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## “INDIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM IN 21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY INDIA-CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND WAY FORWARD”

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This article tries to introduce the issues and challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century in India. Things are changing around us very dramatically, very quickly. The world is becoming more interconnected, the environment is becoming less stable, and technology is continuously altering our relationship to information. Changing global conditions demand that we rethink what, but even more important, how and where we learn. We need education for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

In response to the challenges, we face in the digital age, schools are starting to do education differently. Why restrict lesson times to an hour when half-day sessions allow pupils to delve really deeply into subject material? Many young people have smart phones, so why not allow them to be used as learning aids? Adults learn in the real world, why not let pupils? And, fundamentally, the best teachers are people who love learning, and the best way to make sure that you understand what you are learning is to teach.

The schools that are taking this seriously are still in the minority. But across the world there is a growing global movement towards achieving the vision of 21<sup>st</sup> century education.

**Keywords:** Challenges, Global Movement, Illiteracy, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Education

### Introduction

The future world of learning is one where the forces of globalization, pervasive technology and innovation demands in the learning environment combine to form a dynamic setting that is both challenging and difficult for educational leaders. Together with the changes, new expectations have knocked on our doors. The first aim of our education was all round development of a child, Father of nation, Mahatma Gandhi once said "By education I mean all round draining out of the best in child and body, mind and spirit". It is quite apparent that all round development is like a day dream, because the current system is not der-eloping all round ability in the child. According to Warren Bennis-"Leadership is the capacity to translate vision into reality". Educational leadership in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century should be modern to face the challenges in the digital age. Schools are starting to do education differently.

Education in every society is concerned with teaching children how to live in the society, whether this is a matter of bare survival or a matter of how to have a good life. There will always be some education in relationships with other people. This may be to do with how to show respect to others, how to work within a group or with the rituals of human relationships. Quality of education can be maintained by curriculum, there should be one best curriculum for all over country. The curriculum is described as 'all the intended outcomes' of the school. Process and teaching method is thus part of the curriculum.

## Issues and Challenges

The following are some of the key issues and challenges presently being experienced in going ahead with the projects under TBCB route.

### 1. Planning for transmission system associated with renewable energy (RE) projects

As part of greening the sector India has planned to add 175 GW RE projects by 2022 (to be scaled up to 450 GW in due course). As RE projects come up much faster than conventional generation projects, the gestation period for associated transmission systems would be much shorter than the time normally required. This compressed time requirement is at times seen as a barrier for allotting projects under the TBCB route, as it involves additional time for the bid process. Improved coordination between RE projects' development and associated transmission planning can help mitigate the concerns in this regard. With the announcement of a committee for preparation of the National Electricity Plan for the period of 2022 to 2027, it is important to decide phasing of generation and transmission systems in sync with each other. This committee may also be a forum for industry consultation to be done in a more detailed way, perhaps with representation of an association body.

### 2. Delay in obtaining statutory clearances

Delay in obtaining statutory clearances leading to delays in project execution is another major concern in timely commissioning of projects. In fact, this is a major challenge in case the transmission lines have to go through difficult terrains. Also, it has been noticed that sometimes a State Government notifies a higher RoW compensation after the prescribed cut-off date in the bid documents. This could adversely impact the finances of the developer. The prevailing stress in the financial sector due to COVID-19 would also pose challenges to developers in accessing market for their financing needs. [7 https://cii.in/PublicationDetail.aspx?](https://cii.in/PublicationDetail.aspx?) Total Transmission Projects (from 2011 to April 2020) 165 Project Awarded (from 2011 to November 2019) 151 Awards Awaited 14 89 Compressed Time Schedule 26 Technical Upgradation/ Augmentation 40 Strategic Importance Miscellaneous Reasons 10 Public Sector 20 7 Commissioned 17 12 1 Under Construction 20 Scrapped 5 Private Sector 42 13 Regulated Tariff Mechanism (RTM) Bidding (TBCB) Tariff Based Competitive 62 Exploring possibilities for fast tracking of statutory clearances and ensuring sanctity of contract assume importance in this context. This could also promote "ease of doing business". In this context it would also be important to remove barriers, if any, for bringing in technological innovations by the developer.

### 3. Fixed date for commissioning in tenders

In the recent tenders, especially ones associated with Green Energy Corridor, the scheduled commissioning date is hard-coded. As a result of unforeseen situations like the COVID-19 impact or delays in acquisition of SPV, transmission developers may find it difficult to commission the system in the scheduled time and incur penalties on this count. This could mean higher risk perception for the developers and lead to higher bid costs.

### 4. Risk of recovery of transmission charges

Another issue relates to recovery of transmission charges where the transmission developer has completed his part of the project on schedule; but the generation plant (from which transmission line is meant to evacuate power) is not ready, or the downstream connectivity (from which power would flow to the consumers) is not available. Although the basic principle in such cases is that the defaulting party has to pay (this has also been clearly spelt out in CERC Regulations), disputes have been arising in this context, as seen from different CERC orders. The likelihood of stranded/ delayed payments on this count and prolonged litigation adds to the risk perception on part of developers. There is a need in this context to look at ways on how to ensure that situations such as this are minimized.

### 5. Provisions related to competition in the Tariff Policy

The Tariff Policy is under review at present. It has come out in some media articles and industry forums that the provisions on competition are being maintained. As the benefits of promoting competition are well known, it is important that such provisions are only strengthened further.

## 6. Inter-continental grids – One Sun One World One Grid vision of PM Shri Modi

The task of developing a vision, implementation plan, road map, and institutional framework for implementing “One Sun One World One Grid” has been taken up by MNRE. While the vision document and road map get developed in next few months, it would be imperative to ensure that the development of such grids is done in the most costefficient manner – which has been done very successfully by adopting the PPP model. This mode of infrastructure development has been in place for a number of years, and has yielded unparalleled savings in tariffs for the end consumers. Development of inter-continental grids via PPP route would not only enable access to previously unreachable energy resources, but also safeguard consumer interest by making sure that the delivery of power is done in the most costefficient way possible.

### ANALYSIS OF EDUCATION SYSTEM VIA CAPABILITY APPROACH

Firstly, “Capability” denotes the ability of a person to generate beneficial outcomes without infringing upon personal choice. The freedom of choice provides people with a long-term incentive for cumulative economic achievement and space for personal growth. Societal pressure instigates people to engage in certain kind of sphere of education based on the popular perception of what is considered the “better” degree. Economic need greatly influences a person’s choice of the type of education, at times driving them to give up on individual interests. In such cases, no intrinsic motivation exists which severely affects not only their skill development but also their performance as an employee. People are often unable to pursue the courses of their choice due to high merit requirements in government colleges and relatively expensive education in private colleges. Hence, equal employment opportunities should be created in all sectors and industry relevant practical training should be a part of every curriculum. It would regulate the excessive drainage of human resources into one sector and contribute to the development of each and every sector thus promoting the wholesome economic growth of the country. David Kolb’s experiential learning describes four types of learning processes-Divergent, Convergent, Assimilating and Accommodating. The ability of individuals differs based on their thought process and learning style. Some learn via logical analysis, some by group discussions and some by practical applications. But the education system is not very accommodative for all learning styles. Indian classrooms are designed for typical Assimilating learners (those who learn by watching and thinking). There is a focus on theoretical knowledge while practicals are treated as secondary. If education is imparted while considering the various learning styles, the students would be able to gain much more from the class and hence, be more capable of applying it in real life scenarios. In our country, one has to choose their subject of study before entering the college, He or she is then restricted to a certain domain and rarely do they get a chance to shift their course of study. This rigid and inflexible system is dangerous as it inhibits the growth of the individual and people may end up choosing a subject under peer pressure and be stuck with it for the rest of their lives. This is in stark contrast with the Liberal Arts system prevalent in the US and many European countries. Under this system, students get a chance to study every subject of their choice for the first one or two years in college. They get a chance to discover their niche and develop a broad knowledge base over many fields of study before plunging into the final decision about their degree. Apart from this, there are absolutely no restrictions on the field of study up till the graduate levels. Intense specialization within the subject area takes place only after the undergraduate programmes. It is not uncommon for humanities majors to apply and get accepted at the top ranked medical schools in the US. Such a flexible system provides adequate time to people for making an informed decision regarding their profession and field of study, without being bogged down by societal pressure. Another problem with the Education system is the enormous focus it has on cramming of concepts with the “final exam” as the main agenda. The systemic suppression of intellectual curiosity takes place at a very early age where school attending children are not encouraged to ask meaningful questions. Due to shortage of the teaching staff in many colleges, the packed-up classrooms are left at the mercy of Teaching Assistants who only aim to finish the courses and pay little attention towards fostering the intellectual curiosity and skill development. There are cases of colleges running a course with non-existent classes while conducting the exam for the same. There is an intense race over the highest marks and getting a good “placement” is considered the main goal. This narrow approach to education may seem to be time-saving and an easier path in comparison with the approach of intellectual enquiry but in the long run, it leads to people feeling disillusioned by the rigid competition and many feel dissatisfied as they realize that they are not really learning anything of much use. Even though getting a job remains the main target during college, employers repeatedly complain of Indian graduates who finished at the top of their class and yet are not able to work satisfactorily and apply their theoretical knowledge. One solution is to invest in training the

teaching staff by providing them with continuous workshops about innovative teaching technologies and to ensure a good student to teacher ratio in colleges that enables the teachers to monitor the individual growth. The obsession with getting a “placement” is a reflection of growing consumerism in the society where social status is ascribed to conspicuous consumption. Our education system, manufactures a homogenous mass of self-oriented people who are never really encouraged to take an active part in social development, political activities and are not taught to exercise their discretion in making the right choices regarding the sociopolitical scenario of the country. A quote by Alvin Toffler reads, “The secret message communicated to most young people today by the society around them is that they are not needed, that the society will run itself quite nicely until they- at some distant point in the future- will take over the reins. Yet the fact is that that the society is not running itself nicely...because the rest of us need all the energy, brains, imagination and talent that the young people can bring to bear down on our difficulties. For society to attempt to solve its desperate problems without the full participation of even very young people is imbecile.” People need to be made aware of the fact that their decisions matter not only to themselves but also have an impact on the society and they are responsible for bringing about a systemic change when the time calls for it.

### **CONCLUSION**

The flaws of the Education system have been elaborated upon with respect to the five principles of the Capability Approach. Investing in the education of the huge demographic is the need of the hour and to reap the maximum benefit out of the growing young population; the disparities relating to quality and distribution of educational opportunities need to be resolved within a very short time frame. The conversion of these potential economic assets into destructive liabilities needs to be prevented. A disillusioned and frustrated youth is susceptible to manipulation by extremist groups (as visible in the Naxalite stricken areas) and can lead to political instability, chaos and a huge economic setback. There is also a dire need to analyze and scrutinize the education policies by the central government and regulatory authorities at the national level. A sensible National Education Policy needs to be formulated to check upon the qualitative and also the quantitative growth of institutions, to ensure that education satisfies not only the industrial but also an individual’s needs. Implementation of the policies need to percolate to the general population and should not remain just as a blueprint. Often these policies get caught up due to red tapism, corruption and a general disinterest on part of the regulatory and monitoring authorities. It is imperative to resolve these issues with a strict and systematic approach before the Indian higher Education system plunges into deep, unrecoverable chaos.

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