



# Evolution of Education In Bharat

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## Abstract :

*The author examines the ancient educational system in India and its advantages to mould a society with values. Under British rule the system was changed and English was introduced as the connecting language to retain power and rule India forever. Parents are mainly responsible to give value-based education to the child and should be a role model. They are responsible to mould the child with values, character and self-confidence. Religious education in school is equally important. Govt should introduce education of all the religions in the school. Transparency will help to eliminate hate lessons and ensure level playing field. Through various stories the child will pick up values like Truth, Kindness and Non-Violence and develop purity of mind.*

**Keywords:** Madrassas, Gurukula, brahmadeya, dhanurvedya, gosamrakshana, secularism, excavation, heritage.

## Introduction

Education does not only mean teaching people what they do not know, but it also means, teaching them how to think and behave. Proper education will dilute the negative instincts of man and helps to develop his mental purity. Only a pure mind will nurture qualities like truth, kindness and non-violence. Modern education gives more importance to science, humanities and commerce, but totally ignores value-based religious spiritual education. Through various stories, religious education imparts moral values, self-respect

and confidence to the students, which will help them to become better human beings. Christianity and Islam teach religion in their schools, church and madrassas, but Hindu students do not have any opportunity to study their religion anywhere. With the collapse of joint family system, they do not learn anything from parents and grandparents as well.

Now let us examine the history of education in Bharath during Indus valley civilisation and thereafter the practice of Gurukula system of education.

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Dr. Aninthyia Sarkar, Professor at IIT Kharagpur and his team conducted studies on the objects collected during the excavation of Indus Valley civilisation, using carbon dating and discovered that the civilisation was eight to twelve thousand years old. Vedic ways of worship were the religion of people of those days.

In the Gurukulam system of education Vedas were taught orally with musical notes to students. Sage Veda Vyasa segregated the Vedas into four and put the same down in writing on metal plates and palm leaves.

In Gurukula system, students should live with the teacher as members of the teacher's family for ten to twelve years for their education. There was no discrimination between the rich and poor, high and low or among the varnas. All were treated as equal and were required to do the chores of the gurukula. The students were assigned the work of collecting firewood, water etc. for the Guru's extended family including the sishyas (students) living with Guru. They also had to beg for alms (bhiksha) and collect food materials. It was their job to feed and tend the cows of the teacher's household. Education was imparted free of any cost. On completion of education, the students should give gurudakshina to the guru on the basis of their financial situation.

The teacher or guru used to observe his students for the first two years before beginning to impart them with any formal education and understand their individual aptitudes. The guru used to teach each one of his students according to their aptitudes. Some were taught the Vedas and Brahavidya. Some

students were taught dhanurvedya (archery), whereas another group may be taught the art of trade. Some may be taught agriculture and cow rearing and protection (rearing of cows predominantly – gosamrakshana).

There was no discrimination of any kind in the society, even after varnas came in to existence post the period of Manu. Sage Veda Vyasa, son of a fisherwoman segregated the Vedas into four groups and put them down in writing as noted earlier. Till then the Vedas were taught orally by chanting with musical notes. Ratnakar, the forest robber became Sage Valmiki and wrote the Ramayana. This shows that caste and varna discrimination were not prevalent during those days. Brahmin population was less than 3%. Their way of life abstaining from alcohol and non-veg food was extremely difficult for others to follow. Others did not want to get up at brahma muhurtha, learn vedas by heart with musical notes from their guru and live on dakshana and charity given by rich people.

Even the kings used to send their children to gurukulam instead of arranging their children's education at the palace. This helped the princes to interact with common people and understand their way of life and problems faced by them. Also this way of learning helps them to develop interpersonal relationships with all sections of society. Lord Krishna was sent to the gurukula of Sandeevani Maharishi at Ujjaini by his parents and thereafter his friendship with Kuchela is well known.

### **Story of Satya Kama**

It is noteworthy that the guru gave utmost importance to truth, since dharma originates from truth. The story of Sathyakama mentioned

in Chandogya Upanishad illustrates this fact. A boy, who was the son of a palace-maid approached gurukula for admission. The Guru asked him about the whereabouts of his father, which he did not know. Even his mother did not know the name of the father of the boy. Guru was highly pleased with honesty of the boy and the guru named him Sathyakama (meaning the one who desires satya or truth). The boy was admitted to the top slot for the study the Vedas and Brahnavidya.

### **University system of education**

During the course of time, gurukula system gave way to university system of education. Nalanda, Takshasila etc were some examples. Thousands of students stayed at these knowledge-centres and studied the Vedas and other subjects, free of cost. The costs of the stay and study were financed by the kings or rich temples of these respective regions.

Many rich temples especially in South India established residential schools accommodating thousands of students, free of cost. These schools mainly taught them Sanskrit, Vedas, Puranas and Astrology. Trade and technology were family based and transferred from father to son. The expenses for running such schools were sponsored by the rich temples and rich landlords. Tirupati Devasthanam, Sri Vallabha Temple Tiruvalla, Lakshmana swamy Temple, Moozhikkulam, Kumbhakonam, Kashi, Haridwar, Ujjain etc. are some examples. Nalanda and Takshasila of Bharath were world famous Universities in those days. When the whole world was primitive and fought each other for supremacy Bharat was the centre of education, knowledge, high philosophy and culture.

### **Matha Pitha Guru Daivam**

Mother, father and teacher are God for a student. Mother is the first teacher of the child. From the mother, child learns values, manners and religion. From grandparents, child learns religious stories, and the moral lessons contained in those stories. There may be elements of myth in those stories, but through the stories, child is exposed to values and moral. From the father, child learns worldly wisdom and how to interact with world. Way of life of the parents influences the child. They should not quarrel with each other for any simple reasons. They should be honest to each other and lead a life of honesty. They should be an example to the child. They should be considerate to the child. They should appreciate the child for his positive qualities. Negative qualities of a child, if any, should be pointed out in a mild manner in private. Parents should not do anything to hurt self-respect and self-confidence of the child. Joint family system has collapsed. To meet both ends, both the parents started working. The child is left to the care of others. Parents have no time to spend with the child. This is a dangerous situation.

### **Western Type of Education**

Discovery of petroleum products and invention of electricity and telephone changed the society from agrarian to industrial. Society slowly changed to the present modern system. Changes were more prominent with the arrival of British. They wanted to rule our country forever. To achieve their goal, they wanted to break our culture and our self-confidence and the connecting language which was Sanskrit. They established English in place of Sanskrit,

which was suitable to their requirement and to achieve their goals. They advised missionaries to start schools at all important locations for which free lands were allocated. This also helped missionaries to achieve their goal of conversion. In the past, it was compulsory for all religious groups to attend Bible classes and prayer meetings in missionary schools. In the past, those who study in Christian Schools would understand, develop a soft-corner and respect for Christianity. Those days only Christian missionaries were engaged in social service, by establishing schools, colleges and hospitals in private sector. In due course of time, this trend was changed. Very recently, Hindu religious and social organisations also started doing social services like establishing schools and colleges. But the effect of this is quite negligible, except probably in Karnataka.

### **What is Secularism**

With the collapse of joint family system, grandparents are not available to guide the children. In the name of secularism, schools are not allowed to teach religion. Some temples give lectures on Bhagavath Geetha to the local children. In certain states, Government prohibited this practise by influencing the governing board of the temples. Certain political parties are afraid that religious education in temple will make it a fertile ground for extreme religious groups to grow. This is absurd, Hindu religion is tolerant of all religions and believe that all faiths and worship are different paths to God realisation.

Minorities teach religion in their school and at their place of worship. Hindus pray for peace and well-being of the mankind. If religion and spirituality and universal brotherhood

are not taught, it will make these children to grow up without values which in the long run is detrimental to society. Now it is high time that the Government introduce value based religious education in all the schools so that our new generation will grow as good human beings with moral values and character. If character is lost everything is lost. There are more chances they will become drug addicts, alcoholics and criminally minded when they are irreligious. Hinduism teaches and trains Hindus to accept and respect all the contrary philosophies, concepts of GOD and religion including Atheism. Therefore they are born secular. Religion is required to train our minds with moral values. Secularism does not mean non religious. It only means that we should understand and respect all other religions and treat them without preference and prejudice in government administration.

### **Religious Education – Must**

Vedas were reorganised by the great Sage, Veda Vyasa, son of a fisher woman and Parasara Maharshi. He wrote the great epics, Maha Bharatham and Bhagavatham. He also wrote 18 Puranas. There are some elements of myth in Puranas. Myth is introduced to make it more interesting to read. At the same time, Veda Vyasa conveyed values and moral sense to the readers through the stories in Puranas. It is a pity that Indians, in particular the Hindus are not allowed to learn from Vedas, Epics and Puranas which represent Indian heritage wisdom in the school even today. Minorities can learn their religion in their schools at the expense of the government and also at their place of worship, but we do not teach about our rich heritage and spirituality in government schools or in the schools managed by Hindu

major communities in the name of secularism, even after 7 decades of independence. Why the secularism is only limited to Hinduism? There should be equality and level playing field in spiritual education for all the religious groups. If the religious education is a part of government-controlled syllabus and curriculum it will ensure transparency and eliminates hate lessons, if any, so that our plural society will lead a life of peace and harmony with mutual respect.

By learning Prastanatraya (Bhagavad Geeta, Upanishad and Brahma Sutra), one does not become a fanatic. In fact he or she becomes more liberal and secular. The Fact remains that there is no parallel to Upanishads in the whole world. It is the product of unconditional thinking of free mind and is highly secular. It is easy to convert Hindus if they are ignorant

about Hinduism and think that their religion is primitive. Therefore, it is imperative that we should teach all our children what real Hinduism is about and about our rich heritage. Government should take initiative to introduce the study of all the religions in the school as a compulsory subject with option to select according to each one's faith.

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SEPTEMBER 5

HAPPY TEACHERS' DAY!

**IF THERE WERE  
NO TEACHERS,  
ALL OTHER PROFESSIONS  
WOULD NOT EXIST.**

"The mediocre teacher tells, the good teacher explains, the superior teacher demonstrates, and the great teacher inspires".

Dr. SARVAPALLI RADHAKRISHNAN

It is significant that India has chosen Dr. S Radhakrishnan's birthday as Teacher's day of the country.

"A Teacher affects eternity; he can never say whether his influence stops".

ADAM SMITH