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EDUCATION IN ANCIENT INDIA

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Abstract: Education is a platform in which young generations are trained and make them future-ready. Education provides knowledge and skills which help the person to be employable. The Indian education system is very popular and diversified among other countries' education systems due to its change in the evolution from ancient to the modern education system. During the ancient and medieval periods of education, students were trained by teachers in such a manner that they can survive and live in that era. After independence, there is a tremendous growth in the Indian education system providing teaching and training in all aspects, but it does not satisfy the global demands of the market. The mentioned points are used to differentiate ancient, medieval, and modern education with advantages and disadvantages.

In ancient India, both formal and informal ways of education system existed. Indigenous education was imparted at home, in temples, pathshalas, chatuspadis and gurukuls. Temples were also the centers of learning and took interest in the promotion of knowledge of our ancient system. Students went to viharas and universities for higher knowledge. Teaching was largely oral and students remembered and meditated upon what was taught in the class.

Gurukuls, also known as ashrams, were the residential places of learning. Many of these were named after the sages. Situated in forests, in serene and peaceful surroundings, hundreds of students used to learn together in gurukuls. Women too had access to education during the early Vedic period. Among the prominent women Vedic scholars, we find references to Maitreyi, Viswambhara, Apala, Gargi and Lopamudra, to name a few.

During that period, the gurus and their shishyas lived together helping each other in day-to-day life. The main objective was to have complete learning, leading a disciplined life and realizing one's inner potential. Students lived away from their homes for years together till they achieved their goals. The gurukul was also the place where the relationship of the guru and shishya strengthened with time. While pursuing their

education in different disciplines like history, art of debate, law, medicine, etc., the emphasis was not only on the outer dimensions of the discipline but also on enriching inner dimensions of the personality.

Keywords

Education, learning, curriculum, ancient, medieval, modern etc.

INTRODUCTION

Proper education will play a significant role in making youth future-ready and increasing economic growth by providing skilled persons which will also boost industrial development. In the modern era of education, every institution or university is adapting new teaching methods using their teaching methodologies. Indian education is the biggest and well-known education systems in the world. During ancient education, there were 5 big well-known universities like Takshashila, Nalanda, Vallabhi, etc., which focus on the all-round development of students and those in the medieval period there exists 2 institutions madrasah and maqtabas which mostly focus on building student religious and leaders of the future.

During ancient education, students live away from their parents, their education comprises of subjects like physical education, mental education, politics, economics, etc. They were shaped in a way that they can live in any condition considering how difficult the situation will be? Medieval education also followed the same protocol as ancient education in spite that their education mostly focuses on religion. In today's modern era of big institutes like the Indian Institute of Technology (IITs) and Indian Institute of Management (IIMs), everything is changed like the living standard of students, curriculum, all-round development. The principle objective of the student has been to just achieve its goal and be successful.

DISCUSSION

ANCIENT EDUCATION

During the ancient period, two systems of education were developed, Vedic, and Buddhist. The medium of language during the Vedic system was Sanskrit, while those in the Buddhist system were pali. During those times the education was of Vedas, Brahmanas, Upnishads, and

Dharmasutras. From the Rigveda onwards, our ancient education started with the objective of developing the students not only in the outer body but also on the inner body. The ancient education focused on imparting ethics like humility, truthfulness, discipline, self-reliance, and respecting all creations to the students. The education was mostly imparted in ashrams, gurukuls, temples, houses. Sometimes pujaris of the temples used to teach students. The education system of ancient India has some special features and uniqueness which was not found in any other ancient education system of the other countries. The education was mostly given in

forests under the blue sky, which keeps the student's mind fresh and alive. During ancient times people used to live a simple life and doing their work with devotion and hard work.

The teacher is called as a Guru and the students are called as Shishyas. They were situated in a serene environment such as a forest. Students consider the gurukul as a second home as they stayed there for many years. The education imparted in gurukuls is not just restricted to men. Women like Maitreyi, Viswambhara, Apala, Gargi and Lopamudra went on to become famous Vedic scholars. Education consisted of learning about basic skills such as wood gathering, cooking along with the Vedas. They learnt subjects like arts, history, law on a practical basis and not just with respect to definitions.

WORDS WITH DIFFICULT MEANING:

S.No	Words	Meaning
1	Pathshalas	An open air institution having no open air structures
2	Tols	An open courtyard
3	Chatuspadis	A resting place with four pillars around
4	Gurukuls	An ancient school
5	Pious	Religious
6	Viharas	A Buddhist monastery
7	Debate	Laying out contrasting arguments and statements

AIM OF EDUCATION

The main objective of education was to equip the students with a good quality of education. The education mostly focused on the enrichment of culture, character, and personality, development, and cultivation of noble ideals. The objective was gaining the mental, physical, and intellectual personality of students, to make the students future-ready and survive in any situation.

CHARACTERISTICS OF EDUCATION

During the ancient period, the state government and the people did not interfere in designing curriculum, payments of fees, regulation of teaching hours. There was a strong bonding between teacher and student. Every student was allotted with one teacher and more emphasis was given to the student-teacher relationship, each student used to meet teachers personally to learn and gain instructions from them. During ancient times, royal families, as well as kings of states, used to donate their wealth to improve the education system and quality.

The syllabus was designed in accordance with the demands of that era. At that time students used to leave their houses and went to live with their gurus until their education was completed. During the early Vedic period, women's education was also given more emphasis. The education focuses on the physical and mental development of students. The course duration was about 10–12 years, as there were no books so students used to memorize all things, memory played a crucial role during learning. The education was imparted in forests away from cities and peoples to give students a pleasant and silent environment of study.

CURRICULUM

Curriculum plays an essential role in the education system. It was dynamic and not static; it was made up of different stages. The fundamental goal of building a good curriculum was to develop students physically and mentally. The curriculum consists of four Vedas, six vedangas, Upnishads, darshanas, Puranas, Tarka Shastra. The six vedangas were Shiksha, Chhandas, Vyakarana, Nirukta, Jyotisha, and Kalpawhile the darshanas were Nyaya, Baiseshika, Yoga, Vedanta, Sankhya, Mimasa. Algebra, Geometry, and grammar were also given more importance at that time. Panini was famous in the domain of grammar at that time. The curriculum of the Buddhist system consists of pitakas, Abhidharma, and sutras. Besides this medicine, Vedas were also given importance. Hindu learning was a part of Buddhist learning, although more emphasis was given to Buddhist learning. Both the systems were going hand in hand at that time. The education was totally through orals and debates, and the exams were conducted every year. The education system of the ancient period focused on subjects like warfare, military, politics, religion.

METHODS OF LEARNING

The teachers at that time period special focus to their students and teach them according to their knowledge and skill level. Teaching was basically via orals and debates, and the different methods were as follows:

At that time books were not there, so students had the habit to learn and memorize all the things taught in the class, and teachers also helped them in memorizing. The students used to deep dive into the concepts taught by their teachers and explore new methods to learn it. Listening, Contemplation, and concentrated contemplation were some new methods of exploring the way of learning. The teachers used the storytelling methods to teach the students. Students used to ask questions about the topics taught by the teachers and these topics were discussed and then answered to the students. The education of that time mainly focused on practical knowledge of the topics taught in the class. The students got plenty of knowledge through seminars and debates conducted at frequent intervals.

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Gurukul was the hometown of teachers where students come after completing their initiation ceremony and learn until the completion of their study. The parishads or academies were the places of higher learning and education where students learn through discussions and debates. Goshti or conferences were the places where the kings of the states used to invite scholars from every institute to meet and exchange their views. Ashramas or hermitages were the other learning centers where students from various parts of the country used to come and learn from saints and sages. Vidyapeeth was the place of spiritual learning founded by great Acharya, Sri Shankara in places like Sringeri, Kanchi, Dwarka, and Puri, etc. Agraharas was an institution of Brahmins in villages where they used to teach. Viharas were the educational institutions founded by Buddhists where the students were taught the subjects related to Buddhism and philosophy.

HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Takshashila or Taxila: Takshashila was the famous center of learning, including religion and teaching of Buddhism in ancient times. It was famous for his higher education learning comprising of subjects like ancient scriptures, law, medicine, sociology, astronomy, military science, and 18 silpas, etc. The well-known scholars from the university were great grammarian Panini, he was an expert in his subject of grammar and published his work on Ashtadhyayi, Chanakya who is skilled in statecraft both studied here. Students from Kashi, Kosala, Magadha, and also from different countries flocked into the university despite a long and arduous journey.

Nalanda: When Xuan Zang came to Nalanda it was called Nala, which was the center of learning in many subjects. The students used to come here from different parts of the country and the world to study here. Different subjects were taught, including the Vedas, fine arts, medicine, mathematics, and astronomy. Xuan Zang himself became the student of Yogashastra. Nalanda which is currently situated in Rajgir, Bihar, India was also declared as a world heritage site by UNESCO.

CONCLUSION

The study of the Education System in the Vedic period and Brahmanical Educational system makes it clear that in those days the residence of the teachers (Gurus) were the educational institutions called Gurukulas. There the teacher and the taught lived together as the members of a single family. In Ancient India, in Vedic and Buddhist periods, well-organized educational institutions like that of the modern age had not come into being. In those days, some monasteries and huge sacred places had been established. It is said that the learned persons from different places used to assemble there and debate. Most of the universities are seen to have ended around the 12th century. The destruction of these centers and other places across northern India was responsible for the loss of ancient Indian knowledge.

In the modern era, industries and technology are increasing day by day. Every industry sector is looking for a person who best suits their industry. With the ever-increasing demand for industrial sectors, our current

education system also needs to be upgraded. In universities, students are learning just for competing with each other to come first, no practical knowledge is gained. There is a lot of pressure and burden of work and studies on them, due to this student are committing suicide. Our education system needs to learn from ancient and medieval education system regarding the implementation of practical knowledge, student-teacher relations, ways of life student lived in that age, the contribution of kings towards the education, there was no stress laid on students and much more.

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