Recent Trends in Education

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Edited by
Dr. Utpal Kalita
&
Dr. Phunu Das Sarma

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Preface

The value of education in any society is unchallenged. In fact, its bearing in today's world is possibly far greater compared to most aspects of human life. It is perhaps for this reason that the World Development Report 2018 published by the World Bank, in a first, focused solely on education. In his foreword, Jim Yong Kim, President of the World Bank Group, writes, "For individuals, education promotes employment, earnings, and health. It raises pride and opens new horizons. For societies, it drives long-term economic growth, reduces poverty, spurs innovation, strengthens institutions, and fosters social cohesion." It is a very gratifying experience for anyone connected with education to go through this report as it delves into systemic issues that impact education, and areas of future focus.

In the Indian context, the report is enormously relevant given the strides we have made as a nation in the space of education. Yet there remain issues that need to be addressed, making education quite fundamental to our nation's future growth agenda. We expect 2019 to be a remarkable year for education in India. Several trends of previous years will pan out strongly and hopefully accelerate India's march towards becoming a 'knowledge economy'.

An increasing number of business leaders, politicians, and educators are united around the idea that students need "21st century skills" to be successful today. It's exciting to believe that we live in times that are so revolutionary that they insist new and different abilities. But in fact, the skills students need in the 21st century are not new. For Example, critical thinking and problem solving, decision making, creative thinking have been components of human progress throughout history, from the development of early tools, to agricultural advancements, to the invention of vaccines, to land and sea exploration. In *The Republic*, Plato wrote about four distinct levels of intellect- Imagining, Belief, Thinking and Perfect Intelligence and these were considered "3rd century

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BCE skills." What's actually new is the extent to which changes in our economy and the world mean that collective and individual success depends on having such skills. Today we cannot afford a system in which receiving a high-quality education is akin to a game of bingo. If we are to have a more equitable and effective public education system, skills that have been the province of the few must become universal.

During the last couple of decades the young talents are mounting but they are not able to judge their prospect because of many opportunities in front of them. This is making them go wherever they feel like but not in a correct direction. Educational institutions are facing new challenges resulting from technological driven changes in teaching and learning, globalization of higher education and changes in the economic climate.

The fast change and advancement of technology over the past few years has caught many educators by surprise, with many educational centers' struggling to keep up with the new skills that will be required from the next generation Technology has emerged as the driving force in all the industries. Teaching and learning have gone beyond the norms of reading from a book and understanding. With the rapid development of technology, students are able to better visualize and understand concepts at a much profound level. Commercialization of education has become apparent and the need for using marketing tools has seen to be greater than before. The perception over quality of higher education has been seen differing in many ways. The status of students over quality of education seems to be around scholarship, extracurricular activities, parent's education, age, previous results and at last the name of the university.

The United Nations has set a target to ensure a course of primary education for all the children including those below the poverty line by 2015. It is real that we are far from achieving this target. On the other hand, there is an outburst of preschools in India. If one goes about the list of preschools in India, we see affiliations to major organizations that are private based, and operate in chains. There is again a huge difference in the way education is imparted in the public and private spheres though education in general is governed by the public sector with the central, state, and local levels.

There is a lot happening in the field of education and especially in India. Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley announced various

benefits for students and education sector in India in the Budget session 2018-2019. Budgetary expenditure on health, education and social protection for 2018-19 has been set at Rs.1.38 Lakh Crore against estimated expenditure of Rs.1.22 Lakh Crore in 2017-18. It also mentioned that the Higher Education Financing Agency (HEFA) would be suitably structured for funding the RISE (Revitalizing Infrastructure and Systems in Education) initiative. The education sector has been a top priority for the Indian government. Keeping this in mind, the government over the years has been introducing various innovations to build a world-class higher education system. This year's budget was a step in the same trend, and Jaitley paying attention on improving the quality of education with the support of technology. The government's goal is to support and provide an opportunity to every Indian to realize his or her potential to the core. Through a new initiative RISE, the government has planned to a total investment of Rs 1,00,000 Crore in the next four years to step up investments in research related infrastructure in premier educational institutions. In order to boost the higher education system for meeting the requirements of 'New India – 2022', a comprehensive plan has been made for up gradation of the research.

This book is consists of 41 conceptual papers on a variety of topics written by eminent personalities. The issue covered in the book has a practical and policy significance in India. The theme of the book have deeply and intensively discussed by the paper writers. The editors feel a deep gratitude to the authors whose views and opinions have been incorporated in this book. Further, we express our heartily thankfulness to each and every person who are directly and indirectly helped us in preparing this work. It is hoped that this book will meet the needs of students, teachers and all others who are concerned with recent trends of Indian education. Any comments and constructive suggestions for the improvement of this book are highly appreciable.

Dr. Utpal Kalita
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