CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF HIGHER SECONDARY EDUCATION
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Before we analyse and suggest to diagnose the problems of H.S. education in India, it will be most appropriate to know the background of the existing system and to understand how it has developed its various aspects. The idea of the present system of H.S. education first developed about seventy five years ago through the report of Calcutta University Commission of 1917-19 and moved round various other deliberations. The Commissions, Conferences and Meetings held from time to time recommended for restructuring of education at H.S. level are:

Saddler Commission (1917-19):

The Calcutta University Commission popularly known as Saddler Commission was the first Commission to suggest for making the duration of school education to twelve years and to put forth the idea of re-structuring of education in the shape of 10 4 2 3. The Commission recommended (i) The dividing line between the University and Secondary courses in more appropriately drawn at the
Intermediate Examination than at the Matriculation.

(ii) The duration of undergraduate course at the first degree should be increased to three years.

University Education Commission (1948-49):

The University Education Commission also known as Radhakrishnan Commission under the Chairmanship of Dr. S. Radhakrishnan examined the problem from all angles and recommended for adoption of a uniform pattern of 10 + 2 + 3 for the entire country. It further recommended that the Secondary Education should be vocationalized in order to divert students in different walks of life at the end of school stage with a view to reduce pressure on University admission.


The Secondary Education Commission popularly known as Mudalier Commission was the first introducer of the present system of H.S. education. In its report submitted in 1953 favoured the adoption of a common pattern for school and college classes. The Commission had recommended a pattern of 8 + 3 + 3 which means 8 years of middle school stage followed by 3 years of first degree course. The Intermediate course was therefore broken up into two parts and the first year was either
added to Higher Secondary and Multipurpose school or converted to Pre University/Pre-Degree course in colleges of one year duration and the second year was added to the two year undergraduate course for the first degree to create the three year degree course. The Secondary Education Commission or Muddaliar Commission on reviewing the existing system of education came to the conclusion that the single track system in which all pupils had to follow more or less similar courses did not meet the needs of all and therefore recommended the introduction of diversified courses in the H.S. and M.P. schools. This recommendation aimed to remove one of the major lacunas of our educational system.

The Government of India accepted one of the recommendations of the Commission that High Schools should be upgraded into Higher Secondary Schools by the extension of the high school course by one year. All the upgraded high schools were to be called the Higher Secondary schools but those Higher Secondary schools which provided in addition one or more of the practical courses were called Multipurpose Schools.

Planning Commission Panel (1960):

The Panel of Education constituted by the Planning Commission in 1960 recommended that, duration
of the school course should be 12 years and not 11 years so that the total span of education from Primary to Higher education should be 15 years \((12+3)\) instead of 14 years \((11+3)\) as it felt desirable that mature students of the age of 18 years should go to the University.

**Vice-Chancellor's Conference (1961):**

The third conference of Vice-Chancellors of Indian Universities in 1961 suggested that the period of school education should not be less than 12 years and the degree course should be for a period of three years.

**Central Advisory Board Of Education Meeting (1962):**

The 29th meeting of the Central Advisory Board of Education held in 1962, strongly favoured to have 15 years of education before going to the University. This 15 years of education consists of 12 years of school education up to the Higher Secondary level and 3 years of first degree course.
Kothari Commission (1964-66): 

The Education Commission (1964-66) popularly known as Kothari Commission also favoured a uniform pattern of 10 + 2 + 3. As per recommendation of the Mudaliar Commission, only 25 per cent of the total number of Secondary Schools in India were converted into Higher Secondary Schools by the end of the Third Five Year Plan, many of the conversions in the absence of or lack of necessary facilities in terms of teachers, libraries and laboratories being purely notional. The expected improvement in the re-organisational set up suggested by the Commission has not materialised. The Kothari Commission recommended the pattern of secondary education appropriate and relevant to the student's capacity and improvement. It has recommended against early specialisation. The Commission also accepted the popular demand that the duration of secondary education should be lengthened by one year. This view is similar to the views expressed by several bodies like the Calcutta University Commission (1917) which desired to draw the dividing line between the University and school education at the Intermediate examination and the Radhakrishnan Commission.

(1948) which recommended that students should be admitted to the University after 12 years of schooling. The new education structure suggested by Kothari Commission is as under -

(a) Starting at six plus, a child is to receive 10 years general education. This education is to be sub-divided into: a primary stage of 7 or 8 years (a lower primary stage of 4 or 5 years and a higher primary stage of 3 or 2 years); and a lower secondary stage of 3 or 2 years of general education or 1 to 3 years of vocational education.

(b) A higher secondary stage of two years of general education or one to three years of vocational education.

(c) A higher education stage of three years or more for the first degree followed by courses of varying duration for the second or research degrees.

The system of diversification of streaming from class IX as recommended by the Mudaliar Commission has abolished and the new higher secondary course of two years beginning in class XI is provided with special

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studies in different subject. The Kothari Commission suggested for transfer of Pre-University course of one year duration from colleges to H.S. schools by 1975-76 and the duration of H.S. education should be lengthened to two years by the end of 7th Plan i.e. 1985-86.

National Policy of Education (1968):

The scheme of vocationalization of secondary education recommended by Kothari Commission, 1968 was enshrined in the National Education Policy evolved by the government in 1968. At +2 stage, special emphasis has been given on vocationalization. Vocational stream is to provide students—education, training, experience and technical know-how useful for the lifstream. The objective of introducing vocational stream at the +2 stage is to remove gap between white and blue colour jobs by taking the students from education to work. Thus by vocationalization, they may get suitable jobs and help the nation in accelerating production and earning for livelihood.


The National Policy on Education (1988) has formulated to introduce a National System of education with a common educational structure for the whole country.
The 10 + 2 + 3 structure has now been accepted in all parts of the country including Assam. The objectives of the existing school education covering the + 2 stage of last two years has been re-drafted under the National Policy on Education (1986). The most important feature of the last two years of schooling known as plus two stage or senior secondary is diversification so as to avoid any compulsion on the students into single academic stream. It will provide an opportunity to the students to make choice of subjects and programmes of study according to their interests, abilities and aptitudes. It is further suggested that, out of the two streams available for the students at + 2 stage i.e. academic and vocational, the academic stream will cater for not more than 50 per cent of the students. The new policy of 1986 clearly recommended the + 2 stage or senior secondary education to be properly belongs to the school education and those institutions which are at present offering + 2 stage of education must transfer these classes to the schools.

The entire scheme and the pattern of 10 + 2 + 3 have been born out of the deliberations and discussions of numerous Committees, Conferences and Commissions during last forty years. This new pattern of education were finally approved by the National Council of Educational
Research and Training and in turn by the Government of India in 1975. The pattern also accepted by all the States and introduced in the State's Board of Secondary Education along with the Central Board of Secondary Education. For the first time, India is going to have one common uniform system of education introduced by the National Policy on Education (1986).

Prior to introduction of H.S. education, the +2 stage of education existed in the name of Intermediate education and was exclusively a part of collegiate education. Some modern thoughts on this stage of education were recommended by the Calcutta University Commission (1917-19). The historical background of Intermediate education in Assam indicates that, Assam was extremely backward both in respect of its standard and expansion. This stage of education first introduced in the Gauhati Seminary in 1866 and had to be discontinued after ten years of running due to poor achievement. However the course had been revived in 1901 and started in the Cotton College, established in that year. Since then the Intermediate education had been expanding with the increase in the number of colleges in the State. The Intermediate examination was conducted by the Calcutta University till establishment of Gauhati University in 1948. The system of two years Intermediate course as
Collegiate education had been continued till the last phase of First Five Year Plan. The 11 year H.S. education was introduced in Assam on the recommendations of the Mudaliar Commission during the last phase of First Five Year Plan. The pattern of 11 year H.S. education in Higher Secondary and Multi-purpose schools and one year Pre-University and Pre-Degree course in colleges as replacement of earlier Intermediate course had to be discontinued after the Kothari Commission's recommendation that diversification should start only after 10 years of core school education at 11 years of education. The administration of 11 year H.S. education was run by the Board of Secondary Education created in the State since its introduction and the Pre-University/Pre-Degree courses were run by the Gauhati and Dibrugarh University. But the most important recommendation that +2 education should be vocationalized, remained unimplemented. After discontinuation of the 11 year H.S. and one year Pre-University/Pre-Degree course, two years of H.S. education has introduced as per recommendation of the Kothari Commission. This two years H.S. education at the beginning ran both by the Board of Secondary Education and by Universities separately. Higher Secondary examination of H.S. schools was conducted by the Board and of colleges was conducted by Universities in their
respective jurisdictions. This has created a non-uniform standard of + 2 stage of education in the State. An uniform standard of H.S. education has come to the light only when the Assam Higher Secondary Education Council has created for conducting H.S. examination exclusively and regulation of this stage of education.

VOCATIONALIZATION:

One of the important aspects of H.S. education is diversification to vocationalization. The idea of diversification of Secondary Education first developed by the Indian Education Commission (1882-83). The Commission recommended that, in the upper classes of high schools there should be two divisions, one leading to the entrance examination of the Universities, the other of a more practical character, intended to fit youths for commercial or non-literary pursuits.3

The Government Resolution on Educational Policy (1913) made recommendations concerning the inclusion of subjects of industrial importance in the curriculum and provision of facilities to the students who

are desirous of prosecuting research work.

The Hartog Committee (1923-29) recommended for division of more boys to industrial and commercial careers at the end of the middle stage for which provision should be made by alternative courses in that stage preparatory to special instruction in technical and industrial schools. 5

In 1935, The Central Advisory Board recommended for appointment of a Committee to make recommendations for the re-organisation of education particularly on problems of vocational education and accordingly two experts Messers Abbot and Wood were invited to advise. The major recommendations of Abbot-Wood report (1936-37) as given in Chapter XIV of the report were -

(1) Every province should make a survey of the educational needs of its industries and commerce and thus determine the types of vocational education to be provided, the stage to which each type of school be carried and especially the number of recruits that can be absorbed annually. Until such a survey has been made, it is impossible to do more than prepare on educational framework into which vocational schools and courses of instruction can be fitted (Section 5).

(2) General and Vocational education are not essentially different branches, but the earlier and later phases of a continuous process. Each subject in the vocational school has its origin in the non-vocational school (Section 8-9).

(3) Vocational education is not a matter for the school alone, since it a specific and not a general preparation for employment. Industry and commerce must co-operate with educational organisation if the vocational education provided is to be appropriate and adequate. Organised co-operation of this kind does not yet exist in India (Section 10-23).

(4) The workers in commerce can be divided into (a) merchants and industries carrying on transaction on their own account (b) professional men engaged in the practice of banking, law, insurance etc. (c) clerical workers engaged in recording the transactions of others (Section 31).

(5) Effective machinery should be established for securing close and regular co-operation between industry and commerce, on the one hand and education on the other. This can be secured by the establishment in each province a Government Advisory Council for Vocational Education, which would include the Director of Public Instruction, the Director of Industries and two or three Principals of important vocational schools. On the side of business,
it would include four or five businessmen selected by the government on account of their knowledge and experience of particular branches of business and not because they represented special interests.

(6) Vocational education must be based on an adequate general education. The entrance standard should not as a rule, be below that reaches at the end of the middle school (Class VIII). Pupils who have reached this can be admitted to "Junior Vocational Schools". Pupils who have successfully completed the H.S. school course, can be admitted to "Senior Vocational Schools" (Sections 50, 51, 52).

(7) Full time vocational schools fall into three types:
(a) Those which impart a vocational bias to their curricula during the last year or two of school life.
(b) Those which prepare their pupils for work in an occupation to be selected at the end of the course from a range of related occupations. These are "Pre-apprenticeship" schools.
(c) Schools which prepare their pupils for a specified occupation - These are "Apprenticeship" schools and are sometimes known as "Trade Schools" (Section 55).

(8) Schools which impart a bias to their curriculum are usually preparing their pupils for commerce. It is
suggested that their general establishment in India should be postponed until the educational re-construction now proposed is approaching completion, but this suggestion does not apply to schools with a bias towards agriculture (Section 56,57).

(9) The Junior Vocational School receiving its pupils at the end of class VIII and providing a three year course would be parallel to the H.S. school and should be held in the same repute.

The Senior Vocational School receiving its pupils at the end of class X and providing a two year course, would be parallel to the existing "Intermediate Colleges" (Section 58,59,60,61).

(10) Part-time schools should be provided for the further education of young men already in employment and if possible, the classes should be held in the day time, the students being released by their employers for two half days a week in order that they might attend (Section 65).

The idea of vocationalization of secondary schools was developed in the report on re-organisation of education in this country prepared by the Central

Advisory Board of Education of the Government of India and contained in their report on post-war educational development in India. It is commonly known as the Surgent Plan (1944). According to the Plan, one of the essentials of a system of National Education is that the amount, type and location of technical, commercial and art education will necessarily be determined to a large extent by the requirements of industry and commerce. The Technical High Schools will provide training in the applied sciences and in industrial and commercial subjects. The subjects recommended for Technical High Schools are (1) The Mother Tongue (2) English (3) Modern Languages (4) History (Indian and World) (5) Geography (Indian and the World) (6) Mathematics (7) Physics (8) Chemistry (9) Biology (10) Economics (11) Technological Subjects (wood and metal work, elementary engineering, measured drawing etc.) (12) Commerce (Book Keeping, Short Hand Type Writing, Accountancy, Commercial Practice etc.) (13) Agriculture (14) Art 9 including designing for industrial and commercial purposes (15) Music and (16) Physical Training. For Girls High Schools, a choice is given of the above subjects together with Domestic Science.
for all at the appropriate stage.  

The problems of Secondary Education which the Government of India felt had sidetracked by the Commissions appointed in the past prior to 1952 to survey Indian Education needs to be re-organised with diversified courses. The Government of India accordingly appointed the Secondary Education Commission in 1952. The Commission had recommended the scheme of diversified courses of study for introduction in the H.S. and M.P. schools. It endeavours to provide for each individual pupil, suitable opportunity to use and develop his natural aptitude and inclination in the special course of studies chosen by him. The main advantages claimed for it are:

1. It removes all inviduous distinctions between students preparing for different courses of studies, breaking down the sense of inferiority that is associated with vocational subjects and makes it possible to plan the educational system on a truely democratic basis.

2. It provides a greater variety of educational media and thereby facilitates proper educational guidance in

the choice of studies.

3. It helps to solve the problem of wrongly classified pupil, because transfer within the same school is easier to arrange than transfer from one school to another.  

The system of education introduced by the Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) had been changed with adjustments to meet the progress of a modernizing democratic and socialistic society by the recommendations of the Education Commission (1964-66). The Commission recommended for vocationalization of Secondary Education to bring education into closer relationship with productivity and to increase the emphasis on agricultural and technological education at the University stage. The Education Commission (1964-66) also known as Kothari Commission recommended for extension of H.S. education to cover a period of two years and to be located extensively in schools. The main recommendation of the Kothari Commission on Vocational, Technical and Engineering education is that by 1986 some 20 per cent of all enrolments at the lower secondary level and some 50 per cent beyond class X should be in part-time or full-time

vocational and professional courses. The National Committee on $10+2+3$ Educational structure, 1973 recommended that the vocational stream at the H.S. stage should be taken to supplement the existing facilities for vocational education provided by ITIs, Polytechnics and Vocational Schools. The vocational stream provide specific job-oriented courses in one vocation carefully chosen out of the areas of work relating to agriculture, industry, trade and commerce, public services like secretariat, para-medical, insurance, banking, marketing education etc. The period of a particular vocational course may vary from 1 to 3 years depending upon the requirement of that course. The course content, including the training and practical work should be such as to equip the student well to get a job or to establish himself as a self-employed person depending upon his choice and circumstances. The particular vocational courses to be introduced in any institution of H.S. level should be locality-oriented. As such there cannot be a common list of courses for the whole country. It may even vary to some extent from region to region within the same State.

Committee also recommended for reorganisation and strengthening of the existing educational and vocational guidance service in educational institutions for effective vocationalization of H.S. education.10

The Curriculum Committee on Higher Secondary Education and its Vocationalization, 1976 prepared a document and spelled out details of implementing the scheme in the light of recommendations of UNESCO in 1974 on Technical and Vocational education. The UNESCO defined Technical and Vocational education as a 'comparative term embracing those aspects of the educational process involving in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related sciences and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge relating to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life. Such an education would be an integral part of general education and a means of preparing for an occupational field and an aspect of continuing education. Technical and Vocational education should further contribute to the achievement of society's goal of greater democratisation and social, cultural and economic development, while at the same time developing the

potential of the individual for active participation in the establishment and implementation of those goals. It should lead to an understanding of the scientific and technological aspects of contemporary civilization in such a way that was comprehend their environment and are capable of acting upon it, while taking a critical view of the social, political and environmental implications of scientific and technological change.\footnote{11}

In October, 1977, the Union Minister of Education appointed 'The National Review Committee on Higher Secondary Education' to review the Curriculum of the +2 stage of school education with special reference to vocationalization of education. The review was needed in the light of the document "Higher Secondary Education and Its Vocationalization" published by the NCERT in September, 1976, Report of the Ishwar Bhai Patel Committee (1978) on 10 Year School Curriculum and the formation of the Sixth Five Year Plan. The report of the National Review Committee on Higher Secondary Education entitled "Learning to do towards a learning and working society" submitted in February, 1976.
1978. Recommendations were given by the Committee on —

(1) The course pattern of (a) the general education course and (b) the vocational course.

(2) strategies for implementation.

The recommended pattern of the Vocational Course be as follows:

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<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Time allocation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Language (a)</td>
<td>15 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. General Foundation Course</td>
<td>15 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Elective Subjects</td>
<td>70 %</td>
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The Review Committee has recommended that all authorities now pause upon the further phase of the execution of the 4-2 stage and take time to review their programmes in the light of the guidelines set forth in the report before starting out on the next phase of the H.S. stage. It is also recommended that there be no rigid streaming of courses into the general education and vocationalized courses in accordance with the facilities available and the demands in the region.12

Emphasis has been given on vocationalization of H.S. education by the National Policy on Education, 1986. According to the policy statement, vocational education will be a distinct stream intended to prepare students for identified occupations spanning several areas of activity. These courses will ordinarily be provided after the secondary stage, but keeping the scheme flexible, they may also be made available after Class VIII. In the interests of integrating vocational education better with their facilities, the Industrial Training Institutes will also conform to the larger vocational pattern. To give practical shape to the views contained in the NPE, the "Programme of Action" gave clear cut target and other developmental details.

Vocational education stream was introduced in the H.S. and M.P. schools of Assam on the recommendations of the Mudaliar Commission during the last phase of the First Five Year Plan as 11-year H.S. education. The vocational course, though introduced, could not start in many H.S. schools even after expending huge amount in purchasing machineries and equipments, building construction and teachers training. The schools where this course started faced with problems with discouraged outcomes. Later on this course had to be discontinued after the Kothari Commission's recommendation that
diversification should start only after 10 years of core school education at 11 years of education. On recommendation of Kothari Commission, vocationalization was accepted in principle by the State of Assam along-with other 21 States and 9 Union Territories in 1978, as an important element of the National System of Education. As the first phase of vocationalization of H.S. education in Assam, 17 H.S. schools were selected for introduction of vocational course in 1983-84. But ultimately only 3 H.S. schools came up for the course and the last batch of students passed out in 1986 examination. This was implemented when the Board of Secondary Education, Assam was the academic controlling authority of H.S. courses. After the formation of Assam Higher Secondary Education Council, further progress has been made in expansion of vocationalization in H.S. schools. Upto 1990-91, 50 H.S. schools have opened vocational courses out of 371 such schools. Subjects selected are - Agriculture, Veterinary, Technology Engineering, Computer Science, Commerce. 13

During the period of study, a lot of improvements in H.S. education were made in the country as a whole and the State of Assam in particular through reforms, re-orientation and reorganisation in curriculum, examination system, teachers education etc.