

Higher Education in India: A Socio-historical Journey from Ancient Period to 2006–07¹

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Abstract

The socio-historical journey of higher education in India has evolved through different periods, viz., ancient, mediaeval, colonial, post-independence and contemporary. In this journey, a system of English education takes a position in higher institutions of learning. The institutions of higher learning are considered the most important agency of social change, social transformation, and entire development of the country. In fact, this journey of higher education started with an ancient system of education in the Vedic period in which two types of educational system were present there, viz., the Brahminical and the Buddhist systems of education. The Brahminical system of education was regulated by religious values, while the Buddhist form of education was 'secular' in nature. But the major change in Indian higher education took place through the initiatives of British rulers that made an impact both in positive and negative ways. At that time, the indigenous system of education received a severe setback as the British system created a new class which served the British rulers.