

TRANSITION OF EDUCATION SYSTEM IN PRE-INDEPENDENT INDIA: A BRIEF-UP

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ABSTRACT

Before 600 BC to 1947, Indian education system had witnessed various transitional phases: Vedic, Buddhist, Jain, Islam, Mughal, Missionary and the British, the wave of national movement for education for Indians. Hence, the paper aims to project in synoptic way to concise the entire transition of educational system of India up-to 1947. The paper too focuses the salient features of each phases of education and also highlights how change of education had occurred during the span of time immemorial. The quest of spiritual identity to materialistic identity, to materialistic identity to patriotic identity, to patriotic identity to self-reliant identity all have been transplanted to the Indian people only by the means of education. The paper hence focuses a overall bird's eye-view of transition of education and also helps to comprehend how the nature of education has been shifted along with the span of time.

Keywords: Gurukul, Vedic, Buddhist, Jain, Islamic, Mughal, upheaval, Self-reliant

INTRODUCTION

As Indian educational institutions have existed since the emergence of civilization (Keay, 1972); it is essential to view the historical background of educational transition in-order-to understand its present status. There are no available literary sources for getting an authentic understanding of educational policies in ancient India. Literary sources of 1000 A.D. and onwards give a reasonably adequate knowledge of the policies that governed the ancient education system in India, the prominent sources being the Rigveda, the Aranyakas, the Upanishads, the Epics and the Puranas (Scharfe, 2002). The Aryans entered India in II B.C. These Aryans were the first to make a significant attempt in formulating an education policy in India. The Aryans had clearly defined the nature of their educational system and the natives who were referred to as 'Dasyus' had to adhere to the norms that the Aryans had laid down (Keay 1972).

VEDIC ERA:

Gurukula system is very old in India and it was dedicated to the physical, mental and spiritual development of the human beings. Education in the Gurukula was free but in some cases students were contributing as 'Guru Dakshina' after the completion of their studies (Ranjan, Pandey & Ranjan, 2014). Chand (2015) too viewed that traditional Gurukula system was for complete development of mind, body and spirit. The Brahmins were called as 'Gurus' and they were imparting knowledge to few numbers of students in the Gurukula as Guru-Sishya Parampara and the Vedas was considered as the treasure house of knowledge (Basha, 2015). The Gurus themselves arranged for lodging and boarding of the students. The aims of education were inculcating religion, achievement of absolute (Brahma) which he himself is, and it was recognized that the entire visible world is fully pervaded with the absolute, development of knowledge, acquaintance and observance of social and national duties, preservation and development of culture, moral and character development, education of livelihood, arts and skills. The teachers considered the students as their son and the students regarded teachers as their father.

BUDDHIST ERA:

Buddhism was born in India and was started by Gautam Buddha. Gautam Buddha taught the principle of a religion which was based on the analysis of actual problem of life. The aims of education were physical development for good health, development of knowledge, education of social behaviour i.e. compassion and kindness, preservation and development of human culture, character formation, and vocational development. In the Buddhist period, system of education focused on the actual problems in the life of common man. Healthy life and human welfare were emphasized primarily. The teaching activities were carried out in conventional methods adopted such as lectures, question-answer, conferences etc.; activity based learning through demonstration and experimentation remained prominent. The monasteries and Buddhist viharas were the main educational centres. The emphasis was given to both religious and secular type including physical, mental and moral development (Your article). The state governments/emperors were source of financing educational institutions to ensure continuous learning. Any learner under the Buddhist Vihar was being guided by a preceptor; he was offering spiritual lessons abiding the Buddhist religion and philosophy. A variety of ancient higher learning institutions were developed on pre and during Buddhist period to facilitate institutional framework for scholarly activities. The schools at Pushpagiri in Odisha, Nalanda in Bihar, Vikramshila in Bihar, Kanchipuram in Tamil Nadu and Taxila or Takshashila in Pakistan were some of the primary institutions of higher learning institutions in ancient days (Omvedt, 2003).

JAIN ERA:

Jainism lays heavy emphasis on non-violence (ahimsa) and the believers of this religion, whether a monk or a householder, follows a very strict, well disciplined life. In fact, the householders are supposed to evolve to the monkhood in the later stages of life as was the case with the Hinduism in the Vedic era. Jainism makes distinction between Arhat and Siddha which are analogous to the Vedantic Jivan Mukta (free form life) and Videha Mukta (free from body). A Jivan Mukta might also be a Videha Mukta as in the case of King Janaka. Tirthankaras are those Siddhas who profound the truth during their life time which is a higher thing. The Jains have Arhats, the Siddhas, and the Tirthankaras who in the simpler terms and in the corresponding manner are: those who deserve those who accomplish, and those who sanctify. It is possible for every man to attain the highest state. Tirthankaras take the place of God in the Jain philosophy.

ISLAMIC ERA:

During the Islamic and Medieval period, the curriculum was divided into two categories, viz., worldly and religious. The concept of mass education was not conceivable in the medieval and Islamic period. Maktab and Madrasa offered the Islamic religious education including the study of Arabic, Urdu, Persian, and also other subjects (Apu, 2017). The Madrasas taught grammar, literature, philosophy, political, medicine and agriculture etc. The state financing was reduced and many institutions struggled to meet their expenses through endowment fund and private philanthropic. During medieval period, the Mughals wanted to educate general people and spread education. They allowed both boys and girls for primary education. The main aim of Muslim education was development of knowledge, spread of Islamic culture and Islamic religion, development of character and morality, loyalty to the Government, education of arts, skills and vocations, Knowledge of alphabets, 30 sections of Quran, reading, writing, Mathematics, letter and application writing and the way of conversation were given to children. Students obeyed the teachers out of fear in medieval period. In Maktab every student was made to learn verses of Quran, Islamic religion, Arabic, Persian and mathematics. Madarsa means to deliver speech. Higher Education was given in Madarsa. It is located either in state capital or in big cities. The medium of instruction at these centers were Arabic and Persian languages.

BRITISH ERA:

In Pre-British period, various Christian missionaries such as Portuguese, Dutch, French, Danish and British landed in India with the sole aim of proclaiming Christianity but their contribution was remarkable in the field of education through different stands. In course of time, English centric fragmented specializations had virtually banished the traditional Gurukul system and other religious holistic ancient schools that were prevalent in the country. In the span of time, India benefited in uniting all the states and regional kingdoms, initiated the removal of gender bias and caste bias, and main reforms in education system. The British ruled over India for more than a century and considered as designer of modern and mass education of India (Roy, 2018). During the British period, before 1813, there were several initiatives had taken place in non-formal way to the Indian Mass and Modern Education. The school near Kolkata established by Danish missionary, Madarsha at Kolkata by Warren Hastings, Sanskrit College at Banaras by Jonathan Duncan and Fort William College at Kolkata by Lord Wellesley for training civil servants were some of the individual initiatives (Chand, 2015). However, the significant growth was noticed in

institutionalization, mass education and nation development through some of the important acts, committees and boards (Ranjan, Pandey & Ranjan, 2014).

OBJECTIVE

The paper tries to know about the transition of Indian education system in pre-independence period.

RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

- It does not cover education system of every state and provinces in pre-independent India.
- The explanation is done based on secondary data sources only with no intention to compare Indian education system in pre-independent India with other parts of the world.

METHODOLOGY

The nature of the paper is descriptive, and data sources relies upon primary sources like journals, website, books, periodicals, edited volume etc. to get a more insight in Indian education up-to pre-independence.

DRIFT

Both the Hindu as well as Muslim educational institutions in Pre-British India gave The Charter of 1698 clearly stated that it was the duty of English ministers of religion to give education along with their primary duty of spreading the Gospel. But the East India Company had realised the political significance of a policy of religious neutrality and therefore refrained from carrying out the directions of the Charter of 1698. However, the Company encouraged educational activity by establishing schools with liberal grants-in-aid. Thus the St. Mary's School was established in Madras in 1715, followed by the establishment of two more charity schools in 1717 by the Danish missionaries. In 1718 a charity school in Bombay and another in 1731 in Calcutta were opened. In 1787 two charity schools for boys and girls separately were established in Madras (Singh 2005). Thereafter thrust to religion than other matters (Yechuri 1986). In 1781, Sir Warren Hastings, the first Governor-General of India, established the Calcutta Madrasa for the cultivation of Arabic and Persian studies and he also founded the Benares Sanskrit College in 1791 to promote classical studies in Sanskrit. One of the prominent motives of establishing these institutions was to train Indian assistants to English Judges, in-order-to explain the principles of Hindu and Muslim laws (Basu 1982). The Christian missionaries started providing education to Indian masses in the beginning of 18th century. But, they were allowed to preach and teach in India only after the passage of the Charter Act of 1813, which actually committed the East India Company to allow Christian missionaries to carry on their educational activities in India. The Company was initially reluctant to allow the missionaries to carry on their educational activities because of the resistance that might be put up by Indians who had an apprehension about prose litigation. Hence, the missionaries and their supporters in England began an agitation with a view to protesting the anti-missionary policy of the East India Company. Their agitation received considerable support and ultimately led to the formation of the Charter Act of 1813. The Act laid down the condition that the British Government shall set apart a total amount of 1 lakh of rupees for the education of Indians (Basu 1982).

Although, under the Mughals, education was similarly elitist, favouring the rich rather than those from high-caste backgrounds but this pre-existing elitist tendencies were reinforced under the British rule. The British colonial rule brought with it the concept of a modern state, a modern economy and a modern education system (Das, 2004). At the beginning of nineteenth century the British administration first began to organize a modern system of education for India and this modern education system started with the Charter Act of 1813 under which parliament directed East India Company to accept the responsibility for the education of Indian people. But nothing was decided. In 1835, Lord Macaulay presented a lengthy minute to the then Governor General that shaped the Indian Education System on British lines. East India Company was made responsible under Clause 43 of the charter Act of 1813 to spend at least one lakh of rupees each year in improvement and encouragement of the learned natives of India and promotion of knowledge of the sciences. Lord Bentinck, the governor general of India then appointed Lord Mecauly as the president of the general committee on public instruction. The governor wanted Lord Mecauly to advise him on the Clause 43 of the Charter. Lord Mecauly drafted a lengthy draft, known as "Macaulay's Minute". This draft aimed at creating a class of persons, Indians in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and intellect. This minute was accepted and implemented by the governor, However the Charter of the East Indian Company was renewed in 1853, and there was need for redefining the educational policy. Sir Charles Wood was the President of the Board of Control and the draft prepared by him came to be known as the 'Woods Despatch (1854)' after his name. In 1854 Wood's Despatch which was given by Charles Wood, realized the need of educating the masses because Despatch admitted that the education of the masses was neglected. In 1882, Hunter Commission was appointed. The Commission examined the condition of education in each province and promoted the role of government responsibility for education. It also suggested that each state should be left free to adopt any system

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which was suitable according to their local conditions. The commission supported the indigenous system of education followed by the Despatch's (1854) principles (Ghosh, 2009). The Education Commission of 1882 promoted the role of government responsibility for education and in 1911 an 'Elementary Education Bill-Gokhale's Bill' was introduced to establish compulsory elementary education as a state responsibility. The Bill met with significant resistance from many quarters, including several Maharajas and other 'prosperous Indians', fearful that it would interfere with the employment of children on the land.; although, the bill was defeated in the Imperial Assembly, but it grounded its strongest roots for future education (Kumar, 2005).

SHIFTING OF PARADIGM

The National Council of Education was registered on June 1, 1906 under the Act XXI of 1860. The objective of the National Council was to impart education-literary as well as scientific and technical on national lines and exclusively under national control, not in opposition to, but standing apart from the existing systems of primary secondary, and university education. The nineteenth century education system seldom had any practical implication. Applied subjects like Law, Medical science, engineering and some other subjects like these were limited among few of middle class polity. These men used to have government jobs after completion of their examinations. When the European educated people engaged themselves in scientific research works and expeditious and as a result of these works they brought revolutionary change in the field of industry. The Indian educated people then, used to register their names in the servants' camp of English rulers. Thus they deceived themselves from receiving the fruits of modern education and colleges. When the national education movement reached the peak, Lord Curzon came to India its governor-general in 1899. Curzon introduced censorship on allotment of funds for education and contraction. During his period Boycott and Swadesi movement were started on the issue of Partition of Bengal. The teachers and students of the schools and colleges used to leave their institutions and join in the movements.

DIFFERENT PHASES OF NATIONAL EDUCATION MOVEMENT

FIRST PHASE (1906 -1910):

The first phase was associated with the establishment of the National Council of Education at Jadavpur and similar other National educational institutions in the country. The birth of the National Council of Education was facilitated by the previous establishment of other educational institutions in Bengal and outside. The Dawn Society was set up in 1902. It had tremendous influence on the youth of Bengal in those days. Kangra Gurukul was set up in Haridwar by Swami Sradhananda in 1903. Dayananda Saraswati founded Arya Samaj and laid emphasis on Gurukul system of education. The National Art School and the National Medical College came into being forty national schools were set up in East Bengal and eleven such schools in West Bengal. The National Council of Education was organized in March, 1906. It was registered in June, 1906. On the 16th March, 1906 the Dawn Society was converted into the National Council of Education. In 1910 Bengal Partition was revoked and capital of British Empire in India was shifted from Calcutta to Delhi. The heat and emotion generated by Bengal Partition were over. Thus after 1910 the national political movement waned and with it the national education movement also waned. In the first phase of the National Education Movement there was no clear-cut objectives, no clarity of thought; absence of rationality was one of its peculiar characteristic and the first phase was dominated by emotion and sentiment.

SECOND PHASE (1911-1922):

The second upheaval occurred in 1920-22. The Martial Law atrocities in the Punjab and the inadequacy of the Montford reforms (1919) fanned the flame of national feelings in the country. The resolution passed at the Nagpur congress in 1920 advised the gradual withdrawal of children from schools and colleges owned, aided or controlled by government and in place of such schools and colleges, the establishment of national schools and colleges in the various provinces. The 2nd phase came to an end with the withdrawal of the Non-cooperation Movement by Gandhiji in 1922 after the violent Chauri Chaura incident in the district of Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh. The second phase of the movement was more extensive and widespread than the first phase as it was not limited to the Bengal Presidency only. It coincided with the Hind Swaraj-Khilafat and Non-violent Non-cooperation Movement launched by Gandhiji. The whole of India including Bengal, Maharashtra, Punjab, Gujrat, Andhra and Bihar was practically involved in this phase of the movement. During the 2nd phase a large number of schools, colleges and universities came into being. These included the National Muslim University of Aligarh, the Gujrat Vidyapith, the Bihar Vidyapith, the Kashi Vidyapith, the Bengal National University, the Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapith, Quami Vidyapith, the Andhra Vidyapith etc. Hence, the 2nd phase was more rational than the first one and it was more productive and fruitful than the 1st phase.

THIRD PHASE (1930-1938):

The Third phase of the National Education Movement coincided with the Civil Disobedience Movement launched by Gandhiji in 1930. Though the physical existence of the National Education Movement practically came to an end

with the termination of the non-cooperation movement, yet it continued for sometime more in the mental horizon of the people as it was related to revivalism. During this phase, Gandhiji enunciated his famous scheme of Basic education. The Third phase was characterised by consciousness in respect of technical and vocational education. Again, during this phase the National Planning Committee chalked out a National Plan for education in 1938. It was initiated by the National Congress as it came to power in nine provinces under the new constitutional arrangement of 1935.

USHERING A SILVER LINE

National education must meet the national temperament at every point, and develop the national character. The British ideals are good for Britain, but it is India's ideals that are good for India. National education must be controlled by the Indians, shaped by the Indians, carried on by the Indians. It must hold up Indian ideals of devotion, wisdom and morality, and must be permeated by the Indian religious spirit. After independence; there would be a need for a change in the pattern of education, aims and objectives, curriculum and its transaction as the political ideology would be changed after the independence, and the national aims must be changed. There was an urgent need to prepare the citizens to live in a democratic country, to achieve socio-economic development, to achieve unity in diversity (Jagran, 2018). In 1944, Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) submitted a comprehensive Report on Post-War Education Development known as the Sargent report. The Sargent report was the first Commission that made some attempt to solve the educational problems of the country in relation to its needs. It emphasized the need to introduce compulsory and free education for boys and girls within the age of 6 and 11 years (Sadgopal, 2001).

The Education in pre-independent India can be related with religious periods and transformed towards mass education during the British rule. The education system in each religious period has some special characteristics and different contributions to the society (Chouhan, 2016). From, a bird's eye-view, the education system in pre-independent India can be figure-out through the following diagram:

Diagram : 1.1:---Indian Education in Pre-Independent Period

Sl.No	Approximate Span of time	Period	Education System
1.	Before 600 BC	Ancient	<i>Vedic</i>
2.	600 BC --- 1200 AD	Ancient	<i>Buddhist & Jainist</i>
3.	1200 AD --- 1800 AD	Medieval	<i>Islamic</i>
4.	1800 Ad---1947	Modern	<i>The British</i>

CONCLUSION

Das (2015) mentioned that modern educational pattern collapsed the traditional pattern of education and introduced English education including different skill development courses and many more. The British ruled in India and introduced a new shape to the Indian educational system. During this period, western science and literature progressed through English medium educational institutions. The British rulers planned the curriculum, textbooks, and type of teaching methodology for the benefit of their rule and its impact fell upon the provinces. After independence, there was one of the basic necessities was to structure education system for independent India so that Indians would be self-reliant in its own free soil after a prolonged bondage of foreign rule and provision must be made so that every child born in this country can access equal opportunity to learn, grow and excel in life with quality education blended with character; hence a vibrant nation would be created so that Indian education would be stepped into new horizon of its own educational system: an educational system for the Indian who are Indian irrespective of their caste, colour and creed but as an Indian in a true sense.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The researcher truly acknowledges the academicians who helped to assess the emergence of this research paper, the researcher truly thanks to those with whom he has done informal conversation to analyze the conceptual aspects related to the paper, the researcher also acknowledges about those academicians whose papers, books have been accessed, the various e-sources for conceptualizing the pertinent issues related with this paper.

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