
**EMERGING CHALLENGES AND NEW INITIATIVES IN INDIAN
EDUCATION SYSTEM**

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ABSTRACT

Education in India has often been characterized as having a breadth of access, a range in opportunities, distinction in scholarship and an engagement in social and public issues. Yet there are large segments of population who remain excluded from the benefit of education. This is especially true for scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, minorities, women and other deprived communities. At present the country is facing several challenges in education such as problem of illiteracy, educational inequality, imbalances in the growth of educational institutions, etc. In the present research paper discussed emerging challenges and new initiatives in the Indian Education System.

KEYWORDS: Illiteracy, Inequality, Imbalances, Globalization, Learning and Initiatives.

Problem of Illiteracy

The absolute increase in population was much more than the increase in the number of literates during the decades 1961-71, 1971-81 and 1981-91. As a result of this increase in population, problem of illiteracy continued to grow year after year and decade after decade, though at a decreasing rate after 1971.

According to the 2001 Census, there were 304 million non-literates in the country. Nearly 100 million of these non-literates are in the 15-35 age-group and another 159 million non-literates are in the 35+ age group. Out of 600 districts, 150 districts, which have the lowest literacy rate, alone account for 86.80 million non-literates in the 15+ age group out of which nearly 38.40 million are in the 15-35 age group. In addition, 47 districts of the country have a female literacy rate below 30%. The low literacy rates of SC, ST and minorities and especially

of women also call for immediate redressal. The number of non-literates in the 15-35 age-group amongst the scheduled castes is 21.47 million and amongst scheduled tribes is 13.15 million. Further, out of the 88 Muslim concentration districts, 69 districts have a literacy rate below the national average (MHRD,2005).

Increase in the number of literates in 1991-2001 over took the increase in corresponding population during 1991-2001. However, As a result of tremendous efforts on the educational front a slight decline in the growth rate of population, number of illiterates during the decade 1991-2001 came down from 329 millions in 1991 to 304 millions in 2001. This was a welcome change in the depressing scenario.

Educational Inequality

Post-independent India inherited a system of education which was characterized by large scale inter and intra-regional imbalances. The system of education benefitted a select few, leaving a wide gap between the educated and the illiterate. Educational inequality was aggravated in India by economic inequality, gender disparity and rigid social stratification. The educational backwardness is very high among scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. Women's education is also poor due to low enrolment, coupled with the high dropout rate of girls at the primary stage. Enrollment of girls is much lower than boys. Another dimension of the inequality is the variation in literacy rates between rural and urban areas. Educational development is also not uniform in all the States of the Indian Union. The inter-state differences from one state to another are very high.

Unfortunately, many of the educational interventions have not benefitted those who have been neglected and have not received basic education because of social, economic or geographic reasons. Using both formal and non-formal approaches, the education system must address the needs of the poor and the most disadvantaged, including working children, remote rural dwellers and nomads. and ethnic and linguistic minorities, children, young people and adults affected by conflict, HIV/AIDS, hunger and poor health; and those with special learning needs.

Imbalances in Educational Growth

There exists a considerable imbalance in the growth of educational institutions in India. Emphasis has been given to higher education while neglecting elementary education. The data available show that the institutions of higher education have increased nearly ten-fold (an increase of 950 per cent), while the primary schools have only doubled (an increase of

11.8 per cent). The expansion of the tertiary sector caters to the needs of the urban elite who constitute one-fourth of the population. On the other hand, three-fourths of the population lives in rural areas where primary education needs to be emphasized.

Failure to Achieve Education for All

Ensuring that Education for All is provided with adequate, equitable and sustainable resources is the foremost challenge. The Government of India has declared that the whole nation must achieve the goal of education for all through programmes such as Early Childhood Care Education (ECCE), Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE), District Primary Education Projects (DPEP), Programme of Nutritional Support of Primary Education (Mid-day meal Programme), Non-Formal Education Programme for Children (NFE), Open Basic Education, National Literacy Mission, Mahila Samakyas, Jana Shikshana Sansthan (JSS), etc. Despite the efforts to implement the above programmes, the government has not succeeded in achieving the goal of Education for All. The reasons stated in the evaluation research reports are: (1) Rapid population growth, (2) Illiterate society, (3) Lack of political will and action, (4) Poor quality and relevance of schools, (5) Educationally disadvantaged States and Groups, (6) Poor enrolment and retention, (7) Inadequate funds, (8) Poor commitment of the functionaries, (9) Unsuccessful total literacy campaigns particularly in Hindi speaking B1MARU States, etc.

Many states continue to face the challenges of defining the meaning, purpose and content of basic education in the context of a fast-moving world and of 'assessing learning outcomes and achievements. The huge diversity of contexts makes performance and achievements difficult to measure and compare. Further, the Governments need to explore more actively alternative and innovative ways of increasing the resources available to support EFA and to develop clearly defined strategies for achieving EFA goals. The governments must take real and sustained ownership for all such strategies.

With a view to realize the Constitutional Directive of Universal Elementary Education (UEE) and promote Education For All (EFA), effective steps should be taken more extensively by providing suitable incentives and removing all kinds of disparities at various levels (Mohanty, 1994, pp.69-74). These include: (1) Universal provision of facilities, (2) Universal enrolment and retention, (3) Equalizing educational opportunities, (4) Improving curriculum relevance and interest, (5) Adopting suitable methods, Media and materials, (6) Improving teacher training and supervision, (7) Bringing about adequate awareness and interest, (8) Developing alternative channels.

Girl-Child Education

The education of girls remains a major challenge. About 60 per cent of all children do not have access to primary education, and girls make up a major proportion of this number. The problems encountered in education of girls / women in India ' are: the prevalence of social taboos and traditional beliefs, economic dependency, heavy work load, early marriage, discriminating attitude of parents, poverty of parents, low social status, lack of motivation among women, and unavailability of school (Reddy 1991).

Globalization

Today there are a number of changes taking place in the education system because of globalization of economic activity with opportunities for word-wide employment and the rapid development of new information and communication technologies. Factors such as reduced funding for education, ever increasing competition among educated youth, taking education to the door step of disadvantaged communities force the educationists to experiment with innovations in education. These innovations include: Computer-mediated environment which is defined as virtual classroom; application of information and communication technologies to all aspects of the process of education, which is termed as educational informatics. Information can be shared electronically via E-mail, list servers, discussion groups and bulletin boards as well as using resources from the World Wide Web which is the network of computers on the ir):ernet that provides information in hyper text, and preservation, distribution and retrieval of information access through digital libraries, etc. Globalization is both an opportunity and a challenge. It is a process, which must be shaped and managed so as to ensure equity and sustainability. Globalization carries with it the danger of creating a market place in knowledge that excludes the poor and the disadvantaged.

CHALLENGES FACING ADULT EDUCATION

The history of adult education during the last 50 years shows that many literacy drives were organized before launching of the National Literacy Mission in May 1988. Although several programmes and projects were taken up at state or local levels by government departments, voluntary agencies, educational institutions and individuals, the results have been far from satisfaction. Several reasons could be mentioned for low success rate of adult education programmes. They include:

- a) There is no definite commitment at various levels for the adult education Education programmes. This has led to inadequate resources, on the one hand, and to half-hearted attempts at implementation of programmes, on the other.
- b) There is a feeling that there should be adequate preparedness for undertaking literacy programmes.
- c) There is little coordination between government departments, voluntary agencies, educational institutions and individuals.

Physical Environment

In the absence of a proper community hall or a room, most of the adult education centres are functioning in the house of the instructor or in a dingy backroom of a shop or a god own made available by the owner. A majority of the centres in rural areas continue to be without electricity, and due to lack of proper lighting arrangements the programmes suffer. With a view to putting an end to this unsatisfactory state of affairs, the environment in which the adults are expected to learn should be lively, cheerful, relaxing, and the activities which help them to overcome fatigue and drudgery should be organized.

Teaching-Learning Materials

The teaching-learning materials which are being supplied for use in adult education centres are inadequate, often irrelevant and generally poor in quality. The new approach towards teaching-learning skills needs to be two-pronged, to make the contents as functional as possible and the language should be as localized as possible, and to introduce techno-pedagogic inputs. The development of relevant and attractive software should be used in the educational field for improving the efficiency of teaching and learning. Use of sophisticated equipment like television, audio-video tapes and computers should not be frowned upon as too complicated for learners. They can, on the contrary, be put to judicious use in simplifying and making the teaching learning process more interesting.

Learner Motivation

Learner motivation is the basis for effective learning. But it has been the main problem in the past as well in the present adult education programmes. People can be motivated and their interest can be sustained by employing mass media agencies viz., Radio, Television, Film and Newspaper. The mass media can be used to create conducive environment in the community for learning, to supplement the teaching learning process and to provide support for the adult education functionaries. Research studies have shown that motivation can be enhanced if

there is conducive environment which promotes a literacy, and the programme is of direct interest to learners. Motivation of the learners can be increased by improving the learning environment, creating confidence among them, developing suitable learning material, adapting new approaches and innovative methods and arranging continuing education facilities.

Training of Functionaries

There is scope for improving the quality of training of the functionaries of adult and continuing education programmes. The functionaries are not in a position to do their job perfectly, effectively and proficiently due to lack of proper and timely training in adult education. Under the NLM, the training system has been revamped by introducing participatory training processes, increased number of days of initial training, provision of in-service training, setting up of the District Resource Units (DRUs) for adult non-formal education as part of District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETS).

Individual Differences in Learning

One cannot ignore the fact that different individuals learn differently. Each learner learns at a certain pace. Some are slow, and some learn quickly. An adult education programme should make allowances for these individual differences. Adult learning should be inclusive, aiming at developing understanding and sensitivity so that the learners can learn together in spite of differences. The advantaged learners should attend to the needs, difficulties and aspirations of the disadvantaged, while recognizing and promoting the special abilities of the disadvantaged (Ward and William, 1977).

NEW INITIATIVES AND DIRECTIONS

Public, private, voluntary and non-government organizations have often played a leading role in promoting innovative approaches. The more successful programmes have been highly innovative, departing from established educational structures and methodologies. They include: easy accessibility, curricular framework, admission policy, partnerships, modes of delivery, administration, entrepreneurship, etc.

Revamped Strategy for Eradication of Illiteracy Education

The target for the XIth Plan is to achieve 80% literacy by 2012. The gender gap is to be reduced by 10%. The regional, social and gender disparities are to be brought down. The non-literates in the 35+ age group are also to be covered.

The National Literacy Mission plans to strive to impart basic literacy to adult non-literates in the 15-35 age-group living in low literacy districts and belonging to the disadvantaged sections of the society. It would be a time bound campaign implemented in distinct phases.

Instructors of the literacy centres would be paid suitable remuneration with incentives for good performance. A certificate of equivalence with the primary level will be awarded to learners who pass the examination conducted by a local school immediately after completion of the prescribed primers.

The continuing education programme would be re-structured to provide follow up to the neo-literates through library and reading room facilities. The Panchayati Raj institutions would be approached to provide accommodation and other support. Convergence with other development programmes will be attempted to make literacy visibly linked to issues affecting the daily needs of life of a non literate. NGOs with a good track record would be involved in taking up innovative projects, vocational training, academic and technical resource support.

Learning Individuals to Learning Societies

Earlier we used to provide educational opportunities to only those who could afford education. Yet there are large segments of population which remain excluded from benefits of education. Due to lack of adequate facilities the poorer sections of society like the tribal populations and those living in remote and hilly areas could not be easily reached. Now with the availability of different mass media, Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), and open distance learning systems, it is possible to reach deprived sections of society. The impact of each of the new systems is presented in the following sub-sections.

i) Mass Media Communications

Mass media include those which use modern means of communication, such as radio, television, film, press, publications and advertising. Mass media have brought into existence a new form of common consciousness and modern mass public.

The mass media of communications play a vital role in our contemporary society and they illuminate the social fabric of the nation. They are essential in bringing about quick and rapid social changes, which are an offshoot of modernization, propelled by scientific and technological advancement. Mass communication media play a major role in a democratic system by acting as machinery for informing people and creating and reflecting public opinion.

In an industrial state, mass media works as an instrument for expanding national economy through the power of advertising. In a social context, mass media help in transmission of cultural heritage from one generation to the other. Mass media are the most potent channels for bringing in social awareness.

Mass media can also play a vital role in enlightening people on democratic values. Mass communication can be better utilized for the purpose of literacy Emerging Challenges and continuing education. As the formal / traditional means of imparting education is highly structured and within the reach of only a limited number of people, the solution to eradication of illiteracy lies in adopting mass media for the purpose of educating masses.

ii) Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs): ICT empowered education will be a leap forward as it provides a common forum of interaction C for students, teachers, instructors, planners and parents. Its full potential will be realized when we reach the stage of Web Based Teaching (WBT).

It will change the role of teachers from transmitters to facilitators of knowledge; however teachers will still maintain their eminence by playing a greater in the learning Process by preparing materials and thereby facilitate quality education.

Internet accessibility to resources and information through the use of web allows instructors to share knowledge and experience with colleagues b) joining online conferences. Most importantly, it will bring homogeneity in learning standards.

A number of studies conducted across the globe indicate that students with access to ICT systems show positive gains in achievement in all curricular areas. With proliferation of computers and Internet connections in many schools and colleges, it should be possible for teachers to integrate ICTs in curricular areas after initial training.

The role of ICTs in education ranges from its being an instrument of improving the effectiveness in teaching to an alternative to the face-to-face learning with the help of the internet. ICT can be explored as a vibrant tool for knowledge dissemination, effective learning and development of education. Radio, TV, Computer, Digital Libraries, Virtual Classroom and World Wide Web are essential components of ICTs. They should be selected on the basis of accessibility, cost and teaching functions. Positive pedagogic outcomes should be given precedence over novelty.

Approaches to use of ICTs in Education: Three approaches can be cited for making use of ICTs in education a reality. They are: (i) Fast track, (ii) Medi um-term, and (iii) Long- term approaches.

Fast-Track Approach: In Fast-Track, the thrust should be given to the optimal utilization of the existing infrastructure. Radio and TV should be given precedence over computer as their penetration is high and the cost is low.

At this stage, some groundwork such as improvement of curriculum contents, redesigning teachers' training, etc., should be undertaken with the help of radio and TV to bring quality to classroom teaching. Their role in a developing country cannot be under estimated.

Medium Term Approach : In the Medium Term, all efforts should be made to build telecommunication infrastructure, train teachers, forward looking policies etc., to bring WBT within the educational scenario.

Long-term Approach: In the Long-Term, a composite policy should be formulated which will not only address the basic educational needs but also impart essential knowledge for leading a quality life. WBT can be the only answer to futuristic learning as it provides easy accessibility to the pool of ever expanding knowledge.

iii) Open Distance Learning Systems: Open distance learning shall be pursued through the institutional or structured, and also non-institutional and unstructured options. Autonomous/Independent learners, who are working in secondary occupations and willing to acquire academic/professional qualifications can make use of the distance learning systems such as correspondence courses, open universities, etc., in order to continue their education. Distance learning resources would enable neo-literates to continue their education through which they update and upgrade their already acquired knowledge in any particular field of specialization, profession or vocation, so as to improve efficiency in one's own profession (IGNOU,1997).

Through their spare time studies, students may acquire recognized professional qualifications and become useful members of society with good knowledge of culture, science and technology. As the courses belong to a continuous system, learners with various academic qualifications ranging from senior secondary, matriculation, ordinary certificate, and ordinary diploma or higher certificate from polytechnics can find suitable entry points for their studies and terminate at different levels according to their individual needs (Lo Ming-Tak, 1991). Open/Distance learning institutions, which are offering continuing education programmes, offer job-oriented and skill development courses leading to certificates/diplomas/degrees.

Rigid Curriculum to Cafeteria Approach

Education is a three-fold process of imparting knowledge, developing skills and inculcating proper interests, attitudes and values. Our educational programmes are mostly concerned with

the first part of the process - the imparting of knowledge - and carry out even this in an unsatisfactory way (Pratt, 1980). Thus the curriculum makes inadequate provision for practical activities and experiences.

As the society and the social needs change from time to time, there is a need for change in the curriculum also. Curriculum has to change in accordance with the changes in society due to industrial growth, scientific process and social advancement. Factors responsible for bringing change in a curriculum are: philosophical factors, sociological factors, social policy factors, perceived demand, resources, and research findings.

Several scholars are challenging the content of existing courses and a new reform movement has been started which may bring in sweeping curricular changes at all levels of education. This widespread dissatisfaction with the curriculum is due to many causes. In the first place the tremendous explosion of knowledge in recent years and the reformation of the basic concepts in the physical, biological and social sciences have brought into sharp relief the inadequacies of existing educational programmes.

Secondly, there has been a rethinking in educational circles about the nature and duration of the education programmes. It is realized that more dynamic and Emerging Challenges simulating methods can be developed for presenting essential knowledge.

Under the New Curricular approach, the learners are free to choose the curriculum according to their preferences and needs. As we choose items in the cafeteria, we can also choose the courses which are being offered by the different departments in a particular university. Even the credit transfer system is available. One can choose the core courses and the electives can be chosen from other subjects.'

In short, the curriculum is flexible and open to negotiation. It is determined by the choice of the learner and is not prescribed or required by someone else and may not always even be sequential.

Restricted Admission Policies to Open Admission Policies

Traditional universities are rigid in admitting students. They have restrictions in admission policies based on the size of the class, admission criteria, fee structure, etc. Modern universities are providing open admissions irrespective of prior qualification, provided one has attained the age of 18 years. During the recent past, the Open Distance education system has emerged as a suitable alternative for providing education at all levels from elementary through higher education levels. This mode of education has been transformed through

several stages - from pure correspondence education towards multi-media distance education and maturing into open and distance learning (IGNOU, 1997).

To redress the imbalance and increase the number of under-represented groups on campuses, some institutions have taken radical steps and launched new initiatives. The City University of New York in 1970 launched an open-admission policy to ensure unrestricted access to higher education for all individuals regardless of race, ethnic background and income. According to Levin et al., the overall impact of the open-admission policy was greater equality of educational opportunity.

Distance learning institutions are increasingly offering open admissions. They provide open access to professional and vocational education and have no formal entry requirements. All adults are eligible to enroll, without any formal academic qualifications. Instruction is by correspondence, radio and television and may be supplemented by some face-to-face tuition and counseling (DAE, 1992). There are colleges or provider-based systems with 'flexi-study' and support but the learning is undertaken in the learners' homes through the distance learning systems (Jarvis, 1990). It means that learning can be at the location of provider (individual or institution) of learning opportunities, or at the home or the place where the learner is.

Further, they offer new types of courses, new ways of teaching learning, part time study, courses arranged at convenient times for working adults to attend, and so on. Formal institutions are finding these new demands very hard to respond to.

Isolation to Partnerships

Partnerships serve as a viable way for the institutions to modify their missions and seek new, non-traditional affiliations that can respond to both internal and external challenges. Several institutions have concrete manifestations of partnerships with business and labour, and government to work towards the assurance of an educated and capable workforce.

Networking with agencies working at the district level for providing vocational courses/skills can help in designing need-based courses. This will also solve the problems associated with provision of equipment, tools and materials needed to practice trades. For this purpose State Resource Centres (SRCs) may prepare materials and modules of training and technical institutions, agencies and other bodies can lend their support by providing equipment like graters, pruners, etc., which may be difficult to be arranged by educational institutions. But certainly at the initial survey stage, need assessment work with respect to trade location, profile of neo-literates could be prepared and this should be given a concrete shape during the

TLC phase so that, by the time Continuing Education Programme (CEP) commences, modules and materials are ready and supporting departments/ agencies/institutions and their contributions are available at CE stage in providing vocational support for skill development programmes.

Some of the broad areas of such linkages could be as given here under:

- a) Group entrepreneurship and, side by side, individual entrepreneurship for development of infrastructure for basic managerial skills.
- b) Training under special economic programmes such as Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), Training of Rural Youth for Self Employment (TRYSEM), etc., can be linked up with Continuing Education Programme.
- C) Since the clientele group is diversified at different levels, decentralized approach of planning may be called for.
- d) Supplementary material on rural development schemes in collaboration with other departments may be produced so that, the neo-literates could be given information on how they can derive benefits of these schemes. This supplementary material could also be included in the training schedule of field functionaries.
- e) In order to develop linkages between rural development programmes and literacy, the ZSSs and Department of Rural Development, in consultation with each other, may draw up a concrete plan of action1 mechanism for training programmes.

Knowledge Approach to Vocational Skill-Oriented Approach

Though the knowledge approach was popular till recently, the vocational skill oriented approach has gained importance in recent days. Vocational skill courses like turner, fitter, machinist, blacksmith, welder, moulder, wireman, carpenter, mechanic, electrician etc., are now being offered which are providing employment opportunities.

Vocational education is the education or training of workers. This concept implies that any kind of education or training in which a worker participates in vocational education. It also imparts learning of life-coping skills; how to be a good citizen, a good parent, a good worker, a good partner, etc.

Vocational education is the education for manual work. This concept centres on the ideas of ability to work with the hands, rather than the mind with a curriculum Emerging Challenges of certain manual activities like leather work, wood work, metal work, etc. It is education in certain specified subjects, which may be of vocational or technical nature, generally confined

to secondary stage of education. This concept implies that a specified part of the curriculum is vocational or technical, the remaining part falling under general or liberal education.

Vocational education is that education which is craft-oriented. The major objective of craft-oriented education or training is to aid learning in greatest work efficiency possible and in increased earning by providing special instruction in single crafts or trades (Hosomi, et al, 1985 & 1986).

Jana Shikshan Sansthan (Institutes of People's Education) are offering special courses linking literacy with vocational training for the neo-literates, labourers and workers in the urban as well as rural areas (DAE, 2000).

Community Polytechnics (CP) have been imparting basic skills, knowledge and attitudes to help participants - the under privileged, disadvantaged and socioeconomically weaker sections - practice occupational activity in the rural areas.

Vocational skill-training programmes are being conducted by other government departments attached to different ministries besides the Ministry of Human Resource Development in Non-Formal Education Programmes aimed at Capacity Building for Rural Workers and Artisans.

In this regard, perhaps, a beginning could be made by training the master craftsmen, master-technicians and include them among our master trainers who could simultaneously impart literacy and prepare the neo-literates for certain vocational trades about which they have already fairly good understanding. They could also be involved in preparing the needed curriculum and materials, which could be vetted by experts in the trades concerned. This will enable them to improve their skills and optimally function in their own trades, vocations.

A scheme of prioritization will therefore have to be followed while deciding on the vocations and trades to be covered at the CE stage and only those where skill of literacy also gets strengthened may be taken up.

State Funding to Self-Supporting Courses

During the current decade, the State has withdrawn its funding policy to the educational institutions. The government has cut down the budget in the various sectors of education, including the tertiary sector. Individuals are encouraged to meet the cost in the form of self-managed or on self-supporting basis. Another important feature of the policy is that the cost to parents was also taken into consideration in arriving at per capita cost of education. As a result, corporate colleges and private universities have come into existence.

Banking Concept of Education to Conscientization

The banking concept of education is an instrument of oppression. The relationship of the teacher and the learners involves narrating subjects (the teacher) and the patient, listening objects (the students). The teacher talks about reality as if it were motionless, static, compartmentalized and predictable. The student records, memorizes and repeats these phrases without perceiving what four times four Education really means. Narration (with the teacher as narrator) leads the student to memorize mechanically the narrated content.

Education thus becomes an act of depositing. in which the students are the depositories and the teacher is the depositor. Instead of communicating, the teacher issues communicating and 'makes deposits' which the students patiently receive, memorize and repeat. This is the 'banking' concept of education, in which the scope of action allowed to the students extends only as far as receiving filling, and strengthening the deposits.

Paulo Friere (1 972) believed that education is not the process of depositing by a teacher in a bank of passive minds, but it is a dialogue called conscientization. The term concretization refers to learning to perceive social. political, and economic contradictions, and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality. According to Paulo Freire tl~e coordinator must help the learners to define problems, to analyze them and to design solutions. Conscientization and problemalization should lead to action and reflection beyond the learning situation.

SUM UP

Advances in science and technology and changes in industrial progress have increased the competitive potential. The job-related educational measures have become necessary on a continual basis. A paradigm shift has resulted in globalization of economic activity for which the possibilities of world-wide transport and explosive development of the new Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) must be seen as a prerequisite. The structures of employment, which are being transformed in the course of social development, are closely tied to globalization. With machines replacing people in many areas, the number of mutual tasks is diminishing, and the number of organizational and management . Education tasks of control are on the increase. Qualification requirements are constantly rising. A further factor is the progressive obsolescence of knowledge. This rapid change in the world requires constant learning. The most important characteristic of knowledge era is that education has become a means of social, political and economic upward mobility, and consequently

opportunity for education and training is sought after by all. The innovations in mass communications media, and ICTs have led to major demands on education.

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