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STUDY ON THE FERGUSON COLLEGE FOR DROP OUT STUDENTS

Study on the Fergusson College for Drop out Students

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Abstract – Under this investigation, a three-year entry of fresher to Fergusson College, Poona was considered and the careers of all the students who joined the college in the first year class, in arts or science, in 1949, 1950 and 1951, were followed until they passed out after taking the BA or B.Sc. degree, or left the college to join some other college, course or university or simply dropped out. A period of eight years was considered adequate for this purpose as students who did not succeed in getting the first degree within eight years of their joining the first year class had a very remote chance of doing so after that period. Information was collected from the college records, the main sources being the admission forms, the results of the Poona University examinations and the register of leaving certificates of the college. No questionnaire was issued and no interviews were taken.

Key words: Fresher, Dropped out, Information, Adequate

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INTRODUCTION

There is no much interest for education in villages. Many do not understand the importance of education, because of being illiterate. Some do not send their girls to school because of the Purdah system. Some retain their children at home in order that they may help them in earning their bread and butter. Some are not able to educate their children because of paucity of funds. Some want to train their children in their hereditary trade and do not send them to school. Keeping all these difficulties in view, the school system for villages should be so organized as to help the villagers to get solution of their problems in the school somehow or other. This means that the curriculum of the school should be vocationally oriented according to the needs of the locality which the school is supposed to serve. This will help the people to understand the utility of the school and as a result they will start taking interest in the education of their children. The school should function as a community development centre also. The school should try to develop all skills in children which the villagers want them to pick up in view of their particular profession i.e., agriculture and allied professional occupations.

The schools, should be organized for a particular area keeping in view its religious, cultural and social traditions. Then the public will feel a belongingness with the schools. If the public desires, separate schools should be run for girls. But it will be better if upto the primary stage co-education is encouraged. The primary school should be established for educating the children of scheduled castes, tribes and backward classes according to their particular social

and cultural traditions. If private enterprises are forthcoming in this direction, they should be fully encouraged.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

- DEVI, K. G., (1963-1970), studied the problem of dropouts in primary schools of Manipur with special reference to Imphal town and found that the girls dropped out more than the boys and the causes were poverty, frequent transfer, repeated failure and negligence of parents.
- DAS, R.C, (1969), studied wastage and stagnation at the elementary level of education in the state of Assam and found that in spite of a rapid increase in educational expenditure, efforts and facilities, the rate of wastage and stagnation at primary stage was high. It is higher among girls than that of boys.
- BARUA, A. P., (1971), conducted a comparative study in Sibsagar and Golaghat subdivisions of Assam to compare the wastage and stagnation at the primary stage during a period of 5 years of pupils schooling. He found that Poverty, Ignorance of parents, poor health of pupils, repeated failure, Long absence from the school, bad physical condition of the school, unsympathetic teacher's behaviour, overcrowded classes etc. are the local factors affecting the wastage and stagnation of a particular place.

- DAS, R. C., (1975), compared the educational wastage of rural and urban areas in Jorhat subdivision of Sibsagar District of Assam and found that wastage and stagnation in rural area schools was significantly higher than that in the urban areas.

- SHARMA, R. C. His aim was to find out the position of wastage at the primary level in Rajasthan from 1970-71 to 1980-81, he found that in spite of a big increase in the number of schools and teachers, the state had been able to enroll only 56.6% of the children in the age group of 6-11 in 1979-80, as against the national average of 81.9%.

- ESWARA PRASAD & SHARMA, R. (1982), studied wastage, stagnation and inequality of opportunity in rural primary education- a case study of Andhra Pradesh and found that the incidence of stagnation was higher among girls than boys. He told that stagnation was much higher in lower class people (Harijans) than others. Also the rate of stagnation showed a progressive decline from class I to V. The educational wastage of SC boys at the primary stage was of the order of 94.74% and for girls it was 87.26%. He said that there was no association between school equality and wastage in education.

MATERIAL AND METHOD:

Actually used year, profitably used years and academic credits; If a student spends one complete year in a class and also passes the examination held at the end of the year he is said to have one "profitably used year" to his credit but in case he failed in the annual examination or decides, for some reason to "take a drop" then the year in question would not show "profit" as he would have stagnated during that year. If such a student continues study in the same class and passes examination of that class after another year then he would have "actually used" two years for the course but "profitably used" only one year. Alternatively he may be regarded to have gained one "academic year" in a period of two years when the matter is considered from the point of examination successively passed only.

33. The above concepts were used to define the following indexes:

(a) Index of Attainment = $100 \times \frac{\text{Profitably Used Years}}{\text{Actually Used Years}}$

Actually Used Years

(b) Index of Stagnation = $100 (1 - \frac{\text{Total Optimum years}}{\text{Actually Used Years}})$

Actually Used Years

(c) Sensitive Index of Wastage = This lies between the following two ratios

(i) $100 (1 - \frac{\text{Total Academic Credits}}{\text{Total Initially Enrolled}})$

Total Initially Enrolled

(ii) $100 (1 - \frac{\text{Total Academic Credits}}{\text{Cumulative total number of students who underwent each successive year of the course}})$

Cumulative total number of students who underwent each successive year of the course)

The Stagnation Index takes several factors into account simultaneously. For example, the number first entering the class, the number remaining in the class after each successive year of the course; the number of trials taken by each student for passing the relevant periodical examinations; the total time spent by the class as a whole to complete the course, in question. It is also statistically comparable between one year and another, between one faculty and another and even between one university and another whenever similar Indices are available for different universities. The Sensitive Index of Wastage is also fully comparable

Under this investigation, a three-year entry of fresher to Fergusson College, Poona was considered and the careers of all the students who joined the college in the first year class, in arts or science, in 1949, 1950 and 1951, were followed until they passed out after taking the BA or B.Sc. degree, or left the college to join some other college, course or university or simply dropped out. A period of eight years was considered adequate for this purpose as students who did not succeed in getting the first degree within eight years of their joining the first year class had a very remote chance of doing so after that period. Information was collected from the college records, the main sources being the admission forms, the results of the Poona University examinations and the register of leaving certificates of the college. No questionnaire was issued and no interviews were taken.

The results of the investigation showed that the wastage was about 45 per cent for art students and about 38 per cent for science students. An attempt was also made to estimate the wastage amongst students in the Poona University as a whole with the help of the percentage of failures at the Intermediate and B.A. examinations in the relevant periods, and with the help of proportion of students who dropped out at each stage, as observed in the Fergusson College Study. These estimates placed the wastage percentage for arts students at 51 and for science students at 48.

The investigation also dealt with stagnation cases. It was found that out of 446 students admitted to the first year arts class in the Fergusson College, during the period under survey, only 185 passed the BA. examination. Of these 117 (or 63 per cent) could obtain the degree in the minimum period of four years and the remaining 68 took from five years to nine years to do so. The average period for the delayed students worked out at 5.81 years, as compared to 66 years for the whole batch. In the case of science course, out of 393 students who completed it, 152 (or 39 per cent) did so in the prescribed period and the

remaining 21+1 took from five to eight years to do so. While the average period for the delayed students was 5 years, that for the whole batch worked out to be 4.94 years. We shall now state briefly the causes of wastage and stagnation as they have been determined in the course of these investigations. The most important cause of wastage is poverty. Children are withdrawn from schools either because they are required to work for the family or because the parents cannot afford the expenses of schooling. About 65 per cent of the causes of wastage are due to this single factor. Next in importance are causes relating to inefficiency of the educational system - retardation and the lack of attractiveness in schools. Some causes of wastage are also due to indifference of parents and this is particularly true at the primary stage. Only a relatively very small number of wastage cases is due to causes like death, truancy, etc. Stagnation is due to a variety of factors, the chief among which are the poor quality of teachers, indifferent teaching, defective system of examinations, lack of earnestness on the part of students or lack of proper environment at home, paucity or non-availability of textbooks, etc. The general view in India is that wastage and stagnation are not evils in themselves. They are, like headache and temperature, symptoms of diseases rooted elsewhere and it is only when the basic weaknesses of the educational system such as poor quality of teachers, poor equipment, inefficient methods of teaching, or defective system of examinations are eliminated that these evils can be made to disappear.

CONCLUSION:

It is beyond the scope of this paper to suggest the general remedies for reduction of wastage and stagnation. However, I shall refer only to two aspects: improvement in statistics and what UNESCO can do to help to further studies in the problem. In so far as the statistics are concerned, the existing returns do not throw any specific light either on the problem of wastage or on that of stagnation. It is absolutely necessary, therefore, to design some statistical returns which will do so. For example, when schools are asked to report the number of pupils on rolls at the end of the year, they might be also asked to report as to how many of them are fresh students in the class and how many of them are repeaters for one, two, three and four or more years. This will throw some light on the extent of stagnation. Similarly, the schools can also report the number of students who leave it during the year and analyse them according to the causes for leaving. If this is done, some idea of the extent of wastage and its causes would be readily available from year to year. It is, therefore, suggested that suitable statistics should be designed for the purpose and introduced in all developing countries where these evils are particularly acute.

UNESCO can assist studies in these problems in three ways. At present, very little is known of the extent of these evils in the different countries of this region or of the investigations made into them. It should be possible for the Educational Clearing House of UNESCO to obtain information on these matters, as well as about the remedies that are being adopted to reduce these evils, and to circulate the information to all the countries of the region. Secondly, UNESCO can also assist, through its Technical Assistance Programme, the organization of investigations into the problem in countries where they are needed but where it has not yet been possible to undertake them. Thirdly, UNESCO might also assist in bringing research workers in the problem together in a special Seminar so as to evolve a suitable technique for the development of studies in this important sector.

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