HETERODOX SCHOOLS OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

Unit Structure

3.0 Objectives
3.1 Introduction
3.2 Buddhist Philosophy
3.3 Educational philosophy of Buddhism
3.4 Educational Implications of Buddhist Philosophy.
3.5 Philosophy of Jainism
3.6 Educational Implications of Jainism
3.7 To Sum Up
3.8 Unit End Exercise

3.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit you will be able to
1) Know about heterodox schools of Indian Philosophy
2) Understand the educational philosophy of Buddhism and Jainism
3) Identify distant features of Buddhism and Jainism
4) To understand about the contribution of Buddhism and Jainism in Education.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Strictly speaking it is not proper to use such a blanket term as Indian tradition of philosophical thinking. The Vedanta might be the dominant philosophical tradition in India, but it is not the sole system of thought. To emphasize and highlight the Vedanta only in lieu of Buddhism and Jainism is to omit a vast chunk of Indian tradition of philosophical thought.

Schools that do not accept the authority of vedas are by definition unorthodox (nastika) systems. The following schools belongs to heterodox schools of Indian Philosophy.
Carvaka: It is characterised as materialistic and aesthetic school of thought. Accepted direct perception as the surest method to prove the truth of anything. Insists on joyful living.

Buddhist Philosophy: It is a system of beliefs based on the teachings of Siddhartha Gautma. Buddhism is a non-theistic philosophy whose tenets are not especially concerned with the existence or non-existence of God.

Jain Philosophy: Already in existence by 6th century B.C, it was revived by Mahavira, the 24th Jain Tirhthankar.

3.2 BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY

Buddhism is one of the most remarkable development of Indian thought. It is an offshoot of later vedic thought. Buddhism is founded on the rejection of certain orthodox Hindu Philosophical concepts. It has many philosophical views with Hinduism, such as belief in Karma, a cause and effect relationship between all that has been done and all that will be done. Events that occur are held to be direct results of previous events. The ultimate goal for both is to eliminate Karma (both good & bad), end the cycle of rebirth and suffering and attain freedom (Moksha or Nirvana).

Buddhist education system (200B.C to 200 A.D) was founded by Lord Gautam Buddha. Gautam Buddha was primarily an ethical teacher and reformer and not a philosopher. He was concerned mainly with the problems of life. He avoided the discussion of metaphysical question because they are ethically useless and intellectually uncertain. He always discussed the most important questions of suffering, its cessation and the path leading to its cessation.

Thus Buddha’s enlightenment which he tried to share with all fellow-beings has come to be known as the four Noble Truths. Four Noble truths are:

- There is suffering
- There is cause of suffering
- There is cessation of suffering
- There is a way to cessation of suffering

- Buddhists philosophy of life to get ‘Nirvana’ from suffering is based on the following eight principles:

  ✓ Right Faith (Samyak Dristi)
  ✓ Right Resolve (Samyak Sankalpa)
  ✓ Right Speech (Samyak Vakya)
  ✓ Right Action (Samyak Karmanta)
Right Living (Samyak Ajiva)
Right Thought (Samyak Smriti)
Right concentration (Samyak Samadhi)
Right Effort (Samyak Vyayama)

3.3 EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY OF BUDDHISM

Buddhist Education offered to impart education to all. Many people shifted to Buddhist system of education. It was for the first time in India that education was institutionalised on a large scale during Buddhist movement. It is also a historical fact that with the arrival of Buddhist era great international centres of education like Nalanda, Takshashila, Vikramshila, Ballabhi, Odantapuri, Nadia, Amravati, Nagahalla and Saranath were in prominence. Educational centres in Buddha period developed in Viharas and Sanghas.

Aims of Education

The Buddhist educational aims were comprehensive based on knowledge, social development, vocational development, religious development, character development aims which were as follows:

- To follow the moral values of Buddhist religion
- To adopt good conduct and violence
- To achieve the final goal of Nirvana
- To propagate Buddhism
- To eradicate Vedic karmakanda or ritualism
- To give up caste system
- To take the teachings of Buddhism to the masses.
- To leave yajna and sacrifices for achieving knowledge
- To provide education in the language of masses i.e Pali
- To emphasise the progress and development of the society rather than the individual
- To provide education through the new system this was stated by Buddha.

Principles of Education

- Avidya that is ignorance must be removed through education as it is the root cause of sufferings
- Education should be provided in peaceful surroundings in Buddhists monasteries, viharas and organised educational institutions instead of Gurukulas.
- Pupils should be educated in a democratic atmosphere
Things of luxury must be prohibited for students.

Framed few commandments for the Suddhvi, Harika (new entrant) at the time of ‘Pabajja’ ceremony. A ritual called as “pabajja ritual was necessary for admission to a monastery for education. Educational period for this phase was 12 years.

After 20 years of age Upsampada ritual was performen to gain an entry into higher education. Rules for second ceremony ‘Upasampada were also laid down.

Education System

- Two tier system:
  1) Popular Elementary Education
  2) Higher Education

Elementary Education:
  Popular Elementary education was religious in nature, included worldly education, upto the age of 12 years, pupils received instructions in reading, writing, arithmetic and religion.

- Curriculum of Elementary education:
  Thorough learning of Grammar, Hetu vidya (Logic), Nyaya (science of reasoning), Adyatma vidya (philosophy), shilpa sthan (arts & crafts) & chikitsya vidya (medicine)

Higher education:
  Well organised, carried out at Buddhist monastries & Buddhist universities. Higher education was given to only those students who intended to be monks or nuns. Emphasised both theoretical and practical aspects.

Following subjects were included in the syllabus of higher education:
  Buddhism, Hinduism, Jainism, Theology, Philosophy, Metaphysics, Logic, Sanskrit, Pali, Astronomy, Astrology, Medicine, Law, Politics, Administration, Tantrik philosophy

Methods of Teaching

- Mostly verbal.
- Question, answer, discussion and debates.
- Agra shishya pranali (Monitorial system)
- Travelling and Nature study method
- Book method.
- Preaching and conference method
• Medium of instruction was Pali and also importance to vernacular dialects were given.

Teacher Taught Relationship

• Close, Pure, good and affectionate
• Teacher besides being a scholar of repute must have in himself inspiring ideals.
• Like his students the teacher also used to spend life in simplicity, constant study, celibacy, following ideals and strength of character.
• Both teacher and student were required the authority of reason and experience.
• Students were required to maintain the freedom of thought
• Disciplined in matter of morals and conduct
• Maintain self restrained life

3.4 EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATION OF BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY

• **Cosmopolitan**: Buddhist education was free from communal narrowness, there was no favouritism on the basis of caste, creed in the centres.

• **Total development of personality**: Buddhist education laid much emphasis on the physical, mental and spiritual development of the novice, even today the aim of education is integration of personality that can develop the various aspects of the individual which are interlinked.

• **No corporal punishment**: Corporal punishments were absolutely forbidden which is also very true in the present scenario of education.

• **Positivism**: Buddhist philosophy is positivistic and has a careful logical systematisation of ideas

• **Ethical**: It is ethical, the eightfold path to Nirvana makes a universal appeal.

• **Democratic**: It is democratic as it believed in freedom of enquiry. Democratic and republican procedures were followed while running the educational institutions.

• **Development of good conduct**: The entire techniques of Buddhism provide directions to develop good conduct and which is also the essence of a sound system of education. Also its belief in Karma
lays stress on the necessity to be constantly on the vigil to maintain one’s conduct in the present life.

- **Moral Discipline**: The Buddha Bhikku (monk) took the vows of chastity and of poverty. Character was the basis of moral discipline.

- **Emphasis on Manual skills**: Training of manual skills like spinning and weaving was emphasized to enable men to earn for living.

- **Pragmatic**: It is pragmatic, everything is in a state of flux as it is only momentary. Change is the rule of the universe. It does not believe in the absolutism. It is witnessed in the present era of globalisation.

- **Methods of Teaching**: the methods of instruction was oral. Preaching, repetition, exposition, discussion and debates were all used. Buddhist council organised ‘seminars’ to discuss the major issues at length. Learned conferences, meditation, educational Tours.

- **International impact**: Buddhist education helped India to gain international importance. It also developed cultural exchange between India and other countries of the world. international exchange of scholars attracted students and scholars from far off lands.

- **Value education & Character development**: To be moral being one must follow noble path, the eightfold path as preached in Buddhism provides guidance for moral education and peace. The entire techniques of Buddhism provides directions to develop good conduct which is also the essence of sound system of education.

- **Curriculum**: Curriculum included secular as well as religious subjects.

- **Organisation and Structure of Universities**: Universities established during this period are still serving as a guiding force. The organization of Nalanda and Ballabhi university was advanced that it continues to influence the organization and structure of university till present day. The system of determining a minimum age for higher education, providing a set of rules and taking a test for admission are even today guiding the educational structure.

- **Education as a social Institution**: Education as a social institution got its existence as a result of Buddhist system of education.
• **Imparting education in practical subjects**: An important contribution of this period is the imparting of education in various practical subjects, a tradition which has come down to the present day also.

• **Collective Teaching Methodology**: It was in this period that the method of collective teaching and the presence of numerous teachers in single institution was evolved.

### 3.5 PHILOSOPHY OF JAINISM

Jainism is independent of Buddhism yet it resembles it in several aspects, such as in its repudiation of the authority of the Vedas, its pessimistic outlook on life, and its refusal to believe in supreme God. But the differences it exhibits are equally noticeable, such as its recognition of permanent entities like the self (jiva) and matter. Derived from the word ‘jina’ with root in ‘ji’ it means ‘victor’ i.e., the one who has successfully subdued his passions and obtained mastery over himself.

The origin of Jain philosophy traces back to the pre-historic time. It is said 24 tirthankars or liberated persons preached this truth which was handed over one by one in course of time. The last of them was Vardhamana also called Mahavira, a contemporary of Gautam Buddha. Jainism is the smallest of the major world religion, but in India its influence is much more. Jain philosophy and culture have been a major cultural and philosophical, social and political force since dawn of civilisation in Asia. Metaphysically, Jainism believes in plurality of souls and not in the existence of God. It holds that there are as many souls as there are living beings. They also accept the existence of souls even in animals and plants, with degrees of difference in the level of consciousness. They believe that every soul is capable of attaining infinite consciousness, power and happiness by removing all ‘Karmas’ or bondages.

Infinite faith, infinite knowledge, infinite power and infinite bliss is the state of liberation. According to Jainism Nirvana or liberation is obtained through three jewels: **Right Philosophy, Right Knowledge and Right Conduct. (Tri-ratna)** Right conduct implies 5 absinences: not to lie, not to steal, not to strive for luxury and not to strive for possessions, not to be unchaste and not to injure (Ahimsa). Ahimsa is vital principle of Jainism. Jainism rejects the idea of creator of the world. It believes reality to be many sided. Jainism emphasises ‘Syat-vada’ or ‘ane-kant-vada’ which lays the mind open to truth coming from any quarter. No preposition about the truths can be a absolute. This generates tolerance and regard for all. In the theory of knowledge Jainism accepted three sources of getting real knowledge, namely perception, inference and testimony.

**Practical teachings of Jainism**
1. Triratna or three gems of its teaching were considered three precious principles of life.

2. Five vows (vrata) or absences to indicate general character.

3. Ahimsa (Non-violence) is the foremost virtue in Indian thought but in Jainism it requires distinct meaning and depth; it is non-violence in word, thought and deed.

4. Emphasizing the individualistic aspect, Jainism emphasizes on the development of personality as the final aim. Jaina teachings are social and tolerant and believes in happiness of all.

5. There are two levels of discipline depending on the severity of the vows which are different for the monks and of lay life.

6. The aim of life is to get oneself disentangled from karma. Jainism believes in transmigration of soul. Soul united with karma is called a soul in bondage, and is to be redeemed and liberated.

7. Moksha means dissolution of partnership between soul and matter, restoring the ideal character of the jiva.

8. Jainism rejects God as the creator of this world, as a need to create the world would be inconsistent with his necessary perfection, Jainism looks upon man himself as God when his inherent powers are fully in bloom.

9. Jaina views are both relativistic and pluralistic as it recognizes jivas and the material objects.

10. The primary aim of Jainism is the perfection of the soul, rather than the interpretation of the universe, hence it fails to find ultimate solutions of the metaphysical problem.

**Jaina Education:**

**Aims of Education**

- Truth is relativistic and pluralist, in a state of ‘may be’. Knowledge, therefore may be viewed differently. Nothing fixed.
- Self-realisation as jiva is divine. Education must focus on his divinity and remove the material bond of soul.
- Education should lead to self-enlightenment and restore the full powers of jiva.
- Development of personality as an individual. Hence, more stress on individual aims.
- Teaching should give necessary jnana and penance to help jiva
- Cessation of Karma would disassociate jiva from it and regain its power and glory. Teaching must help train one for it.
- Believes in transmigration of soul, hence education may partly be the preparation for the next world.
Curriculum:

- ‘punya’ and ‘paap’ are the two principles of the Nine categories. Hence, education should develop sense of discrimination.
- Education should include provision for attainment of Tri-ratnas, the precious principles of life, that bring happiness, success and love here and now.
- Education should inculcate non-violence as a virtue, practiced and not only aspired for, that would be socially desirable.
- Teaching of nine principles called as nine categories of Jainism to dissolve the partnership between soul and matter.

Methods of Teaching

- Knowledge is through senses and meditation. Teaching must develop these faculties.
- Teaching should be social and tolerant, and should bring happiness to all.
- Jiva is essentially karmic, therefore education must be action based and ideally oriented.

Discipline:

- Emphasis on self discipline and hard work
- Practical discipline (of a lower order meant for ordinary householders) is essential for release from the bondage.
- Happiness and bliss through action. Man is a free moral agent, responsible for all his deliberate action.

3.6 EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

- Major Contributions: Jainism has made important contribution to art, architecture and literature. Jain philosophy and culture have been a major cultural and philosophical, social and political force since dawn of civilisation in Asia.
- Strong emphasis on Non-Violence: The distinguishing feature of jain philosophy is its strong emphasis on non-violence, accent on multiple facets of truth, morality and ethics.
- Integrated: he contribution of jain philosophy in the development of Indian philosophy has been significant. Jain philosophy concepts like Ahimsa, Karma, Moksha, Sansara and like has been
assimilated into philosophies of other Indian religions like Hinduism and Buddhism. It is impossible to separate Indian religion, philosophy and education.

• **Concept of Compassion**: Sense of sympathy extends to all living beings even to animals as stated in in both jainism & buddhism.

• **Contribution to a strain of Pacifism**: Absolute respect for living beings is stressed, best way to resist evil is through non-violence, it is successfully used in jainism & buddhism.

• **Law of Karma (cause and effect)**: universe is ruled by moral law which punishes all sins and rewards good deeds, belief that our character creates its own heaven and hell is significant in nearly all schools of philosophy.

• **Aims of education**: The education has always aimed at some of the philosophical and religious objectives enlisted in Indian philosophy of education. It is clear that main objectives of education in India since earliest days of civilization had been Man-making who is capable of self-realization.

• **Highest state of knowledge**: The highest state of knowledge is intuition through which man achieves a realization of oneness of the universe. Most of the Indian philosophies essence lies in this aspect.

### 3.7 TO SUM UP

The education imparted during the Buddhist period in reality, reaction to the education of the preceding post-vedic period. During this period, educational institutions or general education were established. They made provisions for imparting primary as well as higher education. An important contribution of this period is the imparting of education in various practical subjects. Educational institutions were formally organized and established in this period. It may favourably compare with the modern Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan.

Summarizing Jaina education we can say that the distinguishing feature of this philosophy is its strong emphasis on non-violence, accent on multiple facets of truth, morality and ethics. The education has always aimed at some of the philosophical and religious objectives enlisted in Indian philosophy of education. Education system according to jainism has nothing special to mention except the following the vedic and buddhistic system of schooling and discipline.

### 3.8 UNIT END EXERCISE
Q1. Describe salient features of Buddhist education.

Q2. Comment upon the following in context of Buddhist Education:
   1) Pabajja ritual
   2) Upasampada ritual
   3) Higher Education

Q3. Discuss aims of education and the role of teacher with specific reference to Buddhist education.

Q4. Discuss Buddhist education with specific reference to aims of education, curriculum, methods of teaching and role of a teacher.

Q5. Discuss in detail the educational Implications of Buddhist education.

Q6. Discuss Jaina education with specific reference to various components of education.

Q7. Discuss in detail the educational Implications of Jaina education.