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# Corruption in Education System in India: A Study

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## Abstract

*This paper takes advantage of a new corruption measure across regions within a country to measure the influence of corruption on public spending efficacy in the education sector in India, one of the most corrupt countries in the world. I find that public spending has a negligible effect on education outcomes in highly corrupt regions, while it has a statistically significant, positive, and relatively large effect in less corrupt regions. I do not find any direct effect of corruption on education outcomes, hence implying that one channel through which corruption adversely affects the education system is through reducing the effectiveness of public spending.*

*The paper addresses corruption in the education industry on a macro level and in the school as a productive unit of the system on the micro level, rather than the process of education itself on macro and micro levels.*

*Corruption refers to the practice of misusing one's power and position to achieve various illegal ends. It implies the dishonest behavior on the part of those who are in authority. Corruption comes into existence when the officials use their office as a means to serve their immoral personal objectives.*

## Introduction

Education is fundamental to human progress. It plays a prominent role in all-around development of individual as well as society. Education plays a key role in creating patriotic, disciplined and productive manpower. Educated manpower constitutes precious assets as well as agents for advancing the nation. Education means the fostering of personality through the unhampered development of innate qualities of a human being. It aims at integrated development of personality. In principle, education to the citizen is the responsibility of the State since India is a welfare State. It is an integral part of the social sector of the economy. It adds to the efficiency and productivity of human resources leading to sustainable economic growth. Its direct and indirect effects can be observed on the performance of economic sector and social sector of the country. The role of State is important in education sector for its vertical and horizontal growth.

As India is making way towards development, Education plays a vital role. It was not recently that a headline emerged in a daily newspaper that read, 'India has exam system, not education system' which can definitely make one ponder whether India is on the right path as far as Education is concerned. Education has always been a prime concern for the country, thus inherited from Britishers has gone through many variations in the past 60 years. India has witnessed many changes in many fields like technology, lifestyle,

economic growth, finance power of the country and lots more. Among these education is on the top. True is the fact that Education is a straight road to the development of the country but now Education has become a mere business as it has lost its quality and is depending on its quantity with quota system and politicization adding fuel to this. Present day education is totally depending on how to make money and is ignoring all the important aspects attached to it.

Education system in India is similar to that of various other South Asian countries. It consists of three major components- general education, vocational and technical, which till liberalization of economy were public domain, i.e. they were State's responsibility class grading divided education system from Primary level to Master level into 17 years. Institutional set-up such as university is called the basic infrastructure which is determinant of educational development.

## Corruption in Education: Why Now?

Enough stress cannot be laid on the importance of education in today's world. But when education itself is full of bureaucracy, how bright can the future be?

Several national conventions on corruption have raised interest in this phenomenon and how it has impacted upon the education sector. People involved in education system from uppermost echelons right down to the school level are confronted by corrupt practices at some stage.

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Much of this research has applied methods of broad analyses of corruption in the public sector, and has tended to use the general definition of corruption as: "the use of public resources for private gain". The emerging focus on corruption in education is partly due to new challenges facing the education sector. These include- the rapid growth in resources allocated to education in particular under the education for all initiative, the decentralization of education system funding and management, the growth of grueling competition among students and schools, the boom in new technologies, the spread of new education delivery system and the development of cross-border instructions. These challenges present important opportunities for the transformation and renewal of education system, but at the same time they have the potential to create new risks for large-scale corruption and fraud.

Corruption in education has taken several forms: bribes paid by parents to teachers to ensure good grades and examination results; bribes paid by teachers to public officials to get preferred posting and promotion; profiling of children based on parental educational qualifications, financial standing or social standing, embezzlement of funds allocated to purchase teaching materials or to build schools. Corruption in the education sector can also mean the bypassing of criteria in the approval of school establishment and accreditation, cronyism and nepotism in procurement and teacher appointment, resulting in "ghost teachers" or the selling of information on exams amongst others.

### **A Unesco Report**

India's education system is mired in corruption and a high rate of teacher absenteeism in the country was a key factor for it according to the new global study. The UNESCO's International Institute of Educational Planning study on corruption in education released recently says that 25% teacher absenteeism in India is among the highest in the world, second only after Uganda that has a higher rate. The global average of teacher absenteeism is about 20%. Teacher absenteeism does not just affect quality of education; it is also a huge drain on resources resulting in the wastage of 22.5% of education funds in India the study said. The study identifies the absence of well established criteria for teacher recruitment a uniform policy on promotion, remuneration and deployment as some of the main reasons identified for teacher

absenteeism. However the report found married teachers to be more regular at job than unmarried teachers. In Bihar two of every five teachers were reported absent the figure in UP was reported to be one-third of the total teachers. However in states like Gujarat and Kerala the figure was lower than 15% the report based on several small studies. Teachers also believe highly in private tutoring a practice identified by UNESCO as unethical. It does not complement learning at school and leads to corruption the report said. The practice of ghost teachers and involvement of teachers in mismanagement of schools were other gray areas identified in the Indian education system.

Another indictment of the sorry state of Indian education was the view held by students that cheating in examinations is their traditional right. In India universities cheating is now well-established. The fees for manipulating entrance tests ranges between \$ 80 to \$ 20,000 for popular programmes such as computer science, medicine and engineering the report said.

### **Government's Role in Education System in India**

As India is making way towards development, Education plays a vital role. It was not recently that a headline emerged in a daily newspaper that read, 'India has exam system, not education system' which can definitely make one ponder whether India is on the right path as far as Education is concerned.

Education became the joint responsibility of the state as well as of the Central government. Together, many schemes were launched by the Indian government for developing the literacy rate within the country that included Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, District Primary Education Program, National Bal Bhavan and many more. **Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan:** Primary Education is a must for all and for this the government of India came up with this 'Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan', the main goal of which was to give complete primary education to all the children between the age group 6-11. This 'abhiyan' emphasized on girl education and education of Schedule Caste (SC) and Schedule Tribe (ST) children. Other girl oriented programs that came up were Girl education at elementary level, 'National Program for Education of Girls at Elementary Level' (NPEGEL), 'Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya' (KGBV) and 'Mahila Samakhya Scheme'. **District Primary Education Program:** Launched in 1994 with the objective of improving primary education, it was easily made accessible to each and every child of

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school going age. It provided construction of school and classrooms, appointed teachers and provided education to disabled children. With the help of government this program has been made successful as 1, 60, 000 schools and 84, 000 alternative schools have been opened under this program. Not only this but work is going on for the construction of new buildings of 52, 758 schools and 4, 20, 203 disabled children have enrolled into the schools. Despite all the work being done to improve the education system, its quality, quantity all continue to haunt the policy makers which is due to the increasing poverty and discrimination. India needs its Education System to be modified as the present system does not help the students to grow up their personality and merit.

### **The Cost of Corruption in Education**

Several studies conducted during the past decade have clearly emphasized the negative impact of corruption on the economic, political and social development of India. It has been observed that corruption increases transaction costs, reduces the efficiency and quality of services, distorts the decision making process, and undermines social values. Recent surveys conducted on the impact of corruption on the provision of social services-including education thus suggest for instance that illegal payments for school entrance and other hidden costs help explain low school enrolment and high drop-out rates in India. Education system for instance appears to be affected in two ways by corruption:

1. On the one hand by the pressure it exerts on public resources, and, as a consequence, in the education budget-which represents, the largest component of public expenditures.
2. On the other hand, by its impact on the costs of education services, on their volume, as well as on their quality.

According to Transparency International, India ranks 87th on the corruption scale out of 178 countries with a score of 3.3 on 10. A 2005 study by Transparency International (TI) India found that more than half of those surveyed had firsthand experience of paying bribe or peddling influence to get a job done in a public office. The TI India study estimates the monetary value of petty corruption in 11 basic services provided by the government, like education, healthcare, judiciary, police, etc., to be around Rs.21, 068 crores.

### **Example of Corruption**

- MBBS seats sold for between Rs 12 lakh and Rs 40 lakh by two private colleges in Chennai barely exposes the tip of the iceberg. The scam gets bigger, more brazen as medical graduates embark on specializations that are necessary for a successful career.
- Other educational institutions like schools and colleges also have started taking bribes on the name of donation which costs up to 10 to 15 lakhs. Where do the middle class people go for educating their child? The Indian democracy says Every Citizen Have a Right to Education. But this is not practised. The education system is not directly depriving the child from taking education but indirectly it is saying that marks and intelligence have no value in front of money today.
- There is no need of Entrance Test in India. But this is another way of getting money. This system has also started in India to a very large extent. Making money is very famous through entrance exams.
- The third major problem in Indian education system is the marks allocation system. Who will study when students can get 60% marks through copy paste? Some institutes have started to give 60% marks for internal assessment. Internal assessment are easy but are made more easy by these institution by just letting the students to copy paste the stuffs from various sources especially internet.
- Indian education system is also in corruption because of high rate of teacher absenteeism in the country was a key factor in education system in India according to the new global study. The UNESCO's International Institute of Educational Planning study on corruption in education released recently says that 25% teacher absenteeism in India is among the highest in the world, second only after Uganda that has a higher rate.

THESE are only 5 of the main corruption in the system now. There are also many others small corruption taking place within the education system of India. These corruptions are not only polluting the Indian education system but also killing our generation and

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the future of India. After going through this piece of information one questions bangs in to our minds. – WHERE IS THE INDIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM GOING?

### **Diagnosis of Corruption in Education**

The measurement of corrupt practices in the education sector has usually proceeded via the use of three main data collection strategies: public expenditure tracking survey, quantitative service delivery surveys and report cards.

- ***Public Expenditure Tracking Survey (PETS)***

PETS survey aim to “follow the money trail” (mainly non-salary expenditures), from central ministry of education level right down to the school level. An analysis of the available research has shown that leakage rates can depend on different variables such as school size, location, student poverty level and teacher profile.

- ***Quantitative Service Delivery Survey (QSDS)***

QSDS surveys are used to collect quantitative data on the efficiency of public spending and the different aspects of frontline service delivery usually represented by schools in the education sector. The collection of additional data at school level can provide useful insights into the relationship between corrupt practices and contextual variables for example trends in absenteeism and their linkage with variables such as teacher's age, gender, status and teaching condition.

- ***Report Cards***

Report cards are used to generate information on the quality and efficiency of the public service as perceived by users. This approach to information collection may be used to mobilize local communities in a participatory approach, and also to question them on particular matters, such as the payment of illegal fees. Data can be collected by the way of questionnaires administered to civil servants, teachers, pupils and parents chosen at random from a sample of school.

### **Prevailing Education System**

The modern education system has been based on one formula: 'cheap, compulsory and common education to all'. Even people are able to decide by their conscience that what way of education will be best suited for them. But still there are many people who know nothing about words and literacy. So they are in

the most of the need to get a proper education. It is needed to provide education to all because other nations are way ahead in the field of education. It's all in the hand of the government that what should be the exact type of system in which education for all is secured. And even the government has taken great measures to increase the level of education.

### **Drawbacks of The Modern Education System**

- One of the major drawbacks of our present system of education in India is that it gives our students the impression that their aim in life is to pass the university examinations, instead of becoming a man of good character and sound temperament. This mentality has many socio-economic evils rooted in it. Naturally, the products of such education system do not contribute to the development of the country, but add to its woes.
- Another drawback of present education system lies in the fact that there is a wide gap between education and its marketability. Our education system does not groom young men and women in a way that they can meet the requirement of market. A majority of these young educated persons have to struggle hard to fulfill their basic requirement which, obviously, brings in them a deep sense of frustration and confusion. Sometimes these frustrated youth come into the contact of anti-social elements leading them to involve in anti- national, disruptive and destructive activities.

### **Steps to Improve The Education System**

- New curriculum should replace the old ones so as to provide latest knowledge to students.
- Everyone should be given equal opportunity without discriminating on the basis of rich and poor or on the basis of gender.
- There should be strict laws regarding the cheating and coaching mafias.
- There should be more emphasis given on adult education as it is necessary to teach the parents and guardians first so that they become keen towards their ward's education.
- There should be strict laws regarding the cheating and coaching mafias.
- Also the system of education should be made free of corruption.



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## The Problem in Education System

Education is a fundamental human right and a major driver of human and economic development. It strengthens personal integrity and shapes the societies in which we live. Since education typically comprises 20-30 per cent of a country's budget, it is critically prone to corruption, from national education ministries to local schools and universities. The cost of corruption is high. Stolen resources from education budgets mean overcrowded classrooms and crumbling schools, or no schools at all. Books and supplies are sometimes sold instead of being given out freely. Schools and universities also 'sell' school places or charge unauthorized fees, forcing students (usually girls) to drop out. Teachers and lecturers are appointed through family connections, without qualifications. Grades can be bought, while teachers force students to pay for tuition outside of class. In higher education, undue government and private sector influence can skew research agendas.

The end result is limited access to – and poor quality of – education, and a social acceptance of corruption through a corrupted education system.

## The Solution

We must demand a commitment to high quality education that's available to all. For this, we need policy information that's clear and easy to understand. National, district and school and university budgets need to be published in detail so that we can monitor how resources are allocated. Confidential complaint channels are essential to report suspected corruption without fear of retaliation. It's important to have clear regulations controlling education finance and management. These give guidelines on new schools, exam processes and fees. Regular external audits must take place to detect and deter fraud. And frequent school inspections can prevent corruption in teacher management and behavior. Consistent penalties for abuses are also needed.

No teacher should be appointed without proof of their qualifications and experience. We must also push for exam regulations to be widely published. And we must monitor grading, so students won't have to buy their way to good marks.

## Conclusion

*If the foundation stone happens to be crooked, how can we build up a healthy nation?*

The importance of quality education in developing India to reach higher pedestals in all spheres of life and to protect our democracy and secularism cannot be debated upon. If steps aren't taken to prevent corruption in all ministries, including education the future may not be as bright as it is imagined to be right now.

The conclusion that we can draw is that even in the modern time India can be given back its status of a wealthy knowledge full land full of ethics and moral beauty. The only step to be taken is to improve ourselves and there is a need of strict laws to appreciate the good ones and to punish the wrong ones whatever the field is. The answer lies within the question. How to improve the system of education? And the answer is "Education". The only way to improve education is education.

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