



DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION IN TAMIL NADU - A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

The education is a vital role for socio economic progress and it is a main indicator for human development. Education provides one with the greatest opportunities of becoming successful in the modern society. The conscious of knowledge, qualities, skills, attitudes, and capacities, learning make possible individuals to become aware subjects of their development and liable participants in a organized process of creating a innovative world. The Indian literacy rate grew from 12 per cent at the end of British period 1947 to 74.04 per cent in 2011. Literacy is an important segment of Tamil Nadu economy. It is one of the most literate states in India. According to 2011 Census, Literacy rate in Tamil Nadu has been upward trend and is 80.09 per cent, which is higher than the national average. The male literacy stands at 86.77 per cent and female literacy is at 73.14 percent. At present, Tamil Nadu has 50 universities (19 state universities, two central universities, 29 deemed universities), 552 (in 2014) engineering colleges (seven of them are Government/aided colleges, twenty of them are Autonomous colleges and the rest are self financing colleges and four are University departments within Anna University), 29 medical colleges (in 2017), 1150 arts & science colleges, 53,722 schools (34,180 primary schools, 9938 middle schools, 4574 high schools, 5030 higher secondary schools).



KEYWORDS: Education, Tamil Nadu, Madras Presidency, British Education.

INTRODUCTION

The state of Tamil Nadu in the Union of India has its own social and cultural identity. One of the biggest challenges that the State of Tamil Nadu faces today is the growing pressure on higher education. Better economic opportunities and upward social mobility are the two reasons which make more number of youngsters in Tamil Nadu to enter the institutions of higher education. The principle of reservation by the Government of Tamil Nadu, gives an ample chance for the students, particularly of the lower strata of the society, to swarm the portals of the higher educational institutions in huge number. Studies show that Gurukulams, Patasalas and Ghatikas were the educational institutions which flourished in Tamil Nadu during ancient period (**Suresh Chandra Gosh, 1995**).

But the principal aim of ancient Indian education was religious. Under the ancient system, the teacher had to teach the pupil how to pray, to offer sacrifice and to perform his duties according to his station in his life. Religious law and culture were taught in Sanskrit language, which was not in common use. In all schools elementary or advanced, recitation was the first and the main mode of learning (**Tara Chand, 2004**). Apart from general education, the system also included the teaching of grammar, tests, simple

mathematics and mythology (**Sequeira T. N, 1948**). Renowned institutions imparting traditional mode of education existed in places like, Nalanda and Vallabi in North India. Kanchipuram in Tamil Nadu was a famous centre of education imparting religious learning in South (**Khanna. P.K, 2005**). There is an interesting study of reservation of certain seats for backward classes from the 1860's onwards. From time immemorial education has been the fulcrum of societal development. The practice of education was mainly oral; it is borne out by the inscriptions that they are eloquent about training in various fields of technical education. But the existing monuments together with the superb specimens of art are made of stones pearls and metals. K.A. Nilakanta Sastri observes that "Industrial or technical education was carried on in the homes of the artisans under conditions framed by as per rules and conditions" (**Gurumurthy S, 1979**). In the workshop he stood in the peculiar relation of a disciple whose life was consecrated by devoted personal service, and sacred attachment to his master.

There is an increasing corpus of literature on educational activities of the missionaries in the southern part of Tamil Nadu in the early years of its colonial era (**Thomas P.J, 1939**). Thanjore, Trichinopoly and Madras functioned as centres of education. In these centres mission schools were founded parallel to *gurukul* education. John Sullivan, who represented the Madras Government at the court of Thanjore prepared a scheme for the foundation of government schools in every province for the instruction of Indian through the medium of English. This new scheme was warmly supported by another missionary namely Fr Schwartz.

They started orphanages and the modern type of schools. In these institutions general and religious education were provided to pupils of all castes. They resembled the modern schools. The Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge (SPCK) started in 1711. His great successors were Schultz and Schwartz the latter of whom arrived in India in 1750 and laboured in the south for almost half a century. Among the many and great services which he rendered to the country of his adoption was the establishment of schools in various centres. It consisted mostly of the instruction given in *Matam* or monasteries. They promoted vernacular languages. It seems that they did not include technical education in the curriculum. As usual technical education was hereditary one. There was no system of state education. This was one more reason to neglect the technical education in Tamil Nadu during the 18th century. Education was left to the care of private enterprise and philanthropists, only these interested in technical education has an opportunity and so the technical education was confined mainly to a small circle (**Thomas P.J, 1939**).

Modern Indian education was introduced only after the arrival of the British in India. The first Governor General of India insisted that English would be the medium of instruction and from 17th March 1835 English became medium of instruction in British India (**Tara Chand, 2004**). With the coming of the Europeans the indigenous system of education, which continued in a state of feeble animation, began to change. The Christian missionaries took the lead in establishing the modern type of educational institutions in this country. As the Hindu educational institutions were practically closed against all but Brahmins, the non Brahmins and other caste pupils were attracted towards the new Christian missionary educational institutions. The missionaries encouraged particularly the lower caste pupils to enter in their institutions (**Gurumurthy S, 1979**). They were organized on the basis of western concept of middle class education whose object was to promote the education to rouse the mind and 'elevate the character' of the whole people not to keep them in state of slavish submission to a particular sect.

The early decades of the nineteenth century witnessed the establishment of the political supremacy of the East India Company in Tamil Nadu. The company's government needed a large number of English educated subjects who would be intellectually and morally fit to perform their duties with efficiency and probity, especially in the judicial and revenue branches of the public service where the responsibility and powers were rapidly growing (**Anil Seal, 1968**). The appointment of a higher grade Indian judicial officer became necessary to contractual principle and the need for replacing custom by law. And the employment of a superior cadre or revenue officers became indispensable in the execution of the land revenue policy; which set out to define and record the right of the different classes in agriculture through survey and settlement operations. Therefore, the British evolved an educational system which would enable them to

meet the needs of the government. But this type of education benefited mainly the higher order of the society (**Sundharalingam, R, 1971**).

In 1854 Charles Wood's despatch and 1882 Hunter commission recommended several steps to promote education. Soon after independence the Government of India became an autonomous body to provide education throughout the country, and it followed the British concept of education as it is. Many commissions were appointed under eminent scholars such as Dr Radhakrishnan (1948) and Dr A.L. Mudaliar (1952-1953), Kothari Commission (1964) was constituted to promote education and the Government of India spent large amount for education through five year plans from 1951 onwards (**Suresh Chandra Gosh, 1995**).

Education became a provincial subject under a dyarchical form of governance introduced by the Montague Chelmsford Reform Act of 1919. The Justice Party formed a government to introduce free and elementary education on a limited scale with provisions of scholarship, fee concession and mid-day meals schemes to attract children of the poor and depressed classes towards schools. English continued to be the medium of instruction. Debate raged Tamil as the language of instruction, but Sanskrit and English continued to enjoy special status. The result was the less privileged were denied education.

BEGINNING OF BRITISH EDUCATION

The Charter Act of 1600 authorized the London Merchants to establish a company to trade with India. The East India Company, founded on the basis of Charter, established factories in chief centres of India, including Madras. The Company was involved deeply in trade whereas, the missionaries who accompanied the traders concentrated more to propagate Christian faith among the natives. To achieve this goal, they utilized education as a weapon. Hence, they started a number of educational institutions in various parts of Tamil Nadu with the financial and material assistance of the company. The first school was established in 1717 at Cuddalore in Madras Presidency. Irrespective of caste, religion and status, this school permitted all sects of the pupils. Subsequent to this, a number of schools were started at various centres. Particularly, schools were started in Thanjavur, Sivagangai, Ramnathapuram, Tiruchirappalli and Nagapattinam, by the hard effort of Fr Schwartz and missionaries of Jesuit Madura Mission. These schools enabled to eradicate illiteracy among the natives to some extent. During the administration of the company, due attention was given to popularize both native and English education.

The institutionalized system of formal education was the outcome of the English system of administration. The occidental versus oriental controversy led to the famous minute of Lord Macaulay, which decided the fate of English education in India (**Philip Hartage, 1939**). Moreover the cultural renaissance started by Raja Ram Mohan Roy coincided with the germination of new era of education. The conservative ideas side traded to attain the benefit to the new learning.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS OF THE SOUTH

East India Company while it was unspoken ruling power in India, had no interest in the support of education among the masses. It was a time whilst in England this task was hardly as a civic responsibility. The court of directors of the East India Company while renewing the charter of the company in the year 1813 gave an annual allotment of one lakh rupees for the restoration and improvement of literature and encouragement of the learned natives of India and for introduction and improvement of knowledge of the scene. Though they did it with reluctance, it was the first mile stone in the history of the western education in India.

Thomas Munroe who was the governor of the Madras Presidency between 1820 and 1827 passed his famous minute on indigenous education, dated 25th June 1822 in which he said "We have no record to show the actual state of education throughout the country. The only record which can furnish the information required is a list of schools in which reading and writing are taught each showing the number of scholars in each subject" (**Minutes of Thomas Munroe, 1820**).

The collectors should be directed to prepare this document according to the form which accompanies this paper. It is not the purpose to suggested any interference, anything, in the native schools. The people should be gone to manage their schools in their own way. It was make possible the operations of their schools by restoring every funds that may have been unfocused from them and maybe granting additional ones wherever it may appear advisable.

Indigenous madarassas and pathsalas had running in each division of South India on individual idea with no aid from the state where old system of instruction was imparted. In Madras Presidency (in 1822), there were about 12,498 such native schools. The troubles that faced educational enterprise in South India, as elsewhere, were the paucity of pupils, lack of facilities for educating girls, lack of opportunity for lower caste pupils to get admission etc. These could not argue the East India Company to get initiative for the reason that England could get without a state organization in the matter.

The previous efforts to initiate change in the existing native system originated from missionaries, individuals and private societies, the missionaries Kiernandar, Ziegenbalg, Gericke, and Schwartz were the first to create schools at Madras, Cuddalore, Thanjavur and Tiruchirappalli. The Court of executives in 1787 had specially commended the efforts of Schwartz who “prevailed on the Rajah of Thanjavur and the Rajah’s of the great and little Maravar to set up schools for teaching English at Ramanathapuram, Thanjavur and Sivagangai, the capitals of their respective countries, the two latter assigning pagodas 300 each for the support of their two seminaries”. These efforts, being extremely important from the point of outlook of explanation of the minds of the citizens and impressments of sentiments of esteem and respect for the British nation in them, were given recognition and high appreciation by the court of directors by authorizing a permanent grant of 250 pagodas each for the three schools at Thanjavur, Ramanathapuram and Shivagangai. Thus these three institutions became the first to receive the company’s special attention from then onward education of Madras presidency became a concern of the company’s government (**Ilamathi S, 2005**).

Charles Grant, one of the directors of the company, submitted a memorandum in which he lamented the low moral condition of the people of India. He asked the company to improve their condition by imparting to them knowledge of the English language which was to serve as “a key which will open to them a world of new ideas”. As the Muslim rulers had taught Persian to the Indians, in the same way the Englishmen should teach English to the people of India. It would be very simple for government to set up, at reasonable expense, in various parts of provinces, places of unwarranted instruction in writing and reading English, multitudes, especially of the young, would gather to them and the easy books used in teaching strength at the same time convey obvious truths on different subjects. The Hindus would in time, become teachers of English themselves and the employment of our language in public business, for which every political reason remains in full force, would in the course of another generation, make it very general throughout the country. There is nothing wanting to the success of this plan, but the hearty patronage of Government.

In 1822, Sir Thomas Munro suggested the survey of the actual state education in the various districts under the Madras Government. The court of directors gave great credit to Sir Thomas Munro for having originated the enquiry. On Munro’s recommendation a committee of public instructions was formed at Madras. A training school was established for training teacher candidates. Civil authority in each district was to select two candidates, one Hindu and one Muslim for this purpose. They were allowed the stipend of Rs 15 per mensem. This scheme devised by Munro was later discontinued, because of the change of attitude shown by the directors (**Suresh Chandra Ghosh, 2000**).

Munroe’s Minute

In 1822 Thomas Munro, the Governor of Madras, ordered an enquiry into the state of education in the Madras Presidency and when the report on the subject was submitted, he found it at a very low level on account of the poverty of the people and indifference of the government. In order to improve the situation, he proposed, in a minute of 10th March 1826, the establishment of two schools one for the

Hindus and the other for the Muslims in each collectorate and of one school in each *tahsil* (taluk) of the presidency at an estimated expenditure of Rs 50 per annum. Munro died in 1827 and his successors lacked his vision and sympathy so that by 1830 only 70 *tahsildaree* schools had been established.

In September 1830 the Court of Directors asked the Government of Madras to concentrate on the spread of English education rather than on an attempt to educate the masses. The scheme of mass education further received a setback when in 1836 the Bengal government recommended withdrawal of aid from the collectorate and *tahsildaree* schools and the establishment of an English college at Madras and of provincial English schools at some important places in the interior, if funds permitted.

In 1836 the Board of Public Instruction was reconstituted as a Committee of Native Education, later to be substituted by the University Board in 1841 which set up a high school called the University of Madras. The University Board was superseded by a Council of Education in 1845, which was dissolved at the instance of the Court of Directors in 1847, its duties being again undertaken by the University Board. Sir Henry Poffinger revived the Council of Education in 1848, only to replace it by a Board of Governors in 1851. It handed over its functions to the Department of Public Instruction formed as per the provision of the Education Despatch of 1854. A rolling stone gathers no moss, and as J.A. Ricky has rightly observed in *Selections from Educational Records*, Part II: "In view of the constant changes both in the policy of the local government and in the personnel of the authority whose duty it was to carry out that policy, it is not a matter for surprise that the educational activities of the Madras Government were not fruitful in results or that we find in 1852 but any single institution in the presidency founded or under the immediate control of government" (Suresh Chandra Ghosh, 2000).

The new directors were not favour of imparting education to the Bengal Despatch on of 1835 which led to the abolition of the *tahsildaree* and collectorate schools caused great harm to the interests of the ordinary masses of the lower castes. In 1836 the Board of Public Instruction was replaced by a Committee of Native Education which again was replaced in 1841 by a University Board (Suresh Chandra Ghosh, 2000).

Lord Minto and Education

Lord Minto, the then Governor General of India took keen interest to promote education. His report published in 1801 emphasized the need to open more schools and colleges to improve the knowledge of Indians in literature and science.

Wood's Despatch of 1854

Sir Charles Wood's Despatch to the court of directors has been described as 'The Magna carta of English Education in India'. It set forth a scheme of education far wider and more comprehensive than any one which had been suggested so far. It enunciated the aim of education as the diffusion of arts, science, philosophy and the literature of Europe. The study of Indian languages was to be encouraged and the English language was to be taught wherever there was a demand for it. It was felt that the time had come for the establishment universities on the model of the London University. Each university was to consist of a chancellor, vice-chancellor and a senate. Madras, Calcutta and Bombay were to have first Universities (Suresh Chandra Ghosh, 2000).

The dispatch also recommended the establishment of institutions for training teachers for all classes of schools, government schools and colleges were to be maintained. New middle schools were to be established, female education was to be encouraged by the government. A director of public instruction was to be appointed in every province (Vidyadhar Mahajan, 1971). The same function, these educational institutions continue to do for the dawn of a new society.

RECOMMENDATION OF THE REPORT

- The report contained various suggestions to improve the condition of education in India. It recommended forming a department of education in every province in the company's rule with a view to increase the number of schools, colleges and teachers training schools. It also suggested encouraging

private sector to start educational institution. It enabled the government to minimize the financial losses considerably.

- Though Wood emphasized more on English education he also requested the government the need to start native schools for the benefit of the common people. This report mention in the importance of the division of educational institution in the primary schools, middle schools, high schools, colleges and universities mainly for the convenience of administration and effective functioning.
- Higher education in Tamil Nadu is considered to have commenced properly from 1840 (**Vidyadhar Mahajan, 1971**). Lord Elphinstone, the then Governor of Madras Presidency, had laid foundation for higher education by establishing a centred collegiate institution at Madras. It later developed into the Presidency College which stands even now at Chepauk, Chennai. It was the first Higher Education Institution in South India. It was followed by founding of a school in Black Town in 1842 with the contribution made by Pachaiyappa, a philanthropist. It later developed into Pachaiyappa's College. The successful working of the Medical College in Calcutta and Bombay and the Thomson College of Civil Engineering at Roorkee made the English East India Company's administration to start an engineering college and a medical college in the Madras Presidency in 1850 and 1851, respectively.
- Besides, the report demanded the government to implement the grand-in-aid system in India especially in Madras presidency. The report also suggested appointing inspectors for the periodical inspection of schools. Such Inspectors helped the government to understand whether the grant was utilized properly for the said purpose. The grants-in-aid codes attracted the attention of missionaries. They received major portions of the grants and constructed schools throughout Tamil Nadu. Thus majority of the schools came under the private sector. The Woods Report of 1854 also mentioned the medium of instruction. It never insisted English as the medium of instruction. But it suggested English should be the medium of instruction at the higher level (**Suresh Chandra Ghosh, 2000**).

FORMATION OF UNIVERSITIES

Government conceded the demands of Wood and decided to start universities at Madras, Bombay and Calcutta. For this purpose, an act was enacted by the Indian Constitutional Council. Based on the act, the University Board High School was converted into Madras University in 1857. The high school formerly governed by the university board was placed under the department of public Instruction and renamed as the Presidency College. The newly formed university controlled the colleges affiliated to it and to conduct the examinations.

As the buildings for the Madras University were not completed it functioned in a part of the Presidency College till 1873. The university conducted the first matriculation examination in 1857. It conducted the B.A degree examination for the first time in 1858. Only two students from Jaffna attended the examination. The university also shouldered the responsibility of conducting examination for professional courses. Hence the university conducted examinations for the medical college, the engineering college and the law college at Madras.

Due to the implementation of Wood's report the number of educational institutions increased considerably during the period between 1857 and 1871. Particularly, the number of colleges increased during this period. The high school at Kumbakonam was upgraded into a college. The Madras Christian College was started by a private management. The Christian missionaries also established college at Madras, Nagapattinam and Coimbatore. As a result, twelve colleges were started in 1871. Only highly qualified and efficient persons were appointed as principals in these colleges. E.P. Powell was appointed as the first principal of the Presidency College at Madras.

Within twenty-five years of the implementation of Wood's report radical changes took place in the field of education. As a result of the rapid growth of education the number of schools and colleges increased from 24 in 1881 to 62 in 1904 (**Siquiera T. N, 1960**). Technical institutions also increased from three to six. Considerable changes were also introduced in the system of syllabus, research and examinations. Thus the

Wood's report brought marvelous changes in education. Hence, scholars and statesmen considered this report as the Magna Carta in the history of education in India.

HUNTER COMMISSION REPORT - 1882

Though government showed keen interest for the growth of education, its benefits did not fully reach the people uniformly. The main reason for this was the lack of interest from education, the Muslims kept aloof from it; hence the anticipation of the government to change the society through education. To reach the benefits of education to all sections of people in the society, government decided to reconsider the policy of education. With this view in mind, a commission was constituted in 1882. It studied carefully the practical difficulties for the spread of education among the people. It also pointed out some schemes for its effective working.

The report of the commission pointed to the government the negligence of primary education and emphasised its importance in educational growth. Hence, Hunter suggested the need to bring primary education under the administrative control of municipal boards and district boards for its betterment. Hunter in his report also suggested simplifying the existing grant-in-aid procedure. With a view to provide job opportunities to the people he advised the government to start job – oriented courses in schools. In certain places, private management and local boards found it difficult to start schools. In such places government came forward to start schools (**Suresh Chandra Ghosh, 2000**). Hence radical changes took place in the field of education.

As result of the implementation of the report of the commission, the number of student in schools and colleges raised considerably. In 1901 the number of students raised to thirty two lakhs in primary schools, six lakhs in high schools and thirty three thousand in colleges. Likewise, the total educational expenditure of the government also raised to one crore and seventy seven lakhs. During this period 5628 primary schools and 467 high schools functioned in Tamil Nadu.

The University of Madras was incorporated by an act dated 5th September 1857 “for the purpose of ascertaining by means by examinations, the persons who have obtained proficiency in different branches of literature, science and art and of rewarding them by academic degrees as evidence of their respective attainments and marks of honour proportioned thereunto”. The first entrance examination was held in September 1857 and the first examination for the B.A. degree was held in February 1858.

The institution thus started was not for teaching but for conferring degrees. At first it was not distinct from the Presidency College; in fact, till 1874, when the Senate House was built, the university office was located at the Presidency College (**Naik J.P, 1963**). At first all teaching was confined to that college; later the Christian and the Pachiappa Colleges came to share in that work. It is well to recognize in this connection that although the degree-giving authority of the University dates only from 1857, the real University of Madras was inaugurated on 14th April 1841 (**Thomas P.J, 1939**).

PROGRESS OF THE UNIVERSITY

Between 1857 and 1904, the University of Madras grew rapidly in strength and influence. In 1857, there were only 47 students. By 1904, the number rose to 15,434. Since then; the new universities of Mysore, Andhra and Annamalai branched off. Yet in 1937, the number of students in the Madras University was 17,500. As many as 35,000 graduates have left the portals of the university till 1938. Under the Act of 1904, the university had jurisdiction not only over the Madras Presidency but over the adjoining Indian states. In 1923, the University was provincialised by the amendment act of that year. Nevertheless, colleges in Hyderabad, Travancore, Cochin and Pudukottai continued to be affiliated to it (**Thomas P.J, 1939**).

The principal events in the history of university education in Madras in recent times are: (1) The foundation of Loyola College, thanks largely to the genius of the late Father Bertram, (2) The migration of the Madras Christian College to Tambaram, outside the university boundaries. The Pachiappa's College is also proposing to migrate to Chetput, not far from the Loyola College (**Thomas P.J, 1939**).

Education in Tamil Nadu after Independence

Tamil Nadu came to be ruled by the Congress party soon after independence. In the field of education there was a policy in favour of the poor during the twenty years of Congress rule. In 1956-62 Kamaraj, the then Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, took several steps to promote elementary education and also number of welfare schemes to develop literacy rate in the state gradually. This work analyses twenty years of education which includes university, college and technical education. Kamaraj is often considered as the pioneer in the history of elementary education in Tamil Nadu.

The Madras University Act was passed in 1923. It changed the University of Madras from a mere examination body to a teaching university and made all the colleges of Madras Presidency affiliated to it. The demand for new universities led to the opening of the Andhra University in 1925 and Annamalai University in 1929 (**Ramasamy A, 2002**). All this led to conflict among the politically emergent classes (**David Washbrook, 1976**).

Education continued to be a provincial subject even under the Government of India Act, 1935. An amendment, made in 1937, brought central supervision over the universities till 1940. Another amendment in 1940 brought universities once again under provincial jurisdiction. These developments in the realm of higher education in India were already probed by many scholars. Similarly the developments in Tamil Nadu were also discussed by scholars up to 1967. A thorough study of the history of higher education in Tamil Nadu is absent for the period from 1947 to 1967. This work focuses on the Government of Tamil Nadu's role in the promotion of higher education.

There is a growing literature on the impact of English education in colonial India. Studies on education have linked the creation of new middle classes with the growth of nationalism. Aparna Banu's study of the growth of English education and Anil Seal's work has discussed at great length the emergence of the middle classes and the growth of national consciousness (**Aparna Basu, 1974**).

But the colonial educational policy has also stunted the growth of overall development resulting in intense competition among the various groups. After independence, the Government of Tamil Nadu had given its institutions clear guidelines to be followed scrupulously with regard to admission of students, which are considered fair and square. In other words, the best among the candidates belonging to the backward and down-trodden sections of the society are given due preference in admissions as per the quota system. It appears that the government colleges are meant for the students of weaker sections of the society.

CONCLUSION

The education is a vital role for socio economic progress and it is a main indicator for human development. Education provides one with the greatest opportunities of becoming successful in the modern society. The conscious of knowledge, qualities, skills, attitudes, and capacities, learning make possible individuals to become aware subjects of their development and liable participants in a organized process of creating a innovative world. The Indian literacy rate grew from 12 per cent at the end of British period 1947 to 74.04 per cent in 2011. Literacy is an important segment of Tamil Nadu economy. It is one of the most literate states in India. According to 2011 Census, Literacy rate in Tamil Nadu has been upward trend and is 80.09 per cent, which is higher than the national average. The male literacy stands at 86.77 per cent and female literacy is at 73.14 percent. At present, Tamil Nadu has 50 universities (19 state universities, two central universities, 29 deemed universities), 552 (in 2014) engineering colleges (seven of them are Government/aided colleges, twenty of them are Autonomous colleges and the rest are self financing colleges and four are University departments within Anna University), 29 medical colleges (in 2017), 1150 arts & science colleges, 53,722 schools (34,180 primary schools, 9938 middle schools, 4574 high schools, 5030 higher secondary schools).

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