A CRITICAL EXPLORATION OF SCHOOL EDUCATION POLICY, USING FOUCAULTIAN GENEALOGY AND DISCOURSE ANALYSIS, WITH REGARDS TO THE CONSTRUCTION *OF THE STUDENT* AS A PARTICULAR FORM OF SUBJECTIVITY IN GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS IN TAMILNADU', INDIA.

Lydia Harrell,
Doctoral Candidate, AUT University, Faculty of Culture and Society, School of Education, North Shore Campus, 90 Akoranga Drive, Northcote, Auckland 0627, Newzealand.

ABSTRACT

The research aims to critically analyse the discourses that are evident in the state run schools in TamilNadu, India which affect the construction of student subjectivities, through the use of Foucaultian genealogy and discourse analysis. The schools in TamilNadu (TN) have been classified into three types, the state run schools, private schools and the International schools. The research methods chapter will explain the process of Foucauldian discourse analysis that will be employed in the research which involves data selection and data analysis. Data selection explains the five most important sources of data that will be critically examined in this research which includes school education policy documents, survey reports, major government initiatives, and media sources which will be studied in relation to one another. Data analysis uses genealogy to document the historical conditions that tell us about the ideas that construct the current school education policies in TamilNadu, India. Foucault's concepts of discourse analysis and genealogy, which will be used in the analysis of data, will also be discussed. The chapter also covers the concepts of crystallisation; reflexivity and rigour which are important in text based research and also identifies some limitations of the chosen research design. Based on reviewing the documents, the prominent links between the contemporary discourses and the historical discourses with regard to the government schools in TN are identified.

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Research Questions:

1. What discourses are evident in the functioning of government schools in TamilNadu, India which affect the construction of student subjectivity?

2. What does a genealogical account of the development of these discourses tell us about the ideas that currently influence these policies?

Rationale and Significance of Study:

At every level, education is primarily concerned with the formation of student subjects. The Education system of India has made considerable progress in terms of increasing primary education attendance rate and expanding literacy to approximately three fourths of the population (NCERT, 2012). According to the World Bank report, 2013, this improved educational system has been a building block for the economic and national development of the nation in the recent years. However, the school education system in India is an exam oriented system which establishes a strong focus on technical education and values science, and mathematics as core subjects that every primary and secondary student must study. This raises the question of what kind of people the system wants their students to become and how do the policies and practices of the system contribute to their formation. This corresponds with the Foucauldian view of the school as a disciplinary block which produces 'subjected and practised bodies, "docile" bodies (Foucault, 1991, p 138). The results of learning scenario surveys conducted by the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) to evaluate education systems worldwide ranks Indian class 10 children 73rd in the world out of 74 countries (PISA report-OECD, 2012). One of the major future challenges for this exam oriented Indian education system is to provide the kind of high skilled, creative and adaptable workers who display the complex 21st century skills - a challenge which is difficult to meet with the school education system that is followed currently given that India sets high academic standards but at the same time inhibits innovation and self-learning. Innovation and optimum learner achievement is seen by some as being stifled by current policies and practices, including discipline, control, assessment and curriculum, which favour compliance over imagination, innovation or critical thinking (ASER report, 2013; SSA, 2010).

On the positive side, India has emerged as an important player in the worldwide information technology revolution, producing a large number of computing graduates and engineers. This phenomenon should be attributed to the rigorous training in related curricular areas offered in schools and colleges. But when India's educational progress is analysed from an international perspective, it is reported that it lags behind the BRIC economies particularly

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China in secondary school participation, youth literacy, learner achievement and teacher absenteeism signalling poor quality of schooling in the Government schools. (Kingdon, 2007; Kremer et al, 2005). This gap has given rise to a massive growth of private schooling especially in the urban areas which raises questions about the growing inequality in educational opportunities. This inequality both derives from and contributes to different forms of student subjectivity as fostered in different forms of schooling. In this research, TamilNadu one of the major states of India will be used as a case study of this larger systemic problem.

TamilNadu (TN), a southern state of India is one of the most literate states in the country with a literacy rate of 80.33% which is well above the national average of 74% (Census of India, 2011). The state has been ranked at the top amongst other Indian states for having the best school enrolment figures with a Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of 100% in primary and upper primary education in a survey conducted by the Industry body Assocham (India Edunews, 2008). TN is the seventh most populous state in India with the population of 74 million people and almost 50% of the population are below the age of 24 (Census of India, 2011). The state has a total of 53, 772 schools out of which 70% (34, 180) are primary schools and private schools according to the official statistics account for 34.37% which is 18, 907 schools. (Govt of TN, 2013).The school education systems can be seen as arbitrarily disciplining the students to meet particular ends, and one of the most expected culmination point is the production of good, or obedient and useful student subjects.

Any education system in the world has a significant place in the development of a modern nation state. According to Foucault (1971), education is a crucial instrument whereby every individual in the society gains access to any kind of discourse. Education systems are referred to as constituting doctrinal groups by Foucault as they teach an entire generation, what is acceptable in the society and what is considered wrong. Most countries have a single education system for all its citizens and hence they create uniformity in the outlook and thought within the society and the children who graduate from these systems share the same world view and become similar kind of subjects and have access to similar kind of opportunities (Nisar, 2010).The school education system followed in Indian states can be considered quite distinctive in this way as there are different types of schools governed by various curriculum bodies and the students passing out from these systems have diverse perceptions and objectives of an ideal subject to be and access to different kinds of opportunities.

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The schools of the Education system of TamilNadu can be classified into three main types, the government run state board schools; the private schools which can be recognised or unrecognised, mostly affiliated to either the Matriculation, Anglo-Indian, or the CBSE (Central Board of Secondary Education) boards, and the elite International schools affiliated to the ICSE (Indian Certificate of Secondary Education), International Baccalaureate Programme (IB) or the Cambridge International Examinations (CIE). All these systems are products of different historical evolution processes and have different philosophies or approaches to education. These different systems are characterised by differences in curriculum, pedagogical style, disciplinary techniques and normalising tendencies which lead to distinct concepts of student subjectivity and crafting of identity among students.

The objectives of the school education policies established by the Government of TamilNadu are focussed on expanding elementary education to small village hamlets, so that at every kilometre, there is an elementary school which provides education free of cost. The other objectives of the Government include providing free mid-day meals; to improve the basic amenities in schools; to eradicate literacy; to provide free and compulsory education for all children aged 6-14 (and many others), where the emphasis is on increasing numbers. However despite universalising elementary education in government schools, the attendance and retention rate of students is low, secondary school enrolment rates are low, as almost 50% of the children drop out after their elementary education owing to poverty and a range of factors. According to a survey conducted by India's largest educational NGO Pratham, learner achievement levels were seriously low at these government schools especially at secondary level (ASER Report, 2007).Teacher absenteeism is an another significant issue in the government schools, and the state of TamilNadu has reported a teacher absenteeism rate of 21.3% in a survey conducted from unannounced visits to government run primary school sites by Kremer and his associates (Kremer et al, 2004). The survey also stated that only half of the teachers who were present were engaged in teaching during those visits and another significant finding was that higher pay was not associated with lower absence rate, in fact, evidence suggests that head teachers and senior, more educated teachers who were paid more were more frequently absent. Hence the poorly resourced government schools which suffer from teacher absenteeism and low learner achievement levels might have led to rapid growth of private schools (unaided) especially in the urban areas.

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There is very limited research and literature available on learner achievement data, the link between student achievement and teacher characteristics and also very limited literature examining the relative effectiveness of private and public schooling in India. Nevertheless, some learner achievement tests were conducted by researchers (ASER reports 2005-2014; Kingdon,, 2007) in small samples of schools in the major states of India namely TamilNadu, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. These results reported that the private school students significantly outperformed their public school counterparts in learner achievement measured in terms of reading and arithmetic skills. This is attributed to a more rigorous syllabus in private schools when compared with the syllabus of the state run schools. It is important to note that the students in private schools come from mostly middle class and upper middle class families. Most of the private schools in TN are affiliated to the matriculation and Anglo-Indian boards, and follow the tougher syllabus set by their respective curriculum boards until class 10 (secondary school) but change to relatively easier state board syllabus in class 11 and 12 (Higher secondary school) which is the common syllabus followed in all government schools. This demonstrates the inequality and lack of fairness in the system which relates to the technologies (or to use Foucault's term '*techne'*) at play to create particular kind of student subjects. By enrolling as a student, the individual is placed in the relations of power inherent in the technologies of domination, which are exercised over the body and its powers and capacities, and 'are concerned with defining and controlling the conduct of individuals, submitting them through the exercise of power to certain ends so as to lead useful, docile and practical lives' (Marshall, 1989).

A major public education initiative known as the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) which means 'Education for all' is a flagship scheme introduced by the central government in 2004(Mahapatra, 2009). The broad aim of this scheme is to provide useful and relevant elementary education to all children in the age group of 6 to 14 and to provide elementary education of satisfactory quality with emphasis on education for life. SSA has introduced Activity Based Learning (ABL) or joyful learning in the state run elementary schools all over TN in which self-learning of children is facilitated by the teacher through a series of activities (Mahapatra, 2009). This programme emerged from an investigation of the current classroom practices that lead to low achievement levels of students which concluded that teacher dominated learning, learning through rote memorisation, lack of self-learning and group learning opportunities, traditional modes of assessments, failure to meet the learning needs of different kinds of learners, lack of interesting learning activities and such other factors contributed to low learner achievement levels (SSA, 2010). The ABL approach was found to

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be effective and the average achievement of elementary school children increased significantly although there were few problems in the implementation of the approach (Mahapatra, 2009). However, ABL is only implemented in state run elementary schools, as these students progress into middle schools, again the pedagogy becomes teacher centred, learning is through rote memorisation and exams become the only mode of assessment (Ashita, 2013). In the process of producing compliant, docile or good student subjects, exams are considered to be the most stringent of all disciplinary practices in which power and knowledge come together in a particularly potent and visible way. Foucault describes this procedure as follows; "It is a normalising gaze, a surveillance that makes it possible to qualify, to classify and to punish. It establishes over individuals a visibility through which one differentiates them and judges them" (Foucault, 1991, p. 184).

The British Raj introduced the state run education system in India. The new education policy established by Macaulay in India by 1835 was considered the most far reaching single measure in the whole of nineteenth century in imperial India, as without this, the present Indian nation, we know today could not have existed. Foucauldian discourse analysis will uncover the extent of the influence of Macaulay's system still operational in the current discourse. Debates about the relevance, utility and effects of the discipline and control methods followed in schools in TN include claims that current teaching methods lead to the constitution of compliant or docile subjects who do not resist the dominant political culture of the nation which is evident in recent media discussions. (Times of India, 2013; News Indian Express 2013; Contemporary TN debate, 2012). The research therefore aims to shed substantive light on this issue by the use of Foucault's discourse analysis which may be expected to identify both historical reasons, and contemporary reasons, for using these pedagogic strategies. By identifying the key concepts which drive these policies and practices (in the form of unthought assumptions), the research will provide some material that makes it easier for those who are anxious to challenge existing practices and policies based on inappropriate concepts. By exploring the notions of the student-as-subject, power relations, discipline and resistance, the dominative and normalising tendencies within the TN school education policies and practices will be illustrated in the research so that these tendencies may be resisted and challenged by staff and students alike in the future. The approach of discourse analysis used in the research will help bring out practices and experiences that may not be apparent when using other research methods, it provides an opportunity for identifying oppressive practises prevailing in TN schools and facilitating more enabling ones. The effects of the discourse analysis done in the study can then be examined to question how these

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prevailing, taken for granted, practices or truths, that exists in the Tamil Nadu school educational set- up might have been different.

Research Method and Methodology:

This thesis will use a qualitative research design as it enables the researcher to be interpretive and creative with their analysis (Gubrium & Holstein, 2001). The main objective of social research is to uncover, understand and communicate the "truth" of situations. The chosen methodology is Discourse Analysis developed by Foucault. The Foucauldian Discourse Analysis has evolved into a critical analysis and in this form has become a much used philosophical, theoretical and methodological approach which facilitates an examination of the existing, taken for granted, practices or truths by tracing relevant points in their history (also referred as genealogy) that have made it possible to think and act in particular ways (Foucault, 1975). Discourse Analysis asserts that there is no truth or reality, which exists are multiple truths in any situation and it reveals how over time discourses shape and influence the position from which we view reality (Cheek, 2000). It provides a lens to examine the current discourses that circulate in the school education policies of TamilNadu, India with regard to government schools and allows for the examination of the notions of student subjectivity embedded in those discourses. The origins of discourse are always historical and hence the genealogical approach is a significant part of the analysis of discourse. Hence there is an inbuilt inclination to emancipation in this form of genealogy because it impels us to ask, why are things like they are and not otherwise? " . This chapter covers the methodological process of data selection, data analysis and the ethical aspects of crystallisation, reflexivity and trustworthiness along with the limitations of research.

1. **Overview of the methodology:**

Discourses are defined as the spoken or written practises or visual representations which characterise a topic, an era or a cultural practise (Grbich, 2012). Discourse is everything we see and do; it includes practices, speech and text. Discourse constructs our reality and is how we interpret phenomenon within our reality. This concept of discourse developed by Foucault moves away from the idea that discourses are primarily related to language and speech to the notion that it is something broader. Foucault suggests that a discourse consists of a set of common assumptions which although, may be taken for granted so much as to be invisible, provides the basis for conscious knowledge (Cheek, 1999). Discourses enable us to

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understand the modern experience and how the phenomena we take for granted came into being (Parker, 2002). Foucault went on to describe discourses as practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak (Foucault, 1972). By identifying the discourses and discursive practises of the school education policies of TamilNadu, the knowledge, subjectivities and power relations incorporated into these systems can be brought out.

Foucault felt that to analyse a discourse in the present, it had to be looked at in its historical context. While historical analysis is a view about the past, Foucault's analysis of history typically begins with the perception that something is wrong in the present and discourses develop because of the social and cultural conditions prevalent at that particular time period (Foucault, 1972). The perception of my research is that, the current practises of discipline and control followed in most schools of TN favour compliance over imagination and critical thinking, hence putting the Indian graduates at a disadvantage in the global labour market which requires creative and adaptable workers.

The focus of this thesis is to identify the constructions of particular forms of student subjectivity that are evident in discourses of the school education policies of TamilNadu, India and its relationship with the elements of discourse examined by the use of the genealogical approach by Foucault. Foucauldian discourse analysis is a critical approach that uses historical and political tracking of discourse over time and the conceptual notion of power for interpretation (Grbich, 2012). Foucault suggests that once a discourse has been established, it disperses throughout the society. The metaphor of the body is used by Foucault to represent the society which shows discourses filtering through the arterial and the venous systems of the populace and then being fed back in a cyclical process through the capillaries enabling maintenance and reinforcement. According to Foucault, power is a key aspect of discourse and the technologies of power include disciplinary power (legal system) maintained through normalisation of discourses, surveillance and monitoring and enforced by the law and the judiciary system (Grbich, 2012).

Focault's work on discourse analysis considered how historically and culturally located systems of power / knowledge construct subjects and their worlds, emphasising the concept of power in specific human contexts (Gubrium and Holstein, 2001). There are other themes of Foucault's view of discourse that are significant to this research. These include how discourses are located and exist within particular moments in history and that a given discourse will be replaced by another at a later time in history. Foucault's view also asserted that knowledge or meaning of the existing practises/ truths is created within and by the discourse. Foucault claimed that subjects such as madness, punishment and sexuality exist meaningfully within the discourses about them (Hall, 1997). This view would similarly be

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true for the topic to be studied in this thesis. Through the contemporary discourses and genealogical study knowledge or meaning from the current set of school educational policies in TN and the notions of construction of student subjectivity embedded in those policies will become apparent from within the discourses about them.

2. Data Selection:

Discourse Analysis is different from other research methods because of how the research is located philosophically with the focus being on theoretical underpinnings. The method that is used to differentiate discourses from one another is by examining the patterns in language use and use of dominant phrases in contemporary and historical documents. This methodology seeks to identify connections between language and other elements in social life suggesting that language helps create reality and there is no single social truth to be discovered (Wetherell, Taylor & Yates, 2001). In this research, the analysis will be confined to the discourses that are constructed rather than the people who produced the talk or the documents.

According to Powers (1996), the process of Foucauldian discourse analysis involves a careful reading of the entire body of text and commentary in relation to one another, in order to interpret patterns, rules, assumptions, contradictions, silences, consequences, implications and inconsistencies. A discursive analysis of texts needs to be critical and reflexive which aims to situate the text in their social, cultural, political and historical framework (Cheek, 1999).It is important to specify the most important texts and other organised work that will be explored in this research and the criteria of selection.

The first set of data that will be studied are the school education policy documents of the state of TamilNadu for the last 3 years which has been published by the department of school education of TamilNadu. Along with this reports on Performance and Statistical Information of the department of school education and the welfare schemes introduced by the present government of TN which are published in the Government website will be studied.

The second data source that will be examined are the national citizen led learner achievement survey reports called as the Annual Status of Education Reports (ASER) designed and conducted by India's largest educational NGO, Pratham. This assessment differs from most other large scale learning assessments as they are household surveys rather than school based sampling conducted every year since 2005 in every rural district of India reaching more than 600, 000 children annually. The reports present the findings of the surveys in a simple and

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elaborate format along with notes and articles by education experts analysing the reasons for the present situation and on ways to improve the learning outcomes.

The third source of data that will be studied include documents pertaining to the major public education initiatives introduced by the Central government in the last 10 years like the Sarva Shiksa Abhiyan (SSA) , RTE (Right to Education) 2009 Act, TamilNadu Right to Free and Compulsory Education (RFCE) 2011. In addition to this, the District Information System of Education (DISE) reports conducted by the National University of Education Planning and Administration is a reliable system of statistics of school education during the last two decades which provides the basis for assessing the progress under SSA and the status of implementation of the RTE act will also be critically examined.

The fourth data source that will be studied includes media sources such as contemporary debates on education and reforms both in national and regional television shows; panel discussions and transcription of speeches by education experts; relevant media articles in the newspapers like The Hindu, The Indian Express, The Deccan Chronicle and Times of India.

These materials have been selected for the study as they present a range of perspectives on the current discourses that influence the construction of particular forms of student subjectivities in the schools of TamilNadu. A variety of survey reports on learner achievements conducted by both the Government and private Organisations are used to avoid bias and identify the most important discourses. The media sources are selected to identify the most recent topics that have been discussed and debated which would provide a clear representation of the merits and demerits of the current educational policies and practices.

3. Data Analysis:

Data analysis will involve a thematic analysis of the discourse which emphasises on the organisation and rich description of the data set which helps in identifying implicit and explicit ideas with the data collected by coding important moments in the data. The analysis uses a genealogy to document the historical conditions that tell us about the ideas that construct the current school education policies in TamilNadu, India. . In this study, data analysis starts soon after the first set of data is collected as the selection and analysis of future data depends on the information which emerges from the analysis of the existing data which is referred to as explanation building. (Strauss and Corbin, 1990)

The most important themes of Foucault that will be used in the analysis of discourses identified in this research will include genealogy, the subject, power which includes

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disciplinary power, and governmentality. These themes and how they will be linked to this particular research will be briefly discussed.

3.1 Genealogy:

A significant component of Foucault's discourse analysis is the concept of genealogy which forms a substantial part of this research. This is based on the acknowledged notion that the meaning, practices and ideas that we take for granted are a result of a complex, long history which one is generally unaware of. This history has been shaped by various beliefs and understanding of knowledge through the different ages of mankind. This research will focus on the history of the contemporary school education policies prevalent in the state of TamilNadu, India with an emphasis on colonial rule as the present school education system followed in India is a product of the British colonisation. Foucault described the importance of genealogy as the

"… .history of ideas sets out to cross the boundaries of existing disciplines, to deal with them from the outside, and to reinterpret them. Rather than a marginal domain, then, it constitutes a style of analysis, a putting into perspective" (Foucault, 1972, p. 137).

According to Willig (2001), the genealogical/ historical approach which examines the way discourses change over time and how they influence the subjects' position is an important part of Foucault's understanding of discourse. When discourse is viewed as a historical object in itself rather than as a knowledge or discipline, its gives rise to different debates and new ideas. Hence discourses can be viewed as 'a transformable unit of history' that creates a history of ideas (McHoul & Grace, 1993).

Foucault's objective in conducting a genealogical study was to understand the present and how it has evolved from the past rather than to just understand the past (Rabinbow, 1984). Power (2001) notes that while much of the history tries to show that where we are is inevitable, Foucault aimed to demonstrate that the past has ordered things in a different way and that processes which lead to our present practices and institutions were by no means inevitable. Our attitudes, behaviour and understanding have been influenced by discourses located within larger historical and theoretical discourses which were originally imposed to reinforce and maintain power (GrBich, 1999). In his genealogical study, Foucault developed a theory of power/knowledge with a strong belief that this approach will uncover and disclose discursive practices which have resulted in the current power practices.

This research uses a genealogical approach which is included in the literature review which traces the history of the different kinds of schools in TamilNadu, with a belief that it will

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uncover the discursive practices that has led to the current educational and pedagogic policies followed in the state.

3.2 The subject:

According to Foucault, his goal in the last decade has been to create a history of the different ways in which human beings have been made subjects (Foucault, 2000c). He stipulates that the relations of power had a significant impact on the human experience of subjectivity. The term 'subject' was used by Foucault in two ways: one where an individual is made a subject through control and dependence and the other in which an individual is made a subject by his or her own conscience or self-awareness. This research will focus on the former where a human subject is created as an effect of power, discipline and control methods. The practises that are apparent in government and private schools in India create compliant subjects and this research will focus on how the construction of a particular form of student subject is made possible.

3.3 Power:

Foucault noted that describing power relations and their influence in day to day practices was a significant part of his main objective of creating a history of how human beings were made subjects (Foucault, 2000c). Foucault's theory of disciplinary power will be used in this research as it is an inherent part of the Indian education system.

Foucault by adopting a genealogical approach demonstrated his social criticism in *Discipline and Punish* where he described how techniques and institutions developed for various, often non disciplinary purposes were combined in order to create the modern system of disciplinary power with schools, factories and hospitals all modelled on the modern prison. In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault identified three main techniques of modern social control as 'hierarchical observation', 'normalising judgement' and 'the examination'. Through 'hierarchical observation,' control can be exercised through the observation of the population. This practice was modelled on Bentham's prison of Panapticon where inmates divided by opaque walls were observed at all times by a centrally situated monitor without the inmate knowing which cell was observed at any given moment or even whether the monitoring station was occupied. The point of the Panapticon was that inmates behaved as if they were being watched at all times as they never knew whether they were being watched or not. Foucault transferred this idea of internal monitoring or surveillance to a large society which created a chain of observers, hierarchically ordered through which control was created and maintained (Foucault, 1991).

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The second concept of normalising judgement is considered to be the foundation of the modern idea of disciplinary power according to Foucault where all those who do wrong or break the rules in the society are considered abnormal and ill and in need of a cure rather than being considered illegal that must be punished. Foucault's third technique 'the examination' represents that power and knowledge are both inseparable ideas. This concept differs from the Baconian argument that knowledge is an instrument of power and the two concepts coexist independent of each other. For instance, a school student subjected to an examination is made to control his behaviour, forced to study; his conformity is measured to the systemic rules. His results are judged which establishes the truth of his state of knowledge by comparing his results with the national standards. According to Foucault, this knowledge is used by the predominant power structure to exert control and form the basis of the categories, norms and averages used by the societal power institutions to structure, stratify and legitimise the knowledge used for further normalising judgement. (Foucault, 1991).

Thus these subtle disciplines become a technique of institutions such as schools, hospitals and military establishments that then disperse to other areas of the society creating power relations between the state and its subjects (Foucault, 1979). In this way, "discipline 'makes' individuals; it is the specific technique of a power that regards individuals both as objects and as instruments of its exercise" (Foucault, 1979, p.170). The background of these techniques which were used to create and maintain societal control put forth by Foucault in *Discipline and Punish* clearly suggests that the Foucauldian school of Discourse Analysis is specifically interested in the relationship between discourses and institutions. This concept that power or knowledge could be expressed through discourse, led Foucault to think how the behaviour or conduct of people is regulated by the use of particular techniques. (Hall et al, 2001). Foucault attempted to explain how within discourse, knowledge is created, is given an authority of truth, and acquires power to establish its truth. This knowledge is then used to govern people through rules, regulations and other disciplinary processes.

3.4 Governmentality:

Foucault used the term 'Governmentality' to describe the way, governing powers operate in a particular era (Foucault, 2000a). This explains how the states started using tactics/ techniques instead of laws to control, administer and direct the entire population to obtain production services from it (Foucault, 2000a). These tactics and techniques of the government were exercised through the development of an administrative state where bureaucracies were created that addressed the various aspects of the society such as demographics, public health care, education, housing and others. These bureaucracies developed the state's knowledge allowing new forms of tactics and techniques to emerge (Foucault, 2000a). Governmentality

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was also defined as being 'conduct of conducts' by Foucault, where the behaviour and conduct of both individuals and groups were influenced and directed by the government through political or economic tactics and subjection (Foucault, 2000c). The above concept of power is used in the research which aims to study how people's conduct were directed and controlled through the tactics and techniques of the state to establish and maintain power, domination and inequality in the society.

4. <u>Ethical considerations:</u>

Crystallisation: It is the phenomenon which should be employed to achieve validity and reliability when doing text based research. Crystallisation deconstructs the traditional idea of validity by using the concept that there is no single truth (Denzin & Lincoln, 2001). It is important to examine the texts that will be studies in this research as crystals which could be turned in many ways, revealing multiple layers of meanings and these meanings can be refracted and reflected helping to uncover hidden assumptions and perceived truths.

Reflexivity: According to most researchers, with Foucauldian discourse analysis, achieving neutrality is impossible unlike traditional research as the researcher and the researcher cannot be meaningfully separated (Wetherell, Taylor and Yates, 2001). However, reflexivity is the process of reflecting critically on the self as a researcher, consciously experiencing the self as a inquirer and receiver of information. The concept of reflexivity asserts that my position as a researcher is central and visible (Parker, 1992).During analysing texts, it is important to be self-aware and take a back seat and observe and question my own behaviour and understand how my experiences and presence might influence my findings. Hence self-awareness is incorporated into the write up and involves constantly questioning and evaluating the claims that are made rather than presenting them as statements of truth.

Rigour: This establishes that a researcher needs to trust worthy and open minded. It is important to be honest, complete and consistent using the chosen procedure for drawing inferences, making claims and for supporting interpretations (Wetherell, Taylor and Yates, 2001).

5. Limitation of the chosen research design

It is important to be aware of the limitations and the criticisms of the adopted research approach so as to address them adequately. The most important criticism of this approach is its incapacity or very limited capacity to do anything much beyond recording the dominance of powerful discourses unless action research is undertaken to reinstitute the ideas that have emanated from the research (Grbrich, 2012). Another drawback of the Foucauldian discourse

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analysis is that it is not a systematic analysis and there are more chances for the political analysis to be derived or shaped or used to further the researcher's political interests. According to Wodak & Meyer (2009), another limitation of the Discourse Analysis is that it mostly does not adequately recognise the dynamic and multiple natures of individuals and their different interpretations.

Research Findings:

1. **The Government Run education system- State board schools:**

The state board schools which constitute 60% of the country's schools are funded by the respective state governments where education is provided free of cost and the medium of instruction is in the local language (UNICEF, 2012). According to official recorded data, the state government schools should be the largest provider of education. However research has claimed that due to the poor quality of public education provided in terms of high teacher to pupil ratio, huge dropout rates, and shortage of infrastructure, there is a tendency of parents even with very low incomes to send their children to private schools with hope for better opportunities (Kingdon, 2007). A research report conducted among government school teachers notes that they send their own children to private schools because of English medium of instruction and better education as they feel that the government school teachers were occupied with a lot of paperwork and non-teaching duties most of the time (Ramachandran, 2014).

 2.1 Contemporary discourses:
The Tamil Nadu Government has succeeded in achieving near universal primary education enrolment through the Right to Education act, 2009 (RTE) and TamilNadu Right to free and compulsory education act 2011 (RTFCE) (TN schools.gov, 2013). The major public education initiatives introduced by the central Government like the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) which means Education for all, Mid-day meal schemes, and the Para teacher schemes implemented in TamilNadu have been focussed on improving infrastructure, increasing the number of schools in village hamlets, improving the student enrolment rate in primary schools and recruiting more teachers to improve the pupil teacher ratio. The SSA which is a campaign for Universal Education, funds infrastructure and civil works; salaries of additional teachers to reduce the pupil teacher ratio; distribution of free text books; special facilities for girls and students with disabilities, technical support, financial management, etc (SSA, 2010).

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The Mid day meal scheme was made universal in all states which provide every child in every government and government assisted primary school with a prepared nutritious mid-day meal for a minimum of 200 days a year. The Para teacher scheme introduced in the mid-1990s appoints low cost untrained teachers with educational qualifications below those of the regular government school teachers in order to expand schooling to small village hamlets where there are no regular schools and to reduce the pupil teacher ratio (Govinda & Josephine, 2004). Hence through these interventions, both the state and central government has been successful in providing key inputs, building infrastructure and hiring teachers. However, the findings of the rural Annual Status of Education Report (2014) and the Programme for International Assessment (PISA) reports that the learner achievement levels of students were alarmingly low in government schools particularly in reading, arithmetic and scientific literacy. The OECD-PISA is an international comparative survey of 15 year olds' which seeks to measure how well young adults have acquired the knowledge and skills that are required to function as useful members of the society in which 74 countries participated and the states of TamilNadu and Himachal Pradesh were ranked 72nd and 73rd among 74 participants, higher only than Krygystan. Another significant finding of the ASER report (2014) is that although in the last years the Government had invested a millions of funds on building more schools, hiring more teachers, providing free textbooks, mid-day meals and uniforms, the net enrolment of students declined by 11 million in the country.

Research surveys and a number of contemporary debates in the media including newspapers, television and social media, both at the national and state level have reported certain issues which lead to poor learner levels in government schools (Kingdon, 2007; Ashita, 2013; The Times of India, 2013; Ramachandran, 2014; ASER report, 2005, 2006, 2013, 2014).The system expects the teachers to teach the curriculum and finish the syllabus within the stipulated timeframe irrespective of whether the children in the class are learning or not. The presence of multigrade classrooms and frequent absence of teachers and students also lead to this cumulative burden of non-learning where some children in the class reach a point where they are unable to comprehend what is going on in the class. Another important issue that has been identified is the absence of a school level monitoring of teaching learning processes, lesson plans and the actual teaching time. Most of the monitoring in government schools is confined to inputs which include the enrolment rate, mid- day meals, distribution of textbooks and so on. The huge social and economic distance between the teachers and students in government schools, as the not so poor and the lower middle class families have opted out of government schools and hence children from very poor and socially marginalised families study in these schools. The educational NGO Pratham conducted a

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series of inclusion and exclusion studies which brought out the innate prejudices and stereotypes that teachers carry with them to school as many of them were convinced that these some children were not capable of learning because of their circumstances and the society they come from. The system of rote learning, the practice of memorising information and the use of exams have been continuously cited by educators and pedagogy experts as reasons for low learner achievement levels. In order to address this lack of child centric and experiential learning process, a number of interventions like the ABL (Activity Based Learning) and CCE (Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation) were introduced in elementary schools in TamilNadu. While there was considerable evidence that ABL energised classrooms and enabled children to learn at their own pace, there was little evidence that it improved learning when adopted on a large scale (SSA 2010; ASER report, 2013).The CCE which was introduced to respond to the damaging effects of year end examinations, has been reduced in many government schools as a series of paperwork which teachers just fill out without actually conducting activities on them(Ramachandran, 2014; ASER Report, 2013). Education researchers argue that the no detention policy where students should be compulsorily promoted from one grade to the other until class 6 without any guarantee of learning as a result of the RTE act fails to address that Right to Education is not limited to enrolment but learning (Ramachandran, 2014). The quality of teachers, his or her mastery over subjects, pedagogic skills and aptitude to teach are cited by researchers as another issue that needs to be addressed as the results of Teacher Eligibility Tests (TET) conducted for the first time in 2011 to improve teaching standards revealed that a high proportion of the already existing government school teachers failed the test (Times of India, 2011, Ramachandran, 2014).

2.2 Historical Discourses:

The British Raj introduced the state run education system in India. The educational philosophy that was behind the system has been apparently voiced by the architect of the Indian Education System, T.B. Macaulay (1781 -1839) in a speech he delivered to the Committee of Public Instruction in 1835 (National Archives of India, 1965).

> ". . . The effect of training . . . is to give an entirely new turn to the native mind. The young men educated in this way cease to strive after independence according to the original Native model, and aim at, improving the institutions of the country according to the English model, with the ultimate result of establishing constitutional self-government. They cease to regard us as enemies and usurpers, and they look upon us as friends and patrons, and powerful beneficent persons, under whose protection the

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regeneration of their country will gradually be worked out. . ." (Macaulay ,1835 in National Archives of India, 1965).

2.2.1 18th Century and 19th Century

The new education policy established by Macaulay in India by 1835 was considered the most far reaching single measure in the whole of nineteenth century in imperial India, as without this, the present Indian nation, we know today could not have existed. Although the focus of the policy continued to instil western learning as the main content of official education, Lord Auckland in 1840 removed most of the harsh and the rigid aspects of the policy offering some kind of government patronage to Eastern learning. Another significant landmark was reached when Lord Dalhousie, enthusiastically implemented Sir Charles Wood's educational dispatch of 1854. The object of this dispatch was the wide extension and the rapid expansion of the means of acquiring European knowledge and it led to the foundation of the first three universities of British India established in Calcutta, Bombay and Madras in 1857(Spear, 1981). These were based on the London examining model though not with the London University standards. Government schools and colleges were established at important points as model institutions and the grant in aid system encouraged the founding of numerous private institutions to supplement the government institutions. Hence the British government succeeded in its aim of popularising education.

This system was conveniently designed by the British to establish their hegemony over the colonized subjects. However, the system faced serious issues, as the primary vernacular education tended to be ignored as all the attention was given to high schools and colleges and hence the ratio of the boys who went from schools to undergraduate colleges dropped to 390:1 and the education of girl children still lagged behind that of boys owing to public apathy and social oppression. Another important setback was that, in these extensive attempts of popularising western education, the standards had to be relaxed and the syllabus made easier as it was determined that high standard restricted entry to an extreme degree. It was reported that in 1857, only 2 candidates obtained degrees out of 13 entrants and only 111 candidates were admitted out of 464 applicants to these universities (Spear, 1958). These standards did not match the overall purpose of the system which was, "passing every student of ordinary ability who had fairly profited by the curriculum of school and college study which he had passed through" (Spear, 1981, p. 719).

As a result, the lowering of education standards became difficult to stop and kept continuing as there was no educational yardstick or benchmark available to measure the Indian standards since the London standards have been abandoned. Hence, in order to popularise western

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education in India, the government created an education system that had much lower standards than London, in which there was no distinction made between pass and honours candidates, and to increase the number of passes, quality was compromised. In other words, quality was substituted by quantity and Indian education came to acquire a second rate reputation as it seemed mandatory to go to Britain for real quality education. Evidently, the British Government succeeded in its attempt of spreading western knowledge widely but failed intentionally or unintentionally to produce, on its own merits a new intellectual class of Indians. The candidates who came out of this system included the failed B.As; the barely passed and exceptionally few men of real distinction who were not properly utilised by the Government and the best candidates were not attracted by the pay, the Government jobs offered (Spear, 1981).

The whole system was biased down by bureaucracy and red tape in its direction and by mediocrity engaged for cheapness in its members. This could be related to the Bell and Lancaster's monitorial schools, a specific technology invented by the British and the foreign societies at the end of the 18th century that could provide cheap education for the poor. Jones (1990) identifies this stage of educational discourse in which the monitorial schools were viewed as a new 'engine of instruction' and machinery through which the Government could scientifically inculcate habits of morality and manufacture a disciplinary society. The system was highly utilitarian in its philosophies where one teacher educated 1000 pupils through the judicious use of monitors and the system is characterised by the polyvalent panapticon technology used in prisons which was mediated by a system of rewards and punishments. The education system adopted in India placed reliance on formal mass lectures to overcrowded classes mainly due to financial reasons and there was a lack of any moral content or personal contact in the new system (Spear, 1981). It was through impersonal examination and degradation that the school was able to inculcate a utilitarian form of morality where each pupil would be taught to calculate the extent of rewards or punishments consequent of their examination scores where each student is competing to occupy the highest rank (Jones, 1990). The certificates and the degrees awarded signified a modicum of knowledge gained by rote memorisation, cramming and copying the text book notes.

In this pedagogic science, the role of the teacher was minimal and the same system of examination and surveillance applied to the teacher as well as they were regularly monitored and examined by an inspectorate. The new educational service provided by the British in India sought efficiency, adherence to the rules, and departmental convenience in the teachers.

"Everywhere departmental convenience was preferred, until very recent times, to educational interests; and the sort of man whom the departments really liked was one

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who was willing to be transferred from the teaching of history to the teaching of physics and from that to the inspection of schools."(Dodwell, 1858-1918, p 205).

Hence it was this technology of examination and surveillance which was used by the British to popularise western influence and education in the Indian minds in order to inculcate the principle of utility and form a useful and compliant population.

The Hunter Commission (1882) established by Lord Ripon was the next important step of this education movement which surveyed the whole field of education and pointed out the significant limitations of the system to be addressed. (Spear, 1958). Emphasis was placed on primary education and the education of girl children and the encouragement of science and moral instruction were also insisted. This resulted in the reorganisation of the educational service which now consisted of three branches, the all India educational service, the provincial services and the subordinate services. The all India educational service attracted better type of British graduates while to the provincial services, an increasing number of Indians were appointed. The responsibility of fostering primary education however was confided to the care of the new municipal and district boards which did not make any progress owing to limited resources and inadequate competence. Even the efforts to introduce moral instruction failed due to official objections and the efforts to encourage science and mathematics did not succeed owing to the popular preference for literary studies. This was the general state of education at the end of the eighteenth century where higher education which was given undue importance was undifferentiated in kind and gained popularity at the expense of quality and primary education was ineffective and ignored. Hence the age old tradition that education was for the few was largely maintained. However, a huge impact had been made on the people throughout the country and a new class was fast rising which shared a common language and stock of western knowledge and ideas.

2.2.2 20th Century:

India became an independent nation within the British Commonwealth on 15th August, 1947 and nationalist leader Jawaharlal Nehru became the first prime minister of Independent India guiding the destiny of this country for a little less than two decades. The Indian government under Nehru represented in many respects a continuation of British attitudes both in form and substance despite certain obvious outward changes in forms of governance or employment of new political personnel (Das, 2001). It was argued that like other post-colonial regimes the Indian state appeared 'overdeveloped' (Alavi, 1972). The British Raj had nurtured a repressive state apparatus which exceeded the needs of an underdeveloped and poor post-colonial state. Most third world states were artificial creations of the departing European

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powers and hence the ruling classes of these independent states have to be involved in the nation building process. However, the Congress government under Nehru chose not to develop an alternative state structure, but to uphold and maintain the police, paramilitary and other civil organisations inherited from the British after 1947 (Shepperdson & Simmons, 1998).Noted scholars like Bettelheim (1968) demonstrated, that the administrative system including the education system in independent India was renewed without being remodelled, thus retaining many of the imperfections of the colonial regime (Das, 2001). Although there was remarkable achievement in the field of science and technological education & research after independence, illiteracy rates were still high. The new constitution adopted by India did not change the overall administrative policy of the country. Education continued to be the prime responsibility of the state governments, and the union (central) government continued to assume responsibility for the coordination of educational facilities and the maintenance of appropriate standards in higher education and research and in scientific and technical education.

In 1950 the government of India appointed the Planning Commission to prepare a blueprint for the development of different aspects of life, including education. Thereafter, successive plans (usually on a five-year basis) were drawn and implemented. The main goals of these plans were (1) to achieve universal elementary education, (2) to eradicate illiteracy, (3) to establish vocational and skill training programs, (4) to upgrade standards and modernize all stages of education, with special emphasis on technical education, science, and environmental education, on morality, and on the relationship between school and work, and (5) to provide facilities for high-quality education in every district of the country (NCERT, 2012).

There were striking similarities reported in the style of functioning of Government ministers to their preceding British officers which reflected their rightist orientation of establishing supremacy of the Congress party which was gradually turning them from agitated freedom fighters into responsible ministers.

> "It was a momentous occasion when, in the month of April, we came under the rule of the party which had been agitating against the British Raj for more than twenty years. But, if anyone at the time expected dramatic and revolutionary changes, he was in for an anti-climax. Our new Government had enough sense and experience to realise that nine-tenths of its work would lie in the field of day-to-day administration, and that spectacular reform must be a fringe activity"(Hunt and Harrison, 1980, p.196).

Thus the basic education system introduced by the British which was characterised by crowded classrooms, impersonal examinations, a system of rewards and punishment, and relaxed standards is maintained and is still followed in India. This has been made possible by

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the political interest groups in power who were able to manipulate and exploit the education system to establish hegemony and domination of certain ideas and beliefs in the society. (Femia, 1975).A critic had summarised the situation of independent India in the 1950s in the following quote:

> "…..The identification of the Congress with the status quo, even if the ultimate intention may be of using it as a spring-board for reform ... has made the organisation unpopular ... The loss of ethical quality in the contemporary endeavours of the Congress in the reorganisation of its party machinery, or in the matter of running an old administrative machinery without sufficient proof of desire or capability of reforming the latter, has created a kind of frustration, and even of cynicism amongst those who had made the attainment of political freedom synonymous with the advent of social revolution or moral regeneration…"(Bose, 1958 in Das, 2001, p. 8)

Links between the Contemporary and the Historical Discourses:

Based on reviewing a range of documents starting from school education policy docs, Survey reports, current media debates, newspaper articles to historical documents, prominent links between historical discourses and the contemporary discourses were established. India's education system has had various historical influences for over 4000 years but the new education policy established by the British in 1845 is considered as a single most far reaching measure as without that, the current Indian nation we have today could not have existed. The significant legacies of the British that are still very much a part of the government school education context today, is, the text book centred pedagogy and examination oriented learning which is still very much a part of the government schools more so in secondary and higher secondary grades. Departmental Convenience of teachers is still highly preferred in the Government schools where a teacher of history should be ready to take up teaching of physics when the need arises. The government school teachers often complain that non teaching duties such as election duty, sensex and loads of paperwork take away most of their time. Rote Learning and the ability to memorise facts and write them in the examinations makes a good student in the Government Schools.By exploring these concepts, my research aims to provide some material for those are anxious to challenge the existing policies and practices based on inappropriate concepts.

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