

## 18 EDUCATION IN INDIA



**S**o far, you have been reading about different aspects of culture, such as art, architecture, religion and science. Another important aspect of our culture is education. But what is education? You may say that it means learning something in school or from books. This is partially true. Education is a learning experience. But learning takes place at all times in one's life. However, whereas some other learning experiences could be of a random or accidental nature, an educational experience is usually a deliberate and pre-designed programme with the purpose of affecting certain pre-determined behavioural changes in an individual. You are going through such an experience right now as you proceed through various lessons of this course. But have you ever wondered how education is related to culture? Culture is the sum total of the accumulated experiences and achievements of previous generations inherited by succeeding generations as members of society. The structured process of passing on this collective pool of experiences and achievements may be called education. Hence education is not only a means of passing on cultural beliefs and ideas, but it is also shaped by cultural beliefs since it is a product of culture. The system of education thus changes along with changes in culture. In this lesson we shall find out about the evolution of the systems of education that prevailed in India since the most ancient times because society considered the education of its members as one of its primary obligation.

### OBJECTIVES

After reading this lesson you will be able to:

- describe the nature of education imparted during different periods of Indian history - ancient, medieval and modern;
- assess the contributions of the Jain and the Buddhist systems of education;
- assess the educational status of women in society with regard to access to education and nature of education imparted to them;
- recall the steps undertaken in the field of education with the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate in medieval India;
- appreciate the role of Mughal Rulers in making education more rationalistic;
- examine the impact of spread of modern education during the colonial period;
- assess the role of education in independent India in its various aspects such as

*elementary education, vocational education, higher education and adult education.*

## **18.1 EDUCATION IN THE ANCIENT PERIOD**

### **18.1.1 Vedic Period**

Learning in ancient India was imparted by the teachers called Gurus to the pupils who gathered around them and came to live with them in their house as members of the family. Such a place was called Gurukul. The Gurukul functioned as a domestic school, an ashrama, where the children's learning was developed by the Guru who gave personal instruction as well as attention to the students. Education was primarily the privilege of the upper castes. Learning was an intimate relationship between the teacher and the pupil called the Guru-Shishya Parampara. The process of learning generally began with a religious ceremony, 'Upanayana' (sacred thread ceremony). Education was normally imparted orally. It included memorization of texts like Vedas and Dharmashastras, fully or partially. Later subjects like Grammar, Logic, and Metaphysics came to be taught and studied. The Maitrayani Upanishad teaches us that the supreme knowledge (gyan) is the result of learning (vidya), reflection (chintan) and austerity (tapas). Through introspection (atma vishleshana) one was to attain goodness (Satva), purity of mind and satisfaction of the soul in stages. During this time self education was regarded as the proper method of attaining the highest knowledge. The best example of this can be found in the Taittiriya Upanishad where Bhrgu, son of Varuna, approaches his father and asks him to teach what is Brahmana. The father tells him to find this out through meditation.

### **18.1.2 Mauryan Period**

During the Mauryan and the post-Mauryan periods, the Indian society went through a phase of intensive change. With the growth of urban centres and trade, the mercantile community came to acquire an important position. As a result, the guilds of the merchants began to play an active role in providing education. They became centres of technical education and fostered the knowledge of mining, metallurgy, carpentry, weaving and dyeing. There were new formulations in building and architecture. With the emergence of city life, new architectural forms evolved. The guilds also gave patronage to astronomy, the study of the position of stars, to help them in ocean navigation. The astronomers and cosmologists began a debate on "time" (kala). This helped in the development of a sharp sense of "time" (kala) in comparison to the past. Medical knowledge began to be systemised as Ayurveda. The elements formed the basis for the Indian medical system. A right combination of the three was necessary for a healthy body. Knowledge of the medicinal properties of herbs and their usage reached a very advanced stage. 'Charaka' became famous for medicine and 'Sushruta' for surgery. 'Charak Samhita' written by Charaka was an authentic and exhaustive work on medicines.

You must have heard of Chanakya, who was a renowned philosopher, scholar and teacher. His most famous work is 'Arthashastra'. The curricula of studies mentioned in the Arthashastra

refers primarily to the education of princes. After Upanayana the prince learnt the four Vedas and the Vedic study included a study of sciences. They also learnt logic, economics and politics. Education of those times was primarily life skills based which is so different from what education is today. The curricula in the Ramayana for the princes was Dhanurveda,

Nitishastra, Siksha (lore) of elephants and chariots, Alekhya and Lekhya (Painting and writing), Langhana (jumping) and Tairana (swimming).

### 18.1.3 Gupta Period

In the Gupta period, the Jain and Buddhist systems of education assumed a different dimension. Buddhist monasteries admitted students for ten years. Learning began with the oral method. Later they shifted to the reading of literary texts. The monasteries had libraries. Important manuscripts were copied and stored. Students from other countries like China and South-East Asia came to the Buddhist monasteries for education. The monasteries were normally maintained by grants from kings and the rich mercantile class. They attracted scholars from far and near. Fa-Hien also spent several years in the monastery at Pataliputra, studying Buddhist religious books. Besides Pataliputra, there were other centres of learning like Varanasi, Mathura, Ujjain and Nasik. Nalanda University was known all over Asia for its high standards of scholarship. The subjects taught included Vedanta, philosophy, study of the Puranas, epics, grammar, logic, astronomy, philosophy, medicine etc. Sanskrit, the court language was the medium of instruction. The Jains used Sanskrit literature like '*Adipurana*' and '*Yashatilaka*' for educational purposes in the earlier phase. But to make education more popular, the medium was changed to Prakrit and other regional languages like Tamil, Kannada and so on. Books in the Jain and Buddhist libraries were written on palm leaves that were tied together and were known as "granthas". Slowly, Jainism and Buddhism lost royal patronage and their monasteries started declining as centres of education and learning. The '*mathas*' supported by Brahmins were institutions parallel to Jain and Buddhist monasteries. The '*mathas*' functioned like *ashramas* for educational purposes.

### 18.1.4 Post Gupta Period

Art and education made great strides in the reign of Harsha. He encouraged education at all levels; education was given in temples and monasteries and higher education in universities of Taxila, Ujjain, Gaya and Nalanda. In Nalanda, Hiuen Tsang spent several years studying Buddhists sculptures. Shilabhadra, a renowned scholar was its head.

In the seventh and eighth centuries, '*ghatikas*', or colleges attached to the temples emerged as new centres of learning. The '*ghatikas*', provided Brahmanical education. The medium of instruction was Sanskrit. Entry to these temple colleges was open only to the upper castes or '*dvijas*' (twice born). Use of Sanskrit as the medium of instruction distanced the common people from education. Education became the privilege of only the uppermost sections of society.

## 18.2 AIMS OF EDUCATION

In ancient India, education was a matter of individual concern. The aim of education was the development of pupil's overall personality. With this view of education as a process of one's inner growth and self-fulfilment, techniques, rules and methods were evolved. It was believed that the development of a person meant, primarily, the training of his/her mind as the instrument of acquiring knowledge. This knowledge would enhance his/her creative capacity. The thinking principle '*manana shakti*' was reckoned higher than the subject of thinking. Thus, the primary subject of education was the mind itself.

## 18.3 SUBJECTS

Knowledge of applied sciences like metallurgy, baked bricks, glazing, measurement of areas and volumes were known to people in ancient India. The scientific system of medicine was developed in the post-Vedic period. Medicine became a subject at centres of learning like Takshila and Varanasi. The '*Charak Samhita*' on medicine and '*Sushruta Samhita*' on surgery were two important works in this field. Sushruta considered surgery as "the highest division of the healing arts and least liable to fallacy". Mathematics or '*ganita*'

included Arithmetic, Geometry, Algebra, Astronomy and Astrology. Interest in Arithmetic was due to its use in trade and commerce. ‘Aryabhattiya’, by Aryabhatta was a major contribution in the field of mathematics. Astronomy was overshadowed by Brahmanical superstitions. ‘Surya Siddhanta’, a work on astronomy consisted of the description of the instruments and the methods of observation which were neither accurate nor impressive. The bronze and copper remains from the time of Indus Valley Civilization are indicative of the development of chemistry and metallurgy. The processes of leather tanning, dyeing, and fermenting were devised during this period.

## 18.4 LANGUAGE

Sanskrit enjoyed a position of privilege in ancient India. It served as a medium of Brahmanical

education. Sanskrit was the lingua franca of the educated upper castes as well as the Hindu rulers and courtiers. ‘Prakrit’ as a language developed with the rise of Buddhism. It became the language of the masses. Ashoka, the Mauryan king used ‘Prakrit’ in his edicts. It is interesting to note that in Sanskrit drama, women and the humble characters were made to speak in formalised Prakrit. Pali was one of the early variants of Prakrit. Most of the Buddhist canonical writings are in Prakrit and Pali, though some Sanskrit literature was also in circulation. Another language ‘Apabhramsha’ was used by Jain writers in Gujarat and Rajasthan for the composition of poetry. The Dravidian languages Tamil, Telugu, Kannada

and Malayalam were in use in the southern parts of India. They found expression in the literature of this period as well.

The best example of ancient India’s advancement was the university of Nalanda. Hiuen Tsang a famous Chinese traveller records Nalanda University as a post graduate university for advanced study and research. Nalanda was also famous for its ‘Schools of Discussion’ as noted by the students who had their own hostels. King Balaputradeva constructed a temple for the students of Java who came to study at Nalanda.

### INTEXT QUESTIONS 18.1

1. How is education related to culture?  
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2. What is Upanayana ceremony?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Where was education imparted in the ancient period?  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. What was the basis of Indian Medical system in ancient period?  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Name the two literary work used by Jains for teachings in ancient India?  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What were the reasons because of which common people distanced themselves from education in ancient period?  
\_\_\_\_\_

## 18.5 EDUCATION IN THE MEDIEVAL PERIOD

With the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate, Islamic system of education was introduced. Education in medieval India was designed on the lines of the tradition of education developed under the Abbasids of Baghdad. As a result, scholars from countries like Samarqand, Bukhara and Iran looked up to the Indian scholars for guidance. Amir Khusrau, an exemplary

personality, not only developed the skill of writing prose and poetry but also devised a new language which suited the local conditions. Some contemporary historians like Minhajus-

Siraj, Ziauddin Barani and Afif have written about Indian scholarship.

The institutions that provided school education were known as '*makhtabs*', while those of higher learning were called '*madrasas*'. The '*makhtabs*' were generally run by public donations while '*Madrasas*' were maintained by the rulers and nobles. There were six different types of institutions: (i) those established and maintained by nobles and rulers, (ii) those which were started by individual scholars with the help of state assistance or donations, (iii) those that were attached to the mosques, (iv) those that were attached to the tombs, (v) those that were started and maintained by individual scholars, and (vi) those that were attached to the Sufi hospices. The famous '*madrasas*' were the Muizzi, the Nasiri and the Firuzi *madrasas* in Delhi, Mohammed Gawani's *madrasa* in Bidar and Abul Fazl's *madrasa* in Fatehpur Sikri. The Sirat-i-figuz Shahi gives a list of 14 subjects that were taught in the Madarsas like Jurisprudence or Dirat which was a method of recitation, punctuation and vocalization of the text Quran etc.

The main feature of the Muslim educational system was that it was traditional in spirit and theological in content. The curriculum was broadly divided into two categories: the traditional

(*Manqulat*) and the rational (*Maqulat*) sciences. Traditions, law and history and literature came under the traditional sciences. Logic, philosophy, medicine, mathematics and astronomy came under rational sciences. Later, rational sciences came to be emphasized more than the traditional sciences. Traditional subjects dominated education from the time of Iltutmish (1211-36) till the reign of Sikander Lodi (1489-1517). The scenario started changing from the time of Sikander Lodi when he invited the brothers Sheikh Abdullah and Sheikh Azizullah from Multan to Delhi. They introduced the study of philosophy and logic in the curriculum.

### **Education System under the Great Mughals**

The Mughal period made immense contribution in the field of learning and education.

The Mughal emperors had great love for learning and they contributed more in the field of spreading education through Pathshalas, Vidyapeeths, Makatabs and Madarsas. Akbar gave grants to educational institutions. He started a College near Jama Masjid. At that time, education was not a state subject. Generally the temples and mosques were the centre of elementary education. They were dependent on the donations given by rulers, rich men and donors. Sanskrit and Persian were taught in temples and mosques. There was no provision for women's education.

The women of the royal and rich families got education at home.

The Mughal rulers were great patrons of learning and literature. This period saw the rise of Urdu as a language which came out of a long contact between Persian and Hindi i.e. the Turks and the Indians. Babar wrote his own biography known as Tazuk-i-Babari. The Mughal Emperor Humayun introduced the study of mathematics, astronomy and geography in the '*madrasas*' in Delhi. This helped in reducing the bias in the existing education system. Many Hindus took to learning Persian and a number of translations from Sanskrit to Persian were made. Akbar added subjects like accountancy, public administration, geometry and built a workshop near his palace. He personally supervised the workshop. Akbar's attempt to introduce secular and scientific system of education was not liked by the orthodox sections. Akbar's efforts ushered in a change which continued for centuries. In the eighteenth century some nobles were against the introduction of Western methods in education which involved inquiry, observation, investigation and conducting experiment. Memorising,

discussing and writing out the lessons were the basis of instruction in the Muslim 'madrasas'. Akbar patronised many scholars such as Abul Fazal, Faizi, Raja Todar Mal, Birbal and Rahim. They were among the nine gems of his court who helped in spreading culture and education.

### **INTEXT QUESTIONS 18.2**

1. Which institutions provided school education in medieval period?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Who maintained Madarsas in the medieval period?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Name some of the famous madarsas of medieval period.  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. What was the main feature of the Muslim educational system?  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. What were the methods adopted by western countries in medieval period?  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What were the changes made by Akbar in education?  
\_\_\_\_\_

## **18.6 EDUCATION IN THE MODERN PERIOD**

### **18.6.1 Eighteenth Century: The Beginning of Modern Period**

As in other aspects of social life in India, many of the traditional features of the preceding centuries had continued in the field of education. The old famous centres of higher learning like those at Taxila, Nalanda, Vikramshila near Bhagalpur, at Jagaddal in North Bengal, Vallabhi at Kathiawar and Kanchi in the South had disappeared long ago. Islamic education, on the other hand flourished subsequently under the patronage of rulers and nobles. Still the majority of the Hindu population continued to receive education in their time honoured institutions and with the growth of vernacular literature they studied their classical works. 'There is not country' wrote Thomas in 1891 'where the love of learning had so early an origin or has exercised so lasting and powerful influence'. According to him 'The English found in India, a widespread style of elementary education and higher education, of which the former was mainly practical while the latter mainly literary, philosophical and religious. For about 150 years, the British were involved in trade and conquest in India. So they maintained a distance from all kinds of cultural activities including education. The beginning of oriental scholarship was made by Warren Hastings in 1781 when he started the Calcutta Madrasa. His endeavour was primarily due to administrative reasons. Eleven years later, in 1792, Jonathan Duncan, a Resident of Varanasi started a Sanskrit college to educate native Hindus to assist the Europeans.

Meanwhile, Christian missionaries were making efforts to introduce Western education by opening elementary schools and providing education to the more humble sections of the society, including the so called untouchable castes.

### **18.6.2 Nineteenth Century**

The first half of the nineteenth century can be called a period of educational experiments. The East India Company's Charter Act of 1813 enabled the Company to set aside one lakh rupees for "the revival and improvement of literature and the encouragement of learned natives of India and for the introduction and promotion of a knowledge of sciences among the inhabitants of the British territories in India". A debate ensued between the Orientalists and the Anglicists which was finally settled by Macaulay's Minutes and Bentinck's Resolution of 1835. It was decided that this fund would be utilised to promote European literature

and sciences. William Bentinck adopted English as the official language of the government. Lord Hardinge in 1844, decided to grant employment to Indians who had received English education.

Wood's Despatch of 1854 underlined the objective of educational policy which was the diffusion of "the improved arts, sciences, philosophy and literature of Europe" through English or other modern Indian languages as the medium. The Despatch suggested that Universities should be set up in Bombay (modern Mumbai), Madras (modern Chennai) and Calcutta (modern Kolkata). It emphasized the development of private enterprise, a system of grants-in-aid, training teachers in the schools, women's education and so on. In 1857, the Universities of Bombay, Madras and Calcutta were established. The Universities of Punjab and Allahabad were established in 1882 and 1887 respectively.

In 1901, Lord Curzon convened the conference of Directors of Public Instruction which began an era of educational reforms based on its decisions. In 1904, the Indian Universities Act was passed that enabled the Universities to assume teaching, inspection of colleges and undertake measures for qualitative improvement in higher education.

Under the Colonial Rule, mass education was neglected and the attempt was to create an urban educated elite that would act as interpreter between the ruler and the ruled. The examination system was emphasised in both high schools and Universities. The impact of English education was not even. Literacy and education were more widespread in towns than in villages. The positive aspect was that it produced a breed of educated political leaders and social reformers who played important roles in the freedom struggle of the country. The publication of newspapers and pamphlets brought about an awakening among the masses.

#### **18.6.4 Impact of English Education**

The British encouraged the teaching of English language in schools and colleges as they needed people to work in the administrative offices either as clerks or babus. This helped in creating a new class of people who later helped them in governance as well as in controlling

many aspects of administration in India. As a result, Christian missionaries who came to India started opening schools where English was taught. You will find many schools in India even today who were opened during those times. One such school is Presentation Convent in Delhi, which is still running and providing good education. Many Indians sent their children to these schools as they thought it would help them in getting jobs in government offices.

Do you know that the teaching of English was encouraged by the British rulers to suit their own interest but it proved to be useful for the Indians in a different way. People living in different parts of India spoke different languages and there was no language that could be understood by all. Use of English by Indians provided one language that cut across the entire country and became a common link for them. English books and newspapers brought to them new ideas from across the sea, i.e. other countries. Fresh ideas from the west like freedom, democracy, equality and brotherhood began to have its impact on the thinking of the English knowing Indians which gave rise to national consciousness. The educated Indians now thought of getting freedom from British rule.

#### **18.7 EDUCATION IN POST-INDEPENDENCE INDIA**

As you know, we got independence from British rule in 1947 and the responsibility of planning for the education of our people fell on the Indian Government of free India. To achieve the goals of personal, economic, social, political and cultural development, it is

necessary to make appropriate provisions for an integrated programme of education for people who happen to be living at different levels of development, possessing different linguistic, social and cultural attributes. Such programmes have to be based upon a common curriculum to strengthen unity within diversity and also to facilitate mobility from one part of the country to another.

If adequate measures are not taken for the spread of education, economic inequality, regional imbalance and social injustice can widen further resulting in the building up of tensions in society. That is why in 1966, the Report of the Education Commission (1964-66) (popularly known as Kothari Commission) referred to education as the only instrument of peaceful social change. To this end, the Constitutional Amendment of 1976 included education in the concurrent list, that is, the centre and states both assume joint responsibility of education.

### **18.7.1 Elementary Education**

Elementary education is the most crucial stage of education, spanning the first eight years of schooling (class I to VIII) and laying the foundation for the development of personality, attitudes, social confidence, habits, life skills and communication skills of the pupils. The Constitution under Article 45 provided for the State to introduce compulsory and free education for children upto the age of fourteen. The period of elementary school is now also recognised as a period of free and compulsory schooling vide the constitutional amendment making education a fundamental right. We will read about this Act in detail under Section 18.9 of this lesson. The National Policy on Education 1986 emphasized that thrust areas in elementary education will be

- i) universal access and enrolment.
- ii) universal retention of children upto fourteen years of age in the school.
- iii) substantial improvement in the quality of education to enable all children to achieve essential levels of learning.

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan was a flagship programme of the Central Government for universalization of elementary education started in 2001 .

### **18.7.2 Secondary Education**

“Secondary school is a period of intense physical change and formation of identity. It is also the period of intense vibrancy and energy.”

There has been a phenomenal expansion of secondary education since independence. It covers children of age group 14-18 (classes 9th to 12th). According to 2001 census 88.5 million children are enrolled in secondary education. However enrolment figures show that only 31 million of these children were attending schools in 2001-2002. While a great increase has taken place in number of schools and in enrolment, there has been a lesser increase in the number of teachers. It is obvious that, on the whole it has adversely affected the teacher-pupil ratio. The pressure for expansion will most certainly continue and may indeed increase as the country progresses towards the universalisation of education.

Although anyone in India who wishes to pursue secondary education (upto class X) is allowed to do so, not more than half of those who pass the upper primary stage join the secondary classes. After the success of SSA at elementary stage, the central government is all set to achieve the goal of universalization of secondary education under the Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan, about which we will read in some detail under Section 18.9.

Vocational education is a distinct stream at Senior Secondary Stage. It aims at preparing students for various occupations involving various kinds of activities. Vocationalisation of higher secondary education was a major objective of the reforms envisaged in the First



Education Policy adopted in 1968. However, the attempts made till now have not borne fruits and enrolment in the scheme, which was expected to include around 50% of students at the +2 level, has remained marginal and confined to a few states. According to the planning commission report for the 11<sup>th</sup> five year plan, there are about 5114 Industrial Training Institutes (ITI's) imparting training in 57 engineering and 50 non-engineering trades.

A positive step in this direction in recent times has been the setting up of a National Skill Development Mission and Training.

### **18.7.3 Higher Education**

The first Prime Minister of India, late Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru, who laid the foundation of the process of India's modernisation, declared that if all is well with the Universities, all would be well with the nation. Higher education begins after a student completes senior secondary (class XII) stage. He then enters a college which is part of a university. Despite the key role assigned to higher education, the development in this field has been extremely uneven. While few colleges and universities are playing a crucial role in academic excellence, the general condition of universities and colleges is a matter of great concern to the nation. The number of students in the age group of 18-20 years enrolled for higher education is low. The proportion is even more adverse in some regions, particularly in case of women, scheduled castes and tribes. Rural areas have been touched only marginally by higher education of quality. The facilities in colleges vary widely. It is important that courses in higher education offer programmes of study and courses closely related to life, aimed at the development of personality, reasoning and learning capabilities of students. The State has subsidised higher education very greatly. A college student pays by way of fees a very small amount of money. The rest of the expenses on his education is paid by the State or the Central Government. This is public money which must be carefully spent for those who deserve higher education.

As per report of Higher Education in India, the gross enrolment ratio increased from 0.7% in 1950-51 to 11% by 2006-2007. By 2012 (the end of 11<sup>th</sup> plan), it is expected to increase to 15%.

### **Adult Education**

Removal of adult illiteracy has also been accepted as an imperative goal, Adult education particularly in the age group of 15-35 years has been included as part of the minimum needs programme in the sixth plan. In this regard National Literacy Mission (NLM) objective is to impart functional literacy to 80 million illiterate persons. The literacy rate after independence in 1951 of 7+ population was 18.3% which increased in 2011 to 74.0 percent. The male literacy rate is 82.14% and female is 65.46%.

### **18.7.4 Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET)**

It is impossible to overestimate the importance of technical education. India already has one of the largest reservoirs of trained manpower. Technical and management curriculum was targeted on current as well as the projected needs of industry. Technically trained persons have already been a source of strength for scientific and industrial development. It is often suggested that talented engineering students are not provided the kind of jobs and work environment which would give them a sense of achievement and job satisfaction. This has resulted in a significant incidence of brain drain either to the developed countries or to the management stream. When brilliant young men and women, who are highly educated and talented, leave the country and go to a foreign country in search of better income, it is called brain drain. There are several centres of excellence in technical and

professional education in India like the Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT) and Indian Institutes of Management (IIM)

### **National Education Policy**

Since independence, the Nation has invested a large part of its resources in education. It, therefore, has a right to expect the efficient functioning of educational institutions. The first National Education Policy of 1968 marked a significant step in the history of education in post-independence India. It aimed to promote national progress, a sense of common citizenship and culture, and to strengthen national integration. It laid stress on the need for a radical reconstruction of the education system, technology, the cultivation of moral values and a closer relation between education and the life of the people.

The new National Policy of Education (1986), was formulated on the strength of considerable achievements in the last few years. India already has extensive network of schools. Approximately 95% of the population is within one kilometre of a primary school and 80% is within three kilometres of a middle school. In accordance with the National Policy on Education (1986) a comprehensive programme 'National Literacy Mission' (NLM) has been started for imparting literacy amongst the 15-35 age group.

India has a large network of television and radio stations. The availability of a satellite and a television network covering a majority of the population is potentially one of the most significant factors, which can undoubtedly revolutionise the teaching - learning system by enriching formal education and by supporting non-formal education, as well as the distance learning programme.

The decision to set up pace setting Navodaya Vidyalayas in every district reflects not only the extent of central commitment to education but also its concern for equality for all in education. Through these schools the most meritorious children, particularly in rural areas, will be able to get quality education irrespective of the economic status of their parents.

### **Open and Distance Learning System**

There are many learners who are compelled to discontinue their studies in the formal system. This may be because of financial, geographical, academic or medical reasons. Open and Distance Learning (ODL) system is meant for such learners. In this system the learner can learn through lessons sent by the institutions of distance learning without attending

classes. These students can keep themselves engaged in service or business while studying. The learner is not in direct touch with the teacher. He is at a distance. Open School at present offers both secondary (Class X) and senior secondary (Class XII) education. You have joined Open School. You know that while retaining your regular employment, you are also studying through the lessons sent to you. These lessons have been prepared with a lot of care. The system is open because there is flexibility in terms of pace, place and time. You are free to select any combination of subjects and pass them at your convenience over a period of five years. Similar facility is being provided at higher level by the Indira Gandhi National Open University.

These institutions will go a long way in taking education to every Indian citizen who may not have been able to continue with the regular stream of education. Thus, education has developed at a rapid pace in India since independence. The national goals of development, integration, excellence and equality in the sphere of education can be fulfilled only when every child in the country crosses a minimum threshold of educational attainment. A holistic atmosphere of development, hard work and excellence has to be built up through a programme which involves everybody as a promoter as well as a recipient of new attitudes and ideas.

## 18.8 RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN EDUCATION

### Right to Education Act

The 86th Constitutional amendment, making education a fundamental right was passed by Parliament in 2002. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, a law to enable the implementation of the fundamental right, was passed by the Parliament in April 2010.

The law makes it obligatory on part of the state governments and local bodies to ensure that every child in the age group 6-14 gets free elementary education in a school in the neighbourhood. At present, there are nearly 22 crore children in the relevant age group. However, 4.6 per cent of these children (nearly 92 lakh) are out of school.

As per the Act, the school management committee or the local authority will identify the drop-outs or out of school children above six years of age and admit them in classes appropriate to their age after giving special training.

### Rastriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA)

RMSA is a centrally sponsored scheme for Universalisation of access to and improvement of quality education at Secondary stage was implemented during 11th five year plan period. The goal of RMSA is to make secondary education of good quality available, accessible and affordable to all young students in the age group 15-16 years (classes IX and X). The major target of the scheme is (i) Universal access of Secondary level education to all students in the age group 15-16 years by 2015 by providing a secondary school within 5 kilometers of any habitation and a higher secondary school within 7 kilometers of any habitation and (ii) Universal retention by 2010.

### Strategies for implementation of RMSA

(i) To provide access of secondary school to students, following strategies have envisaged in the RMSA framework.

(a) up gradation of upper primary schools through construction of classrooms laboratories, computer rooms, headmaster room, library rooms, separate toilets for girls and boys, appointment of additional teachers and

(b) Strengthening of existing secondary schools through construction of classrooms, computer rooms, separate toilets for girls and boys, appointment of additional teachers, strengthening of lab facilities and repair and renovation of existing school buildings.

(ii) To remove disparity among the different social groups of people, the scheme envisages the special incentive for students belonging to SC/ST/minorities/other weaker sections of the society.

(iii) To improve the quality of RMSA scheme it has been proposed that following work should be carried out.

- a. Construction of science lab, libraries
- b. In service training of teachers
- c. Leadership training of school head
- d. Curricular reforms
- e. Science and Maths education
- f. Computer aided education
- g. Co-curricular activities
- h. Teaching learning aids

### INTEXT QUESTIONS 18.3

1. What was Bentinck's Resolution of 1835?  
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2. Who adopted English as the official language of the government?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. When was Indian universities Act passed?  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Where were the three universities established in 1857?  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. What was the basis of education under the colonial rule?  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What was the positive aspect of English education in pre-independence India?  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. When did education come under the concurrent list of the constitution?  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. When was New National Policy on Education formulated?  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. Which are the thrust areas in elementary education?  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. What is the importance of secondary education?  
\_\_\_\_\_
11. What is the alarming situation in Higher Education stage?  
\_\_\_\_\_
12. What is the age group for adult education?  
\_\_\_\_\_

## WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT

- In the Vedic period, education was imparted in the 'ashramas' which were primarily a privilege of the so called upper castes (*varnas*).
- Education was also provided by the guilds which became centres of technical education during the period BC 200 - AD 300.
- Buddhist monasteries and the Jain system of education played a significant role in making India a leading learning centre in the world.
- After the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate, the Muslim system of education was introduced which was an elaborate system encompassing both elementary and higher learning.
- The introduction of Western education brought some radical changes in terms of providing education to all sections of society including the so called "untouchables".
- The National Policy of Education 1986, marked a significant step in the history of education in independent India.

## TERMINAL EXERCISE

1. Briefly describe the development of education in the Ancient period?
2. Discuss the steps undertaken in the field of education with the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate in medieval India?
3. What were the changes introduced in the system of education during Mughals?
4. Elaborate the development of education from 1854 to 1904.
5. Discuss the measure taken in independent India to eradicate illiteracy?

## ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

### 18.1

1. The system of education changes alongwith the change in culture.
2. The process of learning begins with a sacred thread ceremony.
3. In the Ashramas.
4. Vayu, Kaf, Pitt (Air, Mucus, bile)
5. Adipurana and Yashatilaka
6. (a) Education was a priviledge of upper class society.  
(b) Use of Sanskrit language in education

### 18.2

1. Makhtabs
2. Kings (the rulers) and nobles
3. Muizzi, Nasiri, Firuzi - in Delhi  
Mohammed Gawani's Madarsa - Bidar  
Abdul Fazl's madarsa - Fatehpur Sikri
4. It was traditional in spirit and theological in content.
5. It involved inquiry, observation, investigation and experiment in education.
6. He introduced secular and scientific system in education.

### 18.3

1. To promote European literature and sciences.
2. William Bentinck
3. 1904
4. Bombay, Madras, Calcutta
5. To create an educated urban elite that would act as interpreter between the ruler and the ruled.
6. A new class of social reformers and educated political leaders were produced that helped in the freedom struggle of the country.
7. By the Constitutional Amendment of 1976.
8. In 1986.
9. (a) Universal access and enrolment  
(b) Universal retention of children upto 14 years of age.  
(c) Substantial improvement in the quality of education to enable all children to achieve essential levels of learning.
10. It makes children familiar with the basic branches of knowledge.
11. (a) The number of students in the age group of 18-20 years enrolled for higher education is low.  
(b) The proportion of women, scheduled castes and tribes in higher education is worse.
12. 15-35 years

