

Educational System in Bengal during Early Medieval Period: It's Relevance in Globalised Society



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Abstract

Education is an integral part for developing civilization in every country. We all concerned about origin and evolution of Education in India, but in the study a historical analysis would be made on the Educational conditions of Bengal during early medieval period and its relevance on globalized society. Education is a powerful instrument for individual and social development. It is indeed difficult to determine the system and nature of education in ancient Bengal; moreover these are ample evidence of the flourishing conditions of nourishment of various branches of knowledge in ancient Bengal. However early medieval period was the most remarkable for the developing a specific mode of education system in Bengal. A Global Society is, in theory, one which defies the social construct of "to each their own", that is, of world citizens divided and segmented by language, ethnicity, creed, or culture. Globalization entails extending communication, knowledge, and information to everybody in aims of becoming a collaborative culture where people, despite of their genetic or cultural difference, can still coexist work and born together. Therefore, a global society can be described as one which has overgrown the tendency to pull apart and has embraced a new culture of sharing and networking with people from all different backgrounds, mindsets, cultures, religions and other differences that in past were used as excuses to keep as separated.

In this study the author would like to analyze the education system of Bengal during early medieval period and its relevance in modern society. This study will also be conducted how education system in Bengal during early medieval period to construct a global society in Bengal as well as India. The study will intend to focus a systematic scenario of education system in Bengal and its impact on globalised society.

Keywords: Early Medieval Period, Early Medieval Bengal, Globalization, Globalised Society, Globalized Education, Global Peace, Social Development

Introduction

The term 'early medieval' is more significance regarding the discussion on Indian History basically ancient Indian history. Many Scholars and Historians used the term for differentiating this period from early times. Normally, we considered from 8th century A.D. to 13th century A.D. as early medieval period in India. So many changes had been found in this period such as, rise of regional kingdom, decline of money economy, trade and commerce, rise of feudalism, development of regional language and literature etc. Thus, this period is called early medieval period in the context of Indian history. Bengal was also influenced by the nature and characteristics of early medieval period. The early medieval Bengal also witnessed for rise of local dynasties, system of land grant, development of Bengali literature and language etc. These are the nature and characteristics of early medieval period in India and also Bengal. Therefore, we trace on the educational scenario of Bengal during this significant period. Now a question is here: What were the educational conditions in Bengal during early medieval period. In this perspective many Scholars interpreted it from their different point of views. But basically, we mentioned that Education system, structure of education, nature and levels of education, standard of education, higher education which prevailed early medieval period of Bengal, which has been accepted as educational conditions.

Now another aspect of this topic is 'Globalised Society' which is the vital issue regarding this discussion. A global society can be described as one which has overgrown the tendency to pull apart and has embraced a new culture of sharing and networking with people from all different backgrounds, mindsets, cultures, religions and other differences that in the past were used as excuses to keep us separated. 'Global Society' indicate to a society which is being built in all the people of the world have a good understanding with each other. This is an effective result of increasing globalization that is going on the modern world. In past, there were very much differences among the societies of various countries from each other and were not specifically connected in different issues, it was not a global society. Now a day people of various countries share their everyday's cultural activities such as, to watch English Premier League in TV, to watch movies from United States or from India in common with each other. Major reasons of this interaction among the people of various countries is internet and other forms of communication, some aspects of human being move towards a society which is more homogeneous around the world that is a globalised society. Global Society never construct by one nation, it must be a purpose of internationalist, happen when various nations are interconnected or interacted with each other. In this paper the author would like to examine how modern globalised society is influenced by the education system of Bengal during early medieval period.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the Education System in Bengal during Early Medieval Period.
2. To examine the various changes had been found in Education and Social conditions in Bengal during Early Medieval Period.
3. To estimate the relevance of Education system which existed during Early Medieval Period and prevailing in the era of globalization.

Review of Literature

Several books, Literature studies were either written or organized by many authors, scholar & historians in the different issues during early medieval period in Bengal such as, Bangalir Itihasa: Adi Parva by Niharranjan Ray(1950), The History of Bengal, Vol.-I by R.C. Majumdar (1963), The University of Nalanda by H.D. Sankalia (1934), The Making Early Medieval India by B.D.Chattapadhyaya (1994), India's Ancient Past by R.S.Sharma (2008), A History of Education by Nurullah and Naik (1951), Banga Sahitya Parichaya-II by D.C. Sen (1911), Some Aspect of Society in Bengal by T.C. Dasgupta (1935).

Niharranjan Ray's (1950) Bangalir Itihasa: Adi Parva discussed on the origin of Bengali peoples and nature and characteristics of the land of ancient Bengal. This work also traced on economic life, caste patterns, class patterns, village and towns and administrative patterns of Bengal. The author also focused on Religious thought and practices, language, literature and learning and also the Fine Arts and Music. R.C. Majumdar's (1963) History of Bengal, Vol.-I gave a systematic account of ancient

Bengal. H.D. Sankalia's (1934) The University of Nalanda discussed on the origin and evaluation, contemporary educational institutions, roles of Teachers, nature of students, content, teaching methods etc. B.D. Chattapadhyaya's (1994) The Making of Early Medieval India traced on social, economic, religious and cultural conditions of India during early medieval period.

Among the modern works, Brahmanic Settlements in different divisions of Bengal by Puspa Niyogi, Everyday Life in Pala Empire by Sahanara Hussain, Some Historical Aspects of the Inscription of Bengal Binoy Chandra Sen, Aspects of Economic History of Bengal by Kamrunnesa Islam, Historical Geography of Ancient and Early Medieval Bengal by Amitabha Bhattacharyya, Social and Religious Life in Bengal Inscriptions by Ratikanta Tripathi, Some Aspects of Socio-economic History of Early Medieval Bengal by Bedasruti Bhattacharya, The State and Society in Early Medieval Bengal by Soumantra Mitra

Puspa Niyogi expressed her idea on among the modern works, Settlements in different divisions of Bengal. Sahanara Hussain gave a systematic account on Pala Empire of Bengal during early medieval period. Bedasruti Bhattacharya discussed of her work on socio-economic history of Bengal during early medieval period.

Some important studies based on inscriptional sources such as, Inscriptions of Bengal-vol.-III by Nani Gopal Majumdar, Gauda-lekha-mala by Akshaya Kumar Maitreya.

Several books, Literature studies were either written or organized by many authors and scholars in the different issues regarding global society or globalised modern society such as, Norman L Kauffmann's (1992) Students Abroad: Strangers at Home. Education for a Global Society, Saskia Sassen's (1999) Globalization and its discontents: Essays on the new mobility of people and money, Peter Beyer's (2013) Religions in global society, Gerald L Gutek's (2005) American Education in a Global Society, 2/E, Martin Shaw's (1994) Global Society and international relations, Peter Kivisto's (2008) Multiculturalism in a global society, Uma Jayakumar's (2008) Can higher education meet the needs of an increasingly diverse and global society? Campus diversity and cross-cultural workforce competencies, Anthony MCGrew's (1992) A Global Society: Modernity and its Futures, Andrew Satori's (2008) Bengal in Global concept History: Culturalism in the age of Capital.

There are several latest works on related this topic, such as, Partha Sircar's (2016) Early Women Education in Bengal and India, Amiya Kumar Bagchi's (2017) Failure of Education Policies in West Bengal since 1951: An analysis, Dr. Kuldip Puri's (2015) Education- A Decisive Push from State to Market, Akos Ostar's (2015) Play of the Gods: Locality, Ideology, Structure, And Time in the Festivals of A Bengali Town.

But no one researcher conducted his or her study on the educational conditions in Bengal during early medieval period and its relevance in globalised

society. Therefore, a gap in the area of knowledge existed. To bridge this gap of knowledge and to analyze the educational conditions during early medieval period of Bengal and its impact on modern globalised society, this study will be conducted.

Early Medieval Education System in Bengal

Early Medieval Bengal was more significant regarding the discussion on education system, not only in Bengal but also in India, its nature, characteristics, transformation and forms of evolution, innovative approaches etc. were very much effective in contemporary society and to construct a well culture in the Sub-continent. Before the discussion on education system in Bengal during early medieval period we have must known about the conditions of socio-economic and political structure of Indian Sub-continent. B. D. Chattapadhyay (1994) attributes his idea about features of early medieval period; the essential points are:

1. Political decentralization.
2. The emergence of landed intermediaries.
3. A change over from the market or money economy to self sufficient villages as unit of production.
4. Subjection of peasantry.
5. The proliferation of castes.
6. The feudal dimension of the ideology and culture of the period.

Niharranjan Ray (1950) says that the history of learning in ancient India generally begins with the Vedas, Brahmanas and Upanisads; as for pre-times the shortage of materials allows us little means to say anything. However, the learning and scholarship embodied in the Vedas, Brahmanas and upanisadas, even in the Dharmasastras and the Dharmasutras, had no effect on Bengal for quite a long time. Meanwhile, people lived in this region as social beings with a tradition of learning as well as an artistic, literary and musical culture and for times to come this tradition and culture were preserved by the particular written language of each people or community. In the seventh century when Yuan ch'ung travelled in Kajangala, Pundravardhana, Kamrupa, Samtata, Tamralipti and Karnasuvarnha, Buddhist, Jaina and Brahmanical learning had progressed even further. He repeatedly praised the inclination to learning and its cultivation amongst the people of all these settlements. According to Ray (1950) Bengali scholarship in the sixth and seventh centuries was closely connected with Nalanda Great Monastery, and the endeavours towards the advancement of that monastery on the part of Bengal's scholars, teachers and rulers cannot be overlooked. A number of Chinese travelers have written of the scholarship of Tamralipti. Prof. Ray (1950) clearly discussed about the language of ancient Bengali people and also emphasized on study of Bengali literature and discussed about its historical background of Bengali literature. In this study the author also formulated an idea of learning of ancient Bengali peoples and teaching learning method also. According to the author music and fine arts may be more subtle than literature and scholarship. Yet they may be more manifest and pervasive. Here the author used various

primary sources for pointing out the fine arts of different region of Bengal and parallel the writer also elaborately discussed about the music of ancient Bengal. The author also point out the development of fine arts and music of ancient Bengal. Education of Bengal had been influenced by so many Universities of Ancient India and Bengal also. Such Universities were Nalanda, Vikramasila, Valabhi, Odantapuri etc. According to H.D. Sankhalia (1934) of all the contemporary Universities, the only University worthy of standing in comparison with Nalanda was Vikramasila, with its magnificent buildings and eminent personalities, like Atisa and Jetari. But even this University did not reach that pinnacle of glory, which Nalanda acquired in the days of Vasubandhu, Dinnaga, Dharmapala and Dharmakirti. According to R.K. Mookerji (1947) like Nalanda and Valbhi, the University of Vikramasila was also result of royal benefactions. Building and Staff, Administration, Colleges and Central Hall, Dvara-Panditas were very well. R.K. Mookerji (1947) also stated that Nadia is the popular name of Navadvipa on the Bhagirathinat its confluence with Jalangi. The court of Lakshman Sena (A.D. 1106-1138) became a great centre of learning.

Globalised Society

Norman L Kauffmann (1992) says that Colleges and Universities face the major problem of how to make a University education meaningful in a global society. Student develops intellectually in three ways such as through language study, courses in the student majors that offer new perspectives, knowledge acquisition in board. Saskia Sassen (1999) takes on common political, cultural, and economic misconceptions of globalization and offers a thoughtful, provocative new look at our increasingly global society. Peter Beyer (2013), a distinguished sociologist of religion, presents a way of understanding religion in a contemporary global society by analyzing it as a dimension of the historical process of globalization. Martin Shaw (1994) asserted that the emergence of global society is, however, beset by contradictions. Indeed one of the principal was in which we can identify a global society is by the development of global crises. Peter Kivisto (2008) mentioned that Multiculturalism in Global Society explores the concepts and debates surrounding the complex modern phenomenon of multiculturalism, and its varied effects on the advanced industrial nations of the world. With remarkable clarity and concision, it focuses on the interrelated ties of ethnicity, race, and nationalism in a world where globalizing process have made such ties increasingly important in economic, political, and cultural terms. Uma Jayakumar (2008) suggested in his article "*Can higher Education Meet the needs of an increasingly diverse and global society? Campus diversity and cross-cultural workforce competencies*" that it is uncertain how trends toward neighborhood resegregation will impact the state of democracy and the economic interests of our country. Many U.S students, particularly whites, are reaching adulthood without having had meaningful interactions with people of different racial background. However, the

findings of this study are promising. They indicate that even with the increased segregation of neighborhoods, citizens can be equipped to succeed in a diverse and global society.

Summary and Discussion

Although Education System during Early Medieval Period in Bengal was not wide spread in the whole region but some of the features of education have the relevance in modern globalised society. First of all the relationship between the teachers and students was most intimate during the period. As a result the transmission of education between them was very significant. The teachers were devoted to the students and that intermingled condition held to achieve the highest level of education by the students that relationship is very relevant in globalised society. Secondly, in regard to the development of skill the Teachers were always careful and sincere about the skills which were to be developed among the students. Thirdly, the mode of approach for instruction was based on induction model. As a result the students were induced by the knowledge of the Teachers. Lastly, the support system for education during the period was very relevant with the mode of approach of teaching. Mainly residential system was adopted in the education in the educational institution so that the students had the access to the teachers as and when needed. Therefore, the above features are most relevant at the educational scenario to achieve the goal of highest level of education.

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