

## **Impact of Politics and Concerns with the Indian Education System**

**Rashmi Rekha Borah**

*Research Scholar, EFLU, Shillong Campus  
Mailing address: Hem baruah Road Near Floa bhawan,  
Machkhowa, Guwahati-781009, PO: Bharalumukh, Assam, India*

### **Impact of Politics and concerns with the Indian education system**

India is the largest democracy in the world. India has the largest number of political parties, which take part in election campaign. In the 1996 national elections, almost 600 million people voted and an average of 26 candidates competed for each of the 543 territorial constituency seats.

Elections are held at different levels in India. The two major election levels are at national level, after which the national government is established and at state level after which the state government is established. Elections are also held for city, town and village councils.

Indian politics has different political issues. However these issues remain to be issues without any solutions for decades. Some issues are national level and some regional level. Some communities demand more economical and social rights for their communities, while others demand more autonomy for their cultures within the Indian states. Some demanded autonomous states within the Indian Union, while the others demanded to be independent from India.

However, with all its problems India survives as a single state with democratic character. But a number of political problems still exist and remain unsolved in India. Education system is undoubtedly the foundation of a nation. Education makes man civilized and therefore the country. It makes the mankind literate in ethics and moral values. If we have a well nurtured and balanced education system, then half the task of the country's development is done. But when we look into the Indian context in India education system, it is suffering with many issues that needs to be addressed at the earliest, we have some very big problems and thus the challenges are tougher.

The problem that we come across on a daily basis and in large scale is political corruption in the education system. Today is the age of innovation and specialisation. And with this fast moving techno-age, the Indian educational system seems to go nowhere. Though we are aware about the progressive minds of Indian students all over the world, we tend to overlook the fact that most of them find abode abroad in USA or Australia. Let us focus on some stark realities and realize that Indian educational system in serious crisis.

Political corruption is the use of power by government officials for illegitimate private gain. Misuse of government power for other purposes, such as repression of political opponents and general police brutality, is not considered political corruption. Neither are illegal acts by private persons or corporations not directly involved with the government. An illegal act by an officeholder constitutes political corruption only if the act is directly related to their official duties, is done under color of law or involves trading in influence.

Forms of corruption vary, but include bribery, extortion, cronyism, nepotism, patronage, graft, and embezzlement. Corruption may facilitate criminal enterprise such as drug trafficking, money laundering, and human trafficking, though is not restricted to these activities, it has also very much crept into the education system in India which is not only deteriorating the education system but also effecting the social as well as cultural set up.

The activities that constitute illegal corruption differ depending on the country or jurisdiction. For instance, some political funding practices that are legal in one place may be illegal in another. In some cases, government officials have broad or ill-defined powers, which make it difficult to distinguish between legal and illegal actions. Worldwide, bribery alone is estimated to involve over 1 trillion US dollars annually. A state of unrestrained political corruption is known as a kleptocracy, literally meaning "rule by thieves".

Despite growing investment in education, 35% of its population is still illiterate; only 15% of Indian students reach high school, and just 7% graduate. 25% of teaching positions nationwide are vacant, and 57% of college professors lack either a master's or PhD degree. The quality and education standards vary drastically state to state. Compare the likes of Karnataka, Maharashtra with that of Bihar and Jharkhand and we will get the magnitude of variation we are talking about. Literacy for females varies with around 34% in Bihar to 88% in Kerala; for males it is 60% in Bihar and 94% in Kerala. Rajasthan suffers the widest gender difference, female literacy stands at 44% and male at 77%.

Governments come and go, making so many promises, victimizing the innocent population, but at the end it turns out to be another mirage of hopes. Every time a pledge is taken to increase spending on education to 6% of the GDP, but the actual spending keeps hovering around 4%. So many amendments and policies are made, commissions are set up, but the ground of reality is rarely seen. The blend of education and corruption makes it a more deadly combo. Where the education system should just have the motto of providing education and knowledge, they are providing more; they are providing money to the corrupt politicians and businessmen. They see it as another industry where money flows uninterrupted, irrespective of any recession.

If numbers are to be considered then we are with a decent score of 20 central universities, 215 state universities, 100 deemed universities, 5 institutions established and functioning under the State Act, and 13 institutes which are of national importance. Other institutions include 16000 colleges, including 1800 exclusive women's colleges, functioning under these universities and institutions. But more than numbers, the quality matters and there we are below par.

World Bank statistics found that fewer than 40 percent of adolescents in India attend secondary school. The Economist reports that half of 10-year old rural children

could not read at a basic level, over 60 percent were unable to do divisions. If we go to higher technical education the problem is much bigger. For colleges like IITs, NITs and IIMs government hire faculties from abroad, but what about the institution which has either poor faculties or no faculties? Parents invest their life savings in dreams of making their children engineers, doctors and more but many unfortunates get into some universities running without an affiliation or at end– a fake degree. In January 2010, government decided to withdraw deemed university status from around 44 universities. Some were having inadequate infrastructure and some didn't had sufficient faculties.

So are these the foundations on which India will stand as the superpower by 2020? Are these our strengths by which we're going to compete with the likes of China, U.S.A, and U.K?

A lot has to be done to make Indian education system flawless and at par with those of developed countries. India is a developing country, which is known for its varied culture and tradition. While we use the word 'developing' it means there are new forward ideas and changes coming up from India and also there are something lacking too compared to other countries. Being an Indian, it is the responsibility of each and every one of us to scrutinize this and contribute to the development of our country. This may result in finding many of the factors of development like technologies, industries, environmental needs, Jobs and most importantly Education.

Yes, education has become a must remedy for every country to help their existence and development economically. India is one among them, which concentrates more on extending education to the whole states within that and make sure that it is being developed into a hundred percent literacy rated nation. Still, there are many hindrances faced by the government in making this venture successful. In the coming paragraphs we will discuss about those.

Comprising the literacy rates of all the thirty-five states in India, we can see that India is rated at 74.04%. 82.14% is Male literacy rate while female literacy rate is 65.46 %. This reflects where India lacks in one side for becoming a 100 percent developed state. That is, Females in India are not getting attention enough to provide them with education. Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Jharkhand, Jammu and Kashmir, Bihar, Arunachal Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh are found to be states whose literacy rate falls below 60 percent according to the latest Census 2011. But still we can see a good rise in the literacy rate of females compared to the previous years, which is a positive sign for the government to have hope in extending education to the females in India.

Why is India still a developing country and what is stopping it from being a developed country? This particular question strikes every Indian every time when we read something about India's education system. We see India's education system as a stumbling block towards its objectives of achieving inclusive growth.

There are certain startling facts. India is going to experience a paradox of nearly 90 million people joining the workforce but most of them will lack requisite skills and the mindset for productive employment according to a report in DNA. India has about 550 million people under the age of 25 years out of which only 11% are enrolled in tertiary institutions compared to the world average of 23%.

What is the point laying too much emphasis on the drawbacks of India's public education system because it has been an issue well debated over in the past and the main flaws have already been pointed out before? Let us focus on how the education system's failure is leading to another social issue of income inequality and hence, suggest certain policies to improve India's education system and reduce inequality.

The really critical aspect of Indian public education system is its low quality. The actual quantity of schooling that children experience and the quality of teaching they receive are extremely insufficient in government schools. A common feature in all government schools is the poor quality of education, with weak infrastructure and inadequate pedagogic attention.

What the government is not realising right now is that education which is a source of human capital can create wide income inequalities. It will be surprising to see how income inequalities are created within the same group of educated people.

If the government does not improve education system particularly in rural areas the rich will become richer and the poor will get poorer.

Hence, it is imperative for the government to correct the blemishes in India's education system which will also be a step towards reducing income inequality.

Certain policy measures need to be taken by the government. The basic thrust of government education spending today must surely be to ensure that all children have access to government schools and to raise the quality of education in those schools. One of the ways in which the problem of poor quality of education can be tackled is through common schooling. This essentially means sharing of resources between private and public schools. Shift system is one of the ways through which common schooling can be achieved. The private school can use the resources during the first half of the day and the government school can use it during the second half. It is important to remember that the quality of education is directly linked to the resources available and it is important for the government to improve resource allocation to bring about qualitative changes in the field of education. Common schooling is one of the ways in which government can use limited resources in an efficient way and thus improve resource allocation.

Another reason for poor quality of education is the poor quality of teachers in government schools. Government schools are unable to attract good quality teachers due to inadequate teaching facilities and low salaries. To improve the quality of education, the government needs to spend more money from its coffers on education.

We can hope that the Government takes certain appropriate policy measures to improve the education system otherwise inequalities are going to be widespread and India's basic capabilities will remain stunted. Let us strengthen the case for a stronger education system.

Our government makes so many policies and amendments for uplifting the education standard. They should be stricter in implementing of the new policies and amendments. All those educational institutions set up by criminals and corrupt politicians for making-money should be monitored and controlled by the government. Alternate education should be promoted in India so that the youngsters can pursue what they want. Scholarships, not just for the under-privilege students but also to the common people should be given. Corruption is the main cause for degradation of so

many things other than education, so government should deal with corruption in a more effective way.

Another area of development in the field of education in India is the declining demand of teaching profession. Since the payment criteria for teachers are dropping down, it pushes up many of them to switch to other field of job. This also forces upcoming students to swift their mind from creating a dream of becoming a teacher and understanding the value of sharing education, and to focus on raising their career as Engineers or Doctors. This becomes a huge threat for the future generation on ending up under lack of education and knowledge. This is a strong tip of thought for the Government to decide on fixing the value of teachers and remunerate them well.

Also through thorough assessment and valuation, it should be made sure that the quality of teachers and the standard of education are running in a hopeful way so that the students passing out are moulded virtually in their knowledge and skills. Even though, we can observe that a good number of people in teaching profession struggle to broaden education in India via free services like education camps, awareness sessions on learning and development, introduction and demonstration of new technologies and ideas etc. which again contributes the education system of India noticeable. The self-sacrificing attitude of such people promotes the future generation to follow them and build up a trained generation with lot of knowledge and skills in coming days.

While speaking about Education, it is of utmost importance to consider about the number of schools located in a country. Lack or shortage of number of schools in states like Bihar, Rajasthan etc. makes its development slow, which is again linked with the development of the country. To widen Education the government is very much accountable to open schools not only in the urban areas but also rural areas as well. Along with the increased number of schools, the facilities also should be sensible. There are many schools even in some cities, which require lab and quality technology facilities.

Indian government should look into such education systems and make sure these inconveniences are covered up sufficiently. On the other hand, we can find people who are serious in their thoughts to fill in these issues and promote the quality of each educational institution. We can find the growing number of Computer study centres, students' labs, tutorial institutes etc. that makes education in India move on faster and effective without any interruption.

The wide range of syllabuses is a major reason for the fluctuation in the graph of education and growth in different states. In Indian education system we can find different syllabuses out of which some of the common syllabuses are ICSE, CBSE and State syllabuses. Each syllabus has its own standards and targets based on which the knowledge and skills of students will differ. Also the donation criteria for acquiring seats for these types of schools are again a hindrance for students to pitch into a good educational institution. At times, it is noted that students of high grades are moved to private institutions because of their financial inability.

The government should consider such corruptions happening in the education circle and find immediate remedies to resolve it so that everybody, apart from any differences based on caste, creed or money are getting educated equally. Again there

are some optimistic layers for education system in India, where we can find students coming out from such schools and colleges are carrying innovative ideas and dreams, which they could deliver for the growth of the country. The inputs teachers are providing them, which make them individuals with high skills, and good habits are a model for the upcoming generation. Although we went through some common drawbacks of Indian education system, we also found some positives also which we can keep in mind.

We cannot deny the contributions of our ancestors in the education system, however the loopholes and the corruption and politics cannot be overlooked or ignored in any way. But we can hope for a tremendous change which will make us appreciate our education system on its pluses and find new ideas for motivating the government and responsible authorities to have an eye on the minuses and take the necessary steps to leverage the education system up. While doing this it is always worth to keep in mind the words of Dr. Abdul Kalam Azad: When learning is purposeful, creativity blossoms, When creativity blossoms, thinking emanates, When thinking emanates, knowledge is fully lit, When knowledge is lit, economy flourishes. So we can join our hands in placing our country and its economy as a hundred percent educated citizens' nation. Probably with some more steps like these, if taken by the political community of the country, India too will be able to boast of rich knowledge culture. Along with other areas, she will be able to show her supremacy in field of education too.

## References

- [1] Blackwell, Fritz (2004), *India: A Global Studies Handbook*, United States of America: ABC-CLIO, Inc., ISBN 1-57607-348-3.
- [2] *India 2009: A Reference Annual (53rd edition)*, New Delhi: Additional Director General (ADG), Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, ISBN 978-81-230-1557-6.
- [3] Prabhu, Joseph (2006), "Educational Institutions and Philosophies, Traditional and Modern", *Encyclopedia of India (vol. 2)* edited by Stanley Wolpert, 23–28, Thomson Gale: ISBN 0-684-31351-0.
- [4] Raman, S.A. (2006). "Women's Education", *Encyclopedia of India (vol. 4)*, edited by Stanley Wolpert, 235–239, Thomson Gale: ISBN 0-684-31353-7.
- [5] Setty, E.D. and Ross, E.L. (1987), "A Case Study in Applied Education in Rural India", *Community Development Journal*, 22 (2): 120–129, Oxford University Press.
- [6] Sripati, V. and Thiruvengadam, A.K. (2004), "India: Constitutional Amendment Making The Right to Education a Fundamental Right", *International Journal of Constitutional Law*, 2 (1): 148–158, Oxford University Press.
- [7] Mehta, Arun C. Educational Information System in India and its Limitations: Suggestions for Improvement: *National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration*. New Delhi .