

# DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION IN MODERN TIME

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## Introduction

### Modern education system before independence:

Modern education system was implanted by British rulers. Before the advent of British in India, education system was private one. In 1835, Lord Macaulay introduced modern education in India. It was the introduction of Wood's dispatch of 1854, known as Magna-Carta of Indian education that laid the foundation of present system of education and changed the scenario. The main purpose of it was to prepare Indian Clerks for running local administration. Under it the means of school educations were vernacular languages, while the higher education was granted in English only. British government started giving funds to indigenous schools in need of help and slowly some of the schools became Government aided.

### Reasons for introducing modern education

Finding it too costly and perhaps practically impossible to import enough Englishmen to man the large and increasing number of subordinate or lower posts in administration, British rulers planned of educating Indians in such a way that they "should through western education get Anglicised in terms of both cultural and intellectual attainments". Lord Macaulay clearly said that, "we must at present do our-best to form a class, who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern; a class of persons, Indians in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals and in intellect."

### Welcoming modern education

The atmosphere was completely ready for Lord Macaulay to lay the foundation of modern education in India by 1835. Missionaries and their supporters as well as National leaders, intellectuals and Reformers not only welcomed but exerted pressure on the company to encourage and promote western education in India. Missionaries believed that modern education would lead the people to adopt Christianity. Humanitarians, intellectuals and nationalist leaders considered modern education "the key to the treasures of scientific and

democratic thought of the modern West" and the best remedy for social, political and economic ills of the country.<sup>1</sup>

### **Outcome of modern education**

In 1844 through an Declaration knowledge of English was made compulsory for Government employment. The traditional Indian system of education gradually withered away for the lack of official support. The government made English medium schools very popular. English as Official language alienated the masses from the educated Indians. Because of modern education and employment opportunities, many traditional occupations became obsolete in near absence of industrial, commercial or social service activity, people in India were forced to depend on modern education and Government jobs for their respectful earning. Modernisation of occupations and industrialisation processes increased role of formal education and training for furthering future prospects of people. The universities at Calcutta, Bombay and Madras were started in 1837 and higher education spread rapidly thereafter. For scientific and technical education, only three Medical Colleges one each at Calcutta, Bombay and Madras was established by 1857. There was only one good engineering college at Roorkee.

### **National leaders, intellectuals and reformers**

Modern education not only produced persons to fill the lower levels of administration, as desired by the rulers, but also produced national leaders, intellectuals and reformer like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Dadabhai Naoroji, Ferozeshah Mehta. Gokhale, Gandhi, Jinnah, Ambedkar, Tilak, Lala Lajpat Rai, Moti Lal Nehru, Jawahar Lal Nehru, Subhash Chandra Bose, Patel and many more. They took upon themselves the responsibility to build a modern, open, plural, culturally rich, prosperous and powerful India out of a fragmented, poverty stricken, superstitious, weak, indifferent, backward and inward looking society. In short, they believed that:

- Western literature and philosophy would give Indians the understanding of liberal, scientific, democratic and humanitarian ideas thought of Western World.
- It would make Indians aware of the real issues hampering the progress of Indian society.
- Modern education would improve the life of common men and conquer ignorance, hunger, poverty and disease.
- It would open the key to the treasures of Scientific and Democratic thought of Western World.
- Principles of Democracy would spread rapidly across the nation and finish imperialism and tyranny.

- It would remedy many social, political and economic ills of the nation.<sup>2</sup>

### **Brahmins ahead of others**

Initially, it was an impoverished group of Brahmin and caste Hindus in search of livelihood, who desire to live with dignity and honor opted for modern education. Gradual displacement from their source of income after decline in financial status of their patrons - Princes ,and Zarnindars, appalling poverty of Brahmins compelled them to opt for modern education.

### **Reason being their poverty, not discrimination**

Sir Alfred Croft, Director of Public Instruction in Bengal wrote to Rev. J. Johnston in 1881, "We know well that any considerable increase in the fees paid by college students would compel many to withdraw. It seems not to be fully understood how poor the middle classes that flock to our colleges really are. Half the students live from hand to mouth And yet though, far behind in point of wealth, they correspond to, and are in fact the only representative of our professional classes at home, and the pressure on them for the means of subsistence is so great, that they must either be educated or go to wall." <sup>3</sup> Their poverty gets confirmed by a study done to examine the annual income of the guarantors of 1271, Brahmin Students enrolled at Ferguson College, Pune from 1885 to 1895. According to it, 76% of the Chitpavan Brahmins guarantors belonged to the low or medium income groups. Similarly of the 277Deshastha Brahmin guarantors, 70% came from low or medium groups. They being natural learners and pursuers of knowledge utilized new type of employment opportunities created with introduction of modern education in 1835. They were quick and far ahead of other communities to grasp almost all the opportunities in these spheres. Their long tradition and undisputed role in the 'field of knowledge and learning, their intelligence, sincerity and hard work helped them even' after independence to secure important places in the modern society. Education is the imparting and acquiring of knowledge through teaching and learning, especially at a school or similar institution. The earliest educational processes involved sharing information about gathering food and providing shelter; making weapons and other tools; learning language; and acquiring the values, behaviour, and religious rites or practices of a given culture. Before the invention of reading and writing, people lived in an environment in which they struggled to survive against natural forces and other humans. To survive, preliterate people developed skills that grew into cultural and educational patterns.

Education developed from the human struggle for survival and enlightenment. It may be formal or informal. Informal education refers to the general social process by which human beings acquire the

knowledge and skills needed to function in their culture. Formal education refers to the process by which teachers instruct students in courses of study within institutions. Talking of the modern day education, one feels proud; of saying yes I am an educated person. Formally or informally all of us are educated. Education is the equipping with knowledge. The overall development of mind, body and soul is the real education. Carter G. Woodson once said "For me, education means to inspire people to live more abundantly, to learn to begin with life as they find it and make it better."

### THE PRO'S

Modern day education is aided with a variety of technology, computers, projectors, internet, and many more. Diverse knowledge is being spread among the people. Everything that can be simplified has been made simpler. Science has explored every aspect of life. There is much to learn and more to assimilate. Internet provides abysmal knowledge. There is no end to it. One can learn everything he wishes to. Every topic has developed into a subject. New inventions and discoveries have revealed the unknown world to us more variedly. Once a new aspect is discovered, hundreds of heads start babbling/over it, and you get a dogma from hearsay. Not only our planet but the whole universe has become accessible. Now we have good and learned teachers to impart us with knowledge of what they know. Everyone is a master in his field. We and our children are getting taught by professionals of their field. Presently our education is based on making us the best in our area of interest, to help us reach our goals more easily. More of the fact based knowledge is being grasped by us. What we learn helps us in our career and in our profession. Professionalism is deep rooted in our society and this education makes us so skill-development and vocational education has added a new feather to the modern system of education. There is something to learn for everyone. Even an infant these days goes to a kindergarten. And a little grown, mentally and physically is promoted to a Montessori. Everything is being categorized, be it a primary, middle, a higher secondary or graduate school. We have temples of education known by a familiar word the "university". Whatsoever we are getting educated...day by day and what's good about is that it's a never-ending process. Rightly said by Aristotle, "Education is an ornament in prosperity and a refuge in adversity." is what everybody feels now.

### THE CON'S

Well, that was the positive side, but every story has two tellings. Of all the virtues, our education system has developed into mere schooling now. New trends are being developed which are far more a baloney than a boon. Albert Einstein once said "Education is that which remains, if one has forgotten everything one learned in school." Firstly our education is confined to schools and colleges. It has become a process of spoon feeding.

"Spoon feeding in the long run teaches us nothing but the shape of the spoon" were the words of E.M.Forster. We are being fed with facts and knowledge. Not art, not books, but life itself is the true basis of teaching and learning. Cramming of facts and dates, hi-fi: mathematical formulas, theories and doctrines should be at college levels when one has chosen his area of interest. What will the history pay a doctor or a mathematician, or medical terms to a historian'?

Secondly, an art can only be learned from a workshop of those who are earning their bread from it. Modern education has spread more ignorance than knowledge. Most of the women even don't know, where, the fabric they are wearing, came from. The word "How" is missing in our world which causes ignorance."Education has produced a vast population able to read but unable to distinguish what is worth reading." says G. M. Trevelyan<sup>4</sup>

Thirdly all education is bad which is not self-education. Presently, children after school are sent to tuitions. This is a clear question mark on the ability of school 'teacher. Homework tutorials are mushrooming up in our society. Students are thought of like they can't do anything on their own and so are sent even to do the homework. Our schoolings got a lot of loop-holes. They guide us through a "veil catered pathway which finally leads to professionalism. Homework is a waste of time, if it is to repeat class work done today or to be repeated as class work to be done tomorrow.

### **Influence on modern youth**

A drastic change is visible in the values, behavior and etiquette of a new educated neo rich youth of elitist class, which has emerged especially in Metros. Their life style and value system are being gradually replaced by the Western ones. They want to enjoy pleasures of modern life at any cost without any restriction. They are more conscious of their rights and want to enjoy life fully in any possible way without any bondage. They do not like any restriction/comment on their behavior or way of life. Loosening grip of social bondage and observances have made many of them selfish, self-willed and arrogant. Some of them have become so intolerant and aggressive, that they outrightly discard all social norms and etiquette. Their thinking and value systems are quite different from the older ones. Most of them generally regard Indian value system as rubbish and its epics as irrelevant.

They set their own rules. Their yardstick of smartness is interest in stock exchanges, glamor, pubs, parties, discos or late night culture, which gives rise to many kinds of social problems. With growing cult of materialism and consumerism, finer values of life are disappearing fast Lust for material gains, comforts, craze

for luxurious and glamorous life style has made them so insensitive that they hardly feel anything about the hardships and agonies of the 'have-nets'. Friendship relationship prospers only if these cost-effective. Otherwise people do not hesitate in showing their helplessness due to lack of time or energy. The persons, who' readily help people in need are considered fools in modern society.

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