

## **EDUCATION DURING THE MUGHAL PERIOD IN INDIA**

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**Abstract:** The prime objective of this study is to acquire an understanding of education in the Mughal period. During the Mughal period, the Muslim system of education was predominant. In this period, transformations were brought about in the system of education. During this period, the individuals began to recognize the significance of education and even began to enrol in higher educational institutions. Primary education was imparted in makhtabs, and higher education was imparted in madrasahs. There was initiation of modern and innovative methods and strategies in the teaching and learning processes. Exams and tests were conducted regularly. They were regarded as assessment methods, with the main purpose of evaluating the performance and the learning abilities of the students. The main areas that are taken into account are, objectives of education in Mughal period of India, organization of education, characteristics of education, Islamic system of education, the system of education under the Mughals, vocational education and educational institutions. Introduction:

**Keyword:** *Education, Educational Institutions, Mughals Period, Professionals, Vocational Education.*

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

Mughals period is an important period in the history of India because of the developments in the field of art and languages, culture and religion. Also the period has witnessed the impact of other religions on the Indian culture. Zahir-ud-din Muhammad Babor founded the Mughal Empire by defeating Abraham Lodhi at Panipat in 1526. Babor recorded all his experiences in Tuzuk-i-Babori. The word Mughal has its origin in Babor's Mongol ancestry. In 1530 Babor's son Humayun came into power. A battle at Kanauj in 1540 brought Sher Shah into power but again Humayun recaptured Delhi and Agra. He re-established Mughal rule in India. He was succeeded by his son Akbar. He was the great emperor and brought almost entire India under his rule. Jahangir, Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb are the other Mughal kings. The transformations that were brought about in the system of education since the ancient times are a reflection that there have been changes and transformations in the social contexts. The system of education in Mughal India primarily focused upon Islamic. The new social realities, particularly the interplay between the democratization of education, emergence of knowledge society and modernization had a large influence upon the educational processes of all societies. In making an attempt to meet with all the challenges and problems, the country also took into consideration, the international dimension of education. National needs and expectations of the international community may seem to have conflicting interests, but the receptivity of change within the country has led to their complementarities. An analysis of the changing conditions reveals that most of these changes are likely to permeate through the educational policies of the next few decades (Introduction, n.d.).

### **Objectives of Education in Mughals Period**

The objectives of education in Mughals Period of India have been stated as follows: (An Overview of Medieval and Modern Education, n.d.).

1. During the Muslim period, the education was meant to extend the knowledge and propagate Islam.
2. The impartment of education took place with the propagation of Islamic principles, laws and social conventions.
3. Education was based on religion and its main purpose was to make the individuals religious-minded.
4. The Muslim education aimed at the achievement of material wealth and prosperity. The Mughal period made immense contribution in the system of education. During this period, the Mughal emperors acquired enormous understanding for learning and recognized the significance of education to a major extent.

## **II. LITERATURE SURVEY**

1. Jahiruddin Muhammad Babar—His Contribution to Islamic Education (1526-1530):He was an accomplished scholar in Arabic, Persian and Turki. He was a celebrated author of Turkish poems. His "Memoirs" throws light on this issue. Babor was also famous for his Persian

composition (Abul Fazl). He invented a new style of verse called “Mubaivan”. He was a great literary genius. Babor was also a fastidious critic. He composed a book entitled Mufassal. He had also skill in music. Babor initiated a form of handwriting— “The Babarui handwriting” and wrote a copy of the Koran in that script. Fond of books as he was, Babor took possession of Ghazi Khan’s library. He was also a lover of paintings. Babor made the diffusion of education a duty of the state. Babor had a society of literary men. He was the author of Quaran I – Humayum. Babor’s Shurhrat-am (Public works Department) was entrusted with the duty of publishing a Gazette and buildings and colleges. The fact that the establishment of educational institutions constituted an important item of Babar’s administrative programme speaks much for his interest in the extension of education in his Indian Empire.

2. **Nasir-ud-din Muhammad Humayun (1530-56):** He was an accomplished scholar. He gave great encouragement to learned men, and used to discuss literary subjects with them. Emperor Humayun held learned men in very high esteem. His learned associates included Mir Abdul Latif. He designated the different grades of persons by twelve arrows, the lowest being made of base material and the highest (the 12th Arrow) being made of pure gold. Humayun was very fond of astronomy and geography, these branches of science made considerable progress during his reign. He wrote a dissertation on the nature of elements and constructed his own terrestrial and celestial globes. He was very fond of poetry and he himself composed verses. Ferishta tells us that he fitted up seven halls for the reception of his officers, and dedicated them to seven planets. The learned men were received in the Saturn and Jupiter halls. Humayun was fond of magnificence.
3. **Sher Shah:** Sher Shah, who dethroned Humayun and ruled for four years, did much for the promotion of education in his dominions inspire of the short duration of his reign. His educational contributions were not contrary to the spirit of the Mughal rulers. He rather paved the way for Akbar. Personally, he was well-educated at Jaunpur, the then famous centre of Islamic culture and education. He was a cultured king and a serious scholar. He was fond of philosophy, history and biography. He could reproduce Sadi, Sikandar, Namah Gulistan and Bastan from memory. He was also fond of learned men, and built the most gigantic madrasah called the Sher Shahi Madrasah at Naruaul.

### **III. WOMEN EDUCATION IN MUGHAL PERIOD**

All the Mughal rulers were scholars and lovers of literature and arts. They had keen interest in education. Before the advent of the Mughals, a system of education had already been evolved in India

which aimed at the safety of Islam and to preach the canons of Islam. Sadr-us-Sadra was in charge of the religious and academic activities of the empire. Akbar introduced various reforms in this department. Mostly the Maktabas (schools) and Madarsas (Colleges) of the Muslims and the Pathshalas and Vidyapiths of the Hindus were managed by private management but the contribution of the Mughal emperors was also significant in the progress and development of these schools and colleges as they were themselves interested in it.

Both Babur and Humayun were lovers of education. Babur established a Madarsa in Delhi in which besides Theology, Mathematics, Geography and Astrology were taught. Humayun also founded Madarsas in Agra and Delhi and he used to establish contacts with the learned men on Thursdays and Saturdays. Akbar was himself uneducated but he took keen interest in the progress of education and established various Maktabas and Madarsas. He also introduced some reforms in the syllabus of these schools and colleges for the good of the people. Abul Fazl writes, "Everybody ought to read books on morals, arithmetic, the notation peculiar to arithmetic, agriculture, mensuration, geometry, astronomy, physiognomy, household matters, rules of government, medicine, logic science and history, all of which may be gradually acquired."

Jahangir also took keen interest in the development of education and he ordered that if a man had died without successor all his property should be utilized in the development of schools and colleges. He also got repaired all those schools which were not being used for educational purposes and thus contributed to its expansion. Shahjahan also established a Madarsa in Delhi near Jama Masjid. Aurangzeb following in the footsteps of his ancestors also established schools and colleges and awarded scholarships to the poor and needy students but stressed theological education as he was a fanatic and narrow-minded ruler. Keene writes that he "founded numberless colleges and schools."

Education received a further setback in the reign of the later Mughals who could not pay attention towards the development of education due to their unstable position but the loss in education was made good by the provincial rulers. They contributed much to the development of education during the period of later Mughals.

There was no examination system at that time. Dr. Yasuf Husain writes, "Students were promoted from a lower to higher class according to the opinion of the teacher concerned who took into account the total academic career of the students whom they knew very intimately; there was no regular system of annual examination." Three types of degrees, viz. Fazil, Alim and Kabil, were awarded to the students on the basis of their performances. Agra, Delhi Fatehpur Sikri, Ambala, Lucknow, Gwalior, Allahabad, Kashmir, Sialkot, Lahore and Jaunpur were the centers of Muslim education and Persian was the medium of instruction.

During the Mughal period, Banaras, Mathura, Allahabad, Nadiad, Ayodhya, Srinagar and Mithila were prominent centres for the education of the Hindus. Most of the students received their education at their dwellings. Theology, geography, medicine, grammar and mathematics were popular subjects but the Hindus did not pay much attention to religious education. Bernier and Tavernier have praised Banaras as a centre of education. In the beginning, the children were sent to the Pathshalas at the age of five which were attached to the temples and after completing their primary education, they were admitted to the Vidyapith for higher education.

There were no separate educational institutions for girls. They had to go to the boys' schools if they at all wished to get education. Hindu kings and nobles paid attention to the education of their women but the education of Muslim women remained almost neglected. Strict Purdah system proved to be the greatest hurdle in the way of their education but the royal Muslim ladies were imparted education. Generally the higher education to the ladies was given at their homes, Monserrate mentions, "Akbar paid great care and attention to the education of princesses. They were taught to read and write and were trained in other ways by matrons."

Thus, it is evident that the Mughal system of education was quite satisfactory. Education institutions and scholars were patronized by royal persons and nobles of the empire but there were some serious defects in the education system. The Mughal emperor paid no attention towards the education of women, technical education and professional education. Moreover no attention was paid by the imperial authorities towards the education of the general masses. It resulted in backwardness of the country as the people failed to understand the meaning of democracy and autocracy and led a life like a speechless animal. Had proper scientific and technical education been given to all, the country would have flourished immensely.

#### **IV. CONCLUSION**

Never in the whole history of India did art and literature, science and commerce flourish as a whole quite as much as during the two hundred years of the Great Mughals rulers. Education made mighty strides during the Mughal Period. It was because these emperors were great educationists and patrons of learning.

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