THE AWARE CONSUMER

www.theawareconsumer.in

THE INDIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM

IN FOCUS
Brain Drain: Boon For Developed Countries; Bane For India

HORIZONS
Education 2020: Changing The Education System In India

CONSUMERS BEWARE
5 Warning Signs To Spot A Fraud Student Agent

PLUS
ROUND UP
MY MARKET
THE PRESCRIPTION

ZED™
ZERO DEFECT • ZERO EFFECT

Certification Scheme

A roadmap to World-class manufacturing

The unique ZED RATING Ladder

PLATINUM
DIAMOND
GOLD
SILVER
BRONZE

HIGHLIGHTS

- A scheme by Ministry of MSME, Govt. of India
- Certification on the systems and processes of MSMEs
- Handholding MSMEs towards world class manufacturing
- Special emphasis on MSMEs supplying to Defence Sector
- Direct subsidy to participating MSMEs
- Creating a credible database of MSMEs for OEMS/CPSUs/Foreign Investors under "Make in India initiative"
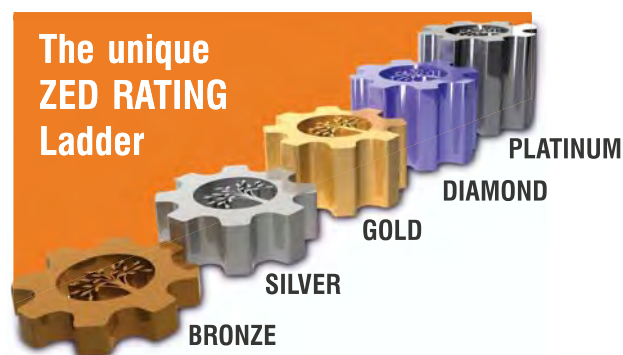- Quality Council of India (QCI) to function as the NMIU (National Monitoring and Implementing Unit) of the scheme

"Let's think about making our product which has 'Zero Defect'; so that it does not come back (get rejected) from the world market and 'Zero Effect' so that the manufacturing does not have an adverse effect on our environment"

SHRI NARENDRA MODI
Hon'ble Prime Minister

zed@qcin.org   **@ZED_QCI**

Free Registration at www.zed.org.in

VIEW POINT

BEJON KUMAR MISRA | bejonmisra@consumerconexion.org

Our Education System
Fallacious Or Fair

THE INDIAN SCHOOL education system is one of the largest and most complex in the world. The complexity of the system stems from India's need to maintain standard and uniformity, while giving scope for its diverse culture and heritage to grow and flourish across the length and breadth of the country. After independence India has worked hard to provide access to almost all its young people, but it has only just begun to focus on aspects of quality and seek to improve learning outcomes.

There is a dire need for revolutionary changes in India's education system. Not just the syllabus and pedagogy, but also the attitude change towards the marks system need to be changed. With the effective learning system, India can successfully utilize its vast human resources. Presently, children after school are sent to tuitions. This is a clear question mark on the ability of the school teacher. Homework tutorials are mushrooming up in our society. Students are thought of like they can't do anything on their own and so are sent even to do the homework.

India is a progressing country and the present scenario of Indian education has improved a lot from the past. Different kinds of steps are taken by the government for bettering the present Indian education. But inspite of all government efforts in building an educated India, India still seems to be lagging far behind. Our education system is producing machines out of pupils. They read books, they speak books and they do books. Discussing in class leads to complications, which remains as confusions for a life time if left untreated. Vladimir Nabokov, a U.S critic, poet and novelist says "Discussion in class, which means letting twenty young blockheads and two cocky neurotics discuss something that neither their teacher nor they know."

So, it's a matter of debate that our education system is fallacious or fair.

> Parents have to shell out large amount of money to provide quality education to their children, right from school to college. However, online education can be done right from your home, at a much lower cost.

Message from the Editor-in-Chief

POOJA KHAITAN

pooja@theawareconsumer.in

DESKTALK

Time To Get EDUCATED

EDUCATION IS THE imparting and acquiring of knowledge through teaching and learning, especially at a school or similar institution. The earliest educational processes involved sharing information about gathering food and providing shelter; making weapons and other tools; learning language; and acquiring the values, behaviour, and religious rites or practices of a given culture. Before the invention of reading and writing, people lived in an environment in which they struggled to survive against natural forces, animals, and other humans. To survive, preliterate people developed skills that grew into cultural and educational patterns.

Education developed from the human struggle for survival and enlightenment. It may be formal or informal. Informal education refers to the general social process by which human beings acquire the knowledge and skills needed to function in their culture. Formal education refers to the process by which teachers instruct students in courses of study within institutions.

Talking of the modern day education, one feels proud; of saying yes I am an educated person. Formally or informally all of us are educated. Education is the equipping with knowledge. The overall development of mind, body and soul is the real education.

Modern day education is aided with a variety of technology, computers, projectors, internet, and many more. Diverse knowledge is being spread among the people. Everything that can be simplified has been made simpler. Science has explored every aspect of life. There is much to learn and more to assimilate. Internet provides abysmal knowledge. There is no end to it. One can learn everything he wishes to. Every topic has developed into a subject.

But every story has two telling. Of all the virtue, our education system has developed into mere schooling now. New trends are being developed which are far more a baloney that boon.

Our education is confined to schools and colleges. It has become a process of spoon feeding. "Spoon feeding in the long run teaches us nothing but the shape of the spoon" were the words of E.M.Forster. We are being fed with facts and knowledge. Not art, not books, but life itself is the true basis of teaching and learning. Cramming of facts and dates, hi-fi mathematical formulas, theories and doctrines should be at college levels when one has chosen his area of interest. Homework is a waste of time, if it is to repeat class work done today or to be repeated as class work to be done tomorrow.

Our schooling does not leave us with time to get educated.

INSIDE

THE AWARE CONSUMER | MAY 2019

> Education in India is provided by public schools and private schools. Under various articles of the Indian Constitution, free and compulsory education is provided as a fundamental right to children between the ages of 6 and 14.

RESEARCH FEATURE

19 | The Indian Education System: Features, Pros, Cons & Way Forward

Why is India still one of the developing countries and what is stopping it from being a developed one? This particular question strikes me every time when I read something about India's education system. I see India's education system as an obstacle towards its objectives of achieving inclusive growth.

HORIZONS

29 | EDUCATION 2020: CHANGING THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN INDIA

Teachers are still largely the sole disseminators of knowledge. But with technology intervention, the teacher would become more of a facilitator in the entire teaching-learning gamut.

GOVERNMENT PERSPECTIVE

33 | INITIATIVES TAKEN BY HRD MINISTRY, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

In case a student is declared failed in a class for two consecutive years or in compartmental exams, he or she will be invariably counseled about choosing other options like the Patrachar Vidyalaya, NIOS, etc, and will not be re-admitted as a regular student.

MONICA MALHOTRA KANDHARI
MANAGING DIRECTOR, MBD GROUP

E-learning industry in India is a prolific one, witnessing a steady growth rate of 25 per cent year-on-year and is projected to be a $1.96 billion industry by 2021

ROUND**UP**

DATA BRIEFING

e-LEARNING

Transforming Education System In India

– By Dhiman Bhattacharyya

E-LEARNING INDUSTRY IN India is increasing at a rate of over 20% on a year-on-year basis. It is estimated to become a US$1.96 billion industry by 2021. Reports say digital education in India already has a vast network. It is connected to over 1.5 million schools and 18,000 higher education institutes.

Of the 1.3 million schools in India,

62%

are managed by the central/state governments and 16 per cent are managed by the local bodies.

The paid online subscribers in the edtech sector are also witnessing a massive surge. While in 2016, the total paid subscribers were around 1.6 million, reports suggest that by 2021 it is going to increase 6 times to reach a massive 9.6 million.

E-learning is also witnessing paradigm shift in its approach, implementation, adoption, and technological development. Some of the latest in the field of digital education include cloud-based platforms, ICT classrooms, Virtual Reality (VR), Augmented Reality (AR), and others.

All these innovative technological advancements are not luxuries anymore. These digital tools and their implementation have become necessities in schools to come out of the theory-based learning to a more practical-oriented one. Technological interventions make education engaging by incorporating interactive media as well as visual animations.

Superior Technological Intervention Aiding e-Learning in India

The education-technology sector primarily eases the learning process of a student. At first it generates lots of data for analysis. These analyzed data are used to understand individual academic needs of students and natural flair for learning.

With the help of this analysis and keeping a tab on individual student's progress, the edtech sector provides efficient pedagogical training through extensive personalization. The derived insights from the in-depth data analysis have the potential of enhancing education system in entirety. In fact, the insights can also help in progression of courses as well as skill development of teachers.

- **Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, & Big Data**

The e-learning industry is on the verge of a paradigm shift with the help of artificial intelligence. In fact, machine learning (which is basically a subset of artificial intelligence) is already being employed to enhance quality education.

Machine learning is combining many aspects such as:

1. Comparing the actual time taken by a student with respect to the average time taken in answering a specific question.

2. Ability of a student in answering the question correctly.

3. A student's performance on a related topic, and much more

Through this multifaceted analytical approach, machine learning handcrafts the effective approach of education as well as course progression of a student.

In fact, Big Data is also employed to analyze the collated data and bring out the core and additional insights. It further helps the edtech platforms to accurately create student profiles and consequently customize their styles of teaching in accordance with the most effective pedagogical model.

- **Content Distribution Networks (CDNs)**

CDN-based content dissemination is the latest technological advancement incorporated in the e-learning industry. It has been found out that video re-buffering stops 2/3rd of the viewers from watching a video. No matter how engaging content is, buffering makes online viewers stop watching videos. Content Distribution Networks or CDNs address this problem. With CDNs, buffering of videos can be ironed out as the content is served to the user from the nearest located data center, providing students get unhindered view of the video.

How is E-Learning Helping Education in India?

E-learning is impacting the higher education in 3 ways:

- **Increasing Access to Education**

E-learning is letting the students learn from their professors and teachers right from their homes and hostels by using internet-connected computers, tablets, and smartphone. Some of the more advanced skills such as machine learning and artificial intelligence are still not accessible to many students in India because of many infrastructural issues. These constraints are mainly seen in the tier II/III cities.

Access to teachers and educators can be ironed out easily with the help of e-learning approach. The Union

Ministry of Human Resources and Development as well as the skill development bodies of different Indian states (such as APSSDC) have understood the effectiveness of e-learning. That's why they have started to upload lectures online so that students can access them anytime and anywhere.

• **Providing Quality Education to Students**

There are only a handful of premier colleges in India. In comparison to the increasing number of higher education students, the seats are severely limited. That's why most of the higher education students can't get quality education.

An MHRD report of 2017 revealed that some Indian schools don't have the required number of teachers. This high student to teacher ratio is adversely affecting the education quality. While the teachers can't provide personalized focus on each student in the classroom, the students can't utilize their time spent in the classroom fully and qualitatively.

The world is also changing with evolving technology. Different fields of study are also witnessing changes almost on a daily basis. However, these changes are not included in the syllabus. That's' why students don't get updated information through traditional education.

This is where online learning has become so effective in providing quality education. E-learning facilities also help students get personalized tips from professors and professionals, bringing quality education to students.

E-learning is also making the entire learning experience fun-filled by including quizzes, challenges, practical-oriented, and engaging. In fact, the online education facility is more engaging than classroom learning.

• **Making Education more Affordable**

Parents have to shell out large amount of money to provide quality education to their children, right from school to college. Reports suggest that the cost associated with higher education at traditional brick-and-mortar colleges are significantly higher than the one-time cost associated with online learning.

In case of traditional college education, you have to spend on commute or lodging. However, online education can be done right from your home. Therefore, with the advent of e-learning resources, students can access education at a much lower cost.

Conclusion

E-learning courses make you job-ready. The education can be imparted in accordance with the true interests of the students in the most effective and efficient way possible. This increases employability of the students, helping them to get employed after successfully completing their education. That's how e-learning is bringing the coveted change in the entire education system in India. ◗

The e-learning industry is on the verge of a paradigm shift with the help of **artificial intelligence.** In fact, machine learning (which is basically a subset of artificial intelligence) is already being employed to enhance quality education.

How Can ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION Create Jobs In India?

INDIAN ECONOMY IS growing at a rapid pace. The growth rate of GDP was 7.3% in 2018 and it is expected to grow well above 7% in the coming years. However, the fastest growing economy of the world isn't creating jobs like before. Latest data shows that in 2018, there were 18.6 million people without jobs in India and it is expected to reach 18.9 million in 2019.

Moreover, hiring in India's formal job market is stagnant. In fact, the Indian job market is also highly skewed in favor of informal employment. Reports say around 8 in every 10 Indian workers are employed in informal sectors. That's why entrepreneurship has come up as a sustained medium of education for employment. It will help create jobs in India. Generation of formal and productive employment depends on adequately skilled labor force, enabled through sustained human capital investments.

Entrepreneurship Education – How can it help Students transform from Job Seekers to Job Creators?

Entrepreneurship education provides required knowledge, skills, and motivation to students so that they can succeed in their entrepreneurial endeavors in different settings. In fact, this specialized education also helps to determine the student's entrepreneurial orientation.

Entrepreneurship education and training has been found highly effective in India and other similar developing countries. This is because they help to enlarge the pool of job creators as well as entrepreneurs.

That's why entrepreneurship education puts major emphasis on 3 important ideas:

- Develop a vast understanding about entrepreneurship
- Acquire an entrepreneurial mindset
- Develop a thorough understanding of operating an enterprise effectively

Now, let's have a closer look at how entrepreneurship education in Indian business schools helps students to become entrepreneurs and job creators:

1. Develop a Vast Understanding about Entrepreneurship

All courses in Indian business schools teach entrepreneurship as a compulsory course. It helps the students to understand entrepreneurship. This not only inculcates interest among the students towards setting up their own enterprise but also provides them adequate exposure towards entrepreneurial skills.

A proper and vast understanding of entrepreneurship

helps students start their entrepreneurial ventures. Even if they don't start just after passing out of B-schools, this understanding will help them start something at a later stage of life.

2. Acquire an Entrepreneurial Mindset

Leading business schools in India have their own Entrepreneurship Cells, which are also known as E-cells. These specialized cells help in fostering entrepreneurial mindset among MBA students. For this, these Entrepreneurship Cells engage in multifarious activities:

- Showcase success as well as failure stories by entrepreneurs.
- Organize workshops to generate business ideas, plans, and funding.
- Organize different kinds of events encouraging students to set up business ventures inside the campus related to entrepreneurship.
- The Entrepreneurship Cells connect with different entrepreneurship networks for mentoring students.

All such activities help to create a positive mindset among students regarding entrepreneurship, which ultimately urges them to set up their own business ventures and become job-givers than job-seekers.

3. Develop a Thorough Understanding of Operating an Enterprise Effectively

Incubation centers are set up by the business schools where the students are given hands-on training on entrepreneurship, right from the stage of pre-ideation to setting up of enterprise. These centers also support their students by providing wide array of infrastructures, mentoring, and funding opportunity.

These incubation centers help the students set up their own start-ups and also appoint Incubation Managers for guiding and mentoring them to start their own enterprises successfully. Once the incubation period is complete, these start-ups move out of the campus as established businesses.

Entrepreneurship education provides required knowledge, skills, and motivation to students so that they can succeed in their entrepreneurial endeavors in different settings.

Indian Government's Initiative to Skill Indian Youth and Create Entrepreneurs

Government of India and state governments have taken few initiatives to increase employability by closing skills deficit. Union government has launched Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (Skill India Mission) under the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) to help Indian youth improve industry-relevant skills for enhancing employability.

To create labor market ready young Indians, government has also launched multiple skilling initiatives such as:

- National Apprenticeship Training Scheme
- Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushal Yojana
- National Urban Livelihoods Mission
- National Rural Livelihoods Mission

To boost the job market and create more entrepreneurs, Indian government has also launched many national flagship schemes:

- Make in India
- Digital India
- Start-up India
- Stand-up India

These programs are meant to accelerate creation of enterprises of all sizes (micro, small, and medium), which will in turn help accelerate labor demand and create jobs.

Conclusion

Government and other international organizations have lately started providing emphasis on 'entrepreneurship education' in India. However, it is still in the nascent stage. The business schools that provide such entrepreneurship education have to go a long way in designing entrepreneurial education programs for expanding knowledge as well as experience of students in entrepreneurship. Once these are done properly, students of entrepreneurship education in India can metamorphose from job seekers to job creators. ◗

How To Create A Better
SCHOOL SYSTEM

Memorising material simply isn't going to teach children the skills they need.

– Antoine Guimbal

If a skill keeps being overlooked by the education system, there won't be any innovation or flow of ideas coming from these individuals and nothing will evolve.

EVERY YEAR, HUNDREDS of millions of children enrol in public, municipal Indian schools, strictly following a set-out curriculum. This is normal, as every country sets up a curriculum that each public school has to follow. However, the issue in India is not what the children are being taught, but how they are being taught.

By interviewing people who used to be taught in the schooling system here in India, I found that the Indian education system is set out in such a way that children are constantly memorising dates, lessons, and various other pieces of text or information that they must regurgitate. There is no creative or innovative thinking involved. The fact that the Indian education system overvalues memorisation over innovation and originality is its biggest limitation. Memorising material simply isn't going to teach children the skills they require to be successful.

I run a service club at my school, where my colleagues and I allow children coming from public schools through NGOs to explore their creativity by helping them build toys from recycled material. One day, as we were teaching, I approached one of the kids: "Have you ever done a workshop like this in school?" He laughed and said: "In school? Never!"

Although I expected that response, I was still shocked. Having been in many different education systems due to constantly moving around, it made me think about the way I was being taught, which brought me to a

realisation: School loses purpose without education.

Being in an education system where most students have been taught in many different ways (many of these not incorporating ideas of creativity, like in India), I decided to ask them questions on how they felt about creativity and innovation, and about a school's purpose without the incorporation of these skills.

Statements such as "school isn't just about academics" or "creativity is an integral part of everyone's life" were the themes of each interview, and not a single person questioned doubted the importance of creativity. While all of them did say there had to be some aspect of real, hard academics, they agreed that creativity was a necessity that didn't just keep them engaged in school but also felt like learning something meaningful.

However, creativity isn't only about finding success in school or later, as most of the interviewed students said. Some said that creativity "allows children to express themselves for who they really are", and not become people "who just know how to follow directions". One even argued that restricting creativity might give children "the idea that expression is a negative thing". Not only do people think that creativity might educate children in order to help them succeed later, they also think that on a personal level, creativity is a great and important thing. Creativity will allow people to express themselves and be who they really are without doubting themselves.

I found that the main thing most people were talking about weren't their life experiences and how creativity might be useful during school, but about why creativity was important after school. People thought that without creativity, the world would be "stagnant", without change, and even that society wouldn't be able to "move forward".

If a skill keeps being overlooked by the education system, there won't be any innovation or flow of ideas coming from these individuals and nothing will evolve.

As Ken Robinson, a famous educationist, said: "Creativity is putting your imagination to work and it has produced the most extraordinary results in human culture."

If education systems keep discouraging it, people won't know how to put their imagination to work — an indispensable skill in our era. ◗

Sitting for exams is like exercising. When we exercise, our muscles become stronger, likewise in an exam, "jogging" our memory for answers strengthens our memory cells.

National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories (NABL)

(A Constituent Board of Quality Council of India)

NABL

QCI Creating an Ecosystem for Quality

Are your test results
RELIABLE??
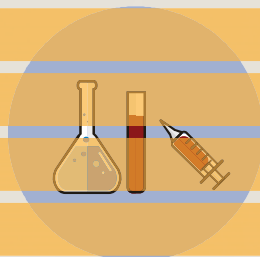
TEST RESULTS

Do you trust your
PATHOLOGY LAB??
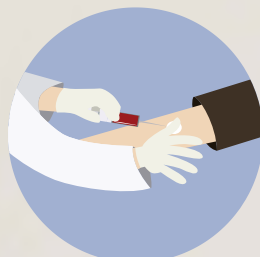
Is the integrity of your sample
MAINTAINED??

Get your samples collected at NABL Recognised Sample Collection Centers

&

tested at NABL Accredited Medical Laboratory to ensure

Reliable & Trustworthy Results

Patient's Trust & Satisfaction

Accurate Diagnosis

Correct line of treatment by Doctor

SYMBOL OF TRUST!!

MC-XXXX
CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION

MC-XXXX

QUALITY IN PATIENT CARE

Consumers, Beware

More and more students are opting to go abroad for their higher education. However, the procedure is not really common knowledge yet and fraud student agents prey on the vulnerable. Check out these warning signs and save your dignity and money.

IN A COUNTRY like ours, where the average income is going up, there is a surge in the demand for quality higher education. As admission to top institutions in India is highly competitive, increasing numbers of young Indians are looking to study abroad.

However, many of these young people lack the exposure that some may have gained from overseas vacations, foreign-educated family members, and watching one's school or college seniors go through the application process to study in another country. Many young Indians live in cities where there is no Education USA, British Council, Campus France, or other official government information channels about studying abroad.

Such aspirants may be unfamiliar with, and perhaps even daunted by, what foreign universities expect from applicants, and the process of applying for admission and a visa. These students are perhaps the most vulnerable to fraud.

Horror stories about student agent fraud

Every now and then, we read news stories about Indian students being scammed by study-abroad agents and diploma mills. Unfortunately, the frequency of such incidents seems to be rising:

- In December 2015, Air India offloaded 19 students who were headed for shady universities in California. In April 2016, hordes of Indian and Chinese students and agents were caught after US investigators set up a sting by creating a fake college

- In June 2016, a US university asked 25 first-year Indian students to leave (which effectively meant leaving not just the university but also the US, because student visas are university-specific) when it discovered that they did not meet admission requirements

- Also in June, an investigative report on a California diploma mill revealed that it had paid more to recruiters in India than it had spent on its own staff. The school had 95 per cent Indian students and no full-time faculty, and it fudged grades to keep students enrolled. For this 'education', students were paying a fees of Rs 8.5 lakh a year

- In August 2016, news broke that the UK government was shutting down 32 fake universities and investigating 30 more

- Recently, New Zealand deported 150 Indian students who say they were unaware that their agents had falsified financial information in their visa applications

Visa fraud and deportation are not something to take lightly. They remain on your immigration record, and could make you ineligible for any visa in the future. If you are applying to study abroad with the help of a counselor or agent, make sure he or she is genuine and competent. In any case, you must do your own research on what to study, where to study, and how to apply. Consult others, but steer your own application process and arrive at your own decisions.

No agent will tell you that he or she is a fraud - you will have to figure it out on your own. It helps to be aware of the telltale signs. Some of these are highlighted in a viral video campaign about a fictitious shady agent called Lucky Lakhanpal.

Here are some warning signs to look out for when dealing with a student agent:

1. He's a poor listener

If your counselor talks more than he listens, or if he thinks a 'job' is the main goal, then he is incompetent at best. He cannot do a good job of helping you if he does not understand what motivates you, and what your career and life goals are.

At worst, he isn't listening because he's interested in pushing his own agenda. And invariably, whatever is 'best' for you will coincidentally also be the most profitable for him, though he will never say so.

2. He keeps you in the dark

He does one of two things to prevent you from gaining a clear understanding of the application process. Either he discusses minute and inane details at great length in an attempt to undermine your confidence and increase your dependence on him, or he tells you to just leave everything to him.

Either way, he subtly discourages you from getting too involved in the application process. A genuine student counselor will help you understand the process and walk you through it.

3. He promises things that he cannot legally deliver

These could include admission, a student visa, or an authorisation to work in another country. This is a huge red flag. Admissions are processed and vetted by the university or college, not by agents, at least at reputed universities. In the case of some countries, such as the US or UK, visa applications may be processed by an officially designated agency in the initial stage, but the ultimate decision to grant or deny a visa is made by a consular official. The likes of Lucky Lakhanpal cannot influence that decision.

Your starting point for genuine information about visas should always be the official website of the high commission or embassy concerned. You can even apply

online. And remember that a visa does not guarantee entry into another country - you can be turned back after landing at a foreign airport if immigration officials there have reason to suspect you of illegal activities or intentions. No student agent can influence them.

4. He glosses over academic concerns and focuses on inane things

If your agent is more concerned about coaching you on things like cultural adjustment, what to pack, and how to find an off-campus job, he probably has the wrong priorities. A good agent should be able to answer your questions about writing application essays, and taking the GRE or GMAT. He should be able to explain things like accreditation, course credits, how to choose classes, the academic calendar, practical training opportunities, and so on.
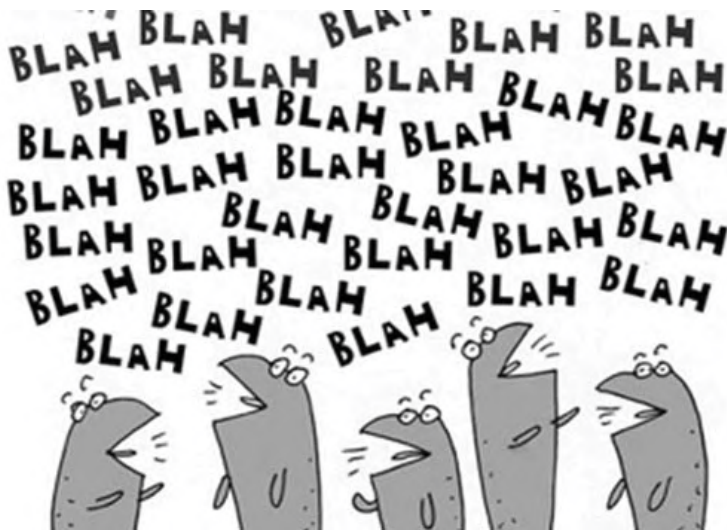
5. He keeps bringing up the name of one or more colleges

If he does this, and can't explain clearly why they're the right match for you, then it's another big red flag. It suggests that he does not care about you or understand your goals. But the application process is about you and not about his agenda.

An agent who takes your money and treats you as a secondary concern in the application process is, well, just taking your money. Quite possibly, he's also taking money from the colleges he's plugging, for every student that he recruits for them.

The bottom line is that there's no alternative to playing an active role in your own application process. Nobody understands your educational goals better than yourself. A good agent will listen, and provide perspective, information, suggestions and tips based on his experience of guiding other students to successful academic careers. But, if you don't do your own research, you will benefit less than you can from even a good agent. More importantly, if you don't do your own research, you are far less likely to be able to tell a good agent from a fraud. ◗

8 Myths Indians Have About Foreign Education

Myth #1: Study abroad is Expensive.
Fact: Not True, Consider the ROI.

Myth #2: It's Difficult to Find Scholarships for International Students.
Fact: Not True, It's Challenging, But Not Impossible.

Myth #3: Employers Do Not Give Importance to Study Abroad.
Fact: Not true, a Holistic Education is Greatly Valued.

Myth #4: Travelling Alone Gives You the Same Experience.
Fact: Not True, Holidays Only Provide You a Bird's-Eye View

Myth #5: I'll Have No Friends and Feel Lonely.
Fact: Not True, But Depends on You.

Myth #6: I Will Have Problems Communicating With Foreigners.
Fact: Not True, After the Initial Hiccups It Gets Better with Time and Practice.

Myth #7: Indian Students Get Neglected
Fact: Not True at All, Colleges Strive Towards Building an Inclusive Environment.

Myth #8: Studying Abroad is No Longer Safe.
Fact: Not True, Universities Rank Student Safety as Top Priority.

SUPPORT THE CAMPAIGN

LOOK OUT FOR THE RED LINE

BE RESPONSIBLE — Medicines such as Antibiotics have a Red Vertical Line on their pack to indicate that these should be consumed only on doctor's prescription. Always complete the full course as prescribed by the doctor.

Campaign Partners

SIGN THE PLEDGE.

HTTP://WWW.CAUSES.COM/CAMPAIGNS/106670-RAISE-AWARENESS-FOR-SALE-USE-OF-ANTIBIOTICS-TO-COMBAT-AMR

The Indian Education System

WAY FORWARD

CONS

PROS

FEATURES

WHY IS INDIA still one of the developing countries and what is stopping it from being a developed one? This particular question strikes me every time when I read something about India's education system. I see India's education system as an obstacle towards its objectives of achieving inclusive growth.

The Indian Education system: Overview

Our country India has always been famous for gaining education since the Vedic period. In ancient times, India had the Guru Kula system of education in which anyone who wished to study went to a teacher's (Guru) house and requested to be taught. If accepted as a student, the guru allows the student to stay at his place and help in all activities at home. This not only created a strong tie between the teacher and the student but also taught the student everything about running a house. The guru teaches the student everything that he wants to learn, from Sanskrit to the Holy Scriptures and from Mathematics to Metaphysics. The student stayed as long as he wished or until the guru felt that he had taught everything he could teach. All of the learning was closely linked to nature and to life, and not just confined to memorizing some information.

Until the 17th century, India was considered one of the richest country in the world. However, due to the arrival of the foreign colonizers and the wrong policies of the then rulers, India lost almost all its richness wealth wise as well as knowledge wise. Originally, Lord Thomas Babington Macaulay brought the modern school system to India, including the English language, in the 1830s. The educational program was restricted to the so-called modern subjects such as science and mathematics, and subjects like metaphysics and philosophy were considered unnecessary. The teaching was confined only to classrooms and the link with nature and the close relationship between the teacher and the student was broken.

The modern education system has been supported by one formula: 'cheap, required and customary education to all'. Even people are able to decide by their conscience that what means of education are going to be best suited to them. Still, many people are ignoramus regarding words and literacy. Therefore, they are within the necessity to urge a correct education. It is required to supply education to all, as other nations are so much ahead within the field of education. It is all in the hand of the government that what ought to be the exact type of system in which education for all is secured. Moreover, even the government has taken nice measures to extend the level of education.

The main features of the modern education system in India are as follows:

- A system of obligatory education to all or any children up to the year of fourteen. Under this age, all children must be given education in any government or private school.

- If any child is forced to do any other job excluding from being educated the person concerned in such activities will be treated as per law.
- After gaining the primary education, a child can be given secondary education.
- For providing this level of education each, the central and state governments are involved through their boards, which are created for this purpose.
- There are also private boards who conduct high school or intermediate exams.
- After their 10+2 (secondary schooling), a person can pursue bachelor, master and an alternative specialization degree in several fields of their selection.

The above points appear to be simple but there are many flaws in this system as well.

Advantages and Disadvantages of The Indian Education system

Advantages of Indian education

With the advancement of education, India has seen an excellent development within the field of economy. People are less unemployed and some of them are even freelancing or rather self-employed. One of the best positive things is that the child labor has gone down to an excellent extent.

There are also reservation systems available for the socially underprivileged people. The present statistics is 7.5% of the scheduled tribes, 15% for the scheduled castes and 27% of the other backward class, but the exact percentages vary from state to state. In Haryana, the reservation is 18% for SCs and 1% for OBCs and 0% for STs, based on local demographics. In Tamil Nadu, the reservation is 18% for SCs and 1% for STs, based on local demographics.

Presently there are chiefly two boards with the exception of the state boards conveying education until higher secondary, that is, ICSE and CBSE. In addition to this, there are also Open Universities providing study at home facility. If you crosscheck the technical fields, there are several institutions providing higher education. Additionally, you will find some institution providing the facility of e-Tutorial.

Positive side of Indian Education system :-
- Students go through many exams in their learning years. It teaches to analyse our strengths and weaknesses consistently.
- Indian education system emphasizes competitive spirit. Competition teaches students to unleash their full potential.
- Indian schools teach basic knowledge in all subjects.
- Annual system in school years helps slow learners.
- These days a lot of positive changes are happening in the education system of India. Emphasis on practical knowledge is increased.

Disadvantages of Indian education

The major downside of the prevailing system of education is that it is not easily affordable. Nowadays in India, more than 37% people are living below poverty level. Therefore, they cannot afford education even at primary level.

Another reason for poor quality of education is that the poor quality of teachers in government schools. The level of education that government schools are not as expected and they do not possess an honest image among people. The ensuing possibility is the private institutions, which provides degrees from private to postgraduate. However, they are very costly an also the admission procedure is too complicated for common person to access.

The best part of Indian Education system was and is in its 'Rote Learning'- Kanthastha, as it was in ancient India. This simulates the mind, body, soul. Improves concentration and bursts the stress. Invokes inner sense. In CBSE system, with continuous analysis and understanding of theory concept, the student is bound to do well in life. However, the annual system can be a boon for slow and average learners. The understanding of various subjects and equal weight to all is another excellent way to give horizontal knowledge. There is a combination of logic and ability, thereby, giving equal importance to the left and right brains. It is such a holistic educational system.

Moreover, there are several political heads, which form a great gap between the Indian government and the common people. A number of them take money from the government, however, do not utilize for the great of the common people. In addition, one will find several socially forward individuals taking the benefits of the reservation system. The problem lies within the massive percentage of illiteracy and population. These two things need to be focused much on creating any development.

Drawbacks of Indian Education system :-

- Rote learning. Emphasis on memorizing the facts rather than thoroughly understanding the concepts.
- Completely relying on text books.
- Giving more importance to text books than the teacher. There is no autonomy to teachers.
- Students have no freedom to think creatively and to question the content in the text books.
- Taking marks as assessment of student's talent, when marks can be easily obtained by memorizing the pre-written answers from the text books.
- Students are not being taught why they are learning the particular subjects and topic. Text books do not mention how the topics are relevant in the practical life.
- There is no incentive for teachers to encourage critical thinking in children.

- Lack of infrastructure.
- Most of the syllabus is in theoretical form.
- Dearth of capable teachers in government schools.
- Low salaries of teachers.
- Pressurizing students for marks and grades. Student suicides are increasing day by day.
- Students are learning the subjects just to reach to the next level, i.e obtaining admission from the good college.
- Indian govt is spending only 3% of its GDP on education.
- As the Govt unable invest enough in the education sectors, private institutions roped in, and the result is High cost of education.
- No control of govt on fee structure of private educational institutes.
- Ethics aren't being taught in schools. And the result of this is many educated persons lack ethics.
- Very low teacher to student ratio. As a result, teachers are not able to concentrate on each and every child. According to Right to Education, there should be one teacher for every 30 students.
- High prices of higher education in India. Indian Govt isn't investing in the higher education aspirants.
- Rise of coaching centers for competitive exams and private tuitions for school children are is resulted by the poor education system, which couldn't make students job-ready.
- Our text books do not mention the importance of physical activity and the extra curricular activities. Most of the schools in India do not have play grounds.
- Not encouraging research and innovation.
- Not teaching students about how to deal with daily life struggles.
- Incentivising hyper-competitiveness rather than encouraging to co-learn.
- Shortage of text books for govt school students.
- No proper career guidance available for students.
- Most of the govt school students are unable to do basic math. This reveals the negligence of teachers.
- Not everyone has access to school. A lot rural areas still have no schools. And there are many single teacher schools.
- In the top 100 universities list by 'Times Higher Education World Reputation Rankings 2016', none of the Indian universities could make into the list.

Steps to improve the current system

Following steps should be taken to enhance and boost the current education system and convey it in everyone's reach:

- The government ought to take steps to extend the number of primary schools in order that people of each village can get education easily.
- There ought to be more emphasis given on adult education as it is necessary to teach the parents and guardians first in order that they become keen towards there ward's education.
- The role of the private institutions ought to be made restricted and so that people do not depend too much on them. In this way, they will not be taking the high amount of fees as they want.
- The condition of the government colleges and institution ought to be raised to a reasonable level.
- New syllabus ought to replace the old ones so as to provide the latest knowledge to students.
- Education loans ought to be made available easily so that even poor students can afford the high level of education.
- There ought to be strict laws relating to the cheating and coaching mafias.
- In addition, the system of education ought to be created free of corruption.
- Everyone ought to be given equal opportunity without discriminating on the premise of rich and poor or on the premise of gender.
- Especially girl's education ought to be given topmost priority.

Situation in other countries :-

- USA is spending 5.4% of its GDP in the education sector, whereas Brazil is spending 5.7% of its GDP.
- China invests heavily in its students and universities. In the Times Higher Education World Reputation Rankings 2016, China could grab nine positions in the top 100 universities list.
- In South Korea, which has high literacy rates, there is a high respect for teaching profession.

Conclusion

The conclusion that we are able to draw is that even within the modern time, India can be given back it is standing of a wealthy knowledge full land, choked with ethics and moral beauty. In short, India is a progressing country and the present scenario of Indian education can be improved a lot. The sole step to be taken is to boost ourselves and there is a necessity of strict laws to appreciate the good ones and to penalize the wrong ones regardless what the field is. The solution lies in the question. How to improve the system of education? And the answer is "Education". The sole way to improve education is education. ◗

The Indian education system:

- **Pre-school**
- **Private play schools**
- **Kindergarten**
- **Primary school**
- **Middle school/ Upper Primary school**
- **Secondary school**
- **Higher secondary or pre-university**

SEGMENTATION OF INDIAN SCHOOL EDUCATION SYSTEM

THE INDIAN SCHOOL education system can be segmented in either of the following ways:
a. by means of levels of education
b. by means of ownership of educational institutions

Segmentation by means of levels of education

The Indian education system is structured as follows:

- **Pre-school:** Education at this level is not compulsory. The Montessori system is especially popular at the pre-school level

- **Private play schools:** Catering for children between the ages of 18 months and three years.

- **Kindergarten:** This is divided into lower kindergarten (for three- to four-year-olds) and upper kindergarten (for four- to five- year-olds)

- **Primary school:** First to fifth standard/class/ grade (for six- to ten-year-olds)

- **Middle school/Upper Primary school:** Sixth to eighth standard/class/grade (for 11- to 14-year-olds)

- **Secondary school:** Ninth and tenth standard/ class/grade (for 14- to 16-year-olds)

- **Higher secondary or pre-university:** 11th and 12th standard/class/grade (for 16- to 18-year- olds).

Pre-school system in India

Various types of pre-primary schools are available in India and more children are now attending Pre-school (NIPCCD, 2006) indicating an increase in demand for education at this stage. Provision of early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children, is one of the six Education For All goals.

Segmentation by means of ownership of educational institutions

Schools in India are owned either by the government (central/ state/ local government bodies) or by the private sector (individuals, trusts or societies). Schools can thus be segmented as:

- **Government educational institutions:** These are run by the Central Government or state governments, public sector undertaking or autonomic organisations and are wholly financed by the government. Examples of these types of schools include state government schools, Kendriya Vidyalayas, Ashram schools, Navodaya Vidyalayas, Sainik Schools, Military schools, Air Force schools, and Naval schools.

- **Local body institutions:** These are run by municipal committees/ corporations/ NAC/ Zilla Parishads/ Panchayat Samitis/ Cantonment Board, etc. Examples of these types of schools include the ones run by NDMC (New Delhi Municipality Council), Delhi Cantonment Board, etc.

- **Private-aided institutions:** These are managed privately but receive regular maintenance grant from the government, local body or any other public authority. The rules and regulations followed here are same as that of the public schools. The curriculum, study materials, syllabus, examinations, etc. for each class of education are done according to the government rules. For the high school classes the final examinations will be same as that of the public schools. In these institutions the education would be provided for all students taking admissions there. The fee structure, PTA fund, etc will be collected from the students according to the rules formulated by the government for each school. Even the recruitment of faculties here will depend on the norms as per the government schools. There will be no specific criteria for the admission of students in these institutions.

- **Private unaided institutions:** These are managed by an individual or a private organisation and do not receive maintenance grant either from government, local body or any other public authority. The fee structure for the students may vary greatly from that of

Segmentation of Indian schools by means of level of education

Pre-school, lower and higher kindergarten

Pre-Primary

18 months-05 years

Classes 1 to 5

Primary school

06 years-10 years

Classes 6 to 8

Upper Primary/ Middle school

11 years-14 years

Classes 9 to 10

Secondary

14 years- 16 years

Classes 11 to 12

Higher Secondary

16 years- 18 years
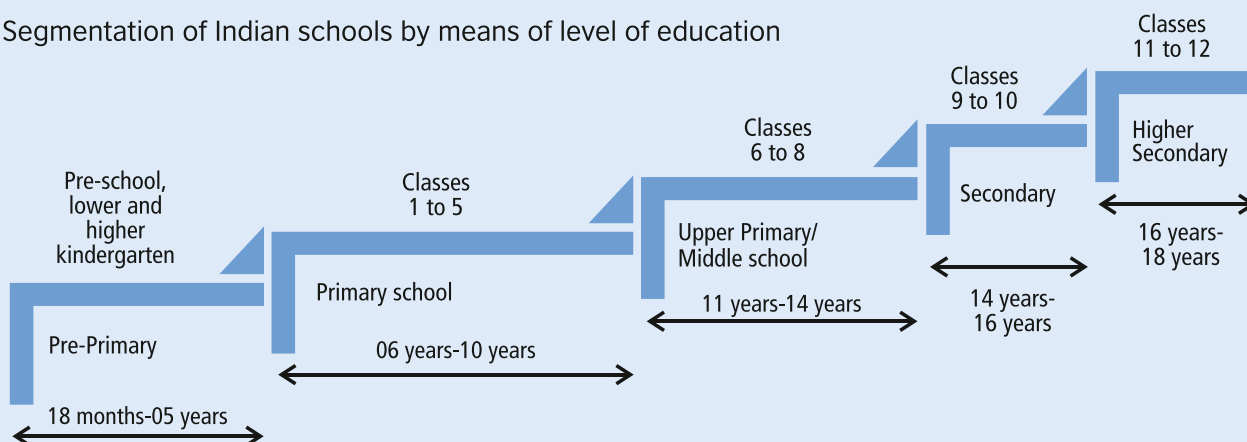
Table 1: Number of Indian schools as per ownership

	Public sector schools		Private sector schools	
	Government	Local body	Private-aided	Private unaided
Primary	524,234	140,765	26,484	68,203
Upper primary	219,451	59,961	22,742	63,748
Secondary	42,119	11,582	27,053	36,252
Higher secondary	24,808	1,847	17,302	20,441
Total	810,612	214,155	93,581	188,644
Sector wise total	1,024,767		282,225	

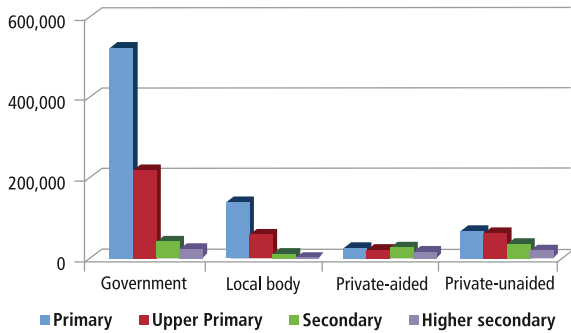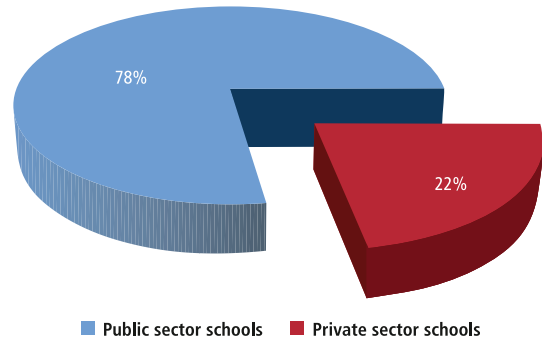Figure 8: Number of Indian schools as per ownership

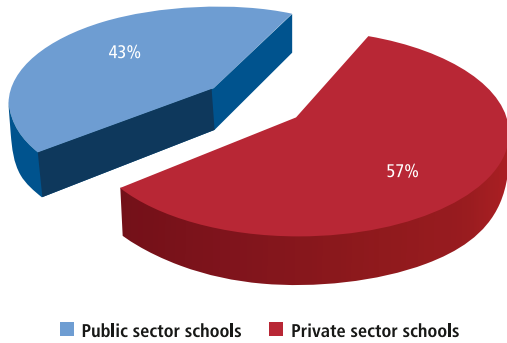Figure 9: Percentage of distribution of schools in K-12 segment

Figure 10: Percentage distribution of schools in secondary and higher secondary segment only
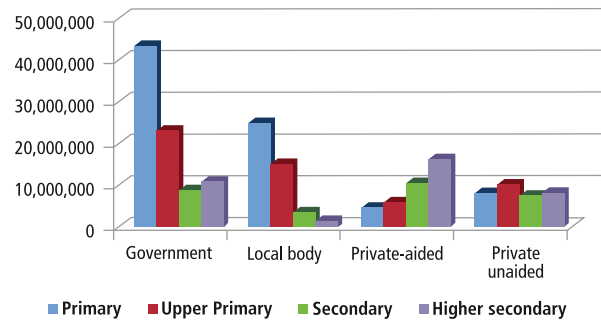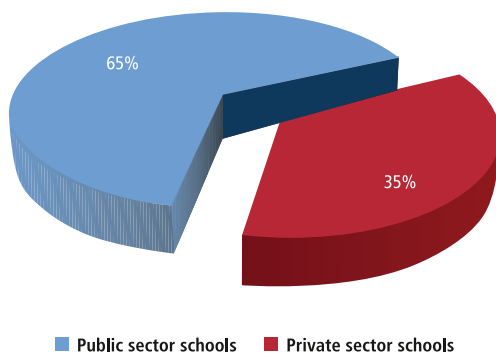

Figure 11: Enrolment in Indian schools

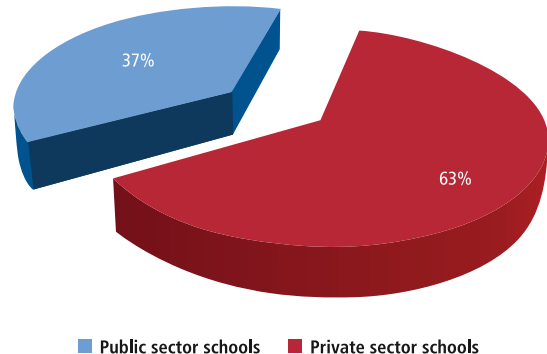Figure 12: Percentage distribution of enrolment in K-12 segment

Figure 13: Percentage distribution of enrolment in secondary and higher secondary segment only

Table 2: Enrolment in Indian schools

	Public sector schools		Private sector schools	
	Government	Local body	Private-aided	Private unaided
Primary	43,324,000	24,827,821	4,649,347	8,099,485
Upper primary	22,951,000	15,230,497	5,823,375	10,230,142
Secondary	8,813,691	3,451,521	10,537,642	7,441,667
Higher secondary	10,890,079	1,290,192	16,144,037	7,932,526
Total	**85,978,770**	**44,800,031**	**37,154,401**	**33,703,820**
Sector wise total	**130,778,801**		**70,858,221**	

the government institutions. The students are admitted to these institutions according to some criteria (entrance examinations, interviews, etc.) and it is totally under the control of the private management. These schools generally create their own curriculum and organize examinations for evaluating the student competency.

Table 1 shows the number of schools as per ownership type according to the provisional statistics of the Eighth All India School Educational Survey.

The number of schools managed by the central/state governments is almost double the schools managed by others taken together.

- There is a sharp fall in the number of schools in the secondary and higher secondary segment.
- There is a significant drop out as we go to higher levels of education.
- Private schools account for only 22 per cent of the total K-12 schools in India.
- However, considering only the secondary and higher secondary segments, private schools account for 56 per cent of the total schools.
- 67 per cent of all private sector schools are unaided while 33 per cent are aided.
- Of the 1.3 million schools in India, 62 per cent are managed by the central/state governments and 16 per cent are managed by the local bodies.

Though the public sector schools dominate the numbers as compared to the private sector, the enrolment picture is slightly different.

Table 2 shows the number of students enrolled in different types of schools as per ownership type according to the figures available from the Seventh All India School Educational Survey.

- It is clearly noted that though enrolment in government school still dominates in the primary level, the private schools have greater share of student enrolment as we go to higher classes.

- The enrolment in private-aided institutions is more than the enrolment in unaided institutions.
- Though the number of private schools is just 22 per cent of the total, enrolment in these schools account for 35 per cent of the total K—12 universe.
- In secondary and higher secondary segments, the enrolment in private schools account for 63 per cent of the total.
- About 52 per cent of the total enrolments in private sector schools are in aided institutions while the remaining 48 per cent are in unaided institutions.
- Only 34 per cent of the total enrolments in public sector schools are in local body institutions.

Segmentation by means of educational board affiliations

Education in India falls under the control of The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT). It is an apex resource organisation set up by the Government of India, with headquarters at New Delhi, to assist and advise the Central and State Governments on academic matters related to school education. The NCERT provides support and technical assistance to a number of schools in India and oversees many aspects of enforcement of education policies. The objective of NCERT is to assist and advise the Ministry of Education and Social Welfare in the implementation of its policies and major programmes in the field of education, particularly school education. Its functions include Research, Development, Training, Extension, Publication and Dissemination and Exchange Programmes. The NCERT also drafts, publishes and recommends school text books (from Class 1–12) of various subjects based on the recommendations of knowledgeable faculty in the subject.

In India, the various curriculum bodies governing school education system are:

National Boards

1. **Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE):** Established in 1962 under the purview of MHRD,

CBSE gives affiliations to both public and private schools. There are currently about 15,167 schools affiliated under CBSE. The board conducts final examinations, All India Senior School Certificate Examination (AISSCE) for classes X and XII. It also annually conducts the AIEEE and AIPMT examinations for admission to undergraduate courses in engineering (and architecture) and medicine in numerous colleges spread over India. CBSE is recognised by the Indian government and by most of the universities and colleges in India.

2. **Council of Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE):** It is a private, non-governmental education board in India. It conducts the ICSE (for class X) and ISC (for class XII) examinations in India. About 1,900 schools are affiliated with the CISCE board. The board

was set up in 1956 at the meeting of the Inter-State Board for Anglo-Indian Education, where a proposal was adopted for the setting up of an Indian Council to administer the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate's Examinations in India. It was recognised as a body conducting public examinations in India by the Delhi Education Act, 1973, passed by Parliament, in Chapter 1 under Definitions Section 2(s).

3. **State Government Boards:** These educational boards are regulated and supervised by the state apex organisation for secondary and senior secondary education. A portion of the curriculum focuses specifically on imparting knowledge about the state. Majority of Indian schools are affiliated with the state government boards. The oldest state board is the U.P. Board of High School & Intermediate Education established in 1922 as an autonomous body under the

Department of Education. Uttar Pradesh has the highest number of State board schools followed by Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra.

4. **National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS)18:** It is the board of education for distance education, under the Union Government of India. It was established by the Ministry of Human Resource Development of the Government of India in 1989 (known as National Open School then) to provide education inexpensively to remote areas.

It provides a number of vocational, life- enrichment and community-oriented courses besides general and academic courses at secondary and senior secondary level. Currently there are 3,827 academic centres, 1,830 vocational centres and 690 accredited agencies under NIOS.

5. **International Boards**

    1. International Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO)19: IBO was founded in 1968 as an international, non-governmental, non-profit educational organization

> Education in India falls under the control of The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), an apex resource organisation set up by the Government of India, to assist and advise the Central and State Governments on academic matters related to school education.

based in Geneva, Switzerland. IB World Schools in India offer three IB programs—primary years program (PYP), middle years program (MYP) and IB Diploma program (IBDP). There are 109 IB World Schools in India offering one or more of the three IB programmes. 50 schools offer the PYP, 11 schools offer the MYP and 96 schools offer the IBDP. IB is recognised by the 'Association of Indian Universities' as an entry qualification (equivalent to +2 qualification of an Indian Board) to all the universities.

2. Cambridge International Examinations (CIE)20: Cambridge International Examinations (formerly known as University of Cambridge International Examinations, are a provider of international qualifications offering examinations and qualifications in more than 160 countries. They are an examination board under Cambridge Assessment, founded in 1858 as a department of the University of Cambridge. There are now over 310 Cambridge schools in India making over 44,000 examination entries for Cambridge IGCSE and Cambridge International AS and A Level, a rise of 15 per cent since 2012. ◗

5 million preventable deaths occur every year

TOBACCO CONTROL

Helpline
1800-11-0456

Reach out to us before you are one of them

EDUCATION 2020

Changing The Education System In India

THE K—12 (KINDERGARTEN-GRADE12) education sector has undergone an overhaul in the last decade. Although, technology has made inroads into the sector with the promise of actively engaging students in the learning process, thereby, improving learning outcomes and reducing teachers' repetitive tasks, its huge potential has not been fully realised yet.
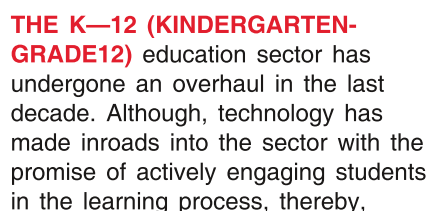
Students need to have more agency in their learning process. Teachers are still largely the sole disseminators of knowledge. But with technology intervention, the scenario could undergo a huge transformation and the teacher would become more of a facilitator in the entire teaching-learning gamut.

The increasing role of technology

Online learning

Online Education in India: 2021', a comprehensive report prepared by KPMG in India and Google points out that the online education market in India is slated to witness an eight-fold growth by 2021. There is already a rise in the number of e-learning companies offering classroom supplement solutions and solutions for competitive examinations. And the coming years will witness a further rise.

• Anytime, anywhere learning

This trend allows students to learn anytime from anywhere ensuring learning is no longer limited to the four walls of a classroom. Students can learn from the comforts of their home or while strolling in the park. This allows learners to explore their interests more. For instance, in the conventional scenario, a learner can approach the teacher only during school hours to clarify any doubts. However, many online learning platforms have doubt clarification sessions that allow students to clarify their doubts instantly.

• Peer learning

Online learning opens the door for student collaboration. In a classroom, teachers are often pressed for time and there are not many opportunities for students to learn from one another. However, online learning platforms have a dedicated learning community where students can help each other learn. They can collaborate on projects, clarify each other's doubts or discuss projects. This helps them gain a fresh perspective on topics and learn concepts anew.

• Making learning more engaging

One of the reasons technological intervention in the K-12 sector is successful is because of its great potential to make educational content engaging and interesting. Thanks to 2D and 3D technology, digital content has made itself a useful resource for both students and teachers. Theory in itself is not enough to make students understand concepts. Digital content due to its interactive nature is easy to grasp. Students are able to understand and retain concepts better. In the near future, we would see a proliferation of content using technologies such as Augmented Reality (AR), Virtual Reality (VR) and Mixed Reality (MR).

• Artificial Intelligence

Compared to other sectors like health and infrastructure, technology has been a late entrant in the education sector due to which the impact of artificial intelligence is also be bound to be delayed. But it has immense potential to improve the learning outcomes in the education sector.

Adaptive learning - This is a unique learning solution powered by artificial intelligence, where the learning path is personalised for each learner based on interactions with learners. It suggests a series of assessments and study materials, to each learner to mitigate his/her learning gaps and meet their individual learning objectives. This personalised way of learning enables learners to study at their own pace and as per their own ability. Thus, a personalised learning experience engages students effectively in their own learning.

Besides the advent of technology, the education sector has also witnessed a change in the approach towards teaching and learning in the last decade.

Focus away rote learning to building 21st century skills

Not everything is bad about rote learning, but it should not be an end in itself. Learning should focus on preparing students for their professional life. In the coming years, we will see the emergence of a curriculum that will emphasize on hands-on activities, experiential learning and more. The emphasis will not just be on acquiring skills and knowledge but also on the process of learning which will be more student-centric.

Importance of coding

Coding involves writing programs for the creation of computer software, websites and apps. Realizing the indispensable nature of coding in today's tech-savvy world, the concept is introduced right at the kindergarten level in many countries. . Although, the children are not taught traditional programming languages, they are introduced to fundamental programming concepts, such as sequencing, loops and conditionals, through exciting activities. Besides developing programming skills, coding also helps students develop 21st century skills - creativity, collaboration, communication and critical-thinking.

Alleviating the burden on teachers

Technology can be a great teaching ally too. The existing digital content helps teachers engage the classroom effectively. In the coming years, we will see a rise in the incorporation of Learning Management System (LMS) into the K-12 sector. LMS aids in planning and delivering education course and also tracking its delivery. An LMS will help a teacher plan the curriculum in-depth and also track the learning progress. The detailed reports will inform teachers about the deviations encountered in the well-defined learning path so that action can be taken to mitigate these deviations.

There has been a rise in e-learning content. However, a major part of the available content is ineffective in engaging students and improving learning outcomes. Thus, parameters to evaluate content will have to be set. The role of government bodies is paramount in promoting such initiatives.

Thus it can be inferred that in the next few years, the k-12 sector will witness improved learning outcomes. It will be able to provide an environment conducive to increased student engagement and improved teacher performance. ❯

FOCUS ON SKILL BASED EDUCATION

OUR EDUCATION SYSTEM is geared towards teaching and testing knowledge at every level as opposed to teaching skills. "Give a man a fish and you feed him one day, teach him how to catch fishes and you feed him for a lifetime." I believe that if you teach a man a skill, you enable him for a lifetime. Knowledge is largely forgotten after the semester exam is over. Still, year after year Indian students focus on cramming information. The best crammers are rewarded by the system. This is one of the fundamental flaws of our education system.

Reward creativity, original thinking, research and innovation

Our education system rarely rewards what deserves highest academic accolades. Deviance is discouraged. Risk taking is mocked. Our testing and marking systems need to be built to recognize original contributions, in form of creativity, problem solving, valuable original research and innovation. If we could do this successfully Indian education system would have changed overnight.

Memorising is no learning; the biggest flaw in our education system

is perhaps that it incentivizes memorizing above originality.

Get smarter people to teach

For way too long teaching became the sanctuary of the incompetent. Teaching jobs are until today widely regarded as safe, well-paying, risk-free and low-pressure jobs. Once a teacher told me in high school "Well, if you guys don't study it is entirely your loss – I will get my salary at the end of the month anyway." He could not put across the lack of incentive for being good at teaching any better. Thousands of terrible teachers all over India are wasting valuable time of young children every day all over India. It is high time to encourage a breed of superstar teachers. The internet has created this possibility – the performance of a teacher now need not be restricted to a small classroom. Now the performance of a teacher can be opened up for the world to see. The better teacher will be more popular, and acquire more students. That's the way of the future. Read here about why I think that we are closing on to the age of rockstar teachers.

We need leaders, entrepreneurs in teaching positions, not salaried people trying to hold on to their mantle.

Implement massive technology infrastructure for education

India needs to embrace internet and technology if it has to teach all of its huge population, the majority of which is located in remote villages. Now that we have computers and internet, it makes sense to invest in technological infrastructure that will make access to knowledge easier than ever. Instead of focussing on outdated models of brick and mortar colleges and universities, we need to create educational delivery mechanisms that can actually take the wealth of human knowledge to the masses. The tools for this dissemination will be cheap smartphones, tablets and computers with high speed internet connection. While all these are becoming more possible than ever before, there is lot of innovation yet to take place in this space.

Re-define the purpose of the education system

Our education system is still a colonial education system geared towards generating babus and pen-pushers under the newly acquired skin of modernity. We may have the

most number of engineering graduates in the world, but that certainly has not translated into much technological innovation here. Rather, we are busy running the call centres of the rest of the world – that is where our engineering skills end.

The goal of our new education system should be to create entrepreneurs, innovators, artists, scientists, thinkers and writers who can establish the foundation of a knowledge based economy rather than the low-quality service provider nation that we are turning into.

Effective deregulation

Until today, an institute of higher education in India must be operating on a not-for profit basis. This is discouraging for entrepreneurs and innovators who could have worked in these spaces. On the other hand, many people are using education institutions to hide their black money, and often earning a hefty income from education business through clever structuring and therefore bypassing the rule with respect to not earning profit from recognized educational institutions. As a matter of fact, private equity companies have been investing in some education service provider companies which in turn provide services to not-for-profit educational institutions and earn enviable profits. Sometimes these institutes are so costly that they are outside the rich of most Indian students.

There is an urgent need for effective de-regulation of Indian education sector so that there is infusion of sufficient capital and those who provide or create extraordinary educational products or services are adequately rewarded.

Take mediocrity out of the system

Our education system today encourages mediocrity – in students, in teachers, throughout the system. It is easy to survive as a mediocre student, or a mediocre teacher in an educational institution. No one shuts

down a mediocre college or mediocre school. Hard work is always tough, the path to excellence is fraught with difficulties. Mediocrity is comfortable. Our education system will remain sub-par or mediocre until we make it clear that it is not ok to be mediocre. If we want excellence, mediocrity cannot be tolerated. Mediocrity has to be discarded as an option. Life of those who are mediocre must be made difficult so that excellence

Personalize education – one size does not fit all

Assembly line education prepares assembly line workers. However, the drift of economic world is away from assembly line production. Indian education system is built on the presumption that if something is good for one kid, it is good for all kids.

Some kids learn faster, some are comparatively slow. Some people are visual learners, others are auditory learners, and still some others learn faster from experience. If one massive monolithic education system has to provide education to everyone, then there is no option but to assume that one size fits all. If however, we can effectively decentralize education, and if the government did not obsessively control what would be the "syllabus" and what will be the method of instruction, there could be an explosion of new and innovative courses geared towards serving various niches of learners,

Take for example, the market for learning dancing. There are very different dance forms that attract students with different tastes. More importantly, different teachers and institutes have developed different ways of teaching dancing. This could never happen if there was a central board of dancing education which enforced strict standards of what will be taught and how such things are to be taught.

Central regulation kills choice, and stifles innovation too. As far as education is concerned, availability of choices, de-regulation, profitability, entrepreneurship and emergence of niche courses are all inter-connected.

Allow private capital in education

The government cannot afford to provide higher education to all the people in the country. It is too costly for the government to do so. The central government spends about 4% of budget expenditure on education, compared to 40% on defence. Historically, the government just did not have enough money to spend on even opening new schools and universities, forget overhauling the entire system and investing in technology and innovation related to the education system. Still, until today, at least on paper only non-profit organizations are allowed to run educational institutions apart from government institutions. Naturally, the good money, coming from honest investors who want to earn from honest but high impact businesses do not get into education sector. Rather, there are crooks, money launderers and politicians opening "private" educational institutions which extract money from the educational institution through creative structuring. The focus is on marketing rather than innovation or providing great educational service – one of the major examples of this being IIPM.

Allowing profit making will encourage serious entrepreneurs, innovators and investors to take interest in the education sector. The government does not have enough money to provide higher education of reasonable quality to all of us, and it has no excuse to prevent private capital from coming into the educational sector.

Make reservation irrelevant

We have reservation in education today because education is not available universally. Education has to be rationed. This is not a long –term solution. If we want to emerge as a country build on a knowledge economy, driven by highly educated people – we need to make good education so universally available that reservation will lose its meaning. ❯

Boosting The Education Sector To The Next Level

Initiatives Taken By HRD Ministry, Government Of India

EDUCATION IS THE backbone of every country. It plays an important role in nation-building and nurturing future leaders. It is a key through which a country's economic condition can be reformed and individual citizens attain the power to grow financially. The reach of education has improved a lot, but when it comes to the quality of education, India is still lagging behind compared to other developed nations. That's why in 2018, the government has taken big steps to improve the quality of education and to revitalize the institutional infrastructure. Here's a list of some of the new initiatives taken by Government in Education sector.

Eklavya School

Eklavya schools will be established for Scheduled Caste (SC) and Schedule Tribe (ST) students by 2022 on the lines of Navodaya schools. Eklavya model residential schools will be set up in each Block having more than 50 percent tribal areas and 20,000 tribal people. These schools will be part of Navodaya Vidyalayas. It will provide training in sports and skill development. It will also have special facilities for preserving local art and culture.

Revitalising Infrastructure and Systems in Education (RISE) Scheme

RISE or Revitalising Infrastructure and Systems in Education was announced in Union Budget of India 2018. It aims to lend low-cost funds to government higher educational institutions and mobilise funds from the market and offer 10-year loans to centrally-run institutes. It will be launched in the next four years with a total investment of Rs. 1 trillion and will be financed by a restructured higher education financing agency (HEFA). In order to mobilise funds Rs. 1 lakh crore corpus under RISE, HEFA will need equity of Rs 10,000 crore, of which Rs 8,500 crore will be provided government and remaining by Canara Bank, which partnered with government to set up HEFA, and other corporations.

Prime Minister Fellowship Scheme

The Prime Minister's Research Fellowship (PMRF) scheme is aimed at attracting the talent pool of the country to doctoral (Ph.D.) programs of Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and Indian Institute of Science (IISc) for carrying out research in cutting-edge science and technology domains, with focus on national priorities. It will provide to 1000 B.Tech students from premier institutes to pursue PhD in IITs and IISc, along with which they will receive handsome fellowships. Its objective is to produce better research in India and make its institutions climb up in global rankings.

Diksha

The government of India will soon launch the learning portal 'DIKSHA' to upgrade the teaching skills and will initiate the integrated B.Ed programme, which is a combination of degree in art, science and education courses. Teachers are the primary source of education for the children. So it is very crucial for them to be properly trained with their skills updated and honed to suit the upcoming technological advancements. That's why the government has made these programmes mandatory for every individual.

Education for Girls
Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Abhiyan

The Department of School Education and Literacy has supported the Ministry of Women and Child Development for roll out of "Beti Bachao Beti Padhao" Abhiyan in 100 districts of the country to enhance the sex ratio and the status of the girl child. An award is

being instituted from the "Beti Bachao Beti Padhao" Abhiyan for School Management Committees which achieve 100% transition of girls at different levels of education..

UDAAN

UDAAN is an initiative of the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) to enable disadvantaged girl students and other students from SC/ST & minorities to transit from school to post-school professional education specially in Science and Math. The first flight of UDAAN is to address lower enrolment of girls in engineering colleges which is currently about 23% girls as against 77% of boys. It aims to reduce the quality gap between school education and engineering education entrance systems by focussing on the three dimensions-curriculum design, transaction and assessment. It will do this by enriching and supplementing teaching and learning of Science and Mathematics at Senior Secondary level. The CBSE will provide free and online resources to the entire student population with special incentives and support to a thousand selected is advantaged girls per year.

Swami Vivekananda Single Girl Child Scholarship for Research in Social Sciences

UGC has formulated this scheme under which 300 scholars would be provided Junior Research Fellowship @ Rs. 8,000/- – 10,000/- per month, and has been implemented from academic year 2014-15.

PRAGATI – Providing Assistance for Girls' Advancement in Technical Education Initiative

The AICTE scheme envisages selection of one girl per family where family income is less than 6 lakhs / annum on merit at the qualifying examination to pursue technical education. The scheme is to be implemented by the authorised admission centre of respective State Governments. 4000 girls are expected to benefit of scholarships available per annum. The scholarship amount is Rs. 30,000 or tuition fees or actual whichever is less and Rs. 2000/ month for ten months as contingency allowance.

Persons with Special Needs SAKSHAM

Scholarship for Differently-abled children AICTE has decided to award 1000 scholarships per annum to differently abled students to pursue technical education based on merit in the qualifying examination to pursue technical education. The scholarship amount would be Rs. 30000 or tuition fees or actual whichever is less and Rs. 2000 / month for ten months as contingency allowance.

Initiatives for the North East Ishan Uday

Special Scholarship Scheme for students of North East Region. The UGC has launched a special scholarship Scheme for students of North East Region from the academic session 2014-15. The Scheme envisages grant of 10,000 scholarships to students from North East Region whose parental income is below Rs. 4.5 lakh per annum and would be provided scholarship ranging from Rs. 3,500 to 5,000 per month for studying at under graduate level in Colleges/Universities of the country.

Ishān Vikās

Ishān Vikās is a comprehensive plan to bring selected students from the school and college levels from the North-Eastern states into close contact with the IITs, NITs and IISERs during their vacation periods. A typical visit is envisaged for a period of ten days to one of these institutions, in the form of either an exposure or an Internship programme. Each school will send one teacher to accompany a group of about 32 students of class IX and X and 8 teachers. The college students would be organised in two groups in summer and in winter, consisting of 32 students each group. About 2016 college students and 504 teachers from N-E will be visiting premier Institutes, like IIT/NIT/ IISERs in an academic year. or Centrally Funded Technological Institutes) with Stipends and Travel will be taken up. From 25 Institutions, about 250 students will be visiting 16 IITs and 6 NITs (to start with six NITs are being considered) per year.

ICT enabled enhancement of learning opportunities

ICT enabled enhancement of learning opportunities to

> In case a student is declared failed in a class for two consecutive years or in compartmental exams, he or she will be invariably counseled about choosing other options like the Patrachar Vidyalaya, NIOS, etc, and will not be re-admitted as a regular student.

accelerate outreach, improve quality and promote equity by facilitating access to the best educational resources for learners/ teachers.

SWAYAM (Study Webs of Active – Learning for Young Aspiring Minds) PROGRAMME

Under this programme, Professors of centrally funded institutions like IITs, IIMs, Centrally universities will offer online courses to citizens of our country. All courses will be made available free of cost for learning. In case the learner requires a Verified Certificate, a small fee will be applicable.

In first phase, IIT Bombay, IIT Chennai, IIT Kanpur, IIT Guwahati, University of Delhi, Jawahar Lal Nehru University, IGNOU, IIM Bangalore, IIM Calcutta, Banaras Hindu University, alone as well as with the help of faculty from foreign universities will be offering courses in areas of engineering education, social science, energy, management, basic sciences. At least one crore students are expected to benefit in 2 to 3 years through this initiative. SWAYAM was launched in 2014.

National E-Library

The E-Library has been envisaged as an online portal that will democratize access to knowledge by ensuring that quality content from central universities and premier educational institutions are available in a digital format that can be easily accessed by students, working professionals and researchers across the country through laptops, smartphones, tablets, PC's. International collaboration has been offered by Israel, Norway, UK, UNESCO. The National E –Library became operational in the academic year 2015.

Augmenting Research

Dr. S. Radhakrishnan Post Doctoral Fellows in Social Sciences

The UGC has launched a new scheme, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan Post Doctoral Fellows in Social Sciences including Languages. Under the scheme 300 fellowships would be awarded at the rate of Rs. 25,000 per month + HRA etc. for a period of 3 years to the selected Fellows.

AICTE Scholarship for Ph D Studies

AICTE has announced 1000 scholarships per annum to eligible candidates to pursue Ph D in CSIR / DRDO labs or other reputed institutions: Payment of scholarship is as per the Government norms for the purpose.

Quality Improvement Program (QIP)

This is a program conducted by GOI to promote research amongst the eligible teachers in   AICTE approved Institutions and others and facilitate them to complete a Ph D from the best Institutions in India like the IIT's and NIT's or other Nationally important Institutes. This scheme is open only to regular teachers. It is proposed to offer ME/M.Tech Scholarships under QIP to 7500 scholarships for M Tech under QIP and 2500 Scholarships for PhD under QIP. ◗

"The Government Is Spending Nearly 4% Of GDP On Education"

Prakash Javadekar

Union Minister of Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India

HRD Minister of India, Shri Prakash Javadekar discusses the achievements of and issues facing the Ministry of Human Resource Development, including the two paper leaks of the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) in April 2018, the changes to the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) textbooks, the draft education policy, and the problem of vacant seats in engineering colleges. Excerpts:

Q Educationists have often cautioned that university graduates have degrees but no real skills because of a faulty system. How much does this worry you and how are you addressing the concern?

As far as higher education is concerned, I am worried for those who graduate every year. I agree that the existing curriculum does not create the necessary professional skills. Therefore we are planning to introduce BA (Professional), B.Com (Professional), and B.Sc courses where students will get 1,000 hours of additional courseware, 250 hours of soft skills and 250 hours of ICT [information and communication technology] skills so that after graduation they become employable. We are planning the course work so that by June 2019 we will be able to introduce this to students. This will be available through the UGC [University Grants Commission], the AICTE [All India Council For Technical Education], so that it becomes available for all colleges in the country.

Q Despite the promise made in the manifesto, the GDP allocation to education is below 6%, which was your commitment.

Today the government is spending nearly 4%. It is an increase of 70% over the 2013-14 Budget. Let's celebrate this. Even States are increasing their budgets for education. It is inching close to 6%. We will reach it.

Q Are you concerned at the rate at which engineering college seats are falling vacant?

This is a classic case of unplanned, unsustainable growth and oversupply of engineering seats because of two things. During the UPA regime, all kinds of permissions were given by AICTE. Whoever wanted to set up an engineering college was granted permission. The AICTE's authority runs only in affiliated colleges. New private colleges, new deemed universities and State universities have increased their intake tremendously because they are quality institutes — the issue is one of oversupply because AICTE cannot intervene. We wish to correct the act so that AICTE's reign continues in all engineering institutes, which is not the case right now.

Second, now students are choosing where they want to go, and obtain reviews before joining. So, in a way, lower quality institutes will go out and the good will stay. That is a good development. We received 100-150 applications for closure of colleges.

Q What are your conclusions on the CBSE paper leak? What went wrong?

It is always a case of somebody breaching the code. In bank ATMs, there is a foolproof arrangement, yet breaches happen. We will be alert. We have put processes in place. We don't want to put more things in the public domain. Our system is foolproof but if somebody breaches the system, it is a criminal act and [the person] will be tried under the law.

Q What was the reason this time?

It was one man's hunger to become headmaster at an early stage, prompted by one lady who said she would help him become headmaster but he must give her two papers. These were the two papers that went viral on social media. That is what the leak was all about. All are arrested.

Q Your Ministry is working on a draft legislation for setting up a Higher Education Regulatory Council. When will that be ready and what is its goal?

The draft legislation has undergone many changes. First, it was an overarching architecture that [the UPA's HRD Minister] Kapil Sibal wanted to bring and it was opposed by his own party members. We want to make the processes of the three regulators the same, with increased transparency.

Q Will it be a super-regulator?

We are in the process of discussing it. We need to have more transparency, so that there is no malpractice or corruption. If it comes as a law, so be it.

Q Isn't the Indian education system the most regulated system in the world?

I don't think so. Actually, we don't regulate anything. The whole inspection process is about the area, ownership and the building. Nobody is talking about learning outcomes. Nobody is talking about the teaching processes and placements. We want to shift the focus of the regulators to these areas.

Q It is said that if something is not broken, don't fix it. The NCERT curriculum has been designed and authored by eminent historians and academics. Yet you have tried to fix the curriculum. Why?

We have only updated and corrected it, which is a

Today the government is spending nearly 4% on Education. It is an increase of 70% over the 2013-14 Budget. Let's celebrate this.

usual exercise. We do not have the committees to redraft and rewrite the curriculum and we have not formed a committee to do this. Last year we asked teachers for their suggestions for updating and [for correcting] erroneous information. We received 1,100 suggestions and we have carried out a little over 700 suggestions.

Q Do you think ancient India has not received adequate attention in the NCERT books?

No, I don't think so. Since 2011, knowledge tradition and practices in India is a good course by the CBSE. Any student who reads that will get correct scientific information. We have only introduced government schemes like Swachh Bharat, Make in India.

Q The UGC notification for graded autonomy for universities that are doing well said that these institutions have the autonomy to expand, offer new courses, decide curricula, etc., provided they do not seek additional funds for this. Does this not lead to potential fee hikes?

State universities don't seek funds from us. Private universities have nothing to ask from us. Deemed universities also don't ask from us. Only Central universities and centrally funded deemed universities are what the Centre finances. As far as central finance is concerned, the Centre will give all the money required.

But in graded autonomy, this freedom given is their choice if they want to take it. We have not mandated that they have to take it. As far as centrally funded [institutions] are concerned, the fund regulations will apply. Because if Finance Minister writes the Budget, we

can't delegate budget-writing to institutes. So, they will have to submit financial approvals as regular financial approvals.

Q What about autonomous colleges?

Autonomous colleges are not something we have invented. It has been there from the 1970s and there are 635 autonomous colleges working smoothly in our country. There are another 350 applications pending. So, we process them. As far as Delhi University is concerned, we said it is not mandatory. It is your choice. As far as financial approvals are concerned, you will have to stick to our original framework. And academic freedom to conduct examinations, on the syllabus... that is the freedom they get. Conducting the examination, evaluation of papers — everything remains with the college, if they want to. But if they don't want, we are not mandating. We are also not increasing fees in any way because of this. But if they have to expand and they want to increase the budget, they will have to seek approval from the Ministry.

Q The new education policy has been pending for quite some time. When do we expect it and what will be the major thrust areas?

The Kasturirangan Committee has almost completed its job. I am very sure that this will serve the next generation. There will be a revolution in education because of the use of technology and there is also scope for a new kind of teaching-learning process. All this will be taken care of and I think it will serve the next generation from 2020 to 2040. ◗

AFTERWORD

Pyush Misra
Director,
Consumer Online Foundation

Instead of creating more and more barriers to education and general learning, it will be better to open doors wide and create new institutional mechanisms that will ensure low costs and better quality.
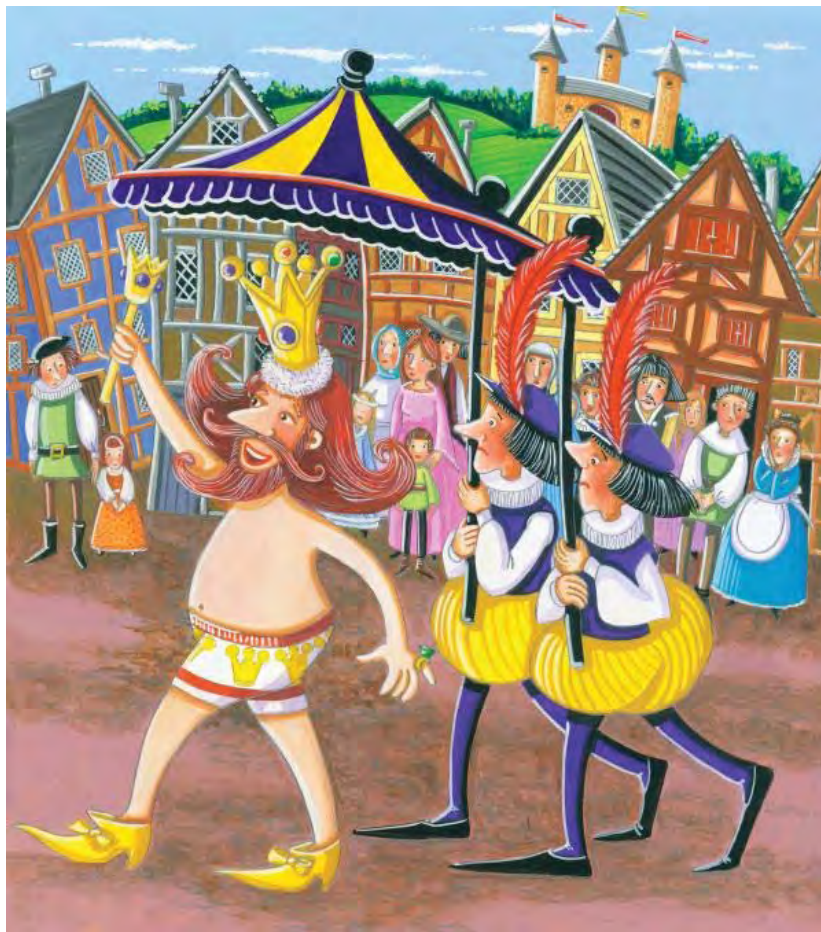
India's Education System Is Like An Emperor Without Clothes

THE EMPLOYMENT OF youth is becoming a critical issue not only in India, but all over the world. We have two sets of problems. One is that not many jobs are being created. The other is that even as the number of students continuing beyond school is increasing rapidly, we seem incapable of preparing them for tomorrow.

Of the total population of 25-29 year olds in India, 10.2% were graduates in 2015-16. This number is likely to double in a decade given the trend of increasing enrolment in undergraduate courses. The question is: what is the value of these graduates, to the economy, to themselves, to their families and to the communities they live in.

In a relatively poor country where industry is starved of skilled labour, young people should be flocking to vocational courses and industry should be chasing the training centres. But neither happens. The answer to India's larger skilling problems does not lie in short modular courses, but rather in creating progressively stronger foundations at different stages in school, and then offering options. Young people should be able to combine work and study, because earning is an immediate need and learning for upward mobility will be a growing aspiration.

The ASER 2017 report shows that nearly 78% of all rural 14-18 year-olds do some agricultural work, whether for wages or on their own land. Yet, the percentage of students in agricultural or veterinary courses around India amounts to less than half a per cent of all undergraduate enrolment. It is an area that could use a more educated and trained workforce, considering agriculture and related sectors will continue to be major occupations and need to be improved if rural livelihoods are to grow. So, why are young people not enrolling to learn agriculture?

I suspect the demand is low for the same reason that most people do not pay to take cooking lessons. It is a skill that is handed down from generation to generation and people would laugh at the idea of enrolling their children in cooking classes

unless it was for a salary earning job. But, it is noteworthy that videos of Indian cooking recipes on YouTube routinely have a million or more views within a year, not too far off the number of views of many popular Bollywood songs. Similarly, videos on agriculture, especially those in Hindi or regional languages, are viewed close to a million times and the viewership is growing.

The supply-demand problem of education has many interesting aspects to it. Graduation certificates, like school certificates, have lost credibility and meaning. Yet, parents want their children to complete graduation. There is a certain helpless faith in our educational institutions that they will somehow deliver at least for 'my' child.

create new institutional mechanisms that ensure low costs and better quality. Even today, almost 10% undergraduates are registered in open universities. Open learning has to be taken many steps further. Digital technology is a feature that needs to be used fully. New learning structures will be needed where local tutors help students and where learning groups can use group and peer learning processes to learn. The possibilities are endless.

The technology that produced the industrial revolution organised our lives in linear patterns. As many have remarked, our schools are a reflection of that era as well, starting from the syllabi, the

> **The employment of youth is becoming a critical issue not only in India, but all over the world. We have two sets of problems. One is that not many jobs are being created. The other is that even as the number of students continuing beyond school is increasing rapidly, we seem incapable of preparing them for tomorrow.**
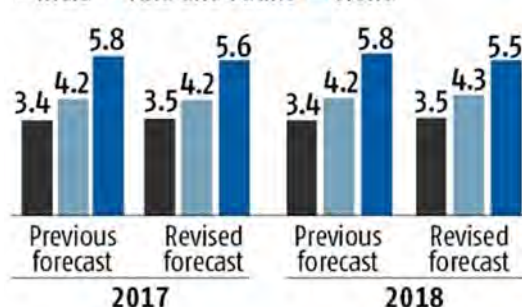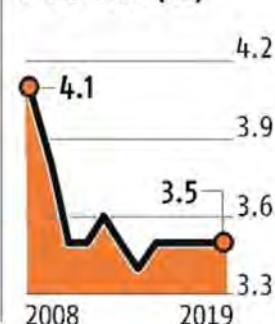

Source: ILO's World Employment Social Outlook Report - Trends 2018

The increasing number of students, lack of infrastructure, shortage of teachers and loss of credibility and quality have lead to this crisis. The education system seems to have become like that powerful emperor without clothes. Everyone can see that he is naked but no one wants to say so.

Instead of creating more barriers to education and general learning, it will be better to open the doors wide and

seating arrangement, the quality control of passing and failing children and, finally, the presentation of a product desired by the factory. With so much knowledge now available at our fingertips, the barriers to accessing this knowledge need to be lowered. But preparing children to learn while they are in elementary schools is the first unfinished task, as everyone now agrees. ◗

THE AWARE CONSUMER STATE AWARDS

4TH EDITION

THE AWARE CONSUMER STATE AWARDS

on the occasion of

NATIONAL CONSUMER DAY

24 December 2018 · NEW DELHI

- THE MOST CONSUMER FRIENDLY STATE – HIMACHAL PRADESH
- THE 2nd MOST CONSUMER FRIENDLY STATE – GOA
- THE 3rd MOST CONSUMER FRIENDLY STATE – ANDHRA PRADESH
- THE 4th MOST CONSUMER FRIENDLY STATE – KARNATAKA
- THE 5th MOST CONSUMER FRIENDLY STATE – ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS
- THE STATE WITH BEST DIGITAL PRESENCE – KERALA
- THE STATE WITH BEST DIGITAL PRESENCE – MAHARASHTRA
- THE STATE WITH HIGHEST CONSUMER COMPLAINT REDRESS – CHANDIGARH
- THE STATE WITH 2nd HIGHEST CONSUMER COMPLAINT REDRESS – TRIPURA
- THE MOST IMPROVED STATE – MANIPUR

THE AWARE CONSUMER

QCI

PHD CHAMBER
HARMONY · DEVELOPMENT · PROGRESS
Estd. - 1905

To access the full Report of the event visit **www.theawareconsumer.in**

SCHOOL FEE REGULATION AND EDUCATION ACCESSORIES COST

The problem with the welfare state is that its attempts to help the poor, it reduces costs at the expense of the producers. While this artificial reduction of price may be seen as a positive impact by the consumers in the short-term, in the long-run the effects will be disastrous for them as well.

INDIA'S GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS are often mistaken to be the only option for children from disadvantaged backgrounds. Private school enrollment has been increasing at rates comparable to government schools even after the government started implementing its flagship program, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan for universalising education. The percentage of children in the 6-14 years age group in rural India enrolled in private schools increased from 18.7 percent in 2006 to 29 percent in 2013 (Annual Status of Education Report 2014). The figures for urban India were estimated to be around 58 percent in 2005 by the Indian Human Development Survey and could only have increased (Muralidharan, A Renewed Model of Education 2014). This is a clear indicator that parents prefer private schools, if they can afford it. It may also be noted that the number of private schools which charge very low fees and function in low income areas have been identified to be on the increase, in response to this demand (Baird 2009).

The focus of private schools on English-medium education and the significance of English in the social mobility aspirations of the people is one of the primary reasons that poor parents prefer private schools. But this is only one side of the story. As the annual ASER reports brought out by the NGO Pratham indicate, states with higher enrollment in private schools also perform better in testing of learning outcomes. Most of these private schools in rural areas and poorer sections of urban areas function at costs much lesser than what the government allocates for its schools (Muralidharan and Sundararaman 2014). Thus, due to several such reasons the private schools in India share a huge load of the education sector—and this is without even considering the smaller private schools that are not recognised by any education board.

While parents increasingly send their children to private schools, they are also simultaneously affected by the increasing cost of living every year. Private schools charge fees based on demand and this serves as a method of eliminating competition to select students. This has created a situation whereby the students from relatively better-off households get preference over children from economically weaker sections for school admissions. But since parents want their children to be educated in a private school, but cannot afford it, they have sought the help of the government to control the price of the service offered by private schools (Raghupathi 2010). It is in this context, that some states in India have started implementing laws to fix the maximum tuition fees that can be charged by private schools. The economic, and subsequent social, effect of

controlling the price of education needs to be further explored, especially since free government schools exist, which benefit from an increased education budget every year.

Price-control: Intended Effects & Actual Effects

The imposition of fee regulation on private schools can be understood to be a reaction to the demands of some parents against large private schools charging high fees for their services. This can also be seen as a direct result of the assumption that these are the only types of private schools that exist, which is not the case. While consumers are always seeking lower costs in any economy, the problem with the welfare state is that its attempts to help the poor, it reduces costs at the expense of the producers. While this artificial reduction of price may be seen as a positive impact by the consumers in the short-term, in the long-run the effects will be disastrous for them as well. Producers, who see no chance of increasing prices end up having to cut costs, are unable to function efficiently and lose incentive to perform better. The regulation of fees therefore has the unintended consequence of lowering the standards of private schools, by destroying the competition in the market.

The regulation of price has always proved disastrous. It is ironic that though the intentions were always to protect the disadvantaged section of the population from being exploited, price control often has the opposite effect. Fionna Scott argues that when price is controlled artificially in one sector, it leads to the talent and entrepreneurs in that sector to migrate towards others that benefit more (Scott 2001). This is the case not just with setting the price at a lower level than the market price, but for setting it at a higher level as well. One of the problems with setting prices at a lower level is that it creates an entry barrier in the market, thus leading to a shortage in the competition. In this case, that would mean fewerentrepreneurs will be willing to start schools since it is not profitable. It is also the case that existing schools will have to close down because they cannot meet running costs, and/or due to a lack of demand because of falling quality as a result of lower fixed fees.

Both government and private schools have maximum capacities, and when the prices are lowered leading to fewer number of schools, this means there will be more students out of school simply because there are not

CBSE Asks Schools Not To Sell Books

THE CENTRAL BOARD of Secondary Education (CBSE) has asked all its affiliated schools not to 'indulge in commercial activities by way of selling of books, stationery, uniforms, school bags' in school premises. The board has also reiterated its earlier guidelines for mandatory use of NCERT or CBSE text books in classes I to XIII by the schools in its latest circular.

"The CBSE affiliation bylaws mandate that society/trust/company running the school must ensure that the school is run as a community service and not as a business and that commercialization does not take place in school in any shape

> The CBSE affiliation bylaws mandate that society/trust/company running the school must ensure that the school is run as a community service and not as a business and that commercialization does not take place in school in any shape whatsoever.

enough schools. In the Indian scenario, where more and more parents are sending their children to private schools, the destruction of the private school ecosystem would mean that a large number of students will be out of school because the government school system will not be able to accommodate such a large number of students.

Thus, while the intention of fee regulation is to decrease cost of education and therefore increase the access to education, the effect is that it creates a supply deficit which in turn ends up reducing the access to education for the very population it had hoped to help. The logical result would be that the government would have to spend much more than it hopes to, or is able to, on government schools, to offset this supply deficit.

The effect of price control on a commodity, as can be seen, will ultimately be a costly form of rationing of the commodity because of the scarcity that artificial prices generate by making the market for the commodity less

attractive for potential and existing investors. The importance of education to a society is accepted and education is now seen as a necessary service. The attempts at increasing accessibility to these services, while justified, are misinformed. Schools are expected to offer services without expecting profits, as is made obvious from the legislationthat requires schools to be registered as non-profit institutions. But the service offered comes at a cost and high levels of risk for the school management. With the imposition of the infrastructure requirements under the Right to Education Act 2009, potential investors are likely to find opening schools to be an almost certain loss. Existing schools have been closed down because they have not been able to meet infrastructure requirements at the low fees that they charge. Price controls on top of this, will make this situation more severe for the education market and ultimately, to the accessibility of a service that is fundamental to the growth of any society. ◗

And Stationery On School Premises

whatsoever," the circular read.

It further added that, it has been brought to the notice of the board through various complaints received from parents and other stakeholders that still schools are indulging in commercial activities by way of selling of books and uniforms etc within the school premises or through selected vendors.

"This is a welcoming step by the CBSE as parents have to bleed through their nose to pay for notebooks and other accessories. The schools even asking parents to buy uniform and shoes from particular vendors, which is again violation of the guidelines," said Basudev Bhatt, convenor of All

Odisha Parents' Association. Following allegations by parents' district administration conducted raids in a private school in Rourkela and sealed books, notebooks and other stationaries sold in the school premises.

Most city schools affiliated to CBSE have been ignoring the board's guidelines of using NCERT books mandatory for class I to XII. "But often the board receives reports and complaints regarding the pressure exercised by schools on children and their parents to buy textbooks other than NCERT/CBSE," the circular pointed out.

Teachers said, the NCERT books do not contain adequate

question banks for practice and other reference materials for which students have to use other books. "Books by private publishers also contained the same curriculum but they value added in their publications by giving more questions for practice and also help students in better preparation," said a mathematics teacher in a city school.

Parents allege that the prices textbooks published by private publishers are three to four times more than the NCERT books. "I paid Rs 5500 for books and notebooks for my son studying in class VIII, which is too much," said Arati Nayak, a parent. ◗

OUR
BUSINESS
is PATIENT
SAFETY.

Partnership for

SAFE MEDICINES INDIA
⚕ SAFEMEDICINESINDIA.*in*

THE COACHING CLASS INDUSTRY

– Aesha Datta

Rising aspirations, combined with the falling quality of mainstream education, have meant that examination-oriented tuitions have taken over the lives of most school and college students in India.

IT IS REALLY not an option anymore; it has almost become mandatory," says Simi Valecha, Professor at the University of Delhi, about her son, Keshav, taking a 'coaching class'. "He doesn't feel confident about many concepts and sometimes I wonder what the teachers do in school."

A tutor visits her home regularly to help Keshav brush up on Biology. The 17-year-old, currently in the 12th standard in an eminent Delhi school, hopes to get admission into a medical college after a competitive examination.

The Valecha family pays the tutor Rs 1,200 an hour for his trouble. They are no exception, either in seeking additional teaching for their child or in paying the tutor a handsome fee. Millions of families across India have been doing exactly this for years.

Parents want their children to get on the fast track to prosperity and are pulling out all the stops to get them into the very best educational institutions. This aspiration has spawned a shadow industry of 'coaching classes' as they are known in common parlance.

All-India Phenomenon

As many as 83 per cent of India's high school children juggle time around school, extra-curricular activities, and tuitions at these coaching centres, according to a 2012 report by the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

Among the better known ones are Aakash Institute, TIME and FIITJEE. They focus on exams such as the IIM Common Admission Test, Management Aptitude Test, IIT Joint Entrance Examination, as well as international exams such as GMAT, GRE, IELTS and TOEFL.

This shadow education system mimics the mainstream. Though it is not formally recognised as an industry, the coaching sector was estimated to be worth over $6.4 billion in 2008, according to the ADB report.

The coaching industry also generates employment. However, since it is unregulated and unorganised for the most part, it is difficult to estimate exactly how many people are employed in this line of work.

While the quality of teachers is in no way equal, some able but unemployed people find a means of sustenance through the coaching industry.

Growing industry

The ADB study, 'Shadow Education: Private Supplementary Tutoring and Its Implications for Policy Makers in Asia,' estimated the sector to be growing at over 15 per cent each year. Add to this the numerous mom-and-pop coaching centres and home tutors, data on which are not available, the size of the industry would be even bigger.

Apart from the high prevalence among high school students, the ADB study noted that 60 per cent of primary school children receive private tutoring. In fact, of the students who were not being tutored at all, the primary reason, according to the study, is lack of resources.

The report notes that in 2007-08, students living in rural India paid Rs 1,456 and those in urban India paid Rs 2,349 each month for private coaching classes. In contrast, the poverty line in the country is Rs 965 for urban citizens and Rs 781 for rural folk.

Exorbitant fees

Tuition fees in urban centres vary by level and location. For example, for regular tuitions supplementing the school curriculum, fees can range between Rs 1,000 and Rs 4,000 a month. However, if a high school student gets home tuitions, the charges can go up to Rs 1,500 an hour per subject.

The fees for structured classroom teaching to crack competitive examinations can range from Rs 1.2 lakh to Rs 2.8 lakh for two years (since students typically start attending these institutes after X standard).

The ADB report also notes that perceptions of inadequacies in mainstream schooling, where teachers often do not show up or complete the curriculum, are a major reason for the growth of private tutoring. The content, the report says, should have been taught in regular classes in school itself.

Since these classes have the single-minded focus of cracking an entrance exam, many believe that students become robot-like, unable to think beyond their syllabus. Addressing a PAN IIT summit in New York, Infosys

Many students planning to crack competitive exams like IIT JEE Mains, JEE Advanced, WBJEE seek best and reliable coaching institutes.

Should Coaching Institutes Get Government Recognition?

The government is likely to tread cautiously on the question of legitimising coaching institutions for two reasons.

One, it will amount to an admission of failure on school education.

Two, they will no longer be able to distance themselves from the problem of student suicides. The government will be held responsible for adding to the stress as much as the coaching institutes.

The fact of the matter is that India's "shadow education system" is as mainstream as it gets – it's worth big money. It is an industry that's single-handedly driving the economy of small towns like Kota, but remains unregulated and unrecognised by the Central government. As a demand that finds resonance across the board, the question is – how long can the government keep it's head in the sand?

Technologies Chairman N.R. Narayana Murthy said the quality of students in IITs has deteriorated over the years because of the coaching class culture and its narrow focus. "They somehow get through the joint entrance examination. But their performance in IITs, at jobs, or when they come for higher education in institutes in the US, is not as good as it used to be," he lamented.

Ultimately this phenomenon, notes the ADB report, "divides the student population into haves and have-nots; it makes teachers less responsible; it makes improvements in schooling arrangements more difficult since the more influential and better-placed families have less at stake in the quality of what is done in the schools".

Crumbling system

Educationists believe the Indian schooling system, which is unable to keep up with the numbers, is the reason behind the burgeoning coaching industry.

Sneha Agarwal, a middle school teacher in Delhi, says that in large classes with 35-40 students, it is often difficult to give individual attention to students as this could potentially lead to a lag for the entire class.

Indeed, the pressure of finishing the given curriculum within a set number of hours often overwhelms teachers.

Earlier, parents would sit with their children and help them. But these days with both partners working in many families, parents are unable to devote that kind of time.

"In my view, it is an indicator of the failing education system, which is not able to cater to the needs of students. Naturally, they look for alternatives," says Anand Kumar, founder of the free Super 30 training

programme for economically backward students.

A professor in Delhi University told Business Line that shadow education in the real sense of the term can also be seen in the university. Teachers on the university payroll are barred from providing private coaching. However, many do so, charging as much as Rs 5,000 an hour to coach students to crack the Civil Services Examination.

Uncertain results

However, the exorbitant fees charged by institutions and tutors don't necessarily guarantee a satisfactory experience. Apoorva Shankaran, 23, who works with an advertising company in Mumbai, enrolled for GMAT training at TIME Institute. "I was not satisfied with TIME. The teachers were not trained to offer GMAT coaching. I had to do most of it on my own, which is where Kaplan study material came in handy."

She adds that students need to research the quality of an institute before joining it. "One-on-one tutoring is better than going for these coaching centres where they don't really focus on each student's strengths." Despite this, students are often left with little choice.

"The most important factor (in the growth of the tuition industry) is the schooling system's inability to match growing aspirations and requirements. I reiterate that till three decades ago, India still produced engineers and doctors, as well as civil servants. The majority of them came from the Government school system, as big public schools were few and far between," says Anand Kumar. "Unless the condition of schools and colleges improves, the tuition industry will only grow." ◗

BRAIN DRAIN
Boon For Developed Countries, But Bane For India

BRAIN DRAIN HAS become a major concern of the developing countries, especially, India. The term, which emerged in1960s when the skilled workforce started emigrating from the poor countries to the rich countries in search of better job opportunities and living conditions, has become a hot topic of discussion over the years.

When the expatriates are going abroad in search of greener pastures, India has been losing its major skilled workforce that includes doctors, engineers, scientists and technicians. If we analyze the brain drain trends in India, we could find that there are many reasons why the country fails to hold back its talented youth.

Check the reasons of brain drain to developed countries from below:

Brain Drain: Reason 1 Higher Education Scenario in India

In recent years, the cut-offs for admissions became close to 100% in the best Indian universities. While the institutes are in the race of getting the best students in the country, the ambitious youth who fail to meet the "irrational" demands had to compromise on their dream of occupying a seat in any of the prestigious Indian universities. This leads them to explore the scope of higher education abroad. Most of the students who try their luck in higher studies abroad get into good universities as they have an edge over the students from other countries in terms of skills and knowledge.

While this is the case of young students, the academically well qualified people prefer going abroad for higher research because they don't get the best chances, resources and facilities for research in India.

A recent study conducted by Indian Institute of Management- Bangalore (IIM-B) shows that the students going for higher studies abroad has increased by 256% in the last 10 years. When 53,000 Indian students went abroad for higher studies in 2000, the figure shot up to 1.9 lakh in 2010.

The US is the most sought after destination for students, followed by the United Kingdom. There are many Indian students exploring study opportunities in countries like Australia, Germany and France as well.

Brain Drain - Country-wise data on the number of students going abroad for higher studies

Country	Students going abroad (per year)
China	4,21,000
India	1,53,300
Republic of Korea	1,05,300
Germany	77,500
Japan	54,500

Source: UNESCO's Report- Global Education Digest, 2009

A report by Associated Chamber of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) pointed out that when a large number of students flocking to foreign universities, it costs India a whopping Rs. 95,000 crores per year.

The report further noted that there is a huge difference in the fees paid by students studying in the premier institutes in India as compared to students who study aboard. While an Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)

student has to pay an average fee of $150 per month, the fee paid by an Indian student studying abroad per month is anywhere between $1,500 and $4,000.

Still, it is a matter of concern that despite the highly subsidized rate of higher education, especially in engineering and management, India fails miserably in attracting the best brains.

Brain Drain: Reason 2 — Better Opportunities Abroad

Most of the students prefer staying back in the host country due to better work opportunities and fat pay packages. After getting good global exposure and getting introduced to the high quality life and facilities, the students become reluctant to return to the home country.

These days, most of the developed countries act like organizations. When they fail to find good, talented and skilled workers in their country, they attract the highly skilled and qualified people from other countries. It's very obvious that the skilled Indians prefer US Green Cards and EU Blue Cards over the not-so-attractive pay checks and average living conditions of a developing country like India. Here, India is the loser and developed countries like the US and UK are gainers.

Brain Drain: Reason 3
Time For A Reality Check ?

Over the years, India has become a major supplier of skilled and talented young people to the Western countries, particularly European Union. The major destinations for Indians in the EU in the beginning of the century were limited to the UK, Germany, Italy, Austria and Spain. But now, more and more Indians are immigrating to countries like Poland, France, Ireland and Sweden. A good number of these immigrants reach the host countries as students.

Comparison between first residence permits issued to Indians and total number of issues in EU in 2009 and 2010

Category	Indians		Total EU	
	2009	2010	2009	2010
Highly Skilled Workers	11,784	12,852	39,027	40,786
Researchers	658	724	6,228	7,172
Seasonal Workers	4,163	3,783	56,518	1,14,311
Other Economic Reasons	47,844	56,488	5,46,749	6,45,493
Total Permits	64,449	73,847	6,48,522	8,07,762

Source: Population Database – Eurostat

While 5,615 permits issued by the UK for Indians were for highly skilled workers, Italy issued 3,479 permits for Indian seasonal workers. These highly skilled migrants and seasonal workers become permanent residents of the host countries as the long term socio-economic benefits lure them.

Brain Drain: Reason 4
Wake Up Call For India

The increasing trend of brain drain of the skilled workers finally persuaded the government to take action. After witnessing a huge brain drain of doctors (among the 3,000 medical students went abroad in last three years, none returned), the health ministry has suspended issuing "no obligation to return certificates" to the medical students going abroad for higher studies.

Further, now the medical students going to the US for higher studies will have to sign a bond with the government, promising to return to India after completing his / her studies. If the student doesn't fulfil the bond obligation, the ministry can write to the US and the permission for the student to practice in the country will be denied.

While India is putting the best foot forward to curb brain drain, there are signs of reverse brain drain where a few best brains are returning to India. With better economic policies and the human capital to execute them, there is still hope for India. ◗

"Our Education System Is Only Focused On Exams. Knowledge Is Not A Priority."

– Chairman, Mr.P.Nalperumalsamy, Aravind Eye Care hospitals

MADURAI-BASED ARAVIND Eye Care hospitals are known all over the world for their philanthropic work in the fiercely commercial world of healthcare. They hold the world record of conducting over 4 million eye surgeries, a majority of them done at cheap cost, or free of charge. Chairman **P. Nalperumalsamy,** *a Padmashri, has been the leading light of this institution for long, so much so in 2010, Time magazine named him as one of the 100 most influential people in the world. In a relaxed interview with* **Arindam Mukherjee,** *the 73-year-old group patriarch stresses that the government needs to tighten control over private sector educational institutions while simultaneously strengthening public sector colleges. Excerpts:*

What is wrong with the education system we follow today in the country?

The general education system is focused only on examinations rather than training students for the future and really testing their knowledge. Because of this, students are forced to take tests that show only their retention powers, not their actual capacity or knowledge. So engineers today cannot do actual work in technology and doctors do not go to people who need their services.

Is the problem with the system or the approach towards education as a whole?

Today, students are completely professionally-oriented and they take examinations for the same rather than to gain knowledge, or do research in the subject. In our colleges, we have infrastructure and good faculty, but there is no motivation to do research. Even in the field of medicine, no one is motivated to do research because everything is so examination and job-oriented.

But that is also a requirement of today's times.

Yes, but not at the cost of real learning. India's education system looks at commercial gains only and students are trained to look at their monetary future. The curriculum is also built around clearing an exam and getting into particular professions. Learning is not a priority.

So who is at fault for this mess?

Those regulating and those making policies are equally responsible. If the system has deteriorated to this level where learning has been substituted by a race to clear an examination, regulators and

policymakers are to blame for not acting on time to correct this anomaly. It's also not enough to have rules and regulations, it is important how they are implemented. Government bodies are not controlling institutions. That should become a priority. Also, for good institutions that are promoting real learning, there should be no interference.

Is the present practice of allowing the private sector indiscriminately into education the right approach?

Most educational engineering and medical colleges owned by the government are not equipped in terms of infrastructure and faculty and their quality has been suffering. The better government institutions cannot accommodate the vast number of students who are seeking to get into them. So the need for the private sector comes in. They are filling the gap.

But private sector institutions also charge very high fees.

Yes, many of the private institutions take advantage of the situation and charge high fees. There are very good students in rural areas but they can't afford good education today.

In some states, the government does regulate fees, including your state (Tamil Nadu).

Yes, but instead of concentrating on just the private sector institutions, the government should strengthen and improve the quality of the government educational institutions. Once that is done, quality education will become affordable and everyone would be willing to join them. Now the standard of these institutions, barring a few leading ones, has gone down so much that no one wants to go there. Everyone is going to private sector colleges, even at a much higher cost.

"The combined engineering entrance exams is a good idea. Without it, many rural students will not be able to get in."

What's the solution? How can we put the system in order?

One way to do this is through public-private partnership. It has succeeded in many sectors, so why not in education? The private sector can develop the institutions and provide infrastructure and the government can build the curriculum and run them. In fact, policymakers, professionals and the public should come together with an aim to build good educational institutions. It is

good to have as many universities as possible, because many students do not get an opportunity to get into good colleges. But the government should have a strict control on every aspect, like infrastructure, faculty, facilities and curriculum, right from the time they are set up. There should be a periodic accreditation system where once every two years institutions seek accreditation and the regulatory bodies check if all norms are being followed, for it's often seen that once a sanction comes through, institutions openly flout norms.

Corruption is rampant at institutions as well as regulatory bodies.

Yes, and seats are today sold for a lot of money. This is because private institutions spend a lot of money to set up infrastructure and they try to get that back in any way—scrupulous and unscrupulous. This is something that needs to be totally weeded out.

There is a big debate on the combined engineering examinations. Is that a healthy idea?

It is a good proposal and should be extended to the medical colleges too. Without the entrance exams,

many rural students cannot get in because those from the big cities have the advantage of coaching and scoring high marks. With a common exam, everyone will be on an equal footing.

Your institution, Aravind Eye Care Group, has set examples of fair play and stands out in this system with values and principles. How do you continue to do that?

We have set our own standards and we select purely on merit. Our tuition fees are not enhanced to suit our needs and we provide value-based education. We ensure that adequate facilities like infrastructure and faculty are available before we start a course. We cannot forget that students sacrifice a lot to come to learn. And we do periodic evaluation.

Is there anything you want to tell today's students?

They must remember that college education is the basic foundation. It's the only place they will get to learn. Once they are outside, they will have to practise what they learnt here...they will not get a chance to learn outside. So they should seize the opportunity, make the most of it. ◗

"Consumer Rights Are Our Fundamental Rights, IT is our Duty to ensure we are not shortchanged"

5 Relatively Easy Steps Can Help India Fight Illiteracy – If Everyone Chips In

India's literacy rate continues to be below the global average, despite concentrated and prolonged efforts. Renu Sharma explores different facets of the problem, and how we can speed up the process towards a universally literate nation.

ILLITERACY IS POISONOUS for the development of any country. It can result in other bigger issues like unemployment, population burst, poverty, etc. It is one of the main issues India has had to deal with since independence. Efforts made by NGOs and the government have resulted in a slight drop in the illiteracy rate in India. But although we're making some progress, it's not enough. There are still so many things we can do to help eradicate illiteracy in our country.

You may think that it's not your problem. But the bigger picture remains that a high illiteracy rate holds a nation back from making progress. It is affecting all of us in ways that we can't even imagine. We all need to come together to help underprivileged children get better education because they are our country's future.

With so many factors playing a role in India's illiteracy issue, there is no single solution that can bring about immediate change. But there are some small steps that can pave the way for higher literacy rates:

Free education

The Right to Education Act, passed by Parliament in 2009, has ensured that children between the ages of 6-14 should receive free and compulsory education. As a result of this Act, there have been some

SOURCE: PEXELS

improvements in the number of children within these age groups getting education.

But we need to think about children who don't fall within this age group. Without education, children below age 6, who haven't yet

qualified for free and compulsory education, could fall into the clutches of child labour. Once they fall in, it's immensely difficult to get them out. That's why NGOs are already making efforts to provide necessary education to younger children.

Additionally, children over the age of 14 could still want to pursue their education. It's upon the NGOs to provide them with the necessary facilities to learn valuable skills that could help them in getting employment.

Flexible schedules

Despite the availability of free education, many children may still fail to attend schools. Most of the time, it's because they need to work or help out their families during the day. So this leaves them with no time to attend the free classes provided by many government schools and NGOs.

SOURCE: PIXABAY

Here, flexible class timings like the ones offered by the Pratham Shiksha organization run by Sumeeti Mittal could make a huge difference. This type of schedule provides underprivileged children the freedom to earn their livelihood during the day and then get an education in their free time.

Vocational training

One of the main goals of education is to provide individuals with the essential skills and knowledge to earn a living. So a basic school curriculum may not always be

SOURCE: FLICKR

satisfactory for educating underprivileged children. Once they're at an eligible working age, they need to have useful skills that can help them find employment. This is where vocational training programs come into play.

In some NGOs, children can attend vocational classes in plumbing, electricity, and stitching. These classes can equip underprivileged children with practical skills they can use for earning a livelihood. The Pratham Shiksha organization has even partnered with a private hospital to provide nursing training, complete with government certification.

Raising awareness among underprivileged societies

Despite all of these efforts made by NGOs and the government, so many families still refuse to send their children to school because of the mindset they have about education. Many parents in underprivileged families may be of the opinion that education is of no use. Because they themselves "survived" without an education, their kids too can do the same.

Here's where we need to put more effort into raising awareness about the importance of education. We can do this by delivering speeches during public events and gatherings. Instead of simply stating the importance of education, we

need to show them the value of education. We can help them learn how having educated children could benefit their families in terms of both financial and societal status.

Empowering educated teachers

For children to get quality education, they need to have an educated and dedicated teacher. Private schools and prominent government schools may have an endless supply of highly-qualified teachers to teach their

students. But in the case of underprivileged children, they may have a hard time finding educated individuals who are willing to teach them. This is mainly due to the minimal or zero pay.

These educated people cannot be blamed because they too need to earn their livelihood and support their families. They may not have the privilege of dedicating all their time to teaching for free or for low pay. In such cases, NGOs could open up an opportunity for educated people to volunteer as part-time teachers. The teachers could dedicate a few hours of their time to teach for free while still having the time to work a regular job.

There are so many factors that come to play when trying to deal with illiteracy in India. The five ways mentioned above should have significant impact on education for underprivileged children. ◗

OPINION

INDIA'S FAILING EDUCATION SYSTEM

It Is Our Children's Future, Not Our Ancestor's Pride, That Deserves Our Outrage First

— Anustup Nayak

HERE IS A sample of what has outraged Indians over the last year: a violent mob attacked a bus full of schoolchildren to protect the honour of a mythical queen. Riots erupted between caste groups over a battle fought two hundred years ago. Young people were killed for falling in love outside their faith and for eating the meat of their choice.

We are willing to die and kill for dead queens, sacred animals, and caste history, all symbols of our past. But why is our response so muted when it comes to our children and youth, who symbolize our future?

Angry high-school students are out protesting on Delhi streets over the leaked Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) grade 10th and 12th question papers. Data analysis conducted by Geeta Kingdon shows that between 2004 and 2016, the median percentage score in CBSE's school leaving examinations have been systematically inflated by 8%. Only 40% of our 14-18-year-olds can calculate the price of a shirt sold at a 10% discount and less than 60% could read the time from an analog clock, according to the findings of the Annual Status of Education (ASER) report. And, less than 17% of India's graduates are employable.

None of these revelations are new. We have known for years that our education system is failing. Children are going to school but not learning much beyond "floor level tasks." Yet, there has been no big bang policy shift, very little sustained media scrutiny and indeed no parent uprising.

Why does the bleak future of our young people not stoke our collective outrage?

Students, parents and employers all benefit from good education. But they lack the voice to press for change. Politicians, bureaucrats, and media can influence education from the outside, but they find it of no use to advance their agendas.

Till recently, the software outsourcing industry boomed.

Companies flocked to hire at campuses of even second rate engineering colleges. Most of these graduates are ill equipped to do entry level jobs. Corporations spend months to reskill them rather than getting entangled in lobbying government to fix college teaching.

Politicians do not win elections, or bureaucrats get promotions on an education platform. It takes years for good education policies to show results and even for bad ones to fail. Few in public office have that kind of patience to sow and wait. Fewer have the gumption to take on the entrenched unions, cartels, and ideologues who block meaningful change in schools and colleges.

Children are the most important beneficiaries of a good education yet the ones with least power to shape it. When children are in school, they are either unaware of how little they are learning or afraid to speak up. College students sometimes raise their voices in protest, but mostly on issues tangential to their learning.

Parents choose to exit the school system rather than pressuring it to change. Millions of parents pull their children out of broken government schools and enroll them in low-fee private schools. Then they find out that even private schools do not deliver much better results. The better-off among them find refuge in tuition centres. The rest make do with what they get.

However, this pattern of exiting without a voice need not be fait accompli for Indian education. "The time for the richer Indian to secede has come to an end," notes philanthropist Rohini Nilekani in her article for this column "The end of secession" (13 November 2017). "The foul air in Delhi is a perfect example of a great leveller. Rich and poor alike must breathe in its health hazards," Nilekani argues.

The leak of CBSE question papers may be the fateful "foul air moment" for Indian education. Fates of children living in Gurgaon skyscrapers hangs in uncertain balance alongside their mofussil peers. Consider this. There will soon be 100 million under-skilled and under-employed young people on our streets. Many will be desperate, leading them to harass, loot, and molest, or to harm themselves if not others. A student commits suicide every hour in India, unable to fulfill aspirations, cope with failure, or find emotional support, according to IndiaSpend reports.

Would we keep quiet if these were your children or mine? Will they find a college of their choice? Will they qualify for a job when they graduate? How will we grow our businesses when there are so few skilled people to hire? What India story will we sell to attract foreign investors? What myth will politicians spin to get the disillusioned to vote this time?

Now is the time to cry out for an excellent education for every child.

Parents, students, and employers must demand that our institutions deliver real capability and not empty certificates. Let us stamp our vote to those leaders who can make this happen. Let us not keep quiet till we get what we deserve. But with the right to raise our voices comes the responsibility to stay invested. Media must capture this moment and ensure that those in power heed this call. It must hold them accountable for action.

It is our children's future, not our ancestor's pride, that deserves our outrage first. Only then can we begin to unleash the potential of our 100 million young minds. ◗

CONSUMEREXPRESS

Where can consumers have their say about policies and legislation, about their needs and requirements, about products and services, about genuine and fraud companies? We provide you the platform to share with our readers your experiences.
Write to us: bejonmisra@consumerconexion.org

Exams Might Be Stressful, But They Improve Learning

– Penny Van Bergen

MANY HAVE ARGUED that exams are pointless, especially in higher education where deep learning is the aim. But they still have their uses.

In recent weeks, students across high school and university classrooms have been breathing sighs of relief. Exams are officially over, and celebrations have begun.

For many students, exams seem a necessary evil. Time-consuming yet inevitable. But are exams really necessary? And are they evil?

In 2011, Macquarie University was the first Australian university to debate the abolition of exams. No exams in any subject, at any year level. At the time it was suggested that exams fail to develop "questioning, self sufficient learners". Critics also often argue that exams promote a superficial understanding of topics, and that they are inauthentic: that is, they fail to represent the kinds of things students will be asked to do "in the real world".

However, this is taking a narrow view of the benefits of exams. Exams include many of the aspects we want from assessment.

What do we want from assessment?

Good assessment programs aim to provide a balanced, fair evaluation of each student. They achieve this in two ways. First, they use of a variety of strategies and tasks. This gives students multiple opportunities, in varying contexts, to demonstrate what they know and can do. It also enables teachers to be confident in the accuracy of their judgements about each student.

Second, tasks must be "fit for purpose". Assuming a subject has a number of goals (knowledge to learn, skills to acquire), each task should be appropriate to the specific goal or goals it is assessing. This means that a task assessing base knowledge will look different to one assessing creativity.

Rather than abolishing exams, we should instead be asking what mix of assessment tasks is most appropriate for each subject. Where might exams fit? And what are their benefits?

Exams focus on breadth

In most disciplines, there are specific bodies of knowledge that students are expected to learn. Physics students might learn about thermodynamics, while history students might learn about the cold war. Exams enable us to accurately test students' breadth of understanding of these topics.

Critics of exams often instead promote "deep", "rich", and "authentic" assessment tasks. These are typically project-based tasks that draw on students' creativity and interest. For example, history students might be asked to choose and research a historical character in depth. Business studies students might be asked to design the pitch for a new business seeking venture capital.

These tasks develop several important higher-order thinking skills, such as analysis and decision-making. However, they're not alternatives to exams. They do different things. And this is exactly what we want: multiple, different tasks to maximise students'

opportunities to demonstrate what they know and can do.

We also want fit-for-purpose. Where breadth of knowledge is important, we want assessment tasks that target this breadth. We want our future doctors to know of the entire human body. We want our future teachers to know a full repertoire of teaching and learning approaches. Exams can help achieve this.

Exams are harder to cheat on

Exams are also useful for a very different reason: they are harder than essays to cheat on. In light of the recent "MyMaster" ghost-writing scandal, it is clear that plagiarism is a serious problem for universities.

Drawing on our characteristics of good assessment, it is impossible to provide a balanced, fair evaluation of a student's performance if the student has paid someone else to complete their work for them.

Are we being defeatist in suggesting exams as a solution to plagiarism? Perhaps. We would like our schools and universities to be about discovery and exploration: not compliance. To date, however, essay mills have consistently remained one step ahead of academia.

While creative tasks may be one alternative solution, ghostwriter Dave Tomar writes in his book, The Shadow Scholar, that all sorts of tasks are ghost-written. More difficult tasks simply cost more. Tasks that cannot be purchased or copy-and-pasted must be integrated into the mix.

For many students, exams seem a necessary evil. Time-consuming yet inevitable. But are exams really necessary? And are they evil?

Exams do enhance learning

Finally, and on a more positive note, there is evidence that both studying for and sitting exams deepens learning.

Studying is like exercising. When one exercises, the muscles in use grow stronger. Likewise, the process of searching through ones memory and retrieving the relevant information strengthens that memory pathway for future uses. This means that when newly qualified teachers, doctors, lawyers, or accountants come to retrieve information they need, it is – as a consequence of having been practised previously – now easier to access.

So, how can we best make use of this "practice effect" for memory? Research tells us that learning is particularly strong when students self-test. Rather than passively reading and remembering by rote, we want our students to study by forming appropriate questions, searching memory for relevant responses, and knitting this information together into an appropriate answer.

We think this third benefit of exams is the most exciting. Exams don't just provide a targeted, fit-for-purpose opportunity for students to demonstrate what they know: they also have the power to enhance what students know. ❯

SOURCES / REFERENCES

franchiseindia.com
pib.nic.in
Business Standard
mhrd.gov.in
thebetterindia.com
ccs.in
legalserviceindia.com
researchgate.net
gktoday.in
Sociology group.com
brainbuxa.com

Hindustan times
Times of India
The Indian Express
Business world
UNESCO
The Hindu
theatlantic.com
theguardian.com
insidehighered.com
The conversation.com
consumer.ftc.gov

The hindu.com
startup.nujs.edu
duupdates.in
careerride.com
Our kids.net
The weekendleader.com
Economic Times
ibef.org
careratings.com
allprojectreports.com ❯

Amway™

DIGITAL BHARAT.
DIGITAL AMWAY.
#AbRuknaNahinHai

50,00,000
NEFT transactions
processed to Amway Direct
Sellers in a year

Itz Cash
possibilities unlimited

Partnership with
ITZ prepaid cards
Forged a partnership with
ITZ prepaid cards six years
ago to digitise cash
transactions

ATM enabled
purchases
Bank ATMs enrolled
for Amway product
purchases

ATM

**95% collections
went digital**
in November, including
3,00,000 active orders
processed via debit,
credit, ITZ pre-paid cards
& Net Banking

**NACH
PRODUCT**

NACH
**enabled product
purchases**
in the North-East

AADHAAR

Mandatory KYC
Bank account and
Aadhaar KYC made
mandatory for
appointment as an
Amway Direct Seller

**100% digital
payments**
100% of vendor and
employee payments
happen digitally

Amway India's state-of-the-art
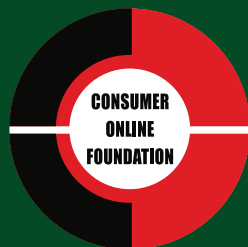manufacturing facility in Nilakottai, Tamil Nadu.

4,55,000+ HAPPY CONSUMERS

Together WE CAN make a difference

JAGO GRAHAK JAGO

Jagograhakjago.com

Toll free # 1800-11-4424

Consumer Conexion

CONSUMER ONLINE FOUNDATION
www.ConsumerOnlineFoundation.org

35 YEARS
1983-2018
IN THE
CONSUMER MOVEMENT
www.bejonmisra.com