

1. Details of Module and its structure

Module Detail	
Subject Name	Education
Paper Name	Educational Administration, Management & Leadership in School Education
Module Name/ Title	Development of Educational Administration in India in Pre-British Era: A Historical Perspective
Module Id	e-PGEDN 13.06
Pre-requisites	Learners are expected to be aware of the concept of educational administration, basic history of Gurukula system, Buddhist religion and Muslim period in India
Objectives	<p>After going through this content the learner will get abreast to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the history of Educational Administration in Vedic Period. the history of Educational Administration in Buddhist Period. the history of Educational Administration in Muslim Period.
Keywords	Educational administration, Vedic period, Buddhist Period, Muslim Period, State Control

2. Development Team

Role	Name	Affiliation
Principal Investigator	Prof. P.K. Sahoo	Department of Education, University of Allahabad, U.P.
Co-Principal Investigator	Prof. Rajaram S. Sharma	Central Institute of Educational Technology, NCERT, New Delhi
Co-Principal Investigator	Prof. Dhananjay Yadav	Department of Education, University of Allahabad, U.P.
Paper Coordinators	Prof. Vidya Agarwal,	Department of Education, University of Allahabad, U.P.

	Dr. J.S. Dhillon	Principal, Khalsa College of Education, Amritsar
Content Writer/Author (CW)	Ms. Rajwinder Kaur	Khalsa College of Education, Amritsar
Content Reviewer (CR)	Ms. Gagandeep Kaur	Khalsa College of Education, Ranjit Avenue, Amritsar
Language Editor (LE)	Dr. Aerum Khan Dr. Geeta Sharma	Central Institute of Educational Technology, NCERT

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1. INTRODUCTION

Educational administration is always influenced by the history of nation so it could not be understood exclusively, without referring the history of nation thus can never be treated as an isolated discipline. The cultural, social and political background of the nation has profound influence on the nature of the educational administrative patterns. Educational administration as such is few centuries old, but its expansion and growth is very rapid in recent epochs. Organizational structures of educational administration of long standing are undergoing further changes with the current demand of time and getting itself modernized to meet many complicated needs of the present day complex society. The historical development of the educational administration of India is quite interesting.

Mukherji says, “The study of the development of educational administration of this country is indeed fascinating. Yet anyone familiar with this development cannot help being impressed with the complexities of administering an adequate and forward looking programme of education.”

2. LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completion of this module, learners will be able

- 1) To understand the Structure of educational administration in Pre- British era.
- 2) To elucidate the Role of various ancient universities in the propagation of education.
- 3) To understand the Attitude of Muslim invaders towards education.
- 4) To describe the Role of Muslim and Hindu kings in strengthening the education in India.

3. HISTORY OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

In order to understand how education is being administered today in our country. It is necessary to know how it has been administered in the past. The study of the administrative history would not only trace the gradual evolution of the present administrative set up, but would at the same time directs us to reform ourselves.

According to **Alteker**

“The state in ancient India, however, did not attempt to control education because it was liberally subsidizing it ... kings were giving grants to all institutions without caring to control their policy or curricula.”

The education in Indian subcontinent began with teaching of traditional elements such as Indian religions, Mathematics and logic as depicted in figure 1.1.

Indian education has undergone certain basic changes in several well-set periods. Here in the present module the education systems during Pre-British era is discussed which comprises of educational developments during

- Vedic period
- Buddhist period
- Muslim period

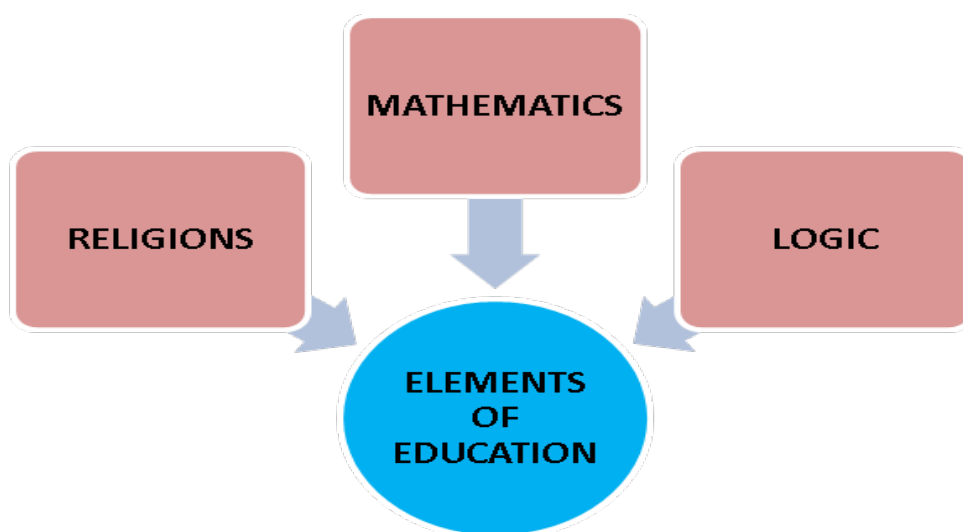


Figure 1.1 Elements of Indian education

3.1 DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION IN INDIA IN PRE-BRITISH ERA: HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The oldest system of our educational pattern was evolved in the Vedic period where Education was kept free from the control of state, reason being; the public education was not deemed to be the business of the state in those days. There was neither constraint nor taxation for the educational purposes. Education was more or less governed by the religious doctrines/ doctrinaires'. In the earlier days the traditions, customs and practices were passed from one generation to another by word of mouth. The priests, rishis and seers were committed to the scriptures to memorize and impart knowledge to their wards and to those who come to seek such knowledge. Transmission and acquisition of such knowledge called 'gyan' was a part of the Dharma of the people – teachers as well as the pupils. There had been royal patronage in abundance, even though little of state inferences are discernible. Complete academic and administrative freedom had been prevalent.

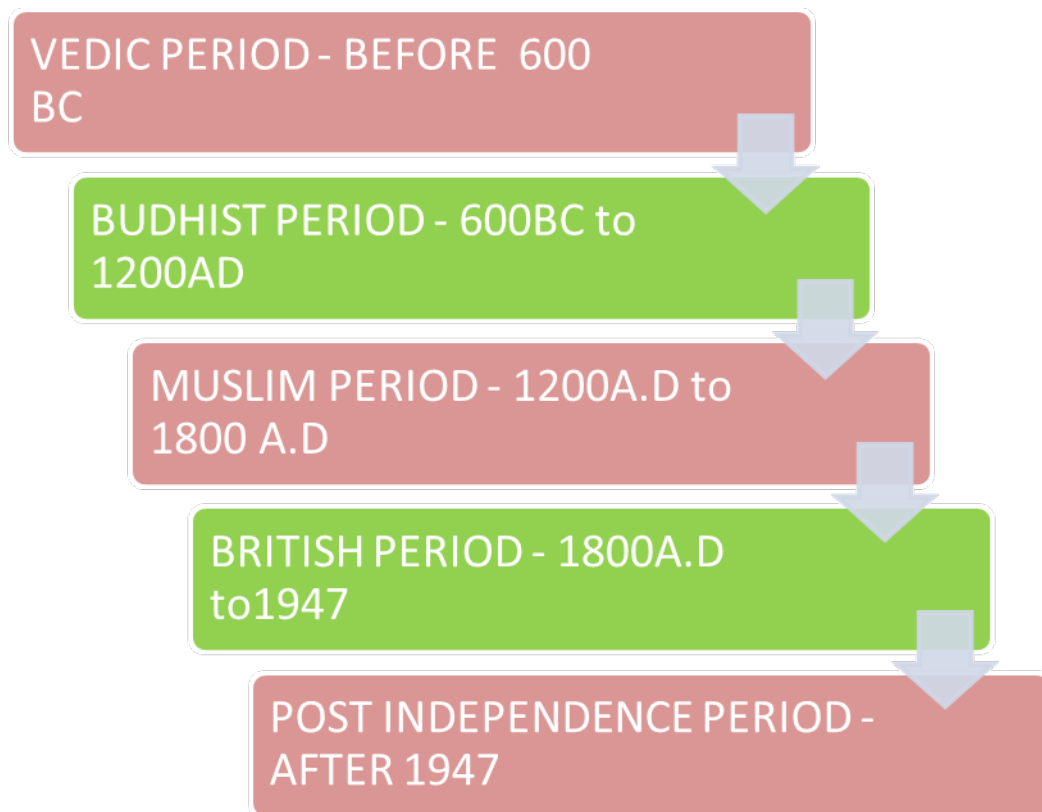


Figure 1.2 History of education

3.1.1 EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION IN THE VEDIC PERIOD

The education in vedic period could be bifurcated into five periods like Rig Veda period, Brahmanical period, Upanishad period, Sutra period and Shruti period. But it was with the sutra period that educational administration of India as such really

began. It is at this period that the responsibility for education of the young transferred itself from the father to the teacher, a class of persons who specialized in teaching of the young. The beginning of education with the 'upanayana' ceremony clearly signifies the authority of teacher in educational administration. In this context, it was evident that learner or child remains in jurisdiction of teacher, right from initiation of educational life till completion. During Vedic period basically three types of agencies of education were prevailing i.e. *Gurukulas, Parishads and Sammelan*.

Gurukulas

Gurukulas or Ashrams were the houses of the guru or *Acharya* placed in natural surroundings and away from the noise of the residential areas. Parents sent their wards to these Ashrams at the age of five to nine years according to their caste. Pupils used to live, get educated and trained under the supervision and guidance of their gurus. Gurukuls were the residential schools and the student had to live there during the stay of his education. It embarked the Guru shishya tradition in education.



Figure 1.3 Guru Shishya tradition

source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guru%E2%80%93shishya_tradition

Parishads

Parishads were the educational institutions just like colleges of modern world where different subject teachers used to teach. Parishads, had been used for conference where, learned men assembled for deliberations upon philosophical problems.

Sammelan

In this type of educational institutions scholars gathered at one place for learned discussion and competitions generally on the invitation of the king. Scholars were appropriately awarded.

All these institutions were free and supported by the gifts of philanthropists. The teachers and students were made fully independent of all economic worries. But the state or the people had no control on this seat of learning. It was the chancellor or the *acharya* who was chief person to be looked to. The kings and rulers did donate liberal grants to the educational institutions but never opened educational institutes under their own management. Brihadaranyaka Upanishads mentions the existence of at least two such Parishads in the upper Gangetic valley alone namely the Kuru and the Panchala Parishad. Though the manner of functioning of such parishads and their relevance to present day federal universities is yet to be established but one thing is certain that they helped in standardization of ashrams. It was not so that the ashrams were always isolated, sometimes they evolved into teacher and whole colonies grew up into a sort of super organization in which the wisest orders of the learned teachers acquired certain powers of control. That such colonies existed in Varanasi, Naimisharanya, Kanjivaram, etc. From the above discussion a little picture of the educational administration in India during ancient Hindu period gets clear though the manner and type of education given is still beyond our vision.

Alms System

During vedic period, begging for sustaining life was not considered bad and it was the duty of student to feed himself and his teacher. The base of such a practice was to make one realise that education and capability to earn livelihood was made possible for him by sympathy and cooperation of society so that he could not turn his face away from it. It was compulsory and unavoidable practice for all students so as to make them tolerant.

3.1.2 EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION IN THE BUDDHIST PERIOD

Buddhism was evolved in India as a sort of proselytizing religion making new converts, not by force, but through teaching and persuasion. This needed preachers of both sexes who would not only be well educated themselves, but be able to devote their whole time to teaching. This naturally necessitates their practicing celibacy and living in *monasteries* and *viharas* or pre-universities. These viharas and monasteries were identified centres of education of the period and were under full governance of chief monk. Further, these viharas were residential in nature and instructions were given not only to the monks, but to the layman also. More definite information is available for Buddhist universities like Nalanda and Vikramashila in Bihar, Tamralipti in Bengal and Vallabhi in Gujarat. These universities neither possess any kind of organizational structure of modern type nor were they controlled by any kind of administrative organization. **Alteker** pointed out, "It may be observed at the outset Taxila did not possess any colleges or the university in the modern sense of the term, it was simply a centre of education." In all these universities there were secular as well as religious courses, admitting monks as well as laymen, and sometimes people of Hindu and Brahmanic faith as well. They were free and residential, being

maintained out of the grants of income from several villages which in the case of Nalanda university were as many as 134. These universities maintained definite standards and admitted students who could pass the entrance test held by Dwara Pandits. *Hiuen Tsiang* and *I Tsing* the Chinese travelers who visited the country in the 7th A.D had an account of the Nalanda University. Though the autonomy of the Buddhist universities, in both administrative and fiscal matters was fostered by a sort of democratic control of the teachers themselves. Still there is also some evidence of an outside control by the Buddhist order or Sanaha which organized conferences to settle teaching and occasionally transferred teachers from one university to another. The organizations of the viharas was somewhat similar to the universities, being vested in the chief monk and were assisted by a number of uppajais or senior monks. The general and academic administration of these universities, where thousands of novices gathered in pursuit of knowledge and where a galaxy of professors educate them, was simply superb. As these were the residential universities besides lodging they were providing free food to body and mind and fostering spiritual awakening. Even in the Buddhist period, the Hindu educational system of what may be called the Brahmanic types co-existed. During that period a tendency of establishing temple colleges was established and curriculum generally narrowed down to religion. Bark of trees and leaves of Cane and Palm were used those days to write as shown in figure 1.4.



Figure 1.4 Palm leaf manuscript

source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palm-leaf_manuscript

The revival of Hinduism marked a rise of Hindu educational institutions lacking cohesion and solidarity, narrowed down the curriculum of the educational institutions and spread women illiteracy. Instead of ushering a cultural renaissance, it thus marked a sort of decadent period which perhaps paved the way for an easy conquest by the Muslim invaders.

3.1.3 EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION DURING MUSLIM PERIOD

There was a difference between the manner in which state patronage was exercised in favour of educational institutions during the Hindu and Muslim period. Hindu princes personally had given land grants for educational institutions, but the Muslim rulers appointed a special minister for this purpose who was called Sardar-us-Sadar. He was the minister of justice as well as the chief of the Ulema or Muslim religious teachers. Historians like Jaffar feels that this was done by the slave rulers, the earlier Sultans, simply to buy powerful support of Muslim Ulemas especially in favour of the royal throne because the slave kings being denied an aristocratic lineage had to depend on the support of religious teachers for claiming their right to throne. The practice of entrusting patronage of educational institutions to Sardar-us-Sadar, continued through reign of Slave, Khilji, Tughlaq, Lodhi and Mughal dynasties up to the period of Farrukh Siar. The picture had considerably changed during the middle ages. The muslim rulers like Qutub-ud-Din, Mubarak Khan, Firoz Tughlaq, Akbar and Deccan kings exhibited keen interest in educational matters. However the credit for organizing a systematic education goes to the uneducated muslim emperor Akbar. According to *Ain-i-Akbari*, though Akbar tried to curtail the powers of *sardar-us-sadar*, but he had not entirely abolished this office. There were just, a few small gaps, one was during the reign of Balban, when it seems that this office was ineffective, another was during the reign of Alauddin Khilji, when in all probabilities, this post was abolished. Perhaps during the reign of the Saiyids also this post had no job to perform. Mughal ruler Aurangzeb acted positively towards Muslim education and negatively towards Hindu education. He followed a different policy from Akbar with regard to Hindu educational institutions. For instance in 1669, he ordered the provincial governors to destroy the Hindu schools and temples within their jurisdiction. On the other hand he spent lavishly on Muslim education. He appointed teachers and provided funds for opening new educational institutions. During the Muslim rule of Delhi there was a definite bureaucratic organization to distribute patronage to educational institutions, though they merely extended this patronage to Muslim institutions only. These Muslim institutions were of two kinds, the elementary schools were called the *maktabs* and the more advanced ones were *madarsas*. They were run by Muslim theologians, and hence religious teaching was compulsory. Some of the *madarsas*, however, taught some secular subjects as well, notably medicine. Education was free, and generally non-residential. The administrative function of the state, however, ended with the award of grants, which in most of the cases were land grants fetching an annual income for the maintenance of the institutions. No doubt, this ensured permanence to the institutions, but there was no check against the deterioration of standards. The grants were given to an institute for life time but the power of control given to a teacher for regulating the institution was hereditary and sometimes unworthy successor of an eminent teacher failed to make use of that grant to bring quality in education and led to the deterioration of standards. Moreover the institutions lacked cohesion and coordination, and therefore there was a great diversity in standards among the educational institutions at different places, unlike the *parishads* of the early Hindu period, or the *sangha* of the Buddhist period, there was no centralizing agency. The state ceased to function, so to speak, once the endowment was granted. The order of, Muslim *ulemas* did not bother much about the quality of teaching available at the

centers. It simply agitated for more centers being opened, so that more teachers might be employed. Probably it was partly due to the fact that proselytizing activities were never conducted through persuasion and education, but the sword of Islamic rulers as well as the patronage of the royal courts was available to converts and did the job of getting new converts to the religion.

A number of Muslim institutions were opened at various places under the patronage of the sultans of Delhi, and later on by the local autonomous rulers of the Bahamani empire of the states that emerged out of this empire, as well as by the rulers of Bengal, Jaunpur, Sindh and Kashmir in the early period, and under the patronage of the Nizam of Hyderabad, Nawabs of Bengal and Oudh at the end of the Mughal period. This shows the evidence of a well-organized system of the expansion of education by the Bahmanis, which seems to show that there was a definite State policy for opening more and more schools. As for the others, it seems that the whole thing was left to the caprice of the rulers; some enlightened rulers did open schools, while many of the successors did not do anything. Land once granted often continued, and the institutions once opened had some sort of permanence, but in the absence of any coordinating policy, there was neither any check against deteriorating standards, nor was any effort made to remove isolation. The curriculum thus narrowed down to the study of elements of language, usually Arabic (though occasionally Persian) and the study of *Quran*. A few maktabas started teaching Urdu in the Mughal period and onwards.

Although as a rule, the Muslims were not in favour of spreading education among the females beyond the elementary stage, we find records of ladies of some of the royal courts being quite enlightened. Razia Begum during the early sultanate of Delhi, Gulshan Begum and Zebunnisa during the Mughal rule and Chand Bibi of Ahmednagar were educated not only in letters and arts, but in politics as well. How they were educated it is sort of times open to conjecture, but for others it is clear that they were educated by enlightened tutors within the palace itself. In Fatehpur Sikri and in Ahmednagar there were special sites for schools for ladies within the *Harem*.

Muslim rulers were generally hostile to the spread of education through Hindu institutions, though their hostility was more manifested in the destruction of Hindu temples and the institutions attached to them. According to *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, *Nalanda* was destroyed, being mistaken for a fort. Occasionally some enlightened rulers, especially Zain-ul-Abidin of Kashmir in the thirteenth century who founded Dar-ul-Aloom and Akbar in the sixteenth century, did patronize the opening of Hindu institutions, and rulers like Feroz Shah Tughlak opened a bureau for translation of Sanskrit texts into Persian, a practice which was later followed by Akbar. But on the whole it can be said that the attitude of Muslim rulers to the Hindu educational institutions was generally apathetic rather than hostile unless they happened to be attached to the temples. This thus reduced the number of temple colleges in the areas under Muslim rule, and favoured opening teacher's colonies imparting a sort of more mundane type of education, especially in northern India. These were generally opened in such areas where there were wealthy Hindus to patronize them, either through land grants or through well-settled grants paid on the

occasion of social ceremonies or annual religious festivals. Three such centers in the north noted were Varanasi, Mithila and Nabadwip. A few smaller centers at Kanauj, Muttra, Vikram Purb and other places also existed. These generally thrived when the grip of the Muslim rule was weakened, due to internecine quarrels. The local colonies tried to maintain some standards, but were isolated, and as such very often mutual jealousies between two centers persisted.

In the far south, the land was free from Muslim invasions and hence temple colleges flourished not only in Kanjivaram, Madurai and other places, but also in the regions less accessible to Muslims like Tirupati and Dharwad. Even during the enlightened rule of some of the rulers of Vijayanagar Empire, these temple colleges suffered from a lack of cohesion, and coordination probably because some of these became citadels of rival faiths, *Saivas* and *Vaishnavas*, and were engaged in mutual opposition.

With the fall of the Mughal Empire, two powerful non-Muslim administrators arose. One was that of the Sikhs in the north and the other was that of the Marathas in the south. The former like the Rajputs in the earlier period consisted of war like tribes, united only once under Maharaja Ranjit Singh, and were so much occupied with warfares so, no time left to devote attention towards the spread of education.

The Marathas, on the other hand, were different. Though illiterate, Shivaji himself did realized the value of education, and made one of his ministers responsible for the award of annual subsidies in the shape of *dakshina* grants. This was a departure from the older methods of land endowment made by either the Hindus or the Muslims. To a certain extent it was necessitated by the conditions of Maratha state, where good cultivable lands were always in demand to feed the Maratha soldiers. Consequently they could not be blocked by being given over to educational institutions. It also suited the variable finances of the warring Marathas, for they could adjust the amount of grant that was available. Besides this, it had one more good point in support of it that it provided a means of annual assessment of the efficiency of the institutions.

Though we know very little about the immediate successors of Shivaji, it is definite that Peshwas who became the ultimate successor of the vast Maratha power, did continued the practice, and organized annual conferences whereby the grants were disbursed according to the ability of the participants. When Bajji Rao II was deposed, the amount of money disbursed as grants through the Poona ministry was something like two and a half lakhs in Indian currency.

Thus at the end of the Muslim rule we find that though educational institutions existed at various places, they lacked both cohesion and coordination with varying standards, for they were all assured of fixed grant mostly through the income from endowed lands. This was true both for Hindu and Muslim institutions. Within the Maratha Empire alone some sort of efficiency was maintained through *dakshina* grants which were liable to vary. Corruption, intrigues and nepotism, however, affected their proper and equitable disbursement and it was not always that consideration of justice alone settled the amount of grants that were paid.

CONCLUSION

The above narration tells that there arose no need for the development of any kind of state administrative machinery of education either in ancient times or in medieval times, though a sort of state interference had been noticed in the medieval ages. It was only in recent centuries that, with the acceptance of direct responsibility of the public education by the state, an external controlling system have evolved to see that the funds provided are properly utilized and instruction is efficiently offered. Mukherjee rightly observes, “It may, however, be noted that during the pre-British days, a state administrative machinery of the modern type did not exist and education was self-controlled.”