



## Study of Teacher Education in Pre-Independence India

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### Abstract

Pre-independence India, like the rest of the nation, saw teaching as one of the most honourable professions. The country's teacher preparation programmes are among the best in the world. Teachers were held in high regard and valued by their students. The tasks assigned to them were carried out with the greatest care and ingenuity. We made certain they had the necessary credentials and would be able to accomplish the goals set forth for them. Pre-independent India recognised the importance of teacher education. When instructors had the necessary skills and talents, they were thought to be able to transfer enough information to their pupils and promote the well-being of the community, according to this belief. Among the many topics covered in this investigation are the history of Indian teacher education, teacher training in pre-independence India, the Upanishad period, the Buddhist era, the mediaeval era, and the contemporary age.

**Keywords:** Curriculum, Instructional Strategies, Knowledge, Profession, Teacher Education

### Introduction

One of the most revered and venerable professions, not only in India but across the globe, is that of the teacher. The educational system has changed and evolved through time, yet it has remained the same. The pre-independence educational system in India was distinct from the one in place at the current time. New laws, policies, teaching-learning procedures and instructional methodologies have emerged, as well as alterations to the physical surroundings of schools and classrooms as well as to the nature of students' interactions with both their professors and their peers. Teacher education in India has a history that predates the very existence of formal education in the country. Teacher education in India is among the most extensive in the world. Teachers in the nation are said to have been educated in 2500 BC, based on their education.

Initially, the teaching of the Vedas was the primary emphasis of the early Hindu civilisation. Brahmins, one of the four Hindu castes, were the community's instructors. They devoted their lives to improving the lives of others around them. The Brahmins saw



it as their primary responsibility to work for the acquisition, preservation, and dissemination of knowledge. India's teachers had a particular status and position prior to the country's independence. Selection and preparation of instructors was seen as important and carried out with a high degree of attention to detail. Students felt that their professors cared about them on a personal level. Students, on the other hand, were respectful to their professors. Students who were capable of acting as monitors helped the lecturers on occasion. This technique served as a way to introduce students to the role of instructors. The old educational system made a significant contribution to the development of this system.

### **History of Teacher Education in India**

From the early days of education to the current day, the teacher preparation programme has undergone several adjustments. It starts to take shape and grow in line with society's local and global demands. Teacher education in India has two distinct eras throughout its history. The first section focuses on teacher education in pre-independent India, from the time of the ancient system of education through the time of the country's independence. The second portion of the book is devoted to teacher education in post-independent India (Historical Development of Teacher Education in India, n.d.). Teachers' talents and skills are critical to the success of the nation. For the development of not just people, but also communities and the country as a whole, they are essential. As a result, teaching is regarded as the most ethical of all occupations.

Teachers' education history conveys to students that it includes both formal and informal activities and experiences that help them succeed in their roles in the classrooms and in their careers as educators. People who work in this field are able to get the knowledge and experience necessary to carry out their jobs in a methodical and systematic way. As far back as the beginnings of teacher education, gurus were revered while mentors and their pupils resided in their homes as they pursued their study. The Guru cared for his followers as if they were his own children, attending to their wants and needs. However, like their fathers, the pupils showed reverence to the Guru and respected the Gurukul's rules.

### **Preparation of Teachers in the Pre-Independence India**

Vedic texts such as the Rig-Yajur-Sama-Artharva and the Vedangas (Shiksha-Chandas-Vyakarna-Niruktana-Kalpa-Jyothisha-Nirukta) dominated education in ancient India.



While there were no formal educational institutions to be found in the ancient time, the system of Gurukul was prevalent. In the Gurukul system, the connection between the instructor and the students was of primary importance. The customised education system was another notable component of teaching. The importance of religious instruction was emphasised heavily. In addition to imparting academic information and abilities to the kids, the professors also taught them about morals and ethics. The pupils were well-prepared for the realities of teaching in the real world. Teachers use verbal explanations to help pupils understand what they're learning. Students used memorization strategies to learn the material. They were well-versed in the ideas and lesson plans offered by the instructors, and they were able to retain this information.

Teaching-learning approaches and instructional tactics were the primary focus of instructors' preparations. In addition to spoken explanation, instructors used a variety of different strategies. Other tactics included talks, debates, storytelling, and so forth. Efforts to do good actions and avoid harming others were seen as important. To help the students grasp the idea, the professors related tales to them. In other situations, the students took on the role of teacher, putting into action what their mentors had taught them. Impersonation and repetition were also used to hone their teaching abilities. Scholars were able to become instructors because to these strategies.

Normally, when professors were absent, pupils with a high level of intelligence were assigned to teach the class. Thus, the students were able to learn how to teach throughout the course of their study. When instructors believe that their pupils are intelligent, capable, and sharp, they are able to better prepare for their lessons. After that, they have total faith in these pupils to go on with the lesson without them. In order to do this, students must cultivate a passion for learning and become more disciplined and dedicated to their studies. Students at the Gurukul received instruction in a variety of different areas, including how to run a family, care for animals, and gather wood from the forest, among other things. Students were also expected to help in the preparation of meals since they ate at the home of their professors. Disciples received comprehensive training in religious education, morals, ethics and other intellectual ideas via this method of instruction.

### **The Upanishad Period**

Upanishad era gurus or teachers were an epitome of virtue, a source of wisdom, and an abode of spirituality. The instructors' selection and preparation need the ability to think



beyond the box. Rig Veda says that the instructor was chosen and then taught effectively. It was a requirement for the instructors to be knowledgeable about the curriculum. They had a high level of esteem and adulation in society as a whole. Teachers in the Upanishad era were recognised for their special attention to pupils. During this time, the instructor and pupils developed a close bond. To accept a pupil was up to the instructor, and if a student was admitted, it was the teacher's moral obligation to see to it that he was properly educated. Additionally, the student had the option of choosing his or her own instructor. Because writing emerged much later, most information was passed along verbally throughout this time period. When it came to teaching approaches, explanations were considered essential. Students embraced the teaching techniques utilised by their instructors and passed them down down the generations. Teachers that were well-qualified devised their own ways and used examples to make the subject matter more relatable to their pupils. The five processes that were used to discover the meaning of a religious truth practised in ancient India were listening, understanding, reasoning, confirmation by a friend or a teacher, and application.

### **The Buddhist Period**

This time period saw a shift in the duties of instructors. Teachers were able to expand their expertise thanks to the expansion of knowledge and the growth of numerous topic areas. Teachers have to be proficient in a wide range of subjects. Secular themes were just as essential as religious ones, although the focus was on the former. Takshila and Nalanda were the two major centres of higher education throughout the Buddhist era. During this time, a standardised approach to teacher preparation was developed. The importance of teacher education started to grow throughout this time.

Preceptors were expected by Buddhist monastic tradition to supervise and guide novices upon their admittance to the monastery (Upajjhaya). The Upajjhaya was chosen with great care and regard by the disciple. The Upajjhaya had a duty to the novice, the Saddhiviharika, to do his duties. He must provide spiritual guidance and support for the group's religious studies. They used techniques such as instructing and encouragement to get the students to ask questions. The instructors' job was to pay close attention to the needs of the students. Methods used for teaching included oral recitation and explanation as well as debates, discussions and question-and-answer sessions as well as the use of tales and parables to convey the message. Vihars and monastic institutions used hetu-



vidya or the inductive approach to cultivate the intellect of their students. The introduction of logic as a discipline helped to improve the intellect and oratory.

### **The Medieval Period**

Throughout the Muslim world, education was seen as a mark of distinction. Respect was shown to those in the teaching professions. The rulers of Mohammedan lands established madrasas (colleges), maktabas (schools), and libraries. In addition to learning the Koran, which pupils had to memorise, the kids in the maktabas also learned how to read, write, and do basic math. Although Persian was used as a medium of teaching, the study of Arabic was considered mandatory. As a part of the Madrasas' curriculum, students studied grammar, rhetoric, theology, logical reasoning, philosophy, literature, law, and the sciences; among other disciplines. People of high intellect were engaged as instructors in the madrasas. Traditionally, the way new teachers were trained was seen as a continuation of the methods used by more experienced educators. In other situations, teachers are also given the task of instructing highly intelligent kids when they are away from the classroom. Teachers were held in high regard not just by their pupils but also by the general public.

One of the most common teaching methods was memorization of lesson plans and topics. Students gained conceptual knowledge and comprehension from their professors via vocal instruction. Lectures were the primary mode of instruction. As a means of enhancing their knowledge and talents, the pupils were encouraged to study literature. Practical assessments and tasks were organised in science and medical classes. Religion, logic, philosophy, and politics, among others, were taught using analytical and inductive approaches. There was no specialised training programme for instructors, but the teachers were well-versed in their roles and responsibilities and the teaching techniques they were expected to use.

### **The Modern Period**

Scholars and teacher training institutes were created in India before to British control by European missionaries. Several Danish missionaries set up a school at Serampur, near Calcutta, for the training of teachers. It all started in Madras, India, when Dr. Andrew Bell conducted an experiment to see whether a monitorial system could be used to instruct teachers. The Bell-Lancaster system was in operation in the United Kingdom at the time. Teachers' training was the subject of a Sir Munro Minute from December 13th,



1823. There should be a raise in the allowance for Hindu and Muslim instructors, as well as a new curriculum. The first normal school in Madras was founded by the British government in June of that year. At first, it was used to train instructors for positions in local public schools. As time went on, this elementary school was transformed into the Presidents' College. There was a normal school in Bombay in 1847 and a normal school in Calcutta in 1849.

### **Conclusion**

Since ancient times, teaching has been held in high esteem as one of the most honourable professions in the nation. Educators in the nation before to independence placed a high value on religious instruction. Besides religious education, secular education was seen as the most important kind of learning. Pre-independence India's pre-independence teacher education was analysed in terms of the Upanishad period, the Buddhist period, the Medieval period, and the contemporary period, respectively. Schools and universities sprung up all across the Muslim world. Mathematics, physics, literature, astronomy, linguistics, jurisprudence, administration, and other academic disciplines were also covered. In addition, labs were built so students could have hands-on experience conducting experiments. Committees were formed in the contemporary era to prioritise teacher education. The training of teachers is regarded to be of the highest importance in order to bring about educational advancements. Teaching is considered an art form that requires a certain level of expertise, knowledge, and talent. Everybody isn't capable of becoming a teacher. Individuals must get suitable training and further their education in order to execute this profession effectively. The fundamental reason for this is because in teaching employment, the primary goal is to help pupils grow and develop effectively. Teachers in ancient India were the primary source of training for those who later decided to pursue a career in education.

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