UNIT 8  INDIAN AWAKENING

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8.1 INTRODUCTION

This unit discusses the Indian awakening. It describes the condition of Indian society during the 18th century and highlights the impact of British rule on India in the political, economic and social fields. Further, it deals with the social and religious reform movements and their impact on Indian society in raising national consciousness.

The unit also provides ample scope for the use of different instructional strategies to achieve the instructional objectives. Adequate description of the content helps you to identify the major thrust areas in teaching the topic. The evaluation items guide you in framing your own items to the level of your students. Though there are different activities and evaluation items suggested in the unit, modifications according to the needs of your situation are not only permissible but desirable.

8.2 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you will be able to:
- identify major terms, concepts, etc., related to the topic of this unit;
- define the meaning of the terms / concepts identified;
- formulate instructional objectives;
- list the required instructional aids;
- develop evaluation test items;
- organise field trips to appropriate places to achieve intended instructional objectives.

8.3 CONTENT

8.3.1 Indian Society in the 18th Century

During the eighteenth century, there was economic stagnation in India. Craftsmen and agriculturists used simple tools. Towns and cities had developed as administrative,
pilgrimage or commercial centres. Luxury goods produced by industries were meant for
the urban population and foreign trade. Though vast profits were made by foreign trade,
they were not used to develop industries.

Economic stagnation was accompanied by social stagnation too. There was the caste
system which led to inequality and social disunity. The Hindu social system practised
sati, female infanticide, child marriage and belief in superstitions. The status of women
deteriorated and widows could not marry. Muslims were also divided due to various
differences. Politically, there was no conception of a united Indian nation. The
conception of nationality of the Marathas was limited. Taking advantage of the economic,
social and political weaknesses, the British conquered India.

8.3.2 Impact of British Rule in India

Politically, India became a single administrative unit under the rule of law enforced by the
British for every citizen.

Economically, there was disruption of the traditional Indian social and economic relationships.
There was the system of Permanent Settlement of land in which the cultivators had no
rights. Under the Ryotwari system, peasants had miserable living conditions and were
in the clutches of money lenders. Land revenue assessment was based on land holding and
had to be paid in cash. This gave way to specialisation and commercialisation of crops-
destroying the self-sufficiency of the villages. This resulted in the problem of indebtedness
and landlessness.

There was, then, the destruction of Indian industry and trade. India became the largest
consumer of foreign products from the principal exporter of Indian products. Though the
development of the railways destroyed the traditional pattern of the Indian economy, a few
modern industries began to be developed. This was a landmark in Indian history.

Socially, British rule gave rise to several new social classes in India like the middle class,
industrialists, traders, landless peasants, moneylenders and professionals. The liberal
ideas of the west were introduced in India by enacting social legislation and introducing
modern education. Laws were enacted to abolish sati, ban infanticide and grant the legal
right to widows to remarry.

8.3.3 Reform Movements - Social and Religious

Social and religious reform movements arose among all communities of the Indian people
to lay the foundations of modernization. They paved the way for the growth of a national
consciousness and a national movement aimed at the independence of the country and at
the reconstruction of society. In social life, the reform movements aimed at the abolition of
castes, of child marriage and of other legal and social inequalities. In religion, they attacked
bigotry, superstition and the hold of the priestly class.

A large number of reform movements sprouted in different parts of the country. Raja
Rammohan Roy, who came to be called the “father of modern India”, founded the Brahmo
Samaj in Bengal. He condemned polytheism and idol worship and propagated the
concept of one God for all. He attacked the caste system and persuaded the Government
to abolish practices like sati and child marriage. He supported equal rights for women,
widow remarriage, modern education and the cause of freedom.

Keshab Chandra Sen expanded the work of the Brahmo Samaj throughout the country.
Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar worked for the cause of women by promoting the education of
girls. He also supported widow remarriage.

Prathana Samaj was founded in Bombay. Its activities were similar to those of the Brahmo
Samaj. Mahadev Govinda Ranade was a leading person of the Prathana Samaj and the
Indian Social Conference.

Jyotirao Govindrao Phule worked for the oppressed castes in Maharashtra by organising
the Sathyashodhak Samaj. Similar movements were started in Andhra by Veersalingam
and in Kerala by Narayana Guru.
Dayanand Saraswati founded the Arya Samaj which opposed the caste system and fought for the equality of women with men. Its greatest achievement was in the field of education.

Vivekananda set up the Ramakrishna Mission and popularised the Vedantic philosophy, mysticism and the path of devotion to God.

Annie Besant was the leader of the theosophical movement and was devoted to the revival of the Hindu religion. Her activities were more significant in the field of education. She organised the Home Rule League and contributed to the development of the national spirit in India.

Though the reform movements among the Muslims developed late, these were concerned with imparting modern English education to Muslims, campaigning against polygamy and the purdah system and reinterpreting religion.

Nawab Abdul Latif founded the Mohammedan Literacy Society in Calcutta to advocate the learning of the English language and the modern sciences.

Syed Ahmed Khan started the Aligarh Movement and wanted to remove the bitter enmity between Muslims and the British Government. He also wanted a proper interpretation of Islam and modern education to Muslims. He prepared Muslims to meet the challenge before them and strove for Hindu-Muslim unity.

Mirza Ghulam Ahmed founded the Ahmediya Movement and emphasised modern education and the universal and humanitarian character of Islam.

The Deoband school kept alive the spirit of political freedom by making common cause with the congress.

Being active in the Indian Social Conference, Badruddin Tayabji worked for social reform among Muslims to promote common national interests.

There were many more leaders of different communities who contributed to reforms. While Behramji Malabari and Ramabari strove for women’s uplift, Nauroji Furdonji and Dadabhai Nauroji and Singh Sabha worked for the spread of education.

Social and religious reforms gradually became an integral part of the struggle for political freedom resulting in the national movement.

Check Your Progress

Notes: a) Space is given below for your answers.

b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

1. Under which system did peasants in British India have difficult life in the clutches of moneylenders?

2. Who is known as the father of modern India?

3. Who is the founder of the Arya Samaj?

8.3.4 Impact of Reform Movements

Reform legislation and attitudinal changes among Indians were the major impact of the reform movements.

In the field of emancipation of women, legal measures were introduced to abolish sati and female infanticide. Permission was given for widow remarriage and the marriageable age of girls was raised to ten years.
The various reform movements, though differing from each other, together helped in the awakening of the people to the need for change. They united the people and attacked the caste system. They contributed to the birth of Indian nationalism and tackled social evils on a national basis. People became aware of the exploitative nature of the colonial rule under the leadership of Dadabhai Naoroji, M.G. Ranade, G.V. Joshi and R.C. Duff. They exposed the disastrous consequences of British rule on the Indian economy.

8.3.5 Growth of Education and its Impact

The credit of starting the system of imparting modern education in India goes to Christian missionaries and individual officers of the East India Company who started school and printed books mainly to spread Christianity.

As the challenges of modern time increased, many Indians started realising that modern education was necessary to meet the new challenges. Many educational institutions were started both by the Europeans and Indians. Indian students became familiar with the revolutionary and democratic ideas of the Western world.

The British wanted people to man minor jobs and spread European culture which resulted in the introduction of English education in India. This gave rise to a controversy between Anglicists, who advocated western-style education through English, and orientalists who advocated the encouragement of Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic learning and teaching through the local language. But the Government favoured Anglicists and preferred English knowing candidates for the Government jobs. As the British did not take up the direct responsibility of spreading education, the primary education got neglected.

Under the Wood’s Dispatch the Government spread education through the local language and English at the school stage and through English at the college stage. Its aim was to spread western culture and prepare Indians for administrative responsibilities. Later Indians themselves took up the responsibility of spreading modern education.

The spread of education brought many changes among Indians. Though the decline of the traditional system of education led to the illiteracy of the majority, English education brought Indians into close contact with rational and scientific ideas. It spread the ideas of democracy, nationalism and socialism. English education also created a class of people who felt themselves different from the rest as it did not promote thinking in the interest of the Indian people.

Modern education evoked interest in rediscovering and restudying the past to understand the present. The Asiatic Society, founded by William Jones, enquired into the history and antiquity of the arts, sciences and literature of Asia. Many ancient works were translated. Preservation and appreciation of the remains of the past started. The British Government encouraged the study of the Indian past as it felt that knowledge about the past was necessary for the present and the future.

Knowledge about India’s past helped Indians regain pride and confidence in themselves and prepared them for the struggle for national independence.

There was a tremendous development in literature and the arts which contributed to the growth of a modern culture. Novels and dramas were written with an eye on the present. Poetry became more secular with national themes. These new forms of literature revolutionised popular attitudes. The revival of the art of painting was influenced by contemporary western styles.

The press became an important factor in integrating the people. It disseminated information, mobilised public opinion and became a forum for expression of opinion on matters of public interest. On the one hand there were a number of newspapers and journals to propagate social reforms and to support Government policies. On the other hand there were others to voice anti-Government and pro-India opinion. The Indian press grew and became a strong instrument of raising national consciousness in spite of the curtailed freedom of the Press.
Check Your Progress

Notes:  a) Space is given below for your answers.

b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

4. What contributed to the major impact of the reform movements?

5. What were the major reasons for the introduction of English education during the British rule?

8.4 INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGY

Instructional strategy for this unit includes instructional objectives, teaching-learning activities and evaluation of student performance.

8.4.1 Instructional Objectives

The instructional strategy adopted will enable the student to achieve the following objectives. The student will be able to:

- analyse the economic, social and political conditions of Indian society in the 18th century;
- give reasons for the British conquest of India;
- list the major impact of the British rule on India;
- describe the permanent settlement and the Ryotwani system;
- give reasons for the increase in the growing of commercial crops;
- name the new social classes which arose in India after the British conquest;
- name the various social and religious reformers and describe their contribution to Indian society;
- arrange the various organisations of social reform in order of their formation and list important leaders associated with each;
- list the major reform legislations for uplifting the status of women;
- describe the similarities and differences between the Brahmo Samaj and the Aligarh Movement;
- analyse the attitudinal changes brought about in Indian society as a result of the reform movements;
- name the leaders who made the people of India aware of economic exploitation by the British;
- appreciate the contribution made by reformers;
- give reasons for imparting modern education in India by Christian missionaries and the British Government;
- distinguish between Anglicists and Orientalists;
- describe the importance of Wood’s Dispatch;
name the agencies which helped in the spread of English education in India in the 19th century;
- appreciate the positive result of the spread of English education in India.

8.4.2 Teaching-Learning Activities

i) Indian society in the eighteenth century

The students are to be taught about the economic, social and political condition of Indian society during the eighteenth century. You may describe the conditions by relating them to the present day society with optimum participation by students. Allow the students to give reasons for the British conquest of India.

Activities

1. What would you do to get the reasons from the students for the British conquest of India?

   Later ask the students to describe the features of the Hindu and Muslim social systems.

2. If you ask the students to compare Hindu and Muslim social systems, what type of answer do you expect from them?

ii) Impact of British rule on India

Now you may proceed to discuss the impact of British rule on India.

Activities

3. List the terms that you would like to introduce to your student on the impact of British rule in India.

   Having listed the terms, you have to describe each of them to the class.

4. Pick up any one term and write how you would develop that term/concept among the students.

   You can further lead the class on to a discussion by asking a number of questions. Some of them are given below:

1) The British introduced uniform rule of law. How did this unite the people?

2) Which were the two important revenue systems followed by the British?

3) What problems were faced by the peasants?

Activity

5. Write any four questions to lead the class to a discussion on the social impact of British rule on India.

Display the political map of India in the class and ask the students to locate the industrial centres where the early industries were put up by the British (cotton, jute, coal, mine) and ask the class to analyse why these industries were put up and what their advantages were.

iii) Reform movements — Social and religious

A major result of British rule in India was the reform movements which were both social and religious in nature. You can have a discussion on the social evils of the then society.
Display pictures of different social evils practised. Let the students identify the ones which are not prevailing much in present-day society. You may ask the class to describe the need for reform movements.

**Activities**

6. What other methods would you follow to tell the students about the different social evils of those days?

Having understood about social evils and the need for reform movements, display the picture of great reformers in the class. Help the students identify them. Ask them to refer to books/biographies and note their contributions in bringing social and religious reforms to Indian society and present it in the class.

7. Suggest project work with a brief description which you wish to give to your students on social and religious reforms.

Organise a field trip to one of the nearby social institutions which serve the cause of the people, e.g., Mahila Samaj, orphanage, drug addiction removal centres etc. Describe the purpose, plans and implementation strategies of these institutions and follow-up activities.

Having collected information about the reforms and their contribution to the movements, ask the students to locate the places connected with their movements on the map of India.

8. Formulate an evaluation/test item to test whether the students know the different organisations and the reformers who founded them.

iv) Impact of reform movements

As the reform movements spread all over India among the Hindus and Muslims, they had an impact in bringing about legislations for raising the status of women. They also contributed to attitudinal changes among Indians.

You may ask the class why there was a need to raise the status of women and what legal measures might have been taken. Let the class list them. You may guide the students in giving the appropriate answers.

While discussing the attitudinal changes among Indians as a result of reform movements, you need to have a few objectives.

**Activities**

9. Formulate any three instructional objectives which you intend to achieve while discussing the attitudinal changes brought about among Indians as a result of the reform movements.

To achieve the above mentioned objectives formulated by you, there is a need to have some content.

10. Write the content that you require to achieve the instructional objectives framed by you.

To make the students know the above content a discussion can be held in the class. It should result in giving a feeling of unity in diversity.

The following questions can be asked to lead the students to a discussion on the above content.

- What did all the reform movements help in?
- What social evils did they tackle?
Did they tackle the social evils community-wise or on a national basis? Give brief details in support of your answer.

This form of tackling social evils resulted in a kind of feeling among people. What was that feeling? What were the bonds which held them together?

Describe to the students the economic exploitation of India by the British. Ask them to find out the impact of this exploitation on Indians and the names of those persons who made the Indian people aware of the exploitation.

v) Growth on education and its impact

The growth of education and its impact on Indian society played a great role in the national movement. To gain knowledge about this a classroom discussion may be arranged after asking the students to collect adequate information. It may begin by asking the questions given below:

- Who started modern education in India?
- What was the purpose?
- What were the challenges faced by the Indians?
- Why did they think it necessary to have modern education?
- How did the Indian students become familiar with revolutionary and democratic ideas?
- Why did the British favour the spread of English education among Indians?
- Who were Anglicists and Orientalists?
- What was Wood's Despatch?
- What were the main changes brought about by Wood's Despatch in the field of education?

You may add to the discussion by describing to the students new ideas like democracy which grew among Indians as a result of education. They may also be made aware of the problems which crept in as a result of English education.

Activity 11. What problems would you make the class aware of which crept into our society as a result of English education?

Though the people were for English education there grew an interest in rediscovering and restudying the past of India. Ask the students to name the ancient works which were translated into local languages.

Let them also find out the necessity of knowing the past. Later ask the questions given below to continue the discussion.

- Why did the British encourage a restudy of the past?
- What was the result of the knowledge of India's past among Indians?
- What were the developments in art and literature?
- What influence did they make on the minds of the people?
- What role did the press play in integrating the people and developing a national consciousness?

Name some newspapers of early nineteenth century. You may conclude the discussion by summing up that the growth of education promoted awareness of new ideas and of the world and nurtured ideas for the reconstruction of India, in spite of its limited nature/scope.
12. What alternative strategy would you like to follow for teaching this topic? Describe in brief.

List instructional aids that you may use for the above topic.

**8.4.3 Evaluation**

- Describe the condition of Indian society in the 18th century.
- Compare the economic and social conditions of 18th century Indian society with those of present day Indian society.
- How did the British conquer India so easily?
- List the major social and religious evils of Indian society.
- Describe Permanent Settlement, the Ryotwary System, Anglicists, Orientalists and modern educators.
- What problems were faced by the peasants?
- Which new social class arose in India after the British conquest?
- What was the impact of liberal ideas of the West in British India?
- Describe the contributions made by Raja Rammohan Roy, Dayanand Saraswati and Syed Ahmed Khan in bringing about social and religious reforms.
- Match the following:
  
a) Annie Besant
     Vivekanand
     Nawab Abdul Latif
     M.G. Ranade
     Mirza Ghulam Ahmed
     Syed Ahmed Khan
  
b) Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar
     Rammohan Roy
     Dadabhai Nauroji
     Bal Gangadhar Tilak

- What did the British Government do to raise the status of women?
- How did the attitudinal changes among Indians after the reform movements help in organising the national movement?
- How did English education help Indians?
- What role did the press play in developing national consciousness among Indians?
- On the given outline map of India locate the place of any six social reformers - prepare an index.

**8.5 LET US SUM UP**

In this unit, we presented a brief content analysis on the topic - Indian awakening. We also framed instructional objectives for this topic, suggested appropriate teaching-learning strategies and evaluation items. Whatever we have suggested as instructional strategy may be one out of many alternate strategies. You may also devise instructional strategy of your own to teach this particular topic.
8.6 UNIT-END ACTIVITIES

1. Pick up a similar unit and write down instructional objectives, content outline, instructional strategy and evaluation items.

2. Keep a collection of pictures of social and religious reforms and their important sayings.

3. Make an exhaustive list of newspapers of India during the 19th Century, the names of their editors and the places of publications.

8.7 POINT FOR DISCUSSION

- The alternate strategies that could be followed for the topic ‘Indian Awakening’.

8.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Ryotwary System
2. Raja Rammohan Roy
3. Dayananda Saraswati
4. i) Reform legislation, and ii) Attitudinal changes among Indians.
5. To man minor jobs and spreading European culture.

8.9 SUGGESTED READINGS


