

The History and Patterns of Education, Evolution of Schools and the Role Played by the Educational Institutions in India

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Introduction

The word 'Education' has a very wide connotation and it is very difficult to define it precisely. Divergent views have been expressed by different philosophers, thinkers, psychologists, priests, statesmen, and educationists. The educationist and linguists have tried to trace the origin of the word "education". The term "Education" seems to have many derivations, one among them has viewed that the word "Education" has been derived from the Latin word "educate" which means "to bring up", "to nourish". The other view is that the word "education" has been derived from the Latin word "educatum" which means the act of teaching or training. It is also viewed that the word "education" has been derived from the Latin word "educare" which means "to lead out" or "to draw out". Therefore, the purpose of education is to draw out rather than to put in.

Based on the above definitions and derivatives, the scholars in this field viewed that education consists in leading out the innate knowledge, virtues, and powers of the child, making the potential actual.

Various Concepts of Education

The Derivative and Differential approaches to education do not fulfill the requirements of understanding education in a comprehensive manner. There is a further need to understand and interpret education in the context of different meanings and definitions given by different thinkers and philosophers of different countries in different periods.

Education - Indian concept

In India, the concept of education has been given differently by different thinkers, philosophers and scholars. A few important views regarding education given by Indian thinkers are as follows:

Rig Veda: Education has been defined as "something which makes a man self-reliant and selfless".

Upanishads: Education is that whose end product is salvation.

Gita: The knowledge of the Brahma or knowledge of the soul has been termed

as education. It emphasizes “Karma” particularly “Nishkam Karma” and that is the aim of education.

Yaj Navalkya: Education is that which makes a man of God character and useful for the world.

Panini: Human education means the training which one gets from nature.

Kautilya: Education means training for the country and love for the nation.

Shankaracharya: Education is the realization of the self.

Guru Nanak Dev Ji: Education consists in service to others.

Swami Vivekananda: Education is the manifestation of divine perfection already existing in man. He also defines the functions of education as, “We want that education by which character is formed, strength of mind is increased, intellect is expanded and by which one can stand on one’s own feet”.

Sri Aurobindo viewed education as, “helping the growing soul draw out that is in itself.”

According to **Rabindranath Tagore**, “Education is that which makes one’s life in harmony with all existence and thus enables the mind to find out that ultimate truth which gives us the wealth of inner light and love gives significance to life”.

Gandhiji expressed education as, “By education, I mean an all round drawing out of the best in child and man, body, mind and spirit”.

In brief, “Education according to Indian traditions is not merely a means of earning a living. It is initiation into the life of spirit, a training of human souls and thereby made powerful instrument of social, economic and cultural transformation”. Hence the Indian concepts of education have stressed the purpose of education for character formation and righteous living.

Education - Western concept

Many Western thinkers and philosophers have given their views on education. Some of them are as follows:

Socrates expresses education as, “Education means the bringing out of the ideas of universal validity which are latent in the mind of every man”.

Aristotle says, “The creation of a sound mind in a sound body. It develops man’s faculty especially his mind so that he may be able to enjoy the contemplation of supreme truth, goodness and beauty in which perfect happiness essentially consists”.

Plato views on education as, “Education is the capacity to feel pleasure and pain at the right moment. It develops in the body and soul of the pupil all the beauty and all the perfection of which he is capable of.”

In the words of **Milton**, “I call, therefore, a complete and generous education that which fits a man to perform justly, skillfully and magnanimously all the offices, both private and public of peace and war”.

John Dewey’s views on education as, “Education is the process of living through a continuous reconstruction of experiences. It is the development of all those capacities in the individual which will enable him to control his environment and fulfill his possibilities.

John Adam defines education as, “a conscious and deliberate process in which one personality acts upon another in order to modify the development of the other by the communication and manipulation of knowledge”.

Herbart has viewed education as, “Education is the development of good moral character”.

According to **H.M. Horne**, “Education should be thought of as the process of man’s reciprocal adjustment to nature, to his fellows, and to ultimate nature of the cosmos”. From the above views expressed by Indian as well as the Western Thinkers on Education, it may be understood that the main functions of education are:

- * All round development of personality
- * Modification of behaviour
- * Preparation for future living
- * Progressive development of innate powers
- * Sublimation of instincts
- * Character building
- * Development of social consciousness
- * Development of good citizenship
- * Preserving culture and civilization
- * Development of social feeling

History of Education in India

Education has its long root in India since the Vedic period. During each and every stage, education had its changes in its nature and functioning. Here below is given the brief history of education under different classifications.

Vedic Period: The impact of culture on education in ancient India can be seen from a mere glimpse of Gurugula system of education. Gurugula System of education was prevalent in India in ancient times since the Vedic period. Gurukula schools were scattered all over the country. They were residential schools run by individual scholars, called ‘Acharyas’ or ‘Gurus’. The

Language in India www.languageinindia.com ISSN 1930-2940 18:4 April 2018

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disciples used to live with their Gurus (scholars) in the 'Gurukulas' or 'Ashrams' and received education in the laps of nature. They were either at the Antskirts of the human habitations or in forest areas.

Normally, the children of higher status were only allowed for admission. In this system, pupils had to work for their teacher in house and field, attending to his sacred fires, and collecting alms for him (Gurus). The pupil was always ready to serve his teacher and awaited his commands. The Gurukulas needed no financial assistance from the state. Hence, there was no state control over them. Society maintained them and the state only admired and appreciated their efforts. It simply guided and moulded their activities as and when needed. The religious and moral factors dominated the system of education. Worship of God and religious feeling, character building, development of personality, observing the social duties of citizen, progress of social efficiency, preservation and propagation of national culture were the aims of education in this period.

Brahmanic Period: During this period, education was maintained by voluntary and private agencies. In other words, there was no direct control of state over education. Taxila, the famous university of India came into existence during this period. Kings, Aristocrats and Barons of then society used to give donations to this institution and also provided stipends and scholarships to those who received education in it. But a significant change, which occurred during this period, was that education fell from the high pedestal of mission and service of the nation to a sort of profession in the hands of same Pandits and Purohits (learned scholars). The religious and moral aims dominated in the Brahmanic system of education. Education was regarded as a means of inculcating such moral habits like strict obedience to elders, god fearing (spiritual development), truthfulness, honesty and temperance. The main aim of education in Brahmanic period was total development of personality along with self control, character building and inculcating the social feeling.

Budha Period: Private universities of the Vedic and Bramanic period changed into public institutions as we have today. Nalanda, Nadia, Vallabhi and Vikramshila were the famous universities of this period. These universities came to run by 'Associations' and 'Samities' and maintained their high reputation and smooth management in all matters. In short, they enjoyed complete autonomy and state control was next to nothing. Buddhistic education was primarily monastic in its out-look and contents. It aimed at the religious development of the individual. The aim of Buddhist Education was based on idealistic view point. Therefore, the aim of education was spiritual. Later on, it became secular in contents.

Muslim Period: During this period the 'Maktabs' and 'Madarsas' turned into agencies of religious conversion to Islam of the infidels by the Muslim monarchs and the Mullas. During the early Muslim period, education was based on religious ideals. The boys were taught the 'Holy Quran'.

The following were the main aims of education.

- * Propagation of knowledge

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- * Propagation of Islamic religion
- * Acquainting the Muslims with the principles, beliefs and codes of conduct of Islam
- * Intellectual development
- * Strengthening the foundation of Muslim administration

British Period: During this period, the decree of 1835 set the seal on English Education for India. The Wood's Despatch of 1854 recommended the establishment of universities and Departments of Public Instruction. The Hunter Commission of 1882 recommended the establishment of model schools by the government and withdrew from the direct management of secondary schools by encouraging voluntary and private bodies to run them on grant-in-aid basis. Thus, Departments of Public Instruction began to be established with more and more officers to complete the task of education. The system of British Education was implanted in India with purely political aims. It developed a class of people, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, opinion, morals and intellect”.

Modern Period: After political freedom and independence, and after careful consideration decided to transform itself into a secular democratic republic, education in India has been decentralized. Now, education is one of the responsibilities of the State Governments. The Kothari Commission (1964-66) has shared and distributed the responsibilities of education among the Central, the State and the Local Bodies. All these authorities share the responsibility of educating the nation to the best of their resources and capacities.

Educational Centres in Ancient India

One of the specialties of ancient education in India was the deep spiritual relationship between the pupil and the teacher. The pupils received education by staying at the residence of their teacher. The educational institution during the Vedic period was known as Gurugulam. The schools established by the Buddhist monks were known as Monasteries and Viharas. Monasteries and Viharas were well organized institutions compared to Gurugulas. They imparted higher education to pupils systematically. The educational centres were Valabhai, Mithila, Vikramasila, Oadantpuri, Nadia and Jagaddala. Nalanda and Taxila rose to the status of universities and developed into universities of international standard and importance.

Education in Tamilnadu – A Brief Introduction

Ancient Tamilnadu was divided into three major kingdoms, namely, the Chola, (occupying Kavery delta), the Pandya (the south of Chola kingdom) and the Chera (extending along the west coast). The history of Tamil Literature had necessarily to begin with an account of ‘Sangam’”. There were three Sangams in antiquity. The Sangam was an organization in which only the highly learned men had membership. All the three Sangams were said to have flourished in the Pandian Kingdom. Many Pandian Kings patronized them. The ‘Sangam Age’ in Tamil literature was a period of great literary glory. The age was a period of awakening of people, when the arts and sciences flourished alike. The people obtained all social amenities.

During the Sangam Age, the education was religious-centred. Prayers were written on palm leaves and they were learnt by heart. The rulers of the Sangam Age had their faith on the Brahmanical religion and performed many sacrifices. Education had its growth during the Sangam Age. The Tamilians had been busy with myth-making and all sorts of stories were told in connection with Agasthya, the supposed father of the language and its first grammarian.

1) History of Sangams

a) The First Sangam: The first Sangam was established in old Madurai which was later submerged in the Indian Ocean, There were 549 members in the first Sangam. No less than 4499 authors submitted their writings to it and obtained its approval for them. Eighty nine Pandian kings patronized the first Sangam which lasted for 4400 years. The notable works of this first Sangam were Akattiyam, Paripadal, Mudurai, Mudukuruku and Kalariavirai.

b) The Second Sangam: It had its seat in another submerged town called Kapatapuram. It included Agastya and forty nine members in all. This Sangam received the support of fifty nine Pandian kings. It flourished for about 3,700 years. The classics of this period were Akattiyam, Tolkappium, Isai Nunnukkam and Vendoli. This Sangam housed in its library 8,149 works, but all were swept away by the sea. Since Akattiyar was common to both sangams, it is obvious that the second was a continuation of the first. The works of the second Sangam are also now lost, except Tholkappium.

c) The Third Sangam: It had its seat in Northern Madurai or the Present Madurai known to us. Its membership totalled forty-nine, but 449 poets submitted their works to it for approval. Forty-nine Pandian kings patronized it and it continued for 1850 years. The major lights of this Sangam were Nakkirar, Iraiyanar, Kapilar, Oaranar and Sittalai Sattanar. These learned members were called by the king to set the standard for Tamil and to give approval to works. The classics of this period were Nedunthokai, Natrinai, Ainkurunuru, Paripadal and Paditruppattu, while many of these are now lost, some works fortunately survived to give an idea of the richness of Sangam Literature. A complete list of the forty-nine members of the third Sangam is given in the “Garland of ‘Tiruvalluvar’ included at the end of his immortal work “Kural”.

It is highly probable that the Sangams were more or less continuous, although they are now described as three because of the changes in the capital from old Madurai to Kapatapuram and again from the later to northern Madurai.

2) Gurukulam

During ‘Sangam Age’ the schools were conducted in the teacher’s house itself which was called ‘Gurukula’. Just as ‘Devakila’ means the temple of God, ‘Gurukula’ means the temple of the Guru or teacher. The teacher was called ‘Kanakayar’ which means a great scholar. Unlike the modern teachers, the teachers of those days studied many books keeping the matters in their memory. The pupils were astonished to see the all-round talents of their teachers. The students respected their teachers as God or next to God. There is a popular tamil saying “**one who teaches is the god**”. When the pupils came to the teacher for their study, first they prayed him. They said, “Long live the teacher; he is our guide”. Those teachers were well versed in literature,

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grammar, Sanskrit, Telugu and other languages. They taught mathematics, astrology, medicine and music. So the students also learnt different subjects and they too become proficient in all. In all the villages, the teacher was respected as astrologer, prophet and as doctor. So the teacher worked for the welfare of the students throughout their life and most of the Sangam poets were all teachers. The Nakkirar was one the greatest teachers of that age.

3) The village school or phial school

In those days even the village had a school which was called ‘Pial schools or Thettry school.’ These schools were conducted under the shade of a big tree, generally a banyan tree. That school was called ‘Mantram’ or ‘Ambalam’ because during the leisure time of the school they discussed matters in that place convening the village. Sometimes music performances were also conducted there. Later the village schools which were conducted under the shades of trees were converted into a small mutt which was called a school.

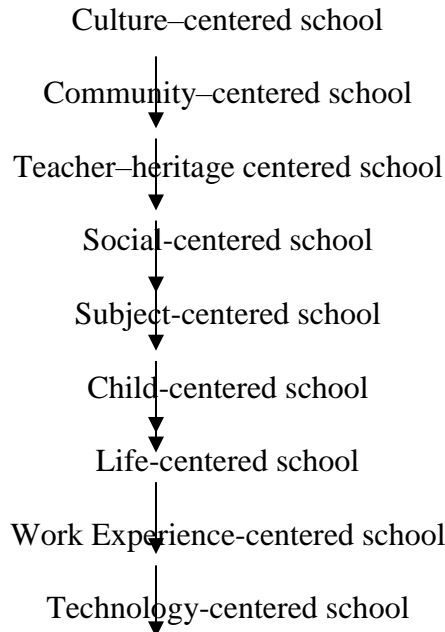
The edict of Raja Raja Chola says the Tiruvaduthurai mutt was sanctioned separate land for educating the students in Vilakarnam. And there is another edict which says about the establishment of a school for medical sciences at Tirumikkudal in Thondai nadu. Madurai was the seat of learning in South India. The Kanchi was also another seat of learning which was praised as Thatchnakasi by South Indian Hindus. Ennayiram in South Arcot district had a college endowed with about 300 acres of lands. Three hundred and forty students received free tuition, boarding and lodging. Venkatesha Perumal Temple at Tirumikkudal in Changleput district had a college with a hostel and hospital attached to it. This college provided free lodging and boarding for 60 students. Mulkapuram in Gundur district had a college with a hostel and a hospital attached to it. In this college, eight teaching faculties were teaching one hundred and fifty students were studying. There was another college at Punnaivayal in Tanjore District which was fixed on wooden frames. Copper frames were also made for the safety of the ‘suvadies’(learning material). Many pictures were drawn on the frames with colour ink. There was a way to tie a Suvadi. Teachers often tested how their students tied their suvadies.

On the occasion of Saraswathy pooja, the students used to arrange the old *suvadies* and the new *suvadies* in the proper order. If a *suvadi* became very old, they would take a copy of it and the old *suvadies* were thrown in the river during ‘Adiperukku’.

Evolution of Schools

Historically the school was invented as a social institution that was endured with the function of providing formal education to children as the informal agencies were unable to take-up the task of transmission of cultural heritage to the younger generation due to growth of knowledge abundantly and due to the increased complexity of life. It became an active instrument for transmission of cultural and social heritage conserving the past culture, serving the present generation and reserving it for the posterity.

The Evolution of Schools in the Recent Past are summarized below:



Pattern of Education in India

Education in India varies with regard to curriculum, mode of admission, pattern of evaluation, and so on. The notable patterns of education available in Indian educational scenario are State Board, Matriculation, Indian Certificate of secondary education (ICSE), and Central board of secondary education (CBSE). Among these different patterns of education, the parents choose the schools for their children based on their needs, expectations, family circumstances, economical status, residential locations, capacities and some other factors.

State Board

State Board pattern of education is the system of education that is sponsored, designed and practiced by the state governments concerned in India. It brings out a unique pattern of studies. In Tamilnadu (one of the states in India), it is run and managed by the government of Tamilnadu. Its curriculum is unique and distinct from that of other educational systems. The government has the sole authority and right to bring out the changes or modifications in the pattern of curriculum, text books, methods of instruction, fee structure, admissions, enrolment and pattern of evaluation. The staff members of these educational institutions are appointed by the government, the salary is given by the government. The state board education is being practiced by the government schools (the schools run by the department of school education of union territory / state government), the government aided schools (the schools run by the private managements by receiving grant-in-aid from the union government / administration of union territory / state government) and private schools (the schools run by the private managements without receiving any grant-in-aid from the government).

In the government schools, the infrastructural facilities and other physical facilities are maintained by the government itself where as in the government aided schools and private

schools, the infrastructural facilities and other physical facilities are maintained by the private organization concerned. The curriculum, syllabus, text books, and pattern of evaluation are common for all the schools. As far as the admission norms and the appointment of staff the government and the government aided schools are supposed to follow the rules and regulations of the state government. Tamil should be taught compulsorily in all the standards. The schools practice Tamil or English or other minority languages as medium of instruction based on the nature of the learner. District common examination is being conducted for standards VI to IX, and XI. The state level common examination has been conducted for standards X and XII by the Government Board of Examinations.

Matriculation Board

The matriculation schools have been started and run by a society / trust duly constituted and registered under the provisions of state acts. At the beginning these schools were recognized and monitored by the university of Madras and Madurai. On and after 1st June 1976 the schools are recognized by the department of education, the government of Tamilnadu. Recognition had been accorded from standard I to X or the standards that actually exist. These schools are not receiving any grant-in-aid from the government and they are self-financing schools which meets their financial requirements from the fees collected from the students and other donations. They practice English as medium of instruction.

They are allowed to frame their own curriculum, design their syllabus and practice their own pattern of evaluation, except for the last one year preparing students for the Matriculation public examination. Now, the matriculation schools are considered as a separate entity by the state government. A separate matriculation board was constituted under the chairmanship of the director of school education and the board controls the infrastructure and other facilities of matriculation schools and conducts the matriculation examination at the 10th year. The matriculation schools are also encouraged to start the higher secondary course, viz., standards XI and XII under the supervision and control of the Director of School Education. They are directed to adopt the rules and regulations of the directorate at higher secondary level with regard to curriculum and evaluation.

Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE)

Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) is one of the widely recognized boards of school education in India. Although CBSE got its present name in 1952, its origin can be traced back to 1921 when the U.P Board of High school and Secondary Education was set up. The importance of CBSE lies in its effort to impart a common education in this land of diverse culture and heritage. The CBSE has two primary objectives, one is to serve the educational institutes more effectively and the other is to meet the educational needs of those students whose parents are employed in the central government and has frequently transferable jobs. The CBSE frames its curriculum and prepares the syllabus for the schools affiliated to it. All the schools affiliated to the Delhi Board, schools of Chandigarh, Andaman Nicobar Island, Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim falls under its jurisdiction, besides the Kendriya Vidyalays (schools run by Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan, an autonomous organization under the Ministry of Human Resource Development of the government of India), Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas (schools run

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by the Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti of the government of India), and some private unaided schools (schools run by a society / trust duly constituted and registered under the provisions of central/state acts not getting any regular grant-in-aid from any government). The jurisdiction of CBSE goes beyond the national boundaries and has schools in the Middle East and the U.S. too. Apart from preparing the syllabus for the schools affiliated to it, CBSE also conducts two board examinations: the All India Secondary School Examination for class X and the All India Senior School Certificate Examination for class XII. It also conducts one Engineering Entrance Examination (AIEEE) and one Medical Entrance Examination (AIMEE). These are common Entrance Examinations on all India basis, success in which would mean entrance to various professional Engineering and Medical Colleges across the country.

It is a self-financing body meets its financial requirements from the annual examination charges, affiliation fee and the entrance examination that it conducts. CBSE does not receive any grant-in-aid from the central government and any other source. Admission in the school affiliated to the CBSE shall be made without any distinction of religion, race, caste, creed, geographical area, place of birth or any of these. As regard to reservations of SC/ST students it shall be governed by the education Acts/Rules applicable to the State/Union Territory where the school is situated.

The board may grant autonomous to selected schools with a view to giving them an opportunity to take initiative in the field of curriculum and evaluation. The school seeking autonomous status should be a high order school among those affiliated with the board. The board may withdraw autonomy if it is not satisfied with its operation or if the school ceases to satisfy any of the conditions for the grant of autonomous status.

Indian Certificate of Secondary Education

The Indian Certificate of Secondary Education (ICSE) is committed to serve the children, through high quality educational endeavours, empowering them to contribute towards a humane, just and pluralistic society, promoting introspective living, by creating exciting learning opportunities, with a commitment to excellence. The main aim of this education is the replacement of the overseas Cambridge school certificate examination by an all India examination. In 1973, the Council was listed in the Delhi School Education Act 1973, as a body conducting “public” examinations. It is a self-financing body meets its financial requirements from the fees collected and the donations received. It does not receive any grant-in-aid from the central government or from any other source. Admission in the school affiliated to the ICSE shall be made without any distinction of religion, race, caste, creed, geographical area, place of birth or any of these. The schools affiliated to this system follow the curriculum framed by the board of studies and many international schools are following this pattern of education. English is the medium of instruction in these schools.

Conclusion

The Indian education system has undergone drastic changes and developments and imparted the importance of education to the common public and the educational institutions have really played a significant role in educating and enlightening the ignorant and common folks who

turned out as assets of the nation. The education system in India has taken marvelous initiatives and brought great benefits to the individual, society and the nation as well. Education through institutions plays a predominant role in fulfilling the objectives of education and helps the learning community to acquire knowledge and skills to the extent.

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