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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.

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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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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](#)



ASPECT**Is the future of education leaving India in the dust?**

The digital revolution in education is coming at a most opportune time for India. Leadership in this is something India could seize, if only it had the vision, feels Rajeev Srinivasan.

There is no doubt that major research universities have a role in the creation of new ideas, and that this can lead to a growth in economic activity. The role played by Stanford and UC Berkeley in the creation and sustenance of Silicon Valley is too obvious to belabor (the latest example is the \$1 billion purchase of Instagram, founded by two young Stanford graduates, by Facebook). Similarly, Boston's Route 128 was sustained by MIT and Harvard. There are other examples as well.

It is likely that there are three aspects to the appeal of educating oneself at a great research university - the knowledge, the branding/certification, and the social networks. That is, one goes to a great university to:

- learn the stuff that the sages there, one presumes, know,
- to get a piece of parchment with the brand of the university that implies quality control and thus gives an indication of your capability, and
- to make friends and acquaintances and a network that will be a lifelong asset.

What if you are able to, in effect, unbundle the university? What if you offer only (a), or (a) + (b)? Can you make up the lack of (c) through other means? This intriguing question is part of what constitutes perhaps the greatest revolution in education since the time the first great physical, brick-and-mortar universities were invented, such as Nalanda in ancient Bihar.

Part of the attraction of a university has always been the possibility for making connections in serendipitous ways. Indeed, there is a case to be made that it is inter-disciplinary work that leads to the great scientific breakthroughs: If you are a physicist, it does you a world of good to be challenged by a biologist or a metallurgist, for instance, so that you do not fall prey to groupthink in your obscure specialty.

A recent book on storied Bell Labs (The Idea Factory: Bell Labs and the Great Age of American Innovation by Jon Gernter, excerpted in the New York Times) which was, in its heyday, the most important research lab in the world -- suggests

that its quasi-academic, multi-disciplinary nature was not accidental, but carefully designed.

The very long corridors of Bell Lab's flagship Murray Hill, NJ facility were deliberately designed to increase the chances that you would run into a colleague while wandering over to the cafeteria for lunch.

It is this sort of 'water-cooler' interaction that led to legendary Bell Labs breakthroughs such as the transistor, the laser, the charge-couple device and Unix, all of which essentially created vast new industries. In many ways, the other fabled lab of the 20th century -- Xerox's Palo Alto Research Centre -- which invented the mouse, the graphical user interface, the local area network, and laser printing -- was similar.

So let us assume (c) is important, but what if we were to drop it from the equation? Will there be advantages from the escape from the tyranny of geography, or of proximity? Is it possible to make distance education world-class, and can one reach out to not hundreds or thousands, but millions and billions of students? This is precisely the question that is now being raised by several intriguing institutions.

Now distance education is not new, and it has never been considered particularly effective: I have observed how, even with high-bandwidth two-way video and competent television-camera operators, it is still an unsatisfactory experience merely to be simulcasting between, say, Bangalore and Chennai.

The instructor and the students are both left with a feeling of incompleteness in this action at a distance. And most educationists and employers do not consider open university programmes or distance-education programmes to be on par with the, as it were, real thing.

But what the folks at Udacity, MITx, Khan Academy and Minerva are attempting to do is to use technology to bring university-level education to anybody who has a broadband connection, regardless of where they physically are in the world. I listened to an intriguing extended conversation with representatives of all the above.

MIT (The Massachusetts Institute of Technology) started going down this path some years ago with its Open CourseWare (OCW) project which did something startling at the time: it put the course syllabi and curricula as well as presentation material on the web for free download. Admittedly, you were not going to get the equivalent of an MIT education merely by sitting at home and studying OCW material, which is rather sparse. An obvious lacuna was the absence of any certification or diploma.

But it turns out that many educationists believe that the widespread availability of high-bandwidth connections makes the system ripe for a little old-fashioned disruption. The best example of the rise of the distributed campus is the Khan Academy, pioneered by Bangladeshi-American Salman Khan. The trove of videos at <http://khanacademy.org> focuses mostly on school-level material, but the material is popular with people all over the world. So we have ways of providing (a).

MITx, according to its director Anant Agarwal, a professor of computer science and electrical engineering at the school, is adding (b) to the mix. MITx offers people the ability to take classes remotely, and be administered tests and to gain MIT certification as well. Thus, one could, theoretically at least, gain a quasi-full-fledged MIT degree, as it were, in the mail.

Udacity goes one step further. It is a startup created by Sebastian Thrun, formerly a tenured professor of computer science at Stanford, and also a vice-president at Google. Thrun taught a class in artificial intelligence at Stanford to 200 students; as an experiment he opened it out on the web. Roughly 150,000 students signed up from some 40 countries, of which over 20,000 successfully completed the course and got Stanford certificates.

This experiment convinced Thrun that this sort of massive online programme was feasible, hence Udacity. At the moment, they are offering a bunch of computer science courses, as they are perhaps easiest to do online. They intend to offer certifications from Stanford.

The Minerva Project is the newest addition. It is an online-only, 'elite' university concept floated by a former Silicon Valley CEO, Ben Nelson; it has raised some \$25 million in venture capital and intends to compete with the top universities in the US by offering high-end programmes.

In an interview with the San Jose Mercury News Nelson explained his vision: to provide first-rate education comparable to that which is available from the best universities in the world.

Nelson is not competing with the free online content available; he plans to start in 2014 with courses in the humanities, computer science, social science, and business -- obviously subjects in which physical manipulation of objects (as in, say engineering or the physical sciences) is not necessary.

Will these attempts dislodge the traditional university? Perhaps not; but surely they can act as complementary sources of education. (C), that is, the ability to form serendipitous associations, is

surely important, although much can be done online through alumni social groups.

The fact is that the process of admissions has become corrupted over time. As the Minerva Project implies on its Web site, many American universities now give undue credit in their application process to 'lineage, athletic ability, state or country of origin, or capacity to donate'. Minerva implies that it can start with a clean slate, with the only criterion being academic ability.

What is tragic is that nobody in India seems to be aware of these disruptive innovations in the education market. There is clearly a huge hunger for education (although a cynic might say the hunger is only for the degree) -- so much so that youngsters brave racism and physical violence to go to places like the US and Australia (where there was an epidemic of assaults on Indian students in the last year or two).

This is a huge economic loss as well. It is believed that foreign students bring in more than \$10 billion into the Australian economy every year: Nothing to be sneezed at.

India was from time immemorial the center of education in Asia. Students flocked to its Nalandas and Takshasilas from all over. Even today, despite the paucity of research universities, the faculty in India are talented enough to appeal to foreign students. So why isn't India jumping on the move to digital universities? After all, the biggest problem with Indian universities today is the lack of facilities -- if that can be removed at one stroke, why wouldn't that appeal to foreign students?

But more importantly, what about Indian students? Should the nation be spending large amounts of money on new campuses that will soon be obsolete eyesores in ten years? (We all know that maintenance and upkeep of buildings is not one of the strengths of the Indian public sector.) In fact, this building boom in universities is merely a belated, half-hearted response to China's \$100 billion spending to create 100 top universities. The Chinese, as usual, are going about it methodically, but the Indian government is simply throwing money at hare-brained ideas.

It is widely believed that Indians are good at software; in that case, if there is investment in broadband access (possibly on mobile devices) following the Khan, Udacity and Minerva model might mean that Indian students in remote places can get the best of education. In fact, there had been some half-hearted efforts to create course material at major universities and put them online; I have no idea what happened.

On second thoughts, perhaps it is just as well that the Indian efforts at online education have flopped. Maybe that way we will be spared yet another embarrassment along the lines of: a. the \$10 computer (which turned out to be a thumb-drive), b. the \$35 tablet (which turned out to be unusable).

On the other hand, if enlightened private sector philanthropists were to create online universities, maybe we finally will get, among other things, a world-class Institute of the Humanities -- a crying need in India, as the country does not produce geographers, historians, and other specialists the country needs to understand the complexities of a globalised world.

In an era where manufacturing may return to the West because of a third industrial revolution based on technologies like 3-D printing (see the Economist magazine of April 21st), it would be criminal if India were to fumble.

This time, the basis of competitive advantage will be software and intellectual property, not brick and mortar factories and assembly lines, and so the digital revolution in education is coming at a most opportune time for India.

Leadership in this is something India could seize, if only it had the vision.

Source: May 16, 2012/Rediff.com

NEWS

Microsoft offers cloud-based service to schools in India

School in Delhi and Mumbai partner with Microsoft for cloud based service Microsoft Live@Edu, which provides them access to Microsoft's software and web applications.

After tying up with the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) for a mammoth deployment of its cloud based service Microsoft Live@Edu in around 10,000 colleges and institutes last month, Microsoft has now partnered with Indian schools like Delhi Public School, Mathura Road and KR Mangalam school in New Delhi and the American School of Bombay for the service.

Microsoft Live@Edu is a collaborative tool for students, faculty and alumni, that gives them access to Microsoft's Office Outlook Live for emails, Microsoft Office Live workspace for documents, the Windows Live Messenger for instant messaging, and Windows Live SkyDrive for an online storage space of 25 GB. "Microsoft Live@Edu enables school students to access a mailing platform from as early as class 2, " says Tarun Malik, Director, Marketing at Microsoft India. "It also allows them

to access some of the most prominent software and web based applications like Power Point, and Excel for writing reports and analyzing data, which would make them future ready for all sorts of workplaces. Microsoft Office Outlook can create diverse user groups for students, faculty, parents and alumni, and can enable all of them to stay in touch with each other for life," he adds.

"The cost of deploying a school wide messaging solution, which would cover over 5,017 students, 220 teachers, and 52 administrators would not have been feasible because of the sheer cost of acquisition and maintenance. Microsoft Live@Edu brings the school at par with global institutions at no extra cost," M.I.Hussain, Principal of Delhi Public School Mathura Road said in a statement.

Microsoft had tied up with the All India Council of Technical Education last month for deploying the cloud based service in around 10,000 technical institutes and colleges. Over 7.5 million students, faculty and staff would have got access to the service with the tie up. "The tie up with AICTE was the largest in the world, and this service has the potential to create a substantial number of educational reforms for the students," says Malik.

Source: May 18, 2012/Times on India

Power bodies struggle to fill technical posts

For a state that has about 150 engineering colleges with nearly 40,000 seats, Punjab's two power corporations are finding it hard to recruit 700-odd engineers due to lack of quality candidates. Of the 608 technical posts advertised, the Punjab State Power Corporation Limited (PSPCL) has managed to fill only 73, underlining the poor standard of technical education in the state that produces about 30,000 engineers every year.

In all, around 27,000 candidates appeared in the written test, of which only 403 achieved the qualification cut-off of 50% marks. Overall, about 300 were recruited against 1,450 technical and non-technical posts.

"We have re-advertised the posts as we managed to fill only 30% of them. We have not changed the selection criterion because we don't want to pick below-par candidates," said HS Seth, director, human resources, PSPCL.

No candidate was selected for posts such as junior engineer (civil), safety officer and supervisor, instrumentation. For these posts, diploma in electrical engineering was the prerequisite. For the posts of assistant engineer (AE), for which bachelor of engineering was the minimum qualification, only three candidates were shortlisted against 290 posts.

Only one candidate was shortlisted against 13 posts of assistant engineer (civil).

The Punjab State Transmission Corporation Limited (PSTCL) has managed to fill only 13% of the advertised posts. For 117 posts of AE (electrical), only 15 cleared the written test.

"We have re-advertised the posts and are hoping to get suitable candidates. This time, we have made final-year students eligible for the tests," said KD Chaudhry, PSPCL chairman-cum-managing director.

Pardeep Sharma, a private job consultant, said Punjab produced thousands of engineers every year, but the standard of education was poor. Most of the best students are selected by private companies on hefty packages during campus placements. It's mostly mediocre candidates who apply for government jobs."

Commenting on the issue, Punjab technical education minister Anil Joshi said, "Most of the private engineering colleges are out to make money. They are not bothered about quality education. We will look into the matter and suggest remedial measures."

Despite repeated attempts, Dr Rajneesh Arora, vice-chancellor, Punjab Technical University, the institution governing technical education in the state, could not be contacted.

Source: May 18, 2012/[Hindustan Times](#)

AICTE gets closure requests from around 150 tech institutes

The government today said All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) has received applications from around 150 technical institutions, requesting permission for closure citing various reasons.

"According to information given by AICTE, some technical institutions have submitted applications for closure due to various reasons, including poor admission," Minister of State in HRD ministry E Ahamed told Rajya Sabha in reply to a question.

Fifty-six such applications had been received from Andhra Pradesh, 18 from Rajasthan, 17 from Uttar Pradesh, 13 from Gujarat, seven from Maharashtra, six each from Punjab and Haryana, five each from Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka, four from Chhattisgarh, two each from West Bengal and Tamil Nadu, and one each from Uttarakhand and Bihar, he said.

Source: May 18, 2012/[Business Standard](#)

CBSE course on retail

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has developed a new vocational course on retail. Vishakha Sharma reports.

The scope of the retail market in India is vast. And for it to reach its full potential, the government and Indian retailers are making a concerted effort. In this direction, Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) is planning to introduce a retail course under the vocational stream at the senior secondary level from the academic session 2012-13.

The board will offer the retail course in class XI on a pilot basis. Schools opting to offer this course will be required to develop the infrastructure (normal classroom for theory and retail lab for role-plays) and train the faculty. According to Biswajit Saha, programme officer, vocational, CBSE, the Indian retail market is poised for highest growth in the next five years. The Indian retail industry would grow in the organised sector at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of about 23% to 25% between 2008 and 2022, thereby increasing in size from Rs 96,500 crore (US\$ 19 billion) in 2008 and clocking Rs 17,36,000 crore (US\$ 347 to 350 billion) in 2022.

"The growth is mainly due to the change in consumer behaviour. Given this upward trend, CBSE has developed a new vocational course on retail with inputs from industry and academia," says Saha.

Talking about the course, he adds, "This course will be offered under the vocational stream as 4/5 elective for class XI and XII. The curriculum includes a course on retail (major) combined with business entrepreneurship development (minor), soft skills and environment awareness programme. The course will be delivered through theory sessions supported by practical applications. The board will also provide students with the books." Since this course requires high degree of practical training, schools will be required to create a retail lab where students will learn the practical applications through role-plays. Further, summer training at the end of the session will conclude the course.

CBSE will also launch a helpline on its website for student queries and to provide support.

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

EU-India skill project

The European Union (EU) and India have joined hands to launch a skill development project in India that will focus on three segments — training and skilling the trainers, developing the National Skills Qualification Framework and on developing and enhancing a national information system for the labour market. For this, the EU will invest six million euro over the next four-and-a half years.

Mritunjaya Sarangi, Union labour secretary, said that the government had set an ambitious target of

providing skills to 500 million workers by the year 2022 and that in a meeting held recently, the importance and requirement of skilled trainers was emphasised.

"Recently, the Cabinet secretary called a meeting of all the chief secretaries of the states on skill development. All the secretaries, while stressing the need for skill development, also said that they suffered from a dearth of adequate trainers. The EU along will give us critical support in training the trainers," Sarangi said.

The project will focus on three vocational sectors selected from the 20 high growth sectors prioritised by the Indian government. The automotive sector has been identified under this initiative for the first year. The Ambassador of EU, Joao Cravinho, said that by 2020, the world is likely to face a shortfall of 47 million skilled workers, while India is estimated to have a surplus of 56 million workers.

"For India to realise the demographic dividend, young people need to be properly skilled. If India can achieve that, there will be no stopping it in the 21st century. This project will cater to the global market and help mobility of the labour force for the ever-changing employment market," he said.

The assistance from EU is part of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between the ministry of labour and employment, Government of India and the European Union that was signed in 2006 with the aim to share information on the issues of common interest, such as skills, training and employment among others.

About the role of the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), Dilip Chenoy, chief executive officer, NSDC, said, "NSDC will work closely with EU and the ministry of labour and employment to work on the identified segments through the sector skill councils."

Source: May 28, 2012/[Times of India](#)

Common test for IITs, all engineering courses to kick in from next year

A common national test for admission to engineering courses across the country that takes into account Class XII board marks will be introduced from 2013.

Under the new scheme, all aspirants will have to give two exams - JEE main and JEE advanced - to be held on the same day. The aspirant's set of scores will decide whether he or she will be eligible for admission to the premier Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT), centrally funded institutions like NITs or IIITs or state-funded institutions.

For admission to IITs, students will be shortlisted on the basis of their cumulative score for Class XII and the main test (50% weightage each). The merit list for the elite institutes will be decided on the candidate's performance in the advanced test.

The weightage for admission to other institutions will vary. For centrally funded institutions which include NITs and IIITs, it will be 40% for Class XII board, 30% for the main test and another 30% for the advanced test: a format that IITs have also agreed to follow from 2015.

States will have to fix weightage for admission to institutions they govern. Class XII marks will be standardized on percentile basis by a formula worked out by the Indian Statistical Institute.

While the main test shall be multiple choice type paper, the nature and modalities of the JEE advanced test shall be determined by the Joint Admission Board (JAB) of the IITs.

For students who have appeared for Class XII board in 2012, the council has decided that they may be allowed to sit for the board exam again if they would like to improve their performance in order to benefit from the new format which factors in their performance at the school level. CBSE and state boards will be asked to make appropriate arrangements.

The decision, after two years of consultations and deliberations, was taken in a meeting with the joint councils of IITs, NITs and IIITs.

The All India IIT Federation submitted a dissent note at the meeting, continuing with their insistence that the exam be postponed till 2014 and Class XII be given a maximum of 40% weightage.

Elaborating on the decision, HRD minister Kapil Sibal admitted to "resistance" from the IIT system, but said the council had secured an agreement by conceding their two main demands. As insisted by the IIT Senate and Federation, they will continue to have academic control over the exam including paper-setting, evaluation and preparation of merit list. Their demand that the main exam scores be used in addition to the board exam to shortlist eligible students was also accepted.

In turn, Sibal managed to get the IIT Council to agree to introduction of the common entrance test next year instead of 2014 as demanded by the IIT Senate and Federation. The minister told reporters that states like Haryana, Maharashtra and Gujarat had already agreed to adopt the new format. An education ministers' meeting on June 5 will be crucial to gauge interest among states who will have the freedom to decide their own weightages within the format.

Stressing that this will reduce mental and financial burden among aspirants, Sibal said the new system would ensure better results in schools and cut down dependence on coaching institutes.

Even as the process of selection to the IITs would be different than other institutes, Professor Sanjay Dhande, Director of IIT Kanpur said the counselling to IITs and other institutes will be done jointly and allotment of seats will be done together.

Sibal made it clear that JAB of the IIT system would have complete control on matters such as paper setting, evaluation and preparation of merit list over the advanced test while CBSE will provide administrative support for conduct of the examination.

For conduct of the main examination, an expanded joint admission board will be constituted including the NIT, other centrally funded institutes and state government representatives.

Source: May 29, 2012/[Times of India](#)

Vocationalisation of secondary education is in focus

Higher education remains expensive, though

Primary and Secondary Education Minister Vishweshwara Hegde Kageri, after announcing SSLC results, told parents that they need not worry about their children's admission into pre-university colleges as nine lakh seats were opening up in Science, Arts and Commerce streams in the State.

Indeed, in terms of numbers, there has been an increase in admissions to PU colleges over the years, with several new composite PU colleges (which have high school and PU) making the physical transition from SSLC to PU easy.

What is to be noted, however, is the fact that the percentage of those who drop out of education between secondary education and pre-university remains consistently high. A comparative study of the number of students who passed out of SSLC and those who appeared for II PUC exams from the same batch illustrates this.

For example, while 5.91 lakh passed out of SSLC (fresh and private candidates) in 2006-2007, 4.34 lakh got admitted into II PUC in 2008-2009. As many as 5.13 lakh passed out of SSLC in 2007-2008 and 4.28 lakh of that batch got admitted into II PU in 2009-2010. The transition in the following year shows a decline from 5.60 lakh in 2008-2009 to 4.5 lakh in 2010-2011.

Considering that between 20 per cent and 30 per cent of students who appeared for SSLC exams fail (in the last six years, the best results of 80.21 per cent was in 2011-2012 and the worst was 66.81

per cent in 2010-11), the total percentage of students who do not take the bridge that leads from secondary to higher education remains high. This is not surprising considering that enrolment into higher education in India remains less than 15 per cent.

While formidable costs make higher education beyond the reach of most, opening up of the informal sector in a big way, especially in metropolises such as Bangalore, is absorbing this section of youngsters who have reached up to secondary education but are unable to move beyond for economical and social reasons. The qualification required of them is usually education up to secondary stage, coupled with some skills. In many cases, familiarity with English is an additional factor.

The NSSO data on the growth pattern of the informal sector in India and Karnataka corroborates this. The 61st round survey on employment and unemployment shows that sectors such as construction, hotels, real estate, finance, health and household works have grown by more than five per cent. The same data also shows that the employees per thousand in the informal sector in Karnataka has seen an increase from 378 in 1999-2000 to 424 in 2004-2005. This is way higher than the national level growth, which has seen an increase from 341 to 362.

A study by Supriya RoyChowdhury of the Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC) on "Livelihood and Income: Informality and Poverty in Bangalore's Slums" has found that urban employment is dominated by the tertiary/services sector rather than by the secondary sector.

Within the tertiary sector, urban employment is concentrated in trade, hotels and restaurants, financing, insurance, real estate, business services, community, social and personal services. In 2004-2005, these service sectors accounted for 66 per cent of total employment in Bangalore, found the study, higher than the average in million-plus cities (62 per cent), according to the study.

Interestingly, while the job generation is now almost entirely in the informal sector, there is a simultaneously accent on vocationalisation of secondary education, geared to provide semi-educated labour from the lower middle-class.

Karnataka is in the process of integrating National Vocational Education Qualifications Framework (NVEQF) into the curriculum, to be introduced at the high school level. This is part of the Human Resource Development Ministry's initiative towards vocationalisation of education, based on the

demands of the industry to make students more “employable” when they step out of schools.

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

ANALYSIS/OPINION/INNOVATIVE PRACTICE

Higher education and its myths

Universities' dependence on government funding has resulted in the downward spiral of higher education

An enormous amount of human capital has been wasted in Quebec in recent months over proposed tuition increases. Students have expressed moral outrage, accusing the government of withdrawing a “social good.”

Underneath the cover of social demographic principles lies a mercantile debate over the price of a commodity; opposition to higher tuition fees reflects the devaluation of a Quebec university education. It has been devalued in part because it has become more accessible.

“Social good” refers to an early Parti Québécois election promise of free higher education, a Timbit of political trivia from 1976 now enshrined in the consciousness of the tuition movement as the birthright of every citizen.

Implicit in the notion of a “social good” is that the benefit be extended to all. But this, the movement’s only claim to a moral high ground, is inherently contradictory. It conveniently disregards the obvious undemocratic reality that the majority of the population doesn’t have the intellectual capacity to attend university.

“Social good” also implies that higher education contributes to social welfare in general because higher subsidies for post-secondary education will pay future dividends in the form of higher tax revenues from higher salaries.

The correlation is weak. High-wage earners are more likely to have a higher education, but the converse is not true. A barista with a degree in sociology is still a barista.

Higher education is a personal choice. For a student to demand that his or her tuition be paid by all taxpayers when he or she is the principal benefactor is an elitist, bourgeois conceit.

It also disregards the fact that any gains the students may make will come at the expense of other people, most probably those less fortunate.

Students appear blithely unaware of this reality and propose negotiations with the government with a continuation of the tuition freeze being non-negotiable and free tuition their ace up the sleeve.

Meanwhile, the government is grappling with competing priorities within a finite fiscal framework in a brutally partisan arena.

It is hard to imagine the two sides negotiating.

As well, the students have sought leverage in an alliance with Quebec trade unions, when the unionization of university administrations has exacerbated the very inefficiencies they rail against.

The unionization of faculty has severed the relationship between academic performance and remuneration, and replaced collegiality with self-interest. The unionization of administrative personnel has imposed strict job descriptions on good people and guaranteed unproductive staff compensation and job security they do not deserve.

Tragically, the downward spiral of higher education due to chronic underfunding will be accelerated by an extension of the tuition freeze should the students be successful.

The decline is real. Quebec universities are financed on a per-capita basis. Faced with large, non-negotiable administrative and infrastructure costs, universities have been forced to compete, often with each other, to fill their classrooms with as many bodies as possible.

Admission requirements have been relaxed; student retention has become the watchword, with graduation rates rising to close to 100 per cent in some schools; universities create trendy product offerings of nebulous academic or real-world value to boost their numbers.

The more universities are driven by financial imperatives, the greater the decline in student morale and respect for their institutions.

The state subsidy is already too large. As tuition fees decline, a university education becomes part of the furniture. Parents and students alike become disengaged. Chronically underfunded state-subsidized education is a recipe for irrelevance.

Underfunding is not the only cause of student alienation. Education in Quebec at both the secondary and post-secondary levels has been subordinated to the cause of nation-building.

It is the legacy of the ascension to power in 1976 of the Parti Québécois, a party whose base was an academic community composed of theoreticians rather than practitioners, political scientists rather than scientists.

Their projet de société to instill future generations with proper nationalist, social-democratic values took precedence over preparing them to assume their roles in business and industry. The legitimate notion of collectivity central to the nationalist cause has led to the mistaken belief that any action by

virtue of being collective must necessarily be virtuous.

The result: alienated young people for whom collective action is an end in itself.

It is not. Students must realize that Quebec is not Syria.

Quebec is more like the mother who doesn't know when to say no.

Now is the time.

Source: May 16, 2012/[Montreal Gazette](#)

Is Indian Education System "Inherently Perverse"?

The well-intentioned Right to Education legislation has become marred with controversies. It is hardly the remedy its advocates claim it to be.

Rajeev Srinivasan in his report to Rediff news says there are at least two reasons why the legislation is not right: One, it hands public funds over to private hands; two, it does not address the causes for the rot in the Indian education system.

He calls the current system of education as "inherently perverse." The system was imposed upon India by the British imperialists, with the sole purpose of creating coolies and clerks to help them run the country.

The System's intention of perpetuating colonialism is demonstrated by Columbia's Gauri Vishwanathan in her book, "Masks of Conquest." English language itself was forced upon conquered nations: First India, then Ireland.

The system has succeeded beyond anyone's wildest dreams, not even Thomas Babington Macaulay's. His infamous "Minute on Indian Education" wanted to create little 'brown sepoys' and make them the cannon-fodder of Empire, metaphorically speaking. You can still see these Brown Sahibs strutting about flaunting their awful 'convent accents' and an utter lack of understanding of what the world is all about.

These people have internalized ideas about distribution without worrying about production, quality, or excellence.

This is reason why Indian education, post independence, has not produced anything-absolutely anything of global caliber. Not one great discovery, invention or even a theoretical insight!

What's more shameful is that this is worse than under the imperialists. At least, in their days, there were world-class discoveries from India, by C V Raman, J C Bose and Srinivasa Ramanujan to name a few.

The second structural problem is that the middle classes take up most of the State's spending on

education. All of East Asia, however, has invested the majority of its funds in primary education, thus driving up the level not only of basic literacy but functional literacy which in turn translates to being able to perform tasks such as reading manuals and carrying out the work accordingly.

This has resulted in the rise of manufacturing in East Asia as they have created factory labor.

In India, the only comparable achievement has been the creation of employees in the IT and ITES sectors which do not account to more than a few percent of the workforce.

These too are low-creativity, repetitive work which probably explains why there is high rate of attrition in these fields.

There is simply no room for creativity or quality research.

All original ideas have to invariably be first approved by the director or department head; anybody who chooses to veer away from group thinking will find himself on the street, blackballed and unemployable. In general, the IITs and IIMs are good mostly because the entrance exams, the JEE and the CAT, are good filters, and manage to identify the very best student. The problem is there aren't enough seats in these institutions.

The acceptance rate is merely 0.1 to 0.2 percent. The limited number of seats has led to an awful situation: Students as young as 8th and 9th grade are in the rat-race to get into academies that specialize in pushing students into these institutions, and then cramming to get into the institutions themselves.

Memorizing and cracking the entrance exam has become the sole objective of students. This has resulted in cramming children's head with useless facts, and killing every spark of creativity, innovation and thinking outside the box.

This has not always been the case. Ancient India was one of the most creative and innovative civilizations in the world.

There was a flourishing creative activity and out of this came diverse works such as Panini's grammar, the infinite series of Madhava; the Aryabhata, the Hortus Malabaricus, and the Yogasutras.

The sad reality of today's India is that, while the rest of the world has moved on, the people who rule our country are still trying to solve today's problems with yesterday's solutions. And the answer is not to clone IITs and IIMs, as has been the case, but to rethink higher education altogether.

Source: May 16, 2012/[Indolink](#)

There is no room for complacency

Shantanu Prakash, CMD of Educomp Solutions Limited, founded the company in 1994. It is the only K to 12 company listed on the bourses with the aim to transform the teaching-learning process through the use of technology and best practices.

Why are private players like Educomp entering the education sector?

The Indian education delivery system (which has witnessed little change/capacity and quality enhancement) has over the years been stressed to the point of collapse as newer generations of parents demand better education opportunities for their children. A manifestation of this is the growing preference for private schools across all strata of society. While some part of this can be attributed to rising aspirations, it can also be seen as a search for an alternative to what are perceived to be less than satisfactory government institutions. Liberalisation and the onset of the IT revolution in the Nineties, both challenged old ways of learning and teaching. Educomp anticipated the surge in the demand for quality education in the country. All these enabling conditions have led to a prolific rise in private education players.

Educomp is one of the pioneers of the 'Smartclass' in schools, though this is an expensive proposition. How is Educomp working to bring this concept close to lakhs of children of government schools and rural India who cannot afford such an expensive?

Educomp works closely with state governments (over 15 till date) to bring technology aided learning to underprivileged children in government schools across urban, semi-urban and rural India. We have developed high quality digital content in over 10 local languages to benefit students at all levels. When we launched Smartclass, we were clear in our mind that though it is an expensive technology, we must take it beyond the few elite schools that had the capacity to adopt it. Our pioneering model, wherein we made the initial investment and the school paid over the long term has today ensured that small private schools in remote areas too are adopting Smartclass. It is today present in over 10,000 schools and majority of those in towns/rural areas that many city dwellers may have never heard of! While Smartclass is currently being adopted in private schools, we are constantly looking to innovate on the model to make it more and more accessible and affordable for schools and are also now working on pilot projects for introducing Smartclass in government schools.

Around 15 years ago, you started Educomp Solutions with a vision. Have you been successful in accomplishing that vision?

Educomp was founded with a vision 'to apply innovative solutions to solve critical problems relating to Quality of Education and Access to Education for all'. While we have made huge strides and today reach over 29000 schools and 19 million learners across the globe with a wide portfolio of innovative products and services to enhance teaching-learning, there are many milestones that await us....In a country that makes up a mere 17 per cent of the global population and yet has 50 per cent of the world's illiterates, there is no room for complacency at any level.

What are the latest trends in the education sector?

Some of the most fundamental shift in pedagogy methodologies has been seen in the last two decades. Education has moved away from the 'one solution fits all' philosophy. The focus is towards providing individual attention to students based on their dispositions, their cognitive capabilities and inclinations... Millennium Learning System developed by Educomp is based on the above principles and a chain of schools called The Millennium Schools are now coming up across India.

There has also been a fundamental shift from traditional pedagogical approaches which view the teacher as the holder of wisdom and knowledge. In the current approach the teacher is seen as a facilitator – the role essentially encompasses introducing of subjects of discussions, encouraging sharing of perspectives and integrate the students shared experiences into the learning process. Educomp, being the largest teachers training company is focusing on updating educators with best practices.

IT-enabled education has also led to tectonic shifts in the overall quality of educational content and its delivery. Technology has opened up many avenues of education or learning for children. Considering the fact that the moment children step out of their classrooms, they are exposed to a diverse set of technology based information sources such as television, Internet, mobile phones, etc makes the classroom a redundant and uninteresting source of acquiring knowledge. In an age where children are exposed to instant learning through various other information sources classrooms have to evolve from a traditional chalk and board uninteresting classroom to a technology classroom which engages the students in a much better manner. This is exactly where Educomp Smartclass comes in.

How do you perceive the growth of education sector in the next five years?

The education market potential can be gauged from the fact that India has over 550 million people below the age of 25 years. According to census figures, over 32 per cent of its 1.1 billion population is between the age group 0-14 years. This means that the number of people needing primary and secondary education alone exceeds the entire population of the USA. These students will be seeking higher education in India over the next decade, a clear indication of market potential.

India's education sector is currently an estimated US\$ 80 billion market, with a potential 16 per cent five-year CAGR. The willingness to adopt technology/new age learning tools by private and public education sector will see an exponential growth over the next many years.

There will be a lot of emphasis on skills development which is critical to put the knowledge that one has gained during his or her education into practical use. Incorporating a skills development based approach would enable students to sharpen their skills to be able to apply their knowledge in a proper manner.

How do you see the role of public-private partnership in education vis-a-vis standalone efforts by the government?

The demand for education services is growing at a phenomenal rate and it is becoming increasingly difficult for governments to keep up with the pace of requirements of the market... Understandably, it is a problem that cannot be left alone for the government to resolve and that is the reason government has opted for PPP to achieve the twin objectives of providing 'access' and 'quality' in education.

What are the key challenges of the education sector?

Indian education sector has the unique distinction of producing some of the brightest brains in the world on one hand while over 100 million children are still out of school. Some of our educational institutes like IIMs and IITs rank among the best in the world...But the flip side is that the sector is also plagued with issues of access and quality-problems range from low enrolments across the education eco-system, shortage of schools and colleges, issues of quality (outdated curriculum and teaching methodologies), shortage of trained teachers, out-of-sync education delivery models, restrictive and non-transparent regulatory regime... Also the sector has been slow in adopting new technologies/learning aids.

Source: May 16, 2012/[The Hindu](#)

Nitin Desai: Right to principals

Empower school principals to truly deliver education to India

The Right to Education (RTE) law, and the subsequent Supreme Court judgment, has focused attention on the future of school education in India. The judgment on the provision that requires private schools to offer 25 per cent of their seats to economically weaker sections opens new opportunities for the poor, and that is welcome. But in our fiercely hierarchical society, class-conscious private schools may be pressured by intolerant parents to segregate these poor students — and that has to be prevented at all costs.

India's school education system needs much more than this breaking of class barriers. It has focused so much attention on numbers and enrolment that the quality of education has suffered.

The pace of expansion of the school system to cope with a rapidly rising population of children was such that there are huge deficiencies in the physical facilities in our schools. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, on which we are spending about Rs 20,000 crore a year, was meant to correct this. Yet Pratham's 2011 Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) shows that some 10 years later, 60 per cent of rural schools do not meet the pupil-teacher ratios promised in the RTE law, 50 per cent do not have usable toilets and 25 per cent even lack access to clean drinking water.

Elementary education in the years ahead will face a very different demographic prospect. Between 2001 and 2011, the number of children in the 0-6 age bracket fell from 163.8 million to 158.8 million according to the provisional census results. The absolute number of people below the age of 14 is expected to decline steadily, according to the projections of the Registrar General. This means that the quantitative challenges of elementary education expansion are behind us and we can concentrate on rapid quality improvements. And about time, too!

Recently, results from the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) shocked the country by placing student achievements in Tamil Nadu and Himachal Pradesh, who participated in the test on a pilot basis, way below the levels in most other large developing countries.

One metric in PISA is the percentage of students whose competence is above the baseline level that allows them to participate effectively and productively in life. In the reading comprehension test the percentage of students at or above the baseline level of proficiency is abysmally low in

Himachal Pradesh (11 per cent) and Tamil Nadu (17 per cent), while the level in countries like Brazil, Indonesia, Mexico and Argentina (BIMA) is within 50 per cent. In Mathematics it is Himachal Pradesh (12 per cent) and Tamil Nadu (15 per cent) against BIMA (23-30 per cent), while in science it is Himachal Pradesh (11 per cent) and Tamil Nadu (16 per cent) against BIMA (34-70 per cent). The OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) average is around 80 per cent for all the tests, and China is more or less at the same level.

Part of the difference could be due to the fact that about a third of the Indian students took the test in a language other than their mother tongue, while in the other countries this proportion is five per cent or less. But despite all the parsing of the results, it is clear that scholastic achievement in our schools is awful compared to other large developing countries. This judgement is borne out by the results reported in Pratham's 2011 ASER. In rural India, the percentage of Class V students who cannot read a Class II text is 48 per cent; the percentage who cannot do arithmetical divisions is 72 per cent; and, what is most disturbing, the proportion has been rising.

Most of our children go to government-run schools, though a rising proportion of even poor people are opting for fee-charging private schools. Many of these private schools in rural areas are really low-cost shops that are woefully below the norms set in the RTE law. Yet the willingness of parents to pay for poor private education is a damning indictment of the government school system.

The problem lies in our political process. Education is a state subject and is a major source of political patronage, with blatant political interference and even corruption in the process of appointment, promotions and transfers of teachers in government schools. Principals cannot discipline politically connected teachers. Parents exercise little or no influence on the working of schools directly or through their local bodies. Indiscipline is rife. On any given day, 13 per cent of the teachers do not attend school in rural India according to the Pratham survey. The percentage of schools where all teachers were present at the time of the survey was just 51 per cent for elementary schools.

So what can be done to quickly raise the standards of elementary school education?

Each one of us has some idea carried over from our childhood about what makes a school good. My *idée fixe* is the importance of the principal as a leader who can enthuse students and direct teachers. Teacher training and money for

infrastructure are not enough unless schools are led by a principal with vision and commitment to improving the quality of education.

Perhaps training of principals or motivational sessions with experts who do that sort of thing may help. Improved salaries, office equipment and some support staff will go a long way. But the most important requirement is to give principals the space to manage the school with the help of teachers and parents by eliminating the influence of local politicians.

Teacher training, better teaching materials and methods, and computers are also important, and so the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) and the State Councils of Educational Research and Training (SCERTs) should continue to work on this. But the RTE Act emphasis on formal teaching qualifications may make it difficult for many dedicated volunteers, like the ones who work for the admirable Teach for India programme, to continue. This must be corrected. In fact volunteer teaching assistants may be a quick and cost-effective way to raise standards.

The philanthropists who are now devoting serious amounts of money to the improvement of school education can help empower school principals and promote the use of volunteer teaching assistants. Their willingness to experiment and try new ideas, and their insistence on quality and measurable outcomes, will strengthen the hand of a dedicated principal.

The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan has a goal: every child in school and learning well. So far we have concentrated our resources on the first part of this goal. It is time we paid as much attention to the second part.

Source: May 17, 2012/[Business Standard](#)

Is There Any Value to a Liberal Arts Education?

With the arrival of May, commencement season begins. This is the time of year when students close the book on their college education and hurl themselves into the fearsome void of questionable job prospects, student loan payments, and plenty of self-doubt. Post-grad life is a daunting transition, and while a college education purportedly prepares one for success that success is by no means secured or measured in terms of financial wealth. Recently in the *New Yorker*, Ken Auletta examines this dilemma by profiling Stanford University in his article "Get Rich U.," where students are not only interested but encouraged to become Silicon Valley success stories and, of course, millionaires. But in the pursuit of this goal, the humanities and the liberal arts have been pushed into the background.

At Stanford, a self-study acknowledged that there is little integration amongst disciplines and students are fairly compartmentalized in their narrow pursuit of a specialized degree. In other words, there is little time to read Homer or search for "truth" when one is preparing (quickly) for a career. And the issue of student debt, profiled this week in the *New York Times*, makes the issue of "value" in higher education even more complicated. Such an atmosphere forces the question: Is there any value to a liberal arts education in our current climate of higher education?

By just glancing at my author's bio, one can probably make an educated guess where I stand on this issue. However, I was thinking about this question recently while reading an address made by the late author David Foster Wallace. Wallace provided the commencement address in 2005 to Kenyon College, and unsurprisingly, was quite the *provocateur* in his talk. He challenged his listeners on the value of a liberal arts education, bringing up certain rote clichés, for example:

"So let's talk about the single most pervasive cliché in the commencement speech genre, which is that a liberal arts education is not so much about filling you up with knowledge as it is about 'teaching you how to think'."

On this point, Wallace's acerbic insight is quite right. Loads of admissions material in higher education promotes the aspect of critical thinking without necessarily explaining its importance or even defining the term at all. Though I would challenge the maxim's status as a cliché: it is not untrue in the least, and if it does bear the stain of cliché-dom the fault lies in the particular institution's lack of defining what critical thinking entails.

Wallace concludes his address to the students by commenting on what the true value of a "real education" is: "it has almost nothing to do with knowledge, and everything to do with simple awareness." So for Wallace a liberal arts education at least allows one to consider stimulating topics while meandering through the bourgeois exercises of life, such as waiting in the carpool pickup line, picking up a Starbucks drink, or negotiating rush hour traffic.

It is worth debating whether Wallace's cynicism is deserved or not. The climate of higher education has certainly changed, even since 2005 when this address was given. The current buzzwords of "distance learning" and "on-line education" are on the tips of administrators' tongues at colleges and universities at every level. With the higher cost of education, a market has naturally been created

that allows students to move through some sort of curriculum to achieve a terminal degree. Many community colleges and on-line institutions advertise the speed of achieving a degree rather than the quality of the instruction. And other well-known and high-caliber institutions of higher education are dipping their toe in the burgeoning market of on-line education. Stanford University recently drew a record 20,000 users (or "students" in a sense) for an on-line offering on artificial intelligence. Harvard and MIT are also all delving into the new frontier of "distance learning" where the classroom is virtual, the pedagogy is on-demand, and the potential for growth (and profit) is limitless. Any institution of higher learning is responsibly exploring this new trend, but questions remain whether this new trend is really beneficial or not.

Thus we return to the question at hand: is there any value to a liberal arts education in this climate? I would answer emphatically "Yes". A liberal arts education is unique in its methodological approach to higher education. As a student I took courses across the arts and science curriculum, classes in religion, history, and English, as well as geology, mathematics, and art. In each course, the classroom was the defining pedagogical instrument. Classes were limited in size to promote the interaction between professor and student, and professors would push the students on their work, directly challenging them to explore different possibilities. This is what makes a liberal arts education unique, and arguably one that is difficult to transpose to an on-line platform. But the crucial engagement between professor and student is face-to-face, not through computer cameras or avatars. There is value to a bricks and mortar classroom, a room where discourse takes place amongst colleagues, fostering an attitude of shared learning. Perhaps that is why many of my colleagues are committed to exploring this new arena in the hopes of preserving what makes liberal arts teaching unique, and not sacrificing the direct engagement between teacher and student.

I graduated with a liberal arts degree into a different economy than the one we are currently enjoying. Granted, it was frustrating to explain to employers where I actually went to school and what my degree was in, but I certainly felt that I was very well-rounded due to my experience in a liberal arts background. As Wallace provoked in his speech at Kenyon, maybe education really is about awareness, even awareness of staving off the monotony of daily life. But my experience in college helped me immediately with the challenges of the "real world." I read great books, observed

momentous works of art, but it was the training in critically assessing literature, art, or faith that was truly valuable; asking not only what makes a book "great," but what makes a "great" life, and more importantly what do I want to make my life "great" and how do I get there? My education was not just about simple awareness; it was about awareness of what I wanted to devote my energies to in this life.

I acknowledge my answer reflects an intrinsically broad definition of the word "value" rather than focusing on economics, although recent data suggests that employers are realizing the benefits of recruiting graduates from liberal arts colleges. Still, many students feel completely unprepared once they graduate from either a bricks and mortar institution, or an online one. So many students enter the first week of college convinced they will graduate with a degree preparing them to be a doctor, lawyer, or businessperson, since those are easily visible and definable markers of post-graduate success. And they feel tremendous heartbreak and depression if they do not meet those goals, and consequently struggle to find their life's work. If graduates are not on a career path or in graduate school but working in retail to make ends meet, they feel overwhelmed with a foreboding sense of failure. They often blame their institution for not preparing them to meet such dire challenges in the "real world," or for being dishonest in communicating the actual cost of their degree. Too often, however, they blame themselves.

Many liberal arts colleges bill themselves as preparing students for success, but in reality we should be preparing them for failure. For it is how graduates, especially in this economy, meet the challenges they will inevitably face, that their future success will be measured by. If we, as educators, can accomplish that, then we will really be giving students something valuable. Not just the simple awareness of thinking skills that Wallace mentions, but the ability and confidence that will allow them to pick themselves up out of failure to ultimately meet their goals.

A career-focused or targeted education model cannot accomplish this since it is predicated on a singular "plan" of vocational training within a certain field. We can all agree that nothing ever goes according to a "plan." And when a student who has been narrowly preparing for a specific field sees their plan radically altered, they have little to cushion their fall. At least a liberal arts model hones a student's thinking skills and intellectual development to be prepared for a change in plan. "Preparation for failure" may be a depressing tagline and it surely does not look good in press

materials, but at least it is honest in its importance. And eventually students with a liberal arts background will realize how reading Homer made them discover their eventual career path, and the challenge to create a great life. If we can prepare our students to fail, it certainly would be a success.

Source: May 18, 2012/Huffington Post

CBSE schools grapple with RTE Act

In several rural areas, there are private schools, but no government schools. The reservation clause is aimed at helping poor children who cannot afford schooling otherwise

Some have filled 25% reserved seats, while others say they haven't receive any applications

Most city schools that are affiliated to the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) have completed admissions for the new academic year. Different schools are responding differently to the clause on 25 per cent reservation that is mandated by the Right to Education (RTE) Act.

While some schools say they received no query from parents of eligible children, others point to the presence of government schools within a 1-km radius. A lot of awareness may be required before the objective of this clause of the RTE Act is realised, say educationists.

The reservation, according to Tamil Nadu's guidelines for the RTE Act, is applicable to students coming from economically weaker sections — where the student's parents or guardians should have an annual income that is lower than Rs. 2 lakh — or from disadvantaged groups that include SC, ST, BC and MBC children, as well as orphaned children, children with HIV/AIDS or disabilities, and children of transgenders or scavengers.

School heads observe that of the applications they received for admission, most were eligible only in the 'disadvantaged groups' category. Chinmaya Vidyalyaya principal C. Sathiamoorthy said: "Hardly five per cent of our applications came from parents with an annual income lower than Rs. 2 lakh. We have reserved 40 seats in L.K.G. for children from these sections."

In Maharshi Vidya Mandir, out of the 400 seats in pre-kg, 100 seats have been allotted for the reserved categories, according to school principal S. Namasivayam.

In an effort to understand the clause even better, the school education department recently wrote to the Ministry of Human Resource Development seeking clarity on this clause. Based on the response it received, the department has decided as follows — all private schools will reserve 25 per cent of their seats. However, a student from either of the

categories — economically weaker section or disadvantaged groups — can have his or her fee reimbursed by the government only if there is no government school within 1 km radius in the neighbourhood. D. Sabitha, secretary, School Education, said: "We will refund the school fee in private schools only if there is no government school in the vicinity. Otherwise, the parent will have to bear the expenses."

On whether this would benefit children who cannot afford the fee, a senior official in the school education department said: "In Chennai, it might seem like there are several government or local body schools. But when you go to rural areas, there are smaller towns and villages where there are private schools, but no government school in the vicinity. Children in such areas will henceforth not be denied education just because they cannot afford it."

However, there are some questions that remain to be answered — who will verify if there is a government school within 1 km radius in a neighbourhood? Is it the private school, government or the parent's responsibility? Who will communicate the availability of seats in private schools to parents of students who qualify for admission?

In the absence of answers to such questions, some CBSE schools seem to be flouting RTE rules, defeating the very purpose of the clause. There are schools that are charging fees from those applying for the reserved seats as well. "If the government reimburses, we will repay the parents," the head of a school in Chetpet said.

Some schools say they have not received any query so far. "We have not have received applicants for the reserved category. We are yet to decide how to fill up those seats," says Rathi Menon, principal of Pon Vidyashram on East Coast Road. The same is the case with Vel's Vidyashram that has not received a single query regarding the reserved quota. However, in such cases, the schools are expected to put up details of the number of vacant seats available for such students on the notice board.

There are cases when the school head has to use her discretion. Lakhmi Srinivasan, principal, P.S. Senior Secondary School, said: "We had a parent from the ST category who has an annual income of 15 lakh, who demanded free admission. But we thought the seat should go to a family that needs it the most, and so we preferred to give it to a family with an annual income of Rs. 4 lakh." The school has reserved 40 seats out of its total 160 seats for the reserved.

A few other schools do not seem to know the rules at all. In fact, the head of a popular school in R.A. Puram asked this reporter: "Can you tell me how this whole thing works?" The correspondent of another famous school in T. Nagar refused to share any information on admissions as per this clause, observing, that "the matter is too sensitive to discuss."

Source: May 18, 2012/[The Hindu](#)

How Competition Is Killing Higher Education

Competition, we are constantly told, encourages individuals, institutions and companies to take the risks necessary for innovation and efficiency. But in higher education, competition often discourages risk taking, leads to overly cautious short-term decisions, produces a mediocre product for the price, and promotes excessive spending on physical plants and bureaucracies.

The construction arms race on campus is the most visible example of competition run amok. To become more attractive to potential consumers, many colleges and universities undertake overly ambitious expansions. In some cases, new facilities contribute to educational programs, but too often they are tangential and trap institutions in a costly cycle: The new athletic center, dorm or student center starts to look faded when competing schools open theirs, and it never ends.

It's about "keeping up with the Joneses," an official at Wright State University said in a Dayton Daily News article last fall detailing why colleges in Ohio were spending hundreds of millions of dollars on student centers and other nonacademic attractions in a down economy. In Georgia, state legislators are reviewing questionable practices used to fund 173 projects to build student housing, parking garages, stadiums and recreation centers.

Private universities with large endowments often start the cycle. Schools such as Harvard University and New York University, for example, take on billion-dollar debts. In a trickle-down effect, less affluent schools also feel pressure to borrow and spend -- money they do not have.

Gaming the System

This is not the only cause of financial difficulties, but it makes them worse. Richard Kneidler, who was president of Franklin and Marshall College in Pennsylvania for 14 years, estimated in 2009 that an astonishing two-thirds of the 700 private colleges he studied were at risk of financial failure.

Obsession with school rankings is another way that competition has warped higher education in the past few decades. College presidents,

administrators and professors dismiss the importance of the U.S. News and World Report survey and other ratings, but they are always looking for ways to gain advantage.

I'll give an example from Williams College, where I taught for 37 years. A decade ago, the new president conducted a review of the school's tutorial program, which was modeled on one at the University of Oxford. The tutorials consisted of eight to 10 students who met with a professor weekly in groups of two to three to discuss papers they had written. The new administration opted to expand the tutorials -- a choice based on more than academics.

Williams had dropped from first to third in the U.S. News rankings, a matter of concern on campus and among alumni. One way the school could reclaim its top position was by reducing overall class size and decreasing the faculty-student ratio. When the faculty voted to increase the number of tutorials, the administration changed its accounting system without announcing it. A tutorial consisting of 10 students, for example, that met three times in groups of three or four counted as three classes. Maybe it was a coincidence, but within a couple of years Williams was again No. 1 on the U.S. News list.

Doctoral Degree Glut

Graduate schools also try to game the ratings system, and their competition is global. Every year, leading research universities anxiously await the Academic Ranking of World Universities, the World's Best Universities: Top 400 and the Times Higher Education World University Rankings.

These lists affect the recruitment of top students and the level of financial support. Schools engage in bidding wars for so-called star faculty who are supposed to bring prestige to graduate programs and help attract lucrative private and government grants.

Second- and third-tier universities often create unneeded doctoral programs to become eligible for additional federal support and to increase their global profile. For example, the University of North Texas has 36,000 students and advertises itself as "a student-focused public research university" offering "97 bachelor's, 82 master's and 35 doctoral degree programs."

Even this is not enough. Although severe budget shortfalls have led to cuts of as much as 90 percent for some programs, the university is adding new doctoral programs in a quest for the elusive top-tier status. This makes no educational sense and violates basic market principles. If successful, the

University of North Texas will join too many other schools that are spending large amounts for unneeded programs that turn out products -- doctoral graduates -- for which the supply far outweighs the demand. This is a national issue, as pointed out in an article this month in the Chronicle of Higher Education titled "The Ph.D. Now Comes With Food Stamps."

While overestimating the value of competition can lead to less, not more, innovation, underestimating the value of cooperation tends to discourage the exploration of possibilities for creative interaction. With escalating costs, limited resources and growing political concern about student debt, institutions should be developing innovative ways to cooperate that will prove to be mutually beneficial, in the same way that companies merge and become more efficient.

In the past, cooperative arrangements were limited to schools near each other, but teleconferencing, Skype and the Internet have exponentially expanded opportunities for interaction. Universities can no longer afford to teach every subject that students think they need to study.

Fiscal conservatives who typically extol competition see its insane effects in higher education. John Kasich, the Republican governor of Ohio, wonders why all public universities in his state have to offer every major. "It's not just inefficiencies," he says. "It's, 'I want to be the best in this.' It's duplication of resources."

Outsource Some Subjects

Some subjects can be outsourced; for example, let one college have a strong French department and another a strong German department. In other cases, costs can be shared by splitting a faculty member's time between two or more institutions, physically and virtually. For the first half of the semester, what is taught at one college can be remotely transmitted to another, and for the second half of the term this process can be reversed. Faculty members would no longer be affiliated with a single college or university and would be required to become much more mobile.

To consolidate resources without jeopardizing the quality of research and teaching, universities should form consortiums to share faculty. The most effective organizational structure would be to have a core faculty of select members of the home department and from departments at participating institutions, which could be supplemented by colleagues in the undergraduate programs at related universities. Qualified faculty members

would participate on a rotating basis, and courses would not be limited to offerings by resident professors but would include lectures and seminars conducted remotely. With more faculty members from different institutions involved, the quality of education would probably improve.

In every complex system - be it educational, economic, political, social or biological -- competition and cooperation must be effectively balanced. When competition becomes excessive, it becomes counterproductive.

The recent announcement that Harvard and Massachusetts Institute of Technology are cooperating to offer free online courses is a promising development. Much more needs to be done. In coming articles, I will describe how overspecialization renders much undergraduate schooling irrelevant, and how globalization and online education provide opportunities for rethinking higher education.

Source: May 18, 2012/[Bloomberg](#)

Higher education: choices galore

The air vibrates with all kinds of emotions. Students, teachers and parents alike are anxious as well as excited about the board examination results due to be released in a few days results as the D-day marks the denouement of a real life drama where the students in their quest to attain knowledge undergo various experiences.

Choosing a course that satisfies both students and parents is a daunting task. Though the availability of varied choices seems to contribute to the mayhem, the scope and range of selecting a course, which has reached its zenith, show a positive sign.

The choice is plenty causing confusion but certain courses have emerged favourite. Courses such as Marine, Biotech, Biomedical, Agriculture, Automobile, Aeronautical, Aerospace, Ceramic, etc, are gaining ground and these are offered by some of the premier government and private institutions in India.

More choices

“Previously there were only a few choices in both engineering and medical streams, but now with globalisation, advancement in science and technology along with the exponential growth of the Indian industries, new and innovative courses have emerged setting benchmarks in engineering education catering to a variety of career opportunities,” says K. Rohan, an aspiring engineer, waiting for his board exam results next week. Environmental and energy engineering has captured the imagination of Swaminathan and he

has decided to pursue it. “I want to pursue this course because of the tremendous potential it has. Considering the exploitation of conventional fuels, the time has come for us to look at un-conventional and alternative energy resources. Energy sustainability is the need of the hour,” he says.

“I only want to study Veterinary Science as I love animals,” feels Santosh, not opting for the MBBS. There are others like Senthil, who has pitched for a conventional mechanical engineering courses because of the wide range offered by the course as there is always scope to specialise at a post graduate level.

“I thought of taking automobile engineering or marine engineering, but I decided to opt for mechanical because others seem super specialised,” he opines. This also applies to various students who want to study medicine as it is not possible for them to take up a super speciality course at the UG level. “I have applied for MBBS, but plan to take up a novel specialisation at the PG level,” says Akshaya.

Education abroad

There are many for whom foreign education has become a necessity. As Mr. Madan Mohan, who is all set to send his son abroad feels, “This is a life time opportunity for my son as he can broaden his horizon. An international degree also adds value to the resume.” South East Asian countries have become the latest educational hub for Indian students apart from destinations such as Western Europe and the U.S. Students are opting for Singapore, South Korea, China, Hong Kong and Australia.

“I chose Singapore because of the scholarship programmes offered,” says Maya, who is gearing herself for a rigorous course there.

According to her, the best part of going abroad to study is the emphasis given to projects. She also believes that studying in a foreign land will inculcate responsibility along with freedom. The inter disciplinary programmes offered by the foreign institutions seem to be the best part along with applied research, internship programmes and field research.

With the higher education industry of India improving at a rapid pace and India's premier institutions having attained world standards, our nation is also attracting foreign students. Also with its friendly atmosphere, moderate climate, food choices and modestly priced quality education India is turning to be an ideal alternative destination in the competitive world of higher education.

Source: May 19, 2012/[The Hindu](#)

Is College's Stone Age About to End?

Excessive specialization has created a culture of expertise that has distorted higher education and had a negative impact on faculty members, students and the broader society.

While global transportation, communications and information technologies have created interconnection, academic disciplines and fields have, paradoxically, become more fragmented and isolated. Universities boast of their global expansion and vision, but they are mostly siloed institutions ill-adapted to a networked world.

While academic specialization has long been decried and ridiculed, insufficient attention has been paid to the influence that narrowly defined research has had on undergraduate teaching and the structure of colleges and universities. With online education taking off at traditional institutions, the hope is that learning breaks out of these cocoons. But as we have already discovered in the political arena, increased connectivity can create new divisions that deepen social discord. The rise of online learning may create more rifts in fields and curricula, or it may reorganize higher education for the better.

Hyper-specialization has both natural and external causes. As knowledge evolves and expands, it diversifies and in some cases leads to beneficial results, as with innovations and discoveries in medical research, engineering, information and communications technology, for example.

Subfields Hurt Learning

But the downside is that as disciplines divide and subdivide, the curriculum expands without planning or oversight. In the department where I teach, there are 11 faculty members and eight subfields, some of which are further divided into as many as four sub-subfields. Until recently, the entire education of a graduate student from admission through comprehensive examinations to thesis was restricted to a single subfield or subfield within a subfield. This situation is not unique.

An important contributor to academic fragmentation is the pressure on faculty members to produce and publish original research, a development that took off in the 1970s. The pressure is greatest at research universities but is felt at all universities and colleges. When I started teaching at Williams College in 1972, many of my senior colleagues who were superb teachers and genuine intellectuals had never published a single word. By the time I came up for tenure a few years later, I was expected to have published a book and several articles.

What changed was the job market, which suddenly dried up in 1970. With fewer jobs and increasing competition among candidates, colleges and universities needed new ways to evaluate faculty members. Research and publication became the gold standard for hiring and promotion and spawned specialized conferences, journals and book series intended to encourage communication among people with the same interests. More people started publishing because they had to, rather than because they had something to say.

The system of peer review -- in which articles and books are evaluated exclusively by other specialists in the field -- has also worsened the over-specialization problem. The same procedure is used for promotion and tenure. The tenure process at Columbia, for example, requires letters of assessment from 20 to 25 experts in the candidate's field or subfield. It is standard in academia that someone from another subfield or discipline is regarded as unqualified to judge a person's work. While nominal attention is paid to teaching ability and other qualities, the judgment of these specialized scholars is critical in making personnel decisions.

Echo Chambers

Life in the intellectual silos makes it more difficult for people working in different fields and disciplines to communicate with each other. There are always exceptions, but for the most part scholars remain in echo chambers talking to themselves. This system is self-perpetuating and resistant to change.

A familiar complaint is that as the importance of research and publication has increased, the value of teaching has tended to decrease. At research universities, prestige is often measured by how little you teach. This creates an incentive for faculty members to design courses that are closely related to their research. Many fine teachers are devoted to the needs and interests of their students, but too many courses are based on what the professor wants to teach rather than what the student needs to learn.

Facing professional pressure, faculty members are not able or eager to guide and advise undergraduate students to craft a coherent education.

When education is more and more about less and less, it becomes counterproductive. Universities have moved at a glacial pace but change is now occurring at warp speed. The way knowledge and institutions are structured is not set in stone but changes with new technologies of production and reproduction.

Just as a networked infrastructure transformed financial markets for better and worse, so the networking of higher education will transform how teachers teach and what students learn. Disciplines will need to be reconfigured. Departments can be transformed or abolished. Research and teaching that encourage faculty members and students to approach problems from multiple perspectives must be encouraged and rewarded. The wall separating the university from the world has to be torn down to produce students with the knowledge and skills they need in the rest of the 21st century.

Source: May 21, 2012/[Bloomberg](#)

Meta-University – Another Progressive Trend in Indian Education

Further to inter-disciplinary courses being tried out in some universities, a collaborative effort between universities for credit transfer is another positive trend. This will facilitate students to choose from the best of courses in different universities and gain advantage from talents in different universities. This will also enhance their networking potential with a wider alumnus status coming from multiple universities.

However, it is necessary that universities develop a free and fair collaborative approach in a supportive structural framework for this initiative to catch up and spread faster in the country. This collaborative effort will also act as a driving force for exchange of ideas and best practices between universities.

Further to the positive trend we have seen in the last week about participatory role for students, there is another good news that is covered in yesterday's Education Times edition of The Times of India. Link to the referred article is given below

Many courses, many classes

Credit transfer is no longer a Western concept. As part of the 'meta university' initiative, students in India, too, can now be part of a system, which will offer flexibility and cross university education, ensuring credit transfer between participating universities.

SM Sajid, registrar, Jamia Millia Islamia, explains that the concept of meta university is a new one and a radical step taken by four universities - Jamia Millia Islamia, Delhi University, Jawaharlal Nehru University and the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi - to pool in their resources and offer programmes at the postgraduate level.

Dinesh Singh, vice-chancellor, Delhi University, adds, "We hope to launch one aspect of meta university this July. It will be a Master's programme in mathematics in collaboration with Jamia Millia Islamia. The course will be delivered through a

combination of online teaching, classroom studies and substantial project work. It is a 'limited' experiment that we are doing this year with not more than 10 students in the class. We will expand next year with more students."

Elaborating, Sajid informs that the four institutes will jointly design and develop the courses, concentrating on three areas - PG diploma in public health, climate change and education.

"We would like to convert the diploma programmes to a full-fledged MA programme so that credit transfers can take place. We would also like to work on semester-transfers," he says.

Through semester-transfers, students can pick up and study a course in one college and later transfer it to another college. These programmes will be for two semesters. "Initially," Sajid informs, "we will have 30 seats for these courses. We are yet to finalise the eligibility criteria but most likely the eligibility criteria will be minimum 50% marks in graduation, along with an entrance test."

However, senior academics are sceptical and feel that India is not yet ready for the meta university concept. According to Dr N Prabhu Dev, vice-chancellor, Bangalore University, it is not a workable plan as more than 75% of the universities in India are not accredited. "In fact, some universities are only research-centric. How would they then link e-learning and content sharing with other universities?"

G Raghurama, director, BITS Pilani, however, feels that for the concept to succeed, it is imperative that there is a uniform structure and common practices in place. BITS Pilani has a credit transfer facility with some of the institutes in the US. But, as of now, it does not have a similar structured collaboration with any institute in India. Most universities in India, Raghurama stresses, do not have a uniform and common structure. Universities in the US have a broad consensus on how the curriculum is designed and other related aspects.

The 21st century meta university would be a network and an ecosystem rather than a single brick and mortar space. Though the internet and technology are fundamental to this concept of the meta-university, at the crux is not a new technology but a 'new pedagogy' that is more in tune with the requirements of the knowledge society of the 21st century

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

IIMA at a crossroads

The period immediately following Independence of India in 1947 was witness to several new initiatives to build the fledgling independent nation into a

model democratic state committed to growth with equity in the development of its people. The establishment of Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad (IIMA) in 1961 was the result of such initiatives in the higher education sector.

The purpose of setting up a management institute was to professionalise management of organisations so as accelerate the economic growth and development of the newly independent nation. The founding fathers ably wove together a coalition of five forces — the central government, the state government, the local philanthropist industrialists, the Ford Foundation and the Harvard Business School, in a true spirit of public private partnership to establish IIMA.

To ensure that the new institution was not stymied by bureaucracy, the governance structure of IIMA was to be different from that for traditional universities. The institute would be managed by a society, the IIMA Society, created under the Societies Act, for the purpose. The institute would be run by a board of governors, constituted by the IIMA Society. The board would have wide representation from all the relevant constituencies to reflect the multifarious needs of a developing nation. IIMA was, therefore, conceived as an institute that would be a board-managed institution, in partnership with but free from control of the government. Thus, operational freedom is an inseparable part of the DNA of IIMA.

Achievements

IIMA went on to become an iconic institution that is an inspiration to management schools in the country. Youngsters aspire to get educated at the institute. Practising managers from a variety of organisations look forward to attending the executive education programmes of the institute to sharpen their skills and knowledge to deal with the challenges of the real world.

The alumni of the institute have contributed significantly to nation building through leadership of a variety of organisations and as entrepreneurs who have set up organisations, including several organisations in the social sector.

The institute has made a seminal contribution to management thought by building an impressive array of academic material rooted in the Indian context. The faculty of the institute have contributed significantly to policy making in the country.

IIMA has achieved global recognition. It has global accreditation and its academic programmes are ranked high among academic programmes of the best business management schools in the world.

Staying ahead

The achievements have been possible only because of the uncompromising drive towards excellence and the continuous innovation in the course curriculum that the institute engages in.

The faculty and the staff make sure that the academic requirements of programmes are delivered with care and effectiveness, day after day. There are no compromises when it comes to observing the academic schedule that would have been drawn up in advance. The process ensures that implicitly the students imbibe the discipline needed for achieving excellence.

Considerable focused research and other academic work in the institute is done by centres that have been created for the purpose. The existing centres include Centre for Management of Agriculture (CMA); Centre for Infrastructure Policy and Regulation (CIPR); Centre for Management of Health Systems (CMHS); IIMA IDEA Telecom Centre of Excellence (IITCOE); Gender Research Centre (GRC); Centre for Electronic Governance (CEG); Centre for Innovation Incubation and Entrepreneurship (CIIE) and Centre for Retailing. These centres have contributed significantly to proposing new ideas and creating new frameworks.

The curricula of academic and executive education programmes are continually refurbished to reflect and sometimes anticipate the changing needs to the economy and the society. Some of the new courses include social entrepreneurship, contemporary film industry, issues in governance, issues relating to environment and GHG emissions, and ethics in business. These courses are offered on the basis of research done by individual faculty and the research centres.

Policy framework

The last two decades since economic liberalisation have witnessed a steady decline of the PSUs. The main reason for the decline has been the unwillingness of the government to let go of its control on the PSUs.

Given the proposal to open up the education sector to foreign universities, the time has come to give full operational freedom to the well-managed public academic institutions. Else, they would suffer a fate similar to that of the PSUs. Institutions such as IIMA that have demonstrated their ability to perform exceedingly well for over several decades, should be permitted to become entirely board managed entities. The performance of these entities may be examined periodically (say, every five years) by a committee of eminent persons with relevant credentials to ensure that they continue to

meet the requirements of the nation and stay true to the purpose they were established for.

Source: May 22, 2012/[Hindustan Times](#)

Surfing for funding?

Finally in this year's Union budget Pranab da made the much-awaited announcement of setting up of a Credit-Guarantee Fund to help boost banks' confidence in the education loan sector. Hopefully this will give boost the education loan sector as banks will be able to pass on most of the risks associated with education loans to guarantee fund, thus enabling them to market it as a commercial product, rather than looking at it as a public service product. Currently education loans are looked at as risky products and this is the reason why only the public sector banks are involved in education loans in a big way whereas private sector banks are involved only where either the collateral is very high, or the courses are extremely reputed like the ones offered by the IITs and the IIMs.

Education loans are a priority of governments the world over and India is no exception to this. But the education loan sector could not get the desired boost owing to factors mentioned above. Now with the Indian government taking initiatives, the education loan segment will definitely get a big boost in the time to come.

So how do these education loans work for MBAs in India and overseas? How can you avail these loans? What are the benefits given by the government? To know answers for these and many such questions, read on!

As you are aware, the purpose of education loans is to enhance the earning capacity of the person after the completion of the course, hence banks take this big risk.

Why are education loans risky for banks? Most students who seek education loans do not normally belong to families that have sufficient household incomes to justify the repayment of the education loans. A lot of them will need to start earning before they can afford to even pay for the interest on the education loan and hence need a complete payment holiday during the course period. Also most of the households will probably not have any collateral security on which the bank can fall back on in case the student is unable to complete the course or having completed the course does not get a job that allows him to begin repayment of the loan. Even if the household residence is available as collateral, it is occupied by the family which will not exactly be easy to evict and sell the house to recover the loan amount.

So from the bank's point of view, an education loan eventually becomes an unsecured loan on which no interest is payable during the course period and repayments begin only after the student completes the course and starts earning enough.

Education loans empower the population, leading to acquisition of better skills, generating higher incomes, thus leading to overall uplift of the people and higher income tax as well. To enable this to happen, in many countries, the country's government guarantees that you will get a loan irrespective of your financial status if you secure a seat in a recognised course. This is to ensure that no deserving student is denied the chance of educating himself just because he has no access to funds.

In India, we have not had a Guarantee Fund so far, but fortunately Pranab da has announced the creation of this fund which will be a big confidence booster.

Some other initiatives which the government has taken to make it easier for students to get loans are:

- For loans up to Rs. 4 lakh, banks are supposed to lend without any collateral. Even if your parents' or even siblings' income is not sufficient to justify the loan, but you have secured admission in recognised course and you have good academic record, getting a loan should not be a problem.
- Another thing that government has done is if one's household income is less than Rs. 4 lakh, then the interest during the course period is borne by the government completely. So, the student has to just pay the principal amount whereas the interest during the course period is borne by the government. So, that is an excellent scheme provided your household income as certified by the notified local authorities, mentioning that your household income is less than Rs.4 lakh from all sources.

Turning specifically to loans for MBAs, this being the biggest area where people seek loans. In India, if the loan is up to Rs. 4 lakh as mentioned above, no collateral and no guarantee from any income earning person is required. Thus, as long as the course is recognised by the All India Council for Technical Education, getting a loan up to Rs. 4 lakh should not be a problem. However, for loans above Rs. 4 lakh, collateral security and/or guarantee from an earning person is required.

It is only an MBA abroad where this becomes an issue because the degree costs much more there. If an MBA costs Rs. 50 lakh to Rs. 60 lakh, you would get a loan worth up to 80% of that amount. Taking into account not just the tuition fee but also your

living expenses, to and fro expenses, purchase of laptops etc, typically you would be made to provide collateral security, without which it may not be possible to get the loan, and that really is a dampener for some students. In any case, most public sector banks restrict maximum education loan amount to anything between Rs. 20 lakh to Rs. 25 lakh.

Hence for such students, we, at Apnapaisa, advise our clients, whose parents have a home loan, and value of their property has gone up substantially, it is a good idea to approach a public sector bank, particularly if the property value has grown dramatically since the time the loan was taken. The public sector bank which might not just take over the home loan but based on the same property, you can get the education loan. This way the same collateral can be used for two kinds of loans.

If you have access to some collateral security, you should also approach Credila — an HDFC Ltd company which, though more expensive than the public-sector-undertaking (PSU) banks, is more flexible and may find a creative solution to your education loan needs. Unfortunately, they will not provide loans without collateral security.

This way student who wishes to take up MBA courses overseas will be able to fulfil their dreams.

Source: May 22, 2012/[Hindustan Times](#)

Indian Education: A Superpower or Dirty Business?

India has got all the chances to become an education superpower but the increasing business in this sector stands as a real threat for the country to achieve this goal. The growth of education in India has been remarkable. There is a visible growth in the number of people who seek higher education now. Many institutions have come up with quality education in India. But beside these promising factors some dirty business and politics played in the education sector, spoils the education system.

Indian parents' desire:

Most of Indian parents have the desire to provide good education to their children. All of them prefer to send their children to the best schools that they can afford. Parents also make sure that their children are getting better education than theirs. Parents with good income are willing to spend crores for their children by sending them to foreign universities.

This strong aspiration in Indian parents is very promising. It will be a prime factor in making India an education superpower in the future. This desire in parents has increased the demand for quality education in India. Today there are a good number

of schools and education institutions that fulfill the education need of the people from all economic classes.

On the other hand, with the increase in the number of institutions, competition has also emerged in the education sector. Institutions compete in the market to provide the most number of facilities to the students who seek education.

In between this tough competition some of the institutions have turned the focus on mere business rather than focusing on the education itself. Today market uses different strategies to attract students to the institutions and some of these have made major shift in the concept of education itself. In the business of education many parents who aspired for good education are getting cheated every day through false promises.

Move from agricultural economy to industrial/ knowledge economy:

There has been a shift from agricultural economy to industrial and knowledge economy. This tendency has been increasing over the years. Today the numbers of people who are working in the agricultural sector have decreased very much. Even the people who own more than 15 acres of land show least interest in encouraging their children to do farming. They all prefer to send their children to towns for education.

Many families have now shifted from villages to towns. All families are looking at reaching higher positions in the class hierarchy and education of their children has given them hope for the same. It has also put forward the demand for quality education. This massive demand for high quality education increases the hope of India's education superpower goals but at the same time it provides chances for many to play dirty politics in the education sector.

Large young population and consumer base:

India's another advantage to become education superpower is its large youth population in the country. The huge youth population has not only created demand for more institutions but also provided India with new ways of thinking. The youngsters who complete their education and training, move on to become consumers and at the same time producers in the society. With the acquired education they contribute to country's technological innovation and also consume the goods in the country.

No country can gain success with technological advancements alone. Good, qualified and innovative employers are needed to meet the increasing consumer demands of our society. Only good

education can provide these qualified employers who can contribute to country's growth.

Education cost:

The cost of education in India is lesser when compared to the developed world. The cost structure is increasing every year but still a standard higher education is very much affordable in India. We have been raising the issue of teaching quality issues. We have now millions of unemployed graduates and post-graduates who are looking for teaching jobs. Giving proper teaching practices to them will definitely solve the scarcity for quality teachers in our country.

Our present education cost structure has even attracted foreign students to pursue education in India. The increasing standard of education in India has given good choices for high class parents to opt for Indian education rather than foreign education for their children.

The business in education has huge impact on its cost. There are many institutes that show different fee structures to students of different category. Some institutions tend to do unnecessary favors to students from good economic back ground. Teachers paying huge amount to find job in management institutes is also common today.

Globalization:

After the arrival of globalization the number of people who go abroad for job and education has increased. Today's internet, flight travel, telephone and other technological inventions have made the world closer to us. Communication to any part of the world is much easier now.

Many Indians aspire to work abroad and earn well. This has increased the educational demands in turn. The need for better education has relocated many students within our country itself. The Keralites are best examples for this. Students from all states migrate to different states and countries in search of better career prospects.

The dream of India becoming an education superpower is not far away. The increasing urge in Indians for better career always provides a positive energy towards fulfilling this dream. The education is meant to provide knowledge and values to the students. The increasing business around this system has reduced education to a mere commodity.

Source: May 23, 2012/[Silicon India](#)

5 reasons why India can become an education superpower!

Thanks to the impact of globalisation and the relatively low cost of education, several

international students are looking at India as the next big destination to study.

Over the last few quarters, I have visited close to a hundred cities and towns in India.

Let me share my observations as to how education is shaping up in India.

1. Aspiration of an Indian Parent

I met with a few parents who are MDs/IAS/CxO etc. Most of them have an inherent Indian desire for their children to leap forward (compared to themselves) in their careers. They are keen to put their kids in the best of schools like those with annual fees of Rs. 5-6 lakhs. They are also quite happy to spend crores to get their kids a degree through a US/UK based university like MIT/Oxford etc.

I also met a few parents who are class-3 employees in factories, or drivers or maidservants. Most of them also want their kids to be engineers or doctors.

A horse cart owner from Bijapur was proud to inform me that his eldest son is currently pursuing a BE in computer science from a local engineering college. He also expressed a strong desire to ensure his younger kids also get into college.

Irrespective of economic status, every Indian parent has a deep aspiration that their kids must do better than themselves in their careers. This is the most important factor that drives the demand for high quality education services in the country.

2. Systemic shift from agriculture economy to industrial/knowledge economy

India is in the middle of shift from agriculture-economy to industrial/knowledge economy.

I talked to some farmers recently. One of them says that he has 15 acres of land, but still cannot have a lifestyle even equivalent to a class-3 worker working in a factory.

Hence he does not want his kids to do farming even though he has a large piece of land compared to all others in his village. He is determined to make his kids study in the best possible school at a nearby city even at the cost of selling a part of his land to pay the fees.

I've also observed that many well-to-do families from villages shift to cities, rent a house and stay there for few years to ensure that their kids get the best possible education.

This is a systemic shift. The per-person net income exponentially changes when you shift your profile from being a farmer to a class-3 factory worker to a class-2 officer to jobs like engineer/doctor/IAS/NRI.

There are many examples that people have seen during the last 20 years. Hence everyone has the aspiration to move on and make the quantum shift. This is creating, and will continue to create massive demand for high quality education and training.

3. Young minds and massive consumer base

We all know the demographic dividend is in India's favour. We have the largest young population in the world. Human mind is the most productive asset to enable progress of a society.

Machines, technologies and automations in vacuum (without significant consumer base) cannot create a sustained economic advantage, Japan is an example.

Large young population acts like a massive consumer base, and also as a large human capital that can be used to develop goods and services to be in turn used by this large consumer base.

This needs massive scale education and training of all young minds at school level, college level and vocational level.

4. Cost structure

Most of the good schools in large cities have annual fees in the range of Rs 15,000 to Rs 50,000 per annum.

This is less than 1/10th of what you see in developed world either in terms of per capita cost in public schools or per capita fee in private schools.

This makes high quality education affordable in India. This cost structure is certainly sustainable for the next few decades.

We have teacher quality issues, but when we have millions of graduates and post-graduates unemployed, it is just an issue of addressing the teacher training problem.

Few weeks ago, I was in a very small town called Gokak in Karnataka, where 200 candidates walked-in for a primary school teacher job in a good private school.

This indicates that there are large numbers of aspirants available for teaching jobs. This in turn will ensure that education cost does not inflate due to disproportionate increase in teacher's salary costs.

This cost structure has started driving students from other countries to come to India, and it will definitely accelerate further.

5. Globalisation

Technologies and tools like the internet, flight travel, telephone have made human relocation easier. Indians do not mind leaving their hometown and settling in any part of the world.

A large number of Indians would continue to relocate either within or outside the country to produce greater income for their families. This creates a larger demand for trained and educated human capital supply chain.

In Kerala, you will hardly find a house where a member of the family is not in the middle-east. I keep visiting Andhra towns, and we all know of their deep urge to send their kids to the US.

There are mini-Keralas and Andhras in almost every part of the country. The only way to meet that aspiration to go out is to get good education.

And this is driving the demand for education services, and will continue to do so for many decades to come.

In economics, demand is the fundamental building block of progress, which has to be met by corresponding supply. Fulfilling demand for education services will create hundreds of large suppliers and entrepreneurs catering to various verticals and horizontal segments within the sector.

Higher entrepreneurial activity leads to competition and innovation, which in long run creates a superpower status for the country in that sector.

I am quite positive that we will see India becoming an education superpower in our lifetime.

Source: May 23, 2012/Rediff.com

The Evolution of Indian Higher Education

This is actually the season when many senior high school senior citizens are using to and waiting for choices from college and colleges. This is an exciting here we are at individuals people in greater education. We're reminded that learning is really a long term pursuit. We're vitalized through the ideas and ambitions in our students.

When we're looking forward to the prospects of the new newcomer class, the economical recession from the last 3 years has uncovered and increased our society's skepticism about the need for greater education. Yes, people still want to visit college, but you will find growing concerns about student debt and unemployment after graduation. Students be worried about their roi.

Institutional leaders be worried about employing and retaining effective faculty and managers, contributing to the continual price of maintaining physical and technological infrastructures. Such as the auto and newspaper industries, Indian greater education must innovate and reinvent itself if it is going to survive, thrive, and recapture its earlier glory. Industries that don't recognize the requirement for transition-or that don't manage that transition with agility-will probably fail.

The evolution of Indian greater education is mainly happening in this particular programmatic realm. Leaders of schools and colleges are focusing on proper initiatives that engage and purchase our students. We're searching for new methods to nurture and encourage youthful minds to allow them to succeed in their lives within an progressively competitive world. Regardless of this progress, the questions remain: Shall we be making changes which are significant enough, and therefore are we which makes them rapidly enough? Greater education improvement must be much more of a common movement than an advertisement hoc effort. How can we join this crucial effort while remaining in keeping with our institutions' traditions and core values?

Colleges are usually change resistant, but change is imperative to make sure that a university education remains relevant and desirable. Let us shed old constraints and step outdoors our comfort zones. Present day students are creative and artistic, and also the schools and colleges they attend should be creative and artistic, too.

Individuals people in college administration must finally embrace, deep within ourselves and inside the bones in our institutions, the truth that business as always in Indian greater education has ended. We must try something totally new. Our students are justifiably demanding more accountability. We have to embrace blue-sky thinking and generate new methods to realize these ideas. In so doing, we are able to make sure that a university education yields the truly amazing roi it should.

Source: May 23, 2012/[JXJSZAP](#)

Kapil Sibal, then and now

Last week, when HRD Minister Kapil Sibal gave in to offended parliamentarians objecting to political cartoons in NCERT textbooks and ended up agreeing with them and ordering the withdrawal of the textbooks, it completed the image of a minister who believes in taking people along, in going the extra mile when politics demands it.

There had been a time when he had been criticised for not being accommodating enough of the views of others. When he took charge in May 2009, he came across as one who would brook no opposition. He took little time setting off a series of reforms in the education sector, booting out the entire top brass of AICTE after they were found engaged in corruption, getting scores of deemed universities blacklisted, reviewing the performance of practically every institute under his ministry and churning out legislation after legislation to usher in reforms in higher education.

Announcing the big shift from marks to grades in CBSE schools and then doing away with the Class X board exams altogether, Sibal ruffled many more for trying to avoid long-drawn consultations and red tape. How much resentment this caused became apparent when one of his key reforms bills— the National Education Tribunal Bill — was deferred by the Rajya Sabha with his own party men leading the attack and bringing much embarrassment for the party and the minister. The Parliamentary Standing Committee headed by Congress veteran Oscar Fernandes lambasted Sibal and his ministry for hastily rushing in bills without adequate homework or consultation. The ministry rejected each one of the standing committee's recommendations for this bill, alienating still more MPs.

One by one, his bills ended up being questioned and held up in Parliament. Until the beginning of this Parliament session, the HRD minister had as many as 14 education legislation stuck in Parliament. Resigned to the situation, Sibal had in fact also asked his ministry to look at non-legislative reforms to push through his reforms.

This session, five of his pending 14 bills have got through. To do that, the Sibal of today has had to consult others and incorporate the changes that he would not have three years back. Sources close to him reveal that the minister has personally met MPs across party lines to convince them to support his Bills.

The once unyielding Sibal has gone ahead and accepted as many recommendations of the Parliamentary Standing Committee as he could. The formerly upset standing committee has said in its latest report that the Parliament should help pass the pending education Bills, evidence of just how much lobbying the minister has had to do.

Here's how four of the five bills went on to be passed:

Right to Education Act 2010 (Amendment): The Act promises free and compulsory education to everyone aged six to 14. The amendment Bill now includes children with all disabilities under the ambit of the disadvantaged sections. The Parliamentary Standing Committee had recommended that the bill spell out the option of home-based schooling for severely disabled children.

Copyright Bill, 1957 (Amendment): The legislation now factors in changes proposed by the parliamentary panel with regard to disabled persons, and includes greater access to reading material for the visually disadvantaged by allowing them to convert books to any format and not just Braille. A clause that included the principal director as author of a film along with the producer had

been opposed by the parliamentary panel; it has now been dropped. Other suggestions incorporated include keeping the provisions for compulsory licensing in line with the terms of international agreements and statutory licensing for radio and TV broadcasters, though with differential pricing.

Institute of Technology (Amendment) Bill, 2010: It amends the 1961 Act and declares the eight new IITs — Bhubaneswar, Gandhinagar, Hyderabad, Indore, Jodhpur, Mandi, Patna, Ropar — as institutes of national importance, and also includes within its purview the Institute of Technology, Banaras Hindu University. The parliamentary panel had raised concerns on the lack of clarity about the zone in which IIT-BHU would be operating and the need to preserve the autonomy of the IITs.

The National Institutes of Technology (Amendment) Bill, 2010: It amends the Act of 2007 and adds five Indian Institutes of Science Education and Research (IISER) as institutions of national importance. The standing committee had suggested the 16-member board of governors be downsized, an expert be nominated to it, the ministry reduce its own nominees, and one member from the engineering field be nominated by the NIT Council. All recommendations have been accepted.

Source: May 24, 2012/[Indian Express](#)

Independent body to regulate vocational education sector

Move expected to end a tussle between the labour and the HRD ministries over control of the sector.

The government has decided to establish an independent body to regulate and lay down guidelines for developing vocational education in the country.

This is expected to end a tussle between the labour and the human resource development (HRD) ministries over control of the government's plan to impart training to 500 million people on key disciplines, including in auto and textiles.

The National Skill Development Authority (NSDA) is likely to be headed by either the Prime Minister's skills adviser and Tata Consultancy Services Ltd's vice-chairman S. Ramadorai or Planning Commission member Narendra Jhadav, according to government officials who declined to be named.

NSDA will prepare a national skills qualification framework instead of a vocational qualification framework as was suggested by the labour ministry or a national vocational education qualification framework as was proposed by the HRD ministry.

The government is planning to create an independent body to oversee vocational education. Mint's Prashant K. Nanda says the move could end a continuing stand-off between the labour and HRD ministries over who controls the training programmes.

"This has been decided by the central government a few days back. We don't have any issue with HRD ministry (now) and the new framework will take care of the skills education sector in the country," said labour secretary Mrutyunjay Sarangi.

A row broke out between the ministries of labour and HRD over the latter's attempt to lay down a framework for vocational education.

The labour ministry, the nodal agency for vocational education, strongly opposed the HRD ministry's interference, Mint reported on 14 October.

The HRD ministry said the labour ministry had failed to meet the rising need for skilled manpower, creating a need for it to step in and integrate skills training with mainstream education.

The labour ministry has a mandate to create a pool of 100 million skilled workers by 2022, as part of an overall target of training 500 million workers.

The labour ministry supervises more than 9,000 industrial training institutes and industrial training centres, where at least 1.2 million students are enrolled.

An HRD ministry official, requesting anonymity, said the ministry recently had meetings with the labour ministry to iron out differences.

Sharda Prasad, director general at the Directorate General of Employment and Training (DGET), confirmed the development. "I had two rounds of meeting with higher education secretary and other officials. Few days back, secretaries of several ministries had a meeting on the issue," Prasad said, adding that both the ministries will collaborate for the national mission. DGET functions under the labour ministry.

"It's a positive development that the issue has been resolved. This will pave way for training more people in the country," said Dillip Chenoy, managing director of National Skill Development Corp. (NSDC), a public-private partnership between the government and industry lobby groups. NSDC has a mandate to provide vocational training to 150 million people by 2022.

Meanwhile, the European Union and India on Wednesday launched a project on skill development that will support development of the national skills qualification framework in some segments, including the automotive sector, with a focus on

manufacturing and maintenance. It will receive an assistance of €6 million from the EU.

Joao Cravinho, the EU's envoy to India, said that in a decade the South Asian nation will have a surplus of 56 million workforce as against a shortage of 47 million in Western countries. This project will cater to the global market and help mobility of labour force "for the ever-changing employment market", he said.

Source: May 24, 2012/[Live Mint](#)

India Intends to Increase Enrollment in Higher Education

Education is a trillion dollar industry worldwide and is attracted by the prospects of liberalization and globalization in every respective country. Education industry in India is too emerging as a global hub in the area of higher education.

With reference to the importance of education, India is intended to increase the enrollment of higher education. According to the Pratibha Patil, the President of India, during her visit at the sixth convocation of the Mizoram University remarked that "Higher education has been accorded priority in our country.

It is our aim to increase gross enrollment ratio in higher education to 30 percent by the year 2020, which means almost tripling the enrollment from the present 14 million to about 40 million". Various universities of the country, which are already existing and the new ones, will be assigned the tasks for achieving this target.

Various periodic short-term as well as specialized courses as per their feasibility into different states, on relevant issues like floriculture, mushroom cultivation and medical plants can be started by Universities having such expertise.

It is also important that the university creates a certain awareness of the adverse impact of climate change and encourages people to adopt energy efficient and eco-friendly measures. Further, terming the faculty members the university's lifeblood, she said that faculty members should act like a friend and must always be ready to give advice and guidance to the students, so that they face the challenges at the best.

Source: May 24, 2012/[Education Insight](#)

Education sector a major employment driver in India: Experts

Experts have named 'education sector' as the major employment driver in the country during the Indian Job Outlook Survey 2012 conducted by TJinsite, research and knowledge arm of TimesJobs.com. "Jobs in education sector will

continue to grow for next two decades", stated Dhruv Desai, Senior VP Human Resource & Leadership Academy, Angel Broking during a discussion with TJinsite, research and knowledge arm of TimesJobs.com on future of jobs in education sector.

Elaborating the current hiring scenario of the sector, Desai informed that the tremendous growth in education sector can be easily and efficiently measured by number of vacancies published in any job supplement or portal in comparison to other sectors.

In month-over-month analysis of RecruiteX, TimesJobs.com recruitment index, it has appeared that the supply of candidates is considerably growing in the sector as job-seekers are eyeing employment opportunities in this supposedly 'recession proof' segment. In fact, the demand of educationists is just not limited to the customary education industry. However, prominent sectors such as Healthcare/Pharmaceutical and IT/ITeS are also contributing to the demand landscape of education segment.

According to Desai, playschool/ preschool/ kindergarten market in urban locations is another critical area in the education segment, which is often ignored or underplayed. "This newly-formed and fast moving market has provided employment opportunities to fresh graduates, especially women, with 0 to 2 years experience with decent remuneration packages." And, as we move forward, the share of this market will get bigger.

Still, the biggest intake of education jobs is happening at the senior level, comprising of candidates with 7-15 years of experience, added Desai. "Many colleges are expanding operations in multiple education levels such as UG, PG and also, PhD/Doctorate. So, effectively hiring is upbeat for senior positions to manage these specified academic units."

Relating this movement to the 'Brain Gain' phenomenon, Desai highlights that owing to the boom in higher education segment, experienced educationists settled in foreign land are willingly relocating back to India. This trend shift is a result of attractive pay packages and reputed profiles offered by private education institutions and universities.

Describing the next-stage evolution of education jobs, he stressed that apart from plain vanilla education jobs, employment options are also burgeoning for administration, research and consultant profiles.

The growth in these not-so-known segments can be attributed to the need of specialized management

courses at doctorate level, which are not so developed at the present.

In his view, future of educationists is bright, he cited the example of our Hon' Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, who before taking prestigious roles in higher echelons of Indian government was a noted Professor of Economics in University of Delhi. Supporting Desai's viewpoint, industry experts echoed that as disposable income will rise in Indian households, a major share of their expenditure will go to the education sector. Therefore, no economic turbulence can affect the growth trajectory of jobs in this segment.

Source: May 24, 2012/[Economic Times](#)

Things to check before going for foreign studies

Being an Indian student overseas is not easy in today's turbulent times. The rising cost of education, high interest rates on education loans, a weak rupee and a gloomy job market have forced many to revise their budgets.

"Earlier, overseas education was a dream nurtured and pursued by Indian students from various economic strata. Now, there is a feeling of the "luxury tag" being attached to overseas education. Fees in US and UK universities have risen in the range of \$500-1,000 and £500-1,000.

This is because of the rising education fees as well as the weakening of the rupee," said Neha Rachh, senior counsellor at Apex Consultants. "The rupee's depreciation has resulted in cost of overseas education going up for Indian students. Consequently, the average ticket size of loans has gone up by 25-30%," says Prashant Bhonsle, country head, Credila Financial Services, an HDFC subsidiary dealing with education loans.

"Earlier, many students preferred not to call for the additional tranches of funds after the first semester as they gained access to part-time employment or some other form of financial aid. Now, students are availing of funds to finance their subsequent semesters, too." Sadly, suitable jobs are also hard to come by - both in India and abroad - putting a question mark on timely repayments.

The Rupee Impact

An MBA course that cost around Rs 46 lakh in December 2011, now costs over Rs 47 lakh due to the depreciation of the rupee. Obviously, you need to redraw your budget. As for those who are about to pay the course fee, try to time the foreign exchange market a bit to save some money.

"If you are yet to pay your fees, don't be in a hurry. Keep the funds ready in hand. We advise our students to track the currency market. If the rupee

recovers even a bit on a particular day, the student can pay the fees then. We have seen students save up to Rs 25,000 just by paying on a day when the rupee recovered from its previous lows as against the dollar," says Neha Rachh of Apex Consultants. In contrast, student borrowers who are earning in dollars after the completion of the course may be smiling their way to the bank as the depreciating rupee lowers the repayment amount.

Funding your education

"Ideally, you should have a clear idea about your budget and affordability before short-listing the universities. Based on your or your parents' savings, you will know your financial requirement, which could be raised either by an education loan or financial aid," points out Suchitra Surve, director at Growth Centre India, an education counselling centre.

"But, if you have a relative who can partly sponsor your study, it can reduce your overall loan burden. Universities allow students to opt for two to three family sponsors. Once you get a job, you can pay off the dues to your family members," adds Rachh. This will also help eliminate exchange rate uncertainties as you would be borrowing from them in dollars.

It is also possible that you may find the course fee to be unsustainable when you are half way through the programme. Even if you have not been the recipient of financial aid in the first semester, you can always re-apply in the second semester. "You can meet the financial aid officer and understand why your application was not considered for financial aid.

Based on the feedback, you can take up academic jobs such as research assistant, teaching assistant and file for a waiver of amount. You can also work towards consistent scores, which will increase the chances of getting a financial aid," says Surve. "US universities work on the credit system. So a student has the option of finishing his course on an earlier date or even postponing the same. You can advance the finishing date if you have completed all the credits," adds Surve.

Taking care of Repayment

Most Indian public sector banks offer loans of up to Rs 20 lakh for funding overseas education, which could still fall short of your requirements. However, these banks do raise the cap on a case-to-case basis. Most private players, like Credila, do not have any upper limit on these loans.

Remember that interest rates are linked to the base rate or prime lending rates, and it means that the total repayment amount could fluctuate. For instance, students who have availed of loans a year

ago, have seen the rates shoot up by up to 75-100 basis points. You can try to ease the burden during the course period by taking up part-time employment if possible.

Also, servicing the interest component during the course period could earn you discounts of up to 1% from some banks. "A student who is already studying abroad can take up a job. He can even opt for academic jobs such as teacher's or research assistant's. Students can earn some stipend to manage their living expenses.

This will take some pressure off the parents who remit money to Indian students for their living expenses. Instead, the parents can focus on paying the interest component of the loan. This will bring down the overall loan burden," advises Rachh.

Finally, be a little more realistic when it comes to deal with the current employment scenario. "If you have taken a loan to study abroad, repayment should be the top most priority. You can always gain some work experience and use that to get a better job when the economy improves. Getting a job profile and remuneration of your choice is highly desired, but it pays to be practical in such times," says Rachh.

Source: May 25, 2012/[Economic Times](#)

No country for easy skill development

In the concluding part of the three-part series, we take a look at what makes the skilling business a difficult one to crack.

The simple fact about skill development is that it isn't an easy business. Not only is it a challenge to get prospective candidates into skill building institutes, industry is yet to be convinced of the benefits of inducting skilled workers at higher wages, but across the board. Yet, there is a consensus that getting the various stakeholders together to create an ecosystem is essential.

For the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), the Rs 2,500-crore public-private-partnership tasked with imparting skills to 150 million people by 2022, this is the difficult reality it needs to contend with.

"There is no structured data available in India, unlike other countries. No names or addresses, although there are so many projects happening like Aadhaar and other schemes. There are lot of supply-side people, but who are they and where are they? So, it becomes a mammoth task to target them, and to even reach that person becomes very difficult," says Sanjay Bahl, president of NIIT's Skill Building Solutions business that aims to train seven million people in 10 years under its partnership with NSDC.

Bahl is going for the massive, young population, who complete their Standard X and XII exams but subsequently drop out of the formal, mainstream education system. "Your typical gross enrolment ratio says 87 per cent of the people fall out after (class) X and XII. So, there is a huge population (waiting to be tapped)," he explains.

On the back of NIIT's established brand and delivery systems, Bahl hopes to target low-to-mid income families to drive its skills business. But for a number of NSDC's other partners, who neither have the size, scale or brand name of NIIT, it is going to be an uphill battle to get students into classrooms.

"The challenge in India is that the behaviour of paying yourself to get trained is very low. Here, the tendency of the urban educated is to pay for higher education. Parents will sell their home to send a child to an IIT (Indian Institute of Technology). That is the perception about higher education. To monetise vocational skills from an individual is very tough," says Sanjeev Duggal, chief executive officer (CEO) and director of Centum Learning, one of NSDC's biggest partners. In the rural market, Duggal explains, the paucity of money means that vocational skill development is very low down in the order of priority. Firms, therefore, need to work very deeply with the government and the industry. "If you're not a large player and you don't have a history, then large corporates aren't going to work with you and large dependence on government projects isn't going to come to you," he adds.

Then, there is the issue of convincing a seemingly reluctant industry to partner in the skill building mission, to convert the need for a skilled workforce into significant demand that can be harnessed. "This is again a challenge," says R C M Reddy, managing director and CEO of IL&FS Education and Technology Services. "Since we don't have a focus on skilling, the value proposition to hire a skilled worker is limited. And, this is a problem with small as well as large corporates."

Adds Duggal of Centum Learning: "The industry has demand but it hasn't reached a point where the individual will line up and pay to get skills developed. The industry is open, it realises that it needs good, trained people, but how much it is willing to spend on that is still unclear."

Apart from India Inc's lack of enthusiasm, another challenge is that the sector skill councils haven't made much headway in fulfilling their core functions such as creating catalogues of skill types, developing sector skill development plans, maintaining skill inventories and drafting skill competency standards and qualifications.

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

Who said IIT aspirants take boards lightly?

Devdeep Ray, who stood third in Maharashtra state with an all-India rank of 13 in the IIT-JEE results, scored 95.4% in Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) Examination.

Pratik Fegade, who came 4th in the state with all-India rank of 16 in IIT-JEE, scored 94% in the HSC.

IIT aspirants have come out with flying colours, proving those wrong who think that they do not give importance to board examination.

The Ministry of Human Resource Development's (MHRD) plan of introducing 40% weightage to board marks for entry into IIT hinged on the reason that students ignore board examination while preparing for entrance tests.

Many IIT-JEE (Indian Institute of Technology – Joint Entrance Examination) rankers were seen among the HSC high scorers.

The MHRD's decision has met with opposition in the circle of IITs. It has proposed replacing the multiple entrance tests conducted by states, private engineering schools, and the IIT-JEE and the All India Engineering Entrance Examination (AIEEE) with a single test across the country.

The single test is aimed at reducing the stress of taking multiple tests for students just out of Class 12, reducing dependency on coaching institutes which promote learning by rote, and reinforcing the importance of school education.

"It is a wrong notion that students preparing for competitive examinations totally ignore the board examination. We have proofs now of students who have done well in board examination while preparing for the IITJEE and other competitive entrance examinations for engineering courses," said Praveen Tyagi, managing director of the IITian's PACE, a coaching class for IITJEE preparation.

An IIT-B professor said that students aspiring for admission to IITs are generally those who have been performing well consistently in schools. "So they are not likely to ignore school studies for ministry to make them understand the importance of board examination," he said.

Source: May 26, 2012/DNA India

RTE Act can pave way for greater commercialisation, says expert

The organising secretary of the All-India Forum for Right to Education, D. Ramesh Patnaik, has expressed fears that the much-debated legislation that promises universal education might end up facilitating greater commercialisation of education.

Speaking at a seminar here on Friday, organised by Karnataka Janashakti, he cited several provisions in the Right to Education (RTE) Act — such as paying for seats under quota in private schools rather than focusing on providing quality education in government schools — that could be "excuses" for the government to disown responsibility.

Recounting the Andhra Pradesh experience of sponsoring higher education of students from economically weaker sections by funding their fees in private colleges, he said the public-private partnership model had ended up taking away 40 per cent of the total funding for higher education.

"This is a way of diverting tax payers' money to private institutions, rather than strengthening public institutions," he said.

CAPITATION FEE

He said the law, while banning capitation fee, had given it an ambiguous definition. "It defines capitation fee as 'any kind of donation or contribution or payment other than the fee notified by the school.' This only means that schools can notify high fees, under other heads, at the time of admission," Mr. Patnaik pointed out.

He said the Act did not pay attention to preventing dropout rate or ushering in a common school system with equitable opportunities for all. The Act also did not include secondary and preschool education, which amounted to leaving out two crucial chunks of the educational process, he added.

Mr. Patnaik welcomed the recent Supreme Court judgment for upholding the constitutional validity of the RTE Act and the parallel responsibility of private institutions in imparting universal primary education. However, he expressed concern over the apex court accepting the argument that lack of funds could be reason for the State to transfer responsibility.

GREATER SEGREGATION?

G. Ramakrishna, writer and editor of Hosatu, said all the focus on providing reservation in private schools was a ploy to eventually close down government schools. He wondered if such a system would lead to greater segregation of children on caste and class lines within the classroom.

BROADER VISION NEEDED'

H.V. Vasu, State convener of the Karnataka Janashakti, warned against the struggle for equitable education getting restricted to the RTE Act and the debate around reservation of 25 per cent seats in private schools. "The vision should be broader," he said.

Source: May 26, 2012/[The Hindu](#)

Growth in foreign degrees – But are they worth it?

Overseas universities queuing to set up affiliated degree programmes, joint degrees and foreign branch campuses in Asia need to do their sums carefully and understand the job market in those countries, or they will fail.

In particular they need to pay attention to the economic value of their degrees in the local market, including the payback period local students might encounter for the higher fees charged, and job prospects with foreign-affiliated degrees compared to those from local institutions, according to recent research carried out by the Parthenon group.

Karan Khemka, partner and head of education practice at Parthenon, warns that India may not bring the returns hoped for by many foreign providers looking to set up affiliated degrees.

“Despite the view that India offers a huge market for foreign providers, growth [of enrolment in foreign-linked courses] in India is less than 5%, with many affiliated programmes operating below capacity,” Khemka said.

“It is in Vietnam, with a much smaller programme, that the fastest growth is apparent.” He said the main reason was that the return on such degrees for Vietnamese students, as well as those in Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia, is far higher than for students in India.

In particular the market for foreign degrees in Vietnam is growing at 15% a year in terms of enrolments, against the 5% growth in India. “Vietnam’s red hot,” Khemka told University World News.

In India most foreign-affiliated courses “are sub-capacity, they are unfeasible, and investors behind these programmes are constantly evaluating what’s wrong and whether or not to shut them down”, according to Mumbai-based Khemka, who presented some of the study findings at the Observatory on Borderless Higher Education conference held in Malaysia last month.

One reason is that a programme taught in English cuts far less ice than in countries like Vietnam and Indonesia. “Unless a university has an ‘Ivy League’ reputation, employers may even prefer a graduate from an Indian university,” Khemka said.

But he noted that the figures speak for themselves, particularly when the value of the degree is calculated in terms of the salary differential compared to a local degree.

In Indonesia a local degree takes a year to pay back once a graduate is in work but it takes double that time to pay back the cost of an internationally

affiliated programme, taking into account the increase in salary and job prospects that the international degree offers.

In Malaysia, where it takes around 18 months to pay back the cost of a local degree, an international programme can be paid back in two-and-a-half years, in salary terms. In Vietnam the cost of an international programme takes four years to pay back, compared to around two years for a local institution.

But in India the gap between the payback period for a local programme compared to a transnational course is “dramatic”, said Khemka. The debt incurred during an international programme takes three times longer to clear than a local programme – almost six years, compared to two years for a local programme.

Despite the demand for higher education in India, it is simply far less attractive for a student there to embark on a foreign-delivered programme than in Vietnam or Malaysia because “the economic value you are creating for a student in Malaysia is far stronger than the economic value you are creating for a student in India”, Khemka explained.

It is a similar story when lifetime earnings are computed.

In India the salary difference over a lifetime for an international degree compared to a local one is marginal, while in Vietnam the salary difference over a lifetime can be 50% more for an international degree.

Khemka stressed that foreign institutions must provide an economic return for students.

If they cannot differentiate themselves from the bulk of private universities and secure for graduates a higher starting salary and a higher lifetime salary, it will not be possible to charge high fees.

Should the Indian government open the doors to foreign providers to set up branch campuses, he predicted there would be an “initial rush followed by big disappointment and recriminations”

Source: May 27, 2012/University World News

Internationalization of Indian Higher Education

Since times immemorial, India has always been a Center of Learning. World class universities & the “Gurukulam” model of imparting education, all have endorsed India’s unequivocal contribution to the cause of education.

The Indian higher education system has exhibited impressive growth over the last decade to become one of the world’s largest systems of higher education. In a rapidly globalizing world, it is becoming a major task of international education to

study a variety of sociopolitical, economic, developmental, and intercultural relations, at the heart of which lie issues around subalternity, diversity, language, and dialogue. In its current state, how well prepared is the field of international education to deal with these complex issues are of great importance to be studied. Through an exploration of narratives from various intellectual, cultural, and linguistic traditions, this study maintains that (a) concerns around critical dialogue and freedom of expression are universal concerns applicable into different environments and cultures; (b) such concerns need to be situated within the wider issues around diversity, multiculturalism, multilingualism, human rights, peace, and social justice; and (c) international and global education can take on this challenge by critically engaging various issues emerging from conditions of subalternity, politics of voice, and multiple identities. In addition, a variety of diasporic, multicultural, postcolonial, and global contexts also influence the outcomes. Today, the private sector is playing important role in the growth of the higher education sector, especially in the professional discipline such as engineering & management.

Higher Education is considered to be the most internationally traded commodity in the era of Globalization. Internationalization is a multi-faceted, multi-dimensional and complex concept described most notably as a higher educational process that integrates an international perspective into its organizational leadership, vision, and curricular goals. Success is dependent upon ongoing engagement of a multitude of internal and external stakeholders with an approach towards the future. Today corporate sector operates in an open, global environment wherein interactions manifest themselves differently for each individual and depend upon one's abilities to adapt to and access interpersonal and inter-organizational relationships. The intricacies of these interactions occur at multi-dimensional levels – individual, organizational and global – and present unique challenges for managers to maintain balance between independence and interdependence. Studies suggest that corporate leaders expect business schools to prepare graduates to be more competent and adaptive to these dynamic global challenges.

The proposed research study aims to understating the various theoretical concepts of Internationalization of Higher Education around the globe and in particular to Internationalization of Higher Education among the Indian higher educational institutions / universities. The purpose

of this study is to examine how key stakeholders envision their contributions in shaping internationalization strategies and how higher educational institutions should engage them in more effective, future-oriented ways. The researcher begins with the development of the concept of internationalization at higher educational institutions operational in India from stakeholder perspectives using multiple frames (e.g. academic, structural, political and cultural) and future tools to assist with recommendations and policies towards entire spectrum of interests of the stakeholders.

A near similar model to the Global Higher Education System practiced by academic institutions and operational internationally is being implemented at the focal institution of the researcher located at Pune, India. The researcher aims to study the higher education models operational nationally & globally with a view to strengthen internationalization in Indian higher education systems. Such a study is likely to facilitate evolution of a consensus model which could be replicated. Higher educational institutions in India could be sensitized to adopt standards to facilitate "Global Benchmarking". The collective experiences of this study may subsequently form the basis of a model for national policy formulation.

Source: May 27, 2012/[Dr Vidya](#)

Corruption Destroying Indian Education Sector Growth

India has got all the chances to become an education superpower but the increasing business in this sector stands as a real threat for the country to achieve this goal. The growth of education in India has been remarkable. There is a visible growth in the number of people who seek higher education now. Many institutions have come up with quality education in India. But beside these promising factors some dirty business and politics played in the education sector, spoils the education system.

Most of Indian parents have the desire to provide good education to their children. All of them prefer to send their children to the best schools that they can afford. Parents also make sure that their children are getting better education than theirs. Parents with good income are willing to spend crores for their children by sending them to foreign universities.

This strong aspiration in Indian parents is very promising. It will be a prime factor in making India an education superpower in the future. This desire in parents has increased the demand for quality education in India. Today there are a good number of schools and education institutions that fulfill the

education need of the people from all economic classes.

There has been a shift from agricultural economy to industrial and knowledge economy. This tendency has been increasing over the years. Today the numbers of people who are working in the agricultural sector have decreased very much. Even the people who own more than 15 acres of land show least interest in encouraging their children to do farming. They all prefer to send their children to towns for education.

Many families have now shifted from villages to towns. All families are looking at reaching higher positions in the class hierarchy and education of their children has given them hope for the same. It has also put forward the demand for quality education. This massive demand for high quality education increases the hope of India's education superpower goals but at the same time it provides chances for many to play dirty politics in the education sector.

On the other hand, with the increase in the number of institutions, competition has also emerged in the education sector. Institutions compete in the market to provide the most number of facilities to the students who seek education.

In between this tough competition some of the institutions have turned the focus on mere business rather than focusing on the education itself. Today market uses different strategies to attract students to the institutions and some of these have made major shift in the concept of education itself. In the business of education many parents who aspired for good education are getting cheated every day through false promises.

Source: May 28, 2012/[The Link Paper](#)

Academics lament lack of respect and reward in India

When Bakul Dholakia was a young man, he says being a teacher meant something. The former dean of the elite Indian Institute of Management-Ahmedabad says the respect that students then had for teachers rivals that which they now have for star cricketer Sachin Tendulkar.

Whether teachers and professors were so venerated can be debated, but there is no doubt the profession has fallen several notches on the list of students' preferred careers.

In a country where wealth matters more than most – if only because of its extreme shortage – being a teacher once meant making a decent living. However, as salaries for corporates sector jobs have soared and those for professors have stagnated, the respect afforded to academics – and the

subsequent desire of students to become them – seems to have done the same. A government panel said recently that India's shortage of faculty staff could be "significantly higher" than the 40 per cent widely estimated.

While the prestigious Indian Institutes of Management and Indian Institutes of Technology – which cater to less than 40,000 of India's roughly 16m college students – are largely immune to the overall shortage, even they have come under fire for lacking top-quality professors.

"There is hardly any worthwhile research from our IITs. The faculty in the IIT is not world-class. It is the students in IITs who are world-class," Jairam Ramesh, a cabinet minister and IIT alumnus told reporters last year.

Elite institutions in 'no need of top teachers'

The heads of the IITs and IIMs and others stress the need for more funding for fundamental research that will attract top-tier professors so that Indian schools are able to compete on a global level. But according to Karan Khemka, Asia head of the Parthenon Group, a US consulting group, the needs of those elite institutions are at best overstated and in general irrelevant to the broader picture of Indian higher education.

"The reason why [such institutions] can even float to where they are is the natural selectivity in India, if you can afford to select from the top 0.1 per cent of your applicant pool, you are probably going to get kids who are so motivated and so brilliant that you could not teach them [at all] for three years and they'll still come out pretty darn good," he says.

There is little point in viewing the IIMs or IITs as high quality, he says. It is the students who are high calibre. Consequently, says Mr Khemka, with such students these institutions have no need for world-class professors.

That being the case, he adds, such institutions should continue to produce world-class students, but not research.

"Can you name for me a piece of fundamental research that has come out of the IITs? So let's not talk about fundamental research at all – in fact, [in] a country like India which has one-half of the world's malnourished children, one-third of the world's poor, should we even really be thinking about fundamental research?"

As far as the rest of the higher education system is concerned, he believes, in a country where an estimated 84m young people are not in college, India needs to focus on its basic higher-level education.

The IITs and IIMs, he said, were excellent because of the quality of students.

The shortage of faculty staff has been further exacerbated because of a government pledge to double the enrolment in India's higher education system by 2020, to help meet the needs of its growing population. A lack of overall funding for the system has also meant that India has been unable to develop the sorts of world-class universities – and the incumbent fundamental research – that attracts top staff. Lower salaries and lack of research have made the shortage all the worse. How the country resolves these dual problems of the shortage of faculty staff and the dearth of world-class universities will determine whether it can realise the potential of its massive population.

The shortfall in faculty staff has its roots in the economic liberalisation of 1991. Since then, private sector salaries have increased from twice an academic's \$30,000 to sometimes more than 10 times that figure. By contrast, the average full-time business school nine-month salary in the US was \$111,084 during the 2009-2010 school year, according to AACSB, the US accrediting body.

Prof Dholakia's concerns are supported by a report this March from the Ministry of Human Resource Development's taskforce on Faculty Shortage and Design of Performance Appraisal System, which reads: "Academic careers are unattractive when compared with the other professions. Not only are academic salaries uncompetitive, there are additional constraints to attracting the best talent the social status of a teacher is not as high as it used to be in earlier decades."

As more students desire MBAs (or engineering degrees) because of the lucrative remuneration, fewer will pursue PhDs and an academic career. Those that do invariably join the private sector or go overseas to teach, leaving fewer students with the necessary qualifications to teach in India.

Solutions for public sector schools especially, according to academics, come in a few broad categories: increase fees to boost staff salaries; upgrade decrepit facilities to attract researchers; and remove constraints on academic freedom.

The first is a fiscal issue that has been solved at the elite IIMs – where fees have more than trebled in the past five years, to about \$30,000 for a two-year programme. That money – and their own prestige – has allowed universities such as IIM-Bangalore to escape the faculty-staff shortages, says the Trilochan Sastry, its dean.

"The universities are not paying well enough[but] more than that, it is the way that things are

governed: academics value freedom and some flexibility. Very often some of the systems tend to be very rule-bound and rigid," he says.

IIMs tend to have more freedom, he adds. IIM-Bangalore produces 25 doctoral students each year, many of whom are going into academia.

According to Ajit Rangnekar, dean of the private Indian School of Business, institutions should explore more creative options to recruit faculty staff and raise funding.

"The IITs and IIMs are now some 50-odd years old, which means a large portion of people from these schools have recently reached the superannuation age of 60, so there is a large talent pool of talented Indians who are probably looking at a second career," he says.

Those experienced professionals could undertake a three-month programme to "teach them to teach", says Prof Rangnekar. At the same time, he adds, "no institution in this country besides the IITs and IIMs has really harvested their alumni for funding [and] nobody has looked at courses outside of the normal curriculum for sources of funding."

Those could include, he adds, using the facilities for short-term courses, continuing professional education, and using technology and the internet to allow potential students to take classes online – allowing a teacher to teach 600 paying students.

There is also the government, whose higher education funding in the March budget was a total of \$4.74bn. In contrast, according to a World Bank study, the California Institute of Technology and Harvard University each have annual expenditures of more than \$3bn.

If India is to compete on the global stage and not lose its large talent pool to international institutions and the private sector, it must invest more in giving teachers the respect that Prof Dholakia remembers from his youth.

Source: May 28, 2012/[Financial Express](#)

A Socratic lesson on the future of teaching

I'M writing this from the seat of democracy – Athens, Greece – where I'm watching demonstrations first hand and giving an address on the future of higher education.

In his introduction to my address, the conference chairman reminds us that Socrates was sentenced to death for educating young people in what was considered the wrong way. I smile nervously and wonder whether what I'm about to do and say will be considered the right way.

Today, I'm speaking alongside colleagues from Israel, the United States, Saudi Arabia and Hong

Kong. We've also heard speakers from Japan, China, Latvia, Canada, Germany, Iran and elsewhere.

Many of the issues in vastly different countries and higher education systems are remarkably similar.

These include tensions, for example, in the view that higher education should not necessarily be tied to labour market outcomes, alongside the view that graduates should be able to expect to get jobs. The dilemma that higher education must rely on industry to employ graduates, but cannot be beholden to the demands of employers alone, has also been considered.

Bigger tensions have also been discussed. These include global versus national interests and how higher education should best serve both these. International and transnational education have been discussed in this context. Whether both best serve the West and dominant cultures or developing nations and their interests is passionately debated. The rise of higher education in India and China is duly noted, along with the "democratisation" of higher education.

Technology and its contribution to revolutionising higher education has been a major focus. There is no clear consensus as to whether this is a positive or negative development. In one paper, we hear research evidence that for traditional students the use of technology, and particularly of Facebook, is a distraction from learning. In the next, the speaker refers nonchalantly to the 80,000 online students on the books at her university and shares findings on the perceived value of e-textbooks.

Technology is a game-changer in higher education. Witness the popularity and impact of Udacity, for example. However, consider also the attrition rate of the Udacity pre-cursor course at Stanford, where there were 160,000 users but only 25,000 completed the program. We are in our collective infancy here but there should be no doubt of the magnitude of the change upon us.

Reflecting on the conference discussions, I'm struck by the focus on society's needs and the greater good of higher education. The language of markets is everywhere and the interest in the economics of it all is very strong, and not only among the Greek hosts.

But I'm also struck by the realisation that we seem to have a worldwide, collective blind spot to the positioning of academic staff.

I sense a growing irritation and impatience with academics perceived to be resistant to technological and other change in this tidal wave that has hit us. We hear the need is urgent for teaching staff to move from being a "sage on the

stage" to a "guide on the side", a facilitator, a broker of knowledge using the internet and other sources.

Yet university teaching staff must embrace technological and other changes while retaining a critical stance on doing so. We should expect no less of them. Their questions are valid and as yet, largely unanswered. What are the pedagogical arguments and evidence to support the changes? Where is the high quality professional development and support for teaching in new ways? What technical support arrangements are in place? What does all of this all mean for academics' workload, and for recognition and reward?

A member of the academic workforce in his time, Socrates might have avoided the hemlock had he stopped asking questions and ceased being a critic. But what would have been the point of that?

Source: May 28, 2012/[The Age](#)

Govt. must rethink policies to resolve crisis in Higher Education

In a candid interview with MBAUniverse.com, Mohandas Pai shares his views on the current crisis in higher education. He says that quality will decide the fate of educational institution in a free market. He also advocates more liberalized environment in higher Education.

More freedom and autonomy should be granted to established educational institutions and they should be given complete freedom to create capacity and expand without any approval from the government.

Q: There is a crisis in Indian Higher education today... On one hand government is talking about massive increase in the number of Universities, on the other hand many private institutions are struggling to fill their seats. Recruiters complain for lack of talent pool. How do you look at the state of affair.

A: It is true that we have succeeded in creating capacity in higher education space, which is mostly in private sector, but the crisis is due to poor quality of education in most of the institutes. On an average, the quality of education offered by Indian Universities and institutes is below par. This is setting in motion a chain reaction of low employability, and low demand.

The reasons for sub-standard quality of Indian higher education are many: poor faculty quality, poor infrastructure, poor marketing and so on.

One of the key reasons for the current state of affairs is muddled government policies for the education sector. We need to rethink the current paradigm.

Q: What's wrong with the current education policies?

A: Fundamentally, our education policies promote license raj in the education sector. They want to strangulate quality-focused higher education institutes by controlling their seats. If quality higher education institutes are not allowed to expand freely, it creates an artificial scarcity for seats, where fly-by-night players benefit.

We need to ask the regulators that why shouldn't a nationally & internationally recognized institute, which has successfully existed for say 15-20 years, be allowed to freely increase its intake. Institutes & Universities can better read the market situation, and take decisions. But the current regime calls for approvals & sanctions every year!

This License Raj favors a few unscrupulous players, and breeds corruption.

One needs to ask, why after more than 50 years of existence, do IIMs only offer such limited number of seats. Till recently, the intake for IIM Ahmedabad or Kolkata was just 200-300 candidates per year. ISB has scaled to 600+ students per year in just 10 years! So again, we are creating artificial scarcity of quality education that breeds fly-by-night operators.

Q: Government has brought a number of education bills which are pending in parliament. Do you think that the bills are in the right direction?

A: I feel that the bills are lopsided and are going to make thing worse. The different bills related to higher education seeks to control the higher education even further. The bills also aim to centralize the authority in Delhi, and diminish the role of the State.

The bills will create more corruption. They will not solve the current crisis.

Q: How do you see the role of HRD ministry in present circumstances?

A: With so much to do, and so little time, the HRD Ministry is a very important portfolio, and requires a Minister who can exclusively focus on the education policy issues. So far our hopes of a better future have been belied.

The focus of HRD ministry should be to support, and promote quality institutes and universities. Only if we have large number of quality institutes, will the problem be solved. Government should certainly have an oversight on the sector, but must not over-regulate it.

Q: What is the possible solution to this scenario?

A: Bringing in quality to the programs is the only solution. The institutions in higher education should

bring in good faculty; they should focus on research and restructure the courses to make them relevant. If an institute can't bring in these essential elements, they should shut their shop! Quality is key.

Today students are more empowered with their exposure to social media and online media for information. As the huge capacity has been created in the higher education space, students also have large number of options and they can shop for whichever programme they want to pursue. Therefore the institutions should themselves decide whether they want to survive or die. If they have to survive they will have to invest on quality and take it to a basic standard level.

Q: Moving on, how do you see the state of management education in our country?

A: As an important component of higher education, Management education also suffers from the crisis and needs a revamp in our country. Majority of over 3000 B-schools in the country being in private sector must understand the demand in the market. If they can't provide the quality offering to the students, they should be shutting their shop. Either they have to be competitive or they will be wiped out from the market automatically.

But I must add that Top 10 per cent of our B-schools are very good. They are excellent at teaching, if not research.

On the whole, there are a number of inadequacies in Management education where the B-schools should focus. For example, not enough research is being done and there is absence of India-specific case studies. We are still following case studies from the Harvard and other institutions in western countries, which are not much relevant to the Indian culture and its market.

We need to develop our own learning material that is rooted in our culture. An HR 'theory' that works well in west, many a times fails in India. So understanding the context is very important. After all, management is not an exact science. It's an art too.

Q: Recently, AICTE has announced some new measures related to admissions, day-to-day functioning of PGDM institutes. B-schools have questioned the notification and gone to court. How do you see this scenario.

A: I am aware of the AICTE-B-schools controversy. The AICTE should not interfere much into how institutions should run their programmes. If AICTE generalizes its policies, it will hurt quality institutions which are doing great service to the nation. The government body needs to be much more careful in its approach. It should facilitate the

quality education and not take unnecessary measures which curb the growth of institutions.

Q: Finally, do you think Indian education brand can be a global brand, at least for the emerging markets?

A: feel that many Indian institutions have great potential of becoming global institutions. Top 10 percentile of institutes in India are very good in quality. They are not research based but they are providing quality education at a reasonable cost. Therefore, India is amongst the best options for students from the developing countries.

If we see the statistics, the approximate number of foreign students in some of the countries like US, UK, Germany is much higher than India. While the US annually attracts approximately 6,50,000 students, the numbers in UK is 370,000. Australia and Germany gets over 2,60,000 students each per year. Contrast this to 25,000 foreign students in India. So, there is a great opportunity for growth in this area.

I think government should take some measure to encourage students from abroad to join Indian institutions. They can take some initiatives to establish India as a hub of education at affordable cost. This needs to be pushed by some initiatives like offering scholarships to student coming from abroad.

Source: May 28, 2012/[MBA Universe](#)

IIT Merit List to be Based on Advance Exam Subsequent to Screening

After a process of deliberations and consultations spanning over two years, a meeting of the Joint Councils of Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), National Institutes of Technology (NITs), Indian Institutes of Information Technology (IIITs) and other Central Educational Institutions approved the conduct of a common admission examination process with weightage to performance in the Class XII Board examinations in its meeting today which was presided over by the Minister for Human Resource Development, Communications & IT, Shri Kapil Sibal.

The multiplicity of entrance examinations that a student intending to pursue a course in engineering has to appear for has been a cause of concern to society. The burden imposed on the students in terms of time, payment of examination fees and the stress caused in scheduling and preparing for each examination is tremendous. The students have to perforce restrict their choice of institutions for which they can compete. We have been working on reforms in the examination system by moving towards a common national test

to reduce the burden on the students and at the same time preserving the autonomy of the State Governments and institutions in devising its admission process.

Another serious problem with the present system is the neglect of the Class XII examination process while admitting students to engineering institutions. This has led to the almost complete disregard to the secondary school system and neglect of education imparted in schools impacting quality and access. Parents and children have been forced to seek access to outside-the-school instruction methods to enable the student to prepare for the multitude of entrance examinations. The proposed reform attempts to bring focus back to the schooling system by giving weightage to performance in Class XII Board examinations normalized on percentile basis. The reform would, in the longer term, have an impact on the quality of secondary education and enable better quality access.

The Joint Councils of IITs, NITs & IIITs considered various views that had emerged during the process of consultations. A strong body of opinion amongst the members of the Council was that the importance of the schooling system has to be revived in the larger public interest by giving due weightage to the performance of students in the Class XII Board examinations and at the same time maintaining the credibility and integrity of admissions to higher educational institutions. After detailed deliberations following consensus emerged:-

(i) A Joint Entrance Examination for admission to the undergraduate programmes in engineering would be conducted in two parts, JEE-MAIN and JEE-ADVANCED.

(ii) The Class XII Board/equivalent marks normalized on percentile basis through an appropriate formula plus the marks obtained in the JEE-MAIN examination, with equal weightage, would be used by IITs for purposes of gating/screening. Only a fixed number of candidates (five times the number of the seats for admission in the IIT system or a pre-fixed cut-off) screened on the basis of merit assessed on the basis of cumulative score of normalized School Board marks and performance in JEE-MAIN examination would be eligible to be considered for admission. The ranking for admission to undergraduate programmes in IITs would be based entirely on the performance in the JEE-ADVANCED examination from amongst the candidates screened through this process.

(iii) For all other Centrally Funded Institutions, there would be 40% weightage for performance in Class XII Board marks normalized on percentile basis

through an appropriate formula, 30% weightage for performance in JEE-MAIN and 30% weightage in JEE-ADVANCED and a combined merit decided accordingly.

(iv) JEE-MAIN tests shall be multiple choice objective type paper whereas the nature and modalities of the JEE-ADVANCED shall be determined by the Joint Admission Board of IITs.

(v) The proposed changes will be effective from the year 2013 and both CFTIs and CBSE would work jointly.

(vi) The Joint Admission Board (JAB) of the IIT system would have complete control on matters such as paper setting, evaluation and preparation of the merit list, etc. over the JEE-ADVANCED and CBSE would provide the administrative support for conduct of the examination. For the conduct of the JEE-MAIN examination an expanded Joint Admission Board shall be constituted including the NIT system, other CFTIs and State Government representatives in an appropriate manner. CBSE will provide the administrative and logistic support for the conduct of JEE-MAIN examination across the country.

(vii) The process of establishing co-ordination between CBSE & JAB-IITs for implementation of the core curriculum in sciences and maths across the CBSE, ICSE and State Boards shall be put in place immediately.

(viii) Those students who have appeared in the Class XII Board examinations in 2012 and wish to improve upon their performance can appear again for the Board examinations in 2013. CBSE and State Boards would make appropriate arrangements to facilitate this through a special dispensation.

(ix) The transparency processes established by the IIT system presently and in AIEEE-2012 shall be adopted for the JEE-MAIN and JEE-ADVANCED too.

A meeting of State Education Ministers' is proposed for 5th June where the participation of States in the common national test process would be deliberated upon. States would have the freedom to join in the process and have the autonomy to determine their own relative weightages to normalized Class XII Board marks, performance in JEE-MAIN and JEE-ADVANCED.

Source: May 28, 2012/[PIB](#)

B-schools: Impact of online education

Recent developments in higher education have prompted some experts to opine that the field is ripe for cataclysmic changes. The expected changes are tied to Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), and they can have a far-reaching effect

on institutions of higher learning, including business schools. For Indian business schools, these developments herald likely threats as well as unique opportunities to enhance the quality of Indian management education.

The MOOC factor

Open online courses are not new; however, the recent version of MOOCs is a force to reckon with because it is offered by the best universities in the world, free of charge. For example, these include EDx initiated by Harvard and MIT, and Coursera (started by a couple of Stanford professors) which offers courses taught by awardwinning faculty from University of Pennsylvania, University of Michigan, Princeton University, and Stanford University.

These MOOCs are not simply recorded lectures; rather, they offer instructor interaction with students, student-to-student communication, virtual laboratories, and e-text books. Further, like traditional courses, they require student registration, have a defined start and end date (typically spread over many weeks), require the completion of assignments, have grading systems, and provide a certificate of completion.

Impact on business schools

Currently, there are only a few "business" courses offered in MOOC programmes such as Edx and Coursera. However, as new courses become available to anybody, anywhere in the world, there will be direct and indirect effects for business schools in India and the rest of the world.

Impact on course quality

For the top-ranked business schools, these free MOOCs taught by master teachers will set new standards of quality, be it course content or delivery. MBA students will have access to these free MOOCs and they will become the basis of comparison to the courses they are enrolled in. Student expectations will likely rise and faculty will be forced to respond to these new benchmarks of excellence. This will lead to improvements in the quality and currency of course content, as well as teaching efficacy.

Impact on curriculum

Business schools that lack sufficient faculty (which is an ongoing problem in India) to offer a wide variety of courses may consider allowing students to complete a course or two from a pre-determined set of MOOCs, and these courses would count to the student's degree. In fact, initial data from Coursera indicate that the reason most students enroll in MOOCs is because their universities do not offer the courses in question.

Impact on MDPS

Management development programmes (MDPs) are short (2-3 days) courses that executives use to update their skills, and are often very profitable for business schools. Tomorrow's MOOCs could include shorter versions that will compete head to head with MDPs. Given that these MOOCs are free, available in the comfort of the executive's home, and provide the ability to interact with a world-renowned expert, business schools may need to rethink their MDP model. They will need to provide new value-added features (probably , focusing on features outside course content and delivery) so that high priced MDPs can compete successfully with the free MOOC option. Overall, the arrival of MOOC programmes from globally topranked schools can be a catalyst that produces broad positive changes in Indian management education, including higher quality in course content, course currency, course delivery , and possibly an expanded selection of courses.

Source: May 29, 2012/[Times of India](http://timesofindia.com)

IIT coaching vs classrooms: Sibal has to improve schooling first

The new common entrance test for national technical institutions such as IITs, NITs and IIITs, will at least partially bring back the importance of class room education and render a big blow to the mega buck IIT coaching-industry that has grown exponentially over the years.

At the same time, the emphasis on the marks of class 12 exams might lead to a new rat-race that might benefit private capital and endanger the aspirations of poor and rural kids.

For millions of children in the country, IITs and NITs carry a hallowed premium because they are the only options for public funded world-class higher education. Since the admission to these institutions are based only on objective type entrance tests, a large number of school children, often with the connivance of school managements, abandon class room education and end up in coaching classes.

The coaching classes, synonymous with some institutions in Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan and Bihar with high hit-rates as well as a national network, put the kids through a gruelling drill spanning two-three years to crack the test.

The focus at these institutions is not on academics or learning the subject well, but on correctly answering as many questions as possible. They train the kids in a process, not necessarily on what that process is based on.

The new common entrance test for national technical institutions such as IITs, NITs and IIITs, will at least partially bring back the importance of class room education. AFP

The Joint Entrance Examination, better known as JEE, is the toughest engineering entrance test in the country. The test is so competitive that a candidate correctly answering even 35% of the questions in 2012 have found entry into the rank list, although it doesn't necessarily guarantee admission. The five old IITs have consistently topped the engineering institutions in the country and together form the citadel that at least half a million competitive teenagers fantasise about every year.

Of late, experts have expressed serious concerns over the plunging quality of the students of IITs, which have benchmarked or rather branded excellence of Indian technical education across the world. Former Infosys chairman NR Narayanamurthy said last year that "they (the candidates) somehow get through the JEE but their performance in IITs, at jobs or when they come for higher education in institutes in the US is not as good as it used to be."

Speaking at the Pan-IIT summit in New York in October 2011, he also said that except for the top 20 percent who crack the tough IIT exam and can stand among the best anywhere in the world, the quality of the remaining 80 percent of students leaves much to be desired.

He singularly blamed the coaching classes for the debacle. "Thanks to the coaching classes today, the quality of students entering IITs has gone lower and lower."

Murthy should know because Infosys hires a large number of students from IITs.

Today, many schools have outsourced their classrooms to private IIT training franchisees, that too at a huge premium leading to the creation of two classes of students in the same school – those who can afford the exclusive IIT-training classes within the school itself and the others who stay back in regular classrooms. Needless to say, most of the privileged zones within the schools are air-conditioned and plush while the rest are cattle-class.

The private classes are mostly run by the faculty of the franchisees and not the school teachers. This system pushes trained and qualified school teachers, who are non-JEE compliant, into teaching the second-class students. Students of this upper class parallel system may score well in JEE, but their CBSE/board (class 12) marks take a beating.

However archaic the curriculum may be, class XII education is the foundation on which the future

academics of children depend. Even with all its drawbacks, it sets the baseline for knowledge on the subjects the children choose to pursue. Compromising on them often compromises the quality of excellence in higher education. It could be one of the reasons why our IITs produce fewer PhDs, as highlighted by Murthy.

The new JEE is in fact an attempt to arrest the coaching-industry driven slide towards cracking entrance tests as well as to reduce the multiple tests that the children need to take. The new system will give equal weightage for class 12 marks and will also integrate exams for IITs, NITs and IIITs into a single enterprise.

For the IITs, the admission will give equal weightage to the class 12 marks and the JEE. However, the students will have to take two JEE – first the preliminary and then the advanced JEE.

In simple words, students who take the JEE will be initially evaluated with 50 percent weightage for class 12 and 50 percent for the entrance exam.

A fixed number of students (say, five times the admissible number) will be selected through this process and will be asked to write an advanced JEE. The candidates who top this test will find admission to the IITs. While the preliminary JEE will be objective, the nature of the advanced JEE is yet to be decided.

For other institutions such as NITs and IIITs, it will be a 40/30/30 formula. Means 40 percent for class XII, 30 percent for JEE and another 30 percent for advanced JEE.

Besides compelling students to focus on subject matter, the new system will also reduce the entrance burden on the kids. Now they write two very competitive tests – JEE and AIEEE, for admission into IITs and NITs. Next year onwards, they got to write only one JEE.

The main opposition to the new formula has come from coaching institutions such as the "Super 30" in Bihar, which has set a global example for training poor, rural students in cracking the JEE.

Anand Kumar, the founder of the centre with a near 100 percent success rate, said the new format will put rural students at a great disadvantage.

He said that the new system will force the students to undergo three types of coaching – one for the preliminary, another for advanced-JEE and the third for class 12 itself. While his argument is based only on the contestable indispensability of coaching, he is right on the quality of schooling.

According to him, rural areas do not have good quality schools that will ensure that they get good marks in class 12.

Perhaps, the new exam will be the beginning of a tectonic shift in the purpose and quality of school education in India. The premium on school leaving marks will lead to a huge demand for good schooling. If Kapil Sibal is indeed sincere in improving the quality of education this is the time to work at it.

He needs to instantly look at improving the quality of school education, which will require massive government investment and reforms.

Otherwise, as happened in higher and technical education in the recent past, private sector will find a more lucrative market in school education and will push millions of poor and rural kids out of the system.

The detractors might even allege that the new JEE is a ploy to make school education more attractive to private investment, which will definitely sound the death knell for poor and rural students.

It's only the deeds of Kapil Sibal and his team that will be able to answer these allegations. They should ensure that while they seek to improve one part of the system, there is intimate attention paid to the complex changes that it might lead to because social transformations are not easy and there are no short cuts.

Source: May 29, 2012/[First post](#)

Need To Redefine Literacy

Literacy needs to be redefined in the context of 21st century requirements, keeping in mind the huge advances in technology. This was stated by Shri Kapil Sibal, Union Minister for Human Resource Development, while inaugurating the '4th International Policy Dialogue Forum on teacher challenges for EFA' here today. He also called upon UNESCO to take a lead towards this effort. The Minister also inaugurated a walk-in-exhibition for showcasing contemporary approach to teacher education in India.

Shri Sibal underlined that in India while a lot has been done in the field of education, a lot needs to be done in regions where challenges are the greatest. In this manner can we prevent demographic advantage turning into a demographic disaster, he added. He said that we need to strategize for less advantaged regions. He pointed out we need to redefine the role of teachers, to empower the students so that they are skilled to get jobs as they leave the school.

The minister stated that challenges regarding quality teachers can be overcome by creating of pool of pedagogy. Data banks with high quality teacher education material can be set up which can be accessed by all. He also suggested that a pool of

high quality teachers could be created whose teaching can be web cast. He also stated that a system of evaluation for teachers, which could be in the form of self evaluation, is required so that teachers can enhance their skills.

The Conference was also addressed by Smt. Anshu Vaish, Secretary, School Education and Literacy and Mr. Joao Cravinho, Ambassador and Head of Delegation (Delegation of the European Union to India), and Mr. Shigeru Aoyagi, Director and UNESCO (Representative to India, Bhutan.). Shri Ashok Thakur, Secretary Department of Higher Education gave vote of thanks .

The International Task Force on Teachers for Education for All (UNESCO) and the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India are jointly organizing the International Conference on Teacher Challenges for Education for All in India from 29th-30th May 2012 at New Delhi. This will focus specifically on Teacher Challenges for Education for All in India and will provide a platform for discussion on the following six areas:

1. Continuing professional development of teachers in India
2. Decentralization: challenges and steps forward
3. Feminization of the teacher force
4. Public-private partnerships to address the teacher gap
5. Inclusive education for children with special needs
6. Monitoring & Evaluation

The objective of the policy dialogue forum is to deliberate on the aforementioned six areas and the issues that fall under their premise with a view to generate recommendations that could inform future policy decisions at the central and the state levels.

Eminent Indian Professionals on Teacher Education would be leading the discussions on the identified themes. In addition the conference will bring together a wide range of stakeholders from non-governmental and civil society organizations at the national level as well as participants and experts from over 45 countries and international organizations. There will be an opportunity for sharing policy related experience with other participants to generate recommendations to inform policy decisions in the field of teacher education.

The selected themes for the international conference are of special relevance to us in India especially in view of the revised teacher education project that has been approved by the Government

of India for implementation during the 12th Plan (2012-17).

Source: May 29, 2012/[PIB](#)

RESOURCE

Higher education linked to longer life, CDC report shows

Education may not only improve a person's finances, it is also linked to better health habits and a longer life.

For instance, people who have a bachelor's degree or higher live about nine years longer than those who don't graduate from high school, according to an annual report, out today, from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Health Statistics. Some of the health data reached back a decade or more.

Gina Lundberg, a preventive cardiologist in Atlanta, says a shorter life expectancy among less-educated people has been consistent for the last few decades.

The study found that in 2010, 31% of adults ages 25 to 64 with a high school diploma or less were currently smoking, compared with 24% of those who had some college and 9% with a bachelor's degree.

"Highly educated people tend to have healthier behaviors, avoid unhealthy ones and have more access to medical care when they need it," says the report's lead author, Amy Bernstein, a health services researcher for the National Center for Health Statistics. "All of these factors are associated with better health."

The report also found that in 2010 24% of boys and 22% of girls were obese in households where the heads of the family had less than a high school education; the figures are 11% of boys and 7% of girls where the head of the household had a bachelor's degree or higher.

Poor people sometimes live in less healthy communities with less access to healthy foods and places to be physically active, Bernstein says. "It's all interconnected."

Source: May 16, 2012/[USA Today](#)

India Ranks 48 in Universities21 Ranking of National Higher Education Systems List

India ranks 48 in U21 Ranking of National Higher Education Systems list. US topped the U21 Ranking of National Higher Education Systems list. Survey was done on the basis of 4 parameters like resources, environment, etc.

India's higher education system has been ranked 48 out of as many countries and territories while

the United States expectedly topped the list in a study by Universities 21, a global network of research universities.

The U21 Ranking of National Higher Education Systems lists countries 'best' at providing higher education. The parameters are divided into four categories: output (research and its impact, as well as the production of an educated workforce which meets labour market needs) - 40% weightage, resources (investment by government and private sector) - 25%, environment (government policy and regulation, diversity and participation opportunities) - 25% and connectivity (international networks and collaboration which protects a system against insularity) - 10%. The research also factored in population size.

After the US, overall, the top five countries "nominally" providing the 'best' tertiary-level education include Sweden, Canada, Finland and Denmark. "However, broken down into the smaller sections, it was interesting to see that the US, traditionally seen as a country with one of the strongest education systems, did not always hit the top spot. Government funding of higher education as a percentage of GDP is highest in Finland, Norway and Denmark. Taking private expenditure into account changed this significantly: on that measure funding is highest in the United States, South Korea, Canada and Chile, unsurprising, given the structure in these counties," say the authors of the study carried out at the University of Melbourne.

For international research collaboration, China, India, Japan and the US are in the bottom 25% of countries.

Rank	Country	Score
1	US	100
2	Sweden	83.6
3	Canada	82.8
4	Finland	82
5	Denmark	81
6	Switzerland	80.3
7	Norway	78
8	Australia	77.8
9	Netherlands	77.4
10	UK	76.8

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

Majority of Indian students pursue career irrelevant to their Education / abilities

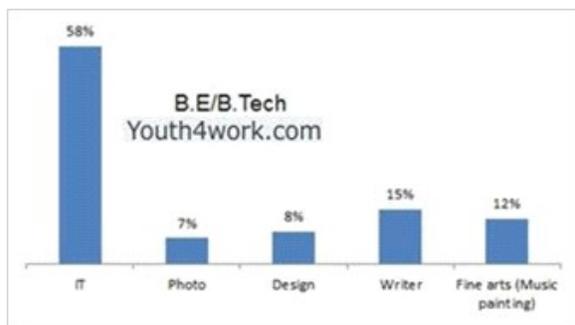
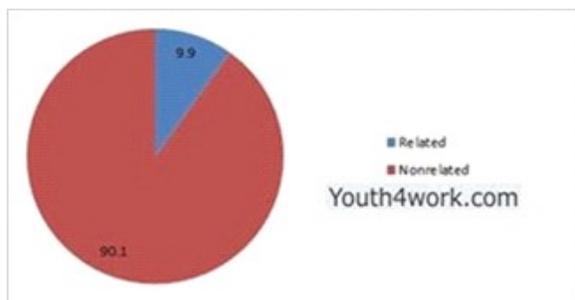
Here is a surprising (or not so) statistic for you – A mere 10% of engineering students pursue a career in engineering, while 90% of them move on to other career streams, mostly IT. Similarly, only 16% of BA/BSc students actually pursue careers in their respective subjects.

These are the findings of the study conducted by Youth4work.com, a portal that allows users to work on projects and build professional profiles even for offbeat careers.

The survey, conducted based on 4000+ profiles on the youth4work website, finds majority of the students do not want to make career in their respective field. For example, 58% of all engineering students have opted for IT careers. Also, a lot of students pursue management studies after their engineering studies rendering most accumulated knowledge to waste.

Highlights of Youth4Work Survey

BE/B. Tech Students



Highlights

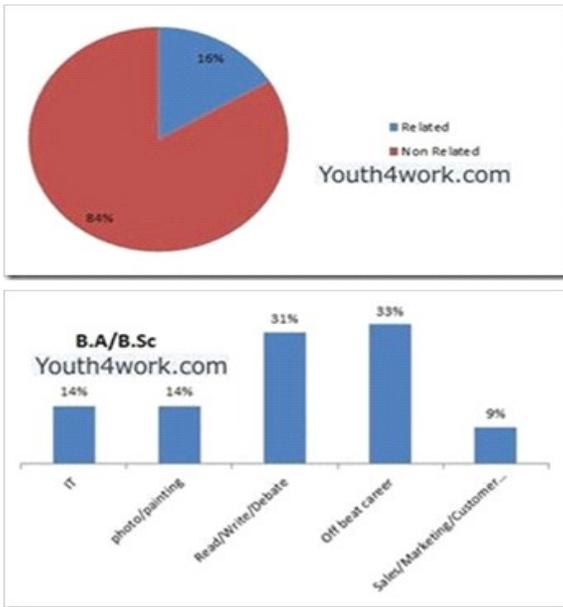
- 90% of engineering students are not making career in their engineering background.
- Majority of engineering students (58%) making career in IT sector. Heavy demand, attractive compensation and open for all branches make IT a top choice.
- Jobs which can be done at home or computer are more popular among engineers. Creative, content,

poem and blog writing etc. are some popular domains.

- Cricket is the most popular game but students don't prefer sports as a full time career.
- 12% students show inclination towards music, painting, sketching.

**Total sample size: 1475, Related Students: 146, Nonrelated: 1329. | Students in IT: 398, Photography: 47, Design: 58, Writing: 100, Fine Arts: 82, Total unique students in nonrelated fields: 685*

BA/BSc Students



Highlights:

- Only 16% of BA/BSc students are perusing career in their subjects.
- Majority of candidates go for offbeat careers like Politics, event management, media planner, concept artist, clothes designer.
- IT sector and Photography, Painting, Adobe photoshop and other 2D and 3D talents consumes 14% of the BA and BSc graduates.
- Writing, Reading, Speaking and Debate related career are one of the most popular among art and Science graduates.
- Sales, marketing and customer relation attracts approximately 9% of students.

**Total Students: 368, Related Students: 60, Nonrelated Students: 308 | Students in IT: 27, Photography, Painting & animation: 61, Students in offbeat careers: 65, Students in sales, marketing and customer relations: 17, Total students in nonrelated areas: 197.*

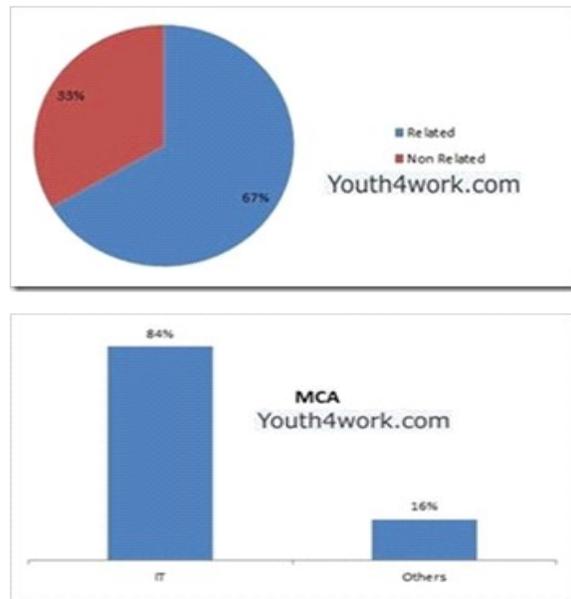
MCA Students

Highlights:

- MCA students are the most faithful to their subjects. 67% are choosing the career related to their studies and rest of 33%.
- 84% of the MCA students prefer to make their career in IT sector and related areas.
- Remaining 16% go for other careers.

**Total Students: 215, No. of related students: 143, No. of nonrelated students: 72 | Students in IT Sector: 73, Students in other sectors: 14. Total sample size: 87.*

BBA/B Com/BCA Students



Highlights:

- Only 15% of Commerce, business and administration studies students works in their related fields and remaining 85% go for other career like IT, writing, animation etc.
- IT sector is again the top recruiter here followed by career related to writing and reading skills with 22%.
- Courses like Photography, 3D animation are quite popular among business and commerce students.
- Sports is a major highlight and 12% students want to pursue sports as a career.

**Total students: 299, Total students in BCom/BBA in related areas: 45, Total students in non-related areas: 254 | Student in IT sector: 37, Sports: 14, Photography & animation: 22, writing career: 25, Music/Dance/Movie making: 18*

The report clearly suggests that IT/Software is what most students are tilted towards, even though they



may not have got the ability or education to back it. The main motivation to opt for that branch obviously is money.

Source: May 17, 2012/[Trak](#)

Business Schools: Looking Local for a Global Reach

NEW YORK — Alix Chen earned a scholarship to HEC Paris, a top business school, and then turned it down. Instead, she chose the Shanghai branch of the [China Europe International Business School](#), or CEIBS, in her home country.

Students at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, where the number of applicants from North America and Europe doubled between 2006 and 2010. The students are playing with giant Jenga blocks meant to represent a marine balance.

Ms. Chen, a 29-year-old third-year marketing student from Zhejiang Province, is planning to pursue a career in China and did not want to miss out on opportunities by being away for three years.

“The economy here is booming and changing so fast — I was afraid I would lose so much if I left for so long,” she said by telephone.

Business schools in developing nations are getting more attention from both domestic and foreign students.

Thomas Hyland, an American who began his career at Goldman Sachs in San Francisco, decided to attend the Indian School of Business in Hyderabad with the intention of starting a venture capital fund in [India](#).

“For me and for a lot of foreign students, it is the entry strategy into this market,” he said. “India is a tough place to show up from the outside and try to do business. So much of business and daily life here depends on relationships.”

Prospective business school students are starting to look beyond traditional destinations in the West. And those who are originally from the BRIC developing nations —Brazil, Russia, India and China — are increasingly exploring the possibilities at home.

This group already has a name. In a column for [University World News](#) last month, one higher education specialist, Rahul Choudaha, called them “glocal students,” or “people who have global aspirations, but need to stay local.”

Meanwhile, the number of Westerners studying at BRIC programs is rising, though the total number is still low. According to the [Graduate Management Admission Test](#), the number of U.S., Canadian and

West European students sending GMAT scores to programs in BRIC nations increased from 381 in 2007 to 639 in 2011.

In 2007, Brazilian business schools received only 12 GMAT test reports from outside the country. In 2011, that number rose to 58, about one for every five candidates.

In 2009, China made the list of top-10 countries to which American GMAT test-takers sent scores for the first time.

At the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, the number of applicants from North America and Europe more than doubled between 2006 and 2010.

“The exodus from Asia to the West is far less pronounced, and as schools like ours grow in reputation, it’s actually a reverse trend, where we are seeing Westerners come here,” said Steven J. DeKrey, senior associate dean at HKUST. “In 2001 our business school only had 16 nationalities and almost all of them were Asian, with only a couple exceptions. Now we are at 28 nationalities and half are from outside of Asia.”

The United States remains the top M.B.A. destination for students from BRIC countries. Still, the demand for Western degrees is leveling off, while demand for local programs is showing signs of rising. The number of score reports sent by BRIC citizens to home country programs grew 50 percent between 2007 and 2011.

The allure of better job prospects in the emerging markets, particularly China, is frequently cited as a major factor.

India, China and Brazil are ranked in the top 10 countries to have the largest expected increases in M.B.A.-related jobs over the next 12 months, according to the [2011-2012 QS TopMBA.com Jobs and Salary Trends Report](#)

In India, job openings for M.B.A. holders increased 43 percent from 2009 to 2010. During that same time period, similar job opportunities increased in Brazil by 25 percent, in Russia by 22 percent and in China by 19 percent.

Comparatively, M.B.A. graduate hiring in the United States increased 9 percent between 2009 and 2010 and only 3 percent in Western Europe.

According to a GMAT study, the majority of Indians who chose to stay home intended to pursue work in India. They also cited affordability as a top factor.

Tuition at the Indian Institute of Management in Ahmedabad is \$38,000. An M.B.A. at an American business school can cost about \$100,000. But students who choose to study in China seem less

motivated by cost and more by career opportunities.

American and European M.B.A. programs are responding to these changes by internationalizing their curriculums, expanding their study-abroad options, offering joint degrees with foreign campuses and recruiting students from developing nations.

“We go to those countries multiple times a year to market the program, to interview candidates, and we’ll be back in the spring, summer, fall time frame in all of those countries,” said Ankur Kumar, director of M.B.A. admissions and financial aid at The Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania.

Students are also drawn by the improving quality of M.B.A. programs in developing nations.

When The Financial Times first began ranking M.B.A. programs in 1999, 20 of the top 25 schools were based in the United States; this year, that figure was 13.

While BRIC nations had no representation in the top 25 in 1999, there are now four programs that make the cut:

The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (No. 6) [The Indian Institute of Management - Ahmedabad](#) (No. 11), the [Indian School of Business](#) (No. 13) and [CEIBS](#)(No. 17).

Top programs in China, India, Brazil and Russia have been around only since the 1990s and are just now developing the faculty and facilities needed to compete for top international students.

“High-end applicants will not take a risk for an M.B.A., because they need a brand name,” said Dr. DeKrey of HKUST.

“It’s very hard to reconcile an option of a top-10 Western school unless you can get comparable or close to quality brand in Asia.

Because we are now able to make that argument, we are now on the list of those best applicants.”

Source: May 17, 2012/[NY Times](#)

Expenditure on Education

The percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) spent on education during 2009-10 is 3.85%. The expenditure on education in India was Rs. 235996.22 crore (BE) during 2009-10. As per the figures published by UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS) in its publication titled, “Global Education Digest 2011”, contribution of education in Gross Domestic Product in some of other countries were U.S.A. (5.5%), U.K. (5.4%), Japan (3.4%), Australia (4.4%), Russian Federation (4.1%),

Egypt (3.8%), Azerbaijan (2.8%), Georgia (3.2%), Tajikistan (3.5%), Hong Kong SAR of China. (4.5%), Thailand (4.1%) , Peru (2.5%), Jamaica (6.2%), Pakistan (2.7%), Bangladesh (2.4%), Ethiopia (5.5%), United Republic of Tanzania (6.8%) and Zambia (0.8%) during 2009.

During XI Plan, a substantial increase was made in Central Plan Allocation to augment the funds for education sector. This substantial increase in Central Plan Outlay for Education represents a very substantial effort on the part of the Central Government towards raising public spending on education.

This information was given by the Minister of State for Human Resource Development, Shri E. Ahamed, in written reply to a question in Lok Sabha today.

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

Can University-Corporate Partnerships Grow Your Higher Education Business?

“New Research Finally Reveals Why University-Corporate Partnerships Present a Golden Opportunity for the Business of Higher Education”

The new research on university-corporate partnerships, reveals a number of interesting findings about the role university and industry collaborations play in growing the business of continuing and higher education.

The report goes beyond primary research though. The 16 page in-depth analysis unveils a number of conclusions that are sure to interest anyone debating the viability of university-corporate partnerships as a means to grow their higher education business.

The budget crisis that the higher education industry is currently experiencing, and it’s obvious that universities and colleges need more money coming in, if they are to successfully alleviate the pressure stemming from state and federal funding cuts.

And by the way, these university-corporate partnership we are talking about are the rare kind in which all stakeholders can come out on top. But to do it right, there remain a few important considerations to remember before you try to put theory into action. So here’s what to look out for when considering corporate partnerships with your university:

What Hurdles Exist to University-Corporate Partnerships and Growing Your Higher Education Business?

In addition to identifying attractive new market segments for higher education institutions in a time of dire need, this new research goes one step

further. After all, if there's room for improvement in the university-corporate partnership market, there is also a reason why we are currently falling short, right? So it's refreshing to finally see a research report that adds a lot of context to the numbers, by exploring the backdrop of current barriers to corporate-university partnerships.

Industry should have more input into what subjects and materials are covered in college and university courses.

Not enough healthcare administration type associate degrees are available through partnerships.

Students need way more emphasis on digital skills, beyond basic computer skills.

Actually, the whole report includes in-depth analysis of eye-opening statistics. It highlights general trends as well as insightful individual anecdotes.

This exclusive new research on university-corporate partnerships and what it means for higher education revenue growth are sure to be of interest to any director, dean or provost of continuing, adult or online education. It will also serve as valuable fodder to anyone involved with course design and program development.

Key findings include:

- 95% of employers have systems in place to financially support employee education
- 70% of employers think ongoing education is necessary just for employees to keep up with the pace of their jobs
- 9% of employers maintain a professional development relationship with a college or university
- 16% of employers feel that there is an adequate availability of college or university programs tailored to their needs
- 62% of employers have no preference whether their employees attend for-credit or non-credit programs

Source: May 23, 2012/[destiny Solutions](#)

Indians No. 2 in US in college degrees'

An official census has put its stamp of authority on what has been clear to most everyone for a long, long time - that Asians are serious about education.

Asians are the most highly educated group of Americans, with more than half with a bachelor's degrees or higher, the Census Bureau reported on Thursday.

Among groups of Asian Americans 25 and older, 74 percent of Taiwanese and 71 percent of Indians had at least a bachelor's degree, the agency said as part of its release of American Community Survey data on hundreds of racial, tribal and Hispanic groups.

The comparable figure for the US population overall is 28 percent.

Several Southeast Asian groups fell behind the overall U.S. rate for a bachelor's degree or higher. They included Vietnamese at 26 percent, Cambodian and Hmong at about 14 percent and Laotian at 12 percent.

Among all groups surveyed, Salvadorans had the lowest percentage with a bachelor's degree or higher, at 8 percent.

Source: May 24, 2012/[Indian Express](#)

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

Apeejay Stya Education Research Foundation (ASERF) is guided by the vision of eminent educationist, industrialist and philanthropist Dr. Stya Paul's vision of value based holistic education for a responsive and responsible citizenship with a finely ingrained attitude of service before self. It is supported by Apeejay Stya Group, a leading Industrial & Investment House of India with interests in diverse fields. It will attempt to shoulder the efforts in serving the broader issues of Access, Quality, Equity & Relevance of Education and gear up to face the challenges of the new world order using collaborative and multidisciplinary approach. The foundation will become the repository of information on education and conduct research in new educational methodologies while collaborating with premier educational institutions globally.



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