



# QUIT INDIA TO NEW INDIA

HISTORY AND SOCIETY



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# OrangeBooks Publication

Smriti Nagar, Bhillai, Chhattisgarh - 490020

Website: [www.orangebooks.in](http://www.orangebooks.in)

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**First Edition, 2021**

**ISBN: 978-93-90489-30-5**

**Price: Rs.300.00**

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Printed in India

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# Indian Education System: What Needs To Change?

**Dr. Deepa Soni**

Education is a process of learning and it continues throughout the life. Education is the only means to acquire, prosperity in the field of physical, mental, spiritual and social developments. Education is must for everybody for becoming cultured. In absence of education people were considered as uncultured and animal like thing. Education is a powerful instrument for shaping and modernizing the society by adopting new paths and knowledge. Education opens hidden qualities. It can be regarded as Third Eye' of human beings. Education works as a lever in raising financial and social status of the individuals. Education is the root of modernization and human development so, expenditure on education is regarded as useful investment not only by the economists, but also by the educationists. Economic condition of a country depends largely on the educational standards of its people. It promotes mobilization and encourages people to participate in the development activities. Education makes people skilled towards jobs and creates productive efficiency. The quality of education greatly influences the quality of manpower for the societal

benefits. The level of education is one of the major indicators of welfare, prosperity and security of people in any society. Education is a process by which individuals are equipped with the skills of everyday life. More than a mere system of imparting and acquiring knowledge, education is regarded as an attempt to transmit the cultural norms of the group to its younger members. It is truly said that

*'Swadeshe pujiyate raja, vidwan sarvatra pujiyate'* "A king is honoured only in his own country, but one who is learned is honoured throughout the world."

To know the practice of Education in India, It is essential to look briefly at educational developments from the ancient i.e. 2nd millennium BC to the modern period. The evolution of education system in India can be studied in four stages-

- I. Education during the Ancient period
- II. Education during the Medieval period
- III. Education Under British Rule
- IV. Modern Education system

### **I. Education during the Ancient period**

During the ancient times Gurukul system prevails where a child gets education and the main motive was discipline, character building and spiritual knowledge. The approach of learning was to study logic and epistemology. Earlier taking education in famous universities of India like Nalanda and Taksashila was a privilege. Taxila and Ujjain universities were famous for medicine and learning

including mathematics and astronomy respectively. In the South Kanchi became an important center of learning. Some of the Chief aims and ideals of ancient Indian education are highlighted by Gupta in the following manner:

- a) Infusion of a spirit of piety and righteousness,
- b) Formation of high character,
- c) Development of personality,
- d) Inculcation of civic and social values,
- e) Promotion of social efficiency and
- f) Preservation and spread of national culture.

## **II. Education during Medieval Period**

Islamic traditions in the field of theology, religion, philosophy, fine arts, painting, architecture, mathematics, medicine and astronomy. 'Mosques' and 'Maktabas' were the centre of education. 'Suharate Aam' was the department during Babar regime which constructed schools and colleges at that time. During his period Fatehpur Sikri was the centre of Muslim education.

## **III. Education Under British Rule**

In the beginning the East India Company felt no responsibility for educating the Indians but thereafter they felt that in order to utilize the Indian man power for their self motive imparting education to Indians are essential so they enacted several acts and adopted several policies in our education system. Some of them are as-

- a) **Lord Macaulay's Minute- Introduction of English as a Medium of Instruction.**
- b) **Wood's Dispatch on Education, 1854-** The 'Wood's Education Dispatch' an important educational document was released on 19 July, 1854 after Sir Charles Wood, then president of the East Indian company's Board of Control and described as the 'Magna Carta' of the English education in India. The Dispatch contained the first comprehensive plan for the spread of education in India and systematized the educational hierarchy from the primary through the high school and the college to the university. The medium of instruction was optional both Vernacular and English being accepted.
- c) **The Indian Education Commission 1882-** The British had placed emphasis on the college and university education. The secretary of state for India had made provision of grants in aid by the government to colleges and universities alone by the regulation in 1859.
- d) **Hunter Commission 1882-83** - Lord Ripon appointed an Education Commission under Mr. W.W. Hunter in 1882 since Wood's dispatch of 1854 to review the progress of education in these fields. The commission submitted its report in 1883 and laid emphasis on introduction of School Course of a 12 year and the degree course should be of three years duration.
- e) **The Indian University Act (1904)-**The only useful provision of this act was an annual grant of five lakhs



of rupees of bring out improvement in higher education.

- d) **The Sadler University Commission, The Calcutta University Commission (1917-19)**-Under the chairmanship of Dr. M.E. Sadler in 1917 a commission was appointed for the development of university education in India. Seven new universities were established in India during the period 1916-1921, namely Mysore, Patna, Dacca, Lucknow, Banaras, Aligarh, Osmania.
- g) **The Hartog Committee (1929)**- It recommended for paying more attention to the Primary education.
- h) **Wardha Scheme of Basic Education (1937)**- The first conference on "National Education" was convened at Wardha on 22-23 October 1937 to prepare a detailed syllabus in the spirit of the resolutions under the president ship of Dr Zakir Hussain. The main findings of this committee were to promote the Gandhian plan of education like introduce a basic handicraft in the syllabus.
- i) **Abbort Wood Report 1937**- Abbort Wood Report 1937 recommended the establishment of a single polytechnic school where training in many vocations should be given, instead of special individual schools for the training in individually different vocations.
- j) **Sergeant Report, 1944**- The Central Advisory Board of Education drew up a Scheme. As sir John Sergeant was the educational advisor of the Government of India at that time in 1944, it is known as the Sargeant plan. The objective which the Board set itself was to

create in India, in a period of not less than forty years; the same standard of educational attainment on had already been admitted in England with this end in view, the Report provides for:

- Preprimary education for children between 3 and 6 years of age.
- For all children between ages of 6 and 14, universal, compulsory and free primary education.
- High school education for 6 years beginning and for selected student after the higher secondary education.
- After the higher secondary examination for selected students a university course of 3 years beginning.
- The development of a public libraries system in about 20 years and liquidation of adult illiteracy.
- full provision for the proper training of teachers.
- Creation of employment bureaus.

Thus the recommendations of the Various committees like Wood's Dispatch, Government of India's Resolution on Education Policy of 1904, Hartog and Saddler Committees hold good for the present times too

#### **IV. Modern Education system or Education During Post Independeny India-**

At the time of independence our education system was plagued with several drawbacks. Except a few pre-primary centres run by Christian missionaries and some philanthropists in the metropolitan cities, pre-school

education was non-entity, the universalization of primary education was absence. According to S. K. Kochhar, the total enrolment of in the age group 6-11 was 141 lakhs, which meant hardly 35% in this age group in the primary school. There were 5000 secondary schools with enrolment of 870000 or 4% of the children of the 14-17 age groups. The 19 universities and 400 colleges had an enrolment 250000. The total expenditure on education was Rs 57 crores or 0.5% of the total revenue of the government. Further, there is a vast educational disparities between the rural and urban, male and female and rich and poor. To bridge the gap, government initiated many constitutional and remedial measures to improve the educational system in India.

- Free and compulsory education system under section 45.
- Article 28(1), Article 28(2), Article 28(3) and Article 30 of the Indian Constitution safeguard the Secular Education.
- Equality of Opportunity in Educational Institutions under Article 29 and 30.
- Article 15, 17 and 46 safeguard the educational interest of the weaker sections of the Indian community.
- The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act 2009 became operational in the country on 1 April 2010.
- Various committees and commissions were also established to improve the quality of education in India like Kothari commission (1964), National Education policy (1986), Yashpal committee (2009),

Tondon Committee etc. to improve the quality of education in India.

- Apart from it various schemes were also launched like Mid-day Meals in school (1995), Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) - March 2009, Model school scheme, Saakshar Bharat (2009), Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (2001), National Programme for girls at elementary level.

### **Status of Education system in India**

The progress of the Indian education system can be analysed with the help of the following tables. Table-1 shows the total expenditure on education (as a % of GDP) in India. The expenditure on Education as a percentage of GDP also rose from 0.64 per cent in 1951 to about 4.20 per cent in 2010. Although, the government is committed to earmark 6% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for education, half of which would be spent on primary education.

Table-2 shows the total number of schools from 1951 to 2011. Data shows that there is a growth of primary schools in 2011 by 3.5 times as compared to the 1951 while the number of upper-primary and secondary schools grew by 33 and 27 times respectively during the 2011 as compare with the 1951. It suggest that large number of upper primary and secondary schools are opened up in India.

Similarly, Table-3 suggests the Sex-wise and Level-wise Number of Teachers in India. It shows that during the year 1951 total 751 thousands teachers were there, out of whom 636 were male and 117 were female. While during

the 2011 number of teachers raised to 6487 thousands, out of whom 3179 were male and 2708 were female. Data also suggest more numbers of female are getting engaged in the teaching profession.

**Table-1**

**Total Expenditure on Education (as % of GDP)**

Year	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001	2005	2010
Expenditure on Education as % of GDP	0.64	1.68	2.11	2.98	3.84	4.28	3.34	4.20

*Sources: Educational Statistics At A Glance (2013), Government of India Ministry of Human Resource Development.*

**Table-2**

**Total Number of schools in India by Type**

Year	Primary	Upper-Primary	Secondary / Sr. Sec (Class IX-XII)	Total
1951	209700	13600	7400	230700
1981	494500	118600	51600	664700
2011	748527	447600	200184	1396331
Growth (as compare to 1951)	(3.5)	(32.9)	(27)	(6)

*Sources: Educational Statistics At a Glance (2013), Government of India Ministry of Human Resource Development.*

**Table-3**  
**Sex-wise and Level-wise Number of Teachers in India**  
**(Numbers in Thousands)**

Year	Primary			Upper Primary			Secondary/ Sr. Sec.			Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1951	455	82	536	73	13	86	107	20	127	636	115	751
1961	1021	342	1363	595	253	851	669	257	926	2285	852	3140
2011	1194	906	2100	1045	839	1887	1537	963	2500	3179	2704	6487

*Sources: Educational Statistics At A Glance (2013), Government of India Ministry of Human Resource Development.*

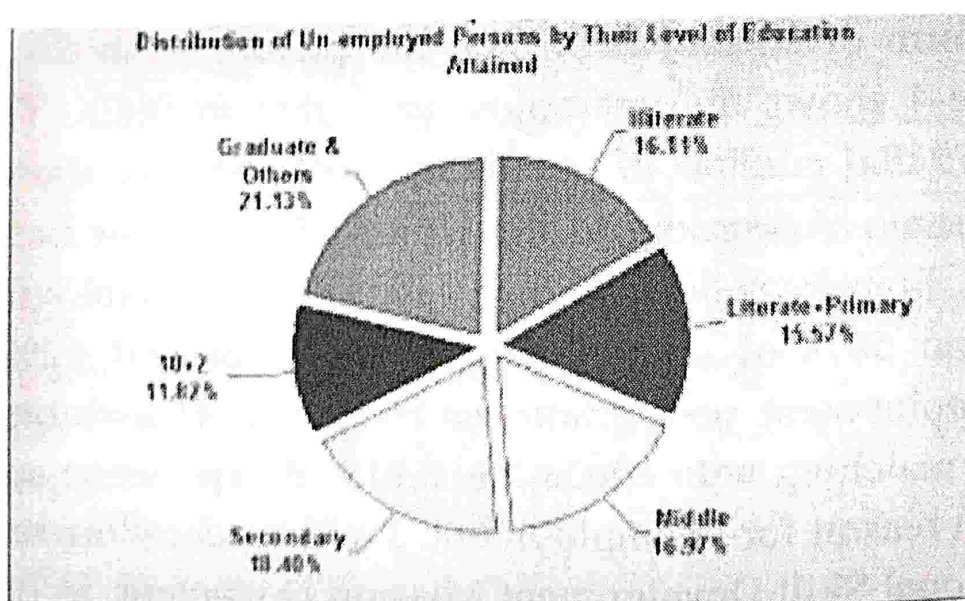
Above scenario of education system shows that total number of schools, teachers raised exorbitantly since independence i.e. quantity wise our education system is progressing well but if we see the quality of education in the form of employment then the picture is so dismal. Table-4 shows the unemployment rate in India. Table shows that number of unemployed persons are more or less same. According to the Union Ministry for Labour and Employment, claimed national unemployment around 58% of unemployment graduates and 62% of unemployment post graduates cited non availability of jobs matching with education/skill and experience as the main reason for unemployment. Further according to the National Skill Development Mission Document, as much as 97% of workforce in India has not undergone formal

skill training. According to the report published by Alakh N Sharma Director and Professor, Institute for Human Development along with society of Labour economics – The rank of jobless Indians with Bachelor’s and higher credentials swelled by 9% in the country between 2004 and 2012 i.e. In 2011-12, about 30% (or 45 lakh of the total unemployed person 1.5 crores) were graduates or more qualified , up from the 21% in 2004. Figure-1 depicts the classification of unemployed persons in 2015. This shows that even after 40 years of Independence, India is lagging behind in the field of education

**Table-4**  
**Unemployment rate in India**

Year	1971	1983	2009-10	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2015	2016
(In Percent)	5.55	8.30	9.3	3.8	4.7	4.9	3.49	3.46
Absolute Number million	5.10	48.26	38.83	44.79	46.8	48.26	46.4	44.85

**Figure-1**



### **Major Threats to Indian Education system**

- Not inculcate the value and humanity among child.
- Problem of Indiscipline
- Lack of Practical and skill-based knowledge.
- Less emphasis on creativity, Innovation and Research activities by teachers.
- Lack of Quality Teachers
- Commercialization of Education.
- Not employment oriented
- Teachers have to engage in uncreative and multiple task not related to their field.
- Reservation Policy
- Low Budget expenditure on education.

### **What Needs to be Done**

About 65% of India's population today is less than 35 years old. A huge demographic dividend will be available, if India revamps the education sector. Not doing so will have serious consequences for the country. Many studies have shown that if a child is provided good quality education and health care in the early years of schooling, it enhances his/her ability to lead a more meaningful and productive life. Children in India have the necessary intelligence and potential; what they need are opportunities to access quality education. Education is a great leveller, and provides the only sustainable route to reduce disparities. The country has tremendous potential



to become a world leader in several fields if there is a resolve to provide high quality education and health care to its children. Earlier taking education in famous universities of India like Nalanda and Taksashila was a privilege but now the situation has been reversed. our present education system is passive and mechanical in character in which only theoretical knowledge is dumped into the mind which he cannot digest. Following are the suggestions to improve the present education system.

- Inculcation of value-based education.
- Education should be qualitative not quantitative.
- There should be one single board for education with same curriculum.
- A Comprehensive and Continuous Evaluation (CCE) system should be introduced which took into consideration the overall personality of the student and reduced the dependence on a single final examination for deciding promotion to the next class.
- Career counseling is essential and on that basis stream should be chosen.
- Fostering social responsibility in the higher education.
- Emphasis should be laid on practical and skill-based knowledge.

Thus, there is a drastic need to change our education system. We need to reconstruct our education machinery for our future generation in such a way that it should be comprehensive, value-based, discipline, morale building

character, building love of virtue, light of spirituality and humanity.

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