UNIT 1: EDUCATION IN ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL INDIA

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1.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- explain the education system in ancient India
- elaborate the education system of Vedic period
- analyse the education system of Buddhist period
- describe the education system of Muslim Period

1.2 INTRODUCTION

Education in Ancient India refers the education system that prevailed

before British rule in our country. Generally, it can be divided as Vedic period, Buddhist period as well as Muslim or Medieval Period. It talks about how the education system focused on all aspects of life and aimed at raising a healthy individual who is not only knowledgeable but also physically fit. The teachings were based on the Vedas as well as Upanishads in the Vedic period, Gautama Buddha's principles in the Buddhist period and on the Quran in the Medieval period. Moreover, the education system has a heritage of being practically accessible and also related with life.

The Indian history is said to have begun with the Indus Valley Civilization which existed 3000 B.C. Ancient Indian Civilization had always been influenced by religious belief. The chief aim of education in Ancient India was to achieve emancipation or liberation. Ancient Indian society was also influenced by its caste system. The Brahmans or the priestly class took care of the spiritual needs of the people of the society and served as teachers in the ancient education system. The Kshatriyas looked after the political affairs of the country. The Vaishyas or the class of traders controlled the trade and economy of the country. The Sudras were the lowest class who did all the other manual work of the society.

The Buddhist era of education came after many problems created by the Vedic system of education. The Vedic system of education was purely based on religion and class structure. Buddhist education was based on the philosophy of Buddhism, mainly consisting the teachings of Buddha.

When Muslims rulers came to India and established their own rule, they imported their own system of education consisting of Maktabs, Madrasas, Mosques etc. The Muslim system of education spread from 10th century A.D. to the middle of the 18th century.

In this unit you will learn about the education system in ancient India. We shall discuss the education system during Vedic, Buddhist and Muslim era in the following subsections.

1.3 EDUCATION DURING VEDIC PERIOD

Vedic system of education is probably the oldest system of education

in entire world. Vedic Rishis were spreading knowledge not only for India, but for the entire world. They brought humanity into the light from darkness of ignorance and spread the light of knowledge among people of our society. Roughly it was from 1500 B.C. to 600 B.C. Education during the Vedic period mainly concentrated on education based on the four Vedas. These were (i) Rig Veda (ii) Sama Veda (iii) Atharva Veda (iv) Yajur Veda.

The word 'Veda' means 'knowledge'. Vedas means wisdom; knowledge or vision and it manifests the language of the Gods in human speech. Vedas are the oldest scriptures of the world. These were composed by the Rishis. The Rishis had composed the Vedas to educate the people. They contain knowledge on the form of hymns or verses necessary for every individual to lead a happy and peaceful life.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1. What does the word "Veda" means?

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Q 2: Name the four Vedas.

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1.3.1 Salient Features of the Vedic System of Education

The system of Vedic education, which is considered as the oldest system in the world has certain peculiarities and constituent characteristics of its own which has drawn attention even to our modern education. The educative principles and methods underlying the system are still found to be inspiring and relevant in the context of reform in our present system of education. Some of the distinguishing features of this education may be described as follows:

- **Aims of Education:** Self- realization was the ultimate aim of

education. In other words we can say that attainment of salvation was the main aim of the Vedic education system. Another aim of education was to prepare the students to lead a happy and prosperous life. They were taught to become socially conscious, responsible, dutiful and morally strong citizens of the country. Main aim of education during this period was all round development of the body, mind and soul of the pupils. However, the immediate aim of education was to prepare the different Varnas to meet their actual needs of daily life.

- **No State Control on Education:** There was a speciality of Vedic education as far as its organisational set up was concerned. The state or the Government or the Royal Authority did not control the education system. It was a private affair of the people which was managed entirely by the Brahmans. The state never imposes any conditions or rule that would affect the teachers in their work. Teachers determined educational policy, framed the curriculum, designed methods of teaching and undertook disciplinary rules and conduct. The Government or the Royal authority provided financial assistance and land grant to Guru from time to time without imposing any control.
- **Curriculum:** Vedic curriculum was based on the principle of utility, practicability, and dynamism. Study of Vedas was made compulsory for realisation of the spiritual need of life. Vedic knowledge was considered as source of all knowledge. In order to make the study of the Vedas more scientific, provision was made for the study of the six Vedangas such as Siksha, Kalpa, Byakarana, Nirukta, Jyotisha and Chanda. Logic was taught with a view to develop the ability of reasoning and to distinguish between right and wrong, truth and untruth. There was the provision in curriculum to study subjects like philosophy, mathematics, history, economics, astrology, politics etc. to serve the intellectual need. The subjects like fine arts, sculpture, medicine, law, archery, commerce, agriculture, animal rearing

etc. were also included in the curriculum. Thus, both theoretical and practical subjects were included in the curriculum to show the variety and elasticity of the curriculum.

- **Method of Teaching:** In Vedic period the methods of teaching generally consisted recitation by the teacher and repetition by the pupil. Three principles were followed in the method of teaching viz. hearing, thinking and meditation. The method of teaching laid down by the Vedic education emphasised not only on how the scriptures were to be studied but also indicated how emotions and sentiments were to be trained. An integral development of all aspects of the human personality was the aim of this education. Therefore, memorisation, repetition, reflection and reasons were methods followed for developing the intellectual, moral, social, cultural, religious aspects of human life. The teachers were very particular about the correct learning of all vowels and consonants and other rules of literature. More importance was given on correct pronunciation of the sounds, words and verses of the original form, as they were to pass on from one generation to the other generations. There was a general belief of the people in that age that incorrect pronunciation of the "Hymns" caused sin and destroyed sanctity and purity of the Vedas.
- **Teacher-Student Relationship:** The relation between teachers and pupils in this period was like that of father and son. As there was no government institution, the pupils used to reside in the Guru's house and education system was quite residential in character. The Gurukula system had provided an ideal situation for development of a cordial relationship between the teachers and the taught. It was the moral responsibility of the pupils as part of their learning to undertake all the household activities of the Guru's house. The pupils collected fire-wood and the necessary materials and equipment for "Jagya" held early mornings. They used to keep Guru's house clean and tidy. The

teacher took care and responsibility of the students, so long they were resided in his house. It was his responsibility to offer medical help to students when required. He used to collect all necessary materials for fooding and lodging of the students. He never let them suffer in anyway as long as they remained as disciples in his house and never allowed the students to feel displeasure or dissatisfaction.

- **Discipline:** There was generally no provision of corporal punishment. Self-discipline was considered to be the best discipline. The life of the students was moulded in such a manner that principles of conduct and discipline were automatically inculcated in them. In that case, there was no problem of maintaining discipline by the teacher. The system made the students self-disciplined. From the Smritis we came to know that there was provision of punishment for delinquent students who violated the prescribed rules and regulations set by the teacher. These punishments were usually spiritual, for example, observing fasts. It is evident that this method of punishment was based on the principle of self-reform and these punishments were more effective and useful than the modern punishment system. Pupils from royal families, who stayed in the Gurukula could not keep pocket money with them. They were to follow the principle of 'simple living and high thinking'.
- **Women Education:** During the Vedic period, women freely pursued knowledge and were given equal status with men. Women also performed religious rituals with men. Women education was at its peak in the Vedic period. There was the proud history of women's education during that period. The women used to receive education with men equally without any restrictions. As a result, a good number of women scholars can be found to exist in the Vedic period. The educated women were called the "Brahmabadinis" or "Rishika". They used to compose the Vedic hymns. Educated women were highly honoured

member in the society and they were called "Devis". The educated women were the source of inspiration to their male counterpart. The parents were also proud of their educated daughters. The renowned women scholars in Vedic period were Apala, Lopamudra, Vishwambara, Urvashi, Sabitri, Devajani, Autrayee, Maitrayee, Gargee and Lilabati. Maitrayee and Gargee were the renowned philosophers and Lilabati was the famous mathematician. The ladies were taught to be better fitted to study music, singing and dancing. They were also given training in the handicraft like spinning and weaving in their own families.

1.3.2 The Gurukula System

Vedic system of education is known as Gurukula system. Although at that time there were other institutions like "Parishad" and "Sanmilan" that used to take responsibility of education, yet Gurukula system was the most popular educational authority run by the Guru.

Gurukula means 'the family of the teacher'. The students stayed in the Gurukula like the member of the Guru's family. The main aim behind sending a student to the Gurukula was to give him an opportunity to mould his life and character on the ideals of teacher by living in close contact with him. The students were admitted here after an initiation ceremony and received education for a period of twelve years as Brahmacharya. The student had to do the household works for the Guru such as tending cows, collecting fire etc. The Guru also treated him like his son. In the Gurukula system the teacher was a very respectable person and any violation of the Guru's instruction was regarded as a sin and subject to punishment. The specific features of the Gurukula system have been discussed below:

- **Admission of the Pupils into the Gurukula system:** In the Gurukula system the students were admitted at the age of twelve. The admission ceremony in the Gurukula system was known

as 'Upanayana' Ceremony which lasted for three days. The term "Upanayana" meant "bringing the child and sitting by the side of the Guru for education and instruction." Through this Upanayana ceremony the students started their spiritual life by taking up "Brahmacharya." They were to live a pure and holy and spiritual life in the Gurukula. It was regarded as the re-birth or 'Dwija' which meant the "Second Birth" of an individual. Also, the life in the Guru's house could not make the students completely cut off from the family life because they were to live in the Guru's house as members of the family and undertake all the household activities of the Guru.

- **Studentship Period:** In Gurukula system the period of studentship was normally twelve years. During this period the student had to live in Guru's house. Sometimes the period of studentship was longer than the fixed period. It is recorded that a student resided as long as for thirty-two years at his Guru's house.
- **Duties and Responsibilities of the Students:** In Gurukula system the student had to perform many duties. The pupils had to tend the sacred fires. In those days, the pupils were usually lived with their teachers as a member of his family. They had to do all types of houseold works at their Guru's house. The students accompanied their teachers wherever he went. They also had to beg food for their guru.

  Till the attainment of proficiency, the students had to live in the Gurukula. During their stay in the Ashrama they were required to perform all the duties necessary for its maintenance. All the students collected water, firewood, kept the Guru's house clean and tidy, washed the utensils, prepared and collected necessary materials for the "Jagya" and so on. The students used to graze the cattle, go for alms twice daily and also attend to the Guru for study of the Vedas.

A student had to offer his prayer thrice a day- morning, mid-day and evening. One had to perform the daily prayer outside his room. To obtain physical purity, which was intimately connected with mental purity, a student had to take regular baths every day.

- **Simple Living and High Thinking:** Student life in the Guru's house was characterised by simple living and high thinking. They were to give up all physical comfort, joy and delight. They used to sleep on the floor, take simple food and used simple garments. They could not use scented things, kept themselves away from music or dancing and attending the public meeting as well as ceremonies. They could not accept or use gold and silver, could not take food at improper time and could not wear shoes. They were to keep themselves away from all sorts of sensory pleasure while in the Guru's house. Thus, they had to lead a very simple life by maintaining strict discipline.
- **Duties and Position of the Teacher:** Teachers in the Gurukula were man of highest calibre and renunciation. The teachers occupied their place in the society next to God. In the Gurukula system the teachers paid much attention to all round development of their pupils.

  Teachers in the Gurukula possessed high moral character. By nature, they were simple, honest, unassuming, upright, bold and active. They lived a life of obscurity voluntarily. They denied all physical comforts or luxuries and enjoyed only spiritual and mental pleasure. Intellectual luxuries such as books, scriptures, discussions etc. were necessary features the life of a teacher during the Vedic age.
- **Farewell to the Pupils:** In the Gurukula system the concluding ceremony of learning was known as "Samabartana". As you know that the student life in Gurukula system began with 'Upanayana' ceremony and ended with 'Samabartana' ceremony. Its meaning was to "go back to one's own house" after completion of

"Brahmacharya" in the Guru's house. After the end of education, the simple ceremony was observed where they used to be honoured by the Guru. They used to take bath in scented water, shave the beard, and wear new garments and ornaments. They were then declared as "Snataka". Guru used to serve the students with ghee and honey in their mouth and called "Modhuporka". Then the students were to attend the convocation addressed by the Guru. This address was highly significant in terms of providing inspiration and guidance to students for their future life as effective members of the society.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 3: Mention two aims of education highlighted in Vedic System of Education.

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Q 4: What is “Samabartana”?

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1.3.3 Aims of Vedic Education System

It is universally accepted that the aims of education derived their inspiration from the philosophy of life. In ancient India, religious requirements greatly influenced all walks of life including education. The main aims of education during Vedic period are discussed below:

- **Obtaining Moksha:** Salvation or freedom from the cycle of birth and death was the most cherished and ultimate aim of every man or women in ancient India and education was considered the most important means of preparing an individual for this.
- **Inculcation of Religious and Spiritual Values:** Another important aim of Vedic education was inculcating into the minds of pupils a spirit of being pious. Studies commenced and ended

with religious rituals.

The life of the pupil was full of ritual acts. Morning started with religious prayers and the night ended with the same. Every pupil was required to perform religious ceremonies. Students had to participate in all religious festivals. Education without religious instruction was not considered as education.

- **Character Development:** In the Vedic period, much stress was laid on character building. Self-discipline was regarded as the chief concern of Vedic education. Control of senses and practice of virtues made one a man of character. Moral excellence could come only through practicing moral values. The teacher and the taught were ideals of morality. Lack of moral values was considered dangerous.
- **Personality Development:** The Guru in the Vedic period realised that the development of personality was the sole aim of education. Human personality was regarded as the supreme work of God. The qualities of self-esteem, self-confidence, self-resistance and self-respect were the personality traits that the educator tried to include in his pupils through example.
- **Development of Civic Responsibilities and Social Values:** Another important aim of Vedic education was the development of civic responsibilities and social values. The Brahmachari after his education in the Gurukula went back to the society to serve the people. He was expected to be hospitable to the guest and charitable to the needy.

1.4 EDUCATION DURING BUDDHIST PERIOD

The sixth century B.C. may be described as the cardinal epoch not only in the history of India but also of the world. During this century religious reformations took place in most of the countries of the world. The movement, which gave the greatest shock to traditional Hinduism, was started by Gautam Buddha. Gautam Buddha established a new religion in our country

called 'Buddhism'. Buddhism has always been considered not just a new religion, but also as a natural development of the Indian mind in its various manifestations, i.e., religious, philosophical, social and political.

We can say that Buddhist education was also a product of the prevailing Brahmanical education system. However, it was not based on Vedic study and its teachers were Brahmans.

It is a historical fact that Buddhist education and learning cantered round monasteries. Buddhist education had no independent existence apart from the monasteries. Educational opportunities were given to those who were in the monasteries only. The Buddhist monks were only the custodians and bearers of the Buddhist culture. The Buddhist monastery was open to all and to those who accepted the Buddhist order. Hence, the system of Buddhist monasteries incorporates in itself the educational system, because the practices and regulations of both were similar. We can determine the form of Buddhist education from these principles and practices.

1.4.1 The System of Admission into the Buddhist Education

The ceremony of admission into the Buddhist system of education was similar to the Vedic system of education which we have already discussed above. The Vinaya Pitaka, a famous Buddhist scripture states with regard to the nature of admission, "Let him who desire to receive ordination first cut off his hair and beard; let him put on yellow robes, adjust his upper robe so as to cover one shoulders, salute the feet of the bhiksus with his head, and sit down squatting, than let him raise his joined hands and tell them to say - take my refuge in the Buddha, I take my refuse in Dharma, I take my refuse in the Sangha." This act of admission was called 'Pabbajja'.

Pabbajja (The First Ordination):

The word Pabbajja means going out of home into the Buddhist order. On completion of Pabbajja ceremony the students had to enter into a strict disciplinary life of the Sangha. An environment of

self-discipline was created in the Sangha by controlling all the ways and means of physical need and instinctive pleasure. The students were to keep themselves from all sorts of excitements and temptations quite voluntarily. Strict rule and disciplined were to be maintained in the Sangha. The student was to take a vow that he will prostrate before the feet of Buddha, seek the shelter of Dharma and enter into the Sangha. He was not to kill any living being, not to accept any bribe, not to tell lies, not to use any drug and not to take food at improper time, not to speak ill of anybody and not to take interest in music and dancing. Teachers used to keep faith in the personality of the students. As such physical punishment to students was quite unknown to them.

For the Pabbajja ceremony the minimum age was eight years. After the Pabbajja ceremony education continued for twelve years. When students attained 20 years of age they received full fledge membership of the monastery.

After getting admission they were given ten advices to follow. These were as follows:

- Practice non-violence
- Speak truth
- Do not steal
- Do not collect
- Observe celibacy
- Give up luxury
- Renounce wealth and do not touch women
- Do not use fragrant things
- Do not eat anything untimely
- Do not use soft and very comfortable bed.

The following classes of persons were excluded from admission into the monastery

- One affected with the five diseases viz. Leprosy, boils, dry leprosy, consumption and fits

- One who was in the royal service
- A proclaimed robber, or one who had broken out of jail, or wore the mark of misdeeds
- One who was punished by scourging or branding
- A debtor
- A slave
- A eunuch
- A physically deformed person or anyone whose limbs were cut off

Upasampada (The Final Ordination)

The Upasampada ceremony was performed in a different manner from that of Pabbajja. The monk after having devoted himself fully to his studies for twelve years and having attained the age of twenty presented himself before an assembly of all the monks of the sangha. The Upasampada ceremony was based on group consideration and only a unanimous decision or the favour of the majority which enabled a monk to become a permanent or life member of the Sangha. After the Upasampada ceremony the students became a full-fledged monk and thereafter had no connection with his family or with the shackles of worldly life.

The Buddhist education system was residential by nature. A group of young Bhikshus or monks living in a Vihar under the guardianship of a common teacher, the Upajjahaya or Acharya, who was responsible for their health, education, manners, morals and spiritual upliftment.

1.4.2 Aims of Education

Buddha urged his followers the four 'Noble truth', concerning sorrow, the cause of sorrow, the remedy or destruction of sorrow. In other words, he pointed out four certainties- there is suffering in life, this suffering has a cause, this suffering could be removed by destroying its cause, the cause of the suffering is desire for material enjoyments

and earthly things. Generally, the aim of Buddhists education was based on Vedic ideals and philosophy of emancipation. Education was to make one free from all worries, desires and temptations of life that captured the soul.

Buddhist education believed in teaching eight noble fold paths to its monk. The aim of education was to make people familiar with these paths and practises in life.

The Eight Noble fold paths are as mentioned:

- **Right views or Faith:** The knowledge of the four truths which Buddha enunciated in his first sermon
- **Right Aspiration:** That requires us to renounce pleasures, to bear no malice and do no harm to others
- **Right Speech:** Signifying that we should abstain from lying, slander, abuse, harsh words and idle talk.
- **Right Action:** Meaning that we should restrain from taking undue amount or abstain from carnal excesses.
- **Right Livelihood:** Requiring us to abstain from any of the forbidden modes of living
- **Right Effort:** Consisting in supressing the rising of evil conditions, in removing those that have arisen and in stimulating good states or conditions.
- **Right Mindfulness:** Requiring us to look at the body and the spirit in such a way as to remain composed and careful, overcoming both hankering and dejection
- **Right Contemplation:** Requires us to take the form of four meditations. It is the end and the crown of the eightfold path.

Another important aim of Buddhist education was to teach the monks the law of 'karma', its working and the transmission of souls; giving moral education was the aim of Buddhist education system.

Another aim of Buddhist education was the teaching of Ahimsa. This philosophy of Buddhism preached that the spirit of love is more important than good deeds. Non-violence towards life is recognised

as an integral part of life.

All round development of child's personality was an important aim of Buddhist education. This all-round development included physical, moral and intellectual development.

Another aim of Buddhist education was formation of character of the students.

Another very important aim of Buddhist education was the propagation of religion and inculcation of religious feelings. Education was considered to be the means of attaining Nirvana.

The Daily Routine of Students

Like Vedic education system in Buddhist education system also the students had to maintain a strict daily routine. You have already come to know the daily life of the students in Vedic education system. Now we will discuss the daily life of students in the Buddhist period.

Like Vedic education, in Buddhist education also one of the important duty of the student was to serve his teacher. In this education system, both the teachers and students were to live in the Sangha together. As such it had provided better opportunity for their coming close to each other. Relation between the teachers and students were very intimate like that of father and son. The number of students being very small, the teacher could give individual attention to them. A teacher would accompany the students to beg for alms, and travelling abroad. The students were responsible for preparation of food and in serving day to day needs of the teacher. They were also to take care of the teacher when he was ill. The teacher was also responsible in providing all forms of help and guidance to students in their intellectual and spiritual pursuit of knowledge. He was to give medical help where the students fell ill. All these indicate the existence of close cordial relationship between the two agencies.

Curriculum:

The major objective of education was the development of spiritual senses. As a result, the study of religion naturally dominated the curriculum. The Bhiksus were to learn the teaching of Lord Buddha. The holy book Tripitaka was the main subject matter of the curriculum. Besides spiritual education, there was provision for secular instruction in the curriculum.

Study of religious books was most important in Buddhist education system. Suttanta, Vinaya and Dharma were the main subjects prescribed for the study. This type of curriculum was mainly for the monks. Besides religious education, spinning, weaving, cloth printing, tailoring, sketching, accountancy, medicine, surgery and coinage were the other areas of Buddhist education.

Education during Buddhist period may be classified into two parts: Primary education and Higher education. In the primary education, importance was given to the teaching of reading, writing and counting. In the higher education, religion, philosophy, military skill, medical science and other higher-level subjects were taught.

Method of Teaching:

In Buddhist education system highest emphasis was given on purity of conduct. In primary education, religious subjects were taught. Students memorised the lessons by hearing them and repeating them to one another. Moral education was also essential. Students acquired knowledge by discussing with one another. Thus, the method of teaching was mostly oral. During this period, the art of writing had developed, but it could not touch the field of education. Lecture and argumentation had a significant place in Buddhism. Mutual argumentation and debate had a particular importance of its own in the scheme education because in argumentation and debate illustration and proofs were essential. During the Buddhist period, efforts were made for the expansion of local languages. Due to the non-availability of writing materials, Buddhist education remained oral.

Women Education

In the earlier days Lord Buddha had not permitted women to join the Sanghas. The rules of the Sangha for women were very hard. The women were tested for two years. They had to live separately from the monks. Although the daily routine for both was the same. The status of women in the Sangha was lower than the monk. Women were educated by one particular monk twice a month in the presence of another monk. Any women who wanted to become a permanent nun had to obtain the agreement of all the members of the Sangha.

Buddhist literature does not say much with regard to the education of women. But it is evident that women showed a strong tendency towards religion. For an instance, Visakha, Supiya, Amrapali etc. were very religious minded. In the propagation of the Buddhist religion and the spirit of service, friendliness and sympathy of these women contributed a great deal towards the mental and moral upliftment of women.

From the above discussion, it can be concluded that Buddhist system of education had developed out of the Vedic system. The basic principles of these two systems of education bore similar elements and characterstics. As such there were many things in common between them. However, the Buddhist system had its own educational principles and its organisational pattern was somewhat different from that of the Vedic system. Some historical evidences mention that Buddhist educational system gained international reputation. Students came from other countries to India to pursue Buddhist education. As a result, international exchange of culture was made possible through it.



LET US KNOW

Buddha's philosophy is described as 'Tripitakas'-

i) Vinayapitaka (Rules of Conduct)

ii) Suttapitaka (Buddha's Sermon)

iii) Abhidhammapitaka (Exposition of philosophical theories)



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 5: Name one famous Buddhist Scripture.

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Q 6: List the main subjects of the Buddhist Curriculum.

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1.5 EDUCATION DURING MUSLIM PERIOD (MEDIEVAL SYSTEM)

Muslim system of education which is also known as Medieval System of Education in India had a long history of about 600 years. Muslim rule in the country had started with Mahammad Ghori, who invaded India in 1194. They were originally the invaders of the North, but gradually occupied the Indian Territory and started to rule over it. It was comparatively a long period of time which had not only the influence of political system of the country, but also had its impact on cultural, religious and educational life of the people. Muslim rule gave a new turn to education in India and their system became an indispensable part of Indian culture. Their education was mainly dominated by religion. The people and the community had deep faith in religion. It had also a new organisational pattern of education in India, much different from that of the Hindus and the Buddhists system. Following are the main features of Muslim education.

1.5.1 Main Features of Muslim Education

- **Establishment of New Types of Educational Institutions:** Muslim rulers established different types of educational institutions based on needs and importance of the students. These types of educational institutions included maktabs, madrasas etc. Maktabs were established for primary education which was attached to mosques. Madrassas was established as institution for higher learning. In these Maktabs and Madrasas the students were taught the Quran and other customs associated with Islam. Even at the higher level, instructions in Islamic religion were imparted through the medium of philosophy, history and literature. Another type of institution was known as Karkhans which provided technical training in handicrafts based on the system of apprenticeship. They were, in fact manufacturing centres where apprenticeship would observe and practice craftwork under the guidance of a teacher who had earned reputation in a particular vocation.
- **Initiation Ceremony:** Muslim education had also its initiation ceremony. In Muslim education system the initiation ceremony was quit colourful. It was known as 'Bismillah Khani'. 'Bismillah Khani' means the child is introduced to education after invoking God. Again, the ceremony for girls was called 'zarfishani' which means shrinking of gold.
- **Supremacy of Persian Language:** Persian, which was also the court language of the Muslim kings, was the popular medium of instruction in the Muslim education. Due to the supremacy of Persian, ancient Indian languages like Sanskrit and Pali became obsolete. Persian became the state language during the Muslim period. Only those who knew could secure a hand in the general administration. This provided an incentive to the Indians to study Persian and Arabic languages. As a result of the Muslim rulers and other influential persons the study of Quran and other texts

of Islam were introduced in the educational system.

- **Organisational System of Education:** Organisational set up of the Muslim or medieval education was basically different from that of the Vedic and Buddhist system. Education was controlled and regulated by the royal authority for which autonomy was absent. The king established Maktabs and Madrassa, offered financial assistance, gave scholarship, prizes and recognition to students. The teachers were also under control of the royal authority. They did not have power to organise, control and regulate education on their own. Methods of education was also designed by the king and not by the teacher. The teachers were to obey the orders and instruction of the king.

  Organisational structure of education was divided into primary and higher imparted into Maktabs and Madrassa respectively. Maktabs were attached to Mosque. The Madrassas were established in the urban areas and the renowned scholars were appointed for their administration. The king and the rich people of the locality used to offer financial help to the institutions.

- **Useful Education:** One significant feature of Muslim education was that their education was more practical and need based rather than being religious and spiritual. More importance was given on study of the practical subjects that serve the need of individual and society. These included warfare, use of weapons, singing, dancing, fine-arts, handicraft, sculpture, and architecture. The Muslims rulers had felt the need of military education in order to conquer, expand and defeat their enemy. They were also lovers of music, art, culture and literature for which provision for their training was made. A group of artisans and sculptors were well trained and developed in order to construct building, royal places, mosques and tombs in the kingdom. The Tajmahal, Fatehpur Sikri, Bulland Darwaja, Red Fort of Delhi etc. provide clear evidence of this.

1.5.2 Curriculum of Muslim Education

It should be noted here that Vedic and Buddhist Curriculum did not have any impact on Muslim curriculum. Their religion, language and the culture being basically different, curricular contents were prepared accordingly. Their curriculum may be broadly divided in to primary and higher.

Primary curriculum was meant for the Maktabs. The primary stage was confined to reading, writing and arithmetic and religious education. In Madrassa, curriculum was of high order. Here, the curriculum was comprehensive enough to include in the study of ethics, divinity, astronomy, algebra, geometry, physics, medicine, natural philosophy, law, rituals, accounts agriculture, economics and history. Science started receiving importance over philosophy during the medieval period. Arts and crafts were also taught in separate schools under the patronage of the rulers. King Akbar had modified the curriculum to make it more secular, practical and useful for life. He also included Sanskrit language and culture for study of the Hindu students.

1.5.3 Women Education During Muslim Period

Women education in general was not encouraged during the Muslim or Medieval period. The 'Purdah' system made it a difficulty for Muslim women to receive education. As a result, women education suffered. More particularly, the rural women largely suffered from illiteracy.

The members of the royal families were however given education at home by private tutors. In this connection we may mention the names of Raziya Sultana, Chand Sultana, Gul-Badan, Begam Satina Sultana, Mohan Anaga, Nur Jahan, Jahanara etc. Besides these Muslim women many other royal noble women whose names have not been recorded, also received some education behind the 'Purdah'.

1.5.4 Teacher Pupil Relation

As education was tempered by religious sentiment, relationship between the teachers and the students was based on moral ideals. They were like the father and the son. The teachers were the religious leaders and as such they were responsible persons in society. Their honesty and integrity of personality were beyond doubt. It was thought that education of the students was impossible without the blessings and good wishes of the teacher. Students naturally showed respect to the teacher and their bond of relationship was based on moral and religious sentiment. Although, Muslim education was not residential like that of the Vedic and the Buddhist system. As such cordial relation between them could not reach the height of those system.

Thus from the above discussion, it can be said that the Muslim system of education had established co-ordination between religion and material needs of life. Along with the teaching of Quran, there was the practice of teaching subjects which had practical value and importance.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 7: Who was the profounder of Islam Religion?

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Q 8: What is 'Bismillah Khani'?

.....



1.6 LET US SUM UP

- Education in Ancient India means the education that prevailed before British rule in our country. It also means education during Vedic, Buddhist and Muslim era.

- Vedic education was one of the earliest education systems of the world. The main objectives of Vedic education were physical, intellectual and spiritual development and acquisition of knowledge.
- Some other objectives were sublimation of instincts, spread of culture, promotion of social efficiency and development of character.
- The curriculum of Vedic education was both theoretical as well as practical. It includes Vedas, Vedangas, art of warfare, agriculture and trade, arts and crafts, logic, philosophy, mathematics, history, economics, astrology, politics etc.
- In Vedic period no provision of corporal punishment existed. Self-discipline was considered to be the best discipline.
- In Vedic period the methods of teaching generally consisted of recitation by the teacher and repetition by the pupil.
- In Vedic period the relation between the teacher and the pupil was very smooth and pleasant.
- During the Vedic period, women freely pursued knowledge and were given equal status with men.
- Vedic education was also famous for its Gurukula system of education. In this system, the students stayed at the Guru's home known as the 'Gurukula'. Gurukula means 'the family of the teacher.
- In the Gurukula system, the students were admitted at the age of twelve. The admission ceremony in the Gurukula system was known as 'Upanayana'.
- In Gurukula system, the period of studentship was normally twelve years. In Gurukula system, students had to lead a very simple life. They had to take pure vegetarian food.
- In the Gurukula system, the concluding ceremony of learning was known as 'Samabartana'.
- The three major points of Buddhist education were discipline, mediation and wisdom.
- The main aims of Buddhist education were all round development of the child's personality, formation of education was considered as a means of attaining 'Nirvana', imparting practical knowledge to prepare

students to earn their livelihood.

- The ceremony of admission into the Buddhist system of education was similar with the Vedic system of education. The act of admission was called 'Pabbajja'.
- The Buddhist education system was residential by nature,
- The curriculum of Buddhist education was mainly spiritual in nature. Besides spiritual education, there was provision for secular instruction in the curriculum.
- The methods of teaching in Buddhist education were verbal method, discussion method, logical explanations, religious tour etc.
- In early Buddhist period women were encouraged to receive education.
- The Muslim invaders destroyed the monasteries and Vihars and killed the monks. The famous centre for learning, Nalanda, was destroyed and gradually Buddhism declined in India. Muslim rulers establish Muslim education system in India.
- Spread of religion was the main aim of Muslim education in India.
- Maktab and Madrasa were the educational institutions of Muslim education.
- Persian was the medium of instruction during Muslim period.
- The main curriculum during Muslim education were religious books, ethics, divinity, natural philosophy, law, agriculture etc.
- The method of teaching, as in the Brahmanical and Buddhist system was mainly oral; in Muslim education also the method of teaching was mainly oral.
- Women education was almost totally neglected in the Muslim period.
- There was individualised instruction during the Muslim period.



1.7 FURTHER READING

1. Chaube,S.P. and Chaube, A.(2005). Education in Ancient and Medieval India. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd.
2. Dash, B.N. (2014). History of Education in India. New Delhi: Dominant Publishers and Distributors Pvt. Ltd.

1.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: The word 'Veda' means 'knowledge'. It means wisdom; knowledge or vision and it manifest the language of the Gods in human speech.

Ans to Q No 2: Education during the Vedic period mainly concentrated on educating the four Vedas. These are (i) Rig Veda (ii) Sama Veda (iii) Atharva Veda (iv) Yajur Veda.

Ans to Q No 3: Two aims of education highlighted by Vedic System of Education are:

- Self- realization was the ultimate aim of education. In another way we can say that attainment of salvation was the main aim of Vedic education system.
- Another aim of education was to prepare the students to lead a happy and prosperous life. They were taught to become socially conscious, responsible, dutiful and morally strong citizens of the country.

Ans to Q No 4: In the Gurukula system, the concluding ceremony of learning was known as 'Samabartana'.

Ans to Q No 5: Vinaya Pitaka is one of the famous Buddhist Scripture.

Ans to Q No 6: Suttanta, Vinaya and Dhamma are the main subjects of the Buddhist Curriculum.

Ans to Q No 7: Prophet Mohammed propounded a new religion which was known as Islam.

Ans to Q No 8: Like Vedic and Buddhist education system, Muslim education also had its initiation ceremony. In Muslim education system the initiation ceremony was quite colourful. It was known as 'Bismillah Khani'. Bismillah Khani means the child is introduced to education after invoking God.

1.9 POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

Short Questions (Answer each question in around 150 words).

Q 1: What were the main aims and ideals of the Vedic education system?

Q 2: Write a short note on the admission procedure of the Gurukula System.

Q 3: Write briefly on 'Pabbajja' and 'Upasampada' ceremony during Buddhist period.

Long Questions (Answer each question in around 300-500 words)

Q 1: Discuss the salient features of Vedic System of Education.

Q 2: Give an account of pupil teacher relationship of ancient Indian education system and compare it with the existing system of education.

Q 3: Give an account of the salient features of Buddhist system of education. What was the status of women education during this period?

Q 4: How did the Vedic education system differ from the Buddhist system?

Q 5: Write briefly on the curriculum and method of teaching of the Buddhist education? What type of relationship prevailed between the teacher and the taught?

Q 6: Give an account of the education system prevalent during the Muslim period. What was the status of women education during that period?

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