

Educational Impact of British Rule On Uttarakhand From The Late 19th To Early 20th Century

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Abstract

Expansion of British Imperialism in India was not identical in all areas of India. The impact of British imperialism occurred as a process. Bengal was the first to face this process. With the victory of the British in the Anglo-Gurkha war in 1815, Uttarakhand witnessed the change in political, economical and socio-cultural spheres. The two basic factors responsible for initiating these changes were the administrative requirements of the new ruling power and the difference between western values and Indian ethical values and traditions. In the Educational field, Christian missionaries opened several convent schools in this area especially in the hill towns like Dehradun, Nainital and Mussoorie. Besides providing education to Anglo-Indian children, cultural conversion of pure and innocent local inhabitants was their hidden aim. Enlightened Indians belonging to Arya Samaj were the motivating force in establishing premier academic institutions like Gurukul Kangri. Western education had its destructive as well as constructive impact. Inculcating national spirit, making people of the area aware of the events and ideology of freedom fighters were regenerative impacts of British educational policy.

Keywords: *Imperialism, Cultural Conversion National awakening, ethical values, Enlightenment, Ideology.*

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Introduction

The introduction of western Education in Uttarakhand was very significant as the education system of a country or region has a long-term impact on national awakening and its development. The introduction of English education in India was primarily motivated by the political, administrative and economic needs of the British government and their motive was visible in their education minutes and acts. Making Indians more acceptable towards the British rule and their cultural conversion were hidden desires. With the coming of the Uttarkhand under British rule in 1815 after the Anglo Gurkha war, it was divided into Tehri state under the native ruler and British Garhwal. Like in other parts of India. The British introduced in Uttarakhand new political, economic, social, cultural and educational policies. The paper “**Educational impact of British rule on Uttarakhand in late 19th and early 20th century**” is an attempt to trace out British education activities in Uttarakhand which had its destructive as well as regenerative effect.

When the British occupied Uttarakhand they introduced English education here. Like in other parts of India, English education was disseminated in Uttarakhand by the government, missionaries and progressive Indians.

Before the British occupation of Uttarakhand education was carried on by Brahmins in their houses. Hindi, Sanskrit and astronomy were the subjects mostly taught. From the period of Trail (1816-30) till Batten (1848-1856) no fundamental changes were introduced in education and no common education policy was introduced. It was during Beckett that some changes were introduced in education. The government decided to start schools and a separate cess was taken along with land revenue. This cess was to be given by each village and it was used to establish and run schools in each district.

In 1843 education was made the responsibility of the state government. In 1840 first school was opened in Shrinagar by the company government on which Rs. 5/- were being spent on the education of the Kumaun region and Rs. 14/- were spent on the education of the Garhwal region.

By 1850 company government had become aware of the education system prevalent in Uttarakhand through the Thorntroon report (1850). According to this report, there was a total of 121 Pathshalas where 522 students studied out of this 80% were Brahmins. In 1857 education department was established in Kumaon which was named as Kumaon circle. Beckett did commendable work for the spread of education in Uttarakhand. He established madrasas in each village in total he established 48 schools and took utmost pains to make these schools successful. He

used to inspect these schools and hardworking teachers were rewarded with the post of Patwari.¹ H.G. Walton complains that few teachers had any taste for their work, they considered teaching as a valuable asset to be exploited until something better comes in the way – patwaris.²

The British Government's effort for English education in Uttarakhand bore fruit. In the first census, the literacy rate was 3.7 in Garhwal and 2.8% in Tehri Garhwal. In the census of 1901, the proportion of literate persons to the total population was 639 in 10,000. Thus it was 6.4% out of which 1.3% were men and 0.2% were females. The highest numbers of educated females were in Dehradun which was due to the presence of European Settlers. The main cause of this increased literacy rate was that now people of this hilly region had realized that agriculture alone could no longer support them, they had to take services for better for which education is a must.³

In 1906 the responsibility of basic schools established by Beckett was given to the district board. It appointed a deputy inspector and two inspectors for the progress of education. By 1910 there were 8 middle schools, 106 basic schools and the government spent 40,699 rupees on these schools. It has been shown in the table.

Education

Year	Schools and Colleges	Total		Secondary Edu.			Primary Education		
		Scholars		School	Scholars		School	Scholars	
		Males	Females		Males	Females		Males	Females
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1896-97	95	3701	96	4	209	96	91	3492	---
1897-98	75	2252	86	4	147	86	71	2105	---
1898-99	83	2392	81	4	195	81	79	2197	---
1899-1900	102	3302	73	4	209	73	98	3098	---
1900-01	103	3184	64	4	226	64	99	2958	---
1901-02	91	3617	62	4	246	62	87	3371	---
1902-03	121	4708	79	7	412	62	114	4296	17
1903-04	122	4754	76	7	459	61	115	4295	15
1904-05	126	5147	15	7	478	62	119	4607	15
1905-06	146	6112	188	7	568	56	139	5544	127
1906-07	166	6562	195	7	655	65	159	5907	130
1907-08	186	6798	159	8	638	68	178	655	91
1908-09	204	6760	311	8	586	65	196	6174	246

After creating district boards, there has been considerable development in the field of education. It was made free especially for artisan's children who were encouraged to receive an education. However, these district boards could do as much as democratic institutions under colonial rule can do. Till 1945-46 there were 473 government-aided schools 40 government recognized schools, one government high school in Dogadda and one in Kotdwar one government Anglo-high school in Karanprayag, one govt. intermediate college in Lansdowne and one in Shrinagar&

one mission intermediate college in Pauri⁵ had the strength of 2,639. Remarkably, more money was spent on education under district boards. In 1934-35 Rs. 1,78,919, in 1935-36 Rs. 1,84,300 and in 1947-48 Rs. 3,93,935 were spent.

Except establishing academic institutions which were established due to requirement of the British Government. They also established other institutions – like technological institutions in plains of Uttarakhand – Thomson Engineering College was established in Roorkee which has later been developed as I.I.T. University Forest College was established in Dehradun in 1878 now known as Forest Research Institute. In 1922 Royal Indian Military College was established in Dehradun to train young Indian Princes and purpose them for formal military training at Sandhurst, England. This institute is now known as Rashtriya Indian Military College (RIMC), Dehradun, remained the favorite place of the British Government to establish schools.

The British government was not alone to work for the education of this hill region, its efforts were supported by the local population, socio-religious reform movements and the Christian missionaries. The most important school established by the efforts of progressive Indians was the ‘Doon School’ in Dehradun established in 1935. It was founded due to the hard work and negotiations of progressive Indians foremost among them Satish Ramjas Das. Lord Willingdon inaugurated the school on Oct. 27, 1935, and AE Foot, a master of Eton College, England became the first headmaster of the school. The institution has achieved the distinction of maintaining a very high standard academic atmosphere.⁶

Arya Samaj was the only socio-religious reform movement that made efforts to establish educational institutions in this hill region-middle school at Duggadda, Chailusain, Bhirokhal and Pauri were established. The two gigantic institutions which Arya Samajists established in Uttarakhand, were Gurukul Kangri at Haridwar and D.A.V. High School in Dehradun. The Gurukul in Haridwar was established to provide education in a pure ashram atmosphere. Emphasis was laid on character building and all-around development based on the ashram system. This wonderful institution was founded in 1902 by Swami Shradhanand. It imparted real national education for the promotion of national interest. This institution used to provide its degrees thus challenging education imparted by the British. Once Lt. Governor James Meston freely spoke of this institution and termed it an ideal institution.⁷

D.A.V. High School was established in 1904 in Dehradun. A local lawyer Mr. Jyoti Swarup took a keen interest in establishing it. Mr. Puran Singh Negi, a local Zamindar of Dehradun donated his land to establish a school. Due to the efforts of Jyoti Swarup, D.A.V. which was established in Meerut was shifted to Dehradun. In

1922 intermediate classes were added to it and in 1946 it was raised to Degree College. Now it's a premier institute for education in the district.⁸

Besides government, socio-religious reformists, Christian Missionaries did extensive work in the sphere of education in Uttarakhand. British imperialism over this region made it possible for early Christian Missionaries to establish their mission here. English education was used as a tool to Christianize the hill people. They were inspired by proselytizing spirit to spread Christianity among the local people. All over India – these missionaries were among the pioneers of modern education. The educational institutions established by them also gave religious instruction in Christianity and a small fraction of their student's population became Christian.⁹

In 1844 Christian missionaries established missionary schools in Almora. It was the first institution to initiate western education here, at present known as Ramsay School, its the oldest educational institute in Kumaun Region.¹⁰

The Presbyterian Church mission did commendable work in the education field in Uttarakhand. In 1853, Dehra Boys Mission School was established by Mr. Woodside. By 1884, there were 162 Boys on rolls. The school occupied a strategic position in the heart of town and laid special emphasis on theological education. Even Christian allowance was paid to the Christian teachers of the school. Now it's known as a mission school. In 1865, a primary school now known as Messmer High School was established by American Mission at the place Chopta, Near Pauri Town.

The Christian Missionaries paid attention to female education, however as was the case in other parts of India, in Uttarakhand also female education was not popular. As the hillman says, girls are too valuable to waste their time on book learning. They have plenty of work in the way of carrying grass and wood.¹¹

The Christian Missionaries established Girls Schools, one such school was Christian Girls School at Dehradun at present known as CNI, it was started as a boarding school for the daughters of Anglo-Indian Christians by Mrs. & Mr. David Harron in 1859. The school aimed to bring up the girls in a Christian environment. Several schools for girls were established in the hills of Mussoorie and Nainital. The aim was to establish boarding schools for girls in a healthy atmosphere of hill stations moreover most of the schools established by missionaries were boarding schools – because they wanted that contact between pupils and teachers should be maximum few such schools which are still in prosperous condition woodstock school (1854), Landour. Mussoorie, Convent of Jesus and Mary in Dehradun 1901, St. Joseph Academy 1934 Dehradun.

These were established primarily to educate the catholic community and preserve catholic faith and religious practices.¹² A list of some of these school is given below :

List of some important schools of the British Garhwal

S.N.	Name of School	Year of Place establishment	Founder
1.	Ramsay Intermediate	1844 Almora	Christian Missionaries
2.	Waverly Convent (first convent school) in Northern Province	1845 Mussoorie	Christian Missionaries
3.	St. George College	1853 Mussoorie	Bishop Carlie
4.	Woodstock School	1854 Mussoorie	American Presbyterian Church
5.	Sherwood School	1871 Nainital	D. Octor, Candon and Mr. H.S. Red
6.	St. Mary	1878 Nainital	Christian Missionaries
7.	Whneberg Allen School	1886 Mussoorie	Mrs.Barton, Mr. & Mrs. Arthur Brigdeer, CordierAlferd Powell.
8.	Oak Grove Railway School	1887 Mussoorie	Sind & Punjab Railway Company
9.	D.A.V. School (Now P.G. College)	1902 Dehradun	Jyoti Swarup, Puran Singh Negi
10.	MahadeviKanyaPathshala (Now P.G. College)	1902 Dehradun	Mrs. Mahadevi
11.	Islamia School	1906 Mussoorie	MaulaviMohd. Sayyid
12.	Arya KanyaPathshala	1917 Mussoorie	B. Ramchander
13.	Hindu National School	1920 Dehradun	Kedarnath
14.	Ghananand High School	1927 Mussoorie	Ghananand, Khanduri
15.	BalaVidyaNiketan	Mussoorie (Later shifted to Nainital)	
16.	NariShilp	1930 Dehradun	Dhanwanti Devi
17.	Doon School	1935 Dehradun	SatishRanjan Das

Sources : (1) DevkiNandanPandey: Glorious Dehradun

(2) Ruskin Bond:Mussoorie and Landour

(3) Uttar Pradesh: District Gazetteer of Dehradun

By 1904 in the whole united province, 69 European schools had 4,376 students on the roll-out of these 21 schools were in Mussoorie and Nainital which were established by missionaries. Most of these schools were established to fulfill the requirements of an elite group of Europeans so the local population was not benefited much from these schools, even then later on these schools were utilized by the Indian rich class and they played important role in spreading Christian values and culture in this region especially in hill stations like Mussoorie, Nainital& Dehradun.

Western education made its way to TehriGarhwal also but its spread was lesser here as compared to the British Garhwal. Before the reign of Bhawani Shah (1871), education was not counted as duties of rulers. In TehriGarhwal's first time in

1862 Bhawani Shah allowed Rs. 5/- per month as a Royal grant to the Sanskrit Pathshala in Deorayag. This was done on the insistence of captain Smith School inspector of the British Garhwal.

Pratap Shah (1871 – 1886) was the first Tehri ruler who was much influenced by English education, realizing the necessity of providing educational facilities to his subjects, the Raja established a school at Tehri in 1883 known as Anglo-Vernacular middle school. In 1940 this school was raised to an intermediate school later known as Pratap Intermediate College. Thus Pratap Shah was the first ruler who introduced English education in his state. It was due to his efforts that some children started learning Hindi, Persian and English.

During the Kirti Shah regime – Anglo Vernacular school of Tehri was raised to a high school. Hewatt Sanskrit Pathshala, Muhmaddan Madrassa a Kanya Pathshala were started during his rule. Madarsa & Kanya Pathshalawas established due to his efforts. He established basic schools in every patti. It was due to his efforts that the number of village schools had reached 17 till 1908-1909. Which was negligible at the beginning of the 19th century. Among these were thirty lower upper primary schools, Hewett Sanskrit Pathshala – 1, Kanya Pathshala – 1. In 1918, a Sanskrit Pathshala was started now known as Kirti Inter College at Kirtinagar.¹³

Several primary schools were established during Narender Shah. He also gave financial assistance to bright students for studying abroad. To commemorate the memory of Raja Kirti Shah, he donated one lakh rupees and announced a financial grant of 6 thousand rupees annually to Benaras Hindu University in 1933, Owing to which Sir Kirti Shah Chair of Industrial Chemistry was established there B.H.U. honoured him LLD.

Western education played important role in Uttarakhand. Its introduction in Uttarakhand was primarily motivated by the needs of the British government however it played a contradictory double role, although it was introduced to cater needs of the British government it also helped the people of Uttarkhand in their struggle against British rule.

The educational institutions like Indian boys hill school. Almora, Ramsay school, Almora, Messmore School Pauri, D.A.V. Dehradun created a class of educated Uttarakhandis who were deadly against the British rule although they were the product of western education. Most of the important leaders of this hill state of the early 20th century like Harshdev Auli, Govind Vallabh Pant, Victor Mohan Joshi, Ansuya Prasad, Shri Deo Suman had got western education from the schools established either by British Government or Missionaries. These people further

disseminated their ideas among the people of Uttarakhand through their newspapers like SaktiSaptahiki, SwadhinPraja, AlmoraAkhbar and many others. The number of newspapers increased due to the spread of western education. These educated people led the national movement. Even the places in Uttarakhand which played a leading role in the national movement of Uttarakhand were the places like – Almora, Nainital, Pauri, Dehradun where the spread of English education was more as compared to other places of Uttarakhand. However, this does not mean that only educated people led the movement the real force was the public's mass force.

Some educational institutions like Gurukul in this hill region trained a class of persons who did great service for national awakening, for freedom struggle, and human development. The pupils of this institution did great jobs in the national interest. Gurukul used education for the social religious political development of the nation. The founders of Gurukul injected into their pupils the nationalist feelings.¹⁴

This educated class was behind many organizations like KumaonParishad, debating club, TehriRajyaPrajaMandal. These organizations infused national consciousness among the people of Uttarakhand. Thus although scanty in number, the educated class spread ideas of nationalism democracy andrationalism, however, Indian nationalism was not merely the product of western education it was the outcome of new social material conditions created in the British rule.¹⁵

The people of Uttarakhand who were very much Pro-British at the time of the mutiny started raising their voices against the British regime from the very beginning of the 20th century. There is no doubt that it was the gradual increase in literacy that inspired social consciousness and political awareness among the people of Uttarakhand. The direct result of which came out in the form of the anti-British movement to secure independence.

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