

Ancient education system in India

Introduction:

1. In ancient India, both formal and informal ways of education system existed. Indigenous education was imparted at home, in temples, patashalas, tols, chatuspadis, and gurukuls. There were people in homes, villages, and temples who guided young children in imbibing pious ways of life.
2. Temples were also the centers of learning and took interest in the promotion of knowledge of our ancient system. Students went to viharas and universities for higher knowledge.
3. Teaching was largely oral and students remembered and meditated upon what was taught in the class.

Gurukul Way of Education:

1. A gurukul or gurukulam is a type of education system in ancient India with shishya ('students' or 'disciples') living near or with the guru, in the same house.
2. Typically, a guru does not receive or accept any fees from the shishya studying with him as the relationship between a guru and the shishya is considered very sacred. At the end of one's education, a shishya offers the guru Dakshina before leaving the gurukul. The guru Dakshina is a traditional gesture of acknowledgment, respect, and thanks to the guru, which may be monetary, but may also be a special task the teacher wants the student to accomplish.
3. While living in a gurukul, the students would be away from their homes for a period of months to years at a stretch.

The Veda's of the ancient education:

1. The Rig-Veda is the oldest scripture in the world. It became the fountainhead of the subsequent knowledge that followed. It contains 1028 hymns and contains 10,522 verses.
2. It deals with the four stages of life viz celibacy, family life, forest life, and renunciation.
3. The second Veda is Yajur-Veda, which lays down the procedure of sacrifices. It contains 1,984 verses. The third Veda Sama-Veda is very important for the history of Indian music it contains 1,875 verses. Lastly, the Atharvaveda primarily deals with

medical sciences. It contains 5,977 verses.

Methods of learning:

1. Listening, Contemplation, and concentrated contemplation were some new methods of exploring the way of learning.
2. At that time books were not there, so students had the habit to learn and memorize all the things taught in the class itself. The students used to deep dive into the concepts taught by their teachers and explore new methods to learn them.
3. The system focused on the all-around development of students. More emphasis was given to practical knowledge rather than theoretical knowledge. The students were not just involved in bringing the ranks, but their main focus was on knowledge.

Ancient Mathematics:

1. Ancient and medieval Indian mathematical works, all composed in Sanskrit, usually consisted of a section of sutras in which a set of rules or problems were stated with great economy in verse in order to aid memorization by a student.
2. This was followed by a second section consisting of a prose commentary that explained the problem in more detail and provided justification for the solution. In the prose section, the form was not considered so important as the ideas involved.

Literature:

1. The Indian literary tradition is the oldest in the world. It is primarily one of verse and essentially oral.
2. The earliest works were composed to be sung or recited and were so transmitted for many generations before being written down.
3. Apart from the Vedas, which are a sacred form of knowledge, there are other works such as the Hindu epics Ramayana and Mahabharata and Arthashastra in political science, etc.

Medicine:

1. The golden age of Indian medicine, from 800 BCE until about 1000 CE, was marked especially by the production of the medical treatises known as the Charaka-Samhita and Sushruta-Samhita, attributed respectively to Charaka, a physician, and Sushruta, a surgeon.
2. The Sushruta-Samhita probably originated in the last centuries BCE and had become fixed in its present form by the 7th century of somewhat lesser importance are the treatises attributed to Vagbhata.

Education of Women:

1. A high standard of learning and culture was reached by Indian women during the Vedic age. In addition to training in the arts of housekeeping they learnt music and dancing. Like boys, girls had to undergo the upanayana ceremony.
2. There were two classes of educated women, Sadyodwahas– who prosecuted studies till their marriages and Bramhavadinis who did not marry and pursued their studies though out their lives.
3. Women were also taught the Vedas and Vedangas, but the extent of their study was restricted only to those hymns which were necessary for the Yajna (sacrifice) or other ritualistic operations. Women sages were called Rishikas.
4. The Rigveda mentions the name of some of the famous women seers like Ghosha, Apala, Lopamudra, Visvavara, Indrani, etc. who composed hymns. During the Upanishad period we find scholarly women like Maitreyi and Gargi taking part in public debates and discussions with philosophers and sages.

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