

STUDY OF PAST AND PRESENT EDUCATION SYSTEM IN INDIA

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Abstract

India has the second largest education system in the world. The Indian education system has gone through many phases. Great effort has been put to shape up the present scenario of education system. The journey from Gurukuls to IITs had many ups and downs. But each phase has its own pros and cons. The aim of this research is to study ancient as well as present education system in India. The various phases through which education system has gone through have been studied in detail. An attempt has been made to compare the education scenario in old and modern India. The pre British and post British education system has been reviewed to know the intentions of the British behind making changes in the Indian Education System. The positive and negative aspects of each phase have been framed out during this research.

Keywords: Education, Ancient education system, Present education system, education budget.

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Research Methodology

Various methods have been adopted for carrying out to carry out this research. Literature concerned with pre British and post British period has been studied carefully. Hermeneutics is used as a research methodology for this paper. Hermeneutics can be defined as the interpretation and understanding of ancient literature and religious texts. Interviews of scholars and experts of the field of management also helped a lot during this research.

Ancient Indian Education System

Indians have understood the importance of education from the ancient times. That's why world's oldest University, The Nalanda University is situated in India.. When we go through holy books like Ramayana and Mahabhatta, we come to know that children were sent to Gurukuls (residential institutes of old times) for education where they used to study and live during their education period. Gurukuls were the only mean of education in ancient times.

Now days in India, common subjects are taught to students till secondary or higher secondary classes. After that they choose their line of interest and then they are taught the subjects of their concerned field only. Unlike today, knowledge of every subject was not given to everybody. A student was imparted knowledge of only those tasks which he was supposed to perform after he grew up. So there was a specialisation based education system right from the childhood. Now days in India, common subjects are taught to students till secondary or higher secondary classes. After that they choose their line of interest and then they are taught the subjects of their concerned field only.

The society was divided into four classes : Brahmins, Kshatriya , Vaishya , Shudras. The priests were known as Brahmins. They used to perform rites and rituals. The people of warrior class were known as Kshatriyas. Their duty was to protect people. The business class was known as Vaishya. They were involved in every type of business and trade in those times. The fourth class was Shudra. They were the labour class. It was their duty to serve the other three classes. The education system in India was based on this caste system. The education was imparted according to the caste of a student. Brahmins were given the knowledge about religion, philosophy, Vedas. They were taught holy chants. Kshatriyas were taught various concepts of warfare. They were

made expert in things like archery, fencing etc. Vaishyas used to learn various techniques and principles necessary for smooth running of a business. Shudras were not given the right for education. The only common thing which the other three castes used to go through was Vedas.

Indian Education system after British Government

After arrival of East India Company in India, They started changing the Indian Education system gradually and one day we were there with a completely new process of educating people. They transformed the whole system to encapsulate European attitude in Indian children. They emphasized on use of English in education rather than our own native languages. They started textbook culture in India. The motive of introducing textbooks was to stop children from producing new knowledge and made them think that they were mere consumers of the knowledge which the textbook writer wants to convey to them. The second and the most dangerous impact of introduction of text books was the degradation of respect of teachers in Indian society. The teachers lost the right of deciding what to teach and how to teach. They had to just follow the matter given in textbooks.

The second concept introduced by the British in Indian Education was that of the examinations. It was a plan of British to have a centralized control of Indian Education System through the introduction of examination system. So the students were limited to learn only those things which were supposed to be covered in the examination and rest of the things were left. In this way the area of knowledge became very narrow. Examination system gave rise to a serious implication known as cramming in students. The students started memorizing things whether understood or not so that they could clear the exam. Indian students were not very good at English those days. So they just started memorizing the concepts in English rather than learning by heart.

The textbooks contained more text on European history as compared to Indian history. The students started getting influenced by the western culture. Then a tendency to adopt western culture grew up among Indian children. The purpose of examination system was to refrain people from getting higher education. The fear of failure in examination made a lot of children to

quit studies. The British Government was afraid that if there were more educated people in India the chances of revolution become brighter.

The intention behind the changes made by British Government in education system of India can be made clear by Lord Macaulay's Address to the British Parliament 2nd February 1835. In his address, he said that "I have travelled across the length and breadth of India and I have not seen one person who is a beggar, who is a thief. Such wealth I have seen in this country, such high moral values, people of such caliber, that I do not think we would ever conquer this country, unless we break the very backbone of this nation, which is her spiritual and cultural heritage, and therefore, I propose that we replace her old and ancient education system, her culture, for if the Indians think that all that is foreign and English is good and greater than their own, they will lose their self esteem, their native culture and they will become what we want them, a truly dominated nation."

Present Indian Education System

Indian education system has got contribution from both public as well as private sector. It is controlled by Central Government as well as State Government. Education has been specified as one of the fundamental rights in the constitution of India. Modern Indian education system is divided into many levels : pre-primary level, primary level, middle level education, secondary education, undergraduate level and postgraduate level.

Pre primary level education or preschool education is provided to children before the age of five. It aims at satisfying a child's needs of fun, enjoyment, freedom, choice, belongingness, respect and love. These needs form the basis for healthy development and life-long learning.

Primary education consists of the education till fifth standard. It is meant for children belonging to age group of 6-11 year. Middle level education is imparted to students studying in classes from sixth to eighth. Secondary education is imparted to students studying in classes from ninth to twelve. After completion of school education, college education starts. College education has two levels generally- Graduation level and post graduation level. After completion of school education, the students choose course of their interest. The undergraduate course lays a

foundation of the student's field of interest. After completing the undergraduate course, a postgraduate level course can be pursued. It adds to the knowledge acquired by a student during the undergraduate course.

Government is investing a lot of money in education sector to improve the level of education in India. A major portion of the total budget is spent on providing good education to children as education is the base of a nation. Fig 1 shows the allocation of union budget to various sectors in 2012-13. A big amount of Rs 28679 crore has been allocated for education sector this year. Fig 2 shows the allocation of union budget to various sectors in year 2011-12. An amount of Rs 52057 crore had been allocated for education sector in the previous year. These figures show that a large part of the total budget is spent on education every year. Government is putting great effort to reform the education sector but due to the problems like corruption less than one fourth of the total fund allocated is spent on education actually.

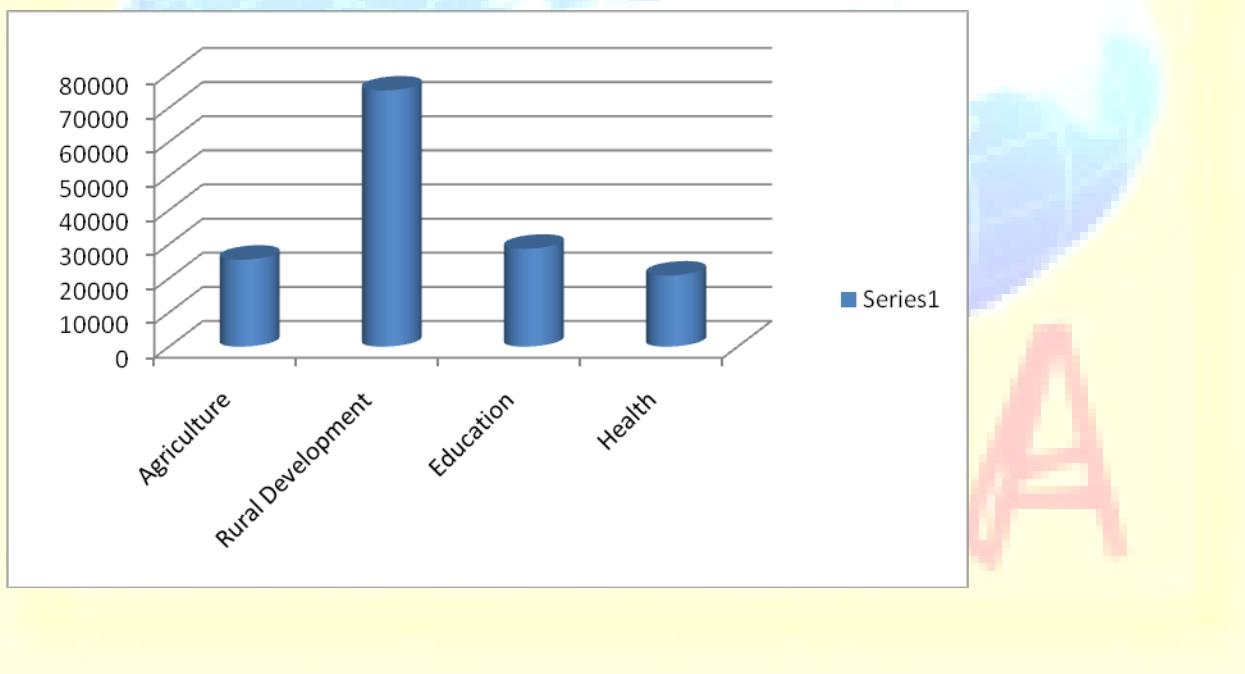


Fig 1: Allocation of funds (in Cr.) for various sector in Union budget 2012-13

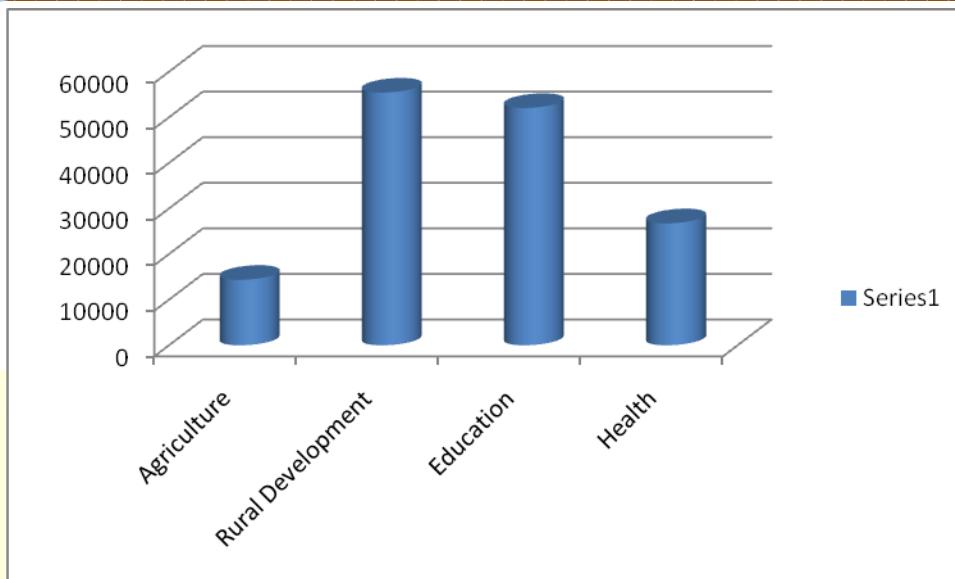


Fig 2: Allocation of funds (in Cr.) for various sector in Union budget 2011-12

Conclusion

After going through various phases of education system it has been concluded that the education system in ancient times was not supported by large sum of money, infrastructure and advanced technology still they were managing to run such a systematic education system. But the dominance of caste system in imparting education was the only problem at that time. After the arrival of British in India, they started changing the education system for their personal benefit and not for the benefit of people. Now days Government is spending a lot of money on education but the money is not utilized properly. So, steps should be taken to tackle corruption and other issues so that the funds can be utilized properly.

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