CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION
Anthropological literature shows that human communities train their young in different ways. Human communities artificially extend the span of childhood to facilitate learning. With the emergence of complex societies human communities developed elaborate and complicated ways of training their young. Such a varied and rich experience needs to be studied. It is important to understand and compare the experiences of human groups because modern societies continue to debate the idea of proper education. Also, in many societies modern educational systems are proving dysfunctional. It should be worthwhile exploring traditions of ‘other cultures’ to reflect on our own traditions.

I intend to study the idea of education in the Buddhist tradition. Such a study will capture the experiences of a tradition that has the longest history of creation of institutions that imparted education. I have selected four countries for this exercise. The Indian experience of Buddhism is recovered because that is where the tradition was founded. The other examples of Tibet, Korea and Thailand are recounted because they provide us an entry into radically different cultural traditions. So, the recovery of these experiences of education tells us about the rich texture of a tradition that celebrated difference and diversity. No wonder Orientalists of the early phase found it difficult to accept the idea that the countries claiming to be Buddhist followed the same religious tradition. The diverse cultural traditions of Tibet, Korea and Thailand with different languages and rituals seemed to have wildly differing religious practices. In tracing the lines of educational systems in these countries I hope to show continuities in the ways Buddhists trained their young. While rites and rituals were the most visible aspects of religious traditions, Buddhism always claimed to be a path of knowledge and self-realization. Whether we consider texts related to Buddhism
in India or the observances in countries where Buddhism is a living religion, the emphasis on an education that will lead to liberation remains a shared concern. The *sangha* as the site of education and *Dhamma* as the search for a method of liberation remain critical to the Buddhist quest. It is in these spaces that I search for continuities and changes in the Buddhist traditions of different countries.

For the Indian tradition I have relied on the Pali sources and their translations. However, in the case of Tibet, Thailand and Korea I have depended on translations of some primary sources and secondary works on Buddhism. I try to connect the processes of imparting education in the Buddhist tradition. It should prove useful as a work of history because it documents experiences of countries that look very different today. While Korea has successfully transited to modernity with a successful education system, Tibet continues to search for its moorings as a country… as an ideology. Thailand too seems to have spawned a successful education system while India struggles with an education system that has become increasingly disconnected with the realities of the socio-political world. In such a world, a search for alternative experiences of education might provide insights and directions. One could ask questions about the ends of education. Is it simply related to material gain or does it serve issues related to happiness and peace inside and outside?

My research is about the education systems that emerged in the Buddhist tradition. A study of the history of education should be viewed as part of a wider social history interpreted through the political, economic and religious aspects of the society concerned. Research on the history of education in ancient and medieval India has not received the attention it deserves. Major works on
education have focused on the Hindu/Brahman system of education. Some of them are- The Educational System of the Ancient Hindus by Santosh Kumar Das(1933), Education in Ancient India by A S Altekar (2nd edition in 1944) and A History of Education in India and Pakistan(1918) by F E Keay. Non- Hindu education systems have not received the attention they deserve. R K Mookerji’s Ancient Indian Education (Brahmanical and Buddhist) was perhaps the first attempt to present a history of the Buddhist education in India. Very few works on Buddhist education have been attempted after that. The present work is an attempt to understand the development of Buddhist system of education through its monasticism. This study intends to carry out a comparative study of education systems in India as well as some other Buddhist societies.

The Buddhist system of education and education of the Buddhists was perhaps not co-terminus. When we speak about Buddhist system of education, we mean the education imparted in the monasteries and nunneries to the monks and nuns (bhikkus and bhukkinis). The essence of the monastic teachings may have diffused among the laity through their social contact during the early days of Buddhism when the monks lived in aramas and viharas and went begging for alms. With the gradual transformation of viharas into mahaviharas as centers of higher education and institutional centers of monastic discipline and knowledge, receiving patronage from royal families and rich donors, the diffusion of knowledge to the laity needs to be explored. In the initial years, the monks did go out for alms when they stayed in small residential locations called aramas and viharas. In this process, they certainly interacted with the laity - Buddhist as well as non-Buddhist. They perhaps received alms from different sections of the society as the notion of ‘dana’ (gift) for acquiring ‘punya’ (merit) was very much present in the Indian society. With the emergence of
mahaviharas or the viharas receiving grants from kings, royal family, wealthy merchants leading to cessation of alms collection from nearby localities, the day to day interaction of monks with laity must have decreased drastically. Any religious order or institution cannot exist in social isolation or exclusion. The interaction of Buddhist institutionalized structure with the society needs further exploration. The education of the Buddhist laity and their religious and non-religious discourse with the Buddhist monastic order is another area of enquiry.

The study of the history of education founded on religious ideology is almost untouched in the Indian context. We rarely find works dealing with Buddhist, Jain or Islamic education. The present work tries to fill in the gap by focusing on the Buddhist system of education. As the Buddhist system of education cannot be viewed without taking into consideration the Buddhist monasticism, this work takes into consideration the linkages between Buddhist monasticism and education system.

The dissemination of Buddhism to other parts of Asia is a well known fact. The areas chosen for the study are India, Korea, Thailand and Tibet. The reason for selection has certain geographical and logical considerations. The Buddhist monasticism and education system in Korea, Thailand and Tibet will form part of the study representing Mahayana, Hinayana (Theravada) and Vajrayana Buddhism. India as the land of origin of Buddhism is the natural choice for the study. Korea as a region of East Asia is generally neglected as the Buddhist practices in the region are believed to be derivatives of the Chinese Buddhism. Korea is taken up for study as a center of the Mahayana Buddhism. Thailand as a region from South East Asia represents the Hinayana (Theravada)
Buddhist tradition. Tibet, having contiguous borders with India witnessed direct diffusion of Buddhism from India. India has strong linkages with Tibet. His Holiness the Dalai Lama lives in Dharamsala, Himachal Pradesh and we can find thousands of Tibetan refugees living in India. Tibet as a center of Tantric Buddhism is taken up for study. The evolution of education systems will be examined in a space and time perspective, as Buddhism had the ability to mesh in with local traditions. I shall also try to understand whether the transmission of Buddhism through different channels and countries impacted the nature of the education systems.

In the last few decades, there have been changes in the concept of education and history. While education is now seen as a major social, political and economic issue, the understanding of history has changed comprehensively with the introduction of new concepts like ‘the new history’, ‘total history’, ‘history from below’ and so on. The social, intellectual and cultural history is equally affected by this development. Every educational system is a product of the social, cultural and economic forces and acquires its uniqueness from its place of origin and development. Education is much more than mere acquisition of facts or knowledge. It is considered a catalyst for social change. “Education is usually considered to be the acquisition of knowledge but actually it is a process of development.”

The Indian educational system traces its genesis in the Vedic age. With the crystallization of the varna system in the later Vedic period and emergence of the caste system (jati vyavastha) the education system underwent changes.

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1 N.K. Upasani, *Effective College Teaching*, S.N.D.T. Women’s University, Mumbai, 1980, p.11
For example, women in general were denied education and *upanayana* (sacred thread ceremony) in later Vedic period and post-Vedic period. The *sudras* were denied access to education in the Brahmanical system. But the sixth century BC was marked by a major shift in the social, religious and political arena in North India. It saw the emergence of sixteen *Mahajanapadas*, the second urbanization and the coming up of sixty-two heterodox sects among whom Buddhism, Jainism, Ajivikas are well known. The religious movements challenged the established dogmas and questioned the basic premises of Brahmanical religious thought and action. Thus, the Buddhist and Jain system of education were different in essence and philosophy from the Brahmanical system although certain commonalities were there.

**Research Methodology**

Researches on the history of education in India began in 1940s and works on this field have grown steadily. Most of the works on the modern period were based on the government reports, legislations and charters. In the Fourth Survey of Research in Education (1983-88)\(^2\) out of the 51 doctoral theses, only three were on ancient Indian education and one on medieval Indian education. Aparna Basu rightly wrote, “The history of Indian education is an important area of study, the full potentialities of which are only just beginning to be exploited. Educationists and historians need to do cooperative research in the field of history of education.”\(^3\) The Fifth Survey reported only seven doctoral theses on history of education while the Third Survey contained 45 abstracts including 36

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\(^3\) *Ibid*, p.92
doctrinal theses. The Sixth Survey of Educational Research (1993-2000) reported only four doctoral theses on history of education, all devoted to modern period. The development of education in India in ancient, medieval and modern period has been studied in a number of ways. Most of the works available on the history of education are descriptive works delineating the growth and development of education. In majority of works, the emphasis has been on factual information. The facts need interpretations and we all know that historians differ in their interpretations of the same facts. Research needs are always felt in any branch of knowledge, especially in disciplines where the same project or theme can be repeated or undertaken with different perspective or offering different interpretations. Historical research in education can be more focused and relevant if “instead of macro-studies covering long periods, of whole of India and all aspects of educations have been attempted hitherto, some micro-studies covering small periods, small regions and specific aspects of history of education are needed.”

Prof. S. Shukla way back in 1970s lamented on the lack of theoretical framework or methodology as far as the history of education in India was concerned. Then, he went on to suggest a few possible choices for the study of history of education. One way was to study it as a sub-system of the polity or society and use the Marxist or Liberal, Nationalist or Imperialist approach for the study. Another way was to study the works of individual educational

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reformers like Gandhi, Tagore or trends like Arya Samaj, Muslim modernist or revivalist movements. The third option was to follow the chronology and the consequences of pedagogical development as followed in the West. The fourth possibility was to explore particular institutions or types of institutions and the data can be analyzed using political or sociological framework. In sociology, we have theories like Conflict theory\(^8\), Functional perspectives on education\(^9\), etc. to study the sociology of education. Lastly, he talked about an intellectual history of education focusing on the elements of educational thought dominant in each period.

In the present work, we will be following, more or less, a mix of the fourth and the fifth options though the method of analysis would be historical. The present study is confined to the analysis and understanding of the Buddhist system of education in the ancient and early medieval period. We shall explore histories of Buddhist institutions like viharas and mahaviharas. Further, it will be an intellectual history of the Buddhist thought and education system. The Buddhist thought and principles can be viewed in the changing pattern of society and the transformation within Buddhism - from Hinayana to Mahayana and its transmission from India to other countries. So, I shall study the developments in Buddhism and its organizational structure mainly in three areas- Tibet, Korea and Thailand and some references to other regions too. The regions as mentioned earlier are one from India’s neighborhood (Tibet), one from East Asia (Korea) and one from South East Asia (Thailand) where Buddhism still has a strong influence.

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S. K. Saini in his book *Development of Education in India (1980)*\(^{10}\) talked about the theoretical framework in the context of the history of education, mainly from the perspective of modern period. He talked about the approaches to the history of education as (i) the external approach and (ii) the internal approach. The external approach is based on the idea that ‘education is the result of politico-economic, socio-cultural, philosophical, psychological and even geographical factors.’ This approach explains ‘how’ and ‘why’ of the development of education. But it is difficult to determine the influence of various forces on education as there is no reliable yard-stick to measure such influences. In the Internal approach, one begins from the education, proper system of education, teacher, methods of teaching, curriculum, etc. and then diverges out on to society. In a way ‘social developments are seen as following the educational developments.’ The problem here too is similar as the first approach, that is, to establish the influence and measure it, although the degree of difficulty is less as the influences are more or less apparent. Further, it is said that ‘distinction between external and internal approach is not one of kind but one of degree’ and almost all educational historians follow a mixed approach.

Another classification of research approaches in history of education discussed by Saini is- (i) the Chronological approach, (ii) the Problem approach and (iii) the Comparative approach. The first approach follows a chronological sequence of educational development as for modern period in terms of educational committees, commissions, minutes, charters, etc. It fails to provide any clue about the socio-economic origins and development of educational problems of any region or country. In the Problem approach, the stress is on a

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meaningful analysis of a small problem than a superficial study of a bigger area spread over a certain period. “Study problems and not periods” is the keyword. Many of the educational problems of the present period can be traced from the past. Among the works on Indian educational history, T.N. Siqueira’s book *The Education of India, History and Problems* (1943) is based on this approach. The comparative approach is followed for the study of Indian history and hence in the history of education too. A comparative approach in the study of history of education is beneficial in not only understanding the educational practices and principles of the past but also in planning for the future. This approach has one lacuna—any educational system develops in a particular socio-cultural milieu and that has to be kept in mind while following a comparative study. Education as an inter-disciplinary subject can best use a combination of all the three approaches and this will make the history of education simple, clear, understandable and interesting. “An inter-disciplinary approach is needed and the tools of economics, sociology, psychology and political science should be systematically applied to the study of the educational history of India.”  

There is a need to study the indigenous system of Indian education both in terms of its extent and curriculum. There is also a need to study the local, regional and district level histories of education, women’s education and the education of the marginalized classes of India in relation to the elite groups focusing on micro-level studies.

The present study is an attempt to provide a comprehensive account of the growth and development of Buddhist education. It is a significant arena of study as far as history of Indian education is concerned. A study taking the socio-economic and political factors into account is always welcome. The study trying to search continuities and discontinuities across the centuries is also a

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way of looking at the educational development. It is correctly viewed “the study of the history of education is best considered as a part of the wider study of the study of the history of society—social history broadly interpreted through the politics, the economics and the religion of the society concerned.” The system of education has to be examined within the context of the society in which it develops. The attempt should be to view education in its relationship with the society. In fact education does not evolve and expand in a vacuum, its character is influenced by culture and the institutions created by the society for certain goals and aims to be achieved. “The history of education touches upon so many varieties of history that it is at times difficult to decide where it begins and where it ends. There is such a close interaction between education and society that if the role of education in the historical process is to be understood, attention must be paid on the one hand to external influences which shape the education system and on the other to the ways in which education influences society. The relation between education and the social structure is a two-way traffic.” Keeping this in view, an attempt is made to survey the works done on the history of Indian education.

I

Review of Literature

In this section I will present a historical overview of works on the education in ancient and early medieval times that is from early times to 11th – 12th centuries A.D and its continuance and relevance in the present time. The number of research work done on the history of education, as mentioned earlier,

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is not prolific. The review of literature is done beginning with books on ancient Indian education followed by books on medieval and modern Indian education.

**Works on Early Indian Education System**

A major work on this subject was *The Educational System of Ancient Hindus* by Santosh Kumar Das, first published way back in 1933. It is a conventional work dealing with the various aspects of education of the Hindus. The author in some twenty-five chapters discusses elementary, secondary and higher education, vocational education, female education, educational institutions, etc. The main source of the study is literary texts. As this work was written some 80 years ago, it did not make use of the excavation reports and inscriptions which have been discovered after that.

An important study in this field was done by A. S. Altekar which was entitled *Education in Ancient India*, whose second edition came out in 1944. This work tries to study the history of education in terms of primary education, higher education, female education, professional education, educational principles, the teacher and the student, etc. In a chapter added in this edition, the author touches upon the Buddhist and Jainism’s contribution to education briefly in just nine pages. The author has made use of available inscription besides the literary texts for this work. Thus, this work which was published before India’s independence does not present the picture of educational development as a whole of the different epochs of Indian history.

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Another work in this field was that of R. K. Mookerji called *Ancient Indian Education (Brahmanical and Buddhist)*\(^{16}\) which was first published in 1947. This book was ready by 1918-1920 but could not be published before 1947. The book is divided into two parts-Brahmanical education and Buddhist education which are dealt separately. The study is based on literary texts and hence the book speaks of Rig-Vedic education, Later Vedic education, education as described in the Sutra literature, etc. in the first part. The study of Buddhist education is done on the basis of Buddhist texts like the three *Pitakas*, *Jatakas*, *Milinda-panho* and the accounts of foreign travelers like Faxian, Xuanzang and Yijing. This was perhaps the first comprehensive representation of the Buddhist system of education in a traditional framework. It is definitely a scholarly account of the Brahmanical and Buddhist educational theories and practices from Vedic times to about 1000AD.

*Education in Ancient India* by S.M. Rakhe\(^{17}\) is a collection of three monographs – Education in the *Atharveda*, Education in the *Vishnu Purana* and *Svadhyaya* in the Vedic and Post-Vedic literature. According to Rakhe, the bases of education are not religious but moral as shown in the *Vishnu Purana*. The moral norms as accepted by the then society determined the course of educating children and youth of that period. The focus was on the relationship between the teacher and the pupil. The teaching-learning continuum has a special significance and the teacher was more concerned about the well-being and prosperity of his disciples. The Vedic literature depicts that both teacher and student are vital components of educational process. The formal and informal aspects of Vedic education in the *gurukula* system have been talked about. The determinant of teacher-pupil relationship was the authority of

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\(^{17}\) S.M. Rakhe, *Education in Ancient India*, Sri Satguru Publications, New Delhi, 1992
knowledge instead of mere authority of status. The education system was rigorous and full of hard work. The aim of education was self realization and in this process the guru was just a guide. Thus, this book mainly deals with the Brahmanical system of education. The treatment of the subject is not exhaustive in content. Many verses are quoted and the book contains passages from the scriptures.

R.K.Pruthi’s *Education in Ancient India*\(^{18}\) is a compiled and edited book which provides the reader some perspectives of the ancient educational system. This book contains the writings of Annie Besant, George S. Arundale in separate chapters. The chapters are on Vedic education, Education and Culture, The Bhagavad-Gita and Education, Post-Vedic Education and so on. There are specific chapters on Buddhist Educational System, Educational Wisdom in Buddhism, The Middle Way and Buddhist Education but the presentation is not comprehensive and is without extensive references to the original Buddhist texts. The book is a general text book meant for students.

S. C. Sarkar’s *Educational Ideas and Institution in Ancient India*\(^{19}\) is written in two parts. It is a comprehensive study of educational activities in Atharvaveda period taking *Bhrigus* and *Angiras* as its originators. This forms the first part of the book and covers the entire post-Vedic period. The second part deals with sources from Ramayana and covers whole gamut of literature pertaining to Valmiki and later products of epic period.

D. G. Apte’s *Universities in Ancient India*\(^{20}\) is an account of four famous universities of ancient India namely Taxila, Nalanda, Valabhi, and Vikramasila, existing between 1000 B.C. and the twelfth century A.D. It gives a brief

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\(^{18}\) R.K.Pruthi, *Education in Ancient India*, Sonali Publications, New Delhi, 2005

\(^{19}\) S. C. Sarkar, *Educational Ideas and Institution in Ancient India*, Janaki Prakashan, Patna, 1979

\(^{20}\) D.G.Apte, *Universities in Ancient India*, Faculty of Education & Psychology, M.S.University, Baroda, n.d.
description of function, finances, curriculum, famous students and teachers, and reasons for the decline of these universities.

Debendra Chandra Dasgupta’s *Education Psychology of the Ancient Hindu*\(^{21}\) is a treatise on the contributions of the ancient Hindus including Buddhists and Jains to educational psychology. This book traces development from the time of Rig Veda to the twelfth century A.D. in a topical rather than chronological manner. The sources used for the study are Brahman, Buddhist and Jain texts in originals and translations.

Frank E. Keay’s *A History of Education in India and Pakistan*\(^{22}\) was first published in 1918 with the title Indian *Education in Ancient and Later Times*. Its fourth edition was published in 1964 with an additional chapter by D. D. Karve. The book was intended to be an inquiry into the origins and ideals of education in India. It is a history of India’s indigenous educational systems from ancient times up to the introduction of Western education coming with the British rule. There are three chapters on Brahmanic education, one on Buddhist education, vocational education, centers of learning, and so on. The treatment of the subjects are not exhaustive and is also a very old book as much has been written and discovered since the writing of this book as far as history of education is concerned.

*Origin of Civilization (Education in Ancient India)* written by C.P. Khanna\(^{23}\) is a misnomer as far as the history of education is concerned. The major emphasis of this work is on the history and growth of Indian civilization. Out of the fifteen chapters, one on ancient education and other on centers of

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\(^{21}\) Debendra Chandra Dasgupta, *Educational Psychology of the Ancient Hindus*, University of Kolkata, Kolkata, 1949


\(^{23}\) C.P. Khanna, *Origin of Civilization (Education in Ancient India)*, Doaba House, New Delhi, 1993
learning are concerned with education. The former deals only with the philosophical aspects related to ancient education. This book is not an analytical historical study and has neither footnotes nor bibliography.

*Education in Ancient India* by Mitali Chatterji\(^{24}\) is the XVII volume published under the series Reconstructing Indian History and Culture by the D.K. Printworld (P) Ltd. New Delhi. This book is confined to the study of the Gupta Age and the apt title of the book would have been Education in Gupta Age. The first chapter discusses the literary sources of the Gupta age which the writer refers as the ‘golden age of the ancient India’. The second chapter is a long one on Education in the *Puranas* and *Smritis*. The third chapter is on Education in Sanskrit *kavyas*, dramas and some other minor works. It is argued that as Sanskrit was popular, the study of *Ayurveda*, astronomy, prosody and philosophy was highly advanced in this period. The next chapter is on education in Buddhist and Jain literature. This is again a long narration without any systematic presentation. The information is based on the Buddhist and Jain texts and the travelogues of Chinese travelers like Faxian, Xuanzang and others. The fifth chapter is a small one dealing with the evidences about education on the basis of the inscriptions of the Gupta age although the inscriptions were not written with the purpose of recording the educational system of the ages. The book contains plenty of information collected from secondary sources but it lacks proper analysis and organization of materials.

*Education in Ancient India* by Hartmut Scharfe\(^{25}\) is another addition to the number of books focusing on ancient Indian education. It is volume sixteen of the Handbook of Oriental Studies (*Handbuch Der Orientalistik*) edited by J. Bronkhorst and published from the Netherlands. This book mainly deals with

\(^{24}\) Mitali Chatterji, *Education in Ancient India*, D K Printworld, New Delhi, 1999
the Brahmanical system of education making some references to the Buddhist and Jain system as a form of comparison. This book has a Western bias in the sense that the author tries to compare the ancient Indian system with the modern European system and trying to depict the superiority of the Western methods of teaching. Just to cite an example, the author writes, “It may be that Indian education of memorizing-by-rote aims at identical replication whereas our modern Western education includes an element of innovation, an appeal and incentive to challenge traditional knowledge and to improve upon it.”26 The author talks on many modern views on education, all drawn from the European context. The presentation of the book is good and the chapters are unlike the other books on the topic written by Indian authors. To cite some of them-Education as a Topic, the Oral Tradition, Content of the Tradition – Revealed and Observed, the Final Goals of Education, From Temple Schools to Universities, Various Languages, Education and the Indian Character, etc. The book has a good index separately dealing with texts, authors, persons, places, schools of thought, Indian terms and topics and some illustrations.

*Ancient Indian Education* by Nrisinha Prasad Mukhopadhyay27 and edited by Marmar Mukhopadhyay is a small book which makes a plea for reintroduction of the ancient education values and paradigm to check the social decadence of the modern times. This book tries to provide a rational and critical analysis of the ancient Indian education system and identifies such dimensions that are applicable in modern times. The editor makes the point clear when he writes, “Contemporary education system services intellectual aspect of life alone, that too superficially. The emphasis on performance in examination and indifference on development of other aspects of human life stands evidence.

26 Ibid, p.1

Superficiality even within this limited focus is further evident from large body of empirical research on levels of cognition vis-à-vis learning. More serious question is the total absence of educational provision for nurturing the physical, mental and spiritual planes.” 28 The author practiced Gurukula system in Udang, a village in West Bengal since 1933 till his retirement. The author is mainly referring to the Brahman system as the chapters are on Brahmacharyashram, Yajnas, Renunciation, and Student: The Disciple. Then, the author contrasts it with the modern life habits and finally talks about the three pillars on which the education must be based. First, a free and adequate supply of preceptors to spread like a network all over the country, not, however, letting quality suffer for the need of quantity. Secondly, a serious and sincere faith in God as the ultimate will. Finally, reverence which stands for a mental decorum to be practiced for listening with grace. The book tries to reinforce the Brahman mode of education which may not be acceptable to all as India is a multi-religious country. Further, the author fails to provide any clue about how to amalgamate the ancient system with the modern system. The book is mainly written from a spiritual perspective, that too, Hindu.

An important work based on the analysis of any ancient literary text is the Educational Ideals and Institutions in Mahabharata 29 by N.L.Gupta, published in 1997. He uses Mahabharata as the base of study and traces the development of educational ideals and institutions as described in the text. His work Education and Values in the Mahabharata 30 utilizes the vast material on the various aspects of education and values as available in the Mahabharata. The writer has made a deep study of the subject in all its aspects in a diligent manner. The topics dealt are the aims of education, educational institutions,

28 Ibid., pp1-2
29 N L Gupta, Educational Ideals and Institutions in Mahabharata, New Delhi, 1997
30 N L Gupta, Education and Values in Mahabharata, Concept Publications, New Delhi, 1995
teachers and students, subjects of study, methods of teaching, examination and so on. He has extensively quoted from the Mahabharata and other Sanskrit texts in support of his conclusions.

A recent work based on the Mahabharata is *A Study of the Educational Philosophy of an Epic Poem, The Mahabharata*\(^\text{31}\) by Dr. Subash Chandra Panda. The book is a valuable addition in the field of philosophy of education. The book touches upon the principles of education and suggests that the present day education incorporates some of the ancient education wisdom mentioned in the Mahabharata. The author points out that according to the Mahabharata, the aims of education are beauty, truth and goodness which set a person free. The method of teaching as emphasized is *shravana, manana, nidhyasana*, discussion, storytelling, memorization and question and answer method. The author has adopted the philosophical cum historical method to study the Mahabharata providing a spiritual and philosophical background to the study.

**Works on Education System in Ancient and Medieval India**

S.P.Chaube & A Chaube’s *Education in Ancient and Medieval India*\(^\text{32}\) is a survey of the main features and a critical evaluation of major trends in education in the period concerned. This book is in two sections, the first dealing with the ancient period and second dealing with the Muslim education. The first part deals with the system of education in the Vedic, post-Vedic, age of Sutras and the Buddhist period. It also touches upon the vocational education, ancient universities and at the end also provides a critique of ancient Indian education delineating its merit and demerit. But this critique is rather general in content than specific as we know that the Brahmanical system and Buddhist or Jain

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system had their elements of convergence and differences. This book is also in the form of a text book rather than a specialized book on the history of education.

*Education in South India (Ancient and Medieval Period)* by S. Gurumuthy\(^3\) traces the progress of education in South India, mainly Tamil Nadu from 400 to A. D. 1300. The author has tried to fill the gap in the Indian history of education. He has produced a comprehensive account and describes many kinds of educational institutions. Educational institutions of ‘sectarian’ traditions like Buddhist and Jain are also touched upon. This work is based mainly on inscriptions and, to a lesser extent, on literature.

*Education in Medieval India* by R.K.Pruthi\(^4\) aims to bring forth the educational history of medieval India against the cross-cultural experience of the Islamic and Hindu system. The two systems existed side by side and were having their own philosophy, principles and methods of education. This book is not written in the conventional style as general books on history of education are based. It talks about education and social life, education and culture, education and social condition, forms of special education too.

*Education in Medieval India* by Krishnalal Ray\(^5\) surveys the educational system of medieval India under the Muslim rule. This work is based on the original sources of contemporary scholars’ works and documents. He has also consulted Hindu vernacular sources in Hindi, Bengali, Oriya, Gujarati, etc. This work talks about the Muslim education as well as Hindu education focusing on primary and elementary education, secondary and higher education. It also talks about women’s education among Hindus and Muslims in a separate chapter.

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\(^3\) S. Gurumurthy, *Education in South India (Ancient and Medieval Period)*, New Era Publications, Chennai, 1979

\(^4\) R.K. Pruthi, *Education in Medieval India*, Sonali Publications, New Delhi, 2005

\(^5\) Krishnalal Ray, *Education in Medieval India*, B.R. Publishing Corporation, Delhi, 1984
The collection of books in the *khanqas* and monasteries has been incidentally referred to in the Chapter on Library and Art of Penmanship.

**Works on Education System in India**

Suresh Chandra Ghosh’s *History of Education in India*\(^{36}\) traces the genesis and growth of education in India from ancient India to modern times (3000BC to 1999AD) viewing it from the perspective of socio-economic and political changes. This book is a compilation of his three earlier books- *History of Education in Ancient India 3000BC to 1192AD*, *History of Education in Medieval India 1192 AD to 1757AD* and *History of Education in Modern India 1757AD to 1999*. Ghosh’s *History of Education in Medieval India 1192 AD to 1757AD*\(^{37}\) is based on Persian, Arabic and Turkish sources as available in English translation as well as supplemented by the contemporary traveler’s account and factory records of European companies from 16\(^{th}\) century onwards. It studies the history of education as a wider study of the social history mainly interpreted with politics, economics and religion put into it. It mainly touches upon the structure and nature of Islamic education. It also talks about the Hindu learning in one chapter and deals with vocational education, vernacular and village education and women’s education. *The History of Education in Ancient India c.3000BC to AD 1192*\(^{38}\) by Ghosh is based on critical study of the religious texts- Vedic, Buddhist and Jain as available in English, German and French translations. The book is a general presentation meant mainly for a non-specialist audience interested in the history of education. The book follows a chronological pattern beginning from Indus valley civilization and goes on to discuss the Vedic age, the age of *Brahmanas, Aranyakas* and Upanishads, the

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\(^{37}\) Suresh Chandra Ghosh, *History of Education in Medieval India 1192 AD to 1757AD*, Originals (an imprint of Low Price Publications), Delhi, 2001  
\(^{38}\) Suresh Chandra Ghosh, *History of Education in Ancient India c.3000Bc to AD1192*, Munshiram Manoharlal, Delhi, 2007
age of Asceticism, the age of Buddha and so on. It also touches upon the vocations and the art of writing, language and literature.

*Education in India* by Padma Ramachandran and Vasantha Ramkumar\(^{39}\) is a study of theory and practice of education in the modern India. It traces the growth of education from the ancient times to independence of India. It analyses the primary education, high-school education, higher education, professional and technical education, teacher training, etc. In the first chapter running into some fifty pages, the education in ancient and medieval India is dealt – a very slight treatment of a vast period. The presentation is on Vedic education, post-Vedic education, Buddhist education, Jain education, Islamic education and women’s education and centers of higher learning. This is a cursory treatment of the subject which in itself is a vast area of study. There are certain factual mistakes in the book – it states that the value of \( \pi \) was calculated by Budhayana whereas it should be Aryabhat. In reference to Benares, the authors write, “Benares was chosen for the promulgation of Buddha’s Gospel and the famous Sarnath monastery adjacent to the city was patronized by Asoka. In modern times, it has become a famous University.” This gives an impression as though the monastery has become a famous university which is not true, rather the remains of the monasteries can be seen even today and Sarnath is presently having Central University of Tibetan Studies (CUTS).

*Our Education* written by Swami Nirvedananda\(^{40}\) mainly discusses the state of education in India. What needs to be done in the education system to make it more meaningful is the focus of this book. It is a small book written with a spiritual background.

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39 Padma Ramachandran & Vasantha Ramkumar, *Education in India*, National Book Trust, Delhi, 2005
Indian Education Today and Tomorrow by Suresh Bhatnagar 41 mainly deals with the Indian education in the modern and contemporary times. In Chapters I and II the author touches Ancient India and Muslim Period in just thirty-eight pages. The ancient and medieval period receive a meager reference in this book.

A prominent work on history of education which finds mention in many works on Indian education is S. Nurrullah and J.P.Naik’s A History of Education in India during British Period. 42 It is considered a pioneering work and is one of the most exhaustive and well documented books on the history of education. As the title of the book suggests, it deals with the British period. S. Nurrullah & J. P. Naik’s A Students’ History of Education in India43 traces the evolution of the modern system of education in India. The background of the study is provided not only by the social, political and constitutional history of India but also by the socio-political and educational developments in contemporary England. It tries to highlight how the planning of institutions in India was influenced by institutions and educational policies in England. This book attempts to show the conflict between the traditional and western education policies and to trace its history. The major influences and interrelationship between three major groups, the missionaries, the European officials of the education department, and the Indian people are also highlighted.

Works on Education and Monasticism in the Buddhist tradition

While coming to Buddhism, there are a number of works dealing with different aspects of Buddhism. Its philosophy, religion, sects, transmission in

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41 Suresh Bhatnagar, Indian Education Today and Tomorrow, Int. Pub Home, Meerut, 1996
42 S. Nurrullah and J.P.Naik, A History of Education In India during British Period, MacMillan and Co. Ltd., Mumbai, 1951
43 S. Nurrullah and J.P.Naik, A Students’ History of Education In India, MacMillan and Co. Ltd., Mumbai, 1962
other countries has been extensively discussed by scholars. Buddhist system of education hardly finds a separate study. We have two works on Buddhist education. V. Nithiyanandam’s *Buddhist System of Education*[^44] is a critical study of one aspect of Buddhist education, that is, the philosophy of education and its adaptation in India, Tibet and Sri Lanka in the modern times. It also highlights the impact of Buddhist philosophy on western education. This study is mainly from a philosophical viewpoint. Another addition to this study is Rachita Chaudhuri’s doctoral thesis entitled *Buddhist Education in Ancient India*[^45] published in 2008. This work begins with education in Vedic-Brahmanic period and then moves on to the Buddhist phase and deals with the Buddhist Monastic education in ancient India, secular education as depicted in Pali literature, Buddhist monastic universities in ancient India and lastly, methods and aim of Buddhist education. This work is a welcome addition on the Buddhist education and discusses the formation of the *bhikku* and *bhikkuni sanghas*, the democratic tradition in the *sangha*, the daily routine in the *sangha*, the method of education, the training, rules and regulations, the crimes and punishment, etc. The development of monasteries into universities as well as secular education has been discussed by the author. Another work is *Buddhist Social and Moral Education*[^46] by Dr. S.N. Sharma published in 1994. This work presents a panorama of Buddhist moral values. The author feels that Buddha’s moral code is rational, psychological, scientific and humanistic. The book deals with the notion of morality and moral code in the pre-Buddhist era and Buddhist period. It also touches upon the general system of education in pre-Buddhist and Buddhist period in a single chapter. What the author tries to project as social education under Buddhism is a depiction of the social order, institution and

[^46]: Dr. S.N. Sharma, *Buddhist Social and Moral Education*, Parimal Publication, Delhi, 1994
ideals. The chapter on moral education as presented in Pali Tripitika mentions levels of Buddhist morality which are a part of its philosophy or ideology.

As the topic of present research is on Buddhist monasticism and education system, it would be relevant to mention a few works on Buddhist monasticism with particular reference to India. Indian Monastic Buddhism Collected Papers on Textual, Inscriptional and Archaeological Evidence\textsuperscript{47} by Gregory Schopen is a collection of his papers on textual, inscriptive, and archaeological evidence regarding various aspects of early Indian monastic Buddhism and rise of Mahayana. The book is divided into two parts and the various papers focus on affairs beyond the ‘spiritual’ taking place within the monasteries. The author speaks about the involvement of monasteries in economy through ownership of property, borrowing and lending, hiring of labourers, etc. The ‘devotional’ activities outside the arena of monasteries involved the making of stupas, chaityas and statues. Schopen also touches upon the funerary practices of monasticism. R. Spencer Hardy’s Eastern Monachism\textsuperscript{48} gives an account of the origin, laws, discipline, sacred writings, rites, religious ceremonies of the Buddhists. This book was written by a Christian missionary in late 19\textsuperscript{th} century and makes comparison with European Christian missionaries monasteries at various places while discussing Buddhist monasticism.

Another seminal work is Buddhist Monks and Monasteries of India\textsuperscript{49} by Sukumar Dutt. This book discusses various stages of the development of Buddhist monasteries. From education point of view, this book speaks about the voluminous manuscripts being produced in the monasteries. These texts played

\textsuperscript{48}R Spencer Hardy, Eastern Monachism, Sri Satguru Publications, Delhi, 1989(reprint)
\textsuperscript{49}Sukumar Dutt, Buddhist Monks and Monasteries of India, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 2008(reprint)
a major role in preserving Buddhism outside India as many of these texts found their way to the monasteries of China, Tibet, etc. were they were preserved and translated into the language of the native. The book mentions the name of various monk-scholars from foreign countries who came to India and studied in various monasteries like Nalanda, Vikramasila, Odantapuri, etc. There was also a reverse flow of Indian monk-scholars from reputed centers of learning to countries like China, Tibet, Korea, etc. as masters to teach there.

Work on Jain Education System

The study will make a brief statement on a book on Jain system of education. Debendra Chandra Dasgupta’s *Jaina System of Education*\(^5\) offers an account of education by studying the problem with its five important agents-the family, the church, the school, the state and the industry. The appropriate title of the book should be ‘Educational System found in Jain Literature’. This work also touches upon the Brahmanical, the secular and vocational education. The period covered is from the time of Risabha to the 11\(^{th}\) century AD. This book is a collection of ten lectures and is a welcome addition to the history of Indian education.

II

Education in ancient and early medieval times was generally religious and based largely on Sanskrit learning in its scope and orientation. Education was not exclusively literary but also included subjects which were equally important and enjoyed status at par with the literary studies. Sacred and profane both occupied important place in the curriculum. Education was largely a private concern of the people though it received royal patronage too. The aim of education in ancient and medieval India was not only concerned with

intellectual, moral, religious and spiritual issues, it equipped people for different occupations and services to society.

The approach of the present study on the history of education will be different from the works cited above. First, the objective of the present study is to present a coherent picture of the development of education in ancient and early medieval India as depicted in the texts dealing with the Buddhist system of education. I shall try to point out the shifts in the nature of education in the period and country chosen for the study. Buddhism was unique as it opened the doors of its monasteries for all including women and the lower varnas of the society. The downtrodden and what we call the ‘dalits’ in present times, all got equal opportunities. There was no caste, varna or religious distinction as far as admission to the sangha was concerned.

Sources

The study will make use of available primary and secondary sources. A large number of books on Indian history, literature and religion allude to the ancient and medieval educational system and they will provide the necessary background for the study. For the general outline of the ancient education system, the relevant works published till date will be used. The primary sources for the study comprises the (a) ancient literary texts, technical texts, etc., (b) the foreign accounts of Faxian, Xuanzang, Yijing, Hyecho and Al-beruni, (c) the excavation reports and the inscriptions as published in various archaeological reports and journals like Epigraphia Indica, India Antiquary, etc. The Tripitaka –Vinaya, Sutta, and Abhidhamma contain the canons of the Theravada Buddhism. The Vinaya pitaka deals with the rules for monks and nuns and some of the general teachings of Buddha. The Sutta pitaka deals with the general teachings of Buddha and the Abhidhamma pitaka deals with the scholastic
analyses of Buddha’s teachings. Some of the major Mahayana texts will also be consulted. The excavation reports of Nalanda, Vikramasila, etc. are another source of information. Besides, the Tibetan sources will also be used for the Buddhist system of education although these works are of later period, that is, 13\textsuperscript{th} to 16\textsuperscript{th} centuries A.D. but they throw sufficient light on the earlier periods. A source which has not yet been used is \textit{A Passage to Central India} by a Korean monk Hye Cho which throws interesting light on the socio-religious and economic history of 8\textsuperscript{th} century India. This manuscript was translated by Prof. Lewis R. Lancaster of California University and will also help in the proposed study. The study will, thus, be based on literary as well as archaeological sources. The Buddhist literary texts in Pali, Sanskrit, and Tibetan (the translated ones) will be used for the present study. The effort will be to make this study interpretative rather than merely descriptive and narrative.

The sources for the study of Tibetan monasticism and education, and the references on Indian connection will be the Tibetan texts available in various libraries in translation and secondary sources. The Tibetan sources will include Bu-ston’s \textit{The History of Buddhism in India and Tibet The Jewelry of Scripture} (translated from Tibetan by E. Obermiller), Taranatha’s \textit{History of Buddhism in India} (translated from Tibetan by Lama Chimpa and Alaka Chattopadhyaya), \textit{Bhavanakrama} of Kamalsila (translated from Sanskrit/ Tibetan by Parmananda Sharma), \textit{The Blue Annals} by Go Lotsawa (translated from Tibetan by George N Roerich), \textit{Dzog Chen Meditation} (explained in Tibetan by Khamtul Rinpoche and translated and annotated in English by Gareth Sparham), etc. The study on Korea will be based on some of the Korean texts like \textit{Samguk Yusa}, Legends and History of the Three Kingdoms of Ancient Korea, compiled by Ilyon (1206-1289 AD), the national priest of Koryo kingdom and \textit{Samguk Sagi}, History of the Three Kingdoms, compiled by Kim Pu-sik (1075-1151 AD), a high ranking
official of Koryo court. These two texts written in 11th – 12th centuries are based on ancient sources which are now not available. These two texts have their own limitations. *Samguk Sagi* is an official chronicle and presents the events in a way that is conducive to the government and does not mention the events not in line with the official thought. *Samguk Yusa* written by a priest fills in the gap left by the official chronicle *Samguk Sagi*. This text divided into five books or chapters give us a picture of the religious beliefs and practices of the ancient Korea. The limitation of the text is that the author being a Buddhist has a Buddhist leaning in his writings. The Book Three and Four are particularly important for our study. Book Three, Part Three deals with the rise of Buddhism in the three kingdoms of ancient Korea. Book Four, Part Five presents the anecdotes of renowned monks including the monks who travelled to India. Korea A Historical and Cultural Dictionary by Keith Pratt and Richard Rutt and some major secondary works based on primary Korean sources like that of Robert E Buswell Jr., Richard D McBride II, Peter H Lee, etc. will also be used. The rise of Buddhism, monastic system and education in monasteries in Thailand will be mainly based on secondary sources.

**Relevance of Research**

Any research should have social relevance and any research on ancient Indian education system should throw some light on the ancient wisdom and pedagogy which with certain modification can be applied to the present time. The essence and ingredients of the ancient Indian tradition in the education can be fruitfully utilized. “Taking Buddhism solely as an ‘ism’, just a form of faith or system of religion, its history has been sought to be traced through its doctrines and philosophies, its sects and schools, its affinities and inter-connections with other Indian systems of faith or philosophy. This, however, is an introvert view: what it fails to take in is that aspect of the religion which
related it most closely to the life of the people- the aspect that is seen in the organization of its monkhood (Sangha) and the functioning of its monasteries (Viharas). It is the cultural aspect of the religion which is perhaps historically and sociologically more significant.\textsuperscript{51}

Buddhism occupied a prominent place in the Indian sub-continent for almost seventeen centuries (500 BC – 1200 AD). It arose in the sixth century BC as a reaction to the Vedic orthodoxy and rituals and flourished for so many centuries but it declined in India and was relegated to oblivion as compared to Brahmanism with the passage of time. On the other hand, Buddhism survived and is still a strong influence in many neighboring countries of India like China, Tibet, Korea, Japan, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, South East Asia, etc.

Buddhism had a profound impact on different social and cultural traditions of India. It contributed immensely in the sphere of philosophy, religious discourse, education, etc\textsuperscript{52}. A reconstruction of the history of education with full focus on Buddhist system has not yet been attempted. A study with contemporary relevance in the realm of education will definitely be of great help and significance to all of us. Education as perceived now is not only 3Rs- Reading, Writing and Arithmetic but much more than that. Education as an all embracing effort to bring out the best in an individual has a much wider connotations. In present times, we witness a renewed interest in meditation, yoga, moral and value education. While the last subject of study has been focused upon in the school curriculum, others are at the management education level. The corporate world of today lays stress on stress management through yoga and meditation. But if we look back at our ancient system of education, we find that they were a part of the education process. The spiritual

\textsuperscript{51} Sukumar Dutt, \textit{Buddhist Monks and Monasteries of India}, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 2008(reprint), p.19
\textsuperscript{52} For details on the impact of Buddhism refer S.R.Goyal, \textit{A History of Indian Buddhism}, Kusumanjali Book World, Jodhpur, 2003 (2\textsuperscript{nd} Revised Edition).
awakening of an individual was intended and the person was an asset to the society rather than just a literate being. In the present era, we focus more on mechanized form of education churning out graduates and post-graduates for the sake of degrees or just for the job market. For a holistic education, I think that we need to revive the best practices of the past as suited to our present times and here we may learn a few things from the Buddhist system of education, meditation being one of them.

The ‘tri-ratna’ (three jewels) of Buddhism - Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha were closely inter-linked. The sangha (monastic order) evolved as an important organizational structure to which the Buddhist monks were attached. With the passage of time, the sangha evolved its own structure, organization, rules and regulations. The monasteries (viharas) evolved as the physical infrastructure to house the ‘sangha’. Although a religious institution associated with Buddhism, the monasteries evolved as educational institutions with the passage of time. As Buddhism spread within India and outside mainly through the efforts of two illustrious rulers- Asoka (268BC-232BC), the great Mauryan emperor and Kanishka (1st century AD), the great Kusana ruler, monasteries attracted students from within and outside India. The teachings of the Buddha were relevant then and are relevant even today. “The Buddha said that all he taught was suffering and the way out of suffering. These teachings are relevant today, for human insecurities and human vulnerability to disappointment, grief, and despair are not fundamentally different from what they were at the time of the Buddha. In addition to their relevance, these teachings are also profoundly philosophical, for the solution to the problem of suffering requires the realization of the nature of phenomena.”

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53 Bart Gruzalski, On the Buddha, Wadsworth/ Cengage Learning India Private Limited, New Delhi, First Indian Reprint 2008, Preface
A pertinent question regarding any research is ‘what is its relevance or utility?’ “Social science, however, seems to have a more direct applicability than many humanities or science disciplines and is often justified by its relevance to human problems.”

Social researches can have implications for social policy, as in the present case, in the field of education, peace building and conflict management. Thus, there seems to be a positive and pragmatic role for the academic research, especially in the present scenario of 21st century which is beset with difficult problems. In this context, the researches in the Buddhist system of education and other fields will definitely point towards some solution as well as solace to the entire mankind.

**Chapterisation**

The study has been divided into six chapters. Chapter one which is the introduction deals with an overview of the topic focusing on the survey of the secondary sources on the history of education, the research methodology and relevance of the present work. The second chapter begins with a brief description of Buddhism. The different schools within Buddhism had their own notion of salvation. As the history of Buddhist system of education is centered in the monasteries and its structures, we will study its evolution in this chapter and then move on to specific aspects of education in detail. The third chapter will be on the spread of Buddhism to other countries, their reason and nature, the monastic structures there and its resemblances with the Indian system and the incorporation of their indigenous religion and culture. Buddhism had this tendency to incorporate or assimilate the local tradition within its fold. The countries/regions chosen for the study will be Tibet, Thailand and Korea. An important aspect of Buddhism since ancient times has been the flow of monks/students of Buddhism from other neighboring countries to India and vice versa.

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This aspect will also be touched upon in this chapter. The fourth chapter deals with women and Buddhism and their monastic order. The main thrust will be on the Indian context and will be dealing with the scenario in three countries/region chosen for the study. The fifth chapter will be on meditation and its role in Buddhist education. The concluding chapter will sum up the major findings of the present study. A historical method of study will be applied in the present study.