

## **CHAPTER – VII**

### **Major findings and Concluding Observations**

## Major Findings and Concluding Observation :

The research work to study and analyze the ancient Indian education system, is resuming to its major findings in this chapter. We have come across a number of interesting aspects related to the subject which is being presented in the following lines. Our study is mainly concerned with the formal education system in the Vedic and the Buddhist period.

The first chapter is the introductory chapter and it is divided in to four parts. The first part gives a general idea about the education system in the *Samhitā* period. It is found that through the *Tapas*, the *Rṣis* acquired highest knowledge and imparted this knowledge to their disciples. Their main aim was the realisation of '*Pramabrahmajāñā*', the ultimate truth. Through the *Tapas* or *Samādhi*, they acquired the ultimate truth.

The second part gives us the general idea about the education system in the Brahmanic period. In this part, it is found that, during this age education system became more systematic. The procedure of *Upanayana* or initiation ceremony became more complicated. During the period some *Sākhā*, *Charaṇa*, *Gotra* and *Pariṣats* were developed for the propagation of education. *Parā Vidyā* was held supreme and the *Brāhmin* got preference. During the age method of study became more developed and the doubts had to be cleared through the question, cross question and answer method. The basic pedagogic principles were *Śravaṇa*,

*Manana* and *Nididhyāsana*. In this period three educational Centres were also developed and the courses of studies became vast.

The third part is the discussion about the education system in Epic age. Here we find that the Epic age education was mostly available to the members of the Royal families and to the *Brāhmins*. The Royal family children used to have the special tutors to teach them at home. Other students had to go to the hermitage in the flung forest areas. In this period the teaching was mainly the job of *Brāhmins*. Educational curriculum become multidimensional but military science was the nucleus subject of entire system of education. During the age four types of educational centres were developed - (i) Hermitage (ii) *Pariṣats* of *Samiti* (iii) Royal assemblies (iv) the places of Pilgrimage. Among these centres of learning the hermitage and the places of pilgrimage, played vital role to propagate education. *Varṇa* system or caste system assumed an inflexible rigidity. *Śudras* by this time had been deprived. The women also do not receive adequate opportunities to receive proper education.

The fourth part of the first chapter gives the general idea about the education in Puranic age. The aim of education in Puranic age underwent some change. The formation of character was still the ideal aim as it was before. The idea of an all sided development was probably conceived by some leading teachers in this epoch. In this time many writer used the term *Vinaya*. The first meaning of this word is education and second expression is the idea of the formation of character. So from this word we find that the whole idea of education is based on

all round development of men. During this age the curriculum of studies also underwent some changes. The primary course comprised reading, writing, counting, storytelling, drawing, and singing. This work was more oral than bookish, more practical than theoretical. Writing was taught with thick reed pencil on wooden boards covered with sand. The girls' education seems to be quite liberal. As regards the methods of teaching, there was no perceptible change. By this time two kinds of teachers i) *Dikshā Guru* and ii) *Śikshā Guru* came to be recognized.

The second chapter is an attempt to analyze the educational *saṁskāras* in ancient India. While dealing with this educational *saṁskāras*, we find that these *saṁskāras* had its own importance. It purifies and regulates the life of a student. A high sense of duty and morality was developed during the life after the performance of these *saṁskāras*. In ancient period first educational *Samskāra* of pupil's life was the *Vidyārambha Samskāra*. From this *Samskāra*, a child started to receive education. In the fifth or seventh year of a Child, the *Vidyārambha Samskāra* was performed. The auspicious day of *Uttarāyana*( *Mārgaśīrsa* to *Jyeṣṭha*) was selected for the performance of this *Samskāra*. All the authorities do not give reference about this *Samskāra*. But later *Smṛtis* describe the importance of the *Vidyārambha Samskāra*.

The *Upanayana* was the second educational *saṁskāra* in ancient period. The *Upanayana Samskāra* marks the beginning of Secondary education. All the *Śastras* describe the *Upanayana Samskāra* in their own way. But the significance

of *Upanayana* ceremony was most beautifully set forth in the *Atharvaveda*. The whole *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* also gives a graphic picture of the initiated students. *Gr̥hyasūtra* minutely describe all the rules and regulations of the *Upanayana Saṁskāra*.

*Samāvartana* was the third educational *saṁskāra* in ancient period. This ceremony marked the termination of the formal education life. All the authorities basically the *Brāhmaṇas*, the *Upaniṣats*, the *Sūtras* and the *Smṛtis* elaborately describe the Convocation ceremony. The *Taittirīya Upaniṣat* describes the teacher's farewell address to the Students.

Besides this, during the *Brahmacarya* period, the student also performed some other rituals, like *Upākarma* or *Śrāvaṇī* ritual and *Utsarjana* ritual. *Upākarma* ritual was the ritual to inaugurate a session and *Utsarjana* ceremony was the annual dispersal or closure ceremony.

The Buddhist period was also characterized by numerous educational rituals. The Buddhist educational rituals are *Pabbaja* (initial ordination) and *Upasampadā* (final ordination). These were the main educational rituals in Buddhist period. The *Pravrajyā* or going forth were the preparatory ordination for education in Buddhist system of education. It was equivalent to *Upanayana* ceremony. The candidates, those who performed the *Pabbaja* ceremony, had to leave all the visible marks of his previous life when he was admitted in to the order. It was the first step of “going forth” for the ultimate “going out of his

Worldliness”. Caste distinction did not come in the way of Buddhist Order. All the *Varnas* equally perform the *Pabbaja* ceremony.

*Upasampadā* ceremony was equivalent to *Samāvartana* ceremony. The *Upasampadā* exercised lifelong binding upon the Monk. But the *Samāvartana* did not give any binding upon the *Brahmacāri*. A person between fifteen and twenty years of age could perform the final ordination or *Upasampadā*. But in case of the postulant being previously a member of another monastic Order, then the period of novitiate was however reduced to four months. The Buddhist Monastery was open to all courses and not merely to the three twice born. But in case of *Upasampadā* or final ordination, after going through the *Pabbaja* ceremony, a person was allowed to perform *Upasampadā* ceremony. After the twelve years of education, a novice was allowed to perform the final ordination. He was now learned competent *bhikṣu*, who had completed twelve years of education. So he must enter in to the *Samṅha* as a Monk to continue his education. The *Upasampadā* was performed before the entire *Samṅha*. The student himself announced absolute submission to the Order. He had to face a volley of questions. The house gave a verdict and the eligible candidate was declared a graduate. In this way the Buddhist *Upasampadā* or final ordination was completed.

The third chapter has discussed about *Gurukula*. The *Gurukula*, the residence of the teacher was the most significant centre of learning in ancient India. This unique institution was a very vital part of the Vedic community for several centuries. Its origin cannot be traced. But it is necessary to point out that,

the entire progress achieved by Indians throughout the ages in various fields of life and knowledge is the fruit of the *Gurukula* system of education and training.

Besides this *Gurukula* some *Śākhā*, *Charaṇa*, *Gotra*, *Pariṣats* were also developed to emerge the education system. But none of these throws any light as to whether there was any effort at organizing a number of teachers in to an educational institution. *Gurukula* functioned as a real educational centre.

In Buddhist period the Buddhist Monastery – known as '*Vihāra*' played a very important role. This *Vihāras* or Monasteries functioned as educational institution.

Buddhists first developed the organised educational institutions. The Buddhist institutions are world renowned. *Takṣaśilā*, *Nālandā Vihāra*, *Valabhī*, *Vikramśilā Mahāvihāra*, *Odantapuri Mahāvihāra* and *Jagaddala Mahāvihāra* deserves special reference. From all parts the students come to these institutions to receive education. But when Muslim invaders come to India, they destroyed these educational institutions. Because they do not know the value of these educational Centres and destroyed it.

The fourth chapter discussed the aims and objectives of education in Vedic and Buddhist period. In this chapter we find that both the system had similar aims and objectives. But the basic difference between the two systems of education is that in the Vedic concept of life and education, the salvation comes through successful completion of life's mission by discharging duties and responsibilities. This led to the *Chaturāśrama* scheme of life. But the sole aim of Buddhist life and

education being the attainment of *Nirvāna*, there is little value attached to family life. Monkhood is the desired end. Hence morality, service and disciplined *Samgha* life free from worldly bonds constituted the basic pillars of Buddhist education. Vedic philosophy propounded reunion with the absolute and freedom from cycles of birth, as ultimate aim of education. Buddhism also propounded the end of cycles of birth, the path being not reunion with God, but complete negation of desires which meant *Nirvāna*.

The fifth chapter observes that both the systems of education are complimentary to each other. Chinese traveller Fa-Hien has written that basically in fifth century A.D. the Vedic education was very popular in Buddhist curriculum. All the Vedic subjects were taught in different Universities of Buddhist period. No doubt the *Tripitakas* was the main subjects of study of the Buddhist monks. But they also required to know the Brahmanic learning matter because they had to defend their faith in public debates against Brahmanic challenge.

The sixth chapter resumes that in both the schools oral, debating and discussion methods were very popular. It is interesting to mention here that though the art of writing developed in ancient age but the art of writing was not considered as pure education. So during that period, oral device was main method of teaching .Later debating and discussion and other methods are also become popular.



In ancient age we find that the relation between the teachers and the taught were extremely cordial and harmonious. The pupil looked up to his teacher as his father and the teacher also give all his love and affection to his pupil. But in Buddhist period we find that the student enjoyed the right to criticize his teacher, if he commits immoral or irreligious things.

Our submission is that the ancient Indian system of education is the oldest system in the world. We noticed significant growth in the system of education in our country from ancient times. During the age education was not confined to intellect only but it was actual realization. That is why, many regulations, code of conduct were to be observed by the students during the age of their studentship.

In ancient India the religious *Saṃskāras* received high importance in Society. People believed that without the performance of the *Saṃskāra* nobody could lead a meaningful life nor obtain higher dignity in society.

It is a matter of fact that the *Saṃskāra* has its own importance. It helped in the refinement and purification of human life. It helped in the solution of many problems. A high sense of duty and morality is developed during the life after the performance of the *Saṃskāras*. In the Vedic period *Upanayana* and *Samāvartana* *Saṃskāras* and in the Buddhist period *Pabbaja* and *Upasampadā* were main educational *Saṃskāras*. The Student performed all these *Saṃskāras* in the beginning and at the end of their educational career.

Today the society is changed; the man is changing accordingly; his beliefs, sentiments and aspiration have also changed. Western influence has attracted or

captured the mind of young people. That is why, in present days people are not performing all these educational *Samskāras*. We may laugh or ignore our old religious ceremonies. But these ceremonies are essential. It nourishes the pious feelings in pupils' mind. It develops the young pupils' mental and moral attributes, which afterwards fit them for being a perfect member of the society.

In the *Gurukula* student used to receive individual attention. In a very beautiful atmosphere teacher imparts all education to his student. In present days we do not find such types of atmosphere in teaching learning process. But many institutions try to follow the tradition of the *Gurukulas*. This *Gurukula* system establishes a high degree of moral behaviour to all classes of society.

Like that in the Buddhist period various *Samghas* or Monasteries were developed which afterwards grew up as the biggest institutions. These educational Centres were renowned in the world. The educational activities of these institutions are very high standard. Pupil from different parts of the country used to flock these educational centre for proper education. Even today people realize the importance of these educational centres. That is why; to revive the glory of ancient education system again the famous *Nālandā II* University is started in Bihar. It has started with two schools 1) School of Ecology and Environmental studies and 2) School of Historical studies. It has fifteen students and eleven faculty members among the students two students from foreign nations viz., Bhutan and Japan also come to *Nālandā II* to receive education. *Gopa Sabharwal* is the first Vice Chancellor of *Nālandā II*.

During the ancient period aims and objectives of education are very high standard. Both the education systems try to make their students of sound mind with developed personality. That means, the student should be well-behaved, self dependent, respectful towards their parents, teachers and above all the students should know duties and responsibilities. Besides, they should respect the culture and heritage and try to preserve the same.

During that age people realize or understand the value of education. They know that through the proper education they can be able to face any challenge of their life. So they always follow their teacher's instructions and try to receive proper education from their teachers. They always cultivate their knowledge. There was no degree or diploma to take shelter. They know their duties and responsibilities. And they always follow the right path. But in the present days we do not find this type of training. Our main aim of education is to pass the examination and receive degree or diploma certificate. Our knowledge is like dry wood or ashes which can never blaze. But during the age of the *Vedas* and the Buddhist, the students were self dependent.

No doubt majority of the people in present days receive mechanical education with the exception of a few ones. Now-a-days there are some educational institution which follow the traditional system of ancient Indian education. They propagate the values of our past. But now the situation has been changed. The requirements of the people are now also different. So it is not possible for all to follow all the principles of past education system. Yet some

necessary features of ancient Indian education system must be added to modern education system. In present days many educationists try to include the necessary positive aims and objectives of ancient education system to modern education system.

Moreover, we find that subjects of study in Vedic and Buddhist education system are multidimensional. They provide all types of knowledge to their students. Because they know that one kind of knowledge is not fruitful for any education system. They also know that different students have different urge or requirements. So to fulfill their requirements the subjects of study must be variegated. We find the extra ordinary progress in the field of education during the age of the *Vedas* and the Buddhist.

The main motto of education in ancient period was basically spiritual in essence but they also visualized the worldly problems. They developed variety of subjects for which the students could be able to lead the worldly problems. But when we compare these subjects of studies in present days then we find that there are numerous defective and unbalanced curriculums of studies. It emphasizes only bookish learning. After Independence many commissions like the Mudaliar commission (1953), the Kothari commission (1964-66) were set up. These commissions pointed out that the subjects of study in India are very narrow and out of date. It has no provision for practical activities. It has not given to the development of the skills, proper attitude, tendencies and value orientations; it is not complete to keep pace with the lives of people. So it is urgent need of

improving the curriculum, raising its standard and forming it. For this the NCERT in secondary courses, the UGC in higher education and many other Centres and State Board largely may look after the curriculum of education in ancient India. After six decades of Independence the country is not able to achieve the ultimate goal. Many educational schemes such as the *Sarva Sikṣā Abhiyān* in Primary sector and many other educational missions in secondary sector also try to develop our curriculum of studies but it has lost their credibility. One of the prominent factors for this dis-credibility is rapid erosion of our moral, academic, social and cultural values. But in present days some schools and colleges try to adopt the ancient culture and give the proper opportunity to their students.

To enhance the education system in ancient period different types of teaching methods were developed viz., Oral method, Self study, Debate and Discussion, Question Answer and many other methods. These methods of teaching were very popular during the age of the *Vedas* and the Buddhist. These methods of teaching were actually developed in Vedic period. Later Buddhist education systems realized that these methods of teaching were very scientific in nature. Vedic *Ṛṣis* developed these teaching methods according to their own experiences.

During the age of the *Vedas* and the Buddhist there was very smooth and pleasant relationship between the teachers and the students. In the Buddhist period, some changes in this relationship occurred. But this situation is far and few between. On the whole the teacher student relationship was direct, cordial and intimate.

The thesis entitled a study on the formal education system in ancient India with reference to Vedic and Buddhist period and its relevance resumes to its concluding observation that the ancient Indian system of education is still relevant of course partially in the modern education system. The basic principles of ancient Indian education system need to be incorporated in the present curriculum. The Ancient Indian education systems have been a source of inspiration to all education system of the world. It is the mirror of all the education. A student who wants to achieve the goal he has to follow the ideals of ancient Indian education. Ancient Indian education was emphatic on moral education. Moral education makes a man civilized and cultured. Without moral education a man can not be able to differentiate good and bad. So in order to make life healthy and smooth one should have to realize the importance of ancient education. According to *Vedas*, the important aspect of education is to train the mind of the soul to be truthful because the noble soul who pursues the path of truth is never defeated.