

# An overview of the modern school education system in india



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Ancient Indian educational system focused on building a disciplined and values-based culture. Human values such as trust, respect, honesty, dignity, and courtesy are the building blocks of any free, advanced society. The convocation addresses from ancient time throws significant light on the qualities required to be developed in the students which are not very different from the qualities that modern educational systems are trying to impart.

Discipline like character is an essential quality for personal as well as social life. It consists in obedience to laws, rules and decisions. In this regard we must admit that ancient Indian system of education played a major role in making students realize their duties and responsibilities and emphasized on the necessity of discipline for an orderly social life. Character and discipline cannot be imparted to an individual by preaching or through speeches. While students can be imparted with the knowledge of what is moral and what is immoral, what is discipline and what is indiscipline, what is character and what is characterless, they can be made to act in conformity with the required standard of behaviour, only through personalexample. These qualities are acquired by emulation in addition to education.

3. The modern school education system in India comprising primary, middle and secondary levels vary considerably across the states since education is primarily the responsibility of the state governments. Most states follow five years of primary, three years of middle and two years each of secondary and higher secondary levels shown in appendix Q. In the public schools, the lessons are taught mostly in regional languages and English is learned as second language while private schools use English to teach most of the

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subjects. The system of higher education is however more or less uniform across the country and taught mostly in English. The first level degrees in non-technical subjects usually require about three years while the technical degree courses span over four years.

4. Indian Constitution directs the State to provide free and compulsory education for all children upto the age of 14. This goal has been pursued by the country for nearly six decades through successive development plans. The last two decades have witnessed significant improvements in children's participation in schooling, accompanied by substantial increase in investments. The recent effort to raise resources for the sector through imposition of an education cess is major effort in that direction. Even though school education has traditionally remained a subject for action by State Governments, Government of India has, during the last two decades following the National Policy on Education – 1986, begun to play a leading role. This culminated in the launching of the national programme of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in 2001. Despite all these efforts, the final goal of providing quality education for all has eluded the country.

5. Urgency of reaching the goal has been heightened in recent years due to several national and international developments, including commitments made under the Dakar Framework for Action for providing quality Education for All by 2015, which not only covers primary education but also focus on literacy goals, gender equality and quality concerns. The Dakar Framework of Action listed the following six specific goals to be achieved by all countries.

- a). Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.
- b). Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality.
- c). Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes.
- d). Achieving a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults.
- e). Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality.
- f). Improving every aspect of the quality of education, and ensuring their excellence so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.

6. The National Plan of Action for Education for All (2002) in India reflects this sense of urgency felt within the country by proposing to reach the targets much ahead of the international dateline. At the national level, the Constitutional Amendment in 2002 declaring education in the age group 6-14 which corresponds to the elementary education stage of schooling a fundamental right has brought the issue of universal elementary education <https://assignbuster.com/an-overview-of-the-modern-school-education-system-in-india/>

(UEE) to the centre stage of public discourse. The country is in the process of drawing up the legislation for effective implementation of the right for translating the constitutional provision into reality. With the progress made in recent years the goal seems to be achievable by the international time frame of 2015. But this requires systematic assessment of the various goals the present exercise is one such effort.

7. Looking from different perspective institutions of higher learning and universities flourished in India well before the Common Era, and continued to deliver education into the Common Era. Secular Buddhist institutions cropped up along with monasteries. These institutions imparted practical education, e. g. medicine. A number of urban learning centres became increasingly visible from the period between 200 BCE to 400 CE. The important urban centres of learning were Taxila and Nalanda, among others. These institutions systematically imparted knowledge and attracted a number of foreign students to study topics such as logic, grammar, medicine, metaphysics, arts and crafts.

8. With the arrival of the British Raj in India a class of Westernized elite was versed in the Western system of education which the British had introduced. This system soon became solidified in India as a number of primary, secondary, and tertiary centres for education cropped up during the colonial era. Between 1867 and 1941 the British increased the percentage of the population in Primary and Secondary Education from around 0. 6% of the population in 1867 to over 3. 5% of the population in 1941. However this was much lower than the equivalent figures for Europe where in 1911 between 8 and 18% of the population were in Primary and Secondary education.  
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Additionally literacy was also improved. In 1901 the literacy rate in India was only about 5% though by Independence it was nearly 20%.

9. Following independence in 1947, Maulana Azad, India's first education minister envisaged strong central government control over education throughout the country, with a uniform educational system. However, given the cultural and linguistic diversity of India, it was only the higher education dealing with science and technology that came under the jurisdiction of the central government. The government also held powers to make national policies for educational development and could regulate selected aspects of education throughout India.

10. The central government of India formulated the National Policy on Education (NPE) in 1986 and also reinforced the Programme of Action in 1986. The government initiated several measures the launching of DPEP (District Primary Education Programme) and SSA (Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, India's initiative for Education for All) and setting up of Navodaya Vidyalaya and other selective schools in every district, advances in female education, inter-disciplinary research and establishment of open universities. India's NPE also contains the National System of Education, which ensures some uniformity while taking into account regional education needs. The NPE also stresses on higher spending on education, envisaging a budget of more than 6% of the Gross Domestic Product. While the need for wider reform in the primary and secondary sectors is recognized as an issue, the emphasis is also on the development of science and technology education infrastructure.