



Announcements

ASERF has instituted **Dr Stya Paul Young** Educationist Award' for honouring Young Educationists who have demonstrated their potential by making an impact on Indian education. Applications from the eligible scholars are invited for the Award of the year 2012. [Click here](#) to download the prescribed format along with the terms and conditions.

Apeejay Stya University announces admission for the session 2012

Apeejay Stya University is offering diverse catalogue of technical, scientific, management and liberal arts courses for the Fall Admission 2012-13. Applicants for admission accepted on the basis of comprehensive merit, judged by their academic excellence, their extracurricular achievements, and their utilization of the resources they have had available. As part of the application, the University recognize a number of examination scores to establish academic excellence, including AIEEE, GMAT, SAT, SAT-II. **For more,** [click here](#)

Apeejay Stya University announces Founder's Scholarship

On the Death anniversary of our beloved founder Dr. Stya Paul, Apeejay Stya University (ASU), Haryana announces a Merit - Based Scholarship Scheme for Undergraduate, Post Graduate and MBA Courses

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Partnership

Dear Partners,

The Apeejay Stya Education Research Foundation (ASERF) invites news, articles, resource material, opinions and analyses on relevant educational issues that can be highlighted in our by-monthly e-bulletins and on the ASERF portal.

We request if you could spare a few moments of your valuable time to have a look at our website and guide us on our regular initiatives.

Editor

[Dr. Mithilesh Kumar Singh](#)

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ASPECT**MHRD, UGC and Universities: Are we really connected?**

UPA's commitment to massive investment in Education and its allocation of over Rs. 46, 000 crores for higher education, during XI Plan, is a testimony to its commitment to sustain India's Industrial growth through a long-term investment to produce skilled and qualified human resource. The allocation of funds and actual accomplishments at the end of XI Plan against the set targets should now form the basis for strategizing our actions during XII Plan. Though the allocation for the XI Plan was nine times the X Plan, what we could spend only one third of the allocation, which is about 14,000 crores. A thorough analysis of the hitches and bottlenecks for the poor spending and not reaching the targets as well as the success stories is the immediate necessity.

The most important document that needs to be prepared is the Result Framework Document (RFD) by each and every university, as well as the UGC and that alone should form the basis for the implementation of XII Plan.

The second lacuna is the absence of any robust mechanism for annual appraisal of performance of the universities on the basis of certain indicator radars. These indicator radars should not only be the basis of further release of grants but should provide a database for UGC and MHRD for its own internal assessment. Earlier, there used to be a midterm review of the performance of at least Central Universities, which also was not done during the entire XI Plan.

The mandate of UGC in its act is silent on its role as a monitor. It does not specifically define its responsibility to monitor the progress in developmental plans and prepare a report and submit it to MHRD. This would certainly not interfere with the autonomy of the University but will keep the system moving. The absence of any mechanism to evaluate and measure the implementation of the Plan proposals by the Universities has left the Universities as free-flying kites where some reach such heights that they go out of sight and remain unrewarded and some crash land into marshy lands, also go unaccountable. The Plan completes and scanty data through sample surveys are presented to the Planning Commission, new projections are made, and the show continues Plan after Plan. Since UGC does not present an annual performance report of universities with clear rating on Performance Index and remarks on successes as well as lapses of

universities and make it public and available to MHRD, there is no mechanism in place that the Ministry can directly assess and be informed of the performing and non-performing universities.

The failure of NAAC whose ranking of universities and colleges is froth with inconsistencies, biases and above all lack of innovation to attract Institutions for assessment, is yet another issue that needs to be addressed. For the past 18 years it has accredited 15% of universities and 5% of colleges. One example is enough to demonstrate the reason for lack of confidence in NAAC. Pondicherry University which has emerged as fastest expanding university, excelling in every parameter is ranked less than Algappa university of Karaikudi. Where do they go for redressal, when the appeal for review is a futile exercise? The entire world has a ranking mechanism for Institutions. In advance countries even primary and secondary schools are ranked. Grading of university is misleading as an "A" grade university may have several poor schools and departments and the vice versa. The students' need subject wise grading as well as ranking of universities.

The Department of Science and Technology under the Ministry of Science and Technology has sustained its tempo of scientific innovation and research in universities and colleges because of its management by scientists. It is time that MHRD should establish machinery in the Ministry along with bureaucracy for Academic inputs, periodic monitoring and appraisal. In the absence of assessment mechanism, all vice chancellors walk out after completion of five years without a score card, in hand. Great performers, poor performers and non-performers all walk out with same smile and pride.

The call of the hour is to bridge this disconnect between the MHRD, UGC and the Universities and greater academic input from the Academia to MHRD. The entire country is looking towards the new education bills to get through and to see a XII plan for Higher Education with a difference.

Source: August, 2012/[India Education Review](#)

NEWS**Ignored by pvt. firms, IITs may come up with PSU aid**

The union cabinet is set to allow public sector units to partially fund setting up of new Indian Institutes of Information Technology (IIITs). This is an effort to salvage the central government's first-ever move to introduce public-private partnerships in higher

education -- a plan that has largely received a cold response from the private sector.

Two years ago, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh promised to set up 20 new IIITs— the country's apex IT schools —through public private partnerships (PPP), in his Independence Day speech. Two days after his latest address from Red Fort, the cabinet will consider allowing PSUs to pump in money and expertise to fill in a role originally envisaged for top private firms, including global giants like Google and Yahoo.

The union cabinet will also consider reducing the number of companies required to fund each IIIT from three to one. The cabinet note points out that in several states, especially in the North East, even medium size private industries are non-existent.

The IIIT Bill 2012 is set to be introduced during the ongoing monsoon session of parliament, after the cabinet gives its nod.

India already has four IIITs fully funded by the central government. These are at Gwalior, Allahabad, Jabalpur and Kancheepuram and are currently deemed universities. The plan was to establish one IIIT in every other state.

The new bill also aims to elevate all 24 IIITs to 'institutes of national importance'—a tag which exempts them from several government regulations and allows them independent statutory status.

It is learnt that the government had to rethink its plan after three states—Rajasthan, Bihar and Kerala—suggested that industry partners need not necessarily be private and that state or centrally-owned companies be allowed to participate.

The private sector's response stands in stark contrast to industry's support to IT education in the late 1990s, when the sector first took off in India.

The state governments of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka both managed to attract private investment to start IIITs in PPP mode. Though court orders subsequently forced these schools to rename themselves International Institutes of Information Technology -- dropping the 'Indian' from their name -- these institutes remain among the best in the country for IT education.

Source: 16 August, 2012/[Hindustan Times](#)

Standard of Education in Schools

Several steps have been taken to improve the standard of elementary education in the country. These include, improvement of infrastructural facilities and sanction of new teacher posts in the

Government schools, free textbooks to all the children in Government and Government aided schools, provision for in – service training up to 20 days every year to the teachers of the Government and aided schools, regular academic support to the teachers through Block Resource Centres and Cluster Resource Centres, school grant to all the Government and aided schools and teacher grant for relevant teaching aids to the teachers of these schools, libraries in the Government schools and provision for financial support for context specific quality enhancement interventions. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 further, provides for laying down of minimum norms and standards for recognition of private schools and the development of curricula and evaluation procedure by academic authorities. The National Council of Teacher Education (NCTE) has laid down minimum eligibility qualifications for teacher recruitment in elementary schools including passing a Teacher Eligibility Test (TET).

The Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) scheme for improving secondary education provides for inter alia schools infrastructure, additional class rooms, school laboratories, school libraries, and appointment of additional teachers for better pupil teacher ratio, subject teaching of science, Maths and English subjects, in – service training of teachers, ICT enabled education, curriculum reforms etc.

Source: 17 August, 2012/ [PIB](#)

Alternative and Innovative Education Scheme

As per information provided by the States and UTs for the 2012-13, the number of out of school children in the country is estimated at 29.34 lakh.

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) has provided support to alternate schooling facilities under its Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) and Alternative Innovative Education (AIE) component, however, with the Right to Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 mandating every child be admitted to a class appropriate to his/her age, to bring out of school children at par with the class in which they are admitted, Special Training facilities are now being provided under the SSA. For the year 2012-13, financial outlay of Rs. 1580 crore has been made for the purpose.

Source: 17 August, 2012/ [PIB](#)

Value Education in CBSE Schools

Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) is continuously stressing inculcation of values among students. The Board brought out a handbook for teachers on Value Education in the year 1997 and

again in 2003. The School based Assessment Scheme launched by CBSE has a component on co-scholastic areas of Life-Skills, Attitude and Values and other co-curricular activities. The National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT) also brought out a Framework on 'Education for Values in Schools' which emphasizes on the moral education for children. The Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE) stipulates that schools affiliated to it are required to assess students in 'Education in Moral and Spiritual Values' upto Class X.

Source: 17 August, 2012/ [PIB](#)

Colleges, schools set for a revamp

The recommendations of the R Govinda Committee, which has suggested scrapping pre-university education by integrating the same with classes IX and X, are most likely to be implemented as the panel was set up to implement the agenda set by the Right to Education Act.

The RTE Act that came into force in 2009 mandates compulsory education till Class 8. But the state's current schooling system is a 4+3+3 year system.

A four-year primary schooling is followed by three-year higher primary schooling, culminating with three years of secondary education.

The committee's recommendation to scrap pre-university education by merging the same with secondary schools calls for a revamp of the entire education system in the system.

There are 1,846 unaided PU colleges in the state. Of this, 731 are composite PU colleges run by degree college managements in their premises. About 951 colleges are independent entities, while 164 are bifurcated PU colleges separated from degree colleges.

PU colleges without high schools may be allowed to start standards IX and X to form a higher secondary school.

Separate infrastructure (including building) for higher secondary school should be formed on the campuses where degree colleges co-exist with PU colleges.

The committee has recommended the midday meal scheme and other incentive programmes be extended to Classes XI and XII. The class X examination can be made a school-level examination. All recommendations may be implemented in a phased manner.

The committee has suggested separate training programmes for postgraduate teachers, while BE

may be made compulsory for all higher secondary school appointments. The principal will have to be from those teaching classes XI and XII, while the vice-principal will be selected from among class IX and X teachers.

The committee has also made recommendations on completely replacing the 4+3+3 years of education. This is because the Right to Education Act that came into force in 2009 has mandated compulsory education till Class 8.

In all, there are 22,570 higher primary schools in the state. Of these, 3,918 government higher primary schools cater to children studying up to class 8. About 18,573 government higher primary schools which have classes up to 7 need to be upgraded to include class 8 to make it a part of the elementary cycle. This calls for additional infrastructure and teachers.

Optional trim begins

Bringing class 8 under the jurisdiction of higher primary school requires 22,718 additional classrooms. The desirable state provision of infrastructure, one each for laboratory, library, computer-aided learning, staff room, girl's room, sports room and craft and arts room. Beyond the requirement of rooms for each class, two additional rooms may be provided as minimum requirement for head and staff of the school and multipurpose uses such as library/laboratory/computer class rooms.

The approximate financial implication of constructing 22,718 additional rooms (that might be required) will be Rs1,238.13 crore at the cost of Rs.5.45 lakh per room.

The R Govinda committee report has been posted on the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan website and the public can post their feedback.

Source: 18 August, 2012/[Times of India](#)

Penalty for officers rejecting education loans to eligible students

New Delhi: Making sure that education loans are not denied to eligible students, Finance Minister P Chidambaram Saturday said bank officers rejecting applications without sufficient reasons would be penalised.

"No application should be turned down by the officer who is receiving it. It can only be turned down by one level higher. They will now penalise branch managers who turn down, say, 5/10 deserving applications which are overturned by a superior officer," Chidambaram told reporters here.

The Indian Bank Association (IBA) would come out with a new circular on education loans in the next few days, he said.

"Bank loan is the right of every student who meets the parameter. No bank can turn away an applicant. Every application for a bank loan must be received and acknowledged and every deserving candidate must be given the loan if the student meets the parameter," Chidambaram said.

Education loan is granted to Indian nationals for pursuing higher studies in India or abroad. As per its website, State Bank of India (SBI) gives loan up to Rs 10 lakh for studies in India, and Rs 30 lakh for education abroad.

Such loans are usually extended to candidates pursuing professional courses from approved universities or from autonomous institutions like IITs and IIMs among others.

Chidambaram said the government has moved a Cabinet note for setting up of education loan credit guarantee fund, which make available loans for students.

"The note will go to Cabinet in about a week or two and we hope to finalise the scheme and launch the fund before the end of the calendar year," he added.

Source: 18 August, 2012/PTI/[Zee News](#)

Plan panel: Indian professors better paid than BRICS peers

The Planning Commission note is based on a recent study that compared academic salaries across 28 countries on purchasing power parity terms.

Indian professors are better paid than their counterparts in BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, China and South Africa) and even in France and Germany, according to the Planning Commission.

The Planning Commission note, a copy of which has been reviewed by Mint, said professors "are better off than an average Indian citizen".

"This is an eye opener," said a government official with knowledge of the matter and on condition of anonymity.

The government is examining working conditions as it seeks to attract teachers, of whom there is a shortage, into higher education in India, the official said. The perception that teachers are poorly compensated in India is misplaced, he said.

The Planning Commission note is based on a recent study by the Center for International Higher

Education, Boston, and the Higher School of Economics, Moscow, that compared academic salaries across 28 countries on purchasing power parity (PPP) terms. It said the entry level salary (in PPP terms) in India is \$3,954 against \$259 in China, \$433 in Russia and \$1,858 in Brazil. However, it's relatively low when compared with the US (\$4,950) and Canada (\$5,733).

The PPP comparison is not the best way to compare salaries, said Pritam Singh, director general of the International Management Institute, Delhi.

"We are facing an economic slowdown and the inflation is quite high, so where is the purchasing power parity advantage," said Singh, who was a former director of IIM-Lucknow. "To say that Indian teachers are paid more than the US or China is not a fair assessment."

The study pegged the entry level at that of an assistant professor, the mid-level at that of an associate professor and the top level at that of a professor or an equivalent post. The study did not take into account private non-aided institutions.

Mid-level academic salaries (\$6,823) are better than in China (\$758), Russia (\$563), and Brazil (\$3,190), the note said.

"Interestingly, this number for India is also higher than that for Canada, the US, the UK, France and Germany. These numbers indicate that Indian academics are much better off than their counterparts in the middle of their careers," the note said, citing the study.

The Planning Commission note asks why results are not commensurate. India was 10th among the top 20 countries in terms of research published between 1996 and 2006, eight places behind second-ranked China, according to a 2008 study by the National Institute of Science, Technology and Development Studies. According to SciDev.net, a well known science website, China produced 94,800 scientific papers in 2007 against 30,000 from India.

According to human resource development ministry data, India's 40 central universities face a total shortfall of 6,542 teachers against a sanctioned 16,602 posts, a gap of 40%.

The Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) face a 31% shortage, requiring 1,611 more teachers than they have.

Experts and professors feel that India has become more attractive for those pursuing academics.

"If you compare the situation 10 years back and now, then you can see the difference," said Nagesh

Rao, director, Mudra Institute of Communications, Ahmedabad. "The environment is much better, research has started getting due attention and salary has improved significantly in last few years. On a purchasing power parity term, India is well off—if not across the table but in several pockets."

Many non-resident Indian academics are now ready to come back, said Rajiv K. Sinha, a professor of Indian origin at Arizona State University.

"Salary is one of the key factors but other issues like work environment, research and facilities for the family are important too," said Sinha, who will shortly be joining as the dean of the MYRA School of Business, a new private B-school in Mysore. "Leading institutes in India, especially in the private sector are getting better response because of these facilities."

Source: 20 August, 2012/[Live mint.com](http://www.live-mint.com)

India's New Rules for Foreign Universities Raise Questions at Home and Abroad

India's recent announcement that it would more closely regulate the many joint- and dual-degree programs its universities have developed with foreign partners has been met at home with a mix of confusion, annoyance, anxiety, and even ridicule. Foreign-university administrators are also unclear about the effect of the new restrictions, which include allowing only institutions ranked in the top 500 worldwide to collaborate with Indian universities.

Many Indian institutions are confused about whether they even fall under the purview of the new regulations, issued by the University Grants Commission, the country's university regulator. Some academics are annoyed because they see the rules as evidence that Kapil Sibal, India's education minister, has all but given up on a bill that would allow foreign universities to set up stand-alone programs in India. The proposal has faced stiff resistance from members of India's Parliament.

Several observers find it downright amusing that government officials believe elite international universities would flock to India to offer joint degrees. The fact is that few of the 340 or so Indian institutions offering joint or dual degrees have top-tier international partners.

"There's a bill pending in Parliament—they should have waited to see its fate instead of sidestepping it," said Ramamurthy Natarajan, a former director of India's regulatory agency for professional education, about education-ministry officials. An

academic who didn't want to be named, for fear of angering higher-education officials, described the ministry's decision as "madcap," saying it "confuses and confounds."

American university administrators were equally flummoxed by the announcement.

"The regulations are excessively restricted," said Guru Ghosh, associate vice president for international affairs at Virginia Tech, which is developing a research center outside Chennai, India. "Having worked with Chinese universities for over a decade, I can attest that even China does not have such stringent requirements and rules dictating academic partnerships and twinning programs."

Mr. Ghosh said he was talking with Virginia Tech's Indian partners to better understand the new rules.

He said he appreciated that India is hesitant to open its arms to outside influence in light of its colonial history. But to fix the country's deep-seated educational problems, like a lack of skilled faculty members and a rapidly growing young population, it needs to bring in "the best minds and research and educational facilities" from around the world.

Who's the Boss?

A major point of confusion stems from the overlapping authority of India's two dozen higher-education regulators. Many institutions that run joint programs are overseen not by the University Grants Commission but by the All India Council for Technical Education, which regulates programs such as engineering and management. Further, some education administrators note that their institutions offer not degrees but diplomas, which are different things in India.

"What is really prohibited is the award of a foreign degree on a stand-alone basis or a joint degree where both universities jointly admit a graduate to a bachelor's or a master's degree," said P.V. Ramana, chairman of the private ITM Group of Institutions, which operates such collaborations.

Still other providers say they're exempt because they are not universities but institutes—again, two different things in India. Then there are the institutions that offer degrees but are called institutes and not universities. They are confused about where they fall. "I don't know what will happen. No one is asking the right questions," said the director of one such institution. "The education ministry is getting reckless."

To an outsider this might just seem to be another tale of bureaucracy run amok in India. But how the

regulations are carried out could have a real impact on foreign engagement. India's higher-education system has been a notoriously difficult—and sometimes hostile—landscape for foreign institutions to navigate. If the government throws up additional barriers to partnerships, some educators say, that could harm what little internationalization has managed to take root so far.

"International partnerships largely work through personal contacts and individual efforts," said R. Narasimhan, founder-director of the private SMOT Business School and a consultant on higher-education strategy. Mr. Narasimhan said it was unlikely that an American university ranked in the top 500 globally, as the new regulations require, would be contacted by a top Indian university, also required by the regulations, and agree to develop joint-degree programs just because the Indian government says they can do so. Allowing Indian institutions to build partnerships with universities abroad is needed, he said, but the government needs to understand that such partnerships do not mature easily.

"So giving them time and helping them to improve should be the approach," he said, "instead of always holding a stick on the head ready to hit anytime when something goes wrong."

Wrong About Rankings

Several experts say that, in any event, rankings are the wrong way to evaluate the quality of academic programs.

E. Lee Gorsuch II, president of the City University of Seattle, said his institution had been seeking an Indian partner, but any potential collaboration would seem to be illegal now. "It appears that the new regulations would preclude CityU since it is not on the list of 500," he wrote by e-mail to *The Chronicle*. He said recognition by an American accreditor should be enough for India to ensure that any partnerships will be of high quality.

Other educational experts have said that India is unlikely to attract top-ranked higher-education players because so few of its universities are well regarded worldwide. But some dismiss that argument.

"We may not have many Indian universities in the top 500 global rankings, but we do have many outstanding academics," said P.M. Bhargava, former vice chairman of the National Knowledge Commission, a higher-education advisory body.

As for what may happen next, Ved Prakash, the University Grants Commission's chairman, could

not be reached for comment. But he has made clear that "every institute that grants a degree," even if approved by another regulator, such as the All India Council for Technical Education, "has to follow the new rule," according to Mr. Bhargava, who said he had spoken with the chairman about the subject.

Mr. Prakash told an Indian newspaper in June that the number of foreign institutions operating in India in some form had increased to 631 in 2010 from 144 a decade earlier. "The idea is simply to regulate this growing area for the benefit of students so that only genuine academic collaborations are encouraged," he said.

If Indian institutions don't meet the new regulatory requirements, they have only six months to make improvements, the rules say. If the institutions fail to do so, they will have to terminate the agreements or risk being derecognized, if they're private, or lose government funds, if they're public.

"Six months is too short a time to wind up any ongoing partnership," said the SMOT Business School's Mr. Narasimhan. Students at institutions in such partnerships, he said, should be allowed to finish their programs.

Mr. Bhargava differs. "Six months should not be a problem," he said. "If they are so dependent on the foreign partner, the university has no right to exist."

Source: 21 August, 2012/Chronicle.com

Digital content fast replacing books

Digital content is fast replacing printed books in libraries of higher educational institutions in the country, according to experts attending a five-day international workshop on digital libraries. The workshop began at the Indian Institute of Management-Kozhikode (IIM-K) on Monday.

"Digital content in libraries at premier educational institutions has already grown to an unprecedented 70-80% as against printed books. Many journals are now available only in digital format," said M G Sreekumar, head, Centre for Development of Digital Libraries (CDDL) at IIM-K and UNESCO coordinator of Greenstone Support for South Asia.

He said there had been a paradigm shift in the way information resources were being handled by libraries following the massive influx of digital content.

"Traditionally, libraries owned books and journals they bought or subscribed to, allowing them to make best use of the resources. But digital publishing has changed those concepts. Libraries now only get the licence to use electronic information, and even this is issued for a prescribed

period," he said. The digital libraries have now become the crucial component of global information infrastructure and offer new levels of access to broader audiences.

Inaugurating the workshop, Debashis Chatterjee, director of IIM-K, said the knowledge professionals of today should acquire the capacity and capability to foresee the future course of information and knowledge landscape in line with the new emerging world order.

The workshop focused on Greenstone Digital Library Software, an open source software system for developing digital libraries promoted by the University Of Waikato, New Zealand and sponsored by Unesco.

Participants will be instructed on how to design digital collections of different publications in a variety of file formats. They will also receive the Greenstone Digital Library Software.

Source: 21 August, 2012/[Times of India](#)

No Child Left Behind has made American education worse or no different

More Americans — 29 percent — believe education is worse because of the No Child Left Behind Act than those who believe it is better off (16 percent).

Another 38 percent said the act of Congress that changed the federal government's role in public schools by focusing on student achievement has made no difference, according to a Gallup's annual Work and Education poll.

"Such ambivalence probably gives the Obama administration broad political latitude to modify NCLB through executive fiats, such as the recent decision to grant states waivers from meeting the law's key benchmarks," Gallup noted.

A random telephone sample of 1,012 adults, ages 18 and older, living across the U.S. and the District of Columbia, was conducted Aug. 9-12. The poll found that 17 percent were too unfamiliar with the law to rate it.

Congruent with Gallup's findings in 2009, the poll found that lower-income Americans were evenly divided in their opinions of NCLB, while middle and upper-income Americans viewed the act negatively. Twenty-two percent of adults in households earning less than \$30,000 a year are more likely to believe the law has made public education better, while 15 percent did not.

The No Child Left Behind Act has sparked harsh criticism from both the political right and left for 10 years. "Now, with Republicans and Democrats in

Congress unable to agree on terms to extend it," Gallup observed, "the U.S. Department of Education has excused half of the states from the NCLB mandate to make all students proficient in reading and math by 2014, with 11 more waivers under consideration."

Gallup offered one cautionary word to those seeking to dismantle the act: It "could be that lower-income Americans show more support for the law than middle- or upper-income Americans do — although even lower-income Americans are divided in their views of it."

Source: 21 August, 2012/[Desert News](#)

Government close to setting up education commission

A little more than a year after Prime Minister Manmohan Singh announced his decision to appoint an education commission, the government is finally close to setting up the panel, which will recommend improvements at all levels of the education system. The last major policy review and framework of the entire education system took place 20 years ago under the PV Narasimha Rao government.

Leading sociologist and Professor Emeritus at the Delhi School of Economics Andre Beteille has been tasked with the responsibility of heading the Commission comprising 15 to 20 leading educationists and experts. The ministry is expected to make an announcement soon. Beteille was a member of the Sam Pitroda headed Prime Minister's National knowledge Commission. He had resigned from the Knowledge Commission in 2006 over differences with the government on its reservation policy for Other Backward Classes in education institutions.

The Commission will be tasked with providing the framework of a national policy that would address the needs and challenges of the education system in the 21st century. It is expected to re-orient the education system, as well as set out goals and parameters for an education system that addresses the changed socio-economic and technological realities. The last major policy formulation for the entire education system was undertaken in 1985, which resulted in the 1986 National Education Policy. This was before India embarked on its policy of liberalization, and the ensuing high economic growth path. The PV Narasimha Rao government modified the 1986 National Education Policy 1986. The 1992 Plan of Action, even though it modified the 1986 policy, could not address the changes that India has gone through over the last 20 years.

The Beteille Commission will therefore have to provide the government with directions on restructuring educational priorities and institutions in a manner that takes into account the changes over the past three decades. It will also be expected to suggest ways to make the education system responsive to fast changing economic-social and technological realities.

It is not just the economic-social and technological change in the 26 years since the last National Education Policy that the Commission will have to address. One major change that the Indian education sector has undergone is making free and compulsory elementary education a fundamental right. This has thrown up a whole host of challenges both at the elementary level but also created further demand at the secondary and tertiary levels, and forced the government to consider the question of vocational education in a serious and systematic manner. The Commission is expected to assess future challenges in the school education on account of the enabling Right to Education Act, focusing on a rights based approach to school education.

The question of engaging urban local bodies, the gram sabhas and panchayats in primary and secondary education and technical training will also be taken up.

One area, which has emerged over the past few as crucial for the health of the education sector, is that of teachers. The Commission will look into ways of empowering teachers as well as creating and fostering a system of accountabilities. This would address issues not just of chronic teacher shortages at every level of the education sector but also about non-performance, absenteeism and training.

With sustainability emerging as an important concern for economies, it is difficult to expect that the education sector would be left behind. Efficient use of public resources is a one key area where the Commission is expected to make an intervention. This would relate not only to use of public funds, but more specifically to the use of infrastructure, which is often left idle.

At the higher education level, a closer look at the university system is expected. The Commission will look into university reforms focusing on restructuring the affiliation system, and promoting autonomy.

Interestingly, the Plan of Action 1992 under the National Education Policy 1986 proposed conducting a common entrance examination on all India basis for admission to professional and

technical programmes. Some three decades later, this is far from reality, despite the push by successive governments in this direction. However, it is yet to be suggested as an issue for the consideration of the Beteille Commission.

Source: 22 August, 2012/[Times of India](#)

Criteria for Opening Colleges

The Central Universities are autonomous institutions governed under the provisions of their respective Acts and Statutes and Ordinances framed there under. The Statutory bodies of the Central Universities are competent to develop the criteria for starting a college, provided the respective Act permits it. Section 6 (xiii) of the Central Universities Act 2009, under which the Central University of Kerala has been established, stipulates that the University has the power to establish and maintain Colleges, Institutions and Halls. Establishment and abolition of Schools/Departments/Centres/Halls/Colleges/Institutions by the University will be governed by the Statutes.

As far as the Central University of Kerala is concerned, the University has taken possession of land for establishment of its campus only recently and its first priority would be to establish its campus before setting about establishment of colleges.

Such proposals have to be considered by the Statutory bodies of the respective University in accordance with their Statutes and the Ministry has no role to play in this regard.

Source: 22 August, 2012/ [PIB](#)

Databank of Teachers

According to the Statistics of School Education (2009-10), the total number of teachers in the country from pre-primary to senior secondary is 67.23 lakh. To meet the Pupil Teacher Ratio (PTR) norms specified under the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009, the Government has sanctioned 8.17 lakh additional teachers posts between 2010 and 2012 under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)

The Government has taken several steps for preparing and providing quality teachers. The Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Teacher Education for the XII Plan envisages establishment of District Institutes of Education and Training in all districts created upto March, 2011 and of Block Institutes of Teacher Education for expanding capacity of teacher preparation. The National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) grants recognition to institutions for starting programmes of teacher education.

Several State Governments have also taken steps to expand teacher preparation capacity. In pursuance of the RTE Act, the NCTE has laid down the minimum teacher qualifications, including the requirement of passing the Teacher Eligibility Test as an essential qualification for being eligible for appointment as a teacher. Under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, financial assistance is provided to the State Governments to enable the teachers of class I-VIII not possessing the minimum qualifications to acquire the same by 2015, and for training of in-service teachers for improving quality.

Source: 22 August, 2012/ [PIB](#)

State Scholarships

The Ministry of Human Resource Development has launched a centrally sponsored 'National Means-cum-Merit Scholarship Scheme' in 2008-09 for providing scholarships @ Rs. 500 per month to one lakh new students from class IX every year which are continued upto class XII subject to fulfillment of certain conditions. As per the scheme those students studying as regular students in class VIII in Government, Government aided and local body schools and whose parental income from all sources is upto Rs. 1.5 lakh per annum are eligible to appear in the selection test under the scheme.

The Ministry is considering increasing the rate of scholarships under the scheme. No specific time frame for its implementation can be indicated at this stage as the decision would depend on availability of funds among other issues.

Source: 22 August, 2012/ [PIB](#)

Panel nod for plan to let corporates, NGOs adopt municipal schools

The standing committee of the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) has approved the proposal to allow corporates, educational trusts and NGOs to adopt civic schools. The proposal is aimed at ensuring effective implementation of Right to Education (RTE) Act in public schools.

Under the recently proposed public-private partnership (PPP) model, BMC hopes to improve the quality of education at civic schools and bring it on a par with private school standards. The proposal will now be discussed in the general body meeting for final approval, said BMC officials.

Three of the four types of PPP models are long term in nature. The 'full school management with private partner teachers' model allows a private partner to manage an existing or new BMC school and provide free and high quality education with its

own teachers and principal. Under this, the staff will be employed by the private operator.

The 'full school support' or FSS model is similar, but will use BMC school teachers. The officials expect the private sector partner to ensure better teaching methods and coaching support by imparting managerial inputs for improving the quality of education.

While the BMC will be the final authority for identifying and appointing private operators for schools, they can apply for adopting schools online. In case corporate houses are interested in running BMC schools in a joint venture with other private operators, both the partners have to furnish evidence of the agreement and details about the strengths and experience which both will bring in the partnership, an official said.

"With more students leaving civic schools for want of quality education, better standard of teaching, co-curricular activities and joining private schools, there is a dire need for a more refined approach to teaching in BMC schools. The private entities are expected to bring a sense of dynamism, competitiveness and enhanced managerial skills in civic schools," said Rahul Shewale, Standing Committee chairman and Shiv Sena corporator.

The third form of partnership -- specific services partnership (SSP) -- entails specific services or inputs for improving the quality of curricular and co-curricular education in BMC schools. For example, support can be in form of running computer classes, language laboratories, special needs education, vocational programme among other things.

The BMC is also looking at short-term support from private organisations for teacher training, coaching support, vocational programmes, special needs education or one-time donation of computers, books, furniture and uniforms. While the long-term forms of partnership will be for a period of 10 years, the specific partnerships will be renewed after every three years, said officials.

Mohan Adtani, additional municipal commissioner, said, "We have ensured a strict selection criterion for these private partners."

According to an internal report of the education department, applicants seeking to run a school or provide specific support will be marked out of a score of 100 based on their track record of running schools, focus on learning outcomes and concrete examples of impact on learning outcomes, proposed approach and detailed plan for school, strength of leadership and managerial team and ability to

garner outside funds and sustain grants for any additional expenses,

To ensure that the programme is successful, the civic body will undertake third party assessment including student learning in subjects such as Mathematics and a second language and a school's competence and overall performance. The funding — part of which will be borne by the BMC and the rest collected through philanthropic sources — will be decided on the basis of the ratings a school gets through third party auditors and other factors.

“In case of poor performance of students, lack of improvement in other co-curricular activities, etc, the BMC can stop payment to those schools,” said a senior civic official.

Source: 22 August, 2012/[Indian Express](#)

International Centre for Human Development to be Set up in India: Agreement Signed between IIAS and UNDP

An International Centre for Human Development to be set up in India will support efforts by governments of the South to integrate human development approaches to ensure improved development outcomes for poor and marginalized people. As Governments of the South are increasingly dealing with the multiple challenges of changing aspirations of citizens, rapidly globalizing economy, environmental sustainability, and rising inequality, this Center is designed to provide new approaches and solutions.

An Agreement to this effect was signed by Shri Peter R deSouza, Director, Indian Institute of Advanced Study (IIAS) and Ms. Lise Grande, United Nations Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative, India. The Agreement was signed in the presence of Shri Kapil Sibal, Minister of Human Resource Development and Minister of Communications and Information Technology; Shri Gopalkrishna Gandhi, Chairman, IIAS and Shri Ajay Chhibber, UN Assistant Secretary General and UNDP Assistant Administrator.

The Centre aims to provide policy advisory services based on national and international evidence to ensure that human development concerns become integral to planning processes and policy making. The Centre also proposes to focus on moving from human development analysis to action and on adaptation of good practices to local contexts. It will also provide a range of capacity development tools and services with a special emphasis on monitoring and evaluation of human development processes and outcomes.

“The Centre will provide a range of services to national governments and will be guided by the objective of translating the analysis of human development reporting to policy inputs and practices that can help advance human development” said Shri Peter R deSouza. These include – research and analysis support on the policy dimensions of a human development approach including trade-offs of various people-centered policy measures; policy advisory services that can help translate the human development concept into policies aimed at improving human development at national, sub-national and local levels; developing capacity of national governments, parliamentarians, CSOs and academia to undertake human development-oriented policymaking and advocacy; and monitoring and evaluation support to develop and support decentralized and community level monitoring tools.

Source: 22 August, 2012/ [PIB](#)

Additional financing from external funding agencies and continuance of 75:25 sharing pattern under the Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan Scheme

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has approved the proposal of Ministry of Human Resource Development for:

Mobilization of external funds amounting to US \$ 500 million in form of credit from IDA from World Bank, GB Pound 80 million from DFID in the form of grant-in-aid and Euro 25 million from EU in the form of grant-in-aid totalling Rs.3315 crore approximately for Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) for the project implementation period 2012-16 and

Continuance of 75:25 sharing pattern between Centre and States (other than NE States including Sikkim), approved for 11th Five Year Plan for RMSA for 2012-13.

Though the strategy and the targets of the scheme will not undergo any change, the technical and financial support from the external funding agencies and the continuance of 75:25 sharing pattern between Centre and States during financial year 2012-13 will provide necessary impetus to the ongoing implementation of the scheme.

The additional financing from the external agencies will bridge the requirement of additional funds to the some extents. Besides, international experience of the external funding agencies will bring in technical expertise to the programme. The continuance of sharing pattern of 75:25 for the

current year 2012-13 at present will facilitate the Ministry to provide the funds available for the current year to the States and to ensure that pace of implementation of ongoing projects is not affected.

Apart from the students, their parents, teachers, headmasters, who will be the direct beneficiaries of the effective implementation of the scheme, the benefit will also accrue to academicians, training institutions, non-profit organizations working for education etc. The programme is being implemented in all States/UTs.

Since inception of the scheme, the RMSA has been able to enhance access to secondary schools by sanctioning setting up of 9646 new secondary schools, and strengthening of 34311 existing Government secondary schools.

Background:

The Cabinet has approved a sharing pattern of 75:25 between the Centre and the States during 11th Five Year Plan and a 50:50 sharing pattern for the 12th Five Year Plan. In the first two years (2009-10 to 2010-11), only a few select components were considered for approval as very few State Governments were able to submit Annual Plan proposals on time, with the net effect that State Governments were unable to take full benefit of the Scheme on a 75:25 basis. Therefore, there was ample justification for continuance of sharing pattern of 75:25 in 2012-13 to ensure that funds are released to States under RMSA during financial year 2012-13 without delay so that the pace of implementation of the scheme at State level is maintained.

Source: 22 August, 2012/ [PIB](#)

If you don't provide quality you will perish': AICTE chief and private university Vice-Chancellors differ on regulation

The chairman of the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), S.S. Mantha, has reiterated the need for a regulatory system on higher education to ensure quality output, even as the heads of leading private sector institutions in India call for greater autonomy.

The differences came to the fore at a session on 'Accreditation Bill Roadblocks: The Standards Versus Autonomy Debate' organised as part of the Mail Today Education Conclave 2012 in the Capital on Thursday.

'Accreditation is required to determine quality,' Mantha said. 'Every single entity that has to bring out quality has to be monitored,' he told his co-

panelists and audience comprising vice-chancellors and educationists from across the country. 'If you provide quality you will remain or else you will perish,' he added.

Speaking at the session earlier, Ashok Saxena, vice-chancellor of Galgotias University in Greater Noida, had pointed to the need for private universities to get together and regulate themselves instead of leaving the task to a government agency.

'It's not a matter of what the University Grants Commission or AICTE is delivering. We will self regulate and meet the required standard,' Saxena said. He mooted the idea of forming a consortium of private universities as a solution to their woes.

The idea received support from K.P. Thooyamani, vice-chancellor of Bharath University in Chennai, who too felt that the government should follow a hands-off approach on regulation.

'The accreditation agency should be a non-governmental body like an NGO,' he said. The outcome-based accreditation which the AICTE follows while evaluating the quality of institutions also drew flak from the speakers.

According to this process, candidates are measured on their competency in their areas of specialisation at the end of their studies. Raj Singh, vice-chancellor of Ansal University in Gurgaon, said private universities often get inferior quality students.

'With Delhi University around, we get only the 'leftovers'... students who are second and third category in terms of quality. We need to accept and acknowledge this,' he said. "Our faculty has to take much more responsibility so that students can compete with the cream of the nation," Singh added.

Source: 24 August, 2012/[Daily Mail UK](#)

Standard of Education in Government and Private Primary Schools

The steps being taken by Government to improve the standard of education in primary schools include sanction of 19.14 lakh teacher posts, setting up of 2,01,943 primary schools and 1,56,792 upper primary schools, construction of more than 18 lakh additional classrooms, over 7 lakh toilets and 2 lakh drinking water facilities for government schools under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA). Besides, 30 day induction training to newly recruited teachers 20 day in-service training to the teachers, distribution of free textbooks and uniforms and financial support for context-specific quality

improvement interventions are some other steps being taken for this purpose.

Section 12 (1) © of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009, inter-alia provides that an unaided private school shall admit in class 1 or pre primary class, as the case may be), to the extent of at least twenty-five per cent of the strength of that class, children belonging to weaker section and disadvantaged group in the neighbourhood and provide them free and compulsory elementary education till its completion. Some states have notified norms for classifying disadvantaged groups and weaker sections and initiated the admission of such children in the private un-aided schools and also mechanisms to monitor such admissions.

Source: 24 August, 2012/ [PIB](#)

Kapil Sibal questions opposition to foreign investment in education

The way to raise standards

Union HRD minister Kapil Sibal's frustration over opposition to the Foreign Educational Institutions Bill is understandable. Questioning the hostility of some opposition parties to foreign investment in the key sector at a recent education conclave, he pointed out that if foreign universities were allowed to set up campuses in India, they would teach Indian students, not foreigners. Given the massive demand for quality higher education, inviting foreign universities to set up bases here is critical to addressing the supply-side shortfall. Consider that India needs another 800 universities by 2020 to address the educational needs of 45 million students. This demand simply cannot be met by [indigenous](#) varsities alone.

Foreign universities would provide a much-needed boost to educational standards in India. It's alarming that not a single Indian university features among the top 100 in global rankings. If India is to emerge as a knowledge and innovation hub, it must reform its [higher education](#) system.

Students today have limited choices in terms of quality academic institutions and are forced to seek greener pastures abroad. However, if foreign universities are allowed to come in, this brain drain could be reversed, saving the country massive outflows of talent and resources.

The fear that foreign varsities would supplant domestic curricula and academic traditions is unfounded.

Such insular tendencies have no place in an increasingly globalised world, characterised by free

flow of knowledge and collaborative academic endeavours. The main factor motivating opposition to foreign universities is reluctance on the part of domestic varsities to pull up their socks and compete for students and faculty. This is directly linked to the unspoken policy of using educational institutions to disburse political patronage. It's, therefore, high time we had a shake-up.

COUNTERVIEW - Education is not for profit

When it comes to matters of government policy vis-a-vis the [Indian market](#), one of the few constants is the reaction of our urban elites to the word 'liberalisation'. All one needs to do is mention it and a Pavlovian reaction sets in: a vociferous defence of allowing foreign investment in just about every sector and a contemptuous dismissal of any objections as baseless obstructionism. Regulations to safeguard the Indian people and local industries? Perish the thought. Bring on the social and economic Darwinism; those who suffer only have themselves to blame.

"I don't see why there is opposition to foreign investment (in education)," says chief [FDI](#) cheerleader and HRD minister [Kapil Sibal](#) plaintively. Well, let's see now. Perhaps there is opposition to it because education, of all sectors, is not about profit.

Given that the gross enrolment ratio in higher education in India is 12.4% compared to an international average of 23% — it shoots up to 55% in developed nations — what we need right now is a focus on expanding supply to meet growing demand. The only way to address that in a sustainable fashion is government investment — supplemented by public-private partnerships perhaps — aimed at providing affordable education underwritten by the national exchequer.

Foreign investors, however, will be looking solely at the bottom line, not at what is best for the country's development. Given their resources and the unequal playing field that will create, what is likely to happen is that a small percentage of elite institutions will corner the market on educationists — already a huge problem here — further making it difficult for the vast majority of students to gain a quality education. And what of other social objectives? Will foreign investors, for instance, be willing to institute the quotas that we still need so badly, or will the lure of their cash lead the government to make exceptions for them? No, education in India is a problem that is best handled the Indian way.

Source: 25 August, 2012/[Times of India](#)

Two key related bills on higher education delinked

Two key related bills on reforms in higher education have been delinked to ensure that the delay in passage of one of them does not affect the other.

The move comes in wake of the inordinate delay in the passage of the Educational Tribunals Bill, 2010, which seeks to establish educational tribunals at the national and state levels to expedite adjudication of disputes in the education sector.

This Bill will be delinked from the Unfair Practices in Technical Education Institutions, Medical Educational institutions and Universities Bill, 2010.

The Educational Tribunal Bill was passed by Lok Sabha in 2010 but has been struck in the Rajya Sabha since then due to lack of consensus among political parties.

HRD Ministry officials said Unfair Practices Bill "will be amended so that adjudication of penalties is delinked from the Educational Tribunal Bill, 2010, and restored to civil courts".

This Bill, introduced in Lok Sabha, specifies guidelines under which unfair practices such as charging capitation fees, demanding donations, questionable admission processes etc could be treated as civil or criminal offences.

The Association of Self-Financing Universities has, however, voiced objections to these Bills along with three other Bills which are pending in Parliament, terming them as unconstitutional.

It said the five new Bills proposed to regulate all universities and higher education institutions, which is "completely unconstitutional" in nature. (MORE)

Source: 26 August, 2012/[Business-Standard](#)

HRD delinks two bills on higher education

With most of his educational reforms bills being stuck due to lack of political consensus, HRD Minister Kapil Sibal has attempted a different route. The Ministry has delinked two reform bills to ensure that the delay in passage of one of them does not affect the other.

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The association, which approached four former chief justices of India, quoted them as saying that Parliament does not have legislative competence to legislate in matters of universities. This in view of exclusion of universities in Entry 44 of List I-Union List and inclusion of universities in Entry 32 of List II-State List.

The Bills in question are The National Accreditation Regulatory Authority for Higher Educational Institutions Bill, 2010, Higher Education and Research Bill, 2011, and The National Commission for Human Resources for Health Bill, 2011. "The Central Government does not have the right to make any of these bills that try to govern universities as well. Universities are State matter as per the constitution of India," a statement said quoting them. The Bills will take away the power of the State, the association felt.

Source: 27 August, 2012/[The Pioneer](#)

China is the new education hub

A young Indian engineer decided to pursue his MBA in China. A number of his friends were surprised as that's not a country many would think of as a b-school destination. Well, Ravi Mittal had his reasons (read his story). Like him, hundreds of thousands of Indian and other overseas students have opted for the Middle Kingdom that boasts of an economy in trillions of dollars.

According to the Chinese embassy in New Delhi, the numbers have "obviously" jumped up in the past five years. The embassy and other official sources state that, in 2011, 292,611 international students, including 9,800 Indians, chose to study in China.

The year before, 265,090 candidates from 194 countries and regions did so. The countries with the largest representation were Republic of Korea, the United States, Japan, Thailand, Vietnam, Russia, Indonesia, India, Kazakhstan and Pakistan.

The Dragon craves more. Aiming to be the top choice of those looking to take up higher, secondary or even elementary education on this continent, the country has launched a 10-year plan to have Asia's largest international student population – half a million, including 150,000 pursuing degrees – by the end of this decade.

“China's Ministry of Education (MOE) will make further efforts to optimise the environment for international students, improve management and to upgrade education quality, by adhering to the National Outline for Medium and Long Term Educational Reform and Development as well as the Study in China Plan, aiming at attracting 500,000 international students by 2020 so as to make China Asia's biggest host country for international students,” according to the China Scholarship Council website.

Different experts have publicly voiced scepticism over the “ambitious” expansion plans. Sreemati Chakraborti, a professor at Delhi University's department of east Asian studies, does not. “For China, nothing seems too ambitious. Maybe they'll lower the tuition fees, increase the number of courses taught in English, get foreign faculty,” says Chakraborti, who specialises in Chinese politics and education.

Authorities have already set the ball rolling to boost its education sector. According to one report, the country would expand the scholarship programme for overseas students, with “at least” 1.5 billion yuan (\$238 million) worth of scholarships in 2012-13.

The financial aspect is one of the usual factors that has driven students east-ward, as is the relatively less competitive entry to courses such as medicine and management, which are the favourites (more than 90%) of Indians studying in the People's Republic, according to information provided by the embassy. “It's quite easier for Indian students to register for the medicine major than in European or US universities.”

Also, some Chinese institutions are among the world's top 200 or 500 universities. “The quality of education is fairly good,” says Chakraborti. “About 10 to 15 Chinese universities are world-class.”

Other than entrance requirements, price and physical proximity to India, there are still more

critical reasons for learning in and about this globally-significant nation. A case in point is the US. It is creating the “next generation of experts on China” through its 100,000-strong initiative launched by US secretary of state Hillary Rodham Clinton in 2010. By 2014, 100,000 Americans are going to study there under the plan.

Money-meter

According to CUCAS (China's University and College Admission System), a student's annual bill would be something in the range of \$6,000 to \$9,000, depending on the university's location, with the cost being “significantly less” in a small town or a city in Western China

Is language an issue?

The official response suggests it isn't. “More and more Chinese universities now offer courses in English, enabling students with no knowledge of Chinese language to study there,” as per the China Scholarship Council website

Source: 29 August, 2012/[Hindustan Times](#)

AP stumbles as govt steers 'professional' course

Andhra Pradesh can make for an intriguing case study given its love for the engineering degree, a fascination which is not rooted in logic. Currently, the state has 2.78 lakh engineering seats for the 2.02 lakh students who cleared Eamcet-2012. But the large number of seats and students do not reflect the ugly truth of engineering education in AP - just about 48% of engineering graduates here manage to land jobs.

So why has engineering remained the most preferred professional course despite its dismal record? Observers note that the state's emphasis on engineering is a predictable result of centring educational reforms around 'professional education' which has, over a period of time, become synonymous only with engineering education.

What has put tech colleges high up on the priority list of students from Andhra Pradesh is perhaps the myth that Hyderabad has lucrative jobs in IT industry for all who pass out with a B.Tech degree. The fact that medical colleges, which occupied the other bright end of AP's professional education spectrum, have very few seats to offer (in 2012 the number is still 4,845) has also aided the engineering boom.

Further encouraging this slant towards tech education was the state government's populist fee reimbursement scheme enabling students from Other Backward Classes (OBC) and Economically



Backward Classes (EBC) to pursue professional degrees for free. This in turn caused an increase in the number of engineering colleges from 375 in 2009 to 717 in 2012 with managements finding it profitable to milk the scheme by drawing funds in the name of even fake candidates. The state at present has 21% of a total of 3,393 engineering colleges in the country.

The focus on professional education, however, dates back to the engineering boom, educationists said. "The whole country had gone through a shift in focus from vanilla degrees to professional degrees and Hyderabad, since 2000, has been a hub of technical education as part of the IT boom," explains VS Rao, director, BITS-Hyderabad. But a decade after the country witnessed the IT boom, students have been focusing on career options other than engineering in states like Maharashtra and Karnataka. When compared to 717 of them in AP, Maharashtra and Karnataka have just 350 and 185 tech colleges with, respectively, 1.7 lakh and 65,000 seats. "These states have encouraged other courses like biotechnology, pharma and law. But in AP, the growth of other courses has been blocked as, right at the intermediate level, students are made to take up the MPC (Maths-Physics-Chemistry) stream in pursuit of an engineering degree," said PM Bhargava, former vice-chairman, National Knowledge Commission.

About 60% of an average of 7.4 lakh students who take admission in intermediate colleges in the state opt for the MPC stream. "The number of students opting for the biology, commerce and humanities streams has been falling steadily over the past ten years," said P Madhusudan Reddy, general secretary of the Government Intermediate College Association. In short, the engineering dream is so big in the psyche of AP students that most cannot think beyond it. "Both my sister and I opted for engineering and my parents were sure that we would land jobs. In our colony, most students opt for MPC and go for Eamcet engineering coaching as it is easy to thus bag a seat," said S Sajini who secured 37th rank in Eamcet-2012.

The state has, however, failed to maintain a good standard of education in tech colleges. "Recent inspection by AICTE has revealed that 40% of colleges in AP do not fulfill even the minimum requirements as regards faculty and infrastructure," said a source in the [higher education](#) department. A recent study conducted on the basis of AMCAT, India's largest employability test, revealed that 57% of engineering graduates in AP (among other states) lack basic employability skills like fluency in English.

Sensing a fall in the quality of education, the state government has asked All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE) to stop sanctioning new tech colleges in the state and neither permit additional seats at existing colleges. However, succumbing to pressure from colleges, the government has increased the fee structure in 67 colleges which are known as providing better education than the rest. "The fee hike has created a catch-22 situation in the state. The government on the one hand promoted engineering education and, on the other, increased the fee only in those institutions which provide better education than the rest," said VARK Prasad, director of Save Education Society.

However, there is finally some change unfolding in AP. Poor placements at engineering colleges over the last few years has led to a drop in the number of students signing up for engineering. From 3.16 lakh students who appeared for Eamcet in 2010, the figure has dropped to 2.83 lakh this year. In 2011, just 2.6 lakh students had appeared for the exam.

Meanwhile, the state is taking up its biggest crackdown on colleges ever. "A special task force will inspect each college and will penalise those found to be in violation of AICTE requirements," said Ajay Jain, commissioner, technical education. But the late realisation might not change the fate of education in the state which has to go through massive structural changes.

Source: 30 August, 2012/ [Times of India](#)

Online Entrance Examinations for Management

The All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) has conducted online National Level Common Management Admission Test 2012 (CMAT) for facilitating institutions to select suitable students for admission in all management programs approved by AICTE for year 2012-13.

AICTE will conduct CMAT twice in a year for admission in AICTE approved institutions for session 2013-14. A computerized Common Admission Test (CAT) for admission to Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) has also been conducting by IIMs since 2009.

Being autonomous institutions, the entire process of conducting exam is coordinated centrally by IIMs. The Director Forum takes overall policy decision regarding CAT examination.

For the benefit of Disabled candidates Testing Assistive devices (TA devices) also known as technical aids are designed to directly enable people with disabilities to perform a particular task



successfully. Magnifying Screens are provided by CAT test centres for Visually Impaired students.

Source: 30 August, 2012/ [PIB](#)

Improving Standard of Education

UGC has taken up various measures for educational reforms, such as introduction of Semester System, regular updating of curricula and Choice Based Credit Systems (CBCS) etc.,

The UGC has launched several schemes to improve the standards of education in Universities and colleges. Under these schemes, financial assistance is provided to eligible colleges for creation and upgradation of infrastructural facilities, including Libraries, Laboratories and Hostels and for strengthening of teaching and research.

These measures are applicable to colleges located in National Capital Region (NCR) also. Consequent to passing of the Central Educational Institutions (Reservation in Admission) Act, 2006, the Central Government has increased the intake capacity in all Central Educational Institutions (CEI) to an extent of 54%.

This has led to enormous expansion of seats available in CEIs including the Central Universities and colleges located in NCR. Education falls in the Concurrent List of the Constitution and therefore it is the responsibility of both Central and State Governments.

Source: 30 August, 2012/ [PIB](#)

Common Management Admission Test from September 27

Training and learning services company Aptech will be conducting the Common Management Admission Test (CMAT) mandated by the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) from September 27 to October 1

More centres

According to a press release, encouraged by the glitch-free process last year, the project duration has been reduced from nine days to five this year. The number of cities where the examination will be conducted have been increased to 64, which means there will be more centres.

The release also quoted AICTE Chairperson S.S. Mantha as saying: "This format allows students to save time, energy and money by institutionalising online testing. We will consider the best of two scores between the CMAT held in September/October and the next, some time later for admissions in academic year 2013-2014."

Source: 31 August, 2012/ Hindu

Yale University's India friendly president resigns

The India-friendly president of the Yale University, Richard C. Levin, has announced stepping down from the helm of the prestigious American varsity at the end of the current academic session after a 20-year stint.

Richard Levin, 65, the longest-serving leader in the Ivy League, said he will retire at the end of the current academic year.

As head of the university, Richard Levin was instrumental in several key initiatives with India including the annual leadership programme for young Indian parliamentarians.

President of the Yale University for 20 years since 1993, he served the institution longer than any other president currently in the Ivy League or the 61-member Association of American Universities.

According to a university release, Richard Levin made advancing Yale's connections to India a priority of his administration in recent years.

Richard Levin travelled to India five times between 2005 and 2011, and during his November 2008 visit he announced the launch of the Yale-India Initiative.

"Yale commits itself to the goal that India will have a permanent and prominent place in the teaching, scholarship, and the life of the institution," he said.

"Decades from now, as India continues its economic, political, and social ascendancy, the commitments that Yale had made today will ensure that our students and faculty have a richer and deeper understanding of India, and will contribute to strengthening the relationship between the world's two largest democracies," Richard Levin said.

Over the last five years, Yale committed significant financial resources to position itself among the world's pre-eminent institutions for the study of and engagement with India and South Asia.

During his tenure, Yale hired eighteen new faculty who teach and work on India and South Asia; expanded resources for Yale students and faculty to work and study in, and to experience India; and allowed resources to attract the most talented students from the region to Yale by providing generous financial aid and scholarships.

During his presidency, Yale launched the India-Yale Parliamentary Leadership Program that has been attended by more than seventy members of India's Parliament since it was begun in 2007. It also launched the India-Yale Higher Education

Leadership Program in 2011 to build the leadership capacity in Indian higher education.

Richard Levin has regularly met and interacted with India's leaders in government, business, and civil society since 2004.

"Rick Levin is simply one of the world's great leaders," said Indra Nooyi, the current Yale trustee and Chairman and CEO of PepsiCo.

"He has been transformational in envisioning how a university should be a leading citizen in its home community and he has boldly staked out how the leading universities should become global institutions. His example has been a guide for how universities around the world can have a much greater impact," she said.

Source: 31 August, 2012/ [Hindu Business Line](#)

ANALYSIS/OPINION/INNOVATIVE PRACTICE

Stage set for new India-US partnership

Starting this year, as many as 200 American students will come to India's Central universities and the IITs as part of a novel 'Connect India' programme planned by the two countries. The University Grants Commission will also award 300 Raman Fellowships to Indian students for post-doctoral studies in the US.

The moves aim at deepening the engagement between the two countries as part of the Second Indo-US Higher Education Dialogue.

India and the US will also join hands to set up a cyber security cell, education testing services, twinning arrangements and meta-university format engagement with the US varsities.

These are among the set of 15 concrete outlines of the Second Indo-US Higher Education Dialogue starting in October this year.

Human Resource Development Minister Kapil Sibal led a 14-member delegation of academicians for participation in talks that were held on June 12 in Washington for a formal approval for the 'Connect India' programme which will be coordinated by the UGC and the Central universities.

The Vice-Chancellor of JNU will be the key authority handling this project from the Indian side.

Waking up to the real threats that could come from the virtual world, India will later this year set up a Cyber Security Centre with the IIT-Delhi handling it along with the Ministry of Home Affairs. A few US

institutions are also expected to assist in the project.

Aiming to boost institutional-level collaboration, the HRD Ministry has already got the UGC to approve regulations to facilitate twinning arrangements between Indian and foreign educational institutions. These will enable tie-ups with foreign institutions without any need for a legislative backing. That apart, the UGC will also initiate the second round of the Manmohan Singh-Barack Obama fellowships and collaborate in education testing services along with the IIT-Kanpur and the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE).

The HRD Ministry will identify 'Grand Challenge' areas for research and innovation related collaboration besides in the area of E-learning — a subject highlighted by US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton — support a US-India Higher Education web portal, hosts an international seminar on community colleges.

Source: 16 August, 2012/[Indian Express](#)

As India plays hard to get, overseas suitors lose interest

The number of young Indians who attend university is rising, but state bureaucracy hinders Western would-be partners.

Indian legislation allowing foreign universities to grant degrees independently and set up full campuses in the country has met with another setback after ministers said they could not get MPs to agree to the law.

The Foreign Universities Bill has been shelved in favour of pushing through other much-needed reforms to higher education. But the delay adds to a growing sense that India is not friendly to foreign investment.

Kapil Sibal, India's minister of human resource development and the man who introduced the legislation in 2010, said he wanted more not-for-profit foreign engagement in higher education.

"But neither UPA [the United Progressive Alliance ruling coalition] members [of parliament] nor leaders from the opposition seem to be in favour of it," Mr Sibal said.

It is now unlikely that his department will try to get the bill through parliament during the monsoon session, which began last week.

Some UK vice-chancellors and international higher education experts said that interest in India among UK universities was now declining because of high

levels of bureaucracy and because the country lacks a coherent regulatory framework.

"There's a genuine worry about doing business in India, not just because of the bill but other regulatory activity and the difficulty of getting permits," said John Fielden of Chems Consulting, which advises on transnational education.

Higher education in India is governed by both state and federal law, and it is both cumbersome and frustratingly slow to register as a foreign provider. Contrary to the situation in other developing markets, there are no financial incentives on offer for those wanting to set up in the country.

"Countries such as Burma [Myanmar], Kurdistan, Vietnam and Brazil are now considered preferable," Mr Fielden added.

William Lawton, director of the Observatory on Borderless Higher Education, said: "It is a fact that some foreign universities have already decided to look elsewhere for international partnerships, and even campuses, because of the uncertainty over the bill."

According to the Association of Indian Universities, 631 foreign institutions were operating in the country in 2010, either from their home campuses or by twinning with a local partner.

Profit restrictions a deterrent

Five had campuses in India but just one, the Schulich School of Business, was accredited. Graduates of unaccredited universities find it difficult to get government jobs or progress to postgraduate study at local public universities.

One UK vice-chancellor, who did not want to be named, told *Times Higher Education* that a restriction on repatriating profits was also a deterrent to setting up in the country.

"There are lots of private partners wanting to attract UK universities to India, but few institutions in the UK are willing to take the reputational risk," the vice-chancellor added.

But Andy Heath, Asia policy officer at the UK Higher Education International Unit, said that although universities would welcome the bill, its delay was not a surprise. "The key obstacle [for UK universities] is the lack of clarity in the regulatory landscape in India," he said.

Sir Steve Smith, vice-chancellor of the University of Exeter, argued that the delay was symptomatic of an opposition to foreign providers. "Some people in India see it as reducing their share of the market," he said.

Currently 16 million students attend higher education institutions in India, but the government has said it wants to triple its enrolment ratio by 2020.

Karan Khemka, head of the Mumbai branch of Parthenon, a global consultancy whose clients include for-profit providers, said it was a "misperception that British universities would automatically prosper because of their quality and brand if they came into India".

The fees charged by British universities are too high to attract students in the Indian market, he said. "They are not creating value for their students relative to the jobs and salaries their graduates can get afterwards," he added.

Salary levels even for professionals in India are far below those on offer in the UK.

"We have heard some delusional vice-chancellors saying: 'If they study with us they can get jobs in the UK', but work permits are not forthcoming after a degree in India," Mr Khemka said.

The University Grants Commission - the funding body for higher education in India - is now considering allowing institutions that feature in the *Times Higher Education* World University Rankings or the Academic Ranking of World Universities to collaborate with the top 100 Indian institutions to initiate accredited dual degrees.

Nicholas Booker, co-founder of IndoGenius, a New Delhi-based education consultancy, said that although the bill was delayed, there were other "innovative, cost-effective and culturally suitable ways for universities to engage in India", including online courses and short courses by academics flown into the country.

Source: 16 August, 2012/[Times Higher Education](#)

Management students lack in holistic view, opine experts

Management education has people who are pretty intelligent but do not have the perception of seeing things in totality. This view was expressed during a session on ethics and values in leadership during a conference at India's premier management institute - the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad (IIM-A).

The IIM-A held a conference for its society members for the first time in 40 years. The two-day conference, which began on Friday at the institute's premises, is the second one since the IIMA's inception 50 years ago.

IIM-A Society Conference was based on the theme 'Leadership and Governance,' where the role of ethics and values in leadership, persuasive communication, strategic management, business leadership and law were discussed. The conference was inaugurated by IIM-A director Samir Barua. The faculty at IIM-A who have specialized in leadership and governance provided insight into issues in these areas of management.

"Ethics is an integral part of leadership. In many cases, decisions taken by managers are plain wrong and unethical. But in most others, there are dilemmas involved. Therefore, education must be complemented with a mix of ethics, character, value and skills," said Professor S Manikutty, former professor at IIM-A, while presenting his views on Ethics and Values in Leadership.

Professor Atanu Ghosh shared his experiences from his recently published book 'Strategies for Growth' in the IIM-A Book Series, while M M Monippally discussed the role played by persuasive communication in leadership and managerial roles.

"IIM-A has collaborations with 75 business schools in various programmes. IIMA's post graduate programme in Agri-business Management was ranked as number one in the world by EDUNIVERSAL, a France-based agency. Almost 10 per cent of IIM-A's alumni are entrepreneurs who have also created enterprises in the social sector and contributed significantly to social upliftment," said Barua while addressing members of the IIM-A society.

Source: 18 August, 2012/[Times of India](#)

Prime Minister's remarks at Golden Jubilee Convocation of IIT Bombay

Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh addressed the Golden Jubilee Convocation of IIT Bombay in Mumbai today. Following is the text of Prime Minister's Speech:

"I am delighted to be here at your prestigious institution on this auspicious day. I wish each one of you a life of purposive action and professional fulfillment. Standing here this afternoon, my thoughts go back to those early days after Independence when our national leaders built great institutions of learning to help lay the foundations of a new India. The Indian Institutes of Technology were part of this great nation building effort. I salute the memory of all those who dedicated their lives to building this and other such great institutions of academic excellence.

The IITs have become an integral constituent of what is known as 'Brand India', like our nuclear science institutions, that Dr Kakodkar has dedicated his life to, like Mr Premji's Wipro and Mr. Narayanamurthy's Infosys and like so many other centres of research and teaching that have given several generations of young Indians new opportunities that my own generation could only dream of.

Today, as we celebrate the Golden Jubilee of IIT Bombay, we feel a sense of pride. But that pride must be tempered by the concern that we still do not have the required number of such institutions to offer adequate developmental opportunities to all our bright young women and men.

Every year when I see how many hundreds of thousands of students apply for admission to these institutions, and when I see how high have become the minimum cut-off marks for admission, my heart is pained by the limits we are placing on the opportunities available to our youth.

That is precisely why our government took the initiative to expand the opportunities for higher and technical education in India. During the last eight years Indian higher education, as well as secondary and technical education, have experienced a quantum jump in terms of the investment being made and the number of seats being created for students. I compliment my colleague Shri Kapil Sibal for leading this effort.

Our government has opened new IITs, new IIMs and new institutions for teaching and research in the sciences. We have increased investment in school education. We have increased scholarships for the disadvantaged sections of our society.

I am happy that IIT Bombay has made research a priority. I am told that a number of centres in the institute are engaged in research on several important areas. These include the National Centre for Photovoltaic Research and Education, the 1 Megawatt National Solar Thermal Test Facility and the Indo-US Clean Energy Centre for Photovoltaics. I am sure these efforts will result in very useful outcomes.

As India's economy becomes bigger and more developed, so too must our knowledge base. A developing country like ours has to catch up with other more developed nations and this 'catch-up' process depends vitally on our ability to harness human resources for development.

Another challenge is to ensure that the investment we make in higher education in fact contributes more directly to nation building. Here the IITs face

an immediate challenge of making their curriculum more relevant to our needs. I am aware that this is a subject of much lively discussion among your faculty and alumnus. How do we incentivize our engineering graduates to bring their professional knowledge to bear more directly on our development processes? This would be in keeping with the vision for IITs that Pandit Nehru articulated when he laid the foundation stone of IIT Bombay. He said, that the role of the IITs would be, and I quote, "to provide scientists and technologists of the highest caliber who would engage in research, design and development to help building the nation toward self reliance in her technological needs".

Many of our best IIT students have, over the years, migrated abroad in search of better opportunities. I do not grudge that. Some of them have returned home to serve our Motherland. Some do so from where they are, in some of the best institutions of the world. A large number of our IIT graduates move away from their core disciplines into management, finance, marketing and even the civil services. Without doubt, they have much to contribute in their new fields of work.

The students graduating today have a long list of IIT Bombay alumni to inspire them. Each of the preceding 49 Convocations of this great institution has seen the graduation of a very talented group of young men and women. They have made important contributions in a wide range of disciplines and have added lustre to the global image of India. Several of them have risen to top positions internationally including Arun Netravali, former head of Bell Laboratories, and Nitin Nohria, the current Dean of Harvard Business School. One of our brightest Cabinet Ministers, Shri Jairam Ramesh is an alumnus of IIT Bombay, as is Shri Nandan Nilekani who carries the enormous responsibility of implementing India's ambitious programme for providing all its citizens with a Unique Identification number.

India needs millions of engineers and millions more of technically qualified workers and skilled professionals. There was a time when engineers like M. Vishwesharayya and K. L. Rao provided leadership to our power projects and irrigation projects and were regarded as national leaders. Today India needs national leaders from the fields of engineering and science. Not just politics, sport and cinema!

Friends, India is on the move. And so, you enter a world of opportunities. How you make use of these opportunities, how you shape them, how you

create new opportunities for newer generations of our youth will shape the future of this ancient land.

I know that in the recent past we have lived through a period of excessive pessimism and negativism. Some of this is natural. Our society has been experiencing a 'revolution of rising expectations'. Hopes are high, but are often not realized. This breeds cynicism. The challenge before you is to retain your sense of hope and optimism even as you surmount the hurdles you face and overcome the challenges that are posed.

When I look back at my own life I am humbled and gratified by the distance my generation has travelled. I studied in the light of a kerosene lamp in a dusty village that had no power, no school or college. I had to walk miles to school. In all these matters, there has been an enormous improvement in the 65 years of independent India. Even then, the progress that has been registered has often fallen short of the expectations of our people, particularly the youth. In some ways, the enormity of the task ahead of us as a nation is daunting, but our achievements so far give us confidence and hope.

India's journey, as indeed IIT Bombay's journey, these past 65 years, is a matter of great pride. After half a century of zero rate of economic growth, from 1900 to 1950, we managed to register 3.5 per cent growth for three decades after Independence, from 1950 to 1980. But from 1980 to now, over the subsequent three decades, we have nearly doubled that rate of growth. In 2003-08 we showed that we can march forward at an even higher rate of growth of 9.0 per cent.

These are not just numbers. They translate into employment opportunities for newer generations. They create new incomes and new possibilities. They help increase the government's revenues so that we can invest more in education, in health care, in eradicating poverty, hunger, disease and illiteracy.

I know that in the past year India's economy has slowed down. But this is not an inevitable or irreversible outcome. The fundamentals of our economy are sound and with greater effort being made to mobilize all the latent physical and human resources, we can go back to the growth rate of 8 to 9 percent per annum achieved from 2003 to 2008. The large investments in the development of human resources that we have made in the last 8 years would facilitate that outcome.

Science and technology have to play a major role in the transformation of our economy. The educated youth of our country have to lead the process of social and economic change. I am confident that

young people like you will take the flag from our hands and march forward. I am confident that your generation will make us proud. I am confident about the future of India, because YOU are that future.

As you enter a new phase of your life never forget those who have made it possible for you to be here today. Your parents, your family and friends, your teachers and the society around you that has enabled you to receive good quality education and build the foundation of your professional life.

May your path be blessed. Jai Hind!"

Source: 19 August, 2012/[India Education Diary](#)

Studying abroad: Look before you leap

Going to a foreign country for studies can be a pain if one is taken for a ride. Things to watch out for before one takes the plunge.

Does going abroad for higher education sound exciting? If you have heard about the shutdown of institutes like the Tri-Valley University in the US, TASMAL (Training and Advanced Studies in Management and Communications) London and the Herguan University in the US that has been accused of visa fraud, you will think twice before taking any decision to go abroad. However, not all universities are the same, and there are a few techniques to identify institutes that can cause you immense trouble.

Indian students going abroad have been stranded as a result of the recent episodes of visa fraud that have led to the closure of several institutes across the globe. Though overseas education consultants believe it is the student who is to blame for getting duped, they recommend certain basic points that a student aspiring to study abroad should keep in mind.

Naveen Chopra, chairman, The Chopras, an overseas education consultancy, said, "The main issue is that some students want to go overseas on fraudulent documents. Genuine students would never seek private, uncertified, low-grade institutes."

Important Tips (overseas edu. Consultants)

- Check the accreditation of the institute. Cross check with the authorities
- Do not get lured by low fees
- There are no other ways to get a visa other than the official route. Do not forge documents and don't let agents indulge in it

- Try to get a local relative/friend to check the genuineness of the institute
- Check how many local students the institute hosts. If the institute caters mostly to foreign students, there might be something a miss

The most important thing to keep in mind

Consultants are of the view that the first thing to check while choosing an institute is to verify the accreditation of the institute concerned. Mansoor Ameen, director of Chennai-based consultancy Linking Overseas, said if one wanted to go to the UK, the website of the UK Border Agency (UKBA) would be the best place to view the accreditations of the institutes. "If one is planning to go to Canada, Australia or Singapore, one can visit the government website of the countries concerned to get details of the university accreditation," he said.

Chopra added that alternatively, one could also contact the embassy concerned if one had some doubts about any institute. Further, he said the respective city councils of the country could also be contacted to get some inputs on a particular university.

In the United States, educational accreditation is provided by private non-profit membership associations. This is validated through recognition by the United States Department of Education (USDE) and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) or both.

Vinayak Kamat of GeeBee Education also informed that a student should not apply to private institutes in the UK, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. "Here, US is an exception. In the US, old and reputed private universities like Harvard, MIT and Cornell are good," he said.

Naresh Gulati, CEO, Oceanic Consultants, said a student should first visit the official website of the government concerned to get details of the visa requirement. He explained that the student should then check if the institute also requires these prerequisites for a visa. "If an institute or its officials tell you that you need not have all the visa requirements, it is better to avoid them," said Gulati.

These consultants agreed that it was safer to go a government-funded public institute, rather than a private, unaided institute. This is because, according to them, it is difficult to get detailed information about such institutions.

Stay away from fraudulent agents

Agents are the most important cause for dashing the hopes of those aspiring to study abroad. Believe

in what the consultants say. Before taking into confidence the agents, students should find out that the overseas education 'agents' have been in the business for long and represents a fair number of reputed institutions abroad, Gulati said.

"Students should learn to distinguish between an agent and a professional consultant. While an agent will try to push students to join a particular institute to earn a commission, consultants bring out suitable institutes for the students to choose from," said Chopra.

Chopra added that students should stay away from agents who promise them to get them through the institute even if they did not pass standard tests like TOEFL or did not qualify for the visa.

Experts said due to lack of penalties for fraudulent agents and a big market for such services, such businesses continue.

Ameen said students mostly from places like Andhra Pradesh and Gujarat were found to be deceived by agents, as there was a big market for these products. Though a new law, which makes it mandatory for all education agents to get registered with the Indian government or face fines or jail terms, was proposed last year, there has been no progress on this front.

Look out for warning signs

Consultants opines there are warning signs that reflect that the institute is a fraudulent one. Chopra said if a university was taking in all the candidates who have applied, there should be certainly something wrong with it. He added that one should exercise caution when they come to know that an institute is hiding information about accreditation or it is less than two-years old.

Kamat said a student should not take shortcuts, and avoid applying to an institute where normal entry criteria like GRE and TOEFL are waived.

Ameen said if an institute was offering a course at throwaway fees or courses were of very long duration, students should be alarmed. "In the UK, for example, average fees for a course would be around £10,000. If an institute offers the same for £4000, then there is certainly something wrong," he said.

Gulati of Oceanic Consultants said a students should check whether there are adequate local students at a particular institute or not. "If an institute targets only international students, this means it just wants to be a gateway for foreigners to enter their country; and in the process make a quick buck out of it," Gulati informed.

It is not all that bad

While consultants believe students should take all the precautions to ensure that they do not end up in a mess, they felt students need not get unnecessarily stressed. As Gulati puts it, "The number of frauds will decrease in the coming years, owing to strict regulations by the authorities concerned. These countries are also equally careful about getting the right number of students who have the necessary quality to be a part of their knowledge community."

The experts believe it all depends on the students on how they deal with the situation. "It is fine as long as students are alert and are not seeking 'fraudulent' means to go abroad," concluded Chopra.

Source: 23 August, 2012/[Business Standard](#)

Digital Faculty: Professors and Technology, 2012

Professors occasionally get lampooned as luddites responsible for the famously slow pace of change in higher education. But in truth the majority of professors are excited about various technology-driven trends in higher education, including the growth of e-textbooks and digital library collections, the increased use of data monitoring as a way to track student performance along with their own, and the increasingly popular idea of "flipping the classroom."

However, other technology trends are more likely to make professors break into a clammy sweat. These include the proliferation of scholarship outlets operating outside the traditional model for peer review, the growth of for-profit education, and the intensity of digital communications. The digital era has brought to the surface other tensions as well, particularly differences in how professors and academic technology administrators perceive how broader technological changes are affecting their campuses and how they should feel about it.

These are some of the findings in the second of two reports from surveys conducted by *Inside Higher Ed* and the Babson Survey Research Group. The first report, focusing on faculty views of online education, was published in June. A PDF of the new, second report can be downloaded [here](#); the text of the report can be viewed [here](#).

The survey relied on the responses of 4,564 faculty members, composing a nationally representative sample spanning various types of institutions; and 591 administrators who are responsible for academic technology at their institutions.

The faculty members' net-positive outlook on several tech-related pedagogical trends suggests that student performance feedback loops and "flipping the classroom" are durable enough to outlast their current buzz. "The increasing collection and analysis of data on teaching and learning on a course-by-course basis" garnered the most enthusiasm of any of the excitement/fear questions in the survey, with 74 percent of professors saying it is, on balance, a good thing.

"Digital Faculty: Professors and Technology, 2012" is the second of two surveys of college professors and academic technology administrators about faculty attitudes about and approaches to technology. A PDF copy of the study report can be downloaded here. To read the text of the report, click here.

Inside Higher Ed collaborated on this project with the Babson Survey Research Group.

The *Inside Higher Ed*/Babson survey of faculty views on online education was made possible in part by the generous financial support of Course Smart, Deltak, Pearson and Sonic Foundry.

The counterargument has been that this trend could lead to an over reliance on data-based metrics to assess not only student performance but teacher performance, leading to a No Child Left Behind-like regime at many colleges, especially public ones. But the vast majority of professors seem to think that the advantages of Big Data in the classroom outweigh the hazards.

As for "flipping the classroom" -- that is, banishing the lecture and focusing precious class time on group projects and other forms of active learning -- a decisive majority of professors seem to be on board. Asked their feelings on the notion of "changing the faculty role to spend less time lecturing and more time coaching students," 69 percent said they were excited more than fearful.

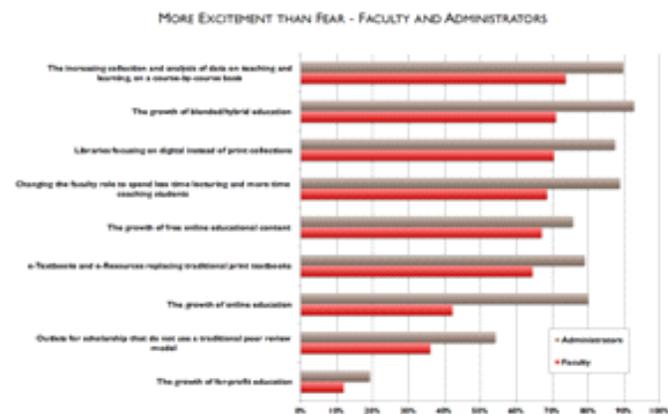
The survey did not ask about the specific anxieties behind these responses. Perhaps some professors feel more comfortable doing research than engaging with students, and use the lecture as a crutch. In any case the findings of this survey suggest that most faculty members do not fear the prospect of "coaching" students rather than talking at them.

Ambivalence about Digital Content

Some technology-driven movements have caused tension, particularly in academic publishing.

In general, professors are pro-digital. A decisive majority, 71 percent, said the prospect of "libraries

focusing on digital instead of print collections"



makes them more excited than fearful (which may come as a surprise, given occasional reports of faculty protesting the removal of print collections from campus libraries). And 65 percent said they were excited about "e-textbooks and e-resources replacing traditional print textbooks."

But professors remain uneasy about scholarly publishing outlets that eschew "traditional" models of peer review. Asked for their gut reaction to the emergence of "outlets for scholarship that do not use a traditional peer-review model," 64 percent of professors said it mostly filled them with fear. (Administrators were far more enthusiastic, with 54 percent saying they are excited about this.)

As "open peer review," post-publication review and other alternative models have gained momentum, would-be reformers have occasionally called for an end to the old system -- calling it tedious, cabalistic and, by now, unnecessary -- and inevitably provoking a heated debate about quality control.

Kathleen Fitzpatrick, the director of scholarly communication at the Modern Language Association, has been at the center of such debates. In her latest book, she argued for a new model of peer review that leverages wikis and other technological apparatuses to improve the process.

Fitzpatrick says that when considering "outlets that do not use a traditional peer review model," many professors might be failing to distinguish between alternative models of peer review and no peer review at all. "Frankly, though, I'm quite enthused to hear that over a third of respondents are excited by the possibilities of publications that use something other than a traditional peer review system," she told *Inside Higher Ed* via e-mail.

For the rest, it is reasonable to assume that much of their fear revolves around the assumption that alternative methods of vetting or filtering academic

articles will not be as reliable as traditional peer review.

Textbook companies have tried to fuel similar skepticism about the quality of open educational resources, or OER. But according to the survey professors seem to be less concerned about quality control in the context of OER: 67 percent said they are excited about "the growth of free online educational content."

Fewer seem interested in producing such content, though. Just under 50 percent said they "created digital teaching materials/open educational resources," such as lecture recordings, even occasionally. Only 20 percent said they do so regularly.

This does not necessarily amount to hypocrisy on the part of professors. Just because they are excited about a trend does not mean they have to participate. In some cases it might not be appropriate. In others it might not be an option.

But it could be that colleges are just not making it worth their while. Only 27 percent of faculty respondents said they believe their institution "has a fair system of rewarding contributions made to digital pedagogy." That roughly accords with the proportion who regularly record and share lectures and other digital resources (20 percent) and those who have ever published novel forms of digital scholarship such as visualizations or game-based projects (22 percent).

Producing digital work also might not be the best career move. While 65 percent of professors said that online-only scholarship "can be equal [in quality] to work published in print," only 13 percent said they believe such work is given the same respect in tenure and promotion decisions. Meanwhile, 57 percent of professors said online-only scholarship should be given equal respect, with only 13 percent actively disagreeing.

Using the LMS

The learning management system, or LMS, is the nexus of traditional and online education. Not all colleges hold courses online, but virtually every college has an LMS. And since the online platforms can serve as a vehicle for other digital teaching tools, the ways the LMS are being used on a particular campus -- and the ways it is not -- are a pretty good indicator of technology buy-in of an institution and its faculty.

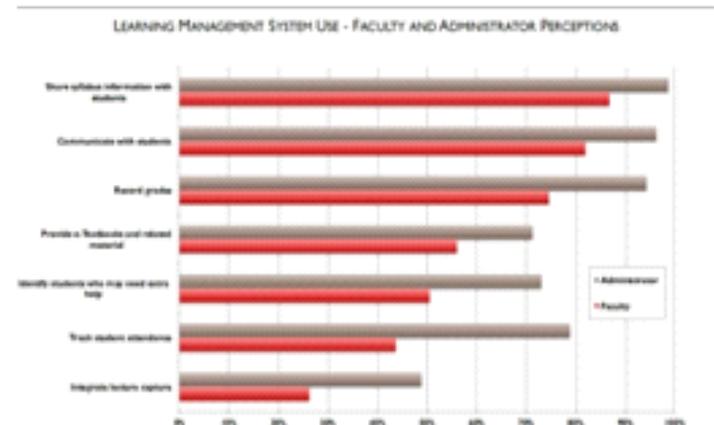
But fewer professors are using the LMS than administrators think.

Administrators believed that 73 percent of the professors at their institutions used data logged by the LMS either "regularly" or "occasionally" to identify students who need extra help. This would be true if every professor who expressed enthusiasm about the availability of fine-grained classroom data actually used those data. In fact, only 51 percent of faculty reported doing so.

About half of the administrators estimated that professors regularly or occasionally posted video-recorded lectures into the LMS, but just 25 percent of the faculty respondents actually do. Nearly 80 percent of administrators said their faculty members regularly or occasionally used the LMS to track student attendance; the professors clocked in at 44 percent. A whopping 94 percent of administrators believed professors recorded student grades in the LMS; the actual faculty rate was 75 percent -- high, but hardly unanimous.

"Institutional administrators' perception of faculty use of LMS systems is not a good match to the reality of faculty usage," wrote I. Elaine Allen and Jeff Seaman, co-directors of the Babson Survey Research Group, in a summary of the findings. "Administrators perceive a much higher degree of faculty use of LMS systems for every dimension than faculty actually report."

At the same time, the administrators did seem to have a pretty good idea of how many professors were devoted LMS users. For example, while administrators overestimated by 22 percent the rate at which instructors use the LMS to identify struggling students, their guess about how many do so "regularly" (31 percent) was spot-on. They underestimated the percentage of instructors who upload lecture videos to the LMS by 3 percentage points, and they lowballed the percentage who were assigning e-textbooks through the LMS by 13 percentage points.



Over all, the discrepancies between administrative and faculty perceptions of LMS usage were largely

in their estimations of “occasional” usage. In many cases, the administrators’ estimates for such casual LMS usage were vastly optimistic.

The 'Always-On' Lifestyle

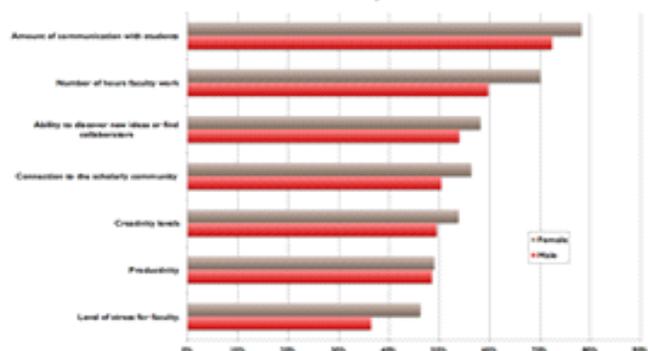
The advent of the “digital era” has not made every professor’s job more stressful, but 41 percent said it has done so for theirs. And while nearly half the faculty respondents said digital communications have made them more productive, very few said it has reduced their stress levels (16 percent) or hours on the job (19 percent).

This was particularly true of the women in the survey. Female professors were 10 percentage points more likely to report higher stress and hours worked as a result of digital communications.

Cathy Ann Trower, director of the Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education at Harvard University, says it makes sense that the ease and expectations around digital correspondence would affect the professional lives of female academics disproportionately.

“I think women often feel more compelled to be immediately responsive to students and colleagues than men do,” she wrote in an e-mail.

THE IMPACT OF DIGITAL COMMUNICATION - GENDER DIFFERENCES (PERCENT REPORTING AN INCREASE) - FACULTY



“Quite frankly, women tend to have more difficulty saying no -- and that includes demands that are now being made via technology,” added Trower. “I know that, personally, I’m getting more requests than ever (to review papers for publications, to speak, online surveys, etc.) and I think that’s in part a function of how much easier it is to reach out, quickly, to people.”

As for many working people, the intensification of the professional lives of college professors can be measured by the length of their e-mail queues. In general the faculty respondents guessed that they received between 11 and 50 work-related e-mails per day — with 33 percent receiving fewer than 26 e-mails and 34 percent getting 26 to 50. (More than 20 percent of professors said they got north

of 50 e-mails on a typical day, and an unfortunate 6 percent said their daily haul exceeded 100.)

About 37 percent of professors said they got more than 10 e-mails per day from students. (Most got fewer than 25.) Most felt the need to reply briskly: most return at least 90 percent of student e-mails within 24 hours.

Professors teaching online or “blended” courses reported getting more daily e-mails from students, but even among them it was rare to get more than 25 student e-mails per day.

In terms of discipline, the daily onslaught heralded by the digital era seems to have been most merciful to professors of the natural sciences. They reported increases in stress at a rate of 33 percent — low, especially when compared to the 47 percent of humanities and arts professors who said their lives had become more stressful. Social science professors reported similarly high levels of stress, while math and computer science professors were largely spared.

Adding insult to injury, the social science, arts and humanities professors who reported the greatest increases in stress also reported relatively low gains in productivity and creativity compared to their colleagues in other disciplines — particularly those teaching in professional and applied science programs.

Source: 24 August, 2012/ [Inside Higher Ed](#)

Student heading abroad? 3 remittance rules to know

It's that time of the year when students from India head to various parts of the world to earn that coveted international degree. In this two-part series we will look at the important things students must keep in mind as they embark on their pursuit.

First, it is important to understand the important rules laid down by the Reserve Bank of India when it comes to remitting funds abroad. We will look at these rules in this article. In the next part, we will look at the tax implications for students who are particularly headed to the US.

Let's begin with the remittance rules:

1. Fee remittance limits

Usually, the fee payable to the foreign university is required to be remitted by the student from India itself so that they can confirm the admission. And the good news is that there is no limit on the amount that can be remitted toward fees. The RBI regulation states that 'for studies abroad the estimate received from the institution abroad or \$100,000 per academic year, whichever is higher,

may be availed of.' So you can freely remit an amount of up to \$100,000 per annum from India towards the tuition fees. If your fees exceed \$ 100,000 per annum, then you need to take a letter from the foreign college giving the estimate of fees. You can remit the amount mentioned in the letter without taking permission from the Reserve Bank or any other authority.

"All you need to do is to apply at the bank where you have an account. You would need to submit an application along with form A2 and if required the admission letter mentioning fees," explains Rajesh Dhruva, a chartered accountant and Chief Executive of Femaonline.com.

Tip: While remitting the fees to the university from India would be the quickest and most cost effective option, you can also carry a demand draft towards fees while travelling.

2. Remittance for living expenses

As we saw in point 1 above, the higher of \$100,000 or total study fees is allowed to be remitted each academic year.

In addition, a student may also carry with him while travelling, an amount of \$10,000 for incidental expenses (that is, expenses other than fees) out of which \$3,000 may be carried in the form of foreign currency.

Note: A student can also remit money back to India at any point of time. You can either wire the proceeds to your bank account or parents' bank account in India or you can carry foreign exchange with you when you travel to India. While there is no limit on the amount you can carry with you, if the aggregate value (of cash, cheques, traveller's cheques) exceeds \$10,000 and/or the value of foreign currency alone exceeds \$5,000, it should be declared to the Customs Authorities at the Airport in the Currency Declaration Form (CDF), on arrival in India.

3. Receiving money from your parents and family after you fly out

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has accorded a special status for students going abroad to study. Students will now be considered Non Resident Indians under the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA) from the day he leaves India.

Dhruva explains, "Before the RBI accorded this status to students, the FEMA defined a Non Resident Indian as any person residing outside India for the purpose of employment, business or vocation. This did not include students giving rise to several problems. For instance, if a student

opened a foreign bank account, he would be in violation of FEMA. He would also not be able to open an NRE or NRO account in India. In order to ease out these problems, the RBI revised the definition. It now recognizes that since students intend to continue to remain abroad during the course of their education they should also be given the NRI status."

How does it matter? As non-residents, students will be eligible to avail of several facilities which are not available to residents. Once students go abroad, they will be eligible to receive remittances from close relatives in India of up to \$200,000 per financial year which can be used towards maintenance or for studies. This is in addition to the remittance limit for fees.

"The applicant parent may apply to his bank where he has an account for more than a year. An application in a specified form along with form A2 must be submitted. Many banks now do insist on form 15CA and 15 CB (Chartered Accountant certificate) as well. If the account is not held for at least a year, the bank may ask for copies of income tax returns of previous years," Dhruva adds.

Source: 24 August, 2012/ [Times of India](#)

Enrolment rate very high, learning abilities very low

Primary education and environmental sustainability have been two issues that have constantly made headlines. With this increased awareness about these, the investment by the government as well as the corporate sector towards them has increased manifold. Despite all this, there is still much to be desired in both the areas.

The Indian government has always stressed the need of primary education. Schemes like Mid-Day Meals, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and campaigns like School Chale Hum are proof of this. Enrolment rates in the schools have risen to an unbelievable 96%.

However, the high drop out rate of girls, especially those from the rural areas is a big threat to the achievement of the goal of universal primary education. Another major concern shown by experts is the below par standard of education in many of the government schools of the country and the lack of basic facilities in them. While Indian students have always been praised for being better than those from other countries in the three R's (reading, writing and arithmetic), the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) of 2011 released earlier this year by HRD Ministry show a shocking decline among the children in these abilities.

In terms of environment, the target includes increased access to safe drinking water and basic

sanitation. According to a World Bank estimate, around 21% of the disease burden in the country (that can be amounted to around Rs300 crore) has its roots in poor quality of drinking water. India tops the world in the practice of open defecation according to a UNICEF report. Even today, 53 per cent of Indian households do not have toilets.

Sure, a lot has been done but a lot more is still to be achieved in both education and sanitation situation of the country.

GOALS: Achieving universal primary education; ensuring environmental sustainability;

CASE STUDY 1: Under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, all children are provided with free books and other educational materials. The regional education board's resource centre was stacked with more than 1 lakh copies of the textbooks to be given away to the various schools of the district.

Six months after the school session had begun many schools claimed they had not got any of the books. Official documents, however, showed that the books had been dispatched. On enquiry, a shocking revelation surfaced.

All the books were still in the resource centre - infested by termite. Educational material worth Rs50 lakh was ruined, burning a hole into the pockets of the government as well as denying some poor children. The officials then got busy shifting the blame from their shoulders.

CASE STUDY 2: To acquaint the children from villages with modern technology, the government decided to introduce computer education in all the government-run schools. A small village in Chamorshi that has classes up to seventh standard also got some computers. These machines served purposes other than educational, too.

Some of the senior boys used the computers to watch adult content. Surprisingly, the teachers of the school knew well about it but chose to turn a blind eye to the incident. It was only after some of the parents got wind of the goings-on that action was taken against the teachers.

CASE STUDY 3: In many remote villages inhabited by the tribals, there are special hostels for children from the community in order to facilitate better educational facilities. In January this year, more than 40 students living in one such hostel had to be admitted to hospital because of food poisoning.

It was later discovered that the room used for storing and preparing the food for the inmates of the hostel was not suited for these functions. The

grains that were supposed to be nutritious were full of insects, their eggs and stools.

When enquired about the incident and the unsavoury condition of the kitchen, the school officials said that since they were located in a remote place, the government preferred to send them the grains required in a bulk that makes it difficult for them to store it properly.

QUOTE SHOOT

Even before the MDG's were conceived India was thinking about universal primary education. It is sad, though, that it took so long for something like RTE to come along. Even though the bill was passed by the Parliament, even now the implementation of the act looks iffy. Despite all kinds of schemes, only 45% children in the villages get formal education. Not many villagers are aware of the existence of a village education committee for monitoring the schools within their jurisdiction.

Today, people have realized the importance of good education and actually want it. Still, they are put-off by the absence of quality education, rickety infrastructure and wide spread corruption. With most of the educational institutions being run by politicians, there is no transparency or accountability in their administration, which also discourages people.

Even at the national level, not much has been achieved in terms of education. Whatever little changes can be seen are because of the private institutions, with no contribution towards any improvement from the government's side.

The enrolment has definitely improved a lot over the years. But as the horror tales of the many loopholes in seemingly successful schemes like midday meals surface, the enrolment is being affected too. Even the attendance that is shown to be very high in most schools is a myth, with the reality being very different.

In the rural areas, children are looked upon as earning members of the family. Only 7-10% of the students from the village ever opt for a higher education, with the number of girls being very little.

The government is making constant efforts to improve the state of education, whether it is in terms of infrastructure or utilizing new technology to raise the standards of education.

Things have improved over the last few years even in the government-run schools. Several new schools with better classrooms and other facilities have been made recently. Schemes like Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan have been especially well received. Things

are changing fast, and the deficiencies that still remain will soon be ironed out, too.

Source: 24 August, 2012/ [Times of India](#)

Transparency for a Change in Higher Education

Indian higher education system has expanded at a break-neck speed. Nearly 20,000 colleges were added between 2000-01 and 2010-11 and the number of students enrolled doubled from nearly 8.4 million to 17 million in this decade, according to the University Grants Commission (UGC).

However, this much needed expansion came at the expense of quality. The number of seats remaining vacant in some disciplines like engineering, underemployment and unemployment among educated youth and incessant desire to collect more degrees for advancing career are some of the indicators of the inadequate quality of education imparted. In addition, we continue to hear cases of malpractices and corruption among regulators and institutions in compromising standards.

Minister Kapil Sibal has attempted to bring a change by proposing a dozen legislative bills including The Higher Education and Research Bill, 2011 and The Prohibition of Unfair Practices in Educational Institutions, 2010. Unfortunately, most are still far from seeing the light of the day. Even if they get enacted, I do not see major qualitative changes in Indian higher education. The reason is that they are still not addressing the fundamental weakness of the system—lack of transparency.

The policy reform directions are seriously limited by its political approach of using control as the way of assuring quality rather than using transparency for empowering students and fostering competition.

One specific recommendation to achieve goals of transparency is to mandate high standards of data disclosures by institutions on institutional performance and feed this data to an easy-to-use national database for students to make informed choice.

Let us consider the case of regulation in the financial system. How is transparency ensured in publicly traded companies? It is through mandatory and easily available audited financial reports coupled with the oversight by the regulator—Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI).

In contrast, there is no availability of parallel information of institutional performance for higher education institutions. This results in all sorts of academic, financial, regulatory and marketing malpractices.

Transparency through data reporting and information sharing is an important policy-tool enforced by the U.S. Department of Education where the National Center for Education Statistics collects, collates, analyzes, and reports on American education. It uses this mandatory data reported by institutions for a free website—College Navigator—to assist students in searching and comparing colleges on various parameters.

Currently, AICTE has the mandatory disclosure requirement, however, it has serious limitations in terms of the kind of information collected and the way it is presented. It is very hard to compare information across several institutions and students cannot use it for informed decision-making.

Imagine a scenario where anyone can see information online about all the approved higher education institutions and the programs available to students with their detailed performance indicators. This information would be invaluable for students in deciding which programs to pursue and thus creating a state of enhanced competition among institutions. In addition, policy-makers and researchers will have access to rich-data for further improving system. Indian higher education is in desperate need of reform. The political approach of using control as the way of assuring quality should give way to information-based approach to enable transparency and accountability in the system.

Source: 31 August, 2012/ [Economic Times](#)

Spend more on education in India

Take teaching beyond chalk and board, says Stanford scholar

Indian policy makers need to spend more on education, especially mass education, and create an education model of their own instead of taking concepts from the West, said Rafiq Dossani, senior research scholar at Stanford University at a lecture organised by the All India Management Association (AIMA) on Friday.

Dossani is also founder of online academic management platform 'College Builder' and has co-authored a book on higher education in BRIC countries.

“The US spends a bulk of its public funds in three- and two-tier institutes, such as community colleges, which see the maximum state funding. But in India, the focus is only on elite institutes that don't even amount to more than 5 per cent,” said Dossani.

“The highest number of recruitments in Silicon Valley takes place from San Jose State University,

which is not even in the top 50 listed universities," he said.

Comparing per student spending in engineering colleges in India, China and the US, Dossani said the Indian Institute of Technology spends \$8,000 per student, Beijing University spends \$48,000 per student and Massachusetts Institute of Technology spends \$2,16,000 per student.

Dossani said the amount of money given for higher education in Indian universities has seen a drastic drop in the last 10 years.

"In research and development (R&D) in IITs, the spending is stagnant and is at the bottom of the BRIC chart. The per student spending is about \$1,000 in R&D in these institutes," he said.

"Teaching is also limited to chalk and walk method. I saw that students are hungry for fieldwork and projects, but all they get are lectures. That is because of shortage of money; practical work needs laboratories and infrastructure," added Dossani.

The concept of giving curriculum and other academic decisions to the management and trustees instead of the faculty is another reason leading to problems in higher education.

"In Indian universities, the vice chancellor, dean and registrar have the responsibility for everything from recruitments to admissions. The head of department (HoD) only takes instructions. In the US, HoDs decide curriculum, faculty promotion, accreditation and finance," he said, adding that a student development committee is responsible for admissions there.

Dossani said some projects introduced under 'cluster innovation centres' of Delhi University and more such programmes across the country can only work at the faculty level.

"Innovation will work only if the faculty has enough research work done. The best researchers as faculties should be appointed in these centres," he said.

Source: 31 August, 2012/ [Deccan Herald](#)

RESOURCE

12th Panel's plan: 25 million jobs by 2017

The UPA government is looking at creating 25 million new jobs and two million additional seats in higher education in the 12th plan (2012-17) to leverage India's demographic dividend. Creating more jobs is key to foster economic growth of 8.5 % to 9 % in 12th plan as India's working

population (15-64 age group) is expected to increase from 781 million in 2010 to 916 million in 2020. The 2011 census also stated that India has youngest population among big economies with half of country's people being younger than 25 years in 2010 as compared to 35 years for China and 45 for United States.

Planning Commission deputy chairperson Montek Singh Ahluwalia has set this ambitious target of 25 million new jobs outside agriculture for the 12th plan likely to be finalized by early September at a meeting chaired by PM Singh.

"It (creating 25 million jobs) is not a difficult task," said Dr TS Papola, former director of Institute for Studies in Industrial Development and member of a plan panel's working group on employment. For that, he said, the government will have to focus on growth in service and manufacturing sectors as employment in agriculture was falling. "We have ability to create 8-10 million jobs every year".

THE ROAD AHEAD

- Panel dy chairperson Montek Singh Ahluwalia has set an ambitious target of 25 million new jobs outside agriculture for the 12th Plan
- Panel believes the key to creating new jobs lies in "substantial" improvement and expansion of higher education reach
- Consequently, it is looking at two million additional seats in high-er education
- Creating new jobs is key to fostering economic growth of 8.5% to 9% in the 12th Plan

The plan panel believes that the key for creating new jobs would be "substantial" improvement and expansion in higher education. "We are looking at addition of two million additional seats in higher education, double of what was achieved in the 11th (2007-12) plan," a senior panel functionary told HT, adding that there would be financial incentive for colleges and universities meet quality parameters.

The panel also wants to provide different skill training to 80 million youth in the 12th plan under the framework of the proposed National Skill Development

Authority. Dilip Chenoy, managing director of National Skill Development Corporation said collaboration with private sector on training to employed and unemployed youth has started in several states including Gujarat, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. "It is work in progress in five key sectors," he said.

The 12th plan once approved by PM headed Planning Commission in September would be discussed with chief ministers at the National Development Council meeting slated for this October.

Source: 15 August, 2012/[Hindustan Times](#)

Nine of ten, unemployable

No movement yet on quality control in higher education

The state of professional higher education in India is abysmal. Consider engineering. All told, there are 1.5 million engineering seats in the country. Almost a third of these are unfilled, so about a million engineers are produced every year. Yet, barely 10 per cent of them are readily employable. About a quarter don't know enough English to make sense of the curriculum. The tab for this monumental inefficiency is picked up by the companies that draw from this pool. Every year, they end up spending thousands of crores of rupees to retrain the fresh graduates and make them job-worthy. The situation is no better in business schools. Unlike engineering colleges, the rot has not been measured here. But it can't be vastly different. People are, naturally, disillusioned: the number of students who appear in the entrance examinations for business schools has fallen steadily for three years. There are as many as 300,000 seats on offer; about one-third of this capacity is vacant. As a result, close to a hundred business schools have shut down in the last couple of years. More are bound to follow.

All engineering colleges and stand-alone business schools are regulated by the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE). Business schools under universities are regulated by the University Grants Commission (UGC). The AICTE has thus far focused exclusively on fattening the supply pipe of engineers and MBAs. The logic is that India's higher-education enrolment ratio is very low compared to other emerging countries; to improve that, the AICTE has been liberal with approvals. This strategy is turning counterproductive. The AICTE should now focus on the quality of education imparted.

Employers complain that the output of engineers and MBAs is poor because the teaching faculty is weak. Engineering colleges and business schools, in turn, say that's because the salaries are regulated by the AICTE, which keeps them from hiring good teachers. While the norms for engineering colleges are fairly stringent (not less than 2.5 acres of land, at least one acre of land for every 300 students, working capital of at least Rs 1 crore and a student-teacher ratio of not more than

15), those for business schools are lax: 20,000 square feet of built-up area, seven faculty members, 20 computers, 2,000 books in the library and subscription to 30 journals. The lack of entry barriers has caused the glut and the consequent fall in quality. These are issues that the AICTE needs to address urgently.

The crucial reform this sector needs is more effective legislation. Legislative initiatives like the Higher Education and Research Bill, 2011, which seeks to replace the AICTE and the UGC with a commission responsible for ensuring quality, and the National Accreditation Regulatory Authority for Higher Educational Institutions Bill, 2010, which will make it mandatory for all institutes of higher education to be accredited by an independent agency, have not made much headway. Unfortunately, in another craven surrender to its allies, the government reportedly withdrew the latter Bill – two years after its introduction – on Tuesday, because the Trinamool Congress had objections. Surely these objections were not new? If so, why has the human resource development ministry waited for so long to review the Bill? Such lack of seriousness in reform will only worsen the sector's crisis.

Source: 15 August, 2012/[Business Standard](#)

Education and employability - a paradox?

This is a tale of two surveys which came out recently. One was by Google India, on education-related queries on Google Search. The other was a study conducted by [MeritTrac-MBAUniverse.com](#). MeritTrac is a testing and assessment company, and MBAUniverse.com is a portal for B-school aspirants. Their study focused on the employability of MBA graduates of more than 100 B-schools in 29 cities, excluding the top 25 schools.

According to the Google India survey, titled "Students on the Web", India occupies the second spot globally in terms of the volume of education-related queries on Google Search. It ranked eighth in 2008, and is now behind only the US.

The study combined Google Search query patterns and an offline research conducted by TNS Australia for Google India. It revealed that more than 60 per cent of Indian students with Internet access use Google as their first source to research courses and institutes.

[Rajan Anandan](#), Vice President and Managing Director of Google India, said in a statement: "Our core objective behind compiling this study was to understand the impact the Internet is having on this young population with regard to education-related decision making by students. With more and more

users getting online every day, the Internet today is the biggest catchment area for youth and we hope this study will help advertisers realise the potential of the digital medium."

The Google survey may indicate the rise in aspiration among the youth for higher education. But there seems to be a clear message to the advertisers too.

"This is clearly a business generation activity," says Paritosh Sharma, a new media expert and Head, Marketing Innovation, Messaging, for Bharti SoftBank, a mobile Internet company. "Advertisers from the education sector will want to increase their media spend on Google. This is an intelligent way of marketing yourself. It is a sales and marketing pitch with logical numbers but it is alright."

The study by MeritTrac-MBAUniverse suggests that [the quality of education at many Indian B-school](#) falls short of recruiters' standards. The survey, which looked at the marks secured by 2,264 MBAs who sat for tests administered by recruiting companies, found that only [21 per cent made the grade](#). A 2007 study by MeritTrac had put the employability index at 25 per cent.

Should we take these surveys at face value?

"They (MeritTrac) haven't mentioned what level B-schools they have selected as the sample," says Himanshu Rai, faculty member at IIM-Lucknow. "They seem to have put all of them in a single pool. What if they have picked the bottom hundred?"

But education experts have little doubt that there are serious gaps in our education system. "There is a lack of quality among many B-schools in India because of the propensity to commercialise," says Sridhar Rajagopalan, Founder and Managing Director of Educational Initiatives, a research company. "There is a huge gap between employability and the demand."

Most searched institutes in India (Google Search from January through June, 2012 - desktop and mobile)

Source: 17 August, 2012/[Business Today](#)

Higher education poised for huge growth: E&Y & IMC 2012

In the next eight years, around 50 crore of the population will be under the age of 20. This will throw open huge scope for the higher education market to flourish.

An academic revolution has taken place in India's higher education space, particularly in the past two decades, marked by a paradigm shift in scope and

opportunity. Indian higher education system is the largest in the world in terms of numbers of institutes. According to a latest report, co-authored by Bharat Gulia, senior manager, Ernst & Young (E&Y), the number of institutes offering higher education in India is 44,668. Of that, 33,668 offer various degrees and the rest offers diplomas. The total number of institutes in China is 4,192, while in the US, the number is 6,500.

The study, presented at the Indian Management Conclave 2012, deliberated upon three broad aspects: current scenario, key trends shaping the future and implications for higher education players.

Continued growth: The growth has not witnessed any abatement so far as the number of institutes is concerned. Says the E&Y report, the numbers of colleges, institutions awarding diploma and institutes awarding degree stood at 23,264, 6,500 and 408, respectively, during 2007-08. In the previous financial year, the numbers were 33,023, 11,000 and 645, respectively. So, in the last four years, the number of educational institutions grew almost 50 per cent.

The number of students pursuing higher education is also on the rise. In 2007-08, 1.36 crore students enrolled themselves in regular courses, while the number of students in various distance learning courses stood at 36 lakh. The numbers swelled to 2 crore and 42 lakh, respectively, for 2011-12.

Though comparatively lower than developed countries, India's gross enrolment ratio (GER) has been witnessing a rise. In the previous fiscal, it was 17. In the US, GER stands at around 75-80.

Challenges: The higher education sector is facing a number of challenges other than improving GER. The E&Y report has categorized them in two broad sections: input parameters and output parameters. Shortage of faculty, poor infrastructure and limited scope for research form input challenges, while output parameters include low employability of students, poor performance in international ratings and poor research output.

Growth driver: Notwithstanding these hindrances, India, with its huge population, is the most exciting higher education market in the world. In the next eight years, around 50 crore of the population will be under the age of 20. This will throw open ample scope for the higher education market to flourish. This potential customer base will be more than the combined figures of China, the US and the UK. A number of global education providers are keen on entering India. Some new laws will pave way for their smooth entry.

Trends in higher education: According to the report, three major trends are impacting the higher

education scene in India. These are: privatization, consolidation and vocationalisation.

Privatisation: The private sector is actively involved in the education space. With the growing number of institutes, the role will become more poignant in days to come. In 2007-08, the number of aided institutes granting degree was 328, while number of private ones stood at 80. In 2011-12, the numbers grew to 454 and 191, respectively. The number of aided colleges in 2007-08 stood at 9,558 while there were 13,706 private colleges. In the next four years, the numbers grew to 13,093 and 19,930, respectively.

While privatization will bring greater co-operation among stakeholders and professionalism, there will be, no doubt, an enhancement of scale. However, students will have to cope with higher fees.

Consolidation: Consolidation is already in vogue in management education. A number of institutes have closed down shutters as they could no longer confront various challenges. The message is clear – only the fittest and the strongest will survive in competitive environment. So, there is need for clear positioning. Consolidation will ensure high quality and low cost in an expanded network.

Vocationalisation: Vocational courses became popular with increasing focus on specialization. A huge number of vocational institutes have come up in the last decade. The prime implication of these courses is making students ready for jobs. So, job readiness is absolutely critical. The other two prime features of vocational courses are better connection with the industry and focus on imparting and measuring skills.

Source: 18 August, 2012/MBA Universe

Socio-economic status of Indian, Chinese students going abroad differs, says study

Patterns of employment status and financial independence of parents different between Chinese, Indian respondents

Financial resources of prospective students are one of the major driving forces of outward mobility from China and India though the U.S.-bound student populations of the two largest Asian countries appear to differ significantly by socio-economic background.

A study shows that while 60 per cent of Chinese students had adequate financial resources to afford overseas education, the percentage of Indian respondents was only 27.

“The higher socio-economic status of Chinese applicants is also manifested in their previous overseas exposure: one out of four Chinese applying to schools in the U.S had lived, studied or worked

abroad prior to their application. By contrast, only one out of 10 Indian respondents had previously spent time overseas. Patterns of employment status and financial independence of parents were also different between Chinese and Indian respondents,” the survey titled ‘Not all International Students are the Same: understanding segments, mapping behaviour,’ brought out by education portal World Education Services said.

Besides maintaining a relevant and interactive social media presence, higher educational institutions need to find the most appropriate platforms for reaching out to target student segments.

The survey found that only 22 per cent of Chinese social media users log in to U.S.-based social media platforms (Facebook and Twitter) on a daily or weekly basis, against 88 per cent of Indian students.

At the same time, 80 per cent of Chinese social media users check their accounts on Chinese platforms on a daily or weekly basis, while only 24 per cent of Indian respondents do so.

Online survey

The report presents insights from an online survey of nearly 1,600 prospective students from 115 countries. The study design was to ascertain how U.S.-bound international students differ in terms of their academic preparedness and financial resources and what information do international applicants need when researching colleges and universities as also what channels they use to get the information they need, among other things.

With more than 7,00,000 Chinese and Indian students enrolled in higher education institutions abroad, one in three of every globally mobile student is from these two countries.

China surpassed India as the leading source country for the U.S. in 2009-2010, while witnessing massive growth at the undergraduate level. India is projected to experience similar patterns from 2015 onwards.

Information needs

Differences in socio-economic status between Chinese and Indian applicants result in different priorities regarding information needs. Obtaining information about tuition and living costs, as well as financial aid opportunities was very important for respondents from India with 46 per cent selecting “tuition and living costs” and 38 per cent selecting “financial aid opportunity” among their top three information needs.

Financial issues are clearly not as important for respondents from China as only 22 per cent ranking

information on tuition and availability of financial needs.

Attending a U.S. college or university is seen by both Chinese and Indian applicants as an investment for future high-paying jobs. This is reflected in their interest in information about career prospects after graduation – about half of Chinese (55 per cent) and Indian (46 per cent) respondents selected career prospects among their top information needs.

“If American higher education institutions wish to maximise the effectiveness of their outreach to applicants from China or India, they should highlight the aspects of their programs that enhance their graduates career prospects,” the report recommends.

Information on programme content and course offerings also ranked highly among the top three information needs of both Chinese and Indian respondents (46 and 45 per cent respectively).

Higher educational institutional appeal to applicants from these countries by highlighting unique course offerings and making information on programme content more pertinent on website, the report suggests.

Source: 29 August, 2012/[The Hindu](#)

Shortage of educated workers boosts U.S. unemployment, study shows

Seattle-area jobs on average have higher educational requirements than most other cities, but local workers are better educated, too.

Mismatches in supply and demand for educated workers boost U.S. unemployment and add as much as 2 percentage points to the jobless rates for some cities, according to the Brookings Institution.

Cities with larger gaps in education levels between workers and available positions have lower rates of job creation and new openings, the institution's Jonathan Rothwell said in a report published Wednesday. San Francisco, Washington, D.C., and San Jose, Calif., have the most demand for college graduates, according to the report.

"It's harder for employers to fill open positions if they're in metro areas with a low-educated workforce," Rothwell said. "There are very few job openings available for workers with less education. We need to create more openings for middle-to-lower educated workers."

Jobs in the 100 largest metropolitan areas require more education than the workforce can provide, according to the analysis of online employment

postings, occupations and educational attainment from January 2006 to February 2012.

A bachelor's degree or more is required for 43 percent of jobs, while 32 percent of adults ages 25 and older have attained that education level, according to Rothwell, a senior research associate at Washington-based Brookings.

The Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue area had the nation's fifth-highest education demand for workers, according to the study. Job openings here required an average of 14.7 years of education, and 48.6 percent of all vacancies required a bachelor's degree or higher.

But metro Seattle also has one of the most educated workforces in the country, the study found: The average person 25 or older has 14.1 years of education, and 37 percent of the 25-and-older population has at least a bachelor's degree.

As a result, the region's "education gap" -- the amount by which the average education demanded by employers exceeded the average educational level of the population -- was just 4.7 percent, in the middle of the pack among metro areas studied.

"Metro areas with the most highly educated workers relative to demand also have the lowest unemployment rates for both less educated and less experienced workers," Rothwell wrote. "Opportunities for those with the least education are often in the metro area labor markets with the most education."

Pittsburgh has the most recession-resilient labor market, based on education gap, house price trends and industry growth, according to the study. Its greatest strength is in housing prices, which rose 7.3 percent since 2006, even as prices dropped by 15 percent in the average large metro area, the study said.

The California metro areas of Sacramento, Riverside, Bakersfield, Stockton, Fresno and Modesto accounted for six of the 10 least resilient metro areas in the nation. The Miami-Fort Lauderdale-Pompano Beach region was least resilient.

Education gaps pose a "longer-run challenge for many regional labor markets" because they account for about two-thirds of the variation in the level of unemployment across metro areas, Rothwell wrote.

San Jose, located in Silicon Valley, home of many of the world's largest technology companies, had the highest level of demand for highly educated workers, according to the study. Some 56 percent of openings required at least a bachelor's degree in the area, while only 36 percent of existing positions required such credentials, the study showed.

Fewer than one-third of openings in cities such as Cape Coral, Fla., and Youngstown, Ohio, required a bachelor's degree, highlighting the variation among the largest cities.

Occupations that had high demand for workers were also the ones that sought employees with more education, Rothwell said. Computer jobs, in which 63 percent of workers have at least a bachelor's degree, were the most heavily advertised online, followed by health practitioners, a profession in which 71 percent have that level of education, the analysis showed.

Higher education also benefits cities by making workers more employable and entrepreneurial, leading to more job openings for less-educated workers as new businesses hire, the report said.

"Given that more than half of new jobs typically come from establishments started within five years, the lack of openings implies a need for more entrepreneurship," Rothwell wrote.

The study sheds additional light on a debate among Federal Reserve policymakers over the causes of unemployment stuck above 8 percent for more than three years. The debate centers on whether the jobless rate is high because of a lagging economic recovery, which can be influenced by monetary policy, or because of a mismatch between worker skills and the needs of employers, a structural problem the Fed can't solve.

While unemployment rates are elevated mostly because of the declines in home prices and consumer spending caused by the longest and deepest recession since the Great Depression, education gaps explain most of the unemployment in cities that's considered structural, the Brookings report said.

"Unemployment rates are unlikely to come down to their pre-recession levels" without improvement in housing and consumer spending, Rothwell wrote. "High educational attainment is essential for the health of metropolitan labor markets before, during, and after recessions. Educational attainment makes workers more employable, creates demand for complementary less-educated workers, and facilitates entrepreneurship."

Pittsburgh's economy got a boost because it's home to a concentration of jobs in health care and education, which were the only major industries with consistent growth throughout the recession and recovery, the report said. The Pennsylvania city, once the U.S. steel industry's capital, has a 7.3 percent unemployment rate, a percentage point below the U.S. rate, according to Labor Department data.

Job growth in Oklahoma City, which has the lowest unemployment rate of any large U.S. city, got a boost from hiring by mining, oil, and gas companies as energy was one of the few sectors to fully recover to pre-recession employment levels. Oklahoma's capital had a 5 percent jobless rate in June, according to the Labor Department.

About two-thirds of the nation's population lives in the 100 largest metro areas, according to Rothwell.

Source: 29 August, 2012/[Seattle Times](#)

Contribute

If you are an academician, a researcher, an investigator or a thinker then, Apeejay Stya Education Research Foundation invites you to send your inputs by way of your opinion, information, suggestions and experiences in the field of education.

Researchers are also invited to send in their published documents so that they can be hosted on this site.

Please email your contributions to aserf@apeejay.edu

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