CHAPTER - IV

REORGANISATION OF SECONDARY EDUCATION IN WEST BENGAL AFTER THE PATTERN OFFERED BY THE SECONDARY EDUCATION COMMISSION, 1952-53
CHAPTER - IV

Reorganisation of Secondary Education in West Bengal after the pattern offered by the secondary Education Commission, 1952-53

After the enactment of the constitution on 26th January, 1950 there was an urgent need of reorganisation and improvement of the secondary education of the country. Secondary is the stage which marks the completion of education for the large majority of the pupils. Secondly, the stage is very important because during this time a student builds his character and personality. Thirdly, it is also the first stage of a student's career building. But so long there has been no comprehensive or thorough examination of the problems pertaining to secondary education. The new government of independent India appointed the Secondary Education Commission on September 23, 1952. Dr. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar, the Vice-chancellor of the University of Madras, was appointed the Chairman of the commission in order to examine the prevailing system of secondary education and suggest measures for its reorganisation and improvement with particular reference to the aims, organization and content of secondary education. When the commission was set up, the most outstanding and educationally relevant facts in the Indian situation were -

(i) the adoption of the goals of democracy and socialism necessitating the development among the people of a broad, national and secular outlook;

(ii) the extreme poverty of the country and urgency for promoting its economic growth and
(iii) the absence of educational facilities needed for developing all aspects of human personality and the neglect of cultural pursuits and activities.¹

On the basis of this analysis the commission studied and examined the problems of secondary education in detail and recommended that secondary education should be reoriented to the following aims and objectives:

(i) A change over from the prevailing system of secondary education which is unilateral and predominantly academic in nature to one which will cater for different aptitudes and interests.

(ii) Development of qualities essential for creative citizenship. This includes the development in the students of secondary schools of those habits, attitudes and qualities of character which are essential for creative citizenship in a democratic society. Among these qualities, which are to be fostered through curricular and co-curricular activities in secondary schools are:

(a) the capacity for clear thinking (allied to which is the capacity for clarity in speech and writing);

(b) the scientific attitude of mind;

(c) a receptivity to new ideas;

(d) the ability to live harmoniously with one's fellowmen through the cultivation of discipline, co-operation, social sensitiveness and tolerance;

(e) a sense of true patriotism.

(iii) the promotion of vocational efficiency. This involves not only the creation of a new attitude to work and an appreciation of dignity of manual labour but also the development of the students' technical skill and efficiency through greater emphasis on craft and productive work and the diversification of courses at the secondary stage.

(iv) development of personality: This implies cultivation of the students' literary, artistic, cultural interests for a fuller development of their personalities. This necessitated the provision of subjects like art, craft, music, dance and hobbies in the secondary school curricula.

(v) providing a sound and reasonably uniform pattern of education in order to do away with provincialism, regionalism, communalism and other reactional differences.

(vi) making secondary education a complete stage by itself by increasing the span of education.

With these aims and objectives in view the commission made some important recommendations which the government of India accepted in their original form. West Bengal also accepted the recommendations. The State Government introduced the pattern of secondary education offered by the commission in 1957 by the Resolution No. 10973 Edn, dated 6th Dec., 1955.¹ School education was thereafter developed under the system during the following years and continued upto 1973.

The most important recommendation of the commission was about the duration of the secondary stage. It was in favour of increasing the span of secondary stage. It suggested

(a) Middle or senior Basic or Junior Secondary Stage of three years; and

(b) The Higher Secondary stage of four years.

Secondly, the commission recommended diversification of courses. This diversification should start after the middle school. With a view to diversifying the secondary curriculum the commission recommended the establishment of Multipurpose Schools which will provide terminal courses like Technology, Commerce, Agriculture, Fine Arts and Home Science.

Thirdly, the commission offered a detailed description of curriculum for the secondary schools. It included two sets of curriculum - one for the Middle school stage and the other for the High and Higher secondary stage.

**Middle School Curriculum**: (The school which cater for the pupils of the age group 11 to 13).

1. Languages
   (a) Mother tongue or Regional language.
   (b) Official language of the Republic i.e. Hindi.
   (c) English, the international language.

2. Social studies

3. General science
4. Mathematics
5. Art and Music
6. Craft
7. Physical Education

The subjects from (1) to (4) will introduce the pupil to the significant departments of human knowledge and activity in a general way. The subjects (5) and (6) are the valuable media for the development of the emotional side of the mind of the pupil. The inclusion of Physical Education (7) is very much important for the proper physical development of every pupil which will enable the child to develop a healthy and balanced personality.

High and Higher Secondary School Curriculum:

(The school which cater for the pupil of the age range of 14 to 17)

A. (i) Mother Tongue or Regional Language
   (ii) One other language from the following - (Hindi, Elementary English, Advanced English, a modern Indian Language, a modern Foreign Language, a Classical Language).

B. (i) Social studies - general course (For the first two years)
   (ii) General science including Mathematics - general course (For the first two years).

C. One craft to be chosen from the following according to needs -
(a) Spinning and weaving (b) Wood Work, (c) Metal Work, (d) Gardening, (e) Tailoring, (f) Typographes, (g) Workshop practice, (h) Sewing, Needle work and Embroidary, (i) Modelling.

The above subjects were common for all. Beside these there were seven groups which were optional. A student might choose any one of the groups. Under a group there were certain subjects. A student had to select three subjects and an Additional subject among these subjects :-

Group - I. HUMANITIES

(a) A classical language or a third language from A(ii) not already taken.
(b) History.
(c) Geography.
(d) Elements of Economics and Civics.
(e) Elements of Psychology and Logic.
(f) Mathematics.
(g) Music.
(h) Domestic science.

Group - 2 SCIENCES

(a) Physics.
(b) Chemistry.
(c) Biology.
(d) Geology.
(e) Mathematics.
(f) Elements of Physiology and Hygiene.
Group - 3 TECHNICAL
(a) Applied Mathematics and Geometry Drawing.
(b) Applied science.
(c) Elements of Mechanical Engineering.
(d) Elements of Electrical Engineering.

Group - 4 COMMERCE
(a) Commercial practice.
(b) Book keeping.
(c) Commercial Geography and Elements of Economics and Civics.
(d) Short hand and Typewriting.

Group - 5 AGRICULTURE
(a) General Agriculture.
(b) Animal Husbandry.
(c) Horticulture and Gardening.
(d) Agricultural Chemistry and Botany.

Group - 6 FINE ARTS
(a) History of Art.
(b) Drawing and Designing.
(c) Painting.
(d) Modelling.
(e) Music.
(f) Dancing.

Group - 7 HOME SCIENCE
(a) Home Economics.
(b) Nutrition and Cookery.
(c) Mother craft and child care.
(d) Household Management and Home Nursing.
E. Beside the above subjects a student may take at his option one additional subject from any of the above groups.¹

On the basis of these recommendations of the commission West Bengal brought a great change in the duration of secondary education. Prior to 1957 school education consisted of ten years schooling - four years at the primary level (Class I to IV), four years Junior Secondary Class (Class V to VIII) and two years secondary level (Class IX to X). This was called High School stage. After class X there was an external examination called Matriculation Examination. After this there was the Intermediate course of two years duration followed by the degree course of two years duration.

But in 1957 the existing Intermediate stage was abolished and the period of secondary education was increased by one year and a three year degree course was planned. The following new organisational structure was established after four years of primary education:

A Junior Secondary education of four years (V to VIII).

A Higher Secondary stage which should cover a period of three years (IX to XI).

But it was not possible to convert all the existing High schools into Higher secondary schools. Some strict conditions had to be fulfilled before recognising a school as

a Higher Secondary school such as proper accommodation, proper equipment, proper qualification of teachers and adequate finance to ensure that the institution would continue to function efficiently. Many schools of the state could not fulfil these conditions particularly the schools of the rural areas. So they remained unaltered and had to continue as class X High schools. The students of these schools could appear at the School Final Examination. After the school Final they had to join the pre-university course in colleges to become eligible for admission to the three year degree course. Thus the Higher Secondary Schools and X class schools were functioning side by side.

However, the increase in duration of secondary education by one year was of great utility. Previously the span of secondary education was six years (V to X) and the standard attained by the students within these years was low for entering the university or any other higher course. The average age was also low. A somewhat longer period of training before entrance to university was likely to be useful. Secondly judging by the requirements of the diversified courses somewhat longer period of training was necessary if the students were to be taught with thoroughness and efficiency.

Thirdly, secondary education is a complete unit by itself and not merely a preparatory stage. At the end of this period the student should be in a position, if he wishes, to enter on the responsibilities of life and take up some useful vocation.
Now after the introduction of eleven class system the period of secondary education covered the age group of about 11 to 17 years. Properly planned education covering 7 years should enable the school to give a thorough training in the courses of study taken up by the student and also help him to attain a reasonable degree of maturity in knowledge, understanding and judgement which would stand him in good stead in later life.

The impact of the recommendations of the commission of 1952-53 introduced remarkable changes in the curriculum of the secondary education in West Bengal. Prior to 1957 the subjects included in the curriculum of the Matriculation Examination were as follows:

(i) English 100+100+50 = 250 marks
    (Two and Half papers)

(ii) Major vernacular language or Modern Classical Language
    100 marks
    (One paper)

(iii) Classical Language or
     Modern Classical Language
     100 marks
     (One paper)

(iv) History 100 marks
     (One paper)

(v) Geography 50 marks
    (Half paper)

(vi) Additional 100 marks
The above mentioned curriculum was full of defects. The defects may be summed up as follows:

(i) It was mechanical, stereotyped and rigidly uniform and did not cater to different aptitudes.

(ii) It was isolated from life and did not give the students insight into the everyday world in which they were living. When they pass out of the school they feel illadjusted and cannot take their place confidently and competently in the community.

(iii) It was narrow and one sided and failed to train the whole personality of the student. For many decades, it provided only academic instructions which meant teaching him a certain number of subjects. These subjects either gave information which the adults considered useful or trained him in certain skills like reading and writing. The non-cognitive aspects of his personality - his practical aptitudes, his emotions, his appreciation, his taste were largely ignored.

(iv) English was a compulsory subject and it was given undue weightage. Students who did not possess special linguistic ability in English were greatly handicapped in their studies. If a student did not fare well in English he could not pass the Matriculation Examination. The other subjects, which were psychologically and socially important or congenial, were not given greater attention. The new curriculum of 11 class Higher Secondary course in West Bengal showed a great change.
The Curriculum was in two parts viz.

A. Core subjects;

B. Subjects for the Board's Higher Secondary Examination.

**A. Core Subjects:**

A student must study these subjects in classes noted against each.

1. Social studies (To be studied in classes IX to X).
2. General science (To be studied in classes VI to X).
3. Elementary Mathematics (To be studied in classes VI to X).
4. Craft (to be learnt in classes VI to X).
5. Third language (to be learnt in classes VI to VIII).

**B. Subjects for the Higher Secondary Examination:**

A student must offer subjects 1 to 5 below and 6 optionally.

1. First language (Two papers) - 200 marks
   One among the following languages should be selected as first language (Bengali, English, Assamese, Hindi, Gujrati, Malayalam, Marathi, Tibetan, Nepali, Oriya, Punjabi, Tamil, Telegu, Urdu).

2. Second language (one paper)-100
   (English or Bengali was offered as second language)

3, 4 and 5 - Three elective subjects and an additional subject from any of the following 7 groups -
Group - 1 (Humanities)

Third language (Two papers) - 200 marks
(A classical language among the following languages
Sanskrit, Pali, Arabic, Persian, Latin)
or Bengali - (Two papers) - 200 marks,
or Hindi - (Two papers) - 200 marks,
History - (Two papers) - 200 marks,
Geography - (Two papers) - 200 marks,
Elements of Economics and Civics - (Two papers) - 200 marks,
Logic - (Two papers) - 200 marks,
Psychology - (Two papers) - 200 marks,
Mathematics (Elective subject) - (Two papers) - 200 marks,
Elements of Home science - (Two papers) - 200 marks,
Sc. Music (Vocal) - (Two papers) - 200 marks,
Music (Instrumental) - (Two papers) - 200 marks,

Group - 2 (Science)

Physics - (Two papers) - 200 marks,
Chemistry - (Two papers) - 200 marks,
Mathematics - (Two papers) - 200 marks,
Biology - (Two papers) - 200 marks,
Geography - (Two papers) - 200 marks,
Elements of Physiology and Hygiene - (Two papers) - 200 marks,
Elements of Home Science - (Two papers) - 200 marks,
Mechanics (only as an additional) - (Two papers) - 200 marks,
Psychology - (Two papers) - 200 marks,

200 marks allotted to each subject were distributed
in the following manner -

Theoretical - 150
Practical - 50
50 marks allotted to practical should be divided as follows -
Sessional work to be assessed internally - 20,
External Practical Examination - 30,
Internal test should include laboratory work and also practical tests to be held by the school including oral tests. There should be at least 4 practical tests during 3 years.

**Group - 3 (Technical)**

Students electing the Technical Group were required to study compulsorily:

(a) General Engineering, (b) Any two of the following subjects viz (i) Applied Maths, (ii) Physics and Chemistry, (iii) Elements of Mechanical and Electrical Engineering, (iv) Mechanics (Same as the Sc. Group), (5) Elements of Building construction, (6) A classical language (same as Humanities Group).

All students electing the Technical group should offer "Workshop Practice" under "Craft" from class IX onwards.

**Group - 4 (Commerce)**

Students selecting the commerce Group shall study -

(a) Elements of commerce including Business method and correspondence

(b) Economics and civics including Economic Geography as compulsory subjects, and also one of the following —

(1) Book-keeping and commercial Arithmetic.

(2) Shorthand and Typewriting.
(3) A classical language (Same as Humanities Group).

(4) Mathematics (Same as Humanities Group).

**Group - 5 (Agriculture)**

Any three subjects among the followings are to be offered-

(1) Element of Agronomy and Animal Husbandry,

(2) Physics and Chemistry (Same as in Group No. 3)

(3) Biology (Same as in Group No. 2)

(4) Mathematics (Same as in the Humanities Group)

**Group - 6 (Fine Arts)**

(a) Appreciation of Art Compulsorily and

(b) Any two of the following -

i) Drawing and Painting

ii) Modelling and sculpture

iii) Music - vocal

iv) Music - Instrumental

v) Dance

vi) Elements of Home Science (Same as Humanities Group)

vii) Classical Language (Same as Humanities Group).

**Group - 7 (Home Science)**

Students electing this group must study compulsorily all the subjects given below :-
Part - A

1. Paper - I  Household Management
   Paper - II  Textiles, clothing and Laundry.

Part - B

2. Paper - III  Food Nutrition and Cookery
   Paper - IV  Health and Home Nursing

Part - C

3. Paper - V  Mother Craft
   Paper - VI  Human Relationship

100 marks allotted to each paper were distributed in the following manner -

Theoretical  -  75
Practical    -  25

25 marks allotted to practical were to be divided as follows :-

a) Sessional work to be assessed internally - 10 marks
b) External Practical Examination - 15 marks,

There should be at least four internal Tests of sessional work during the period of three years. One laboratory Note Book should be maintained for each paper and marked by the teacher.

4. A Classical Language (Same as Humanities Group)
5. Music - Vocal (Same as Humanities Group)
6. Music - Instrumental (Same as Humanities Group)¹

Thus seven groups of optional courses have been offered. These groups would provide enough scope for full freedom of choice to pupils with different interests, aptitudes and talents.

This diversification of courses is very significant and useful. This course included both general and vocational subjects so that pupils should have an opportunity to choose from them according to their needs.

The course content of the School Final Examination which was running side by side was as follows :-

1. First language - 200
   (Two papers)
2. Second language - 200
   (Two papers)
3. General Science - 100
   (One paper)
4. Indian History - 100
   (One paper)
5. Geography - 100
   (One paper)
   or Social Studies in lieu of History & Geography
   (Two papers) - 200
6. Two elective subjects - 200
   (Two papers)
7. Additional - 100
In the list of elective subjects a third language like Sanskrit could be taken.

The language policy of the new structural pattern offered by the Secondary Education Commission (1953-54) was different from the earlier one. A great emphasis was given on the teaching of mother tongue, because it was the medium of expression for a child. He expressed his ideas and feelings through his mother tongue. Beside this it was the medium of instruction throughout the secondary stage. But teaching of mother tongue was included not only to help the students to acquire the capacity to read and write it and increase their vocabulary. Through the teaching of mother tongue a pupil should be trained in clear thinking and lucid and felicious self expression and in building literary appreciation. But in this case the quality of teaching should be improved. The traditional method of drilling into grammar and vocabulary should be abandoned and emphasis should be given on self expression in reading, writing and speech and development of habit of reading different books of high quality and literary works. But the whole thing depended on the teacher. Experience showed that the teachers did not take up the teaching of the mother tongue in that spirit. They followed the "Kill-joy drill" in grammar and vocabulary. Moreover, due to the heavy load of the elective subjects students could not devote sufficient time for the learning of their mother tongue. Rather it was neglected greatly because they thought it was easy for them and tried to manage to pass at the last moment. Hence it may be stated that the very purpose of emphasising the importance of mother tongue was frustrated.
As regards the teaching of other languages like English or Classical language or modern Indian languages the syllabus was so arranged by which a student was only able to read them with comprehension and ease, speak them correctly and express simple ideas and give easy descriptions in writing. But in practice more emphasis was given to the teaching of English because it was a foreign language.

In this period the question of language became a debatable one. India is a multilingual country. So with the end of the British rule different opinions were created regarding the place of various languages in the school-curriculum. Indian constitution dealt with the problem. The University Education Commission in 1949 also studied crucial and controversial issue of language. It emphasised the importance of regional language, Hindi and English. Then the Mudaliar Commission (1952-53) recommended two language formula. The B. J. Kher Committee (1956) also studied the problem but the Central Advisory Board of Education devised the well known "Three language Formula" in 1956. It was confirmed and officially approved by the conference of Chief Ministers in 1961. The Formula was (1) Mother tongue or Regional language, (2) Hindi in non-Hindi areas and Modern Indian Language in Hindi areas and (3) English. A heavy opposition to this formula created a turmoil in the country. West Bengal never emphasised the study of Hindi as a compulsory subject rather avoided it. The study of Hindi was made optional.
Another dispute was about the place of Sanskrit in the curriculum of secondary education. It was not included as a compulsory subject in the syllabus of Higher Secondary Examination. Upto class VIII it was treated as third language. But just after independence Sanskrit was a compulsory subject in the school final stage. Even during the British period Sanskrit was compulsory upto F.A. standard.\(^1\) Thus in the new curriculum Sanskrit was not allowed to enjoy even the status and facilities it had under the British Raj.\(^2\) The Government of India appointed a commission under the leadership of Dr. Suniti Kumar Chattopadhyay in 1956 to consider the place of Sanskrit in the education of the country. It recommended the rehabilitation of Sanskrit as it was the bedrock of Indian speech and literature and artistic and cultural heritage of the country. But it was not given that status in the new curriculum.

In the new curriculum a new subject called social studies was included. It was meant to cover the ground traditionally associated with History, Geography, Economics, Civics etc. It provided insight into social conditions and problems. The object of teaching the subject was to adjust the students to their social environment which includes the family, community, state and nation. Moreover the subject could develop among the students a sense of national patriotism, an appreciation of national heritage and a sense of world unity and world citizenship.

\(^1\) Dhyanesh Narayan Chakrabarty - *Jana Shiksha O Sanskrita*, pp. 5-6.
The subject Social studies was a new one in West Bengal. For this the West Bengal Government took an important step for the training of the subject teachers. The government invited Dr. Alan Griffin from OHIO University of U.S.A. in 1957 and 15 days' training programme in Social Studies was arranged in David Hare Training College. Teachers of different parts of West Bengal joined the programme. New books were written in the subject on the basis of the training like Samaj Parichay by Piyush Kanti Chatterjee for class IX and X and Samajbidyar Ruprekha by the same writer. But this training programme was not sufficient for thousand of teachers in West Bengal. More extensive programme of training should be undertaken for the successful teaching of the new subject.

In the new set-up General Science was also included as a core subject which was taught from VI to X. The aim of teaching the subject was to give basic understanding and appreciation of scientific phenomenon—biological and physical which would prepare the students for a fuller and complete life in the world of science. This was a very important step because there was streaming after class IX and those who, entered the stream other than science were deprived of learning basic knowledge of science but it was necessary for the effective living in the world of today. So its inclusion as a compulsory subject from class VI to X was quite justified. But the method of teaching was not scientific and so the purpose of inclusion of the subject was not fulfilled. Moreover, only dissemination of bookish knowledge in the classroom was not enough. The
environment around the students—school, home, his village, town or city offered rich resources and opportunities for science teaching and these should be utilised. But unfortunately the teachers mostly depended on books. It is a matter of shame that they did not even use charts, models and other relevant audio-visual aids. Except these the teachers were not properly trained. The teachers must have training of teaching science in the proper way. There were not sufficient number of qualified science teachers. In order to tackle the problem of shortage of qualified teachers different steps were needed to be taken by the Govt. such as:

(a) One year Hons. course for B.Sc. teachers, and

(b) One year special science teachership course both in content and method, should be introduced

(c) Short Refresher course during long vacations should be arranged.¹

In the new curriculum every student from class VI to VIII should take one craft. The idea of craft teaching was derived from Mahatma Gandhi's Basic Training Programme. The object of the inclusion of a craft in the curriculum was that every student should devote sometime to work with hands and learnt the dignity of labour and experienced the joy of doing constructive work. It had also an economic value. A student could attain proficiency in a particular craft and if necessary he could support himself by pursuing it. But the problem was that there was lack of efficient craft teachers. Special training programme was needed to be

¹ Bulletin of the West Bengal Headmasters' Association Vol-VIII., April 1959, PP. 15-16.
arranged. Craft teaching in training colleges for a limited period of ten months or one year was not enough to produce this type of teachers. Some sort of training was arranged which was not sufficient for the purpose. Moreover, there were not proper materials, equipments and teaching aids which could help the successful teaching of any craft. Beside these neither the teachers nor the students took it seriously as it was not included in the syllabus of Higher Secondary Examination.

The commission put great importance on guidance and counselling. The provision of diversified courses of instruction imposed on teachers and school administrators the additional responsibility of giving proper guidance to pupils in their choice of courses and careers. The student's talents and aptitudes must be identified while offering them a particular course. For this purpose the services of trained Guidance Officers and Career Masters should be made available to all educational institutions. As per this recommendation school Guidance Service began in West Bengal in 1957. Since then guidance was provided every year to about 10,000 pupils on the average.

West Bengal Board of Secondary Education by a circular (circular no. 9/60) gave instruction to all the Heads of all class XI schools to form a school Guidance Committee with the Headmaster as the Chairman, three representatives of teachers and three of guardians as members and the Career Master (Teacher Counsellor) as the Secretary. The main function of the committee should be to guide the students of

1 Bulletin of the Bureau of Educational and Psychological Research, Calcutta No-3, January 1972, P-10.
class VIII about the choice of stream they would offer on promotion to class IX and to meet the parents of pupils who were faced with special problems in regard to the choice of stream.\(^1\)

To make this guidance programme successful the Bureau of Educational and Psychological Research, Calcutta made arrangement for Career Master's Training course. Within 1973 the Bureau trained about 898 career masters and through these trained career masters the Bureau organised the school Guidance Programme in different Higher Secondary and Multipurpose schools of West Bengal. The Bureau also regularly supplied psychological Tests and other guidance tools and materials to existing career masters for allocating their students into different streams. By 1973 the tests were applied on about 12,365 school students.\(^2\)

Regarding Examination the commission made valuable recommendations. According to the commission there should be only one External Examination. But the system should be reformed. Objective Tests should be introduced to minimise the existing subjectivity.

Secondly, the commission gave emphasis on internal tests and maintenance of school records. The certificate awarded was to contain both the results of external examination and internal tests along with a gist of school records. Regarding the keeping of school records the commission suggested the maintainance of Cumulative Record

---

\(^1\) Headmasters' Manual, West Bengal Headmasters' Association, 1966, PP. 262-63.
Card. It is a record of a pupil's work done by him in the school from day to day, month to month, term to term, year to year. Regarding the system of evaluation the commission recommended the system of symbolic marking instead of numerical marking. The next important recommendation of the commission was the establishment of a Board of Secondary Education to lay down general principles and policies regarding secondary education and examination.

The West Bengal Board of Secondary Education took an earnest step to reform the prevailing examination system on the basis of the recommendations of the commission. The prevailing system of examination was full of defects. It was essay type test and subjective in nature. It gave undue weight to the power of verbal expression and encouraged cramming and it never helped intelligent understanding. The entire assessment mainly depended on the results of the external examination. There was no importance of internal examination.

The Board of Secondary education passed a circular on 27.6.58 (Circular No. 15/58). This emphasised the introduction of (1) Objective type test and short answer type questions in the examination. (2) Maintenance of Cumulative Record Card from class VI to IX. It gave clear notes on the maintenance of Cumulative Record Cards and preparation of objective tests. West Bengal Secondary Education Board prepared a sample card in collaboration with the Bureau of Educational and Psychological Research, David Hare Training College, Calcutta.¹

This card was distinguished from school Progress Report Card. Unlike the later it was not to be sent to the parents or guardians.

It was a confidential document maintained by the school, containing comprehensive information about the pupil, to be utilised for his education. Parents might be allowed access to it on special request or when it was felt this should be done for the benefit of the student.

The enclosed Record Card had provision for maintaining pupils' record for three years - one Record Card was to be introduced at class - VI and ran upto to class VIII; a fresh one had to be introduced at class IX and ran for the rest of the school years.

The class teacher who had the best familiarity with the class might maintain the record card. The card contained record of a pupil's health, co-curricular activities, interests (Linguistic, Scientific, Technical, Artistic, Musical, Agricultural, Commercial, Household work and Management and personality Traits). In the selection of stream after class VIII all these informations would help a lot.

The Board also compiled a handbook on objective Tests with sample questions in different subjects for different classes to give concrete guidance in the field. Moreover, it suggested that in the case of any difficulty in the construction of objective Tests or the maintenance of Cumulative Record Cards, the Bureau of Educational and Psychological Research, David Hare Training College, Calcutta should be consulted.
Another significant step taken by the Board was that much importance was given to the schools in the field of internal examination. The achievements of the students in the core subjects would be tested by the schools, 3rd language at the end of class VIII, craft at the end of class IX and the other three at the end of class X. At the end of class XI there should be an external examination which would deal with only the subjects excluding the core subjects. A pupil should not be sent up for the Higher Secondary Examination unless he passed in all these five core subjects. Schools should maintain necessary records of work done by the students in these five subjects. The Board might check the records from time to time. The mark-sheet issued to a student on the result of the Board's examination would also contain a record of his performance in subjects assessed internally, but the marks secured in these core subjects would not be counted towards the division.

The changes that West Bengal Board of Secondary Education wanted to introduce was of great utility. It laid importance on examinations - internal and external. The curriculum should not be examination oriented and there should not be dead weight of the examination because it curled the teachers' initiative, stereotyped the curriculum, promoted mechanical and lifeless methods of teaching, discouraged all spirit of experimentation and placed the stress on wrong or unimportant things in education. But it could not be denied that examination can not be totally discarded because it is necessary for both the parents and teachers to know from time to time how the pupils were
progressing and what their attainments were at any particular stage. It is equally necessary for society to assure itself that the students studying there were receiving the right type of education and attaining the expected standards. This kind of check up of the school work was essential in the interests of all concerned -- pupils, teachers, parents. Examinations were the usual means adopted for this purpose.

The inclusion of an external examination was also very significant. It had a stimulating effect both on the pupils and the teachers. In case of pupils it provided definite goal towards which he should strive and a stimulous urging him to attain that goal in a given time. It encouraged steady and constant effort on the part of the pupils. For a teacher too it was helpful to have a goal and stimulus without which he may lose precision and direction. External examination helped him to have an idea about the uniform and universal standard of the students of the same level. Finally, it helped a school to compare itself with other schools.

The introduction of Cumulative Record Card was wise enough. Neither the external examination nor the internal examination singly or together can give a correct and complete picture of a pupil's all-round progress at any particular stage. But it is very important to assess this in order to determine his future course of study or his future course of vocation. For this purpose this Cumulative Record Card is very important. This would indicate the work done by a pupil in the school from day to day, month to month, term to term and year to year. This school record presented
a clear and continuous statement of the attainments of the child in different intellectual pursuits throughout the successive stages of his education. It also contained a progressive evaluation of development in other directions such as the growth of his interests, aptitudes, personality traits, his social adjustments and the practical and social activities in which he took part. In other words it gave a complete picture of his school career. The card has the following uses -

(i) deciding promotion of pupils to the next higher grade,

(ii) taking special measures in regard to improving the health, educational attainments and personality development of a pupil when needed,

(iii) Helping pupils in the selection of courses. The card is the most comprehensive and dependable record about the pupil, which was very important in making any decision about him.

But in the practical field there was no major breakthrough from the traditional method. There was the same overemphasis on the external examination and the method of the external examination was not improved at an expected level. The nature of questions asked were traditional in many respects. They were oriented more to test the acquisition of knowledge than to develop the ability to apply knowledge and the ability to solve the problems. To make the policy of examination reform successful the competence of paper setters should be raised through an intensive
training programme sponsored by the State Boards.1 West Bengal Board of Secondary Education, started a movement for the training of the teachers to increase their efficiency to improve the nature of question papers. The Bureau of Educational and Psychological Research took an important part in this regard. But the programme was not enough for thousands of teachers in West Bengal.

Regarding the internal examination it can be said that it was not taken seriously. The maintainance of the Cumulative Record Card was not regular. Some eminent schools took all these programmes seriously. But most of the common schools took it casually.

The commission laid great importance on the quality and standard of teachers. But it emphasised that only teachers of quality and standard could not serve the purpose. The teachers need job satisfaction and job security. But during this period the teachers were very frustrated and discontent as their salaries and service conditions were not satisfactory which hampered their efficiency. The commission recommended (i) the review of the scales of pay of teachers and its improvement; (ii) the introduction of the scheme of pension and triple benefit, (iii) introduction of a uniform pattern of scale all over the country and (iv) provision of quarters through a system of co-operative Housing Societies, free medical relief and treatment, railway concessions, free education of children. It also emphasised the impartial appointment of teachers and the security of tenure of office.

---
1 H. S. Singh - School Education in India, P. 123.
In this field West Bengal Secondary education showed a very poor picture. There was no pay scale of the teachers of non-government Secondary Schools prior to 1948-49. The teachers were placed on a time-scale of pay in accordance with their qualifications and experience with effect from 1st March, 1948. After this the pay scales were revised different times. During this period All Bengal Teachers' Association came forward to fight for the cause of the secondary teachers and organised strong movement for improving the status of the teachers-both economic and social. The Government of West Bengal took initiative in this matter. Pay scales of the aided non-government Secondary School teachers were revised during the First Five Year Plan period with effect from 1st April, 1954. In 1958 the Government of West Bengal again improved the salary scales of teachers of secondary schools with effect from 1st March, 1957. Again in 1961 there was a great deal of excitement created by some school teachers with regard to pay-scales of teachers of non-government schools. The All Bengal Teachers' Association also took a leading part during this period and gave a deputation to the Chief Minister of West Bengal, Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy on 6th June, 1961. West Bengal Headmasters' Association also met the Cheif minister on the same issue. As a result an increased pay-scale was proposed by the government in 1961. An additional amount of 1.25 crores was required for meeting the improved pay scale. Thus during this period the scales of pay were revised different times such as in 1957, in 1962, in 1966 and in 1971. But the salary was not satisfactory or attractive (The
comparative pay scale chart, 1948 to 1998 in Chapter VI will prove it). As a result the teachers had to supplement their income by other means. In most cases it was private tuition which had a very unhealthy influence on the teaching-learning process.

Again there was disparity among the salaries and allowances of different kinds of schools. The teachers of many schools did not get their salaries in time and they had to depend on the Dearness Allowances. But they did not get the allowance at per with the government officials. This was the financial position of the teachers of non-government recognised secondary schools and 99% of the secondary schools were of this category. Beside this the teachers had no security of tenure. It was regulated by the sweet will of the managing committee.¹

Inspite of all these an important step was taken during this period to relieve the teachers from worries about the future of their family and that was the introduction of the pension scheme for the teaching and non-teaching staff of secondary schools.² The scheme was given effect from 1st April, 1966. So long these staffs were entitled to the benefits of the contributory provident fund. The employer's contribution was 6.1/4% of pay, the employees' contribution being also 6.1/4%. But on the basis of the recommendations of the Mudaliar commission the new scheme was introduced. Under the scheme the teachers and non-teaching staff were entitled to the following benefits:

¹ Bhabesh Moitra -- Shikha Prasange. P. 151.
(a) Contributory provident fund with employer's contribution @ 6.1/4% of pay and employees' contribution @ 4.1/6% of pay.

(b) Pension equal to 1/120 of the average of the past three years' employee's pay for every completed year of service (after ten completed years) up to a maximum of 30/120 of the pay.

(c) If an employee had less than ten years service he would be entitled to receive gratuity @ 1/2 month's pay for each completed year of service.

(d) If an employee died while in service after putting in service between 5 and 20 years, his family would be entitled to a gratuity @ 1/4th of one month's pay for each completed year of service subject to a minimum of Rs. 500.

(e) If an employee died while in service after completing twenty years' service his family would get a pension equal to half the pension admissible to the employee.¹

Regarding the age of retirement West Bengal Government declared that the age of superannuation of the employees of the recognised non-government secondary institutions should be 60 years (sixty). Thereafter the employees might be retained in service on extension until they attained the age of 65 years subject to the usual condition of physical fitness and mental alertness. The period of service rendered, on approved extension, after attainment of the age of superannuation should be considered as qualifying for pension. Thus on the basis of the

recommendations of the Secondary Education Commission the pattern of secondary education in West Bengal was reconstructed.

The experiment of the eleven year Higher Secondary Schools was not successful in West Bengal. In fact it was a failure throughout India. While implementing the whole plan several defects were apparent.

Firstly, the age of 13 or 14 at which the children had to opt for a particular stream commencing in class IX was too low for a sound judgement. Specialization should not be introduced till class X or the age of 16. But in the new structure a student was compelled to decide upon his future career at a very early stage. Dr. D. S. Kothari condemned it as a system of "child marriage".

Secondly, the experiment was costly in itself. The decision to convert the High Schools to Higher Secondary pattern created undesirable pressure. Even small rural High schools, which under the previous system would have been more efficient and economical as ten-class institutions, were upgraded to the higher secondary status and became both costly and less efficient. On the other hand it was found impossible to downgrade an Intermediate college to a Higher secondary school. So every Intermediate college had to be raised to the costlier degree level. Naturally the standard was not satisfactory.

Thirdly, when the scheme was initiated the salary scales of our teachers at the school stage was extremely poor.

Qualified persons were unwilling to join the schools because of lower salaries and lower status. They preferred to join more lucrative jobs rather than teaching.¹

Fourthly, the philosophy on which the pattern was based was ill conceived. The bias towards work introduced through the practical streams such as Technical, Agricultural, Commercial, Fine Arts and Home Science harmed the students. The concerned establishments would not employ them because they were not fully trained to do the work. The professional institutions also gave them no preference in admission because they wanted pupils who were strong in basic sciences and Mathematics. They claimed to teach the professional subjects in their institutions from the beginning.

Fifthly; the teachers were not properly trained to teach in the Higher Secondary classes. The new course was introduced in 1957 and the Multipurpose schools came into being but the training of the teachers started much later.

A number of High Schools were upgraded to the Higher Secondary pattern without any appreciable improvement in their accommodation and equipment and qualification of the staff. The Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) clearly pointed out that the schools which would be converted into Higher Secondary schools must fulfill some conditions before recognition. The conditions are:

a) Accommodation
b) Equipment

¹ P. D. Shukla -- Towards the New Patterns of Education in India. pp. 9-10.
c) Qualification of the staff

d) Adequate finances to ensure that the institution would continue to function efficiently.\(^1\)

But in West Bengal the recognition was not governed strictly. So the schools were not developed into efficient institutions capable of achieving the objectives in view.

Moreover, the recommendations of the two commissions (The University Education Commission, 1948 and the Secondary Education Commission appointed in 1952) were not implemented fully. As a result the defects in the arena of education persisted. As for example the secondary education commission, 1952-53 suggested the duration of four years Higher Secondary course but it was made only three years for lack of finance, accommodation, equipment and staff. But the standard of Higher Secondary course was that of the Intermediate stage.\(^2\) So addition of one year to higher secondary was not satisfactory for the course.

Again, in West Bengal, like other states, the total duration of secondary education was six years (three years of Middle schools and three years of Higher Secondary schools) The stage would cover the age group of 11 to 17. So the age in which a student entered the university or any other institution of higher education was 17. But in all the advanced countries of the world a student entering the university was expected to be eighteen years of age or more.


\(^2\) Curriculum and syllabus for the Higher Secondary Examination 1968-69. West Bengal Board of Secondary Education. P. 1.
It was only then that he could be adequately prepared for entering upon a course of higher education. This necessarily implies a total duration of at least 12 years for the school stage. But in the new pattern of Higher Secondary System the total duration was 11 years. So the students were not matured enough to enter higher education. It was not favourable for good education.

In this system adequate teaching of Science and Mathematics was neglected. General science and Elementary Mathematics were to be studied as core subjects. The achievement of the students in these core subjects were tested by the schools. Generally much importance was not given to these subjects. The students who offered any other course than science omitted Science and Mathematics. The net result was that a major portion of students were deprived of real education in those subjects. But adequate teaching of Science and Mathematics was essential in modern world which is based on science and technology.

In the eleven class structural pattern, seven groups of optional courses such as Science, Humanities, Technical, Commerce, Agriculture, Fine Arts and Home Science were offered. But in practice only two streams such as Science and Humanities flourished. Commerce and Technical group of courses were opened in some limited institutions but others did not flourish at all. The reasons were lack of proper avenues for future employment, lack of future course of study, lack of proper accommodation and equipment and lack of teaching personnel.
New pattern demanded high quality training of the teachers. For this the Mudaliar Commission suggested the modification of the Teacher's Training Programme. But the steps taken in this regard were not satisfactory. Moreover, what the teachers learnt during training period they could not apply after going back to their respective schools. The most important reason was the unwillingness on the part of the teachers themselves. Beside this lack of proper equipments and arrangements was also responsible. Only the syllabus and activities of Teacher's Training colleges were not sufficient to enable the teachers to teach in the new pattern efficiently. For professional growth and efficiency there should be adequate arrangements for in service training programmes during vacations through the organisation of refresher course, short intensive course, workshop, seminar and conference etc. The attempts taken in this regard were not satisfactory.

Thus the new pattern introduced on the basis of the recommendations of the Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) brought out serval changes in the field of secondary education in West Bengal. Unfortunately the changes gave birth to many new problems rather than solving the old one because of its different defects mentioned above. Moreover the recommendations dealt with Secondary education only. But a particular stage of education can not be developed in isolation. The need for a comprehensive study of all the stages of education was vitally necessary. The setting up of the Kothari Commission 1964-66 was essential for this purpose. The recommendations and its implementation in the field of secondary education of West Bengal has been dealt with in the next chapter.