

# Educational Research in India : Quality and its Development

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## ABSTRACT

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The future of any country largely depends on education which in turn was decided by the quality of research and its development in education as it helps in laying policies and planning of implementation. Educational research is a complex activity and deeply rooted into science and philosophy of science. Its quality and application determined the development of any nation. So it was felt necessary to evaluate the quality of educational researches. In this article author has tried to lay emphasis on quality of educational research and its development.

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## INTRODUCTION

Since time immemorial man is trying his best to solve the problems, which are arising in his way out of his situational compulsions. Different solution provided by different civilizations to come out of their limitations constitute the entire body of mans knowledge. Research is a systematic attempt to tackle or to solve the real or hypothetical problems, which may become impediment in the path of progress and well being. Archaeology of knowledge is nothing but the treasury of these attempts of knowing which were made in the entire course of the history of mankind. The sources from which we obtain knowledge may be reliable or unreliable. The knowledge which is based on assumptions, beliefs, and untested generalizations may not to be reliable. Unreliable knowledge is also accepted in a society because of faith, tradition or authority. Reliable knowledge is created through scientific investigations. The structure of knowledge in a field of study may be characterized by its issues, its methods, its key concepts, its substantive generalizations and its applications.

Research has contributed much more in changing man's material conditions of living and quality of life. It has greatly extended mental horizon of civilization since the dawn of history. It has provided better techniques of production to meet the ever multiplying demands of the society. It opens new vistas and provided better alternatives. Every meaningful research contributes much for the improvement of conditions of living and quality of life to some extent. It is one of the most valuable contributions towards the upliftment of the humanity.

In India huge amount of capital is being invested after independence for research activities because it was felt by nation builders that research is a sin-guenon for the development of the society.

Despite all activities which are being performed in the name of research may not be meaningful research performance at all. This may be a valid remark, particularly for educational researches.

The university education commission (1949) complained that "there is not much systematic research in education going to India." The secondary education commission (1953) stressed that a training college should in essence be not merely a college for training teachers but an institution for research work in all aspects of pedagogy."

It was remarked in Indian education commission (1966) that "Educational research is still in its infancy. Its quantity is small and it's quality, mediocre or poor at the M.Ed level. The programme has been weak in methodology and has suffered further because only those students who have done the B. T. or M.Ed. class be admitted to it."

It was observed by Buch and Yadava (1974) that "Educational research in India has yet to attain maturity. In the name of academic freedom one cannot be allowed to undertake educational research on an unplanned basis anymore. A developing country cannot afford to have the luxury of research for the sake of research."

It was remarked by Buch and Govinda (1987) that "The review of research in India has yet to attain in the field of education does not reveal a very satisfactory position. This is particularly true with respect to a number of studies undertaken in the dual disciplinary area related to sociology and psychology. It is important to realize that mere inclusion and socio- economic status or attitude or value as a variable in the study of a sample of students belonging to a school or a college makes study neither sociological nor educational.

Education in general and education researches in particular occupy an important role in improving the quality of educational system of any country. Our present educational system is a contribution of a colonial and alien British educational system.

Science has provided a rational basis for conducting researches and creating knowledge. But the questions of vital importance in this connection whether the researches carried out in these educational institutions are really a piece of research work of worth to be investigated. The main considerations in the mind of present researcher when he opted to conduct a research on researches carried out in educational institutions were to test whether the findings of the research are conducive to our experience and the methods adapted by the researcher to arrive at conclusions are valid.

After independence some minor changes have been made following the experience of other nations also. Research in the premise of educational institutions is of recent origin. It is mostly concerned with research training programmes leading to a Ph.D. or higher degree which has same educational and social worth. A doctoral thesis is supposed to be a significant contribution to the entire body of knowledge. But this may not always be true in the case of researchers carried out in Indian University.

The proposed problem was concerned with educational researches. Educational researches are being carried out for a long but still their usefulness is a debatable question in the minds of many.

A general review of educational research was presented by Buch and Govinda (1987) and they found following weakness in educational researches which are being carried out in Indian University:-

### **A. Absence of Appropriate Theoretical Framework:**

Appropriate theoretical frame work is not being adopted for conducting researches. According to them, "A perusal of studies reveal that while formulating specific research questions, the approach, in many cases, has been adhoc and arbitrary. The researchers have shown total disregard for any conceptual basis in choosing variables of studies and tools and techniques for obtaining the relevant data."

### **B. Selection of Research Topic:**

Research problems in India in education should be formulated after considering the demand of the discipline as well as the practical relevance. But these aspects are being neglected in educational researches.

### **C. Methodological short Comings:**

Methodology of educational research plays a crucial role in determining the quality of research in education. But the picture of Ph.D level researches which are being carried out in this country is presented in the following words. "a major weakness of educational research in India is it's overdependence on the use of questionnaire and test following the typical Anglo-American tradition"

**D. Analytical Procedures:-** The importance of the scientific treatment of data cannot be denied in any scientific investigation. But, "the educational researches in India seems to have become a mainly means-centered activity rather than a problem-centered one with quantification as the reason d'être of the whole endeavor. But Indian research literature is full of instance of inaptitude procedures in processing the data.

**Development of Education Research in India-** The Indian Education Commission, 1964-66, in its report said the following about educational research: "Educational Research is still in its infancy. Its quantity is small and its quality mediocre or poor. This is due to several reasons. Most of the research is confined to training colleges which have very inadequate facilities for research and few competent people to guide it. In the absence of specialized institutions doing research on their own, the bulk of research comes to be done by students for the university degrees-M, Ed. and Ph.D. The M.Ed. dissertations hardly deserve to be called research, although they have a useful place as an exercise in training the students in research techniques. At the Ph.D. level, the programme has been weak in methodology and has suffered further because only those students who have done the B.T. or the M.Ed. can be admitted to it. There are very few scholarships available for research students in education. Again, a good deal of the research done so far has been in the field of mental testing and other fields have received but little attention. Ancillary services lie documentation, computation, consultation, etc. have not been developed. The country does not have a single journal devoted to educational research. No central clearing house has been created and there has been considerable duplication of work. Even the little research that has been done has largely remained in the archives and administration has not used its findings for formulation of policies. The total expenditure on educational research-estimated as less than half a million rupees a year-has been negligible."

In India the origin of Educational Research is very recent. Development of educational research, organization of special institutions. and provision of special courses in this field is almost a post- independence feature. Compared to most of the other countries, educational research in our country is still in its infancy.

For a proper understanding of educational research in India, an outline of the historical background of educational reform in the country may be useful. To quote D.T. Chitranjivi, "One may trace back the earliest beginnings of educational research in India to the first decade of this century when Baroda introduced compulsory elementary education throughout the State in 1906 and Hyderabad experimented in University Education through Urdu. At the close of World War I many Universities began to organize programmes for rapid development of Indian education. Tagore was the forerunner of the new spirit of synthesis in the East and West in Vishwa Bharati. The Jamia Millia Islamia, the Banaras Hindu University and the Muslim University at Aligarh followed suit. The Calcutta University Commission of 1916 changed a good deal of both the content and organization of Secondary and University Education. The Montfort Reform of 1919 aided the new features. In the sphere of Elementary Education, Mahatma Gandhi introduced the Basis Scheme- formerly known as the Wardha Scheme. Immediately after the Declaration of Independence, two Commissions were appointed by the Government of India-one for University Education and the other for Secondary Education. Both the Commission have recommended research-intensive as well as extensive-with regard to important educational issues."

The Report of the University Education Commission published in 1949 pointed out that till then not much systematic research in education was being carried on in India. It classified the three main agencies of educational research functioning however unsatisfactorily in the country as below:

1. Some Universities which provided M.Ed. courses. They required a piece of original work in educational research which was found "small and scrappy" and of not much value in the strict sense, yet good enough to start with.
2. The Staff of some training Colleges or Departments which was engaged seriously in original work-sometimes of high quality- but isolated due to the lack of inter-university planning.
3. Some centers for advanced work in Education and Educational Psychology like the Central Pedagogical Institute, Allahabad, Education Department, University of Patna, and the Central Institute of Education, Delhi

Since the publication of the University Commission Report and the First Conference of Training Colleges in India, educational research in India seems to have become increasingly popular with the Indian universities, and to have gained a very great impetus from the Central and State Governments. Prof. T.K.N. Menon, writing in 1955 about research in education in Indian universities reported as follows:

"A good number of the Universities in India have in recent years approved of courses leading to the Master's Degree in Education. One of the requirements for the award of the degree is that the candidate for the degree should do a certain amount of research in education. This research may be of two types viz. 1) research on a topic leading to a thesis in which case the candidate is not required to specialize in any other subject and to appear at any other examination, 2) research in a topic leading to a dissertation which needs to be supplemented by three or four papers in which the candidate will be examined.... The difference between the research done at the thesis and dissertation levels varies in the nature of the topics chosen, the intensity and depth of research done, and consequently in its quality. Provision of course for the Master's Degree in Education by dissertation and papers is much more frequent in Indian Universities than that by thesis.

"Whether it be for preparing a thesis, or for writing a dissertation, the amount of research done by candidate in our Universities is very impressive in quantity. If only the quantity could be accompanied by some standard in quality the research would be of tremendous consequence to the solution of the large number of problems in Indian education.

To encourage students of merit to carry out research in important problems of Indian Education, substantial financial help has been given in the form of scholarships and fellowships by the Government, the Universities and the University Grants Commission. Many persons in the teaching profession and many institutions have benefited from financial aids from several foreign agencies and schemes, of these mention might be made of the Ford Foundation the British Council the Institute of Education, London, the Commonwealth Student Exchange Programme the UNESCO Exchange of Persons Programme, Colombo Plan United States Agency for International Development and the U.S. Department of Health, Education and welfare, to mention only a few. Since 1951, the Ford Foundation has been assisting India in her programmes of advancement on many fronts. Expansion of educational research had been directly affected by an international team of experts sent by the Ford Foundation to study the problems of secondary education in other countries of the world with regard to the training of teachers and the curricula of secondary schools. Moreover, it is in co-operation with the Ford Foundation that the Ministry has not only been able to set up some institutions of educational research but also to support some projects in secondary and rural education.

The contributions of UNESCO in promoting educational research in our country have also been significant. It has spied us with experts, finances and equipment in many areas and activities of educational research. 'Men, money, and materials are flowing into India to assist our educational efforts. Many educational seminars and research projects have been possible in recent years because of the aid from UNESCO. The UNESCO Coupon Scheme has made it possible for India to benefit by setting the necessary equipment for the advancement of educational research, educational literature, instructional materials and films. The contribution of the Central Government to the promotion of educational research has been made in other way too. Improving and extending the facilities provided by the Central Educational Library and the starting of Educational Abstracting Services since September 1955, a Quarterly Bulletin entitled the Indian Education Abstracts have been of real help to educational research workers. The Documentation Services, Central Secretariat Library, Ministry of Education have recently started publishing Bi-monthly Abstract of Foreign Educational Literature and the Indian Education Index-a monthly subject index to a selected list of Educational Periodicals published in India. These have proved to be of great value as guides to educational literature for research workers.

A project to compile a Union List of Educational Periodicals is already on its way and bibliographical information for about 2500 theses and dissertations submitted to various Indian Universities has been collected by the Ministry of Education. A list of these theses has already been published by the National Council of Educational Research and Training. Another list of theses (2941 in number) for the period 1962-66 has been brought out by NCERT in mimeographed form in 1968. Abstracts for about 600 of these studies are ready for publication and more are being prepared. A register of Educational Research in India published in the Literature Notes abstracts several these on education. Bibliographies on various subjects of Education-science education in elementary and secondary etc. have been prepared.

The major organizations and depositaries of Educational Research functioning in India have been and are the following:

1. The Central Institute of Education, New Delhi, founded on 1947 to act not only a teacher-training institution but also as a research centre for solving problems of the country.
2. The Central Bureau of Textbook Research was started as separate Research Bureau of the Ministry of Education in 1954 and was later made department of the Central Institute of Education.

3. The Central Bureau of Educational and Vocational Guidance was set up as a separate agency under the Ministry of Education in 1954, for servicing, training and research in counselling and guidance.
4. The National Institute of Basic Education, New Delhi, established in 1956, undertook a number of major projects in the area of basic education and brought out many useful publications.
5. The National Fundamental Education Centre started in 1956, has been concerned with adult education and social education including literacy. It has conducted a number of training courses and has completed some valuable research projects.
6. The national Institute of Audio-Visual Education was earlier engaged in normative survey of the merits of certain projected aids and in some experimental work in its laboratory.
7. National Council of Education Research and Training was established by the Government of India on September 1 ' 1961 as an autonomous organization. It aims at promotion of systematic research and progress in education in the country. Its purpose is to conduct educational research, to train educational personal at an advance level and to carry on related extension and field services.

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