

HISTORY YET TO BE WRITTEN: EDUCATION IN INDIA

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Abstract:

Sources are the basis of history. It is on the foundation of primary sources that the edifice of history rests on. Political history has always been dominant trend in historiography. Non-political aspects of history have received lesser attention. With the advent and the popularisation of total history scenario has begun to change. History of arenas other than political are being coming under the orbit of historical documentation. However, in the case of the writing of history of education the challenges are different. The paper enumerates and takes a stalk of the difficulties in the historiography of education.

Key words: education, India, History of education, private schools

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Introduction:

Writing of history is a continuous process. Every age and era has to produce its history. It's history that enables many of the present issues and the planning of future. Historicality illuminates a sense of past which seeks to capture the multiple, plural and enchanting aspects of human existence. Presently a lot of discussion is being done about National Education Policy. In this scenario, it would be appropriate to enumerate the history of education in India. The historiography of Indian education is a chapter that needs to be explored, understood and documented.

Literature review:

Political history has always captured the mainstream attention in India. The non-political aspects have remained as less explored and emphasised histories. The emphasis on total history and the covering of all around aspects has been gaining ground. History of education is such arena which needs documented. Many of the historiographers of Indian education hold this view. Education is an important variable in the development stories of the nation. The paper aims to focus on this aspect.

Objective:

When the attempt to write history of education is done or undertaken, a number of issues are faced. Official sources and documents are not easily available or accessible. Again, the discussion and the steps and processes involved in the decision making are equally important to understand the evolution of the educational system in India. Without understanding the background details of the decisions and the policies, the policy documents don't make proper sense. The study looks at this aspect.

Research methodology:

While writing the history of education the background details are significant. Just putting the reports of the educational commissions does not explain the evolution of the educational system. The system exists in the context of the political and social realities. Without this context educational history does not make any sense. The history of education in India often leaves out the processes of social and cultural reproduction that take place outside colonial type schools. There is need to cover history from a wide range of approaches is a move from the voice history to one of heteroglossia, varied and opposing views.

Official histories:

India has been the centre of learning since ancient times. Education is a means of cultural transformation from one generation to another in any given society. Education in India during the modern period gradually became and remained the concern of the government. History of education hence became official histories. These at times result into history of the facts but the reality remains undocumented and unnoticed.

Colonial perspective:

The colonial conquest led to the destruction of the indigenous education in India. The period of British rule from 1757 to 1900 was marked by major socio-political changes and scientific breakthroughs that influenced medical systems, institutions, and practitioners in India. The colonial regime used Western medicine as a tool to expand and legitimize its rule. There was severe criticism of Indian thought and Indian practices. If one presents the timeline of the Indian education in the modern period without the colonial narrative, the research is not reflective of the reality. This has happened in many of the histories of the Indian education.

India in the Pre-British period was not an illiterate country. British like most colonial masters introduced English education as a part of the greater imperial design. Language, culture, subjects and curriculum were all under the influence of the British. Imperialist historians portrayed the Indian educational system as irrelevant and of lesser value and utility. Oral resources have largely remained undocumented and unrecorded.

Education in the ancient Indian context was the preservator of the culture. Education was holistic in nature. For the colonial masters it was instrument of the power. The British imparted education for their benefit. It was implemented after mature deliberations. Even education became the part of conversion agenda. Introduction of the Western education in India had its root in Whiteman's burden theory. Advances in Western thought and technology shook the foundations of Orientalism. Education system modified with the changed time. The colonial regime for example withdrew its patronage to the indigenous systems of medicine. Western system claimed itself as the superior system.

Education and power:

Change in the system can bring better life. Education can be and has to be way of life. The introduction of Western style education and the gradual destruction, marginalisation and final near extinction of ' indigenous education ' in modern India proceeded simultaneously. Indigenous education and its impact have not been studied in detail and in depth. The history of education in India is not restricted to the history of government but even the history of private institutions. Educational institutions are like micro -societies. The growth and content of

higher education has been the result of private and government initiatives based on priorities and strategies. The relation of knowledge and power has been the key factor in the education narrative. Education reproduces classes.

Conclusion:

Education in India carries and represents the multiple ethos. It has been pragmatic in nature. History of education needs to capture and present it. In Western countries history of higher education is an established discipline. The paper has reviewed the literature on the education in India. With Covid education system has seen major breakthrough. Online has become reality and that demands the revisiting and rewriting of History of education in India. This would result into new perspectives and paradigms in the history of Indian education. Education in terms of the spread of the rationality need to be explored. The New Normal education has raised insight in the minds of the educationists and the community. In recent times the arena of education has received the attention of the scholars. However, the history beyond the official minutes and the commission reports need to be retrieved and written in its right context.

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