

A Study on Impact of British Rule on Modern Governance in India

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ABSTRACT:

British rule in India past independence set the stage for much of the governance we see today. The colonial era brought many rules in India just like (Political, Economic and Civic), bureaucracy and representative institutions. This legacy exposes in the form of artificial borders, centralized political systems, economic dependency, and social divisions, all of which continue to leverage post-colonial societies long after independence. These structures still today shape how India is operative, highlighting up in its political and legal systems. Meanwhile, British control both modernized and restricted India's economy and society. In Post-Independence the Infrastructure, education, and legal codes got a boost, but the policies often favoured British colonial period interests and left behind us poverty and inequality. It's an intricate legacy. That's why India's government and institutions are looking the way they do now. British rule didn't just influence laws and the economy. It also shaped India's national image and its long struggle after independence for the self-rule. After studying the British rule in India or the impact of Colonial Period to Indian System, we would become more and more aware of how British rule damaged every bit of Indian life including Religious, cultural, economic and political aspects. This political control also meant a long drawn cooperation between two distinct cultures one is British Culture and the other is Indian Culture. This paper is to study the Impact of British Rule on Modern Governance in India. Overall, we can see that the colonial legacy remains a powerful force in shaping post-colonial governance. While some nations have succeeded in overcoming these challenges, others continue to grasp with the on-going effects of colonialism, making the process of decolonization both complicated and on-going.

KEYWORDS:

Colonial, India, British, Legacy, Government.

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Introduction

Now we see today in the post-Independence period India's present government systems have deep roots in British colonial exercises. We see the administration is organized, the legal codes, and even the layers of government in present period all show British impact. The British East India Company was the main force behind, in shaping early control system during colonial period. The parliamentary system in India today began under impact of British rule. The British rule built a professional civil service to operate on India's huge boundary. This system was integrated, with clear ranking system and rules set by British India. It was all about productiveness and control, using rules and regulations set to report keep things running effectively. Today's Indian Administrative Service (IAS) is basically adopted after that British system. The bureaucracy was planned to keep law and order and collect taxes, but it also kept Indian participation restricted at the beginning. Over the time, more and more Indians were joined, but the system stayed pretty rigid and formal. That the same legacy is still visible in how things work now in the system of IAS. India's legal framework often follows British laws adapted during colonial times that are British rule in India. The British created in a common law system, with courts depending on written laws and case decisions. The Indian Penal Code and Civil Procedure Codes were created in the 1800s and are still in use by the Post-Independence Indian System. Their formation resonates in the British system. This kind of legal setup helped connect different groups under one same system, but sometimes it conflicted with local traditions. British rule in India split governance into central and provincial levels, forming India's federal structure. Domains had governors and councils, but real ruling power stayed with the British-appointed Viceroy. Today, we see different states with different elected leaders, but central or national laws still guide them. The Government of India Acts, especially the one from 1935, put the foundation for parliamentary democracy in India. This model tried to balance local violation with a strong national government. Indian participation in governance started under British reforms, though it only took off after independence. At first The British East India Company was to control large parts of India, acted as trading company and a government both simultaneously, setting early examples for administration and military control. The Company replaced the dying Mughal Empire and set up tax systems during that period, law

administration, and communication networks. The rule of British Empire was very hard, but it introduced systems the British Raj after some time it was formalized. That altered when the British Crown took over in 1858.

Colonial Rule: Economic Transformation

India's economy drastically changed under British rule. Land taxes, casualty to the local industries, transport systems are renovated, and rough farming policies become more fragile. These changes will definitely shape how the economy starts grew and how people lived.

Colonial Rule: Land Revenue Systems

The British India has set up three main land tax systems to India. The Zamindari system, In this system put landlords (zamindars) in charge of collects taxes from agricultural labours for the British. This is the high taxes and pressure on farmers also high.

The Ryotwari system, in this type of Ryotwari the British Government dealt directly with individual farmers, letting them own land if they paid set of taxes—though the rates were comparatively high and rigid. This system usually used in places like Madras and some parts of Gujarat.

The Mahalwari system, in this type of Mahalwari they worked through village communities, making the whole village have responsible for the tax payments. These path confused traditional village life and also increased financial stress among the villagers. In this system if farmers unable to pay the taxes they may lose their land forever.

Colonial Rule: Impact on Indian Industries

The impact on Indian economy is high when the Industrial Revolution in England happened, as it inverted the character and balance of India's foreign trade. This led to elimination of Indian handicrafts although there was no generous growth of modern factory industry. Indian local industries, like textiles, took a tremendous blow under British rule. Cheaper and cheaper British goods came in the Indian market and replaced Indian-made or Local products. Places such as Gujarat, once it is famous for textiles and handcraft weaving, saw their crafts downturn. The Industrial Revolution in Britain India created an appeal for Indian raw materials like cotton and silk, but the colonial policies pulled back India's own industrial growth. Trade increased in British India, but almost

always in Britain's benefitted out of the increased trade. Then Indian exports automatically shifted to raw materials, while finished goods were imported from others-thriving local economies and incomes.

Development of Railways and Infrastructure

The British built railway track to move goods and troops from one place to another. Tracks spread across India, connecting far-off areas to ports. These Railways helped farmers get crops to market faster and opened up new places for business and migration. Telegraphs and roads were also built to communications, making it easier for the colonial government to control our country.

Famines and Agricultural Policy

India was hit by the Famines again during the British rule. Agricultural policies involved on growing cash crops means commercial crops rather than the traditional crops for export instead of food, making local food supplies insufficient. Land revenue systems required in fixed taxes even when low harvests or harvests failed, causing very hardship to the Indian farmers. Many villages couldn't able to pay taxes and went hungry. During this the Government relief fund was often slow or restricted. These policies didn't do much to support the farmers who are under poverty and food security or farmer well-being.

Shaping Indian National Identity

British rule changed India, how it was saw itself and how it sped things. The Ideas concept of freedom and rights took hold, and leaders started pushing for independence. New Social reforms and new political ideas suited the country's future.

Centralization in Indian administration

One of the most enduring influences of British colonial administration is the centralized governance structure. The British gradually established a strong central authority in India, primarily to maintain control over the vast subcontinent and facilitate efficient resource extraction.

This centralized approach manifested in several ways:

Unified command: The Government of India Act of 1858 established direct British Crown rule, replacing the East India Company's administration. This created a unified command structure with the Viceroy at the top, representing the British Crown.

Hierarchical decision-making: A pyramid-like authority structure where major policy decisions flowed from the center to local administrations.

Standardized procedures: Common administrative procedures implemented across different regions to ensure uniformity and control.

Post-independence, India retained this centralized approach while adapting it to democratic governance. The Constitution of India established a strong Union government with extensive powers, including emergency provisions that allow for central intervention in state affairs under specific circumstances. This centralization has helped maintain national unity despite India's immense diversity, though it has also been a source of center-state tensions.

The evolution of center-state relations

The British provincial model evolved through several phases, gradually allowing limited self-governance at the provincial level. The Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms of 1919 introduced "hierarchy," dividing provincial subjects into "transferred" (under Indian ministers) and "reserved" (under British control) categories. The Government of India Act 1935 further expanded provincial autonomy while maintaining central control.

Post-independence, India's centre-state relations have continually evolved through:

Constitutional amendments: The 73rd and 74th amendments strengthened local governance, creating a three-tier federal structure.

Finance Commission recommendations: Regular reconsideration of revenue-sharing arrangements between center and states.

Political developments: The rise of regional parties and coalition politics has increased states' bargaining power vis-à-vis the center.

Indian Leaders and Independence Movement

Leaders like Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Jawaharlal Nehru, and Subhas Chandra Bose became key figures in the fight for independence. They organized protests, formed political groups, and pushed for self-rule in different ways.

The Indian National Congress became the main stage for political action, bringing leaders together to demand rights and independence.

Their work helped organize protests and negotiate with the British.

The movement drew in people from all walks of life, from peaceful protests to more radical actions. These leaders inspired millions to believe in India's right to self-government.

Legacy of Mahatma Gandhi and the Swadeshi Movement

Mahatma Gandhi changed the game with his idea of nonviolent resistance, or Satyagraha. He encouraged peaceful non-cooperation with British authorities.

The Swadeshi movement was a big part of this—people were asked to boycott British goods and support Indian-made products. That built economic independence and pride.

Gandhi's approach brought together people from different classes and religions, strengthening the independence movement. His focus on truth, nonviolence, and self-reliance left a deep mark on India's later government and social policies.

Global and Comparative Perspectives

British rule in many countries where the British government ruled has shaped governments all over the world. India's present system has a lot in common with other former British colonies. Analyses change from independence shows both continuing effects and newly framed directions.

Continuities and Changes since Independence

After independence, India has kept many of the British legal ideas and administrative ideas for the smooth running. The civil service system in India now and an independent judiciary are still in place as it was before. These ideas help to maintain law and order and honesty in the governance. After Post Independence, India expanded its democratic participation far above what existed under British rule. Universal attestation and the inclusion of diverse communities really stand out as huge changes. But, the challenges like bureaucratic setbacks and the slow pace of law reforms remain still also. This revolution isn't quite like what we think which happened in European countries, which didn't have to deal with a colonial legacy. The British inheritance is still both a foundation and a source of on-going change in India's government today to run smoothly.

The evolution of legal frameworks

Many colonial-era laws continue to achieve in independent India,

with little bit of modifications. This legal cohesion provided administrative balance during the changeover to independence. Moreover, some of the old out-dated colonial legal access persisted. Recent years have seen more increased efforts to update colonial-era Laws and legislation to reverse contemporary values and needs.

Administrative reforms after post-independence

After Independence the post Independent India didn't hardly inherit British administrative structures-it struggle actively adapted them to serve democratic and developmental goals:

Democratic accountability: Administrative systems of India were brought under democratic control through canonical oversight and parliamentary analysis.

Development acclimatization: Administrative priorities of post independent India shifted from control and tax collection to welfare and development.

Comprehensive governance: Reservation policies of post-Independence and approving action needed to make administration more classical.

Bottom-up planning: More and more importance is given to public participation in governance, especially through local government institutions.

This flexible process continues today, with on-going administrative reforms objected at making governance more active, aware, and more of community-centric. Recent actions include new technological digital governance, clarity measures like the Right to Information Act, and performance-based evaluations of government departments.

Conclusion:

After studying the British rule in India or the impact of Colonial Period to Indian System, we would become more and more aware of how British rule damaged every bit of Indian life including Religious, cultural, economic and political aspects. This political control also meant a long drawn cooperation between two distinct cultures one is British Culture and the other is Indian Culture. Some changes were knowingly introduced to strengthen the British political and for the sake of trading interests. But there were others that appear as a by-product of the interaction between

the Indian and the western culture systems. A large number of British and European people stayed in our country during this period which also brings the cultural transformation or changes. We should not forget that the present life of ours is highly shaped to a great extent by our immediate past Western Culture. In this immediate past life or culture, the British control over a large part of the country becomes an important determining influencing factor. Some of the cultural, religious and legal changes that took place during the stay of British rule continue to affect our life even till today. The fences, the modern club life, the imperial huge tall buildings like the Rashtrapati Bhavan and the Parliament are similar of the British rule in India ring colonial time. The Industrial Revolution in Britain India created an appeal for Indian raw materials like cotton and silk, but the colonial policies pulled back India's own industrial growth. Trade increased in British India, but almost always in Britain's benefitted out of the increased trade. Many food items like bread, sandwich, tea and cake that we are consuming today are an influence of our interaction with Europeans during the British rule. If you look around our self, we will be stunned to know that a large number of costumes that we are wearing prevalent in urban India were adopted during the British rule, for example, trousers, coats and ties. The idea of proposing Indian civil service started during this period. The Indian armed forces still holds many aspects of European discipline, training and culture. The medium of our instruction or learning itself is especially in English language. Even the Supreme Court and the High Court pass their judgments or Verdicts in English. The influencing of language itself is a legacy of the British rule and continues to be the expression of Indians seeking employment in their own country.

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