

OPSC STUDY: History Optional (UPSC & OPSC)

History Optional Test Series: OPEN TEST - 2 (Model Answer)

Q1) What are the strategies followed by Macaulay's minute and Wood's Dispatch to promote education in British India? (20 marks)

- Demand of the question - Strategy !! Don't just write down the provisions
- Don'ts - In this type of question candidates get carried away from the topic.
- Introduction- Just give a brief introduction about British education in 2-3 lines
- Body- Discuss about strategies followed in Macaulay's minute and Wood's dispatch
- Conclusion - How it helped in 2-3 lines only.

Answer-

The colonial government aided the spread of modern education in India for a different reason than educating and empowering the Indians. To administer a large colony like India, the British needed a large number of personnel to work for them. With this aim T.B. Macaulay drafted a minute called **Macaulay's minute** which was put into force through **The English Education Act of 1835** passed by the Council of India.

Strategy-

Macaulay's minute favoured the anglicists so English was made the medium of instruction in the new schools and colleges opened by government.

As per charter act of 1813 only a sum of 1 lakh was sanctioned which was very small amount so Macaulay's minute called for opening of few number of English schools and colleges instead of large number of elementary school. Thus mass education was neglected.

Macaulay's minute called for **Downward filtration theory** where by a small upper and middle class people were educated who would pass on the education to the masses and act as a mediator between government and the masses. As per this theory these educated Indians will enrich the vulnerables with their knowledge of Western science and philosophy.

In 1854, the policy of education was given a new direction by **Wood's dispatch** authored by Charles wood. This was the first comprehensive plan of education in India so it was considered as the magna Carta of education in India.

Strategy-

- It appointed a number of government pundits each in charge of looking four to five schools. The task of pundits to visit pathshalas and try to improve the standard of teaching.

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- Each guru was asked to submit periodic reports and take classes according to time table. Teaching was now to be based on textbooks and learning was to be tested through a system of annual examination.
- Students were asked to pay regular fee, attend regular classes, sit on fixed seats and obey the new rules of discipline.
- The salary of the teachers were paid by government so they became government servants.
- Teachers had to follow the curriculum set by British.
- Visiting school inspectors were appointed for surveillance purpose.
- Provision for teacher's training and women's education was also provided.
- Promotion of vernaculars at lower level and English at higher level of education was the mantra of Wood's dispatch.
- Private players were also provided with grants to spread education.

Although British education brought certain change but not through what they planned. Modern ideas if not education did reach down to the masses through Political parties , newspaper, public platforms which ultimately helpful to arouse the consciousness of the masses. Which proved fruitful during national struggle.

Q2) Ashoka's policy of Dhamma (20 marks)

- **Demand of the question- Mention about Dhamma and it's philosophy.**
- **Don'ts - Don't just write down about the inscriptions**
- **Introduction - what is Dhamma and why it was required**
- **Body - Provisions of Dhamma and how it was propagated**
- **Conclusion - Relevance of Dhamma**

Answer-

Ashoka's policy of Dhamma was basically a social code of conduct which promote certain principles which needs to be adopted by people in order to create a **harmonious social order**. The policy of Dhamma was an earnest attempt at solving some of the problems that a complex society faced. The policy was nurtured in the mind of Asoka and through it he attempted to resolve some of the social tensions of the society. Asoka's private beliefs and his own perceptions of how he should respond to the problems of his empire were responsible for the formulation of the policy of Dhamma.

The principles of Dhamma were so formulated as to be acceptable to people belonging to different communities and following any religious sect. Dhamma was not given any formal definition. It

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emphasised on toleration and general behaviour. Dhamma stressed on dual toleration that emphasised on toleration of people themselves and also an toleration of their various beliefs and ideas.

There is a stress on the notion of showing consideration towards slaves and servants; there is stress also on **obedience to elders, generosity towards the needy, Brahmanas and Sramanas, etc.** Asoka also pleaded for tolerance of different religious sects in an attempt to create a sense of harmony.

The policy of Dhamma also **laid stress on non-violence**. Non-violence was to be practised by giving up war and conquests and also as a restraint on the killing of animals.

The policy of Dhamma also included certain **welfare measures**, like planting of trees, digging of wells, etc. Asoka attacked ceremonies and sacrifices practised regularly on various occasions as meaningless so that a rational thinking can prevail in the society.

A group of officers known as the Dhamma mahamattah were instituted to implement and publicise the various aspects of Dhamma. Asoka thrust a very heavy responsibility on them to carry his message to the various sections of the society.

Dhammayatras also conducted on a regular basis where by the king maintain a direct contact with his subjects (public). It was a essential feature of welfare state.

Asoka engraved his views about Dhamma on inscriptions which were meant to be read by people of various areas. In doing so, Asoka was trying to establish direct communication with his subjects. These inscriptions were written in local languages so that it could be easily understood by the public at large.

Ashoka's inscriptions were of three types - Major and Minor Rock Edicts which were inscribed on rock surfaces, the Pillar Edicts inscribed on specially erected pillars. All sites of Asokan inscriptions were chosen carefully to ensure that they were accessible to a large number of people.

So Asoka's Dhamma was not simply a collection of high sounding phrases. He very consciously tried to adopt it as a matter of state policy. It was a totally new and inspiring ideal of kingship. With such new set of ideals Ashoka was able to intact such a large kingdom for a good period of time. Because of this Ashoka's policy of dhamma was also considered as a policy of cultural and peaceful conquest by many historians.

Note: The model answers may exceed the word limit sometime. Thus, whenever you are writing you can shorten the answers through writing crisp answers (eliminating detailed explanation). Otherwise, you can use map, diagram or chart to explain the same answers in short.

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