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# Contemporary System of Education in India and its Discourse

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## ABSTRACT

*Education is an empowerment. Education includes acquiring knowledge and skill which acts as a tool not only for personal development but also for the development of the nation. For a developing country like India, the quality of education plays a vital role for moral, economic and political development. For the progress of country, the education should be job-centred, value-based and mass oriented. But in contrary to that the present-day education system is mark oriented and the quality of education depends on 'money' and 'politics'. Even after recognising education as a fundamental right (86th Amendment Act, 2002 inserted Article 21 A that includes provision of free and compulsory education for the children of age 6-14 years) how many children get access of this basic right? Still India is having 25% of illiteracy in the world and considered as one of the largest illiterate countries in the world. Studies shows that if this continuous India will attain universal literacy rate only by 2060. So, this research tries to find out the problems in the education system and ways to improve the drooping level of education in our country. The methodology to be employed for this research article are the study of data from major world journals and also data collected from stake holders in the issue. Data interpretation and analysis of such collected data may highlight the real lag in the development of our people.*

**Keywords:** Educational right, Quality education, Equality.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Education is an empowerment. Education includes learning and acquiring knowledge and skill for personal gain which leads to the development of the whole nation. If each individual in a country is educated, inequality among the citizens can be eradicated and it ultimately leads to the overall development of moral, political and economic condition of the country. Education may be regarded as an instrument for social and personal development. Education increases opportunity. If there are more opportunities more jobs can be created and this can eradicate 'Unemployment' and 'Poverty', which are considered as the two major social evils deteriorating and degrading the development of the nation.

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Education does not mean mere memorising of facts. According to Mahatma Gandhi, education should be value-based, job-centred and mass oriented. The quality of education provided to students decides the progress of the country. But the education system prevailing in India today is completely mark oriented and the quality of education depends on 'money' and 'politics'. Still India is having 25% of illiteracy and studies shows that, if this continues, India will attain universal literacy rate only by 2060. So, if the country wants to eradicate illiteracy, equal educational opportunities should be given to all without any discrimination on the ground of financial condition, gender, caste etc. And most importantly 'Nepotism' should be eradicated.

## **II. EDUCATION: A FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT**

The Constitution Amendment Act of 2002 Inserted Article 21A which contains the provision for free and compulsory education for children of age 6-14 years. This Article and right to education came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010. It lays down that, it is the duty and responsibility of the government, parents and local authorities to provide free and compulsory education for all the children. After this amendment, India became one of the 135 countries to make education a fundamental right.

Thus, under this said article, the obligation is on the state to provide free and compulsory education to all children of the specified age.<sup>2</sup>

## **III. PROBLEMS DUE TO IMPROPER EDUCATION SYSTEM**

For a developing country like India the quality of education plays a vital role for the overall progress of the country. But the quality of the present-day education is not efficient and worthwhile. It has been observed that there is almost 97% of enrolment in class 1 but only 35% reach 12<sup>th</sup> grade and less than 20% enrol for higher education. What may be the reason for this? As education is considered as a national investment in human development, question of its accountability needs a special attention.

As per the data provided by NAAC, of June 2010 "Not even 25% of the total higher education institutions in the country were accredited and among of those accredited, only 30% do universities and 45% of the colleges were found to be of 'A' quality". In the top 100 universities listed by Times of Higher Education World Reputation Ranking, none of the universities could be found in the list. Since government plays a key role in education, as it sets instructions regarding the arrangements of how universities and schools should operate. So, if the education

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<sup>2</sup> Supreme Court on Right to Education, P. 3, P.4

system of the country is not good the first responsibility is of the government.<sup>3</sup>

Students' enrolment has gone up to over 178.09 times in the system of higher education as compared to the figures of independence (source AISHE Report 2018-19).<sup>4</sup> But the current public (Government- Centre and State) expenditure on education in India has been around 4.43% of GDP (Analysis of Budget Expenditure 2017-18) and only around 10% of the total government spending towards education (Economic Survey 2017-18). Thus, these numbers are far smaller than most developed and developing countries.

The secondary reason for the degrading education system may be the poor quality and a smaller number of people engaged in the teaching profession.

The world's labour force has more than doubled from 1.2 billion to 2.7 billion, outstripping the growth in job creation. As a result of this, the United Nation Labour Organisation estimates that nearly 1 billion people, appropriately 30% of the world's work force are unemployed or underemployed. Over the next half century, the world will need to create more than 1.9 billion jobs. All of them to maintain the current level of employment. Over the next 25 years, India will add nearly 10 million to work force each year. Thus, it is crucial for a developing country like India to facilitate quality education for the students as they are the workers of the future.<sup>5</sup>

As a result of this poor education system, the distribution of income is not proper in the country. Almost 80% of the population living in the village are still illiterate and there is also a widespread disparity existing between the urban and rural people. World Bank reports that between 2000 to 2017, elementary school enrolment increased to more than 33 million.<sup>6</sup> But this achievement greatly varies between the states and UTTs of India. Only a few of these states achieved universal primary enrolment. As for the year 2014, the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) for Kerala was 21% while of Bihar it was only 6%. These great difference within the country should be avoided to attain the universal literacy rate. Although the literacy rate grew to 74% in 2011 from 12% in 1947, but the progress is very low and studies shows that if this continues, India will attain universal literacy rate by 2060.

Another problem in the Indian education system is the gender-based inequality. Even though women got many rights but in some remote areas, still women are meant for household works

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<sup>3</sup> India: Preparation for the world of work. Education system and school to work transition Regmi, Kapil Dev, P. 20

<sup>4</sup> India: Preparation for the world of work. Education system and school to work transition Regmi, Kapil Dev, P. 20

<sup>5</sup> Education and Human Rights M. C. Narasaiah, P.43

<sup>6</sup> A review on Indian Education system with issues and challenges. Ms. Falungi A. Sudhar and Dr. Shavesh Vol 11 (2),17-22, P. 17

only. As per the data, the GER for boys is 12% while that of girls, it is only about 8%. In India where almost 50% of the population is constituted by women, equal educational opportunity for women is must.

#### **IV. SOLUTION FOR THIS ISSUE**

In order to improve the education system and quality of education, the government must take appropriate measures like improving the infrastructural facilities, introducing scholarship programmes, providing equal educational opportunities for all students to get access of equality and value education etc. Infrastructural facilities include better form of education like technology-based teaching systems, practical concepts and studies related to present day needs and requirements. The old concepts of education and theoretical teachings have lost its importance nowadays. It was noted in 2012, the percentage of educated graduates seeking jobs where 83.7%, while only 5% has found job. Thus, to cope with the present-day scenario, the education should be more practical and skill-based as required by the companies and other job providing centres.<sup>7</sup>

The next most important thing is that there should be no discrimination on any ground like financial condition, gender etc. Students with real talents and capacities should be encouraged to do the best in their field, which may contribute for the development for the country. Most importantly merit- based importance should be given to the students during enrolment in schools and other educational institutions. On the name of 'Quota', the real talents of the nation should not be rejected. Illiteracy and its ignorance should be eradicated especially in rural areas where the mass population is still dependent on agriculture only.

Teaching profession is a profession which includes knowledge, skill, experience, guidance etc. Teachers are considered as the pillars of the nation's development as they build up the personality of the students. So, the quality of teacher should be good and worthwhile so that they can provide better guidance to the students in skill development and learning process.

Most importantly, the schools and universities should be centralised under one government and the number of private institutions should be reduced so that everyone can get free education with the same quality and value. This will also create a unity in the governing system. In order to improve the existing education system, The National Education Policy [NEP] 2020 has laid down many principles and ideas which can improve the educational quality of the country. It is stated in NEP 2020 that, curriculum content will be reduced in each subject to its core essentials,

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<sup>7</sup> India: Preparation for the world of work. Education system and school to work transition

to make space for critical thinking and more holistic, discovery based, analysis-based learning. In addition, the government of India will constitute a ‘Gender-Including Fund’ to build the nation’s capacity to provide equitable quality of education for all girls as well as transgender students.<sup>8</sup> As NEP 2020 focuses on ensuring universal access to school education at all levels, it requires the government to implement this policy in a full-fledged manner and participation of students and parents with awareness.

## V. SURVEY RESULTS

A survey was conducted for 200 students and 100 faculties who are the main stakeholders of this issue. Three main questions were asked to the stakeholders and their responses and answers had been added and analysed. The responses are represented in the form of percentage for a better understanding.

Question 1: Do you think that the existing education system in our country is practical enough to get job soon after education?

Level of Agreement	Number of Stakeholders (Students)	Percentage (%)
Agree	16	8%
Disagree	164	82%
Partially agree	20	10%

Level of Agreement	Number of Stakeholders (Faculties)	Percentage (%)
Agree	10	10%
Disagree	78	78%
Partially agree	12	12%

<sup>8</sup> National Education Policy 2020 Ministry of Human Development Government of India, P. 12, P. 15 And P. 26

Question 2: Do you think that the government is making enough efforts to promote education opportunities to students?

Level of agreement	Number of Stakeholders (Students)	Percentage (%)
Agree	52	26%
Disagree	120	60%
Partially agree	28	14%

Level of Agreement	Number of Stakeholders (Faculties)	Percentage (%)
Agree	11	11%
Disagree	69	69%
Partially agree	20	20%

Question 3: Do you think the students belonging to the backward classes are getting equal educational opportunities in the society?

Level of Agreement	Number of Stakeholders (Students)	Percentage (%)
Agree	32	16%
Disagree	138	69%
Partially agree	30	15%

Level of Agreement	Number of Stakeholders (Faculties)	Percentage (%)
Agree	8	8%
Disagree	82	82%
Partially agree	10	10%

## VI. RESULTS

As per the data collected from the stakeholders of this issue, the majority of respondents (82% of students and 78% of faculties) agreed that the existing education system is not practical enough to get job soon after graduation. The respondents stated that the education system is neither practical nor skill-based. The respondents stated that there is a need for improvement in the quality of education. The majority of respondents (60% of students and 47% of faculties) also agreed that the government is not making enough efforts to provide better educational opportunities to the students. They stated that there are many beneficial schemes introduced by the government but they should be implemented in the proper manner for our development. As per the level of agreement in the above given tables, it is also clear that majority of respondents (69% of students and 72% of faculties) agreed that the students belonging to the backward classes are not getting equal educational opportunities in the society and they should be given more importance for the overall development of the nation.

## VII. CONCLUSION

Improving the education system is an important and difficult task for the government. Education which is one of the basic fundamental needs of a citizen should be provided to all. As the quality of education plays a vital role in the process of future building, the concerned authorities should work for their betterment and people are requested to be aware of the various developmental plans being implemented for their betterment. Thus, for achieving universal literacy rate in our country, the government and the people should work hand in hand and plans and policies should be more practical and realistic for their implementation and success in the society.

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