Pattern of Education in India

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Abstract

Secondary education covers children aged 14 to 18, a group comprising 8.85 crore children according to the 2001 Census of India. The final two years of secondary is often called Higher Secondary (HS), Senior Secondary, or simply the "+2" stage. The two halves of secondary education are each an important stage for which a pass certificate is needed, and thus are affiliated by central boards of education under HRD ministry, before one can pursue higher education, including college or professional courses. UGC, NCERT, CBSE and ICSE directives state qualifying ages for candidates who wish to take board exams. Those at least 15 years old by 30 May for a given academic year are eligible to appear for Secondary board exams, and those 17 by the same date are eligible to appear for Higher Secondary certificate board exams. It further states that upon successful completion of Higher Secondary, one can apply to higher education under UGC control such as Engineering, Medical, and Business Administration. Secondary education in India is examination-oriented and not course-based. Students register for and take classes primarily to prepare for one of the centrally-administered examinations. Senior school or high school is split into 2 parts (grades 9-10 and grades 11-12) with a standardized nationwide examination at the end of grade 10 and grade 12 (usually informally referred to as "board exams"). Grade 10 examination results can be used for admission into grades 11-12 at a secondary school, pre-university program, or a vocational or technical school. Passing a grade 12 board examinations leads to the granting of a secondary school completion diploma, which may be used for admission into vocational schools or universities in the country or the world. Most reputable universities in India require students to pass college-administered admissions tests in addition to passing a final secondary school examination for entry into a college or university. School grades are usually not sufficient for college admissions in India. Most schools in India do not offer subject and scheduling flexibility due to budgeting constraints (for e.g.: most students in India are not allowed to take Chemistry and History in grades 11-12 because they are part of different "streams"). Private candidates (i.e. not studying in a school) are generally not allowed to register for and take board examinations but there are some exceptions such as NIOS.

Key Words: Mathematics/Biology, Chemistry, and Physics Commerce (Accounts, Business Studies, and Economics), or Humanities any three of History, Political Science, Sociology, Psychology, Geography depending on school). Students study Mathematics up to single-variable
Introduction

The education system of India is one of the largest of its kind in the world. More than 102.8 million people come under this education system. Elementary education in India has been emphasized to increase the literacy percentage of the country. India’s post-independence period has seen the launch of various schemes by the Government to promote education among the masses and to achieve universalization of elementary education in the country. The constitutional Constitutional mandate, 1950 - "The State shall endeavor to provide, within a period of ten years from the commencement of this Constitution, for free and compulsory education to all children until they complete the age of 14 years."National Policy of Education, 1986 - "It shall be ensured that free and compulsory education of a satisfactory level is provided to all children up to 14 years of age before we enter the twenty first century", Unnikrishnan Judgment, 1993 - "Every child/citizen of this country has a right to free education until he completes the age of fourteen years."The elementary education in India starts from the early childhood days. The system includes three stages: pre-primary, primary and middle level. The analytical report, given below, gives an insight into the state of elementary education in different states in the country. Academic Session The academic session usually begins from July after a long summer vacation in most of the states but it is different in hilly states where the winter vacation is significant. The total number of working days is more than 200 days in all states and Union Territories.

Matriculation or Secondary
Students taking the grade 10 examination usually take six subjects: English, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, one language, and one optional subject depending on the availability of teachers at different schools. "Elective" or optional subjects often include Computer Applications, Economics, Physical Education, Commerce, and Environmental Science.

Senior Secondary Or Higher Secondary
Students taking the grade 12 examination usually take four or five subjects with English or the local language being compulsory. Students re-enrolling in most secondary schools after grade 10 have to make the choice of choosing a "core stream" in addition to English or the local language: Science (Mathematics/Biology, Chemistry, and Physics), Commerce (Accounts, Business Studies, and Economics), or Humanities (any three of History, Political Science, Sociology, Psychology, Geography depending on school). Students study Mathematics up to single-variable Calculus in grade 12.

Government Schools
The majority of students study in government schools where poor and vulnerable students study for free until the age of 14. An Education Ministry data, 65.2% (113 million,) of all school students in 20 states go to government schools (c. 2017). These include schools runs by the state and local government as well as the centre government. Example of large centre government run school systems are Kendriya Vidyalaya in urban
areas, Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, for the gifted students, Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya for girls belonging to vulnerable SC/ST/OBC classes, Indian Army Public Schools run by the Indian Army for the children of soldiers. Kendriya Vidyalaya project, was started for the employees of the central government of India, who are deployed throughout the country. The government started the Kendriya Vidyalaya project in 1965 to provide uniform education in institutions following the same syllabus at the same pace regardless of the location to which the employee's family has been transferred.

**Middle**

The middle stage of education consists of classes either from VI-VIII or from VI-VII depending upon the states or union territories. The 18 states which come under the first category are: Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Chandigarh, Delhi and Karaikal region of Pondicherry. The second system (VI-VII) is effective in states like Assam, Goa, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Daman & Diu, Lakshadweep and Mahe region of Pondicherry.

**Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (Ssa)**

“Sarva Siksha Abhiyan” or “Education for All Movement” was started by the Government of India to make the universalisation of elementary education in the country. The program was mandated in the constitution making education free to children of ages 6-14 and a fundamental right. The program aims to achieve the goal by 2010. SSA has several plans in its hand. The program includes opening of new schools in those areas where schooling facilities are not available. It also provides basic infrastructure to the existing schools by providing additional classrooms, toilets, drinking water, maintenance grant and other accessories. It also seeks provide computer education to the children. The program emphasizes on girl’s education and children with special needs.

**Non-Formal Schooling**

For making the universalisation of elementary education in the country an important measure adopted was opening of non-formal education centers for children in the age group 6-14. This system of education was adopted for those children who were not covered under the formal education system. The children in the age group of 6-14 were out of the school either because they were not admitted in the schools or were withdrawing from the schools before the completion of their elementary education. Hence these children now
get free education at their door step. Though this program me was started in the late 1978, it has been accelerated in the recent days. These non-formal centers are mainly located in the rural villages of the country.

Secondary Learning

Secondary education in India starts form class VIII or IX depending upon the states or union territories. The Secondary Stage consists of Classes IX-X in 19 States/UTs. Viz., Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Nagaland, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Chandigarh, Delhi and Karaikal region of Pondicherry. The other stage i.e. classes VIII to X is adopted in 13 States/UTs viz., Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Goa, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Orissa, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Daman & Diu, Lakshadweep and Mahe & Yanam regions of Pondicherry. The Higher Secondary / Senior Secondary stage of school (classes XI-XII) which comes under the 10+2 pattern is available in all the States/UTs though in some States/UTs these classes run in Junior colleges or are attached with universities.

Medium of Study:

The medium of instruction at primary level is the regional language of the respective state. Teaching of Hindi and English is compulsory in most of the non-Hindi speaking states. The states like Tamil Nadu, Tripura and Karaikal region of Pondicherry have not accepted Hindi as a compulsory subject to be included in their syllabus.

Concluding Examinations

The final examinations are conducted at the end of classes X and XII in all states and Union Territories. The State Boards or Councils conduct these examinations. The age limit for secondary exams varies from 14 to 16 whereas for higher secondary it varies from 16+ to 18+ years. In some states the first final examination is conducted at the middle school level of education.

Higher Education

The Higher Education sector of India is the third largest in the world in terms of number of students. The higher education refers to the study in colleges, universities and research centers. After the completion of class 12th or intermediate course a student generally goes for higher study. The country has about 380 universities and deemed universities, over 17,500 colleges and hundreds of national and regional research institutes. The institutes for higher learning in India follow specific rules as made by the state or the central government.
There are also some statutory and autonomous bodies running in the country to regulate the higher education system in the country.

**Undergraduate Colleges**

The initial period of the higher education starts from the undergraduate level. After completion of intermediate level (i.e. 10+2 or class 12th) in any stream a student is eligible to pursue higher education. The duration of study is either three years or four years or even five years in case of Medical Science or Architecture etc. The Engineering degree is of four years duration and all other degree courses in Arts, Commerce and Basic Sciences are of three years duration. After successful completion of the course a student is awarded a degree by the college or by the university with which the college is allied. There are more than 16,000 colleges in India. These colleges are affiliated to different universities of their state. The pattern of examination varies from one university to the other. Some holds annual examination while other conducts semesters. The total marks also differ from one university to the other. Some universities have started the “grading system” for awarding degrees. The syllabus for a particular course is designed by the affiliating university and it is in a state of modification from time to time. The colleges of India follow the reservation policy as mandated by the government. There is provision of reservation of seats in colleges for special categories like Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), Other Backward Castes (OBCs), Physically Challenged, Sports Personalities and other categories as classified by the reservation act.

**Universities**

A university is an institution of higher learning that offers degrees at all levels (Bachelor, Master or Doctorate) in different fields. There are as many as 300 universities in India which are either state, central or deemed universities. These universities provide different programmers and also carry out researches in respective fields. The Post Graduate or Masters Degree programme is offered at all universities in the country. Generally the duration of masters’ degree programme is of two years. After successful completion of programme in any discipline; the student is awarded Masters degree in the same field. The student who undergoes Master programme would get intensive theory and practical classes. Sometime internships and trainings are also covered as a part of the programme of study to sharpen the skills of the student. Universities of India follow the guidelines of the University Grant Commission (UGC).

The funds are provided by the state governments or by the UGC. The most predominant form of grading system (in evaluation process) in the country is the percentage system. In this process the marks obtained by the student is divided by the maximum marks to obtain the percentage for award of division or class. However some universities in India have started to follow a marking system based on a grade point average. The
grading system in these institutes is a Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) on a 10 or 4 point scale. Notably, all the IITs, BITS Pilani (Pilani, Goa campuses) and most NITs use a 10-point Grade Point Average (GPA) system. However, the grades themselves may be absolute (as in NITs), exclusively relative (as in BITS Pilani), or a combination of absolute, relative and/or historic, as in some IITs.

**CONCLUSION**

The course structure is rigid and minimum options are available in Indian education system. On the other hand, if a student opts for an education in a foreign country gets a varied range of courses available and moreover students can choose among a host of classes and courses. They can change their major (i.e. field of study) midway through college. This usually means that students receive more exposure to a variety of subjects and hence, are more aware of their career options and opportunities available to them.

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