



A Comparative Study of the Ancient Indian System of Education & the Buddhist System

KEYWORDS

Vedic system, Buddhist, self-control, Nirvana, Sangha, Vidyalaya, Upanayana, Pravajjagrahana.

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ABSTRACT

The Ancient Vedic system of education developed on the basis of the Hindu philosophy of life, the Buddhist philosophy of life was the basis of the Buddhist system of education which ultimately more or less mingled with the ancient India ideas.

Introduction :

India happens to be one of the earliest centres of civilization in the world. The superstructure of the Vedic civilization that was built upon the academic discipline emerged as a unique trend for drawing out that in man which is best and make it perfect for a noble use. The ancient Indian education system later broadly developed into two distinct steams – Ancient Indian School type & Buddhist type.

Objectives of the Study :

- To have a glimpse of the ancient Indian system of the academic discipline.
- To have a similar view of the Buddhist System of Education in ancient India.

Ancient Indian System of Education :

The educational principles of the Ancient Indian System of education built up the spiritual ideals for realization of higher aims of life. According to them wisdom in the truest sense of the term occurs after realization of the Transcendental Force. Its highest aim of such an educational programme leads one to the realization of the self through genuine self-restraint. If one can reach this state of mind it would be possible on his part to have a direct contact with his own Self. For this, restraint of desires and inclinations is considered to be the pivotal structure of the educational philosophy of ancient India.

Buddhist System of Education :

The highest ideal of the Buddhist education is emancipation from the worldly life. It aims at Nirvana by making one genuinely free from the shackles of the mundane life. Lord Buddha pointed to 'Pari-Nirvana' which means complete emancipation from the universal cycle of rebirth. Making one free from all desires will not alone do what is necessary – one has to widen one's devotion or pure love for making one's soul emancipated.

Comparative study of the two Systems :

In ancient India for a quite a reasonable period of time the Buddhist System of Education went on side by side with the Ancient Indian system. In the 6th Century B.C. we find the advent of Buddhism & Jainism as a protest against the ritualistic excess of the Vedic religion in India. In fact, the

Buddhist philosophy developed on the basis of concept of rebirth and 'Karmaphalavad' (the theory of the consequences of one's action) of the Upanishads. And he did not focus on any theory that we do not find in the Upanishads. It is said that he discovered new truths out of old one all though. A careful observer may find its advent and evolution issuing forth from the fundamental essence of Hinduism. In Buddhism also has been accepted the multiple principles of Hinduism. Thus, it may be said that the existence of Buddhism can hardly be traced when we set aside the Ancient Indian religion.

Therefore, Buddhism should not be looked upon as a new faith from separate from Hinduism. In the womb of Hinduism, Buddhism is born. Hence, the Buddhist System of Education is only a new embodiment of the Ancient Indian System of Education. As there are some similarities in both the systems of education, there are as well a few differences.

Conclusion :

In fine, it may be said that both the Ancient Vedic system of education and the Buddhist one laid emphasis on moral education based on religious concepts. In both the systems the tie of relationship between the teacher and the taught was indeed very close and both of the systems catered free education. As the Ancient Vedic system of education developed on the basis of the Hindu philosophy of life, the Buddhist philosophy of life was the basis of the Buddhist system of education.

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