

## Education in the context of Socio Economic Problems in India

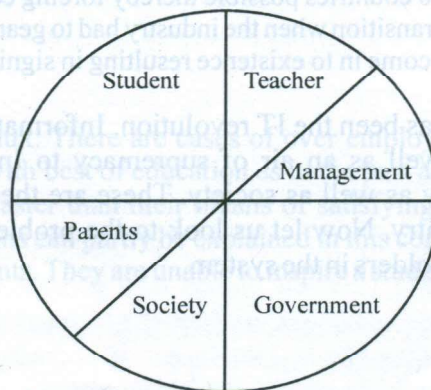
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India has been experiencing a discontinuous socio economic change ever since 1980 and more particularly after 1991. The socioeconomic dimension of the country have undergone a significant change ever since Late. Rajiv Gandhi thought of taking the country in to a 21<sup>st</sup> century gracefully.

Every country has changing scenario evolving from one context or the other but the changes are most of the times predictable. The changes that have taken in India between 1947 - 1960 could be reasoned or predicted to some extent but the changes that have taken place after the death of Mrs. Gandhi have been unprecedented. Many ascribe the liberalization era to P. V. Narasimharao Government though it is true to some extent the foundation was laid by Late Rajiv Gandhi. To illustrate the biggest happening in recent times and even now is the communication revolution where we have come to a cell phone era. The foundation for this revolution was laid by Rajiv Gandhi through creation of Telecom commission. Many of the gains that have accrued to the economy are due to the liberalization process where economic controls are slowly with drawn this process started in 1980s when Rajiv Gandhi initiated broad banding of licenses. Adaption of a new comprehensive education policy and creation of a Human Resource Development ministry are two other important steps taken by Shri. Rajiv Gandhi in setting the tone for a new era.

Education is a process of continuous value addition which enables an individual to rise to greater heights as a person and serve the larger interests of society as meaningfully as possible. With this as a process we have to look in to facilitators as well as impediments in the context of socioeconomic changes.

The approach used for analyzing these impacts is the stakeholder analysis. Let us essentially see who are stake holders in educational system how is their role affected by the socioeconomic changes in the country.



Before this analysis let us look at a few socioeconomic changes in general.

### I. Social Changes.

- Though the per capita income / literacy levels and other parameters of society have improved rate of unemployment as well as under employment have risen.
- Jobs in many sectors including industry as well as banking have been lost creating a social problems. The voluntary retirement scheme which appears very rosy at the outset has had its own social effects.
- The communication revolution, particularly the advent of television though it has widened our horizon of thinking through wide exposure it has also made exposure to a certain undesirable aspects leading to a serious social problem.

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- (d) Erosion in social values has been a greatest calamity in recent times leading to a adulterated society. The earned, the rich and famous who occupy highest position in social hierarchy have failed to deliver. Materialism which was a western credo has come to India and Spiritualism which was the eastern credo has moved to the west. Corruption in society is at an alarming level at present and we are slowly nearing catastrophe. Concept of morality and polity in public life are getting eroded and corroded in recent times.

## II. Economic changes.

- a) We have ushered in a new are of liberalization, privatization and globalization which is popularly known as LPG. The liberalization process has disturbed the social balance by making entry in to various industry and business free thereby creating a flood of goods and services creating a demand induced by supply. To illustrate; we have moved from only two models in passengers to over 80 models of cars costing from 2,28,000 to Rs. 1 Crore. Once upon a time our desires were suppressed due to non availability. To day our desires are getting stimulated. We have wide range to think of consumer durables.
- b) Liberal tax benefits have given a boost to housing sector and has made even low paid employee think of a house for himself or herself thereby directing a large amount of disposable income towards housing thereby affecting social spending.
- c) Initially when the process of privatization was triggered by the World Bank from which we took a loan of \$5billion in 1992. We did not realize its impact. Today Government has reduced its social spending resulting in reduced or almost nil subsidies in areas of agriculture, education, power and other sectors. This has a significant impact on education as it has now been turned in to a commercial activity to be decided on a cost benefit analysis. The support given to various levels in the educational system is getting reduced substantially leaving people in a state of disbelief and shock.
- d) World Trade Organization has had a significant impact on Indian economy particularly in the context of India choosing to be one of the early and active members of the WTO. Impact of WTO is wide. It has made imports from as well as exports to over 150 countries possible thereby forcing competitiveness on Indian industry to which it was not prepared. In this transition when the industry had to gear itself to leverage the change number of industries and businesses have come in to existence resulting in significant impact on economy as well as society.
- e) Fifth important development has been the IT revolution. Information Technology has provided the much needed confidence as well as an air of supremacy to Indian industry thereby making a significant impact on economy as well as society. These are the major changes in the social and economic scenario in the country. Now let us look to the problems arising out of it with special emphasis on the various stake holders in the system.

## Government

Government is an important stakeholders in the educational system. Its role is getting changed. From its early role as a support system it has transformed in to regulatory system. It has become suddenly conscious of huge amounts it used to spend on education and it has started questioning the same and whenever it continues to spend it has started putting lot of conditions. As a country develops, the various institutions come to enjoy more and more freedom, but in India the recent development have brought in more regulation and interference to the detriment of academic excellence.

**Remedy is;** While it is good to build a real cost economy the processes adapted to do so must be cautious and thoughtful as to cause least damage to the institution. The vulnerability of educational institution in the contest of reduced social spending should not be exploited.

## Management (of educational institutions)

Governance has come to acquire lot of importance every where Governance in education also is important. Educational institutions in the context of liberalization in education where new opportunities are created with less of regulations with regard to self supporting system managements have to gear up to

utilize the freedom objectively at the same time responding to regulation. Management of education is not adequately developed as it should as a result of which country loses lot of money arising out of poor utilization of resources.

### **Remedy (Process is a neglected function):**

Managements should bring in more discipline and have a systems approach to management. Capacity building in educational management should start bringing in qualified administration and exposing existing staff to training particularly the principals who play a pivotal role. Management must seriously consider the choice of only the meritorious and capable people for teaching jobs so that delivery system are not affected.

### **Parents**

Today's parents are in a state of flux. They are educated. They are spurred by desire to give best education to children (since they have less number of them). Many times both of them are working, but due to the impact of over exposure their aspirations are increasing faster than their income. They are in a state of flux. An average middle class parent has no time to spend with his family particularly children. In the context of tuition era leisure in family as well as pleasure in family have become scarce. Due to nucleus families and also due to erosion in values parents are not in a position to give a proper direction to their children.

### **Remedy :**

Parent should selectively interact with children provide them where withal to face life. Provide them economic discipline, inspire them, through self discipline. Provide a spiritual base so that they can face life boldly.

### **Teachers**

Teachers today are in a state of flux. There are cases of over employment as well as under employment. Today's teachers are not blessed with best of education as in the past and a result they are unable to deliver. Their aspirations are increasing faster than their means of satisfying them as a result they have become materialistic. The menace of tuitions can partly be explained in this context. Teachers are not in a position to provide a good role model to students. They are unable to inspire a students.

### **Remedy:**

Teachers should be more inward looking. They must cherish values rather possessions. They must become conscious of their role as mentors and play it effectively. They should reduce their pursuit of material happiness and find a pleasure in doing a good job of teaching. They must spend money on their self development and keep improving to be able to deliver. Teachers should provide more soft skills such as leadership, interpersonal relations, goal setting etc.

### **Society:**

Society as a whole has a pivotal role to play. They must become conscious of underlying social processes to stem the rot. Society has a great role to play in the context of slow withdrawal of Government from the scenario and come forward to fund educational processes and encourage excellence through institution of endowments, scholarships, prizes etc. Society must come to the rescue of educational institutions which are struggling to cope up with the sudden change and provide their valuable services as well as attentions which is very vital.