REVIEW, CONCLUSIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH POSSIBILITIES

Education is a world in itself as also a reflection of the world at large. On the one hand it is subject to society and on the other it helps the society to mobilize its productive energies by ensuring the development of the human resources.

It is now increasingly felt by all educated states that education emerges as a natural characteristic of the human societies. It has contributed to the destiny of the societies in all phases of their development, significantly enough, education in itself has never ceased to develop. With a view to continued self-improvement and development, education, more particularly, the various states and their educational systems has assumed greater importance.

NEED OF THE STUDY

'It is believed that both the necessity and encouragement for the educational measure exist as much in the Punjab as in any other Province in the Presidency. There are less prejudices and fewer elements of passive hinderence or active opposition there than elsewhere,' said the First Administrative Report of the Punjab (vide Marquis of Dalhousie's Administration of British India, London, 1862 by Arnold Edwin). 'On the whole then', it was reported, 'the Punjab is ripe for the introduction of an educational scheme.'

The above report indicated as if there was no educational system in the Punjab before it was annexed to the British empire in 1849 A.D. As against this, it is well known that the Punjab was no exception to the respect for learning. Inspite of being
the region of regular invasions from the north-west and civil wars, it did not lag behind in pre-serving and adding to the educational endowments. The various chiefs, the money lenders and even free-booters are known to have founded the schools and rewarded the learned. A Maulavi, Pandit or a Granthi/Bhai was generally entertained by the leading personalities or the wealthy men of the area.

A wrong impression was thus created by the British that before annexation (1849) Punjab did not have an efficient educational system of its own. It is with this view that, the present study on the educational system in the Punjab during the pre-British period has been undertaken by the present researcher. The study has been conducted primarily because nothing substantial has been written on the history or on the educational systems which existed in the undivided Punjab during the later-Mughal, or more appropriately, the period of the Sikh rule in Punjab.

**STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The present study on the educational systems in the Punjab is entitled:

**EDUCATION IN PUNJAB FROM A.D. 1707 TO A.D. 1849 - A CRITICAL STUDY.**

**OBJECTIVES OF STUDY**

The study has been conducted in the light of the following objectives:

1) To study the educational systems in the Punjab during the period 1707 to 1849 A.D., as envisaged by:
   
   a) The Hindus
   
   b) The Muslims, and
   
   c) The Sikhs.
ii) To identify the institutions of primary education in the Punjab during the period 1707 to 1849 A.D., in respect of the following:
   (a) Elementary education among the Sikhs
   (b) Elementary education among the Hindus, and
   (c) Elementary education among the Muslims.

iii) To locate the institutions of higher education in the Punjab in respect of the:
   (a) The Sikhs
   (b) The Hindus, and the
   (c) The Muslims.

iv) To work out the details of the educational system pertaining to its aims, curricula, the methods of teaching etc.

v) To explore the beginnings of the modern system of education during the early nineteenth century in the Punjab.

**DESIGN AND DELIMITATIONS**

**Design:** The study is historical in nature, based upon the exploration of various systems of education prevailing in the pre-annexation Punjab (A.D.1707 to A.D.1849).

In various primary sources include Persian, Punjabi and Urdu historical records, both contemporary and later. The Travellers' accounts about the systems under reference also find a due place in the present study.

The secondary sources include, the Educational Reports, Gazetteers, Reviews, Journals, Encyclopaedias, Dictionaries and printed books.

A critical appraisal of the various types of source-material has been undertaken to find out the impact of the various socio-cultural, religious and secular forces on the development of indigenous system of education.
DELIMITATIONS

The following delimitations have been applied in the study:

I. It is confined to the study of religious, secular and military education among the Hindus, Muslims and the Sikhs during the period from 1707 to 1849 A.D. with special reference to the development of indigenous as well as modern educational systems during the period under review. The study has also taken into account the patronage extended by Maharaja Ranjit Singh to the various systems of education in the Punjab during the same period.

II. It is a historical survey based chiefly on the Sikh source, the Sanskrit, Hindi, Urdu and Modern sources, including educational reports, Gazetteers and travellers', both contemporary and later.

III. The study has been restricted to both the religious and a secular orientation to education during the period under review.

IV. The study is confined to the geographical limits representing the pre-British Punjab, including the north-western region and whole of the west Punjab (including the areas now forming a part of the sovereign State of Pakistan) and the Indian Punjab, including the modern States of Haryana and the H.P.

V. The study is confined to exploring the various aspects of military education and training during the period under review. It is restricted to the study of military system and training under the Sikh Gurus and Maharaja Ranjit Singh.
According to all estimates, there was considerable growth of education and learning in ancient India. Among the Aryans, the Brahmins or the priestly class, devoted their energies exclusively to the promotion of learning. The very first period of man's life (i.e. the Brahmcharya Ashram) was devoted to the receiving of education. With the exception of the Shudras, the other castes had free access to education. The kings made liberal grants of land and money for this purpose. The main emphasis during the ancient period, however, was on moral, religious and spiritual education. It was limited in its impact and education was a gift denied to the majority.

Like the Hindus, the Muslim too had deep respect for learning and revered learned man. Education during medieval India remained, to a considerable extent, a private enterprise. The Maktabs and the Madrasahs were managed by the keepers of the mosques, who were sometimes assisted by the rulers or other well to do people with land or money grants. The Muslim Madrasahs supplied the State with suitable recruits for the various posts in the ministry of religious affairs, like Qazis, Muftis and Muhtasibs. However, theology being the mode of thought in the middle ages, education and other secular subjects, were subordinate to theology. Apart from the Madrasahs or the higher centres of learning, there were also the Maktabs, or the primary schools, attached to the mosques or the Khanqahs.

With the rise of Sikhism, the monopoly of education and learning of one class was over. This was the greatest contribution of the Sikh Gurus in the field of education. They systematically ended the monopoly of the Brahmin class over the right to
education and learning of one class only. The education was thus made universal and the property of all sections of society. Another equally important contribution of the Sikh Gurus in the field of education was that of giving a new alphabet and a vernacular language, containing the best ideas of the well-known oriental languages, including Sanskrit, Arabic and the Persian.

The Sikh education in the Punjab developed with the birth and growth of Sikhism and Sikh institutions in the form of the:

(a) Jangat and the masand Systems.
(b) The Gurmukhi Schools.
(c) The institutions of higher learning established by the Udasis, Nirmalas, Namdhari and others.
(d) The military education and training in art of warfare during the period of the Sikh Gurus and under Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

The above mentioned educational and religious institutions imparted both formal as well as non-formal education at elementary as well as higher level. The most important obligation of a Sikh was reading the sacred books, studying of the Gurmukhi and getting training in the art of warfare. The acquisition of knowledge for the Sikhs was thus in conformity with the aims of the Sikh Gurus, who brought knowledge within the reach of all classes.

The educational concepts of the Sikh Gurus, beginning from its founder Guru Nanak, related mostly to the spiritual uplift of mankind, the social good-will and understanding among the people of different creeds and classes based on common fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man. These concepts were
further popularised through the institutions of Sangat and Masand systems. The forums of Sangats (congregations of followers or admirers) later on developed into Sikh missionary and educational centres, where Gurus' work of reformation and transformation was continued by their leading representatives, popularly known as the Masands.

It is of interest to note that the word Sikh is derived from Shiksha (instruction) or Sishya (a disciple). The Sikhs, even to this day, acknowledge by their name their share in an immense respect for education and learning which they take, in an even higher sense than mere scholarship, as a search for that which is the Ultimate Reality. The literary contribution of the Sikh Gurus culminated in the compilation of the Adi-Granth or the Guru Granth Sahib, which may rightly be called the Bible of the Sikhs. It has a special value to the students and scholars of literature and philology. The credit for the compilation of the Adi-Granth goes to Arjun Dev, the fifth Guru in 1595 A.D. The contributions from different sects of the Hindus as well as the Muslims were considered and incorporated in the Adi-Granth, apart from the bani of the Gurus. The selection indicates the cosmopolitan nature of the Sikhism, which had begun with its founder. The Adi-Granth was finally completed in 1604 A.D. and installed at the central temple at Amritsar. During the period of Guru Gobind Singh, the Guruship was permanently incorporated in the Guru Granth Sahib, which gave a distinctive character to the Sikh concept of education. Another equally important literary contribution of the Sikh Gurus was the
compilation of the *Dasam Granth* by Guru Gobind Singh in 1764 at Anandpur, which became the second Sikh seat of higher learning after Amritsar.

With the passing of time, the *Sangat* and *Masand* systems, introduced by the Sikh Gurus, were institutionalised and became centres of formal education. Meanwhile, the Gurumukhi language led to the origin of the Sikh or the Gurmukhi school and gradually the number of the Gurmukhi schools multiplied and soon a network of them spread over the entire length and breadth of the Punjab and even in the other parts of India where the Dharamsals were established by the Sikh *Sangat*. In Punjab, Kiratpur, Kartarpur, Amritsar, Goindwal, Makhowal, Paonta, Anandpur, Pindana and many other places became the centres of Sikh educational and religious activities. The Dharamsals established in these and other towns gave a fillip to the cause of Sikh education and culture.

The elementary education in the Punjab during the Guru period was more or less based on the Brahmenic system wherein a boy on attaining the age of seven, was sent to a village school managed by a *Pandha*, or the professional village school master, who taught the boys both religion and commerce. The Primers, like the other books, were a luxury in those days and were provided to the beginner after he had committed the alphabet to memory and could tell one letter another. The first stage of his learning was therefore, and is still to this day, the *phatti* or tablet on which the teacher wrote for the novice, the letters with a kind of liquid chalk. These he
repeated loudly and practised on the tablet daily with the benefit of individual correction. The manner of learning was in short, poetic, a drill and practice method, so much emphasised by the present day educationists in the modern educational practice.

The character of education was two-fold, practical as well as commercial. While the commercial education was open to all, the religious or cultural education was a close preserve of the upper classes. Among the Hindus, the Brahmin was a mercenary who educated boys or visited the houses of the rich for the sake of money. Thus private coaching was also a common practice during the period under review.

In a pharamsal or a Gurmukhi school, a child's elementary education began with learning alphabet or 'painti', i.e. the 35 letters by rote. Each letter being accompanied by a motto or moral maxim, which according to Leitner, had come down since the time of Guru Angad who is believed to have written the first Primer of Gurmukhi. For the knowledge of commercial arithmetic, the students attended the Lande school, where they memorised the multiplication tables. The method of learning these was Moharni or oral drill in groups with every student, in turn, taking a lead in repetition. Boys and girls were often educated together at the primary stage.

The higher education in the Punjab was imparted through the Sanskrit Pathshalas, the Hindi Schools, the Persian Nadrasahs apart from the Gurmukhi schools. The private enterprise included the deras of the Udasis, also known as the akharas; the Nirmala
monasteries, the Ashrams, the Rungas, through the Gyanis, the Granthis and the Mandals or the itinerant schools. The Mandaris, Nirankaris and the Sewapanthis also gave great fillip to the spread of literacy among the Sikhs.

In the Punjab, a closer study of the Sanskrit schools, reveals that these schools were not always a monopoly of the Brahmin boys nor even that of the Brahmin teachers and that the Khattris and sometimes the children of the business community also attended the Sanskrit or popularly known as the Shastri schools. Besides the Brahmins, the Udasi and Nirmandals sadhus also founded the deras or akharas which imparted higher education in Sanskrit, literature, philosophy and medicine like the other Sanskrit schools or colleges. Many members of the Udasi sect were good scholars of Sanskrit and ran the Sanskrit Pathashalas where Vyakaran, Laghu-kaumudi, Vedant and Miyaya and medicine were included in the curriculum.

The teaching in Sanskrit began after a fair skill in the reading and writing of Devnagari script had been acquired. An elementary knowledge of grammar, number, person, gender and tense, declension and conjugation was considered a pre-requisite of the study of Sanskrit. However, Sanskrit being a difficult language, a small percentage of students would undertake its study for a longer period. No wonder therefore, if the Sanskrit schools were not very popular during the period under review. The Sanskrit schools were invariably single teacher schools. The number of students ranged between three to six only, while teaching was limited to one or two books which the student could master or specialise in.
Hindi was taught in Sanskrit schools as a primary subject. Although the number of Hindi schools was very large, the number of boys never passed beyond the vernacular school. Till 1850, in the Hindu villages, inhabited principally by the Brahmans, the children were generally taught Devnagari or Hindi character. The books taught in their schools included Balbodh (Primer), Saraswat, Prem Sagar, (a Hindi standard book), Tulsi's Ramayana and Vivah Padhati i.e. marriage ritual etc. Apart from Sanskrit schools, Hindi was taught also in Lande schools and by the Mandalis or the Sadhus, Udasis and the Nirmalas. The Hindus in Punjab had also recourse to the Persian school kept by a private Muslim teacher or to the mosque school, in which the Mulla taught Persian as well as Quran. There were purely Quranic schools too, but these, the Hindus did not need to attend. The study of Persian was a necessary avenue to employment as a clerk in private or government service.

Among the Sikhs, the four Dhuans (orders) of the Udasis (created by Baba Gurditta) acted as head preachers to educate the masses about the teachings of Guru Nanak and his successors. The Udasis began their missionary and educational activities in a regular and organised way. Their activities included among other things, the discovery of such places which were visited by the Sikh Gurus; establishment of missionary and educational centres; setting up of Deras, Dharamsalas and Sangats to render social, humanitarian and educational service to the people in those areas and teaching and propagating of Gurbani. The Udasi scholars established their monasteries at
Higher education was also imparted in the Nirmala monasteries or Akharas. Sanskrit formed an important subject and the Nirmalas sects produced, among others, abbots like Bhai Dargah Singh, Thakar Dyal Singh, Pandit Nihal Singh, Pandit Tara Singh and Mahant Ganesha Singh, who devoted their entire lives to comparative study of religion and teaching of Sanskrit. The Nirmala monasteries under them became higher centres of research and teaching, wherein big libraries were kept, translations from Sanskrit into Gurmukhi were made and many original these were written.

Around the holy tank of Amritsar, there were many Bungas, which belonged to the different misals, Sikh Sardars or private individuals. These Bungas were erected for accommodating the pilgrims, for propaganda of their creed and for education of their followers. In these Bungas, the men of education, kept their small colleges or academies and specialised themselves in some particular branch of learning and attracted students from far and wide.

The private schools were also an important agency of indigenous education. Sometimes, these were kept by pious or cultured scholars, who took to teaching for love of it. They were mostly in possession of a jagir or subsistence allowance from the government. If a teacher was competent, his school became popular. Both Sikhs and other students attended these schools. Sometimes a Gurmukhi school was kept by a Hindu who...
took both Sikh and Hindu students. There were certain Hindus also, who accepted the teachings of the Sikh religion without accepting its formalism. They found no harm in attending a Sikh private school.

The most interesting feature of the Gurmukhi schools was that the Hindus also attended these schools. Wherever there were at least ten Hindu or Sikh residents, a Sikh Dharamsal existed and carried on both the spiritual and educational functions of the Sikh Church. At times, even Muhammadan boys attended the Dharamsal schools and read Gurmukhi there. The Sach or the Granthi, who was incharge of such type of institution, was often in possession of endowment and also received presents from the parents of his pupils. Some of them were given land in the form of Dharam-Arth.

Among the Muslims, the maulvi, or incharge of a Muslim Madrasah, must have been well-versed in Persian which being the sweetest and most polished language of the time, was in those days the most popular language of the Muslims in Asia. The demand for the study of Persian, which was also the Court language, down to the days of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, must have largely increased.

The Persian Madrasah therefore, became very popular for two strong reasons. In the first place, the Hindus would have in the beginning a prejudice against attending the mosque schools or Maktabs for fear of possible conversion. Secondly, Arabic, like Sanskrit, kept a student away from the Arabic schools and as the time passed even these schools introduced
Persian for the benefit of renegades or the weaker students. The Persian school thus played a very important part in the secular education of the Punjab province as it equipped many young men with adequate skill for clerkship in the government offices and at the Court. The Hindus adopted Persian and studied it eagerly since the days of the great Mughals.

As against the Persian Madrasah, the Arabic Madrasah was a resort for the scholarly few. It imparted the highest Muhammadan education through the medium of Arabic. It was the highest ambition of most advanced Muslim students to visit Mecca in order to give finishing touches to their education. A Mecca degree commanded the highest respect in India and was often considered as the necessary qualification for the office of the Chief Qaziship.

With their knowledge of finance, coupled with their accomplishment in Persian, the Hindu Khatris of Punjab made competent officers of the Muslim rulers as diwans or even governors. Lakhpat Rai, for instance, was a diwan of Zakariya Khan as well as his son Yahiya Khan, the Subedars of Lahore; Lachhmi Narain, that of Zain Khan of Sirhind; Kaura Mal of Shah Nawaz Khan, who replaced his brother Yahiya Khan at Lahore; Sukhjiwan was appointed as Diwan and later governor of Kashmir by Ahmad Shah, the Afghan raider and conqueror. Kabuli Mal was appointed as viceroy of the Punjab by the same Afghan invader.
During the Sikh rule under Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the people of Punjab enjoyed a degree of law and order and of peace, which they had not enjoyed since the days of the Durrani invasions. This gave a new impetus to the promotion of learning and education in the Punjab. Ranjit Singh bore, inspite of his mere literacy, every quality of an educated person. The Europeans like Jacquemont, found him almost an intellectual in conversation with every foreign visitor to his Court.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh respected learning and the learned men. He had a knack of selecting the right men for the right place, regardless of any considerations of creed, caste or colour, origin or rank. Apart from the Sikhs, Brahmins, no less than the Muslims and Khatris as well as the Dogras were his confidents and advisers. Among his officers were Afghans, Gurkhas and Europeans of different nationalities. Among his courtiers were Sikhs of all Misals, Hindus of all castes and Muslims of all tribes. Faqir Aziz-ud-Din was a gem of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's court. He was not only a diplomat, a mystic, a poet, an educationist, but also author of several works on theology and physics. Mian Qadir Baksh, another distinguished courtier, was a profound scholar of Arabic and Persian. He learned the art of gunnery under French military officers and wrote on the subject a book in Persian called *Miftah-ul-Qila*. Sardar Lehna Singh Majithia was a mathematician, an astronomer, an engineer and an inventor. Another distinguished courtier was Munshi Sohan Lal, the official historian of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's Court who wrote *Umdat-ut-Tawarikh*, which gives a faithful account of the Maharaja's eventful life.
Apart from Punjabi, which was the mother tongue of the Maharaja, Hindi, Sanskrit and Persian languages also received full attention and were taught to the royal children during the rule of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Pandit Radha Kishan son of Madhusudan, the darbar Pandit, and Zahur-ud-Din, nephew of Faqir Aziz-ud-Din and Bhai Ram Singh were entrusted with the education of princes Kharak Singh, Hira Singh and Dalip Singh. They prepared a picture-book for the young beginners with the help of the court painters. Kanwar Nau Nihal Singh, Ajit Singh and Lehna Singh Majithia studied the higher branches of mathematics and astronomy under the famous Khwand Ali Ahmad, who was specially called from frontier to Lahore.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh gave liberal grants in money or jagirs for the maintenance of educational institutions, housed in temples, mosques, deras or akharas. A large number of Gurmukhi schools enjoyed jagirs and stipends from the Maharaja. Further light is thrown on the indigenous education and learning in his maintaining a Dharam-Arth department. The library of the Maharaja was probably the biggest in the Punjab of those days. It contained 423 volumes, three bundles of papers, a marble inscription, and a box of Muslim relics.

The twelve departments of the new administration set up by the Maharaja created a new demand for vakils, gazis, adaltis, kardars and munshis etc. The study of Persian and next to it of arithmetic, became very popular and the schools that undertook to teach both flourished in the Sikh period. The Sikhs youth, however, did not avail themselves of the openings offered by the Maharaja as they preferred a military service to
the civil. In short, peace in the province and patronage extended by Maharaja Ranjit Singh during half a century of his rule gave a great fillip to the cause of education and learning in the Punjab.

The execution of Guru Arjun Dev, the fifth Guru, convinced his successor as well as his followers that they must educate themselves in the art of warfare, if they wanted to live. The new approach, therefore needed the introduction of one more subject in the curriculum of the Sikh education i.e. military education and training. Guru Hargobind, the sixth guru, was the first among the Sikh Gurus, who taught the use of offensive and defensive weapons, besides riding, hunting, wrestling and other sports. The Miri-Piri concept of the Guru necessitated the training in arms to meet the official challenge. Thereafter, and more so under Guru Gobind Singh, the collection of horses and arms, training in the use of weapons and art of warfare and construction of fortifications etc., became regular features.

Before taking up to arms, Guru Gobind Singh evolved a suitable theory of struggle, which would not only explain its aims but also boost the morale of its participants. His ideals were systematically developed into a definite theory which the Guru designated as the Pharamyudh. The Guru's valour and perfection in the military training and use of arms received further impetus with the creation of the Khalsa in 1699 A.D.

The military education received top priority during the period the Sikh Misals and more so during the rule of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Educated like a soldier himself, Ranjit Singh introduced military education among his soldiers long
before he employed European instructors to train his armies. He gave personal attention to their drill and equipment and himself went through the formal exercise. All the officers of his battalions were sons of the Sardars. When a Sardar had more than one son, the Maharaja took one when young and educated him for military career. He employed renowned masters for instructing them in military arts. Mian Qadir Baksh received special training in the art of gunnary. Sardar Lehna Singh was a genius of the Sikh ordnance, and well versed in science of artillery. Sher Singh, who was given the title of ustad had obtained proficiency in swordsmanship. Sardar Bhag Singh obtained skill in casting arms. Sabit Khan an Afghan was celebrated for his skill at the sword and the pistol while riding.

Although the Britishers had come to India as early as 1600 A.D., during the rule of Queen Elizabeth, they confined their activities to trade and commerce only. The East India company's attention was first drawn to educational matters by the Charter Act of 1698. The company gave encouragement to some charity schools only. The real beginning of the educational activities of the British government in India can be traced during the governor-generalship of Warren Hastings, with the foundation of the Calcutta Madrasah. The aim of these institutions however, was the consolidation of the British rule in India. The Charter Act of 1793 aimed to foster the Christian propaganda. The early nineteenth century saw a controversy between Anglicists and the Orientalists led by Macaulay and Princep respectively.
The missionaries were active in spreading English education in the Punjab since the beginning of the 19th century. During his rule, Maharaja Ranjit Singh also aimed at establishing an English school in the capital for the benefit of the children of his family and the sons of the Sardars. Interesting side-lights are thrown on the education of the princes by the Europeans in their accounts of Ranjit Singh's Court. The Maharaja was keen on introducing the study of English in Lahore and invited the Ludhiana Mission under John C. Lowrie (the first American missionary) but the scheme fell through owing to Ranjit Singh's refusal to let the Bible be taught in the proposed school.

This was thus the system of education prevalent in the Punjab at the time of annexation. Under the British regime, the system began to change and we find a satisfactory growth in primary, secondary and other education in the Punjab after it become a British province in 1849 A.D., which however, is beyond the scope of the present study.
Further Research Possibilities:

Further research possibilities exist in the following areas:

i) Further research can be conducted with regard to the impact of the Hindu and Muslim systems of education on the Sikh system of education and vice-versa during the period from A.D. 1707 to A.D. 1849.

ii) Further study can be conducted on the various centres of Hindu, Muslim and Sikh, elementary as well as higher centres of learning in the various parts of the un-divided Punjab during the same period.

iii) A detailed study can be conducted on the role of the various Sikh sects such as the Udasis, Nirmalas, Masands, Namdhari, Nirankaris, and Sewa-Panthis etc., in the promotion of elementary and higher education among the various sections of society during the period under review.

iv) Further research is possible on the various issues connected with the origin and the growth of the Gurmukhi School in the Punjab during the pre-annexation period.

v) Further study may also be undertaken regarding the patronage extended by Maharaja Ranjit Singh and his successors during the period from 1799 to 1849 A.D., to the indigenous and English education as well as the Dhadham grants given to the Hindu, Muslim and Sikh educational centres.