NEED OF INDIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM: REFORM OR REVOLUTION

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ABSTRACT

With a population of more than 1.3 billion, India is one of the most populated countries in the world. The country has been continuously facing challenges in terms of quantity and quality for its primary and higher education systems. Due to a high number of out-of-school children in the country, thrust has to be given to establish an education-friendly environment and ensure basic facilities to attract children to educational institutes in the rural-dominated country. Although access to school education has more or less been achieved by the Government, the problem in the country is with "Quality. The current study deals with the issues of education in India and proposes the possible solutions in order to deal with the issues.

Keywords: Primary Education, Higher Education, Parochialism, Socio Economic disparity.

INTRODUCTION

Education is an essential investment for Human and Economic Development in any Nation. The factors of continuity and transformation however, remain perpetual and it is up to the society to determine its pace and direction. As per a report released by UNESCO in 2015, in terms of absolute numbers, India, with 28.7 crore illiterates, was the country with the largest number of

adults without basic literacy skills in 2010-11. It has become important today, to review the situation and reorient the education system to bridge the gap between the demand and supply of employable graduates. The Government of India has been trying to eradicate the problem of illiteracy in the nation, but what all these initiatives lack is a deeper dig into the grassroots.

As per the World Education Development Index, the India ranks among the 10 bottom most countries in the list. The learning outcome of the students is not improving, even though the Government has introduced various programs like:

- Free Text Books
- Mid Day Meal
- Free Uniform
- Saraswati Cycle Yojna
- Scholarship
- Student Insurance

This case deals with the issues faced by the Department of School Education of India, proposes creative solutions and identifies the measures that can be implemented in order to achieve the desired results.

OBJECTIVES

  i.   To identity the problems/ issues faced by the Department of Education in India.
  ii.   To give propose possible solutions in order to overcome the problems/ issues.

PROBLEMS/ ISSUES

Despite several measures undertaken by the Government, the education system of India is falling dangerously low in terms of quality. According to the trend in public expenditure on elementary education, there is an increase of about 7% in the Net Enrollment Ratio from 2011-12 to 2014-15, but the progress of the students is very poor.

The major issues and policy gaps responsible for this can be stated as below:

  i.   Socio-Economic Disparity

ii.   Following the Rule of thumb

iii.   Less and Unskilled Teachers

iv.   Parochialism, not Global outlook

v.   Language Barrier

vi.   Gap between education and industry requirement

vii.   Absenteeism

viii.   Uneducated parents

ix.   Higher Education System

ANALYSIS OF PROBLEMS/ ISSUES

i.   Socio-Economic Disparity

Disparities or inequalities in socio-economic position have been acknowledged among Indian states. Low levels of performance among the most disadvantaged create long-term problems, particularly in an economy in which higher skill levels are more valued and the wages paid to less-skilled workers are deteriorating. Socio-economic disparities have direct effects on what and how much children learn. Children growing up in low-income neighborhoods, for example, are much more likely to experience repeated stress from violence and crime that may inhibit cognitive development. The disparities between rich and poor families and neighborhoods have increased, exacerbating the differences between schools and widening the gap in opportunities.

ii.   Following the Rule of thumb

Technological and scientific improvements are rapidly increasing in India. Although, the curriculum of Higher Education as well as Graduation courses are often reviewed by the Education Department but these are not updated at the pace as required by the current situation. Lack of vocational training and non-availability of such courses renders students with barely any employable skills at the end of their schooling. These factors, coupled with other social circumstances have lead to alarmingly high dropout rates in the country.

iii. Less and Unskilled Teachers

One of the glaring problems is the acute shortage of "qualified and skilled" teachers. Materialistic gains, incentives and opportunities entice the qualified Indians educator away from this challenging field. Teachers do not have proper training of how they are going to impart values in children that are going to change the future of the country.

iv. Parochialism, not Global outlook

Our education teaches too much of nationalism and it could create a narrow mindset in our younger generation. In our schools, children are not able to get a global outlook. It means how to see yourself that you are actually a global citizen rather confined to a place or a country.

v. Language Barrier

This is also a big problem that needs to be addressed. We are not able to decide on the medium of language of our education system. On one hand a lot of teachers as well as students of government schools don't understand English as a medium of instruction, on the other hand private schools focus on English as a code of conduct.

vi. Gap between education and industry requirement

Despite the large number of students studying in various streams, there is no increase in the productivity of individuals as skills and talents are deficient to support economic activities. Hence, there is a serious concern on employability of these educated persons. Becoming too bogged down in the detail of content misses the much bigger point about how we best prepare our young people for life after school.

vii. Absenteeism

A teacher appointed under sub-section (1) of the Section 23 of the RTE Act, 2009, will have to perform the following duties:

- maintain regularity and punctuality in attending school

- complete entire curriculum within specified time

However, national representative sample of government primary schools in India reveal that the teachers, either don't turn up to the school at all or if they are in the school, they don't go to the classes. Lack of accountability of teachers and school authorities has raised the rate of absenteeism. Older teachers, more educated teachers, and head teachers are all paid more but are also more frequently absent.

viii. Uneducated parents

Uneducated parents often mean uneducated children. Poor students with poorly educated parents are more disadvantaged. Intuitively, a child's academic performance is likely higher if he or she has highly educated parents.

ix. Higher Education System

In the present situation, the system of Higher education in the state is complex and challenging. A lot of students are migrating from the state to other states for higher education. With the increase in population, there has been surge in the number of students seeking admission in these universities and colleges for higher education.

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

If India needs to attain the vision in education, what are required aren't simply reforms however a revolution of sorts. There must be a drastic overhaul of the prevailing education system.

i. LEARNING FROM JAPANESE EDUCATION SYSTEM

In order to deal with the problem of socio-economic disparity, Government schools should be transformed in such a way that the children of the high class society also strive to take admission in these schools. We should learn from the successful model of education that is adopted by Japan where most students attend public schools. India needs to learn from Japan in order to modernize its primary education system.

ii. SEPARATE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT WING

Existing teachers have poor training; teacher training courses are undertaken only in urban areas as an initiative by the private schools. Thus, rural areas, where literacy

levels have traditionally been lower, end up with fewer trained teachers. There should be a separate department, exclusively responsible to train, develop and keep the teachers updated with the contemporary methods and techniques of teaching. The number of teacher intake should also be increased.

iii. **MODERNIZED SYLLABUS**

In many cases the topics in syllabus are included which have lost relevance with the present situation. Again, many things that have relevance and importance at present are simply omitted. A drastic change, therefore, in the sphere of curricula is also necessary.

iv. **MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION**

We need to create a balance system of education. Education should be imparted through the Mother tongue and through English language as well. English language is a globally accepted language for communication. Even in India, people of different states often communicate in English. English language bridges the language gap between people. Hence, we cannot afford to ignore the importance of English language.

v. **IMPROVING THE HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM**

New courses in computer, heath-care and nursing, banking and insurance, advertising, tourism, and hotel-based industries are now luring many students from general studies. Institutions should inculcate multitasking abilities amongst students, foreign languages, advanced IT knowledge so that they can perform better in the chosen field. Student exchange, cultural exchange should be encouraged. Tie ups with the advanced universities of the country should be made for the benefit of the students.

vi. **ABSENTEEISM**

To tackle the problem of absenteeism, digital technology like installation of Bio-metric attendance system should be installed in schools, even in the rural areas.

vii. **EDUCATION AS PER 21ST CENTURY**

Pitching the curriculum in terms of traditional content versus generic skills creates a false choice. They are not mutually exclusive. There is a need to broaden our focus and embed these skills in traditional discipline areas. Traditional disciplines remain

important. But we no longer need an education system that helps students simply remember facts and figures. We need them to be critical consumers of information.

As consumers of information via technology we need to be able to find out how to do things without direct instruction; to find an answer to a question using a tablet computer or other mobile device.

In education, we should harness technology to develop the collective skills of groups. Technology has taken us further already than we might be aware. If we don't allow for the explicit inclusion of skills and prepare students properly to live and work in a new technologically driven world, then their lack of education will hurt them and the rest of us. **It's not only what we learn, it's how we learn.**

viii.   PARENT COUNSELING

To encourage the parent to send child to school was a herculean task but the state government has done that. Free meal, books, uniforms etc. are big incentives for sending the child to school. However, to make villager agree to education and that too, higher education is difficult. So, we have to convince the parents about relevance of education to life, how it will improve the child to improve hygiene, finances, better agriculture, better making use of information available around and better manage his land and produce. Therefore, parent counseling sessions should be organized for a paradigm shift.

HURDLES

i.   RESISTANCE BY THE SOCIETY

Change is always resistant. Changes in the methods of teaching, adopting a foreign technique in primary education would be resisted by the society. In the rural/tribal areas the assistance of the village Sarpanch could be sought.

ii. POLITICAL ISSUE

The indian education system has many problems which need more than some heavy-duty and long-term solutions that require time and intense involvement. Political unwillingness is a great challenge for our education system. Moreover, the processes and practices of education are as political as the content.

iii. INVESTMENT

In order to transform the education system a huge amount of investment and funding is required. The inflow of FDI is the need of the hour. Foreign investors have to be attracted and big institutions have to be approached to invest in this sector as a part of their CSR.

iv. PARENT RESISTANCE

Rural girls are less likely to achieve the same level of basic education as boys. If one of the children in a household has to drop out of school because of family workload, the cost of schooling or for other reasons, it is usually the girl child. This mentality of rural families is to be dealt with.

v. E-LEARNING

Use of technology would require availability of electricity and internet connections even in the rural areas.

CONCLUSION

Indian states put together have one of the largest education systems in the world. Various government initiatives are being adopted to boost the growth of education in the country. However, there is still a lot of potential for further development.

To end with the words of Nelson Mandela: Education is the most powerful weapon we can use to change the world.

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