



An overview of Indian educational system (Ancient, Mediaeval and Modern education)

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Abstract: Indian education system has enlarged through various era. Indian education system highly constructed and got transformation from Gurus or teacher centred education to learner centred education system. In ancient Indian education system, the fundamental principle is to pervaded with the desire for bringing about salvation along with the full physical development of an individual. In ancient Vedic, Brahmanical and Buddhist education system, the concept of residential education system is one of the prominent systems enlarged through Gurus. After ancient period, Mediaeval education system is glorious in various part of Indian subcontinent. Mediaeval education system is based on free education system. Mediaeval education system emphasis on the spiritual and intellectual development of the individual and also learners are learning practical skills and theoretical knowledge. In British colonial period, the Indian education system transforms from traditional education to western education system based on English language. The time period between 1835 - 1853 had been most important period in Indian education system, which makes full transformation of Indian education system.

Key words: Indian education, Ancient, Mediaeval, British colonial education.

Introduction

Indian traditional learning and education derived from the primitive age and this traditional system is followed over generation to generation. It was religious than political and economical. The total aspect of ideas, practices and conduct is called Dharma. The realisation of our fore father to life, their subtle analysis and education of duties reveal the spiritual values and values and also multi-dimensional progress of all mankind became the sole objective of civilisation.

Thus, it is gradually enriched by characteristics of politics, social and economic. The principles of love, honourable conduct and good behaviour were the bases of the ancient Indian polity. According to Dr. R.K. Mukherjee: **Learning in India through the ages had been prized and pursued not for its own sake, if we may so put it, but for the sake, and as a part of religion. It was sought as the means of self realization, as the means to the highest end of life viz. Mukti or Emancipation.** Ancient Indian education is to be understood as being ultimately the outcome of the Indian theory of knowledge as part of the corresponding scheme of life and values.

Philosophy of life in Ancient India:

In the Indian system of life and education the doctrine of action(karma) occupies a very significant place. The Brahma is the ultimate object of devotion for an individual. The ancient Aryan culture of India emphasises on plain living and high thinking as the moral basis of education for self- development. The paravidya (the higher knowledge, the spiritual wisdom) and the aparavidya(the lower knowledge, the secular sciences) are the two broad streams of all fields of vidya or knowledge. Aparavidya is needed for living a comfortable life here. The paravidya helps to prepare one for hereafter. A balanced combination of these two imparts both civilization and culture. The educational system of ancient India is pervaded with the desire for bringing about salvation and final beatitude along with the full physical development of the individual in the same manner as the philosophy of life is shot through by the spirit of religion.

The fundamentals of ancient education of India:

On the grounding of ideological and philosophical tradition of India, ancient Indian education had been evolved. The idea and concept that life is ephemeral and death is ultimate, and the futility of mundane pleasure had provided them with a special angle of vision. These were the principles in which originated the entire educational tradition. The ultimate aim of education emerged as the **Chitti-Vritti-nirodha** (the control of mental activities connected with the so-called concrete world). However, the development of pupil's powers for his all-sided advancement was not neglected by education.

- **Knowledge related to life:** During the ancient India, the pupil, surrounded by beautiful nature, sat at his teacher's feet and would perceive all the perplexing and intricate problems through listening and meditation. He would not merely depend on literary or bookish learning but acquire practical knowledge of the world and society

through the direct communication with the people. In this way the pupil was made capable enough to experience the supreme truth and mould the society accordingly.

- **Close association between teacher and student resulted in all round development:** Students would reside in the forest at their teacher's residence. In 'Gurukula' they live a simple life as celibates till completion of their education. The Guru (teacher) and shishya(student) shared a very deep and intimate bond with each other. Such a close contact with the teacher would help the pupil to naturally imbibe his qualities through emulation. This was indispensable to develop the personality of the pupil because it was supposed that the symbol of good ideals, traditions and code of behaviour of the society was the teacher or 'Guru'.

- **Development in social work:** In a gurukula, the students living together were considered as equal, irrespective of their social standing. They learnt from the guru and helped the guru in his everyday life, including carrying out of mundane daily household chores. It was their sacred duty to collect fuel- wood, supply water and do other household odd jobs for the teacher. In this way they would receive instructions related to domestic life and learn the concrete lesson of the dignity of labour and social service.

- **Vocational training:** The teacher gave the students training in occupations of animal husbandry, agriculture and dairy farming etc. They tended the teacher's cows and served him in diverse way. There was a purely vocational system of education wherein master craftsmen and artisans taught their skills to students who worked as apprentice under them.

- **Salient features of Ancient Indian Education**

Ancient education of India was primarily the education of the Vedas. Brahmans, Upanishads, Dharma Sutra were the source springs of education. Dr.A.S. Altekar says that the Brahmanic education aimed at 'Infusion of a spirit of piety and religiousness, formation of character, development of personality, inculcation of civil and social sense, promotion of social efficiency preservation and spread of natural culture'.

1. **Infusion of spiritual and religious values:** The ancient Indian education's primary aim was instilling into the minds of the pupils a spirit of being pious and religious for glory of God and good of man. The pupil's life was full of ritual acts. They prayed every day. They performed religious ceremonies duly. It was believed

that a keener appreciation of spiritual values could be fostered only through a strict observance of religious rites.

2. Character development: In Vedic period so much stress was laid on character building. Wisdom consisted in the practice of moral values. Control of senses and practice of virtues made one a man of character. The teacher and the taught were ideals of morality, for both practiced it all through their lives.

3. Development of civic responsibilities and social values: Civic virtues and social virtues were equally important objectives of Indian education. After his education in the gurukul the Brahmachari went back to the society. He served the rich and the poor, relieved the diseased and distressed. After the end of the studies, he was required to become a householder and to perpetuate his race and transmit his culture to his own offspring.

4. Personality development: The development of personality is the sole aim of education and this was realized by the guru in the ancient time. The qualities of self-esteem, self-confidence, self-restraint and self-respect were the personality traits that the educator tried to inculcate in his pupils through example.

5. Preserving and diffusing natural culture: Vedic culture was kept intact and transmitted through word of mouth of succeeding generations. At last, a portion of the sacred scriptures had to be memorized by every individual. The members of the priestly class learnt the whole of Vedic literature by heart and passed it on.

Period of Vedas

The Vedas are probably the earliest documents of the human mind. It is believed that it is in 1200 B.C when the first Aryan immigrants in India started composing the various hymns that are part of the books. Vedas are four in number- the Rigveda, Samveda, Yajurveda, Atharvaveda. They are said to date back to 1500 B.C – 1000 B.C. Some scholars date the Rigveda as early as 1200 B.C to 4000 B.C. The traditional date goes back to 3000 B.C, something which the German scholar Max Muller accepted. The Samveda, Yajurveda and Atharva veda were compiled after the age of the Rigveda.

The four Vedas

1. Rig Veda, the book of Mantra: The Rig Veda is a collection of brilliant songs or hymns to the gods. It is a main source of information in detail on the social, religious, political and economic background of the Rig- Vedic civilization. The Rig Veda is the oldest book in

and Indo-European language and contains the earliest form of all Sanskrit mantras. It is on a foundation of plain living and high thinking.

2. Sam Veda, the book of chant: The compilation of all the hymns recited on the occasion of the Sam yajna came to be known as the Sam Veda. It is purely a collection of 'Samans' (chants) derived from the eighth and ninth books of the 'original Veda', the Rig Veda. According to Vedic scholar David Fraley- if the Rig Veda is the word, Sam Veda is the song or meaning, if Rig Veda is the knowledge, Sam Veda is its realization.

3. The Yajur Veda; The book of ritual: 'Yajush' means ritual. Yajur Veda contains different rituals and sacrifices to be conducted to pacify gods. It is a collection of prose mantras. Though the duty of chanting the hymns on the occasion of sacrifice was mainly undertaken by the Hotri, the first order of priesthood, the certain hymns related to prayers or invocation were sung by the Adhvaryaus who were closely associated with sacrificial operations.

4. Atharva Veda; the book of spell: The Atharva Veda (the wisdom of Atharvans) is called so because the families of the Atharvans sect of the Brahmins have traditionally been credited with the composition of the humans of the Veda. This is the last of four Vedas. In the beginning only three Vedas were popular. In the course of the time the fourth Veda called Atharva Veda was also recognized. Atharva Veda is considered next only to Rig Veda with regard to history and sociology because its completion of hymns lacks the remarkable spiritual experience that is offered by Rig Veda. The Atharva Veda is thoroughly secular in character containing a vivid description of various arts and sciences.

Curriculum of Vedic education

The curriculum during Vedic period was dominated by the teaching of Vedas and Vedic literature, spiritual and moral lessons. The other subjects like grammar, philosophy, rhetoric, logic, astrology, Nirukti, were the main subjects. Also, physical education was included in the curriculum. The students were learned hunting, archery, wrestling, dancing etc. Some professional and technical education like astronomy, chikitsa, Ayurveda, arthasastra were in the curriculum.

Method of teaching

During vedic period two methods of teaching were being practiced- oral and chintan i.e thinking. In the oral method the students were to memorize the Mantras and Richayas (verses of Rig Veda) in order. Another part of the teaching method was thinking method. An attempt to reserve Veda Mantras and Richayas was made through this method. There were mainly three processes of

learning according to Vedic system. Sravana is the first step. It was listening to the truth as uttered by the teacher. Knowledge was technically called Sruti or what the ear heard and not what was seen in writing. The second step or process was Manana. It means to internalize or to assimilate what was given to the pupils. It is the process of deliberation and reflexion on the topic. The third step known as Niddhyasana means complete comprehension by the pupil of the truth that is taught so that he may live the truth and not merely explain it by word. It was considered indispensable for the realization of supreme reality.

Conclusion

The system of education of vedic period achieved a pronounced success in connection with character formation, personality development and contribution to knowledge in all branches of learning as well as social well being and material prosperity.

Education in the later Vedic age

The post Vedic age roughly covers the period from 1000 B.C-600B.C. It was the period when the Brahman priest held dominating position in the society and a lot of sacrificial rituals were being performed in the name of religion. There were scholar and thinkers who had developed an attitude characterized by mysticism towards life and meditated on speculative subjects such as God, soul and universe, life and death etc. The philosophers now meditated upon self realization. Their mystical experiences manifested themselves through scriptures known as Brahmanas and Aranakya the Upanishads were next to emerge into being. Through the pages of the Upanishads was revealed the Vedanta, an important trend in philosophical thought. Divers institutions like Sakha, Charanas, parisads, kulas, and gotras influenced the spread and propagation of the later vedic education.

Aim of education

Though the basic aim of education during Vedic age and later Vedic age has been the same the salvation of the soul, the method of attaining his goal has been different between these two periods. While living with Acharya as member of his family in vedic period the student used to attend the objective of education through penance. The education that helped one to realize this supreme truth was regarded as true education.

Curriculum

During this period of the curriculum included more subject that during the Vedic age. Veda mantras (hymn and verses) were principally thought in the Vedic period. During the post Vedic period various type of literatures were produced pertaining to different Vedas. The curriculum

consisted of Vedas, history, Puranas, grammar, mathematics, brahma vidya, Nirukti, astronomy, dance, music etc.

Method of instruction

During the post vedic period the three principle psychological methods of instruction were hearing, thinking and meditation. Question- answer system was also followed in the Upanishad literature. This system made difficult and abstract ideas simple.

Important place of teacher

A predominant place in Gurukul as well as in the entire society was enjoyed by the teacher. Everyone in society regarded him as a great guide. The teacher possessed the essential qualities viz. profunding of education, clairvoyant vision and intellectual regeneration. To his pupils he showed all love and affection and used to teach them whatever he knew. Students could discuss points freely with the guru. Rules of conduct were enforced keeping in view the physical, mental and moral development of students.

Forms of educational institutions: Broadly there were three types of educational institutions during post- vedic period. They were 'Gurukulas', 'Parisadas' (academics), 'Sammelan' (conference).

Education in the Sutras and Epics

Education in Sutras:

Sutra literature followed the period of the Vedic literature. Because of the vast and diffused growth of Vedic literature it was strongly needed to evolve some practicable method as may epitomize conveniently the huge mass of Vedic literature. This need brought a new type of literature, the **Sutras** into being. Mainly in form of **Dharma- Sutra** the rules and regulations of education were manifested in this period. Dharma Sutras were the embodiment of the social conduct and code of duties for the teachers and pupils. The entire Sutra literature consists of **Vedangas**. The Vedangas are six auxiliary disciplines of Hinduism that developed in ancient times and have been connected with the study of the Vedas. These are Siksha, Chhandas, Vyakaran, Nirukta, Kalpa and Jyotisa. Specialization of students in different subjects is the special feature of education of this era. This period is important for its constructive and creative aspect in ancient education of India in as much as such important subjects of learning as geometry, algebra, astrology, psychology, astronomy and grammar culminated in this age. During the sutra period and the Upanishad period the system of education was identical. In the

sutras all the current regulations, social and religious traditions and long-standing conventions which were unwritten had been compiled in a well-organized and systematic order

The unprecedented progress of philosophy is one special feature of Sutra literature. The Sutra period was the witness of the consummation of its progress. The current of philosophical thought flowed out chiefly in six different channels in this period. The Samkhya of Kapila, the Yoga of Patanjali, the Nyaya of Goutama, the Vaisheshika of Kanada, Karma or Purva-mimamsa of Jamini and Uttara mimamsa or Vedanta of Badarayana were developed in this was.

Education in the Epics:

The main Epics of ancient India are the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. These epics catch glimpses of the creed of militarism of that age. The story of Ramayana indicates the Aryan expansion into southern India and hits at the use of military force in this process. The Mahabharata shows that the whole India was Aryanized by that time. We are given accounts of numerous hermitages in the Mahabharata. Pupils from different parts gathered there for instruction round some far-famed teachers. A full-fledged Ashram consists of several departments. The most important hermitage was Naimisha, a forest. It was like a university. **Saunaka** was the presiding personality of the place. Another famous learning centre was the hermitage of Kanva. On the bank of Malini it was situated. In every branch of learning there were specialists in each of the four Vedas, in sacrificial literature and art, Kalpa-Sutras in the Chhanda, Sabda and Nirukta. There was also a logician, specialist in physical sciences and arts. The learned souls were approached by students to acquire knowledge. It was encouraged by parents too. The boys were sent to the institutions. With the increasing number of the students the institutions began to grow gradually. By the time these institutions turned into universities. Taxila, Ujjain, Nalanda, Benares, Ballavi, Ajanta, Madura and Vikramsila were very famous institutions of that age. Two pre-Buddhist institutions Taxila and Ujjain were famous for medicine. Jibaka the well known medical expert and Panini, the famous grammarian and Kautilaya, author of Arthashastra studied at Taxila. The academic year has several terms. Upakarnmana ceremony inaugurated each term and it was ended by Utsarga ceremony. To conclude, secular vocational training was a practical and useful ceremony. Formal paraphernalia of education required in modern times was completely absent. According to practical and direct method the father imparted education to his son. At the peak there were industrial occupations.

Brahmanical Education

The Brahmanic education is important as it regards the harmonious development of physical, mental and spiritual aspects of human life. It developed character and individuality of human beings. In his book, 'History of Indian Education, Ancient and Later Times', Mr F.E.Keay said: **“Not only did Brahman education develop a system of education which survived the crumbling empires and changes of the society, but they also, through all these thousands of years, kept aglow of torch of higher learning, and numbered amongst them many great thinkers who have left their mark not only on the learning of India, but upon the intellectual life of the world.”** Therefore the aim of both the Brahmanic education and the Vedic education was identical. The religious aspect of education had been emphasized too much in Vedic education, but the Brahmanic education included worldly aspect as well. With the physical development self control, self reliance, character formation, individual development, knowledge of social and civil life and preservation of natural culture was accompanied as the aim of education.

Some important characteristics of Brahmanic education were as followed:

1. The disciple and the Acharya lived in direct contact. All the responsibilities of the taught regarding food, lodge etc were taken by the Guru.
2. The students' routine of daily life was regulated.
3. A great attention was paid by Brahmanic education to build the character and nature of the students.
4. Strict celibacy had to be maintained by the students.
5. it was the individual teaching not the collective teaching that prevailed in Brahmanic education.
6. Brahmanic education provided both the theoretical knowledge and practical knowledge to face the struggles of life.
7. The course of study was much vast in Brahmanic period in comparison with Vedic era. Including four Vedas, Itihas, Puranas, Vyakarans, Arithmetic, Ethics, Astronomy, Yajurveda etc were also studied.
8. The education was based on the principles related to psychology.
9. Students could study freely according to their choice and ability.
10. Karma siddhant and stratification of caste system had an effect on the course of study in Brahmanic education.

Like Vedic period the oral system of teaching and learning followed in the Brahmanic era too. Through discussions and debates the education was provided in this period. There were organizations of Sabhas. Because of the poor development of the art of writing the education was mostly oral in Brahmanic period. In the Gurukula the pupil had to study for about 12 years. After the completion of the course of their study the Guru allowed them to return home and gave them final instructions. This was the **Samavartan Sanskar** ritual. To speak truth, to fulfil the duties and to be careful in self study were such instructions delivered by the Guru to his students.

Education in Buddhist Era

Buddhism represents a vast and intellect tradition. Buddhism itself is rooted deeply in the pre-existing Hindu system of thoughts and life. According to Max Muller, "To my mind, having approached Buddhism after a study of the ancient religion of India, the religion of the Veda, Buddhist has always seemed to be a new religion, but a natural development of the Indian mind in its various manifestations, religious, philosophical, social and political. During the Buddhist era the centres of education were the monasteries. No other organizations except monasteries were there for imparting education. Religious and other types of education could be received only by the Bhikshus. Yajnas was nowhere in the Buddhist system. To take admission the pupil had to present himself before the teacher. He was requested to give him education. The total responsibility to take care his students' education was given to the teacher. The students were obedient and they had to response the instructions of their teacher. In this way a good relationship between the teacher and the students was built as during the Vedic age.

Pabbajja (First Ordination):

The meaning of Pabbajja is 'going out'. In accordance with this ceremony, after getting admission in a monastery all the worldly and family relationship had to be renounced by the students. They could remain as a monk after the admission into 'Sangh'. The students could get admission for Pabbajja at the age of eight. During the period of 12 years of education the new monk prepared himself for Sangh life. Then he had to undergo through the ceremony called **Upasampada**.

Upasampada (Final Ordination):

The monk after the completion of 12 years of education had to undergo the Upasampada ritual at the age of 20 years. After that he was considered to be a permanent member of the Sangh. The nature of this ceremony was democratic. To get admission for the Upasampada ceremony one required the vote of the majority of the monks in favour of the same.

In the Buddhist educational system, a student could never come back to his house after having received education. He could not live with his parents and lead a householder's life. He cut off all the worldly and family relationships forever to remain as a monk for good. A warm and friendly relationship existed between the teacher and the student. All the rule of conduct, prescribed for the students, had to be observed by the teacher. He imparted intellectual and spiritual education of a higher order to his disciples. It was the highest and more sacred duty of the teacher.

Curriculum

The nature of it was chiefly spiritual because the attainment of salvation was the chief aim of education. Religious books like **Suttanta, Vinaya And Dhamma** were the main subjects prescribed for the study.

There were two parts of education during this period, one was primary education and the other was higher education. In the primary education the students were taught alphabet, vowels, Sandhis or rules of combination.

Various subjects like religion, philosophy, medicine, military science etc were taught in the higher education. Beside these subjects the students also studied Vedas to gain comparative knowledge; nevertheless, the Atharvaveda was excluded from the curriculum up to the Jataka period.

Method of teaching

Buddhist education always aims at a personality transformation into a highest form of humanity, through the ethical, intellectual and spiritual perfection. At first the teacher delivered a lecture on a certain topic and the students listened to him attentively. They tried to memorize the same. Thus oral was the method of teaching. The logic was encouraged by the importance of discussion in Buddhist period. After completing the education, the students were encouraged to gain the practical and real form of the theoretical knowledge gained by them undertaking long trips.

The teaching method of Brahmanical education and Buddhist education regarding technical education in Secular science, Arts and crafts was similar i.e. students were given education through both theoretical and practical methods.

Commercial and occupational education

Indeed education in Buddhist era was based on religion. Yet occupational education was not neglected altogether and Mahabagga mentions about spinning and weaving tailors etc.

Architecture, Arithmetic, Painting, Agriculture and animal husbandry etc. were also taught. Emphasis was laid on the development of the medical science in Buddhist period. Many medical experts were there during Buddhist era. Taxila was the main medical centre and it took seven years to complete the course of the science.

Conclusion

Beside religious and philosophical aspects of the Buddhist education, secular education formed an essential part of it. Such international institutions were given birth by this system as Nalanda, Taxila and Vikramshila. These centres were religious and secular.

Main Educational Centres and Universities in Ancient India

Education has always been given great prominence in Indian society since the times of the Vedic civilization with Gurukul and Ashrams being the centres of learning. There the teacher and students lived in direct contact as the member of the single family. Inner and spiritual uplift was much more emphasized than the external objects for the spiritual and philosophical development of the taught. Well organized educational institutions were not there during Vedic and Buddhist era. In Hindu temples and monasteries, the educational institutions were started inspired by the Buddhist system.

Lord Buddha had realized that education was necessary for devotees. So the monasteries and Vihars were established by him. There education was imparted. Later on, these monasteries became full fledged educational centres. With evolving times, a large number of centres of learning were established across ancient India of which Taxila and Nalanda developed into universities of international importance.

- **Taxila**

Ranked as the top tourist destination in Pakistan by The Guardian newspaper in 2006 Taxila was an ancient capital city of the Buddhist kingdom of Gandhara and a centre of learning. During the Buddhist period, its fame continued in northern India. Hundreds of students from various countries were attracted by it. They came to quench their thirst of knowledge. According to Valmiki Ramayana, the city was founded by Prince Bharat. Taksha was his son whom he appointed as the ruler of the territory.

Though no organized institutions were there, education was imparted on family system. Taxila was not an organized university. Different subjects were taught in this centre where special and higher studies were carried on. The students could learn any subjects of their choice. After completing the course of education, they were not awarded any degree or diploma.

In Taxila only higher studies were conducted. So, to get admission in the university the age limit of the student had to be more than 16 years. Vedatraty (three Vedas), Vedanta, Vyakaran, Military education, agriculture, astronomy, commerce, eighteen sippas (crafts), snake bite cure etc were the main subjects here. Panini, the father of Vyakaran and Jivaka, an expert surgeon, kautilya, the author of Arthasastra were the students of Taxila. Greek culture had influenced Taxila. Greek historians accompanying the Macedonian conqueror described Taxila as “wealthy, prosperous and well governed”. Taxila was famous as a training centre of Indian Military science.

- **Nalanda**

Nalanda is one of the well-known ancient universities. It is situated in the province of Bihar about 55 miles south east of Patna and seven miles north of Rajgriha. It was a famous Buddhist cultural and educational centre of learning. It became educationally important and famous by the beginning of 4th century AD. At the hands of Gupta ruler Nalanda touches its zenith of progress. A monastery was built there by Kumar Gupta I. There were three hundred study chambers. The preceptors taught the students there. Higher studies were carried on in Nalanda. It has been considered a centre of learning throughout the whole of Asia. The students had to be 20 years of age for admission into the university.

Shilbadra was the **Kulpati** or chancellor of the university. He had studied all sutras and shastras books. In Nalanda the scope of study was very vast. Along with Buddhism and Buddhist literature many other subjects of the time were included in course of study in Nalanda. Beside physical education there were various subjects of study like Vedas, Vedanta, Sankhiya, Philosophy, Dharma sastra, Puran, Jyotis, Ayurveda etc. practical training in many subjects was given to the students. Three methods of teaching were followed in this university. These three methods are – verbal and explanatory, lectures and debates and discussions. The university had a big library. It was the longest library of the ancient world. The library complex was called Dharma Ganja. The library had nine storeys. It had a collection of thousands of volumes of manuscripts on various subjects like Grammar, Logic, Literature, Astrology, Astronomy and Medicine. Nalanda was an eminent university. It contributed the evolution, expansion and refinement of Indian culture. After 800 years of glorious career Nalanda was very likely ransacked and destroyed by an army of the Mamluk Dynasty of the Muslim Delhi Sultanate under Bakhtiyar Khilji in 12th century AD. He destroyed the university and put the library on fire. The monks and students were ruthlessly massacred. Thus, the light that had been kept aglow through ages was extinguished never to shine again.

- **Vikram Shila**

Vikramshila was one of the most important centres of bud learning in during Pala Empire. Dharmapal, the famous emperor of Pal dynasty, established the Vihara of Vikramshila in the 8th century in Northern Magadh. It was situated at a beautiful hill on the bank of the river Ganges. In Vikramshila 108 scholars were appointed as the in-charge and Acharyas of the various temples. For general management six additional pundits were also appointed. Altogether 144 permanent scholars were there in the university. Because of the presence of many personalities in the university its fame spread out in various countries. A considerable number of students from Tibet were attached to come there for higher education.

The university was later organised into six colleges. The highest authority of the university was Mahasthavar and the general management was under his guardianship. He was the kulpati of gurukula. Vyakaran, logic, Philosophy, Tantra-Sastra and Karamkanda were the main subjects to study. Later the university was well known for the specialized training on the subjects of Tantra (Tantrism). The students who completed graduation and post graduation were awarded degrees at the time of Samavardana (convocation) by the rulers of Bengal. In 1203 AD Bhaktiyar Khilji destroyed Vikramshila University. It is said that the Vihar was taken as a fort by the Muslims and they killed many monks. Thus, fell mighty educational centres under the barbarism of the Mohammedans.

The emergence/establishment of Muslim education sultanate

During the medieval era, the Islamic system of education replaced the Vedic and Buddhist system of education. With the establishment of Delhi sultanate, there was increasing need of Islamic administration which ultimately led to the emergence to the Islamic education system. The emperor or the "sultanas" paid high respect to religion and education. They patronage both, education was meant to spread religious knowledge as well as another subject. In this period there were number of subjects that were introduced, this includes logic, mathematics, geometry, history, geography, accountancies, public administration, literature, science and astronomy. Apart from this, different strategies and methods like reading, writing, discussion, logical reasoning were also introduced in this system of education.

The Islamic education to a huge extent based on the teaching of Quran. The important benefit of Quran is expressed in the Allah as the most important principle. Knowledge is regarded as one of seven major attributes of Allah and education is the prime duty of all human beings. In Muslim period learning were held in high esteem. The great Mughal emperor was the patrons of learning and promoters of education. The educated people were respected and revered. To

spread education and educational institutions, the rulers or the patronisers demolished the ancient Buddhist and Hindu temples, schools and other educational, centres and built mosques and madrasas.

The Muslim system of education was traditional in spirit and theological in content. Their curriculum had to different categories that is-

- Mangulath, that is traditional science and
- Maqulat, that is rational science.

Subjects like Law, History, Literature were included in traditional science and logic, philosophy, medicine, mathematics and astronomy come under rational science.

The Mughals:

The Mughal period, however, was not very much different from that of Islamic period, but yes it had its own unique contribution. This period contributed immensely in the system of education. In this period the Mughal emperor, besides patronising the education system were themselves involved in acquiring knowledge. Akbar the great, perhaps the great emperor of mughal dynasty, gave grants to educational institutions and established a college near a Jama Mashjid. During this period both Sanskrit and Persian were given same importance. It is to be noted that earlier, the Hindu institution was demolished by rulers Akbar; however, by his greatness and open mildness encourages hindi institutions too. Akbar was interested in spreading education and learning among the masses. The prevalent language was Urdu. Humayan, the great emperor Akbar's father introduced the study of mathematics, astronomy, geography in the Madrasas Delhi. Akbar himself established residential colleges for post graduation studies.

Vocational education

During the muslim system of education there was provision of vocational technical and professional education. The individuals began to acquire education on basis of their skills, abilities, and interest this education includes silk wearing, carpentry pottery making, dyeing, art works, handicrafts, working with metal, precious stones, production of garments, jewellery etc. The Mughals emperors were interested in artworks and handicrafts. The individuals, engaged in this manufacturing and production of these items need to possess knowledge and skills and to have enough awareness of how to use machines and tools to increase or to even generate productivity.

Educational institution

The educational institution that was prevalent in mediaeval period were Maktab and Madrasas. Maktoob stands for primary education and Madras stands for higher education. In Maktab children received religious education, reading writing and arithmetic. General practical education like letter writing, application was also taught in maktab. On the other hand, in madrasas, the individuals were given training in terms of other areas in order to prepare them practically. The subjects that were introduced in madrasas included medicine, history, mathematics, Economics, political science, astrology, philosophy and law. In Abul Fazal's Ain-e-Akbari one can easily get a glimpse of the education system in the Mughal era.

Methods

In the maktab, teaching primarily took place making use of oral methods and memorisation of assigned lesson. In the structure of education several attempts had been made by the emperor Akbar to bring about systemization. The education of a student starts with acquisition of alphabet knowledge, then he began to learn world knowledge and gradually to form a sentence. The teachers and students were meant to work in collaboration, integration with each other. The practical education was given much more value. There were no annual or half yearly exams. Their assignment was done time to time on the basis of the practical education of life. Women belonged from wealthy royal families were able to acquire education within their homes. Due to the prevalence of Purdah system education among women was not given recognition.

British colonial education

The Muslim System of education was prevalent before the advent of the Britishers in India. With the advent of the Britishers, the European religious missionaries had started coming to India in the last phase of 15th century. The advent of European missionaries introduced a new phase in education of the country and developed it appreciably. The central aim of these missionaries was to propagate Christian religion through European mode of education. For them education was a means to the spread of Christianity. At length in the year 1813, the British parliament made Indian education an important aspect of State duties by putting before the East India Company educational policy and attendant responsibilities unequivocally.

In the 19th century British rule had firmly been established in India. Consequently, English system of education was introduced, which led to the downfall of Muslim system of education. Gradually the East India Company established its own empire in the country.

The period of nineteen years between 1835 and 1853 had been very important in Indian education. Education saw many upheavals during this period and ultimately it was brought on a definite track by Lord Macaulay who played a leading role to close the occidental and oriental controversy.

Macaulay advocated the occidental approach and laid down the educational policy accordingly. He ridiculed the oriental languages and literatures and vehemently opposed the oriental policy. Thus, education in European languages, literatures and sciences was started in India. Both Bentick and Aukland supported Macaulay. Bentick issued a declaration on the basis of Macaulay's views. The declaration decided in favour of English education as advocated by the Occidentalises. The indigenous schools got a set back, although they were allowed to continue on nominal financial assistance. But appointment of teachers in these schools came under the control of the government.

Macaulay's views received a mixed reception from the people in the country. A section of the enlightened group criticized him as a person who wanted to tie the people in the shackles of slavery. On the other hand, another group regarded him as a guide and father of modern education in India. Macaulay's efforts ultimately brought regeneration in the educated people and they became aware of the happenings in literature and sciences in the other parts of the world.

Macaulay tried to impose English on Indians. But this imposition ultimately has helped them as they became acquainted with the latest developments in the world and got inspiration for fighting for their political independence, which they achieved in 1947. Thus, the Oriental-Occidental controversy ended with Bentick's declaration.

Wood's dispatch: A Committee was formed in 1854 for studying the problems of education. Charles Wood was its chairman. Hence, the Despatch is famous after his name. The Despatch contained 100 principal clauses. A short summary of the major recommendations contained in the Despatch is as follows:

1. The Aim of Education should be to impart useful knowledge to the Indian people in such a way as to raise their intellectual, moral and economic status.
2. Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian should be included in the curriculum along with English, Western literature and science. Education in Law was also recommended.
3. The Despatch recommended that along with English, Indian languages should also be accepted as the media of instruction.
4. The Despatch recommended that a department of public instruction should be constituted in each province. The Director of Public Instruction should be the Chairman of this Department.
5. For development of higher education two Universities should be established, one each at Calcutta and Bombay on the pattern of the London University. The Despatch also recommended for a university at Madras and other places if a need was felt.
6. For receiving higher education, one should get education from the lower stage. The Despatch urged the Company to establish graded institutions.
7. Education should be made available to all. It recommended for education of the Indian people in all directions.
8. The Despatch advised the Provincial Government to formulate its own rules of grant-in-aid system. The rules should be accepted for all categories of educational institutions, primary or higher.
9. Despatch recommended that there should be at least one training college in each province for training of teachers.
10. Despatch recognized the importance of private enterprises in this area and advised that they should be further encouraged and women should be given education in all the provinces.
11. Despatch stated that the purpose of education was to develop human qualities for success in life. So, education should be obtained with a wider outlook and not only to obtain services.
12. Despatch suggested for Vocational education of the people through schools and colleges to be established for the purpose.

Thus, the Despatch contains a number of fundamental and valuable recommendations. It has been termed as the Magna Charta of Indian Education. However, because of the Revolt of 1857, many of the recommendations of the Despatch could not be imparted. Lord Ripon appointed the first Indian Education Commission known as Hunter Commission on Feb.3, 1882, with William Hunter as its Chairman. The commission was to enquire mainly into the manner in which effect has been given to the principles of the Despatch of 1854 and also the present state of elementary education throughout the empire and the means by which this can everywhere be extended and improved. The commission gave valuable recommendations on primary, secondary and women education. It recommended bifurcation of secondary education into academic and commercial schools.

The Indian University Commission (1902)

In the beginning of 20th century, the first attempt in education was made by Lord Curzon the then Governor General of India by appointing the University Commission in 1902 to enquire into the conditions and prospects of the Universities in British India. It mainly dealt with university education making the following recommendations:

Reorganisation of the administration of universities and the territorial jurisdiction of each university to be defined.

1. Strict and systematic supervision of the affiliated colleges by the university, and the imposition of more exacting conditions of affiliation.
2. Proper attention to the conditions under which students live and work, provision of adequate literary facilities etc.
3. Substantial changes in curriculum and in the methods of examination.

In 1906 the National Council of Education was organised for propagation of education in all over India. It aimed to impart, not only literary but scientific and technical education also. The NCE advocated education through the medium of vernaculars and English as a compulsory subject. It also recommended preparation of text books in Vernaculars, promotion of Physical and Moral education. Religious education without religious rites and practices, synthesis of Western and Indian thought and philosophy. The aim of NCE was to spread education out of Bengal also and during 1905-6 it was a revolutionary ideology for young Bengal. In 1911 by the efforts of Gopal Krishna Gokhale and others primary education was declared compulsory in several provinces. Baroda and Bombay placed better example before the country for the development of primary education.

The Calcutta University Commission 1917-1919

The Calcutta University commission, also known as Sadler Commission was to enquire into the condition and prospects of the University of Calcutta, its report, which was presented in 1919, presented a comprehensive scheme of secondary, collegiate and University education in India. The recommendations of this Commission improved the condition of Calcutta University and general nature of higher education in the country. Secondary education was accepted as the foundation of university education. So, the Commission gave a number of suggestions for its improvement. It made the following recommendations:

Only an intermediate passed candidate should be admitted to universities.

1. Intermediate colleges should be established as a necessity.
2. Subjects useful for practical life should be compulsorily taught in intermediate classes.
3. A Board of High School and Intermediate Education should be established in each province. This Board should be made independent of the existing education department.
4. Mother tongue should be the medium of instruction in the intermediate college.

The commission also gave suggestions for administration, functions and organization of the university. It also emphasized women education, Teachers' Training and Vocational education. The recommendations of the Commission were regarded much unique at that point of time. In spite of many shortcomings the utility of the recommendations of the Commission cannot be denied. The suggestions of this commission resulted the establishment of a number of new universities at Patna, Lucknow, Aligarh, Agra, Dacca, Delhi, Nagpur, Hyderabad and Mysore.

The Hartog Committee was appointed in 1929 and it covered all levels of education and made valuable observations about the then system of education. At the primary level it observed that wastage and stagnation was a big hurdle in mass literacy mission. For secondary education the committee recommended diversion of boys to industrial and commercial concerns at the end of middle stage and introduction for rural pursuits in curriculum of vernacular schools, it also stressed for improvement in the training and service conditions of secondary teachers. Due to paucity of highly trained and competent staff for assistance to local bodies for educational administration, the committee recommended that suitable checks should be imposed upon the local bodies and that larger powers be assumed by the Provincial governments. However, the committee did not give consideration to the contributions, these local bodies were able to make

to the progress of elementary education by bringing in additional resources and helping to create public awakening.

After 1937, the conditions were changed again due to the introduction of the Government of India Act, 1935. Due to this introduction Indian Ministries were formed in the various provinces and the Central Government again started to take active interest in educational affairs. The Central Education Department was now called Central Ministry for Education. Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad was made the first Education Minister of the Government of India. The interim Government took special interest in educational matters and many new departments and schemes were started. As a result, the University Grants Commission, Central Advisory Board for Education, the Central Bureau of Education was established.

Sargent Report (1944)

The Sargent Report was the result of the efforts started in 1938, when the National Planning Committee had taken up the assessment of educational reconstruction at national level. It was made available only after the piecing together of the report of various committees could be done. It is a concise, comprehensive and workable report. The report was presented to the govt, of India by John Sargent, Educational Advisor to the govt, of India. The Central Advisory Board of Education accepted this memorandum during the course of their meeting in 1943 and 1944. The Report published by the Central Advisory Board of Education has an immense value and importance. The objective of the Plan was to create. In India, in a period of not less than forty years, the same standard of educational attainments as has already been attained in England. It contains a detailed account of education from the Nursery stage to the University level. It throws light on its organisation, defects, methods of improvement and other future suggestions. In a way, it is the first report of its kind which seeks to examine and study the entire gamut of national education so comprehensively and minutely. As regards the aim of education the report stated that the main aim was to devise a system which is essentially Indian, with fostering of such attributes as physical fitness, intelligence and integrity of character. The moral or spiritual side of education was not to be ignored. In the field of basic (Primary & Middle) education the 'Report' observed that the principle of "learning through activity" as contained in Wardha Scheme should be adopted as is being endorsed by educationists all over the world. This activity should lead to a basic craft or crafts at later stage in accordance of suitability to local conditions. But in respect of covering of cost of education through sale, the 'Report' observed that only the cost of additional materials and equipment's involved in education through crafts may be met with. In matters of High School Education, the 'Report' says that "the function of the High

School is to cater for those children who are well above the average in ability." It will, therefore, only admit pupils selected on the basis of abilities, aptitudes and general promise. The report considered High School Education not as preliminary to University Education but as a stage complete in itself. It recommended academic and technical type of high schools separately. The academic schools should impart instruction in arts and pure sciences, whereas the technical schools should provide training in the applied sciences, industrial and commercial subjects. It recommended revision of conditions for admission to the universities and abolition of intermediate course. The length of a university degree should be three years. It also proposed for constitution of a University Grants Committee. 'Report' emphasized need of adult education on the widest scale to secure an early and effective solution of India's educational problems. It also felt the need for introduction of a free and compulsory system of primary education. The other important recommendations were regarding health of the school child, physical education, education of the handicapped recreative and social activities, employment bureaux, administration of education and many other aspects of education. In spite of its short comings the 'Report' could be considered as an important document comprising of a comprehensive scheme of a national education system. The 'Report' has been discussed and criticised from many points of view and has stimulated a good deal of critical thinking on various issues even after independence.

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