**Vedic Education**

**Introduction**

Vedas occupy a very important place in the Indian life. The education system which was evolved first in ancient India is known as the Vedic system of education because the ancient system of education was based on the Vedas and therefore it was given the name of Vedic Educational System. It is also known as gurukula system of education.

**Aims of Vedic Education**

**1. Attainment of moksha or self-realisation:-**

Ancient Indians believed that education should prepare and individual in such a way as to prepare him to attain the objective of moksha or self-realisation , i.e. to be one with the almighty and to be free from the cycle of births & deaths.

**2. Infusion of Piety & Religiousness:-**

In ancient India religion played a prominent part. Education aimed at the infusion of piety(faithfulness) and religiousness in the minds of the pupils.

**2. Education for worldliness:-**

 Happiness in other world was given more stress than the happiness in this world. This world according to them was unreal & full of chains. The highest wisdom was a release from these betters.

**3. Character formation:-**

Education must from character. Mere intellect was not of worth if the person was devoid of not much morality. Morality or the right behavior was the higher “Dharma”. Education was regarded as a means of inculcating values such as strict obedience to elders, truthfulness, honesty and temperance.

**4. Development of all round personality:-**

Ancient Indians believed that personality should be developed through education. Personality was developed through the following methods:-

(a) Self-restraint

(b) Self-confidence

(c) Self-respect

(d) Discrimination and judgement

**5. Stress on Social duties:-**

A student was not to lead self-centred life. He was to perform his duties as a son, as a husband, as a father & many other capacities conscientiously and efficiently in the society. His wealth was not for his own sake as for his family, he must be hospitable and charitable. All professions laid stress on civil responsibilities.

**6. Promotion of Social Efficiency and Welfare:-**

The promotion of social efficiency & welfare was an equally important aim of education. Education was not imported simply for the sake of culture or for the purpose of developing mental powers but for the purpose of training every member of society in the profession which he expected to follow. Society had accepted the theory of division of work which was later on governed by the principle of heredity. Each family trained its children in its own profession. The purpose was to make each individual society efficient.

**7. Preservation and promotion of culture:-**

The preservation and promotion of national culture and heritage was also stressed. “The services of the whole community were conscripted for the purpose of the preservation of the Vedic literature. Every person had to learn at least a portion of his sacred literacy heritage.” A section of Brahman as had to devote the whole of their life to the cause of learning to commit the Vedas to memory in order to ensure preservation.

**Curriculum:-**

The system of education was well-organized. It was suited to the needs of the society education was considered as the greatest gift in ancient India. It was aimed at the development of personality of an individual to his maximum extent. Education helped in the realization of spiritual & moral values, besides preparing for worldly pursuits. It was freely available to all those who wanted the relations between teachers and the pupils were based on love and affection. They were very cordial & intimate.

Vedas & Vedic literature:- During the Vedic – age, education became centered on religion which is essentially an effect to establish an harmony between man’s total personality and the totality of the universe. The curriculum was dominated by the study of Vedas and Vedic literature, spiritual and moral lessens. Hymns of the Vedas were primarily composed by Rishis as an expression of the inner light for the benefit of man kind. There are four Vedas namely 1 Rig Veda 2 Yajur Veda 3 Sam Veda 4 Atharva Veda.

Vedangas:- It includes the study of i. siksha ii. Kalpa iii. Nirukta iv. Chandas v. Jyotisha v. Vyaleama (granner).

Logic:- It develops the resonsry facilities.

Scheme of Arts & Crafts (silpa – vidya):- It develops aesthetic sense & practical skill in construction regarding symmetry, proposition & beauty.

Physical Education:- Meditation & salvation are possible only when one is physically healthy. Hence intense physical education was also included in the curriculum. It built stamina students had to learn riding, wrestling, hunting, swimming, running, jumping, etc. for developing physical & mental strength, early marriage was not in practice in Vedic â€“ age. They strictly observed celibacy upto a particular age to avoid premature old age & death. (Atharva Veda).

Professional &technical subjects:- Some professional and technical subjects like medicine and surgery, astronomy, Astrology, Mathematics, economics, were given the importance the curriculum.

Dharma:- It was also the part & parcel of curriculum.

Meditation:- It was also included. Hymns of Vedas were composed by Rishis as an expression of the inner light for the benefit of mankind. This was in fact the main object of Vedic education. The education of Vedic period was the education of the complete man.

Stress on other worldliness:- Curriculum in Vedic age, laid more stress on other worldliness. Although provision was made for all the student, yet he was not prepared for this world, but for the eternal happiness in the other world. The highest wisdom was to seek release from worldly claim & the highest knowledge was to acquinted with the method by which self – realization could be attained.

**Student centered:-** A great quality of curriculum of Vedic education was that it was student centered i.e. according to the educational needs, interests & aptitudes of the student. the curriculum was planned in such a way that it met the requirements of every student.

**Methods of teaching**:- In this period Verbal education was imported in such a way that it could be preserved for thousands of years. The hymns were learnt by remembering & they were realized through meditation. The sounds words to verses were pronounced in their organized forms. The Acharya, corrected the mistakes of their disciples by repetition. The people of Vedic age believed that the pronunciation of the hymns caused sin and destroyed their effect.

The method of mediation was also practiced meditation helped preservation of the meanings of the mantras & development of the sound of the disciplines. The discipline tried to understand the sense and echo of the sense by meditation of every world of the hymns.

**Process of Instruction**

There were three steps in instruction:

 1. Sravana       2. Manana        3. Nididhyasana.

Sravana is listening to words texts as they uttered by the teacher.

Manana is the process of deliberation or reflection of the topic taught.

Nididhyasana represents the highest stage.