

## I N T R O D U C T I O N

A gale sweeps the education system. Mighty changes takes place. Well-enshrined customs are thrown out; new practices come in. The gale is not just a destroyer. It acts as a life giving gentle wind too. This is the gale of innovation.

The School of Today differs vastly from the School of Yesterday. No longer are its precincts confined to a few. The doors are open. Universalisation of primary education enables children from homes denied education for centuries peep into the school. The standard textbooks and traditional teaching methods drive them away. An innovation - Comprehensive Access to Primary Education - is born to keep them at School. Minimum Learning Continuum - another innovation, based on Bloom's Mastery Level Concept - ensures basic education to the millions.

The Secondary Schools see many changes, curricular or otherwise. Modern Mathematics and New Science prepare the students for the technological age they will be living in. Language teaching undergoes a sea-change, thanks to the innovation, English Language Teaching Campaign. The boys and girls in their smart uniforms - an innovation makes the community provide them - do, see, listen and learn.

The dichotomy between the educational objectives and the national objectives disappear. The objectives of education conform to the national objectives. A new pattern of education - ten plus two plus three - emerges. Vocationa-  
lisation of the plus two course attempts at a revolution, giving meaning to education and succour to the learner.

A radio in a school was a luxury three decades ago. An innovation has resulted in every primary school in Tamilnadu. possess one. Some have a Two-in-One too. Most secondary schools own a wide range of audio visual equipments, from filmstrip projectors to television sets, from tape recorders to overhead projectors. 8mm, 16mm, 35mm - no strange words any longer.

The financing of education ensures democracy in practice. An innovation encourages the local community to provide the basic amenities to the school. The government has taken on its shoulders the responsibility to pay the teachers in all schools and colleges. Education is totally free upto twelfth standard. Public schools have come up in every nook and corner. Where there was no primary school two decades back is a higher secondary school.

Schools without Walls, - Correspondence education, the Open University, private appearance at Public examinations, Non-formal education and the like- break new grounds. There is no age bar to learning. One who missed education in his early life has it in his forties, fifties.

Sweeping changes - undreamt of - innovations of far reaching nature govern the school of today. Innovations invade schools. Are all of them the best of the alternatives worthwhile, desirable and essential? How do some innovations succeed? Why do some others fail? Who are the actors in this drama of change? Do innovations fail or do people fail the innovation?

The present investigation attempts at a study of these and many other questions relating to innovation and change and tries to find answers. The study confines itself to select innovations at Secondary level in Tamilnadu.

"Two roads diverged in a wood,  
I, and I, chose the one less travelled by,  
That, and that, made all the difference".

- Robert Frost.