The Education System of India (Ancient to Present)

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A B S T R A C T

In this paper we would like to introducing and comparing some basic concept regarding the education system of India through ancient time to modern time education. In India, the education system was very highly skilled, during the ancient time there are lot of universities in India like Nalanda (Bihar), pushpagiri (Odisha), Taxila (gandhara present day Pakistan), vikramshila (Bihar), Nagarjuna Konda (Andhra Pradesh) etc. In these universities students taught about many things like metallurgy, mathematics, medicine, astronomy, politics, art of war etc. But in the modern education system lot of things is missing but the main thing is skill is missing and in ancient time the mode of education is orally transmitted to student by guru in this paper we carefully analyzing and comparing the education system of India trough ancient to modern era. But we found after analyzing and comparing the earlier education system was efficient highly skilled then modern education system.

Keywords: Informal education, formal education, non-formal Education, emphasis, formalized education system, manifests, empathy, monastery, linguistics, fascinating, sustainably

INTRODUCTION

Education is the process of bringing desirable change into the behavior of human being. It can also be defined as a process of acquiring knowledge, habits, values, attitude and skills through instruction or study [1]. Education is the transmission of knowledge, skills and character traits and manifests in various form [2]. Education is training in logical thinking that helps future generations adjust to the ever-changing environment. It is not merely teaching knowledge in a certain faculty or subject or making one fit for gaining jobs or performing well in exams. It also entails clearing the mind, purifying the soul, and realizing one's own self.

ॐ असतो मा सद्गमय
तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय ।
मृत्योर्मा अमृतं गमय ।[8]

Translation:

"From falsehood to lead me to truth,

From darkness lead me to light,

From death lead me to immortality."

There are 3 three types of education

1. Formal Education

2. Informal Education

3. Non formal Education

Formal education:

Formal education occurs within a structured institutional framework, such as public schools, following a curriculum.[3]

Thus, formal education is a process which is consciously and deliberately planned to modify the behaviour of the child with a particular view.

(i)   It is provided according to systematic, planned and guided instruction.

(ii)   Limited to a specific period or stage.

(iii) This curriculum is based on certain aims and objectives. These aims are in conformity with the needs of the society and the country.

(iv)   Formal education is given by well qualified teachers. They are supposed to be efficient in the art of teaching.

(v)   In modern progressive schools, the process of education is not merely restricted the four walls of the class-room. There are more activities outside the class-room than inside it.

Informal Education:

 Informal education is a general term for education that can occur outside of a traditional lecture or school-based learning systems. Informal education entails unstructured learning through daily experiences.[1]

(i)   Incidental and spontaneous

(ii)   Not-pre-planned nor deliberate

(iii)   Not imparted by any specialized agency

(iv)   No prescribed time table or curriculum

(v)   May be negative

(vi)   Life long process

 Non formal Education:

non formal education also follows a structured approach but occurs outside the formal schooling system. Non formal education includes various structured learning situations which do not either have the level of curriculum, syllabus, accreditation and associated with 'formal learning', but have more structure than that associated with 'informal learning '.[2]

Let's start with the ancient education system

In this education system it is not confined to four walls of the class room.

History of ancient education system

In ancient Indian education system, early education in India was mostly available to the children of higher caste, the education is delivered through the "Gurukula". In the gurukula, anyone who wished to study went to the guru's (Teacher) house to study.[4]

In ancient times, guru (teacher) taught students to developing character and instilling human values like moral & ethical behavior, empathy, leadership, creativity, etc. In the Gurukula was not confined to memorizing the lectures/information but was closely linked to the nature and life.

Taxila and Nalanda are great examples of ancient Higher education learning institutes of India. Nalanda was the oldest university of education in the world. These institutions imparted knowledge and attracted a large number of foreign students to study topics such as Buddhist Pali literature, logic, and Pali grammar.

Nalanda

The ancient Nalanda was a center of learning from the 5th century CE to 12th century CE. Located in present day Rajgir, Bihar, India, Nalanda was one of the oldest universities of the world and UNESCO declared the ruins of Nalanda Mahavihara, a world heritage site. The new Nalanda University is envisaged as a center of inter-civilizational dialogue.[5]

The ancient system of education was the education of the Vedas, Brahmanas, Upanishads and Dharmasutras.
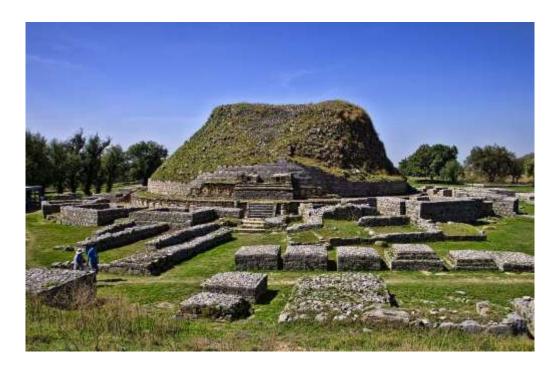
Nalanda was established by emperor Kumargupta I of the Gupta empire around 427 AD, and was supported by numerous Indian and Javanese patrons – both Buddhists and non-Buddhists.

The Chinese scholars I-Qing and Xuan Zang visited Nalanda in the 7th century CE. They have given vivid accounts of Nalanda. They have noted that as many as one hundred discourses happened on a daily basis, in a variety of disciplines through the methods of debate and discussions.

In his biography of Xuan Zang, Hwui-Li states that all the students of Nalanda studied the Great Vehicle (Mahayana) as well as the works of the eighteen Nikaya traditions of Buddhism. In addition to these, they studied other subjects such as the Vedas, Hetuvidyā (Logic), Shabdavidya (Grammar and Philology), Chikitsavidya (Medicine), the works on magic (the Atharvaveda), and Samkhya.[2]

Finally at the end of 12th century invader Bakhtiyar Khilji demolished the monastery, killed the monks and burned the valuable library. At present in view of the fact that this place was a symbol of Asian unity and strength.

Taxila

Taxila was an ancient Indian city, which is now in north-western Pakistan. It is an important archaeological site and the UNESCO declared it to be a World Heritage Site in 1980. Its fame rested on the University, where Chanakya is said to have composed his Arthashastra. Archaeologist Alexander Cunningham discovered its ruins in the mid-19th century.[5]

Teachers had complete autonomy in all aspects from selection of students to designing their syllabi. When the teacher was satisfied with the performance of the students, the course concluded. He would admit as many students as he liked and taught what his students were keen to learn. Debate and discussions were the primary methods of teaching. Teachers were assisted by their advanced level students.[5]

It was a renowned educational and cultural hub during the ancient period, dating back to at least the 5th century BCE. Taxila was an important center for the study of various disciplines, including philosophy, mathematics, medicine, astronomy, linguistics, and military science.

Education system in the Samhita Period, in the Brahminic Period, in the Epic Period and in the Puranic Period:

1) Education system in the Samhita Period:

The Samhitas are the collections of Mantras. It is the oldest part of the Veda. From the very beginning Mantras were collected in the form of Samhitas. This Samhita part is divided in to four parts called – the Rigveda Samhita, the Samaveda Samhita, the Yajurveda Samhita and the Atharvaveda Samhita.

2) Education in the Brahminic Period:

The Brahminic period also maintains the same tradition but it was more refined and developed form of education system then the Samhita period. During the age the Sages or Rishis were dwelling in solitude forests lived in a state of Samadhi for attaining the eternal bliss. This mystical experience manifested in the Brahmanas, the Aranyaka's and the Upanishads. These Brahmanas, Aranyakas and Upanishads are the main sources of knowledge about the education system in Brahminic period.

Subjects of Study in Brahminic period:

1. Rigveda
2. Samaveda
3. Yajurveda
4. Atharvaveda
5. Epic and mythological poem as the fifth Veda
6. Grammar
7. Necrology (pitrya)
8. Arithmetic (rasi)
9. Diviation (Nidhi)
10. Chronology (kal nirupan vidya)
11. The art of war (kshtravidya)
12. Astronomy
13. Snake charming (sarp Vidya)
14. The fine arts
15. Necromancy (bhuta vidya)

Method of study in Brahminic period:

In Brahminic period the methods of study become more and more scientific. Doubts had to be cleared by question, cross question and answers method. These methods were explained in a very fascinating manner by employing all the available sources viz. – illustration, stories, and parables39. But the Upanishads mentions that the main part of education was the work of the student and not the teacher.

Education of woman's in Brahminic period:

Women were highly respected and honored in Brahminic period. They had the fullest extent of freedom to develop their personality. It was the notable element of the Brahminic period that women participated in sacrificial ritual. Wives of rishi's were the partner with their husbands in spiritual rituals.

Education of other caste in Brahminic period:

In Brahminic period the outlines of the caste system having become something changed. The studentship was open for the first three classes. The Brahmanas were received education in the Vedas and the other Sastras. But the Vedic study came to be regarded as of secondary importance of Kshatriyas and Vaishyas. The Kshatriyas generally studied the ṣhatravidyā, the Niti shastra or the Dhanurveda which they had to learn from the Brahmanas. The Vaishyas, the Śudras too learnt agriculture, cattle rearing, dairy farming and handicrafts. They were not allowing to receiving education in the Vedas. But their main pursuit of knowledge was the Deva-Jana Vidya which means music, dancing and instrument playing. The Brahmanas imparted to the Śudras education in these subjects.

3) Education system in epic period

The Ramayana and the Mahabharata were the two main epics of ancient India. The value of these two epics was considerable indeed because these two epics give us a very clear idea about the highly developed culture of ancient India. But these two epics do not contain much regard to education. These epics mainly deal with action not in the thought.

Subject to study in the epic period:

The Ramayana and the Mahabharata give the detailed syllabus of various subjects. During the age Veda, Ānvīṣikī, Vārttā, Dandaṇīti, were the main subjects of study. Besides these many other subjects like Yuktiśāstra, Śabdaśāstra, Gandarvaśāstra, Purana, Itihāsa, Ākhyāna, and Kalāvidyā were included in the curriculum.

Educational Institution of epic period:

1) Agnisthāna – The place of worship.

2) Brhama sthāna - The place of study Veda.

3) Viṣṇu sthāna - The place for teaching Rājnītividya.

4) Mehandra sthāna - Military section.

5) Vivasvata sthāna - Astronomy section.

6) Soma sthāna – Section of Botany.

7) Garuḍa sthāna - Section dealing with Transport and conveyances.

8) Kārtikeya sthāna - Military organization

4) Education system in the puranic period

The word Purana means old narrative i.e., what is very old. The Vedic and Buddhist literature mentioned that it was the fifth Veda. It denotes the history of the world. From the Atharvaveda, for the first time we find the word Purana. It indicates that it was a class of work. But when we go through the details of the Puranas, we find that it was designed for those who had no access to Vedic literature.

Subjects of Study in puranic period:

During the period subjects of study were categorized into two heads viz.,

(1) Primary course and

(2) secondary course.

The Primary courses comprises reading, writing, and arithmetic, storytelling, drawing, singing, dancing and swing for girls particularly.

The secondary courses comprise numerous subjects. Basically, the fourteen Vaidya's were recommended by the Puranas. These fourteen Vidhya's were – four Vedas, six Vedāṅgas, Puranas, Nyāya, Mīmāṁsā, and Dharmaśāstra.[6]

BRITISH EDUCATION SYSTEM IN INDIA

HISTORY OF BRITISH EDUCATION SYSTEM IN INDIA

Before the British rule in India, gurukuls, provided education to all Hindus without restrictions. Also, the Mughal empire influenced Muslim education. The young students were educated through maktabs, madras, tols, and pathsalas about ancient kinds of literature, along with a bit of awareness of scientific advancement.

British Education System in India introduced the concept of practical learning and modern education in India. They introduced significant acts, commissions, and policies that shaped the modern view of education, still persisting in India. Below you will learn about the British Education System in India, its history, and the development of the modern education system with emphasis on Wood's Despatch in 1854 and the impact of British education in India.

The history of British education policies in India can be divided into two sections:

1. Under the East India Company, i.e., before 1857,

2. Under the British Crown, i.e., after 1857.

Development of Education in British India before 1857

The development of British education system in India before 1857 is as follows:

- **1781** – Warren Hastings, governor general of Bengal, established the first educational institution, Calcutta Madrasa in Calcutta for Islamic Law Studies.

- **1784** – William Jones founded the Asiatic Society of Bengal to understand and study the culture and history of India. At the same time, Bhagwat Gita was translated into English by Charles Wilkins.

- **1791** – The Sanskrit College was established by Jonathan Duncan, a resident of Benares, to study and understand Hindu philosophies and laws.

- **1800** – Fort William college was founded by Richard Wellesley, governor-general, in Calcutta for training the EIC's civil servants in Indian languages. However, the college was shut down in two years as the British government (in England) disproved the appointment of Indians as English Civil Servants.

The Charter Act of 1813:

The first step taken by the British government towards modern education in India was the charter act 1813.

The English Education Act of 1835:

Macauley's act of Indian education system, or the English Education Act of 1835

- As per this act of the British education system in India, the government should focus on spending resources for teaching literature and modern sciences only in English.

- The medium of education in all schools and colleges should be English.

1843-53 – As an experiment, James Jonathan introduced one model school in each tehsil of North West province. It was suggested that vernacular language should be used for teaching.

Wood's Dispatch (1854):

attempt to Wood's Dispatch, also known as the Manga Carta of British Education in India, was the first envisage mass education in India.

Hunter Commission on Indian Education in 1882:

The hunter commission on Indian Education of 1882 asked for an increase in government efforts to achieve the objective of formal education in vernacular languages.

Saddler University Commission (1917-19):

Because of the poor performance of students at Calcutta University, the Saddler University Commission was set up. It reviewed all the universities in India.[7]

NEW EDUCATION POLICY (NEP) 2020

What is new education policy 2020?

an education system rooted in Indian ethos that contributes directly to transforming India, that is Bharat, sustainably into an equitable and vibrant knowledge society, by providing high quality education to all, thereby making India a global knowledge superpower." The NEP 2020 is founded on the five guiding pillars

of Access, Equity, Quality, Affordability and Accountability. It will prepare our youth to meet the diverse national and global challenges of the present and the future.

Part I. SCHOOL EDUCATION

Part II. HIGHER EDUCATION

PART III. OTHER KEY AREAS OF FOCUS

PART IV. MAKING IT HAPPEN[9]

DISCUSSION

ADVANTAGE AND DISADVANTAGES OF ANCIENT AND PRESENT EDUCATION SYSTEM

Benefits of ancient education system

1) It focuses on the all-round development of a student.

2) Practical science was taught.

3) No pressure on student, which helps then to concentrate on the topic clearly.

4) No craving and tension of ranks.

5) Focus on student learn values and ethics.

6) Interaction between the students and teachers is more compared to present day system.

7) The respect of students to their teachers.

8) Class room will be inside the forests, and open area, which helps students to keep them healthy.

9) Students not get to much pressure to their studies and syllabus.

10) Ancient system is much towards practically rather than theorical. Where students learn things by doing practically rather than mugging up which happens in present genratio0n students.

Disadvantages of ancient education system

1) Females are not admitted.

2) No standard syllabus.

3) No conventional and examination system.

4) There used to be discrimination at the entry level about the admission in gurukul.

Benefits Of present education system

For Students:

1) Holistic Development

2) Flexible Learning Pathways

3) Reduced curriculum burden

4) inclusive education

5) skill development

For Teachers:

1) professional development opportunities

2) enhanced teaching practices

3) integration of technology

4)   recognition of leadership and mentorship

5)   collaborative learning communities

6)   empowerment as facilitators

Disadvantages Of present education system

1)   Increased Pressure and Competition for Students

2)   Narrowing of Subject Choices

3)   Insufficient Teacher Training and Support

4)   Imbalance in Digital Infrastructure

5)   Standardization Challenges

6)   Insufficient Implementation Strategy

7)   Some teachers are reading but not teaching

8)   Can't find difference between rice bag and school bag[10]

Table-1 comparison between ancient and present education system

S.NO.	PARAMETERS	ANCIENT EDUCATION SYSTEM	PRESENT EDUCATION SYSTEM
1	LOCATION	Gurukul, forests, open areas Some universities like Nalanda and Taxila etc..	Formal buildings known as schools, college and institutes etc..
2	TEACHING METHODS	Prioritized instruction over memorizing information and tradition of speech and practical science.	Instructional strategies, such as technology-based learning, talks, lectures, and practical exercises.
3	PRIME FOCUS	Topics as mathematics, arithmetic, philosophies, medicine, astronomy, polity, administration, and science etc…	Provides board choice of courses in social sciences, humanities, science, arts, math's, economy, computer, technology, and law etc..
4	TECHERS	Religious teachers (mainly Buddhist and brahmans)	Professionally trained teachers and professors etc..
5	EDUCATION RESOURCES	Vedas, puranas, upvedas, shastra, Aranyaka and Upanishads etc…	Books, internet, digital library, content, research paper and notes

Conclusion:

As we can see that from above passage and table, we finally conclude that boths education system has advantages and disadvantages. In the present education system, there is lackness in skill of teaching technique, present education system tilted towards more economical and commercial rather than social well fare. It means present education system lackness in moral education. Present education system aims to make more money rather than developing techniques and skill. But ancient education system aims to make character, behavior and lots of knowledge of nature and life. Government should focus on developing skill and technique rather than making money.

We should learn from ancient education system to upgrade and improve the present education system.

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