




## Be Mains Ready

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**Q.** Critically examine the evolution of modern education policies in India in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

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### Approach

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- Highlight the status of the education system during the British era
- Examine the evolution of modern education policies in India
- Discuss the important policies
- Conclude by referring to the rationale behind these policies and their consequences

Initially, the East India Company did not evince any particular interest in matters of education. Although the British had captured Bengal in 1757, yet the responsibility of imparting education remained only in Indian hands.

- The study of ancient texts written in Arabic, Persian and Sanskrit still continued.
- In 1781, Warren Hastings established a Madrasa in Calcutta to encourage the study of Muslim laws along with Arabic and Persian languages.
- A decade later in 1791 due to the sincere efforts of the British resident, Jonathan Duncan, a Sanskrit College was established to promote the study of Hindu laws and philosophy in Banaras.

During the first three decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the development of education took place only through traditional institutions. The contemporary British scholars were divided into two groups on the issue of development of education in India. Orientalists who advocated the promotion of oriental subjects through Indian languages and the Anglicists who advocated education in the medium of the English language.

- The East India Company began to adopt a dual policy in the sphere of education. It discouraged the prevalent system of oriental education and gave importance to western education and the English language.

- The Charter Act of 1813 adopted a provision to spend one lakh rupees per annum for the spread of education in India.
- The General Committee of Public Instruction was formed in 1835 to resolve the issue of the desired medium of instruction in education. However, it too failed in breaking the deadlock.
- The challenge was overcome in February 1835 when the Chairman of the Committee, Lord Macaulay announced his famous Minute advocating the Anglicist point of view.
- Consequently, it was declared that henceforth, government funds would be utilized for the promotion of western literature and science through the medium of the English language.
- In 1854, Sir Charles Wood sent a comprehensive dispatch as a grand plan on education. The dispatch recommended the introduction of grants in aid to encourage private participation in the field of education and establishing departments of public instructions.
- It also laid emphasis on the establishment of schools for technical education, teacher and women education.
- The dispatch recommended the establishment of one University each in Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras, on the model of London University. Consequently, within the next few years, Indian education became rapidly westernized.

Largely, the education policies of the British were self-serving. As T.B. Macaulay put it “a class of persons, Indian in blood and color, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect” need to be cultivated for sustaining the British rule. However, the unintended consequences of these moves were India’s exposure to modern western ideas like liberty, equality, and fraternity which provided ideological and moral backing to the demand for independence and self-rule