

**COMPARATIVE STUDY OF TEACHING LEARNING APPROACH OF BUDDHIST
SUNDAY SCHOOLS IN ROI-ET PROVINCE OF THAILAND AND VEDIC
SCHOOLS IN VARANASI, INDIA**

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ABSTRACT

The institution of school is responsible for the all-round development of the child. Schools set up under the aegis of religions management agencies have their own special influence on the development of the child. The Sanskrit, Vedic schools of Varanasi and Buddhist Sunday schools of Thailand are institutions set with aim to provide oriental learning in modern times.

This article is related to the comparative study of teaching learning in Buddhist Sunday School of Roi-Et province of Thailand and Vedic Schools of Varanasi, India

The objectives of this study were 1. To study background of Vedic Educational system and Buddhist Educational system. 2. To compare teaching methods used in Vedic program and Buddhist Sunday schools program. Descriptive survey study was done and population of this study composed of stakeholders of Vedic School in Varanasi and stakeholders of Buddhist Sunday School in Roi-Et province of Thailand Sampling technique used was incidental to draw sample group of only 50 Buddhist Sunday School in Roi-Et and 12 Vedic school in Varanasi.

Keywords: Teaching learning, Buddhist Sunday School, Vedic School, teaching methods, Descriptive survey study.

Introduction

Human Resource development is essential for the progress of any country in the world. Human resource development has become synonymous with the development process of a country. This is due to the fact that every development process is driven by the human factor. Paitoon Wipulo (2007) carried out study on “Human Resource Development According to the Threefold Training in Thevavada Buddhism”. It was found that the principle

of the Threefold Training is directly related to the development of human beings Moral, Mental and Intellectual. Youth as a resource to the society should be nurtured in a proper way. If they grow in unhealthy and unethical environment they tend to become burden on the society, on the other hand if they grow on good environment or high society they will be useful to the Nation. The youth should have the capability to differentiate right and wrong for which religion shows the way. They have right to faith in Religions which they prefer according to Universal Declaration of Human Right (1948) Article 18.

“Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance”.

Religiosity has its influence on the behavior the youth. The increasing abstract thought and searching for an identity by young people draw them to religion and spiritual matters (Santrock, 1996). Religion is a form of social capital, acts as a source of social control, provides reinforcement for social behavior, and punishment in case of lack of altruism. Religiosity provides youth with moral directives to lead their decisions and behaviors. Although these conceptual linkages have only been minimally investigated, religiosity and spirituality have been linked to altruism, sympathy, helping, and other social behaviors Religious involvement or religious importance are positively associated altruism and service (e.g., Furrow, King, & White, 2004; Smith & Denton, 2005).

Most of the Religion play an important role to develop youth either Muslim, Christian, Hindu and Buddhist all have same goal, but differ in model namely to cultivate morals and ethics in youth like Sunday School of Christians, Ponoh School in Thailand for Islamic youth, Vedic School or Sanskrit School of Hindu and last Buddhist Sunday School of Buddhist. Since, Buddhism and Hinduism have same place of origin hence the researcher wanted to investigate in terms of Teaching Learning the Vedic Schools and Buddhist Sunday Schools.

Objective of Study

1. To study background of Vedic educational system and Buddhist Educational system
2. To compare teaching learning methods of Vedic program and Buddhist Sunday schools program

Hypotheses

1. Vedic school and Buddhist Sunday were similar in background
2. Vedic program and Buddhist Sunday school program differ in terms of teaching learning approach.

Methodology to be used

This study use analysis of curriculum and teaching methods of Vedic schools and Buddhist Sunday Schools.

Population

Population will be drawn from stakeholder of Vedic school in Varanasi and stakeholder of Buddhist Sunday School in Roi-Et province.

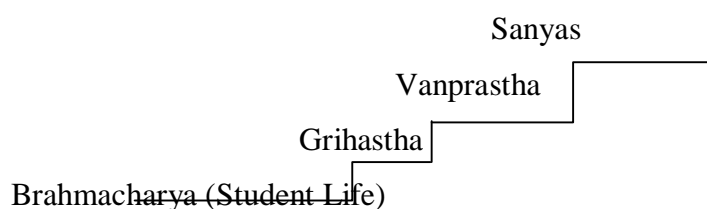
Sample and Sampling technique

The accidental sampling technique was used to collect sample group.

Concept of study

Vedic system of life: Education system of Hindu culture is divided into four kind of Asharam (step of life). All of Hindu Youth, especially, high caste have to follow strictly on Asharam figure as follow:

Step of Life (4 Asharam)



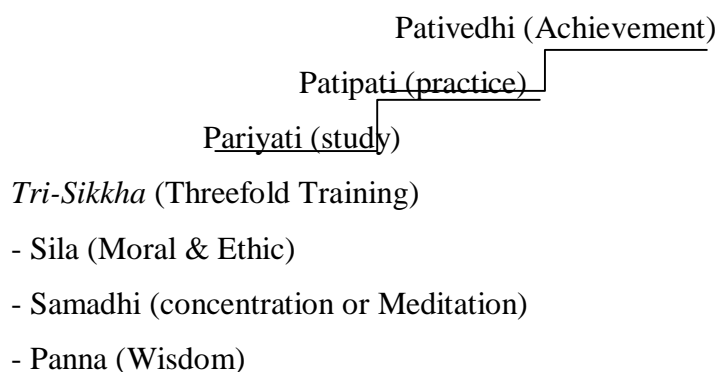
- Sanskrit

- Vedas

Brahmachariya (Student Life) is related to adolescence the Brahmachari-ashram, often away from the home (somewhat like a boarding school), was primarily intended for fostering spiritual values. Memorization and skill development were subsidiary to character formation and self-realization. Even sons of the royal family were expected to undergo this austere and rigorous training to be celibate and live a simple life, free from sensual pleasure and material allurements to serve the guru (spiritual teacher) and collect alms for him, to hear, study and assimilate the Vedas to develop all the appropriate qualities: humility, discipline, simplicity, purity of thought, cleanliness, soft-heartedness, and so on.

Buddhist Education System

The chief aim of Buddhist education is all round development of child's personality. This included his physical, mental, moral and intellectual development. The aim of Buddhist Education is to make a free, a wise, intelligent, moral, non-violent & secular man. Students became judicious, humanist, logical and free from superstitious. Students should become free from greed, lust and ignorance. Buddhist Education was wide open and available to the people of all walks of life. The principal goal of the Buddhist Education is to change an unwise to wise, a beast to priest. The Buddhist education system aimed at regaining our intrinsic nature. it also teaches absolute equality which stemmed from Buddha's recognition that all sentinel beings possess this innate wisdom and nature. Buddha's teaching helps us to realize that innate, perfect, ultimate wisdom. With wisdom, we can then solve all our problems and turn suffering into happiness. In the Buddhist era, religion was given top priority and education was imparted through it. The chief aim of education was propagation of religion and inculcation of religious feelings and education served as a mean to achieve salvation or nirvana. Preparation for life, there was a provision for imparting worldly and practical knowledge along with religious education so that when the students entered normal life they may be able to earn their livelihood. Pariyattisaddhamma; the true doctrine of study (textual aspect of the true doctrine; study of the Text Scriptures) Patipattisaddhamma; the true doctrine of practice; (practical aspect of the true doctrine) Pativedhasaddhamma; the true doctrine of penetration (realizable or attainable aspect of the true doctrine) P.A. Payutto (1997).



1. To study Background of Vedic educational system and Buddhist Educational system

The Background of Vedic Educational System

Vedic education is to be studied as an integral part of Vedic thought and life. It will be best understood in the light of certain concepts and technical terms in which are concealed and stored up the traditions governing the general philosophy and scheme of life of the Vedic age. These terms came to be established as the outcome of important movements and trends of thought which they reflect. In some cases, as will be seen below, they directly point to the educational principles and institutions which were typical of the culture of the age. The term Veda is from root Vid, to know, and indicates that by which is obtained the knowledge of the ways and means of achieving spiritual ends (Aluakikampurusharthopaymvetianeneti). Its meaning is also defined in the following text:-

Pratyakshenanityavayastupayonavudhyate

EtamvidantiVedenatasmadVedasyaVedata

“The end which cannot be known by the evidence of direct perception, inference, and the like, can be known through Veda and , therefore, this determines the character of Veda.” Mookerji, R. K. (1990)

The Government of India has established Maharishi SandipaniRashtiryaVedVdiyaPratishthan (MSRVVP) in the years 1987 to preserve, conserve and develop the oral tradition of vedic recitation. For this purpose, it provided financial assistance to 59 Vedic Pathshalas towards honorarium for over 350 Ved teachers and stipend to about 3000 students. Under the scheme of Preservation of Oral Tradition of Vedic Recitation it provide honorarium to over 210 Swadhyayi-teachers who teach about 1800 students at their home or any suitable place in their locality. 48 Aged VedPandits, who are above 65 years of age, have been extended financial assistance for subsistence. A correspondence Course “GharBaitheVedon Ki Shiksha” has also been introduced by the Pratishthan for Vedic education to disseminate Vedic knowledge among common people.

Structure of Vedic School

Minister of Human Resource Development (MHRD)

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Department of Higher Education

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Language Education/Autonomous Bodies



Maharishi SandipaniRashtriyaVedVidyaPratishthan (MSRVVP)



- NyayVedantMahavidyalay (KendaryGhat)
- PattabhiramShastri (Hanuman Ghat)
- Brahmanal (KhashiVishwanathgali)
- Paramhansgoyankavedpathshala (Assi)
- RamshwarMuth (Assi)
- Chintamanivedvidylay (Sonarpura)
- DhormSanghvedpathshala (Durgakund)
- Shrishriramdaskathiya baba vedpathshala (shivala)
- Bramhavedvidhyalay (assi)
- Svamisvarupanandsarasvatedpathshala (vidhyamath) (kedarghat)
- Acharyashrinathshasrtivedpathshala (assi)
- Vidhyasadhna pith (nagavalanka)

The Back ground of Buddhist Sunday School

The concept of Buddhist Sunday School was first introduced in Sri Lanka during the time when Buddhism was in danger, by Colonel. Henry Steel Olcott, an American who was interested in Buddhism. In 1885, the first Buddhist Sunday School was established in Sri Lanka by unpaid volunteers including monks and some Buddhist laymen with the knowledge in Buddhist aspects with the cooperation with TheYoung Men's Buddhist Association (YMBA). Nowadays, Buddhist Sunday classes take place in almost every temple and monastery and get success in nationwide curriculum.

The idea of Buddhist Sunday School was established in Thailand during 1953-1957s by PhraPhimontham (ordination name, AsaphaMahatherra),a Thai Minister of the Interior Sangha, Mahachulalongkorn Buddhist College. Having visited Myanmarand Sri Lankain Buddhist activities, he found that:

‘...Buddhist Sunday School should be established inThailand because children and the youth had been interested in Buddhism..... In preparing Buddhism for the future this would be another way of propagating Buddhism’.

He brought back the model to Thailand and discussed with other teachers and student monks of Mahachulalongkorn Buddhist College.

In 1962, the activities of the Sunday Schools were upgraded to the Department of Sunday School. Later, in 1969, it was enhanced again to special Faculty of Sunday School in

the Office of Secretary, Ministry of Education. As a consequence of its success in operation, it becomes a model of other Thai Sunday Schools.

Management of Buddhist Sunday Schools in Thailand

Buddhist Sunday schools are an informal education system managed by Buddhist Sangha. It helps to cultivate in children and youth appropriation of Buddhist values together with establishing Sunday Buddhist Study Centers. These Buddhist Institutes play an important role in morality and integrity development of people especially children and youths.

Department of Religious Affairs has regulated promoting and supporting functions in three ways as follows: (1) administrative function (2) academic function (3) budget function

Decentralizing Power to Buddhist Sunday Schools in Roi-Et Province

Buddhist Sunday schools have spread to the region following the policies of Department of Religious Affairs. Roi-Et province is one of all regions situated in the northeast. There are several temples based on Buddhist Sunday schools since 1980 and nowadays these are 193 in urban and rural of Roi-Et province.

Structure of Buddhist Sunday Schools

Department of Religion Affairs



The Office of Buddhist Sunday school of Thailand (Central Office)



Middle

North

East

South

Northeast



Buddhist Sundays of Each Province

2. To compare teaching method between Vedic program and Buddhist Sunday school program

The table 1.1 Shows that the Teaching Learning of Vedic program and Buddhist Sunday Schools program

Buddhist Sunday program	Vedic school program
<p>Aim of education The 5 main objectives of Buddhist Sunday Schools are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To introduce students the Buddhism and its teaching. 2. To teach ethics and morality. 	<p>Aim of education The objectives of the Pratishtan are:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (i). To preserve, conserve and develop the oral tradition of Vedic studies for which the Pratishtan undertakes various activities such as, supporting traditional Vedic institutions and

<p>3. To encourage students to live as per the ways of Buddhist teaching.</p> <p>4. To encourage students to make themselves beneficial for the society.</p> <p>5. To spread the belief of Buddhism.</p>	<p>scholars, providing fellowships/scholarships, undertaking production of audio/video tapes, etc.</p> <p>(ii). To foster the oral tradition of intonation and recitation of Vedas through the human agency.</p> <p>(iii). To encourage and ensure involvement of dedicated students in higher research in the field.</p> <p>(iv). To provide for research facilities to students with the background of Vedic knowledge and to equip them with sufficient scientific and analytical outlook, so that modern scientific thought contained in the Vedas, particularly in the disciplines of mathematics, astronomy, meteorology, chemistry, hydraulics, etc. could be linked with modern science and technology and a rapport established between them and modern scholars.</p> <p>(vi). To revive and administer the endowments and trusts which are defunct, or not properly run.</p> <p>(vii). To give special attention to VedShakhas which are extinct and for which human repositories can be identified, and to prepare a detailed list of Pandits related to these Shakhas.</p> <p>(viii). To ascertain the present status of oral traditions relating to the Vedas, particularly intonation and recitation peculiar to various regions, Institutions and Mathas in the country.</p> <p>(ix). To collect information about the state of textual material, printed manuscripts, texts, commentaries and interpretations, etc. of the various oral traditions of the Vedic Shakhas.</p> <p>(x). To collect information about the present state of recordings, both audio and visual, available in the country.</p>
<p>Buddhist Sunday program</p>	<p>Vedic program</p>
<p>Syllabus Buddhist Sunday schools dealt with core-curriculum of Department of Religion Affairs to teach students in their schools in case of Roi-Et province. It found that they adopted curriculum of Dhamma Studies for Elementary level to use in compulsory subject. In term of elective subject adopted Basic Education Core Curriculum B.E.2551 (A.D.2008) to use in their school. The curriculum divided into 2 part: compulsory subject and elective subject.</p> <p>A. Compulsory subjects are;</p>	<p>Syllabus The education of this was dominated by the study of Vedic Literature, historical study, stories of heroic lives and discourses on the puranas also formed a part of the syllabus. Students had necessarily to obtain knowledge of metrics. Arithmetic was supplemented by the knowledge of geometry. Students were given knowledge of four Vedas–Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda and Atharvaveda. The syllabus took with in its compass such subjects as spiritual as well as materialistic knowledge, Vedas, Vedic grammar, arithmetic knowledge of gods, knowledge of the absolute, knowledge of ghosts, astronomy, logic</p>

<p>Dharma study for laymen, elementary level (Dharma Essay, Dhamma, History of Buddha, Discipline of laymen)</p> <p>B. Elective subjects by choosing one of subjects;</p> <p>Health and physical education Visual Art, Music and Dancing Social Studies religion and culture Thai Language Mathematics Science and Technology Vocational Foreign Languages Computer</p> <p>C. Student development activities by participating activities organized by center not less than 80 %; activities promoting Buddhism on important days such as; Visakha puja day, Makha puja day, Asalkha puja day, KhoaPhansa day or other important days, declaring oneself as Buddhist, and public development activities based on participation and cultivation of morality and integrity for children and youths. (Notification of Department of Religion Affaire. B.E. 2550 (A.D 2007).</p>	<p>philosophy ethics, conduct etc. The richness of the syllabus was responsible of the creation of Brahman literature. As per notification of Maharishi SandipaniRashtriyaVedVidyaPratishthan (MSRVVP) are as follow:</p> <p>Elementary (Pratham)</p> <p>A. Compulsory subjects are:</p> <p><u>Rigaveda divided into 2 branch</u> -Shakul, sankhyayan(Vaskal)</p> <p><u>Yajurveda divided into 2 branch</u> -Suklhayajurveda, krishanayajurveda.</p> <p><u>Samaveda divided into 3 branch</u> -Kauthum, Ranayaniya, Jaimaniya.</p> <p><u>Athurveda divided into 2 branch</u> -Shunak, Paiplad.</p> <p>B. Elective subject:</p> <p>-Social science -Geography -History -Mathematics -English Language</p> <p>C. Extra Curriculum:</p> <p>- depend on each school design for students like -praying mantra -wash and clean classroom, hostel. -sport etc.</p> <p>Maharishi SandipaniRashtriyaVedVidyaPratishthan (MSRVVP)</p>
<p>Class room</p> <p>Both theory and practice approach were applied to teaching learning in the class room. Considering proper ways depends on teacher's design of the pedagogies like compulsory subject-Dhamma essay for were used Recitation is require to this subject as the nature of this subject involves to be the memorizing the proverb it necessary to student who write the proper Question formulated by the Royal Dhamma Division. For example, students should know how to explain the proverb with good reason and to give another proverb to match with first one given by the teacher. Students have to mention the scripture's name where the proverb comes from. Similarly, in terms</p>	<p>Class room</p> <p>In the classroom of vedic students are different from Buddhist Sunday school even through, regular school. Recitation is learning approach by the pupil followed by explanation by the teacher is generally followed. Besides question-Answer, Debate and Discus-sion, storytelling is also adopted according to need. Sometime seniors are appointed to teach Juniors. In the oral method is adapted to teaching learning, memorizing the mantras (Vedic Hymns) and Richayas (Verses of Rigaveda) in order that there might not be change at wrongly and they might remain preserved in their original forms. Under the oral methods these prosodies were thoroughly taught on which Richayas happened to be based. Special emphasis was laid on the various lines of a particular verse, their pronunciation and meanings. In this oral</p>

<p>of Dhamma subject (Bhuddha's Doctrine) to lead student understand and memorize each of all groups of them. In term of elective subject it depend on nature of subject. However, to lead student to accomplishment of threefold training (<i>Tri-Sikkha</i>) <i>Sila</i> (Moral), <i>Samādhi</i> (Concentration), <i>Pañña</i> (wisdom).</p>	<p>method correct pronunciations was specially emphasized. For this instruction in grammar and pronunciation was compulsory for all. Thinking method was another part of the teaching method. Through this an attempt was made to preserve the veda mantras (vedic hymns) and Richayas (vedic verses) Manan was higher method of teaching than a thinking. Through Manan the meanings of vedic mantras the meanings of vedic mantras were developed and preserved in ones own mind. This method was used to encourage the highly intelligent students by guiding them to make research, similarly in ancient days, Manan (Reflection) was a method specially adopted for highly intelligent students.</p>
<p>Activities and function All Buddhist Sunday School student of Roi-Et province have their daily routines are as follow: - Do activities friendship with environment and surrounding like keep clean and green - Chanting to pay respect on the triple gem viz Buddha, Dhamma, Sangah. -Listening the address of administrators or deputy of their schools. -Go to class as per time schedule On specially occasion there are extra activities as follow: Royal important days: - His majesty's king birthday - Hismajesty's princess birthday - His majesty's price birthday - Her majesty's queen birthday Exhibition of monarchy duties, Candle ceremony, Chanting, Meditation dedicate for him. Activities volunteer for public. Competitions Buddhism important days - Makha puja day - Visakha puja day - Asalha puja day and Khoa - Phansa day Exhibition Candle ceremony, Chanting,</p>	<p>Activities and function As vedic school like boarding school where student have to spent their life with Guru so their daily Routines start from when they get up till sleep 4 am. To 5 am Wake up and take a bath 5 am to 6 am. Nityakarm (Sandhyapashanbidhi, gayatrijaap, and sun namaskar) 6 am to 7 am. Washing, cleaning class room and chattravas (hostel). 7 am. to 8 am. All students going to hall for praying into God. 8 am to 12 pm. All students Going to class room. And 12 pm. to 1 pm. Lunch time. 1 pm to 2 pm. Take a rest 2 pm. to 4 pm all students going to the class room and write course book. Hindi, Sanskrit and other subjects. 5 pm. Break take light breakfast then they take part in sandhya. 6 pm. Take a bath. 7 pm. Go to pray hall for chanting. The extra activity - Anniversary of AdiShankaracharya. - ViasMahotasare -ShrawaniVpakaram (Rakshabandhan) Students participate to chanting mantras when even any programe is organized. -Seminars are organized time to time on different subjects like Vedic Tradition. -Students take part in competition of learning branch of Vedas and Geeta and they are awarded by ShardaPeethShringeri.</p>

<p>Meditation. Activities volunteer for public. Competitions Buddhist activities will be held in class some time would bring students out of station to get experience. However, it depends on schools which organize function to teach his students.</p>	<p>-The institution celebrate National festivals like Independence day, Republic day and Gandhi Jayanti all students participate in Sandhya three times daily. -Students play games like indoor game (Caram, Ludo, chess) and outdoor games (Cricket).</p>
<p>Uniform Buddhist Sunday School do not regulated students to take same uniform but it was found that some school designed uniform by using local product for supporting the product of their community.</p>	<p>Uniform Dothi and Dupatta are uniform of vedic students its divided into many color like white, yellow, orange and pink. Students have to wear those cloths and also have to wear Janeu (symbolic of Barmana) and make tripund on their face with chandan.</p>
<p>Eligibility of candidate of Buddhist Sunday School Candidates who want to apply in Buddhist Sunday School program should be eligibility is the Youth is a term used for people of both sexes, male and female, of a young age, studying in Buddhist Sunday Schools of Roi-Et province of Thailand as follow: First level: students grade 4-6 from elementary school Medium level: students grade 7- 9 from secondary school High level: students grade 10-12 from High school In this study the students taken for data collection belong to elementary schools.</p>	<p>Eligibility of candidate of Vedic Schools Candidates who require to apply in Vedic program, should be youth boys only and belonging to high caste (Brahmin) in accordance with Ashram (Brahmachariya) who have to study Veda and Sanskrit to preserve their religion. It was found that they are from various family names such as: Pandey, Shukla, Tiwari, Acharya, Agnihotri, Chaubey, Tripathi, Dikchit, Adhikari, Pokharel, Dubey, Sharma, Upadhyay, Mishra, Sharma, Bhandari, Kuderiya, Pathak, Pyasi, Gautam, Chakravarty, Mukharjee, Chatrjee, Hampariya, Jha, Arjariya, Ojha, Choudhary, Dwivedi, Chaturvedi etc.</p>

Conclusion

It was found that both Buddhist Sunday School program and Vedic school program shows similar aim of education cultivating moral value and ethics in youths and encouraging them to live as per the way of their Religion. These are for awareness and preservation of doctrine of their religion by learning Pali text (Tipitaka) and Sanskrit text (Veda). Teaching learning approach adopted recitation and memorizing by oral method it same in Buddhist Sunday School memorized the proverb and chanting mantras by recitation. In term of uniform and eligibility it shows that very difference between both schools namely, Buddhist Sunday School free style to wear any dress, and candidates who apply can be of any class and sex. But Vedic students have a strict uniform of Dothi and Dupatta without which will be not

allow to attend the class. And candidate who can apply are from the Brahmin caste, others are not allowed. Therefore inspite of similarities we can say Buddhist schools are more liberal as compared to their Vedic counterparts.

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