CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Historiography and Survey of the Sources
INTRODUCTION:

The History of Karnataka is a complex one. It includes the survey of dynastic study, cultural impact, North Indian invasions and the rise and fall of the dynasties.

It is very difficult to get a clear picture of the state by studying the administration, social life, political life, cultural life of the people at this period of time.

This work examines the institutions of learning under the Vijayanagara State between A.D 1336 – 1565 that is from the foundation of the state to the battle of Talikota. The Aravidu dynasty is not considered as a very significant dynasty because the state had lost its Pre-eminence after the battle of Talikota.

The topic “Institutions of Learning and the Role of State in Medieval Karnataka – A case study of Vijayanagara between A.D 1336 to 1565” though an interesting one has received scant attention by the scholars. But it does not mean that it has been rejected as insignificant. Scholar’s like Mahalingum T.V., Venkataratnam A.V, Gururajachar S, have made an attempt to give some glimpses about the educational institutions of that period. There are many kannada works which throw some light on this aspect. But this topic has not been studied indepth so far. The reasons for this are many. Most of the scholars gave more importance to the political expansion and cultural contributions of the state. But at the same time the study of institutions of learning during the Vijayanagara time has not been given much importance.

The period between AD 1336-1565 saw the patronage of kings, queens, ministers and the rich to agraharas, ghatikas, brahmapuris, mathas and temples by making donations or by giving land grants.

There are several works to throw light on socio-cultural aspects. But less information is available about the educational institutions that existed during this period. Bearing this in mind I have decided to select this topic for my study.
AIM OF STUDY:

At one time the scope of history was just confined to the study of kings, wars, and their achievements. Now the study of cultural and social life is equally important, otherwise the study of history becomes lopsided.

Scholars have made the sociological study of a state or an empire by keeping education as the focal point. As far as Karnataka is concerned we have works like ‘Pracheena Kaladinda Kalyani Chalukya kalada varege’ by Prof. Pattar I. K, ‘History of Education in Karnataka upto AD 1800’ by Jevoor S. V., ‘Administration and social life under Vijayanagara’ part II by Mahalingam T. V ‘Social and Political life in the Vijayanagara Empire’ part II by Salettore B.A., ‘Karnataka Parampare’ vol II published by Kannada Mattu Samkrite Ilake which give little information about Vijayanagara Education. Salettore R. N’s, ‘Vijayanagara Art’ speaks about the fine arts, Salettore B. A’s, ‘Medieval Jainism’ with special reference to the Vijayanagara Empire will give us information about the patronage given to the agraharas and chaityalayas by kings, the rich, and ordinary people. Gopal B. R’s ‘Inscriptions of Vijayanagara’ vol. I & II is very useful to study the education system of this period. Based on these and also on the basis of the inscriptions this topic “Institutions of learning and the Role of State in Medieval Karnataka –A case study of Vijayanagara AD 1336 – 1565” is taken up for a detailed study.

Historiography and Survey of the Sources.

i. Survey of Sources:

The history of Vijayanagara is largely at the mercy of the epigraphical evidences as well as the secondary literary works. A number of inscriptions are available in the areas where the Vijayanagara State had its sway. But one thing is certain that many of the inscriptions are silent about educational institutions, and no direct reference to the nature of education is mentioned. Again we have got the literary
sources available in the form of books and travelers account. These make a passing reference here and there. This research topic attempts to collect the scattered sources and construct them into a coherent account of educational activities during this period.

There are good number of source materials available in the form of inscriptions, literature, chronicles and travelers accounts, modern works, articles in research journals etc. The work of Chidananda Murthy M. "Kannada Sasanagala Samskritika Adyayana" (AD 450-1150) give an insight into this topic regarding the methods to be followed in this area. Altekar A.S's "Education in Ancient India" is also another important work which provides a model to be followed in this respect. Apart from these we have some other works which provide some information on education during this period.¹

Review of Historiography

The scholars of this period have to deal with the epigraphical as well as literary sources which could be in the form of books, articles, and travelers account. There are a number of inscriptions belonging to this period. Before going to the original sources, it is important to consult the sources like Annual Reports of South Indian Epigraphy, Summaries of Inscriptions, Epigraphia Carnatica volume I to XVI, Karnataka Inscriptions, Historical Inscriptions of South India by Robert Sewell, 1932 and Laxminarayana Rao N’s South Indian Inscriptions (ed) etc. At the same time we have got the accounts of travelers like Barbosa, Abdur Razzak, Domingo Paes, Petro - Della Velle etc which are very useful in this respect. The folk songs and modern works also give a very good account in this respect. Since the Vijayanagara State was a complex one it covered the parts of Tamil Nadu, Andhra and many parts of Karnataka State. So we have to study the sources available in each region. Most historians seem to have by-passed these sources to explain the prevailing complex system of education during that period although passing reference on this topic are made by Mahalingum T.V, Venkatratnam A.V.
and Saletore B.A., but none of them seems to have tried to explain the prevailing system of education of that period in detail.

The present work is largely dependent upon the literary and inscriptive evidences. At the same time all available secondary works which are helpful for this study have been utilized from which substantial information regarding the educational activities of this period has been obtained.

Robert Sewell's 'Forgotten Empire' written by him in 1900 was the first monograph giving details of the political, social, economic life of this period. The book contains some of the impressions by the foreign travellers who visited Vijayanagara in its haydays such as Nuniz, Paes, Barbosa, Abdur Razzak etc. This was followed by works of scholars like Krishnaswamy Ayyenger, Nilakanta Sastri K. A, Venkataramanayya N, Mahalingum T. V., Rev. Fr. Henry Heras, Saletore B.A and others have been pioneering in respect to know the political fortunes of the Vijayanagara rulers and their subordinate chieftains, general economic and social conditions, art and architecture, and information regarding the education and learning activity during this period under study.

At the same time we have the inscriptive evidences available from the Epigraphica Carnatica Volumes (both old and new series), Epigraphia Indica, Tirumali Devastanam Temple Inscriptions (TDTI) etc. There are also Vidyaranya Aranya Inscriptions, A Topographic List of Inscriptions by Rangacharya R, Vijayanagara Inscriptions by Panchamukhi R.S, which is also very helpful to evolve an idea about the educational activities under different periods. We have also the Andra Inscriptions edited by Rama Rao giving information regarding the grants, donations and literary activities carried on in this part of the State by Vijayanagara Sovereigns. The South Indian Inscriptions also provide considerable information about the subject matter of this topic.

Mysore Archaeological Reports, Archaeological Survey of India, Archaeological Report of Indian Epigraphy, Annual Report of South Indian Epigraphy etc. contain
valuable information regarding the educational institutions, pattern of education, patronage to education and learning and literary activities during this period in different parts of the Vijayanagara State.

The Journals containing the scholarly articles also are very helpful to study the educational activities of this period. The important journals consulted are Quarterly Journal of Mythic Society, Journal of Indian History, Journal of Karnataka University, Journal of Bombay Branch of Royal Asiatic Society etc.

Secondary works like Altekar A. S.’s ‘Education in Ancient India’ and Mukarajee R.K’s ‘Ancient Indian Education’ are taken as the basis for this work. The other works referred are the books written by Chidananda Moorthy M, Swamy T.R., Gururajachar S., Diwakar R. R.’s ‘Karnataka Darshana’ and ‘Karnatakada Gatavaibhava’ Vijayanagara Sexcentenary Commemoration Volume by Hayavadana Rao C. etc.

The secondary works of most recent time are Venkataratnam A. V.’s ‘Local Government in Vijayanagara Empire’ is a very scholarly work containing information regarding the agraharas and their activities. Similar works of this nature like ‘Education in Medieval Karnataka’ by Jevoor S. V. and Karmakar A. P.’s ‘History of Medieval Karnataka’, Srinivas Murthy H. V.’s ‘History of Karnataka’, Basavaraj K. R.’s ‘History & Culture of Karnataka’ are very useful to have a first hand information regarding the education system in Karnataka in different periods. The more recent scholars like Burton stein’s ‘Peasant, State and Society in Medieval South India, A New Cambridge History of India – Vijayanagara, Filliozat Vasundara’s ‘ The Vijayanagara Empire ; as seen by Domingo Paes and Fernao Nuniz, Jyotsna Kamath’s ; ‘Karntakadha Shikshana Parampare’, Shivanna K. S’s ‘The Agrarian system of Karnataka 1336 –1761’ throw some light in this regard are consulted. Following these pioneering works a spate of specialised dissertations have appeared in recent years on many details.
An attempt is made to focus our attention on the old and new system of education, educational institutions and their functions. The present work tries to analyse whether education was religious or secular. A humble attempt is made to give an objective version about the education system without any bias or without any preconceived notions.

iii. The Scope of the Study:

The topic is divided into two parts. The first part traces the origin and growth of educational institutions, while the latter part explains their role in the educational development under Vijayanagara. It also covers the changes that took place in the education system in this period. A comprehensive study of the various education systems in different regions of the state is also attempted. The whole thesis is divided into seven chapters. The first chapter primarily deals with the educational setup and the institutions that imparted education in the Pre-Vijayanagara period. Since the Vijayanagara State continued the traditions of the Hoysalas it is necessary to have a specific look at the education system of the Hoysalas. At the same time it is also necessary to have a first hand knowledge about the various educational institutions in the early and Medieval India, their role in imparting education at various stages till the rise of the Vijayanagara State. With the disintegration of the Hoysala Dynasty there was a shift of emphasis towards other aspects such as politico- economic change. Hence an attempt is made here to highlight the reasons for the disintegration of some of the educational institutions of the earlier period and the emergence of a new system of education introduced during Vijayanagara period. It also deals with the meaning of education from ancient to the medieval period on the basis of the definitions given by the smrtikaras, scholars and historians. It also deals with the goal of education by moulding the character of students by inculcating in them socio-civic responsibilities.

The body of the thesis begins actually with Chapter II, the first being dedicated to a historiographical analysis of the available sources and Pre-Vijayanagara education system.
Vijayanagara had its own traditions. Even now we find the evidences here and there. Karnataka traditions had its influence on outsiders also residing temporarily in this land. The second chapter presents information about the religious and secular education that existed during the Vijayanagara period. Simultaneously with the political changes that took place the educational institutions began to divert their emphasis on some other aspects. So this chapter deals with the question of continuation of the existing educational institutions and also discontinuity of the traditions by the newly emerged Vijayanagara State. The agraharas, mathas and temples became more of an economic unit than a educational institution. Since temples, agraharas, mathas etc. were inhabited by the scholarly persons they continued to play their role as educational institutions in different ways. The new agraharas which came into being either because of the grant made by the kings or patronage shown by the rich continued to flourish as important educational centres. The different stages of education, from primary to higher education, the duration of the course, the agraharas, brahampuris, ghatikas, temples and mathas discharging different responsibilities as primary, secondary and higher education centres, the growth of these institutions with the philanthropic attitude of the Kings, Queens, Ministers and the common people are dealt with in this chapter.

Temples played an important part in imparting education. They employed scholars, musicians to expose the sacred literature and to learn the playing of different instruments of music and to perform other ceremonies. Some of the scholars were great religious exponents and experts in philosophic concepts. Free education from initial to higher learning was given in the schools attached to these temples. The education imparted in the agraharas, mathas, temples, chaityas, viharas, basadis and ghatikas were broad based either on religious or secular concepts. In many cases agraharas, mathas, temples playing their role in disseminating religious education, whereas chaityas, viharas, basadis were imparting secular education. This does not mean that there was no secular study in the
agraharas, mathas and temples but religious study was given more importance than secular study.

This chapter tries to analyse the position of the existing agraharas, mathas, temples, chaityas, viharas, basadis and ghatikas and their role in imparting both religious and secular education. With the founding of the Vijayanagara State new agraharas appeared. The Mahajanas looked after the administration of the agraharas. So an attempt is made to give a graphic picture of the new agraharas, their functions with a special reference to the educational activities of these agraharas.

The father in the family himself was a teacher in the initial stage. In many occasions we find children learning the profession of their fathers at home itself. This has been brought under this chapter. In the initial stage the students were asked to write on the sand.

Education of the period was divided into initial secondary and higher. Temples had sanskrit patashalas attached to them. Mathas attached to these temples were also centres of learning serving the same purpose. The importance of secondary education is highlighted here because it was an important stage at which the line of profession to be taken up by the student was decided. Higher education was not just like that of the present day. Mastery of sanskrit language was considered a great achievement. An attempt is made to study in detail the various stages of education.

Another point discussed in this chapter is the role of different virashaiva mathas and their influence on education. The role of Kalamukhas, Pashupatas in spreading education is discussed. The mathadhipatis resembled the head of residential missionary institutions of education. They gave a set back to the jaina, vaishnava institutions. Innumerable disciples of virakta mathas went door to door to preach their faith.

To popularise education Vyasaraya made use of music and composed songs both in sanskrit and as well as in kannada. It gradually led to the rise of a new era.
called the *Dasa Movement* which later became a popular means to educate the people without having to go to school or other institutions. This chapter tries to bring out the significance of the Dasa Movement.6

Chapter III seeks to examine the role played by the sages, kings, poets, dasas and virashaiva Saints. It attempts at examining the role of persons in enriching the literary knowledge of the people. It also highlights on their works.

The Vijayanagara State was established at the instance of Vidyaranya, the guru of Sringeri Matha, who later became the guru of the monarchs. The rulers after founding the state established a matha at Sringeri to show their reverence and gratitude to the guru. Since Sringeri Matha was acting as a seat of learning in these days and Vidyaranya's affinity with the founding of the State, special attention is paid on the role of Vidyaranya and the other gurus of the Sringeri Matha.

Since many of the ruling sovereigns were the partons of education and literature and the preservers of the 'Purvada Maryada' by giving munificent grants, Sringeri continued to flourish under the royal patronage of the kings till its downfall. That is why it is important to have the study of the sages, or gurus of Sringeri Matha and their role in imparting education.

One cannot forget the role played by the kings of Vijayanagara State. They were the backbone of education by making liberal grants and donations to the educational institutions of the period. In many cases we find kings of Vijayanagara as great scholars and literary personalities. The most prominent among them are Devaraya, Bukka I, Devaraya II, Krishnadevaraya, Ramaraya and others. One cannot forget the role played by Krishnadevaraya in enriching the literary knowledge of the period by his patronage besides being a scholar himself. For this reason he was called the 'Andhra Bhoja'. So this chapter deals with the kings and their works and contributions to education and learning.

The Vijayanagara Court was filled with literary personalities. This was possible because of the encouragement given by the kings of Vijayanagara to scholarly
persons. That brought many scholarly persons from different parts of South India to this state. If we take the reign of Krishnadevaraya we find a series of names of the scholarly persons. That is why some of the important poets and literary personalities are studied to find out:

1. The background which made them so famous and towering personalities?
2. What was the educational background?
3. Who were their teachers?
4. Which was the centre of Education?
5. What was the type of education?
6. To which religious faith they belonged?
7. Which religion had great influence on them? etc.

Hence, this chapter brings out the contributions made by these scholars to enrich the literary knowledge of the people.

We hear of Dasakuta and Vyasakuta and their popular means of communication through padas and keertanas. In this chapter two persons namely Purandara and Kanaka are studied. It also analyse the contribution of these two dasas to education.

The birth of Virasaiva Movement revolutionised the whole education system itself. It brought about changes in the social structure. The downtroddens were not allowed to take up education. Moreover it was very difficult for the ordinary people to understand the sanskrit language. So lingayats and virasaivas came forward to teach education in simple vernaculars. An attempt is made to study the role played by the Virasaiva scholars in the field of education.

Chapter IV deals with the structure of education. This chapter deals with various aspects like educational finance and patronage, curriculum of education, evaluation method, teaching aids, duration of the course etc.
The Rayas of Vijayanagara gave liberal donations to education and they never made any discrimination between one religion and the other. Krishnadevaraya had so much regard for scholars that he himself bore the palanquin of the great scholar Peddana. He encouraged finearts, like music and dancing. As a mark of respect for the benevolence shown by the king Laxminarayana, the teacher of dramas dedicated ‘Sangeeta Suryodaya’ to the King. Harihara II made nearly sixteen gifts to agraharas and won the title ‘Karnataka Vidya Vilasa’. Even his ministers like Mudda Dandanatha established an agrahara. The kings never felt tired of listening to the learned persons. They liked the company of learned persons.

Because of the encouragement learned men took more interest in expanding their knowledge and the number of learned persons increased in numbers. Although the government was not directly encouraging education, it did something by keeping a portion of the revenue for the purpose of education. As most of the schools were found in temple premises the schools received this benefit. Rules and regulations were formed to safeguard the interest of these institutions and persons engaged in imparting education.

We have evidences available showing the growth of education under the patronage of various kings, ministers and rich people. An attempt is made to analyse the role of these persons in the field of education. What were the subjects taught is another point to be studied. That is why an attempt is made to bring out the curriculum of education.

The curriculum of education included the study of Vedas, vedangas, sixtyfour vidyas. The qualification and duties performed by the brahmin teachers are focused upon with brief details of the subjects taught in the schools by them. An attempt is made to focus the attention on the different methods of teachings, on the evaluation system, materials used, duration of the course etc.

To show the gradual change over in the method of education and teaching, teacher - student relationship are also discussed to make it clear whether it was commercial or otherwise. In the Vijayanagara State there were some professional
classes pursuing their caste professions. That is why professional classes and their activities are discussed. Since education enlightens a person and broadens the horizons of knowledge some changes are expected. So this point is also discussed here in this chapter.

Chapter V deals with technical education and fine arts. Under technical education apprenticeship with type of education, duration, the areas of its influence on the class structure are discussed. This chapter also deals with fine arts like, music, drama etc. Emphasis is laid more on the learning process and not on the art. Similarly in the temple building, use of similar type of stones, methodology, depiction of the theme on the temple walls will speak more about the teachers who taught them. The works in the field of medical science like *Khagendramani Darpana, Ashwasstra, Supa Sastra* will give us an idea about the development of medical science during the period. It also deals with the professional guilds, shilpa shikshana, vastu shikshana, painting and general science etc.

In the concluding part of this work a brief survey is made about education under the Vijayanagara Chieftains. Vijayanagara lost its importance in the year AD 1565 after the battle of Talikota. It was a death blow to the State. In this way we find the gradual disintegration of the State on the prevailing situation. Definitely we find the birth of new dynasties and chieftains. It is very important to know whether education system continued to be as before or not. That is why a brief survey is made on the education system under the feudatory chieftains with a special reference to Nayakas of Keladi. The advent of the Europeans and its impact on education are also discussed in this chapter. Hence the present work therefore is an attempt to understand the education system in the country in the pre-modern South India.
## FOOT-NOTES

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