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## Competitive Exams: General Studies Economics Education in Indian Economy

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### Education in Indian Economy

1. The individual goals of education are cognitive (knowledge) , affective (values) and skill formation while the collective goals are employability, socio-economic development, better quality of life, peace and social harmony, well-informed citizens ' participation in governance, national character and prosperity. For any productive activity, labour and entrepreneurship are as much required as land, capital and organisation. Labour is mainly of two types manual and mental though both are complementary to each other. However, one can do manual labour without specific skills but mental labour (skilled jobs) requires specific skills and training. Hence for getting skilled and semi-skilled jobs, one is to be educated and trained in a particular area and direction of knowledge.
  - a. National Knowledge Commission has diagnosed ten ailments of higher education:
    - i. outdated curricula have not kept pace with the times
    - ii. learning places premium on memory rather than understanding
    - iii. the milieu is not conducive to anything beyond class
    - iv. academic calendar is no longer sacrosanct for classes or examinations
    - v. the infrastructure is on the verge of collapse
    - vi. the boundaries between disciplines have become ' dividing walls '
    - vii. the importance of research has eroded
    - viii. decline in volume of research (frequency of publication) and quality of research
    - ix. little accountability no rewards for performance and no penalties for non performance
    - x. governance structure not responsive to changing times and circumstances that the system is readily subverted by vested interests.

b. In India, it is a contradictory situation that the products of academics (supply) do not match with the demands of three sectors of economy agricultures, services and industries. Most of traditional industries, especially textiles, jute and sugar, have collapsed in India. Agro-industries have also not prospered. At present service (tertiary) sector is growing very fast and contributing to the extent of 50 percent of the

Gross Domestic Product (GDP) . About 20 lakh Indians are working in the Gulf and maximum number of skilled labour is from Kerala as nurses, teachers and technicians, while unskilled labourers are from Bihar.

U P etc. Paucity of funds is also one of the reasons for the poor quality of higher and technical education in

India. D. S. Kothari Commission had recommended that 6 percent of GDP should be spent on education (all sectors) but only about 3 percent of GDP is spent here on education at present and about 1 percent on higher education. UNSECO has observed that India has the lowest public expenditure on education per student in the world.

## Policy Implications

1. For better contribution of education to the Indian economy in general, and service sector in particular, following steps need to be taken by the Union, State and local governments at the earliest
2. First, public expenditure on education (with special focus on technical education) , should be enhanced to 6 percent of GDP so that both central and state educational institutions are provided adequate fund for various academic and infrastructural facilities. Higher education should get 1.5 percent of GDP.
3. Second, still access is less than desirable, hence a massive drive is to be launched; drop outs should be removed through mass awareness campaigns, making curricula more student-friendly, providing facilities like labs, libraries, toilets, classrooms etc. Adequately.
4. Third, there should be a paradigm shift from literature type education to productive, jobproductive, job oriented education as per requirement in public and private sectors after secondary education. This will provide assured employment to skilled and semi-skilled manpower, and finally unnecessary burden on higher education (especially in humanities/social sciences) would be eased. There should be regular interface of industry and service sectors with educational institutions. Like Germany, there should be sandwich pattern of education and employment after studying for sometime one needs to join factories and again to join academics. Gandhian motto of 'earning while learning' may be popularized.

5. Fourth, individual rate of return from secondary education is usually less (in terms of employment) than social rate of return (in terms of collective consciousness, basic citizens' rights and duties). On the other hand, from higher education individual rate of return is more than social rate of return because a graduate/post graduate gives top priority to his/her job and tends to be highly mobile and migrate to urban areas, metros or foreign countries for individual gains. Therefore quality education at all stages (primary, secondary and tertiary) should be ensured, because if the foundation (schooling) remains weak, superstructure of higher education cannot sustain for long. Moreover, 25 percent of teachers positions being vacant should be filled in a transparent manner at the earliest. Dr. Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister of India rightly remarked in 2007: In almost half of the district in the country, higher education enrolments are abysmally low, almost  $\frac{2}{3}$ rd of our universities and 90 percent of our colleges are rated as below average on quality parameters\_\_\_\_\_ there are complaints of favouritism and corruption.
6. Fifth, the argument that all foreign universities should be freely allowed to open campuses in India does not hold good. In 2010 Tri Valley University (US) was detected as a fake University where thousands of students were illegally studying and many Indian students were arrested. Similarly in 2001 in the University of Northern Virginia 2400 foreign students were enrolled against the legally permitted strength of 50 foreign students. About 90 percent of such students were from India. Thus craze for the west is dangerous. Therefore, there should be limited and careful entry of only selected world class universities who would care for the socio-cultural values of India and would not charge very high education fees. Further world class scholars should be invited by Indian universities frequently for exchange of new ideas and experiences with teachers and students. On the other hand, Indian Universities should be capable of attracting foreign students in engineering, medicine and management as well as opening of their campuses abroad. This will result in huge capitalformation necessary for the growing Indian economy.
7. Sixth, though the literacy rate in India increased from 65 percent in 2001 to 74 percent in 2011, there still remains a wide gender gap 82.14 percent of males and 65.46 percent of females are literate. That is, women are lagging behind males by 16.2 percent points. Though women's literacy growth during 2001 – 11 was higher than men's, yet this gender gap is to be bridged at the earliest. Kerala tops the list with highest literacy rate (93 percent) and Bihar is at the bottom with 63.8 percent. Further for adults, literacy should be made more functional and meaningful by focusing on productive skills and life skills, rights and duties, government schemes, clean environment, health, sanitation, values, peace and social harmony, and empowerment of the weaker sections including women. Literacy drives should be aimed against child labour through team efforts of educational administrations, labour officers, district administration, NGOs and teachers to cover 26 percent

illiterate Indians. Towards this end, GOI has launched Sakshar Bharat Mission for Female Literacy.

8. Finally, the bitter truth is that 90 percent of India's workforce is in unorganized sector (comprising mainly agriculture and service sector) where jobs are casual, insecure, with less salary, more work, unhealthy working conditions, drudgery, no leisure, no insurance, no provident fund etc. Further due to liberalization, privatisation and globalization, many labour laws/provisions, restricting employers from firing, have been relaxed or repealed, therefore there are new trends of casualization and contractualization of labour (hiring and firing) and feminization of poverty (as women-headed households have suffered most) . But for this new economic reforms is more responsible than the education because the motto of these economic reforms is that 'privatization is the panacea of all ills' Even the Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) model has been implemented only where it suits the private sector which does not venture in remote North-East region or naxal affected areas. Still 80 percent of schools are in public sector in India, mostly in rural areas where private schools are rare.
9. A notable fact is that the policies of liberalization, privatization and globalization became a part of higher academics curricula as well as training module for working civil servants in Union and State governments.
10. Many private schools, colleges and universities do not give adequate salary (at par with government) to teachers and staff and most of them are untrained (55 percent) and there is no in service training. Needless to say that GOI's Tandon Committee (on higher education) found that 44 deemed universities did not fulfil eligibility norms and were running as family fiefdoms but government's decision to cancel these was challenged in Supreme court. Similarly UGC found 39 fake institutions operating in the country.
11. We may conclude that in order to become a prosperous global economy within first five ranks, India has to qualitatively strengthen her education, especially higher and technical education; that is, at as the catalyst for bringing about visible economic change with more skilled jobs with higher earnings leading to a prosperous society. We need job-led growth and for this the thrust should be on quality and vocational/technical education.

Courtesy: Yojana

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

**In IAS mains exam... one Indian language we have to choose... I had chosen English... tell me the syllabus of this paper**

**( - aa...@ on 26-Dec-2016)**

*1 Answer*

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