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## **TO THE STUDY IMPORTANCE OF BUDDHIST EDUCATION'S IN 21-CENTURY MODERN EDUCATION SOCIETY**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Only with the advent of the Buddhist educational system was education accessible to all groups of people for the first time in history. The Buddhist Education System, which began in India, is distinguished by this as its most important quality. With the help of education, Bhagawan Buddha sought to alter society by increasing the moral and spiritual standards of all social groups. As a result, He created the educational system that attempts to restore India's inherent spiritual and moral ideals. The goal of the current study is to increase understanding of the Buddhist System of Education and assess its applicability to society in the twenty-first century. Because of the complexity, cultural diversity, and general state of dissatisfaction in our society in the 21st century, In order to reorient the oneness and integration of everyone in this century, current education should promote among children the universal and timeless ideals contained in Buddhism. In addition, it is important to understand that the Buddhist Education System has a very good foundation that is built on our initial universal impressions. If educational programmes are reconstructed and reorganised with the mentioned factors in mind, they will undoubtedly provide beneficial results for children in the twenty-first century. Consequently, there is a great demand for a comprehensive solution that can handle many of the global challenges. The only remedy is to educate the mind because most crises caused by humans are the result of human thought. This essay introduces Buddhist education that is pertinent to the times we are living in in an effort to educate and inspire policy makers to consider alternate methods of teaching the mind.

**KEY WORDS: Buddhist education, Relevance, 21<sup>st</sup> century, Educationists, social scientists, and thinkers.**

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### **INTRODUCTION**



It is only reasonable to discuss the ideas of Vedic education and Buddhist education when discussing the history of Indian education. During the Vedic era, Gurus were India's first teachers, who held classes in their own Guru Grihas or at Ashrams. The most important aspect of the Vedic educational system was the individualistic effort of the Guru toward the Sishyas. The educational process for students became institutionalised throughout time, and subsequent Buddhist education placed a strong focus on institutional organisation. Buddhist education in India spans a period of around 1200 years, or roughly 600 B.C. to 600 A.D. The teachings of Gautama Buddha, on which Buddhist education was based, were so significant that they continued to serve as a source of inspiration for both individual and social growth throughout India. Racial prejudice existed in all facets of Indian society at the time of the Buddha. Such prejudice was based on a man's job and place of birth. There were four social classes in the society: Brahman, Kshatriya, Baishya, and Sudra, with Brahman being the highest class. They had access to rights for religious instruction and training. However, there is another group of persons that lack access to religious and educational freedoms. A religious revolution began in ancient India as a result, and a new ideology known as Buddhist doctrine or Buddhist philosophy emerged. In this regard, it is important to note that an innovative and unique educational system, built on the principles of Buddhism, emerged in ancient India and provided everyone with the chance to study through organised learning without regard to caste. In ancient India, this new educational approach caused a huge movement, and as a result, it had a significant impact on how society as a whole developed. It is widely acknowledged that the golden age of Indian culture and civilisation began with the spread of Buddhism in that country. He emphasised the importance of discipline, meditation, and knowledge in his teachings. These three teachings were actually the foundation of Buddha's entire educational philosophy, which had broad educational implications. In the science and technology-driven civilization of the twenty-first century, individuals have wealth but no discipline, property but no peace, and knowledge but less wisdom. Buddhist education's applicability is hotly debated, hence the focus of the current study is on "the study value of buddhist education's in 21st-century modern education society."

Only because of his conversion to Buddhism was Asoka, one of the great Indian rulers of the third century B.C., able to put an end to all wars and conquests, drain swamps, construct wells, and perform other acts of public benefit. Other Buddhist emperors have followed this

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pattern in the intervening period. The use of this Buddha example to illustrate Buddhist teachings in the twenty-first century is very significant. The eradication of people's suffering, greed, rage, and delusion was the main goal of the Buddhist educational system. Ultimately, lessons for these fundamental purposes inevitably result in a socially ethical life for everyone. The importance of the Buddhist educational system for the present world resides in this area as well, and it has been noticed that all contemporary guiding organisations place a strong emphasis on this area. Every person has a right to education, according to Buddhism. Therefore, all racial disparities should be put aside so that everyone can have access to education. Since the right to education is still a valid notion in India, the government of India established the Right to Education Act in 2009, which makes education one of the country's fundamental rights. Buddhism again emphasises the need for us to cultivate love, kindness, and compassion for all living things while also working to purify our own minds. The relevance of the Buddhist educational system, the study of Buddhism as a discipline, and its place in the education of the twenty-first century are given prominence in this context as well. As a result, the ideas of inclusive education, environmental education, etc. arose. Higher education curricula also included vocational education, which covered topics including spinning, weaving, sketching, medicine, clothing printing, tailoring, accountancy, surgery, and coinage. These topics are still important for developing skills and lowering the unemployment rate in society. Therefore, the current education system of 21st-century society reflects the Buddhist educational system in this regard as well. In this system, practical training played a significant role in university education. For instance, students were required to study nature in order to provide a complete understanding of medicinal plants during medical school. Studying nature was seen to be the finest way to encourage kids' natural curiosity, which is still highly important for pupils in the present era. Above all, the Buddhist educational system was a synthesis of psychological theories and methods, from which today's individual might profit for both his or her own spiritual development and emotional well-being. Because it demonstrates a path to happiness and peace of mind regardless of one's political or social context, Buddhism has a significant importance in the modern world.



## **OBJECTIVE**

Objective of the present paper is to make people understand and analyze about the to the study importance of buddhist education's in 21-century modern education society.

## **21ST CENTURY CONCEPT**

According to the Gregorian calendar, the twenty-first century is the current century of the Anno Domini era or Common Era. This century started on January 1, 2001, and it will end on December 31, 2100.

## **THE RESEARCH METHOD USED**

The current study, which is entirely historical in nature, deals with the Buddhist educational system. As a result, the present study has been conducted using both an analytical and historical methodology, in accordance with the issue. As secondary sources of information, many books and research articles are read, and three Assamese Buddhist temples (primary source) have been visited to get information about the works' current relevance and authenticity. So, the current study uses both primary and secondary sources.

## **BUDDHISM'S EDUCATIONAL APPROACH**

What is the ideal and correct course of action for Buddhist education in order to achieve its purpose? As is well known among Buddhists, the Buddha employed varied ideas and techniques depending on the disciples' ages, social classes, genders, and occupations, much like a doctor might recommend different medications depending on their patients' illnesses and medical conditions. The vast amount of Buddhist literature is partially owing to the depth of its ideas and the growth of its ideas, and partly due to the variety of its practises. Due to the Buddha's attitude, different sects eventually emerged, each of which created its own unique educational system. From this, it is clear that the Buddhist approach of instruction is flexible and adaptable rather than rigid. Buddhism must test out continually fresh methods of instruction.



The Eightfold Path teachings found in the earliest sutras and Chan theory in Mahayana Buddhism are the most representative ideas for enlightenment, the individual's objective in Buddhist education. The Four Noble Truths approach teaches educators how to assist pupils in identifying a problem, its root cause, and a solution. The principle of the Four All-encompassing Bodhisattva Virtues, which include offering what others want, speaking affectionately, acting in a way that benefits others, cooperating with others, and adapting oneself to others, teaches teachers how to handle pupils properly. The idea of the clean country alludes to the simultaneous attainment of knowledge and purification of society. Basic study on these theories has been conducted, paying close attention to the work of education.

Whatever the premise, the impartial Buddhist educational process has been condensed into what are known as "The Three Studies": 1) Moral restraint—keeping the rules in order to eradicate desire; 2) meditation practice—to abolish wrath; and 3) development of wisdom—to abolish ignorance According to the Lotus Sutra, the Buddha's arrival in the world was meant to disclose truth, clarify what truth means and aid humans in understanding it, and finally to guide them into nirvana.

The Buddha placed a strong emphasis on mental self-education. He once remarked, "All of the Buddha's teachings are meant to heal the mind; without the mind, the teachings are useless." Buddha employed a variety of techniques to train the minds of his followers.

- To educate everyone without regard to their background;
- To impart knowledge without becoming weary; Journal of Humanistic Buddhism at Hsi Lai
- To employ tactful measures;
- To set an example via one's own behaviour;
- To combat evil with evil;
- To demonstrate the truth by one's own actions;
- To pay tribute to worthy deeds;
- To acquire both happiness and wisdom;
- To consistently adapt to all sentient beings; 9.



- Striking a balance between knowledge and application.
- The Buddha used the world's innumerable facets, shapes, and other manifestations as his teaching tools.

## **BUDDHIST SYSTEM OF EDUCATION**

The main objective of the Buddhist educational system, which was created by Buddha Shakyamuni, was the attainment of knowledge and the dissemination of the Buddhist religion. When it first began, the system was entirely religious and monastic in nature. Actually, monasteries, or "Viharas," were founded because of religion, and through time, these monasteries evolved into institutions of higher study and education. The primary goal of Buddhist education was the dissemination of the religious teachings of the Buddha and the achievement of "Nirvana" through them. Buddha asserted that obtaining the ultimate insight was the sole goal of all practises throughout our lives. Buddhist educational theory places equal focus on knowledge's conceptual and practical dimensions. The establishment of this educational system placed emphasis on the growth of moral, ethical, social, and economic principles. Buddhism holds that education entails real knowledge, the pursuit of which makes it possible for a person to be set free from suffering and lead to the achievement of salvation. Following are some discussions of the ancient Indian.

### **BUDDHIST EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM:**

The deep purposes or ambitions of the Buddhist educational system play a significant impact in contemporary society. All-around Personality Development, Moral Development, Cultural Development, Social and Vocational Development, Personal Development, and Attainment of Salvation were the objectives of education. Making a free man who was also wise, educated, moral, non-violent, and secular was the major goal of Buddhist education. Students gained discernment, humanism, logical thinking, and freedom from superstition. In this system, education was designed specifically to liberate students from greed, desire, and ignorance. Buddhist education was too accessible to people from all backgrounds. The main objectives of Buddhist education were to change the unwise into the wise, the beast into the priest, and the aggressive into the calm and serene. Buddhist education has always sought to turn a person's personality into the highest expression of humanity, which is possible



through the three facets of human life's perfection: ethical, intellectual, and spiritual perfection.

### **FUNCTIONS OF EDUCATION:**

During the Buddhist era, the primary purpose of education was to reform society and save individuals from all types of miseries. Religion predominated the entire educational system in order to achieve this goal, but the fact is that all Mathas or Biharas had a practical education component. Students were required to do tasks like as drawing, weaving, and spinning in order to carry out numerous daily tasks.

### **CURRICULUM:**

There are two forms of education in the Buddhist educational system: primary education and higher education. Reading, writing, and math were taught in primary school, and religion, philosophy, military training, and Vedas were covered in upper education. Ayurveda received particular attention among the four Vedas because of its therapeutic efficacy. Curriculum at both levels placed a strong emphasis on presenting a good understanding of the Tripitaka, which is made up of the Sutta, Vinaya, and Abhidhamma Pitaka. Higher education curricula also included vocational education, which covered topics including spinning, weaving, sketching, medicine, clothing printing, tailoring, accountancy, surgery, and coinage. Everyone had the option to choose their own preferred upper level curricular subject.

### **METHODS OF TEACHING:**

In order to spread the teachings of Lord Buddha, instructors used techniques like the lesson method, in which a teacher gave a pupil a sandal slate to practise writing on. Speaking and writing were used here to teach the alphabet and numbers, together with the lecture, question-and-answer, seminar, discussion and analysis, comparison, and self-study methods. The language used for instruction was folklore. Later, it also comprised Pali and Prakrit, and later still, Sanskrit. Here, one instance is given. Renowned Sanskrit language experts



Nagarjuna, Asanga, Vasubandhu, Shantideva, Aryadeva, and Chandrakirti contributed greatly to philosophy and literature during the Buddhist era.

### **DISCIPLINE CONCEPT:**

During the Buddhist era of education, the primary disciplinary concept was complete dedication to the instructor. The kids were required to be ready to receive instruction anytime the teacher chose at all times. The pupils had a great deal of responsibility to abide by the regulations of monasteries or the Buddhist order because the curriculum of Buddhist education was spiritual in nature.

### **WOMEN'S EDUCATION:**

The Buddhist educational system is frequently critiqued from the perspective of women's education. Actually, Lord Buddha believed that women were the root of all problems in the early days. Therefore, there wasn't much hope for women's education during the early Buddhist era. The monasteries forbade the admission of women. But later, some 400 women, including his stepmother, were allowed entry into the viharas on the request and demand of Anand, a beloved student of Buddha.

### **EDUCATION TIME:**

The overall education time was 22 years, divided into 12 years of Pabbajja and 10 years of Upasampada. Pabbajja is a term that means "getting out." After being accepted into a monastery, the student had to participate in this rite when he had to give up all of his worldly and familial ties. Any caste member may be accepted into a monastery, where his caste identification is erased upon admission. The student was required to modify all of his former habits and methods of living as soon as he was admitted. The minimum age required for the Pabbajja ceremony was eight years old. The student was required to participate in the Upasampada ritual after completing twelve years of study. This event had a very democratic feel to it. The pupil was required to stand in front of all the other monks in the monastery. Only when the majority of the monks voted in favour of something might someone be allowed to participate in the Upasampada rite. The Shraman was recognised as a full-fledged



monk when the Upasampada rite was successfully completed. All relationships with the outside world and families come to an end with the conclusion of this event.

### **INSTITUTIONS FOR EDUCATION:**

Education had a very limited scope in the early days of Buddhism. At the time, it was solely available to monastic communities and their members. Later, it became accessible to everyone, giving common people the opportunity to receive an education in those schools. During the era of Buddhist education, India was home to a sizable number of universities that were dispersed throughout the country. Takshashila, which dates to the sixth century BC, is the oldest one to have been unearthed. Nalanda, Jagaddala, Odantapuri, Vikramsila, Somapura, Baranashi, Mithila, Ujjaini, and Kanchipuram were some of the other notable sites. Even now, researchers are discovering ancient Buddhist-era universities' ruins near to those that have already been excavated. However, not everyone found it easy to enrol in Takshashila or Nalanda. Only approximately 20% of applicants at Nalanda were accepted. Foreign students had the most difficulty passing the entrance exam unless they were well-versed in both traditional and contemporary knowledge. Despite this, the university had 1,500 faculty and 8,500 students. (Singh, S., 2017: Pp. 10)

### **ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF TEACHERS:**

In the Buddhist educational system, a teacher is a practitioner who has already covered some ground before students. He is known as a "spiritual guide" for this reason. He can therefore instruct others because he is familiar with the ideas and procedures. Teachers could be classified as either Acharyas or Upadhyayas. Teachers' responsibilities included educating students, creating books, promoting religion, engaging in conversation, and organising debates to address important issues. Actually, in the Buddhist tradition, the teacher must spend at least ten years as a monk and must be characterised by virtues like charity, chastity, and moral purity. Both the teachers and the pupils had a complete responsibility to the monastery. However, the teacher was alone in charge of the student monks' educational system, attire, diet, and living arrangements.

### **CONCLUSION**

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The production of an intelligent and conscious human being is the ideal educational result. The problem of modern education, however, is that it results in highly competitive graduates who know a lot about their field and the outside world but little to nothing about themselves or life. Human transformation, the most significant component of education, is neither taught nor shown. Human achievement is around the gradual realisation of who we are and our capacity for love, compassion, and the ability to be glad and ecstatic inside of ourselves without external physical stimulation. The 21st century educational system should make sure that this is taught as a true definition of success. Instead of competing with one another, teachers and parents should teach kids how to work together and coexist peacefully. In place of anger and competition, love, compassion, and respect should be widely employed as effective tools in all spheres of life. The ability of the learner to be a cheerful, conscious, and thoughtful human being should be the yardstick by which to judge the success of an education.

In this world, change is unavoidable, and Buddhism recognised this as a universal law. Therefore, this ideology was designed with the pragmatic goal of educating everyone while releasing them from a community narrowness. Buddhist education was free from any form of favouritism based on caste or creed in the centres because of its cosmopolitan nature. A lot more emphasis was placed on the whole development of the person, with Buddhist education emphasising the novice's physical, mental, and spiritual growth. Positivism was another effect of this educational system. Buddhist education was based on a positivist philosophy that gave systematised concepts a very careful logical scrutiny. It was also, in large part, democratic in nature because it supported the right to freedom of inquiry.

Nowadays, there is less of a focus on filial piety in our curriculum. Schools merely provide superficial abilities; they do not impart knowledge at its core. When the root of a problem is rotten, it upends society and contributes to the current state of anarchy. Junior highs, high schools, and colleges are like the blossoms and leaves of education, whereas elementary schools are like the root. Early instruction of filial piety to our children by teachers is essential.



It is time for education to turn its attention from what is "out there"—the curriculum, tests, classroom setup, books, and computers—to the underlying tenets and definitions that educators and policymakers hold dear. By constructing on a model T's chassis, NASA did not send astronauts to the moon. In a similar vein, education cannot aspire to advance beyond its current state on the foundation of education from the 18th century.

We can achieve truth, virtue, beauty, wisdom, and real eternal bliss via the study of Buddhism. Buddhism encourages both teachers and students to exercise self-discipline, initiative, compassion, tolerance, giving, and other virtues. It will be a fantastic educational model for the system's ongoing overhaul. My honest wish is that Buddhism will be accepted and integrated into all schools in America and beyond.

## **SUMMARY**

Buddhism as a whole promoted giving advice on how to cultivate moral behaviour, which is also the cornerstone of an effective system of contemporary education. Additionally, it stressed the importance of maintaining constant vigilance to uphold one's behaviour in the present life due to its belief in karma. Therefore, a focus on manual abilities was made. Men were encouraged to learn manual skills like spinning and weaving so they could support themselves. The primary teaching method was oral. There was a lot of preaching, repetition, exposition, discussion, and controversy. Buddhist council once held "seminars" to talk about the important topics. This method strongly supported learned conferences, meditation, and educational tours, which reflects the current applicability of this ever-modern education. The relevance of the Buddhist educational system can also be cited along with its influence and international recognition. It aided India in gaining recognition on a global scale, as seen by the arrival of the Chinese pilgrim Heuen Tsang. It also created a programme for cultural exchange between India and other nations. In addition to all of these, moral education, which includes value education and character development, drew people of all backgrounds at that time. The Buddhist education centres were given significant priority in order to promote moral growth among all disciples. As a result, it was deemed mandatory for everyone to follow the noble way, which is the eight fold path that Buddhism preaches since it offers guidance for moral education and peace. After all, the entirety of Buddhism's techniques



offers guidelines for fostering moral behaviour, which is also the foundation of an effective educational system.

The Buddhist educational system was effective in fostering spiritual growth, personality development, social effectiveness, and overall satisfaction. After receiving an education at either Buddhist schools or universities during that time, pupils were unable to do any wrongdoing, theft, or murder and became alcoholics. All of the students could be liberated from lust, ignorance, hatred, and greed. Because of this, regular discussions, seminars, and lecture programmes about the applicability of the Buddhist educational system in the twenty-first century are organised all over the world today.

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