

# The Evolution of Modern Education in Jammu and Kashmir under Dogra Rule (1846-1900 A.D.)

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## Abstract

Learning is a complex idea with different meanings, commonly associated with traditional schooling, ongoing education throughout life, or gathering knowledge, abilities, and outlooks. In the region of Jammu and Kashmir, learning development has been shaped by various viewpoints and historical backgrounds. After signing the Treaty of Lahore in 1846 A.D., the State kept a rudimentary indigenous educational system, including Pathshalas and Madrassas. Significant progress started under Maharaja Ranbir Singh (1857–1885 A.D.), a progressive leader who supported contemporary learning and set up educational institutions and translation centres. The arrival of Western education was accelerated by Christian missionaries, who, despite facing early opposition, were instrumental in revamping education and healthcare. By the end of the 19th century, Jammu and Kashmir witnessed the creation of modern educational facilities and the integration of English and scientific subjects into the curriculum, establishing a more contemporary educational system that blended traditional and Western teaching methods.

**Keywords:** Education, Modernization, Missionaries, Schools, Visionary.

## Introduction

The concept of education can be understood in numerous ways. It is often described as structured or continuous learning throughout one's life. Specific experts in the field see it as the process of gaining knowledge, abilities, and perspectives. Some view education solely as a mental exercise, encouraging individuals to reconsider their desires. Suppose you were to inquire about the definition of education from a Statesman, a craftsman, an educator, a parent, a thinker, or a pupil. In that case, you'd be astonished by the various opinions and understandings regarding this topic (NCERT, 2014).

The territory of Jammu and Kashmir came into existence on the seventh day following the Treaty of Lahore (this treaty was signed on March 9, 1846, A.D., where the Sikh administration handed over a substantial portion of her lands, such as Kashmir, to the East India Company. Shortly after this, on March 16, 1846 A.D., the Treaty of Amritsar was signed between the British and Gulab Singh. Maharaja Gulab Singh had limited time to enact reforms in the kingdom since he had to spend time maintaining the newly created State's security (Choudhary, 2007). The State continued to support the traditional native educational system. Because no one was encouraged to study by the state government,

just a few male students could attend these primitive local institutions (Choudhary, 2007). Until the State introduced the Western educational system in Jammu and Kashmir, the native schools, known as Pathshalas and Madrassas, were run by members of the Hindu and Muslim communities and were generally housed in mosques and temples. In Muslim schools, students were frequently expected to read the Holy Quran in Arabic. Sanskrit was often taught to Hindu students so that they could read their holy writings. Some schools taught Persian and rudimentary maths in addition to these two languages (Chouhan, 2001).

The State of Jammu and Kashmir was only strengthened by Maharaja Ranbir Singh (1857-1885 A.D.), Maharaja Gulab Singh's successor. His brain leaned towards academia; he was enthusiastic about art, education, and social and religious issues. His education was supplied through a regular approach. He witnessed how education evolved in British India based on the recommendations of several Commissions and how British India affected them, and he was an extraordinary visionary. He thoroughly examined Charles Wood's proposed plan for the British Indian Provinces. He considered it relatively useful to have attempted to give modern scientific training. However, he saw that the State's people were so backward that they didn't value it. He considered that the State's residents were the ones who pursued the construction of institutions following modern lines (Choudhary, 2007). He established various new Pathshalas, Madrassas, or Makhtabs and provided generously to the already existing ones. During Maharaja Ranbir Singh's reign, Christian Missionaries were present in Srinagar.

Maharaja Ranbir Singh had his further education in the States of Jammu and Kashmir. He was a promoter of arts and education. He opened a printing house in Jammu to publish books. The Translation Bureau, established by Maharaja Ranbir Singh, translated books from English into Hindi and Persian on geology, geography, history, physics, and other relevant fields (Bamzai, 2007).

Jammu's Matriculation School opened in the first half of the 1800s. This school's curriculum included English, Sanskrit, law, Ayurvedic, Tib, and Persian. The Srinagar School was established in 1874 A.D. to give education to the intermediate level. Sanskrit and Persian were the vehicles of instruction. In 1883 A.D., 450 Muslim students were enrolled in an experimental school that taught Arabic. Rev. J. S. Doxey built the Mission School in Kashmir in 1881 A.D., which was the first time modern education was offered there. Maharaja Ranbir Singh and the general public vehemently opposed the institution. They believed that the Mission was intended to convert people to Christianity. Rev. Doxey was encouraged to continue the school's activities by the steadfast determination of the first two pupils, Pandits Anand Koul and Narain Das (Bamzai, 2007).

The State School was established by Maharaja Ranbir Singh in 1874 A.D. The name suggested a school. Maharaja Ranbir Singh was the first Dogra ruler to take an interest in education in the State of Jammu and Kashmir. Two schools were founded in the twin towns of Jammu and Srinagar in

1874. The institutions were called Srinagar Middle School and Ranbir High School Jammu. Many native Tsatahal run by Pandits and Mullahs taught a few fundamental books in Sanskrit and Persian without a systematic method or guiding ideology. When Dr A. Mitra (Dr A. Mitra's success as a medical administrator resulted in ever-increasing burdens being placed on his shoulders, and no fewer than nine departments were entrusted to him, namely Jails, Municipality, Education, the Chemical Laboratory, Zoological Gardens, Sanitation, Meteorology, Museum, and Public Library. These departments were extensively reorganized and ably managed by Dr. Mitra.). In 1886 A.D., the State School was transformed into a regular school. English education was added, and the university curriculum was updated according to the curriculum (Bamzai, 2007). Maharaja Ranbir Singh was so concerned with boys' education and training that, during his reign, he passed a law establishing compulsory schooling in the State of Jammu and Kashmir. He criticized some parents for not paying their sons adequate attention in school. He founded contemporary schools for the technical sciences, languages, arts, and many trades. Raghunath Temple in Jammu was well-known for delivering excellent indigenous education. During the same period, it became a vital hub for Sanskrit education. Maharaja Ranbir Singh built the Raghunath Sanskrit Mahavidyalaya in 1857 A. D. This indigenous institution achieved significant advances and became a key Sanskrit teaching hub in Northern India. Throughout Maharaja Ranbir Singh's administration, education in Jammu City and the rest of Jammu and Kashmir State began to take on more modern forms, with considerable advances in both Jammu and Kashmir. Initially, each tehsil and wizarad had a school built, and finances were put aside to continue learning Eastern languages. Several scholarships were offered, and books were provided at no expense to the pupils (Singh, 1995).

A cholera outbreak spread across the city during Dr. Elmslie's summer campaign in 1867 A.D. His writing demonstrates that his request for assistance from the government was denied. Dr. Elmslie continued the medical Mission's summer campaigns until 1870 A.D. The Rev. W.T. Stores worked during Dr. Elmslie's leave of absence in 1870. He returned in 1872 and worked over the summer. He died in Gujarat in the same year while returning from Kashmir to Punjab. Dr. Elmslie healed thousands of Kashmiris throughout four seasons, "doing an enormous amount of good in Kashmir" (Khan, 2007). Dr. Elmslie's pioneering efforts paid off when, shortly after his death, Maharaja Ranbir Singh authorized the missionaries to stay in Srinagar for an entire year. His efforts and those of his successors resulted in the medical missionaries being able to carry on their work in Kashmir without much trouble. While commenting on Dr Elmslie's efforts in Kashmir, Dr Ernest Neve writes, «The antagonism of the State authorities had been, to a significant part overcome, the confidence of the Kashmiris had been earned, and an enormous amount of comfort had been offered to them. Four Kashmiris converted to Christianity. For many years, one remained a loyal Christian teacher in Kashmir. The first Kashmir State dispensary was established as an indirect outcome of the Medical Mission, and it served as the progenitor to the current comprehensive Medical Department" (Khan, 2007).

Dr Elmslie laboured to accomplish a notable result: in 1868 A.D., the State began supporting an Arabic school, basically the first government school. It was founded solely on government support. As a result, the government accomplished one of its essential responsibilities and sparked the revival of the indigenous educational system. Dr. Elmslie narrates the story of how this school came about. It was said that Sher Ali, a Srinagar native and father of two boys, had asked Dr. Elmslie to instruct his sons in English. The doctor assigned one of his assistants to teach his youngsters English because he had to travel throughout the day to offer medical treatment. When Maharaja Ranbir Singh brought the situation to his notice, the father was strongly encouraged to discontinue sending his boys to the mission bungalow to learn English. Maharaja Ranbir Singh then issued an order to construct an Arabic language school “intended exclusively for the sons of those who may be called the nobility of Kashmir” (Khan, 2007).

Dr. Theodore Maxwell maintained the medical practice when Dr Elmslie died in 1872 A.D. The situation had transformed. The missionaries’ dedicated labour and commitment overcome the local authorities’ prejudices. Consequently, they developed a cordial relationship with the people of Kashmir. The Kashmir Medical Mission had such an impact that the government established the first state dispensary in Srinagar in 1870 A.D. It was additionally noteworthy that in 1874 A.D., Maharaja Ranbir Singh provided space for the Mission Hospital on the hill known as Rustum Gaddi under the Takht-i-Sulaiman, even though in the early days of 1860 A.D., Maharaja Ranbir Singh had not granted the doctor one inch of territory. The structure was built using public money. The facility was named the Drugjan Facility. Furthermore, the State provides free light and electricity to the Mission Hospital every year. The Maharaja also visited the hospital on several occasions. It was also significant that, instead of the early days when officials attempted to terrify patients and their families, patients and their families freely sought the medical knowledge and help given by the Drugjan Hospital in the Valley. The hospital attendance number demonstrates the tremendous alterations in Srinagar driven by Western pressure. No other hospital in Srinagar has the reputation that Drugjan Hospital was built. It was a godsend for the Valley’s medically disadvantaged residents. The Zenana Missionary Society of the Church of England established a second hospital at Rainawari in Srinagar, Kashmir. Rainawari is situated on the N.H. “Srinagar-Leh” route, about 4 km from Lal Chowk. Rainawari was known as Rajanavatika in ancient times and was regarded as the most significant suburb of Srinagar, located on the north side and crossed by multiple canals from Dal Lake.) Miss Butler, a woman doctor, Miss Irene Petrie, and Miss Robinson, a certified nurse, “who laid down their lives on duty in the Valley,” were among the lady missionaries whose dedication to the cause of women’s health was recognized, Miss Kate Knowles, another honourable physician who garnered tremendous respect for her contributions to the women of Srinagar (Khan, 2007). Dr. Elmslie, the first medical missionary in Kashmir, died but not before launching the educational campaign. However, considerable progress was only realized under the reign of Rev. J. Hinton Knowles in 1884 A.D. The Rev. C.E. Tyndale

Biscoe began the task early, and in 1905 A.D., an Oxford Honours man joined him (Neve, 1914).

The British were similarly interested in integrating contemporary education within the State. Their primary goal then was to keep control of the State's executive branch. The Foreign Secretary made a significant statement, "We are not much concerned in the particular matter of education," in response to a correspondence from the British Resident objecting to the State advertising a few openings of senior teachers in the C & M Gazette on July 6, 1886, A.D. (Bamzai, 2007). In 1898 A.D., the Mission School sent two boys to the intermediate test, which they both passed. Additionally, it reared eight boys, all of whom passed their middle school examinations. That year, seventeen and twenty-two boys sent by the State School passed the entrance and middle school examinations. Despite these favourable figures, education has progressed extremely slowly.

Modern education in Kashmir began in 1881 A.D. when Rev. J.S. Doxey established the Mission School. Maharaja Ranbir Singh and the Kashmiri people had to battle hard against the institution. They believed the Mission's principal objective was to convert people to Christianity. Rav Doxey kept the school going due to the unrelenting determination of the first two boys, Pandits Anand Koul and Narayan Das. The virtuous missionaries worked diligently for two years, happy with their early success and hopeful about their future growth and yielding fruit. The school made significant progress under his tenure, thanks solely to the hard work of Rev. J. Hinton Knowles, who succeeded him. His brother, the Rev. George Biscoe, also put in a lot of work and aided him when he handed over the reins to the Rev. C. Tyndale Biscoe in the spring of 1892 A.D. until more than 600 boys were in the Mission school. In 1886 A.D., Dr. A. Mitra strengthened the standing of the State school, adopted English teaching, and provided instruction compatible with the Punjab University curriculum (Bamzai, 2007).

Maharaja Ranbir Singh, an excellent visionary, foresaw educational growth in British India. He examined the plan devised by Charles Wood (Sir Charles Wood served as President of the Board of Control for India from January 1853 to February 1855 A.D., under Lord Aberdeen's ministry). He joined the office during a pivotal point in British rule of India. The time of the East India Company's Charter of 1833 A.D. was almost up, and Britain's future approach to Indian rule remained established. Wood discovered committees of both chambers of parliament active in gathering data about the character and impact of the government since 1833 A.D. The testimony revealed that there was little reason for congratulation on the extent to which the noble objectives of the reformers of the eighteen thirties had been realized in administrative action. The Charter Act of 1833 A.D. (was to have begun a period of change) had made detailed suggestions for the British Indian provinces. He found it helpful because it aimed to educate modern scientific education. But it occurred to him that the State's citizenry was so backward they had never comprehended. He thought the people who lived in the State were responsible for maintaining contemporary institutions.

However, many individuals must see the significance and usefulness of current education (Choudhary, 2007).

During the reign of Maharaja Ranbir Singh, three organizations supplied education to the people of Jammu and Kashmir: Christian missionaries, Pathshalas, and Madrassas, also known as Makhtabs. Maharaja Ranbir Singh founded two modern schools in the State. The Srinagar school opened to the intermediate level in 1874 A.D. The Jammu school opened in the early nineteenth century and was up to the matriculation grade. These schools taught Sanskrit, English, Law, Tibetan, and Persian (Rasool & Chopra, 2016). The Jammu school had 400 pupils enrolled in 1883 A.D., while the Srinagar school had 450 students. In 1890 A.D., the State possessed ten modern schools: eight elementary schools throughout the State, one middle school in Srinagar, and one high school in Jammu. In 1889 A.D., an organized system of school inspections was begun, led by a permanent school inspector (Rasool & Chopra, 2016). Maharaja Ranbir Singh, the State's monarch from 1857 to 1885 A.D., established no schools based on the Western educational model; but, in the first year of his reign, 1886 A.D., his son and successor, Maharaja Partap Singh, established one such school in the State. During this period, more Western-style education institutions were established (Chouhan, 2001). These contemporary educational institutions in the State of Jammu and Kashmir were divided into primary, middle, and high schools. Three courses were begun at a primary school: two upper primaries and one lower primary. Middle Vernacular School has the same grades as three and five. The development of a Middle Anglo-Vernacular school followed a similar path, except that English education began in the upper elementary levels and lasted through the three middle classes. The lower preparatory courses had been transferred to one or more branch schools around the State, leaving a high school with two high classes above the middle. In other cases, the high school offered English teaching at the upper elementary level. Two special courses were added below and above the lowest middle class to accommodate students who transferred from direct or middle schools where English was taught to the Anglo-vernacular or middle classes. In these sessions, there was a strong emphasis on teaching English. Only the first middle-class students were taught English in female Anglo-vernacular middle schools. Because these institutions were linked to Punjab University, the high schools prepared students for the university's matriculation examinations (Chouhan, 2001). In 1889, English and Urdu were proclaimed as the official languages of Kashmir. The government did not hire Jammu and Kashmir residents since they were poorly educated. As a result, the British sent numerous bright Sikhs, Muslims, and Hindus from Punjab to Kashmir. Names included S. Karam Singh Ranger, S. Bishan Singh Tehsildar, S. Tirath Singh Tehsildar (later D.C.), S. Damdoar Singh Engineer, S. Gurmukh Singh Engineer, Raizada Hukum Singh, D.F.O., Sher Singh, D.F.O., and Malik Swarup Singh A.C.F. (Sodhi, 2007). The St. Joseph English School was founded in Baramullah in 1905. Government schools were also established in select areas up to the fifth-grade level. Until 1890 A.D., there were no matriculated Kashmiri

Hindu, Muslim, or Sikh pupils. Since there were no adequate travel choices or boarding schools, the Sikhs found it incredibly difficult to continue further education, even if they had finished up to the fifth grade in village schools. Through numerous hardships, a few Sikhs from Baramulla and the neighbouring villages' schools completed their education to the matriculation level in English schools, at the mission schools, along with having a modern education, the student's physical health was well taken care of. They were urged to take part in community service. For example, the boys at the Mission school in Srinagar had to spend an hour in the exercise centre every day; on Thursdays, they had to play football and cricket in addition to their normal activities; and during the summer, they went swimming and boating once or twice a week (Sodhi, 2007; Chouhan, 2001).

A significant portion of current Indian historians think that modern education reached Indians through three primary channels: British administration, progressive Indians, and Christian missionaries. They significantly impacted the development of indigenous and contemporary education in the State of Jammu & Kashmir (Sooden, 1995). The English language was introduced to the Valley by British missionaries under the Dogra dynasty (1846-1947 A.D.). The English had established a hospital and an English-medium school in Srinagar, the State's summer capital. The facilities offered much-needed medical care to Kashmiris, while the school provided a modern education in the new English medium. English was introduced to Kashmir by Christian missionaries, and it was their most magnificent gift to Valley pupils. Their engagement in evangelizing the Valley while concealing their actions as a component of contemporary education first received harsh criticism from various social circles and the well-being of society. Despite considerable criticism, the Christian Missionaries continued their educational efforts. They eventually acquired the public's trust, resulting in a large enrolment of children from the Valley's wealthier classes. After a careful inspection, they discovered that superstition, exploitation, corruption, and persecution had depleted the indigenous people's devoted spirits. In order to help these oppressed people realize their true identities and compete with the rest of the world, Christian missionaries committed to providing them with an English education (Shah, 2014). The introduction of Christian missionaries in the second half of the nineteenth century A.D. marked a profound shift in Srinagar society. Before this, the culture remained untouched. Aside from the current educational development by Christian missionaries' operations in Srinagar, the numerous British administration approaches affected this area's social structure and institutions (Khan, 2007).

## Objectives

- To analyze the historical evolution of education in Jammu and Kashmir during the 19th century.
- To evaluate the impact of Maharaja Ranbir Singh's policies on the development of modern educational institutions in the region.

- To assess the role of Christian missionaries in introducing Western (Modern) educational practices and their influence on the local educational system in Jammu and Kashmir.

## **Methodology**

The methodology used in this study involves an analysis of secondary sources. The research examines the evolution of education in Jammu and Kashmir, focusing on the roles played by Maharaja Ranbir Singh and Christian missionaries. It includes a review of educational policies, the establishment of schools, and the impact of Western educational models. The study emphasizes the socio-cultural and political influences shaping Jammu and Kashmir State educational reforms.

## **Results**

The study reveals several key results. Firstly, it highlights Maharaja Ranbir Singh's significant role in modernizing education in Jammu and Kashmir by establishing schools and promoting scientific and literary translations. Secondly, the influence of Christian missionaries is evident in the introduction of Western educational practices, including the establishment of English-medium schools and medical facilities, which gradually gained acceptance among the local population. Thirdly, despite initial resistance, these efforts led to integrating contemporary subjects and methods into the native educational system, resulting in a more diverse and comprehensive academic framework. Lastly, the combined efforts of the State and missionaries paved the way for increased literacy and educational opportunities, particularly among the elite and emerging middle class.

## **Discussion Points and Suggestions**

### **1. Comparative Analysis:**

How did educational reforms in Jammu and Kashmir compare to overall changes in British India?

How did indigenous systems, such as Pathshalas and Madrassas, help preserve cultural identity?

### **2. Key Figures:**

Discuss Maharaja Ranbir Singh's goal for education and its impact on the region.

Discover how Rev. J.S. Doxey and Dr. Elmslie helped introduce contemporary systems.

### **3. Religion and Education Interaction:**

How did religious organizations and beliefs support and impede the advancement of education?

How missionary schools either strengthen or deepen societal divisions.

4. Impact on Society:

How did English and Western education affect social mobility in Jammu and Kashmir?

Examine how integrating contemporary schooling with traditional beliefs affects the region's cultural landscape throughout time.

5. Gender and Education:

Emphasize the role of education in reducing gender inequality throughout the Dogra era.

Examine programs for educating women and their impact on society.

6. Critical Reflection:

Did modern education strengthen or consolidate British influence in the region?

Consider the balance between conserving indigenous systems and implementing Western models.

## Conclusion

Ultimately, the evolution of education in Jammu and Kashmir under the rule of Maharaja Ranbir Singh and the influence of Christian missionaries represent a pivotal shift from traditional methods to modern systems. Maharaja Ranbir Singh, recognizing the stagnation in education, introduced contemporary schooling alongside native institutions, setting a foundation for progressive learning. Concurrently, Christian missionaries, despite initial resistance, made significant contributions by establishing schools and hospitals and embedding English education into the fabric of the Valley. Their persistent efforts eventually garnered public acceptance and led to a profound transformation in both educational and social structures. This blend of Indigenous reform and foreign influence laid the groundwork for a more inclusive and modern educational system in Jammu and Kashmir, demonstrating the complex interplay between traditional values and progressive change.

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