the Lucknow Christian College. The educational development of the United Provinces lagged behind about fifty years in Bengal. The economic, political and commercial conditions were not suitable for education in these provinces. The occupations in which education was necessary as a trade, public administration and liberal arts did not engage in the large percentage of the population. People of these provinces were awakened by the introduction of the University Act of 1904 and facing an opposition of the political leaders and the press. The report of the Department of Public Instruction for 1907-08, speaks of the colleges being unable to cope with the rush of students. The awakening for the value of education which was so anxiously awaited came as a blessing in disguise.

By 1917, the United Provinces had over five thousand pupils in Arts College. The number of B.A. students had increased in comparison to the preceding twenty years. Over the period, the expenditure on education also showed a high increase in the United Provinces. The people by



now had become very literate among all the communities. The most educationally advanced community was 'Kayastha'. In 1901, more than 55% of 'Kayastha' males and nearly 5% of 'Kayastha' females could read and write. The percentage of educated 'Kayasthas' was high because they were traditionally a professional caste for whom education was a must. The next most literate ones were the Agarwals, a commercial caste. Out of 10,000, 319 Agarwals were found to be well versed in English. The next advanced group in education was that of 'Sayidds', traditionally a professional Muslim class. The number of English literate 'Sayidds' in these provinces was 361 per 10,000 males. English literacy was very low in 'Brahmin' class in comparison to others. The number of English knowing Brahmins was 79 per 10,000 males. The most backward community in education was the lower caste Muslims such as the Julahas and Behnes. Out of 10,000, 3 were found to be literate in English. The Resolution of 1913, stressed the necessity of local teaching and residential universities. Prestigious colleges which attracted students from distant places were developed into such universities. Lord Harding's Government surveyed the situation and passed a resolution in 1913. It urged that "the area of jurisdiction of the existing affiliating universities should be reduced so as to provide a separate university for each of the leading provinces in India. Following the resolution of 1913, the Banaras Hindu University came into existence and it began to function well by 1917. It was the first residential university in these provinces. However, the education policy drawn by the Resolution of 1913, could not be carried effectively because of the outbreak of World War 1 in 1914. The Government of India appointed the Calcutta University Commission in 1917. Although originally appointed for the reforms of Calcutta University, the Commission made a thorough assessment of the entire university system in the country. Its report was published in 1919. The report of Calcutta University Commission was an important document for the United Provinces and Awadh. It also gave birth to the U.P. Board of High School and Intermediate in the year 1921. As a result of these recommendations, a number of new universities sprang up all over India.

The Calcutta University Commission recommended that a university in Lucknow and Aligarh should be established and that Allahabad University should be reconstituted. As soon as the Calcutta University Commission Report was received, two strong committees were appointed by the local government. One was to consider the measure for the establishment of a teaching university at Lucknow and the other for the creation of a board to control the high school and intermediate education. On April 4, 1921, Hon'ble Mr. C. Y. Chintamani, Minister of Education U.P. presented the bill of intermediate education. The bill received the assent of the Governor on 30th September, 1921 and it was published on 7th January, 1922. It was then that the Board of High School and intermediate education was established. The year 1920 was filled with great educational activities. Early steps were taken to reform the higher education of the provinces on the lines. Under the inspiring leadership of Sir Harcourt Butler, the United Provinces started a constructive programme in the field of education. An event of great moment was the stone laying



ceremony of the Lucknow University. This was performed by his Excellency the Governor Sir Harcourt Butler.

The Allahabad University approved the establishment of Lucknow University at an extraordinary meeting of the senate on August 7th, 1920. The committee also recommended a grant of Rs. 7.87 lakhs to Lucknow University. The bill prepared by the Director of Public Instruction De La Fosse was amended and passed by the Council on 8th October. Sir Harcourt Butler appointed Rai G.N. Chakrawarti on December 16, 1920. The first Vice Chancellor and Major T. P. Donnelly had been appointed as the registrar. The plan and design for the erection of a university building was prepared and a site for it was selected at Badshah Bagh. The foundation stone was laid in March 1921. Private donations amounting to Rs. 30,000 had been promised for the university by the Taluqdar community of Awadh. However, the university was responsible for the management of all formal teaching, but this did not lessen the importance of the colleges.

The result of De la Fosse's labour could be seen in the Lucknow University Act of 1920 which defines the functions and powers of the university, officers and authorities. The chief officer of the new university was the chancellor who was the Governor of the United Provinces. The Vice-Chancellor, the Treasurer, the Registrar and the Deans of Faculties were appointed on handsome salaries. The authorities of the university were the Executive Council, the Academic Council, the Committee of Reference and the Faculties. The court was also a large representative body, mainly a deliberative assembly concerning its broad lines of policy and with its general finance of the university. The Executive Council was a small body of representatives of the university interests which had its control over administration, its property and safeguard the functions of the university. It regulated and determined all matters concerning the university except those that were purely academic. The Academic Council was established in the year 1920. The main function of the Academic Council was to maintain a proper standard of teaching and examination, to coordinate the work of different departments of teaching. Canning College, Lucknow Christian College, Medical College and The Isabella Thoburn College formed the nucleus of the new university and surrendered their affiliation to the Lucknow University. Canning College had its faculties of Arts and Science along with King George Medical College with its Faculty of Medicine. In August 1921, students were admitted to the Faculty of Commerce. According to the act of 1922, the Canning College with all its property and liabilities was merged with Lucknow University. In the same year, the staff was strengthened by the appointment of three professors, eight readers and twenty lecturers. In 1925, the university expressed its confidence in the Vice Chancellor Dr. G.N. Chakrawarti, he re-elected him for a second term of three years. Under his able supervision, Lucknow University flourished as a prestigious institution and strengthened the number of students. The students in various faculties were 321 in the Arts Department, 164 in the Science Department, 239 in Medicine, 334 in Law and 72 in Commerce, the total being 1,130 till the year 1924-1925. After the retirement of Rai Bahadur G.N. Chakrawarti, the reign of Vice-Chancellorship fell upon the shoulders of Dr. M.B.



Cameron by election who was the Principal of The Canning College Lucknow and professor of philosophy in Lucknow University. Because of the large increase of students, during his period, the Lucknow University felt its need of strengthening of the staff in some departments.

However, due to the shortage of funds, the university could not create new posts.

The Government gave a grant of Rs. 3,00,000 to the chemistry block and also gave a special grant of Rs. 25,000 to the Zoology Department for the construction of a zoological museum and for its equipments, a grant of Rs. 21,900 to the Department of Physics, Chemistry and Botany. For purchasing books and periodicals, the Government gave a further grant of Rs. 50,000. By a process of careful selection of books, the Lucknow University Library was one of the most up-to-date libraries in India. At the beginning of 1930, Dr. M.B. Cameron who was the intellectual guide of the educated youths of Awadh retired from the post of Vice-Chancellor of Lucknow University and he was succeeded by Pandit Jagat Narain. Two research degrees were instituted in the Faculty of Arts namely a Ph.D. for three years research and a D.Litt. degree for a further period of five years after the Ph.D. and for original research of a high order. Similar rules were applied to the D.Phil. and D.Sc. degrees. In the year 1934, the important research publications were made by the staff and students of the Faculties of Arts, Science and Medicine. In the same year, Dr. Birbal Sahni was honoured by the Asiatic Society of Bengal for research in biology. The university with its 140 teachers and 2,340 students played a significant role in the field of higher education in Lucknow and United Provinces. When the Second World War broke out, England dragged India into the war on 3rd September, 1939. It was a very tiring period for the universities. All the schemes were shelved for want of funds. All universalities had to cut their expenditure at the cost of efficiency. The war, in fact, was not the people's war. The Indian National Congress opposed the war. The movement of 1942 came as a necessary consequence of this opposition. The Government adopted a repressive policy against the student community. Prominent Congress leaders urged the students to take part in the freedom struggle. Against the regressive policy of the Government, a one-day strike was held at Lucknow University on 1st August which continued throughout for two months. The arrest of Jawaharlal Nehru on 31st October attracted more violent reaction from students. The Lucknow University students greeted Sir Maurice Gayer with black flags. A circular issued by the Director of Public Instruction had no effect on such agitation and the authorities were unsuccessful in restoring the discipline in educational institutions. The normal schedule of the universities was disrupted and some of the universities had to be closed down for a long term, till the situation was brought under control. After the cooling down of the situation, the academic session started with a very low attendance throughout the country. The Congress Ministry again came into office in April 1946 and started educational reconstruction.

To conclude, it can be said that the independence of India paved the way for bright opportunities for the higher education in these provinces.



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