



CHARACTERISTICS OF BUDDHIST EDUCATION SYSTEM IN CONTEXT OF RECENT EDUCATION SYSTEM IN GUJARAT

Dr. Bharat K. Parmar

I/c Principal & Assist. Prof.

Smt. M.J. Gajera B.Ed.

Mahila College-Amreli

INTRODUCTION

At a glance in to the past Indian systems of Education , a vivid picture arises. It was influenced by the Vedic, Buddhist, jain, Islamic and British systems of education; where the Buddhist period has given considerable contribution in the field of Education. Buddhist, made a remarkable movement which played a valuable role in the development of Education System in ancient India and ancient Buddhist world. The Buddhist period identified due to some weaknesses of Vedic System. Due to the Formalism, Exclusiveness and Karmakand of Brahmanic system, it rose up. The period from 500 B.C. to 1200 A.D. was the period of Buddhist Education.

Prince Siddhartha made four trips outside the palace. He saw four things and changed his path of life and became a wandering Monk. He left his palace in search of Meaning of Existence and Freedom from Misery. Under the Bodhi tree in deep meditation he gained the supreme wisdom and realized the Truth, and became 'Buddha'. He shared his understanding and realization to the people. The people around him found it as a right path of living and followed him. In the beginning it was just perspective towards life and then it turned in to religion. People around him found it as a right path and followed him. Not only from india, but the people from Japan, China , South Asia etc. became its followers. The Buddha religion developed in form of *Sangharam/Sangha, Matha and Vihara*. They were the best institutions for providing education. Gradually those educational institutions famed and developed in Universities too. The Monks and Disciples in *Maths/Sangha* have to follow the specific rules and regulations of religion. They were Educationist, Philosophers thinkers and Higher Level of Literators.

PHILOSOPHY OF BUDDHISM:

The Buddhist philosophy has the three universal Truths: (1) Nothing is lost in the universe, because everything is changing in a different forms like soil, air, plants etc. (2) Everything is change as the principle or law of impermanence. There are timely change in every object or occurrences. (3) Law of cause and effect or the law of causation according to it nothing occurs due to pure chance. The law of Cause and Effect is known as *Karma*. Besides natural forces, it is the Karma which leads to the occurrence of all events. The popular notions of the indestructible soul and the cycle of rebirth emerge from these two basic philosophies- Vedic and Buddhist. Human has to understand, accept and practice all of the above Truths for their lives.

BUDDHIST EDUCATIONS:

According to Bar (2009), Mookerji (1969) and Sharma (2002) the monks had to take shelter in secluded and protected places during the rainy season. They also needed space for meditation, study and discussion, Cave-resorts or *layanas* thus came into existence, which eventually grew into *Viharas* or *Mathas* (Monastery, Temple) and places of rest, where education was also imparted. The monks and Samanaras reside there. Students from different caste, creed, colour, nation and religion got free admission. Buddhism established democracy, universalism and monastic life. There was no racial discrimination and nobody was deprived of his rights. Buddhist monasteries began to undertake secular as well as religious education and there began a large growth of popular elementary education along with secondary and higher learning. There were different specific characteristics of Buddhist Education like Objectives, Educational *Sanskaras*, Curriculum, Educational Institutions, Medium of Instruction, Method of Teaching, Teacher-Student relationship, Women education etc.

OBJECTIVES OF BUDDHIST EDUCATION

Buddhist Monasteries attached to Buddhist temples served the double purpose of imparting education and of training persons for priesthood monastery, however, educated only those who were its members, later on they permitted day scholars and thus did not cater to the needs of the entire population. The religion was the main source and force for education. Buddhist Education system has two objectives of Education like achieving *Nirvana* (Salvation) alive and Spread of Buddha religion. It was essential for the Samanara or Shraman to strictly follow the above given Eightfold path achieve the objectives. The highly qualified teachers (Monks) non-violent & secular man. It make Students Judicious, humanist, logical and free from superstitious, greed, lust, enmity and ignorance. Buddhist Education was wide open and available to the people of all walks of life. The teachers were the guardian of the students. They were responsible for physical, mental, spiritual and moral development of the students. Since Educational Institution (Monasteries) were residential, therefore the relationship between the teachers and the students were very cordial.

UNESCO (2000) given the objectives of recent primary education decided on the basis of Universal and National level determinations. A World Education Forum held in April 2000 in Dakar in Senegal. The Forum's core messages were universal access to learning; focus on equity; emphasis on learning outcomes, broadening the means and the scope of basic education; enhancing the environment for learning; and strengthening learnt from the past decade. The Jomtien perspective on EFA reaffirmed in Dakar by 164 Country Government and different Groups and organizations and adopted a framework for Action. Six goals drawn for Action

1. Expanding and improving early childhood care and education.
2. Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls and minorities, have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education.
3. Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skill programmes.
4. Achieving 50 percent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women.
5. Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls.
6. Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.

The Nations of the World have also noted significance of Primary Education and attempts have been made for achieving the Universal Primary Education (UEE), UNESCO (2005) declared about the Education for All for Basic Education.

The Indian government has taken care of Primary Education, Examined by a Specialist Committee of India in the year 1950 as a Directive principle of State Policy under Article 45. In fulfilling the above Constitutional Directive, the government of India has accorded highest priority to the programme of UEE and different schemes and programmes were launched for UEE like the scheme of Operation Black Board (OBB), Teacher Education, Bihar Education Project (BEP), Lok Jumbesh Project (LJP), District primary Education Programme (DPEP) establishment of District Institute of Education and Training (DIET), Non Formal Education programme (NEF) Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) etc. The objectives listed in the SSA framework (2002) are as below:

1. All children in school, Education Guarantee Scheme, Alternative School, Back to School campy by 2003.
2. All children complete five years of primary schooling by 2007 and eight years of primary schooling by 2010.
3. Bridge all gender and social category gaps at primary stage by 2007 and Universal retention by 2010.

The National Curriculum Framework (2005) described the aims of education that they serve as broad guidelines to align educational processes to chosen ideals and accepted principles. The aims of education simultaneously reflect the current needs and aspirations of a society as well as its lasting values and the immediate concerns of a community as well as broad human ideals. At any given time and place they can be called the contemporary and contextual articulations of board and lasting human aspirations and values. Education should aim to build a commitment to values like equality, justice, freedom, concern for other's well-being, secularism, respect for human dignity and rights, which are baed on reason and understanding . sensitivity t other's well-being and feelings, together with knowledge and understanding of the world, should form the basis of a rational commitment to values.

Thus, when go through the objectives one don't find the objectives leading cognition, percentage values , degree, certificate, earning livelihood; higher job, abroad job etc, while the Budhhist education concept of education for the sake of education or knowledge and to practice religion and Spirituality to achieve the ultimate goal of life i.e. *Nirvana* is forgotten. So, the objectives lead to the Spiritual Education too.

Education become excessively competitive and education causes students to become self centered and reward-seeking individual who fail to understand the essence of humanity. Centuries ago Indian and Chinese Buddhist monasteries provided followers with spiritual guidance as the core of education; on the other hand , schools and universities today accentuate occupational training more than spiritual education. Thus, contemporaries are prone to perceive spirituality through the eyes of materialism.

ADMISSION POLICY OF BUDDIST EDUCATION

Chaube and Chaube (1994), Mookerji (1969) and Bar (2009) say about the admission to the chidren in this period. Buddhist Education had make revolutionary changes in the society and made Education open to all. Students irrespective of caste, creed, class and religion got opportunity to have education which was denied by the superior class in the society. The child got admitted in this system through *Pabbajja Sanskara*. It gave to the child, who wanted to get admission and to become Disciple of *Acharya* (Monks). He had to undergone a ritual/ceremony and be ready to follow Eight paths or principles. He had to follow the monastic rules and *Sangha* rules and to perform daily routine works beyond learning. At the completion of 12 years of education, he can leave institution

or carry forward his education. If want to continue and to be a Monk, he had to undergo from *Upasampada Sanskar*. He had to be ready for following other eight paths. **Today the Society** is taking care of the student's Enrolment, Retention and Quality education. They are arranging different programmes like *Shala Pravesotsava*, Bridge Course, providing food, study material, facility of sanitation, in service training to the teachers etc. The *Shala Pravesotsava* is the main in all programme of joining primary Education, School prepares a record and enrolls the children of village or city coming under the compulsory age-group before June. The children invites as students into school. They arranges procession of Social Leaders, Social Workers, Parents, Teachers and local Community etc with children wears colourful dress and caps. School provides free books, bags, cloths, toys, sweets etc. to the enrolled children.

The rules or regulations are on the basis of discipline of Institution itself. The admission procedure of Buddhist and recent times are different. The recent system can utilize the Buddhist procedure of admission as a ceremony maintaining the secularism. The parent should motivated toward the enrolling their child. Off course there are such parents too who admit their child in expensive schools also, where they are filling up the admission form and their child and some times they also pass through the interview or test. Here also the objectives of Buddhist system are not reflecting.

MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION OF BUDDHIST EDUCATION

The medium of instruction was the common language of people maily Pali, and Local languages also. Afterwards, Sanskrit also included as a medium of instruction. Today the society is using regional, national and International languages as medium of instructions. The Mother tongue or local language may accept as a Compulsory Subject in recent times for the sake for learning their language and inculcation of own culture. The other languages are the need of the hour. So, the system should focus on them also. The national and international languages are preparing the student as National or Global Individual and Can Walk with the World.

CURRICULUM OF BUDDHIST EDUCATION

The curriculum of Buddhist education mainly on the basis of *Tripitaka* which was consists of *Sutta Pitaka*, *Binaya Pitaka*, *Abhidhamma Pitaka*. The entire Tripitaka consists of Buddha's teaching, message, philosophy and rules for the Bhikkhus and Bhikkhunis. Buddhist monks used several artistic forms to propagate religious teaching. Jataka Stories were represented in sculpture and painting. The Primary Education curriculum included different scripts like Sidharastu, Sidhhamang, Religion, Philosophy, Literature ,Grammar, Law, Spiritual education, Pali, Sanskrit etc. In later period art, sculpture, architecture, reasoning , vocational skills such as painting , carpentry, weaving and medicine also included in to the syllabus. **Today the Primary Education** include different subjects like Home/First languages or Mother-tongue Education, Second language acquisition i.e. English , learning to Read and Write, Mathematics, Computer Science, Science ,

Social Science, Art Education and Health , Physical Education and Work and Education. Here today's curriculum should include religious and spiritual subjects too. Health and Physical Education adopts a holistic definition of health within which Physical Education and Yoga contribute to the physical, social, emotional and mental development of a child. Yoga should go beyond the health towards to achieve the ultimate goal of life.

INSTITUTIONS OF BUDDHIST EDUCATION

Maths, Viharas and Sanghas were the institution of Buddhist religion, which gradually developed as institutions of Education too. There were different Higher Education institution in Buddhist period like Nalanda, Taxila , Vikramshila, Sompura, Jagaddala, Vallabhi etc. and grew to the level of Universities also. They attracted the people from all over the world and provide them education too. Students from China, Myanmar, Thailand, Java ,Sumatra, Gandhara and all parts of ancient India came to have their education in those universities. Those splendid institutions attracted to students from abroad, where today Indian students are attracting towards the foreign Education. So the efforts should be made to back the flow of students towards India, where the glorious education was given.

CONCLUSION

The primary education is at the higher progressive level in Gujarat. Different Programmes and Schemes implemented for promotion and Universalisation of Primary Education. The care should be taken from characteristics of the Buddhist Education in different matters of advancement of individual, society, country and world. The education system gains from the Buddhist education system in matters of objectives of real prosperity and achieving the ultimate goal of life, admission procedure not as a formality but a ritual ceremony, include spiritual and religions curriculum, medium of instruction, preservation and utilization of Buddhist educational institutions etc. It raises various research problems also like what should be the objective? What should be the subject? What should be the rules of the School? How the maintain the medium of instruction and mother tongue, National or International Language? Investigations may carry out on such problems in concern of Buddhist education and in context of other regions or nations too.

REFERENCES:

- Mookerji, K. (1969), *Ancient Indian Education*, Delhi: Motilal Banarasidas
- Chaube,S and Chaudhary, A (1994) *Foundation of Education*, New Delhi: Vikas Publishing
- Sharma, H and Pava, R (2002) *Bharatiya Shanskriti Ke Adhar*, Jaipur: Malik and Company
- Sharma,Y.K (2001) *History and Problems of Education*, New Delhi Kanishka Publishers
- NCERT (2002), *National Curriculum Framework for School Education*, New Delhi:NCERT
- GCERT (2002) *SSA Framework*, Gandhinagar:GCERT
- Bar, P (2009) *Early Buddhist Education and its Modern Updated on 30/09/2009*.