

The Question of Outsourcing in Primary Education

Spinning off from the Case study of the USA

Engaging Minds: Season 1: Episode 1

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ITPI | IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST



Outsourcing of Education in the US

Editorial

With the advancement of technology comes concepts like 360 vision and 5 dimensional approach (Space, time and the virtual world). Taking advantage of this, it has been possible to connect people on a real time basis across continents. Does this make the possibility of decentralised democratic governance for sustainable development possible ? We certainly think it does. As people travel the virtual world, the necessity for routine travel is considerably reduced. The progress of mechanisation and AI have automated many routine tasks. This leads to fears of redundancy, unemployment and worse. However, will machines take over the world ? we don't think so, the human brain is behind every programme made.

Yet redundancy and unemployment very real, in the hands of Corporates, production for profit is the mantra. Social unrest, turmoil, political back stabbing communalism, racism get fanned in the race for limited jobs in a world where downsizing, ofshoring are very much part of the creation of the lean mean production machine. How can technology work for man ? Amidst this development juggernaut, is an emerging new world which says, LIVE YOUR DREAM. The TATA Ad says, we also make steel. Amul tries to engage everyday with topical quotes. Never mind their powerlessness in the face of profits, clearly Corporates too understand that human beings and their welfare is at the centre of their own well being.

The CGA - VERRM is a creation of such a thinking global process where the vulnerability of man is pitted against this Corporate Juggernaut. One that is now almost synonymous with the MIC (Military Industrial Complex). history has shown that though the merchants of war have fuelled invention, there has been research for development in its wake too. The concept of duality also endorses this conception. Hegels three laws of dialectics indicate that quantitative changes lead to qualitative change. CGA - VERRM is one such process that looks at development from within.

The laws of dialectics also indicate that, that which has negated will also be negated. CGA - VERRM understands perfectly that it does not exist to perpetrate itself, rather to sow the seed that will bear fruit. In a diverse world with diverse cultures and exploding of technology, CGA- VERRM says bring it on. This is a space for creation. Of new ideas in the womb of the old. We look forward to your engagement

The CGA- VERRM

(So called because of its insidious nature of getting under our skin: A version of naturopathy still evolving, natural version of plastic surgery to change the way Human Beings respond to mother earth)

Background

America's new outsourced jobs: Public School teachers

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Eit4PzABDoI>

This youtube story was a source of an interesting discussion on school education in the US, Canada and India on 16th December. The extreme scarcity of teachers in the US led to this as a temporary solution. Will it become a permanent feature ?

https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/product-files/A_Coming_Crisis_in_Teaching_REPORT.pdf

In 2018, the US had a shortage of 112,000 teachers. There were serious difficulties in finding qualified teachers for mathematics, science, special education, bilingual Education/ English language development.

https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/body/Teacher_Shortages_Causes_Impacts_2018_MEMO.pdf

Since the recession, to balance budgets, low teacher salaries, lack of adequate teacher preparation, lack of administrative support and challenging working conditions especially in schools serving large numbers of low income families have driven many teachers out of the profession and dissuaded many from joining.

<https://www.epi.org/publication/the-teacher-shortage-is-real-large-and-growing-and-worse-than-we-thought-the-first-report-in-the-perfect-storm-in-the-teacher-labor-market-series/>

This report provides a more detailed account of the shortage.

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/us/nyc-puts-spanner-in-education-outsourcing-to-india/articleshow/193442.cms>

This explains the barriers to distance learning which was sought to be provided by India.

<https://www.coursehero.com/file/195246110/Article-Reviewdocx/>

This article lists the reasons why the Phillipines has stepped up to fill the teacher breach in the US. Among the reasons are that they teach in a system similar to that of the US with a 1:10 differential in the salaries. However while the necessity to study to get out of the poverty trap was considered a necessity in the Phillipines, in the US stories of teenagers getting rich of the internet overnight, fill the imagination. Whether real or just a bubble, the result has been that large numbers think that education is not the way to get rich.

<https://www.inc.com/john-boitnott/40-young-people-who-became-millionaires-before-they-were-20.html>

This cultural difference has certainly posed an issue for teachers from the Phillipines but focus on education has been the way out. What the future will bring is however not clear.

Dedication

Cleta Lobo: Her father's will be done



Cleta Hedwiges Lobo: 4th September 1940 - 17th May 2023

Cleta Hedwiges Lobo

The guiding light of Mater Dei for over six decades

Passed away peacefully on 17th May 2023

The eldest of three daughters

Felt it her duty to carry on her father Anaicleto's legacy

Mater Dei School in Saligoan to be precise

In a patriarchal world

That meant being the man of the house

Not marrying the price

While her sister Edna and mother Inez supported her all through

Her youngest sister Yvette a larger world unfolded

When push came to the shove, her colours she did show

Government takeover foiled
Even as the CM boiled
Sisters stood together as one
Resisting all those that tried to con
My father an article to this brave fight dedicated
As Anacleto faith remained vindicated
Mater dei created at a time of need
Evolved as time went by
Cleta a girl guide provided many a new dimension
As Mater Dei many heights scaled
Dark clouds not far away
Not uncommon for terrain like this
Many a cloud has come and gone
What the new wave brings we will see
For now we know that Cleta in adversity stood firm
The rock on which Anacleto his legacy built
Rest in Peace Cleta
The courage you have shown will endure
As to the new challenges we seek the cure



A Philo Born 20/8/1931 Died 31/7/2023 ¹

My eulogy for mum²

The Meaning of Being a Mother. ... A mother is a selfless, loving human who sacrifices many of her wants and needs for the wants and needs of her children.

This was our mum - in every aspect of her life. A mum who loved each 7 of us in her own special way.

As a child you always know and feel secure that your parents are around- to feed, clothe and protect you but as you grow older you start to appreciate them more and the foundations of a lasting relationship begin to get laid.

I'd like to share with you a few beautiful memories that I hold dear in my heart- memories I draw strength from in this very sad devastating period in my life.

When I moved to middle school mum also commenced teaching there - so together we entered the school on our first day- yes it was daunting but was filled with opportunities for us both. Guess for me there was another edible attraction - a samosa stall. I would go past the staff room quite a few times each week to ask mum for an extra 30 paisa to buy a samosa as I had already finished my tuck shop money on ice cream . Mum still recalled this time together with fond love- it was our own very special year together at school.

Mum's compassion for the poor and marginalised was highly commendable. On our way to school in the cycle rickshaw - we'd pass a slum where daily there would be two beggars sitting down at the side of the road. It was a routine to stop and give them money each day.

¹ A Philo an educationist and a mother

² Jeanne Fullinfaw

There were numerous times when the elderly beggar man wasn't there. Mum would request the rickshaw driver to stop -she ,then would get down and tell the rickshaw man to take us home and come back for her. She'd go into this slum to check why the old man wasn't at his usual place and most times would find him down with the flu. Mum would then get him some cold and flu tablets and groceries to tide him over a few days and leave him with some money as well. When I think back now- this was a very brave thing to do as mum could have got mobbed but the thought of helping another human in need was at the forefront of mum's mind - not the danger around.

Similarly when our maids or gardener were ill , mum would go to their houses, get them into the rickshaw and take them to the drs to get proper medication and treatment. Mum - you can rest assured this virtue of compassion for our less fortunate brothers and sisters - both from you and dad has flowed down to your children.

Our yearly holidays to visit mama and papa in Poona are now precious memories. Not sure how you and dad managed with 7 children at the busy Bombay Dadar station- changing trains there in a short time span to get to Poona with 7 kids and luggage.

I remember being always asked by mum to proof read articles she wrote for the New Leader- a Catholic magazine and was also asked what I thought of it. I felt important and my opinion valued.

As we celebrate your life ,mum today- we thank you deeply for your love, the sacrifices you and dad made to give us a sound education- not just academically also cultivating in us -great values and we owe who we are today to you both.

The journey forward will be very hard- mum - now our guardian angel and our shining star - we ask you to pray that each of us carries on your legacy of love, peace, forgiveness, unity , love of family and compassion for the disadvantaged- all which was the essence of your life.

Mum, we will look after each other.

As the quote from Fr Flanagan's Boys Town goes.

He ain't heavy Father. He's my brother.

Part I

A New World Order

The Collapse of the Berlin Wall followed by the dissolution of the USSR



The fall of the Berlin Wall on 9th November 1989

With the collapse of the Berlin wall, faced with the loss of the East European markets and declining foreign exchange balances, India was forced into a position of agreeing to the Dunkel Draft, ushering in an era of Globalisation and Liberalisation and the resultant curtailment of Social Service expenditure, privatisation of PSU and essential goods and services to bring down fiscal deficits. Despite all protests, the slow but gradually increasing path to 'opening up' of the economy, freeing the movement of currency and prices of petroleum products based on global market exchanges increasingly saw the light of day.

<https://www.downtoearth.org.in/news/mass-movement-against-dunkel-draft-29974>

https://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/history_e/history_e.html

The formal emergence of the World Trade Organisation relatively free of the fetters that Socialism had put on it was hailed as a victory for the freedom of choice, one that is dictated by the money in one's pocket and the freedom to earn, rolling back the heavy taxation regimes meant to tax the rich and fund social security programmes. Entrepreneurship instead of wage labour was hailed as the way forward to stimulate individual initiative and put brakes on a burgeoning, corrupt bureaucracy.

https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/11_origins_crisis_baily_litan.pdf

That this unfettered freedom given to Finance Capital to expand its reach was misused by the Corporates is well known. This puts down the source of the economic crisis to unfettered borrowings stimulated by low interest rates.

<https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/fandd/issues/2018/03/alesina>

This report acknowledging the earlier failures points out that cutting expenditure is less harmful to growth than high taxation.

https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---soc_sec/documents/publication/wcms_383871.pdf

This article argues in the opposite direction, it offers eight options that would help to expand fiscal space and generate options to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), realise human rights and invest in women and children.

https://www.cigionline.org/static/documents/the_government_of_canada_s_experience_eliminating_the_deficit_1994-99.pdf

The experience of the Government of Canada in cutting deficits in the nineties has been widely hailed.

<https://irpp.org/research-studies/income-inequality-in-canada/>

This article however hints at the widening of economic inequalities in Canada post the nineties. While this gap seems to be relatively stable after the initial upheaval of the decline in the redistributive effect post taxation due to reduction in social sector spending. Overall the graph points to increasing income disparities over the last 35 years. Post COVID 19, these differences have become more stark. It is however not being dealt with over here.

Part II

The Case for the Privatisation of Education



The Sustainable Development Goal Number 4 says, by 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and Goal-4 effective learning outcome(HT)

<https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/67086/407023-Privatization-of-Public-Social-Services.pdf>

Arguments in favour of privatisation: discontent with the performance of the public sector; desire for more flexibility (e.g., personnel, operations, innovations); desire to reduce costs; and desire to "empower" service intermediaries (e.g., CBOs).

To be successful in the future the government must like the private sector adopt modern management measures, utilise meaningful programme performance measures, increase workforces incentives and flexibility without sacrificing accountability, provide for humane downsizing opportunities and harness computers and other technology to strengthen service delivery.

The major argument against privatisation is tendency to skim the cream to serve those most easily served and most likely to succeed.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2022/04/18/privatization-of-public-education-gaining-ground/>

According to a report by an advocacy group that supports traditionally funded and democratically governed public school districts, a number of Republican-led legislatures pushed through legislation to expand charter schools and voucher programs during the coronavirus pandemic. Most often these were passed without serious safeguards to ensure that students, families and taxpayers are protected from “discrimination, corruption and fraud” that has marred a number of these programs.

<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ914667.pdf>

Discontent about the ability of public schools to properly educate students, perception that government is doing more than it should, poor performance of public schools, prolonged budgetary pressures, resurgence of the political right, expansion of pro market forces and inefficiency of the public sector among the main reasons for this trend.

<https://www.iiep.unesco.org/en/publication/international-schools-growth-and-influence>

Recent years have seen an unprecedented growth in the number of international schools worldwide. Although these schools were initially set up to educate the children of globally-mobile expatriate professionals, "host country" families now increasingly consider international schools education as an alternative to the national system in which they lack confidence, and/or as a means of providing a competitive edge for their children in education and labour market terms. In an increasingly globalized world, "international-mindedness", concern for world peace, and the need for intercultural understanding has led to the inclusion of an "ideological" dimension in the mission statements of many such schools. This booklet

provides an insight to the origins and characteristics of international schools, curriculum and assessment, students and teaching staff, and the management, leadership and governance of these schools. The booklet also discusses how international schools (usually private and fee-paying) might develop in the future against a backdrop of growing forces of globalization and other international influences. In all cases, attention is drawn to the implications of the issues discussed for both policy-makers and planners in national and international contexts.

<https://www.international.gc.ca/education/strategy-2019-2024-strategie.aspx?lang=eng>

International education is an essential pillar of Canada's long-term competitiveness. Canadians who study abroad gain exposure to new cultures and ideas, stimulating innovation and developing important cross-cultural competencies. Students from abroad who study in Canada bring those same benefits to our shores. If they choose to immigrate to Canada, they contribute to Canada's economic success. Those who choose to return to their countries become life-long ambassadors for Canada and for Canadian values.

Many Canadian education institutions export services such as curriculum licensing and technical and professional training, often with the help of the Canadian Trade Commissioner Service (TCS). In doing so, they export Canadian values and import new ideas, as well as generate economic returns for Canada.

In 2018, international students in Canada contributed an estimated \$21.6 billion to Canada's GDP and supported almost 170,000 jobs for Canada's middle class. This is a significant economic contribution—and one that is felt right across the country.

https://www.ripublication.com/ijeal6/ijeav8n1_01.pdf

Privatisation encourages the individual and society to establish schools, colleges to meet the growing demand for education. As a result private educational insititutes are growing day by day throughout the country.

<https://www.thehighereducationreview.com/magazine/the-changing-role-of-industry-in-the-education-sector-CCFP780923291.html>

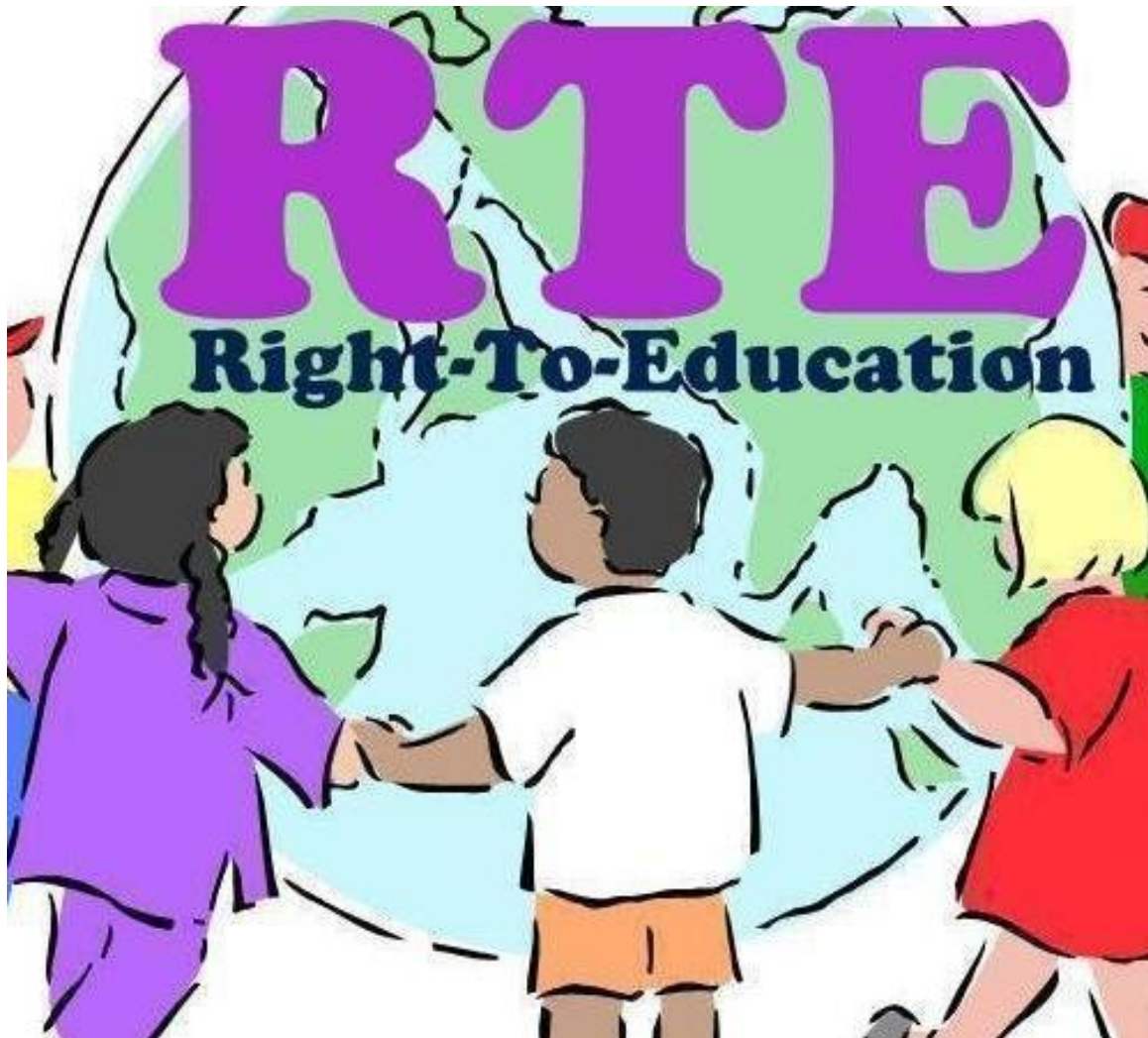
Industry participation has enabled Blended Learning concepts of Flipped Classrooms, Network Learning and Adaptive Learning to actually take shape. Khan Academy is one such initiative.

Amalgamation of Tech-Industry with education sector has prompted Bill Gates (whose foundation is working firsthand in this sector) to term the present time as "a special time" in education.

The Indian Industry has finally started viewing the Industry-Academic Relationship as a symbiotic one because of which complete Indian Education sector - from Primary Schools to Research Universities is undergoing a radical transformation for the better!

Part III

Right to Education



The Global Right to Education for Children

The Right to Education

The 86th Constitutional Amendment (2002) inserted Article 21A in the Indian Constitution which states: "The State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of 6 to 14 years in such manner as the State, may by law determine."

<https://righttoeducation.in/know-your-rte/about>

The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act or Right to Education Act (RTE), is an Act of the Parliament of India enacted on 4 August 2009, which describes the modalities of the importance of free and compulsory education for children between 6 and 14 in India under Article 21a of the Indian Constitution. India became one of 135 countries to make education a fundamental right of every child when the Act came into force on 1 April 2010.

The Act makes education a fundamental right of every child between the ages of 6 and 14 and specifies minimum norms in elementary schools. It requires all private schools to reserve 25% of seats to children (to be reimbursed by the state as part of the public-private partnership plan). Kids are admitted in to private schools based on economic status or caste based reservations. It also prohibits all unrecognised schools from practice, and makes provisions for no donation or capitation fees and no interview of the child or parent for admission. The Act also provides that no child shall be held back, expelled, or required to pass a board examination until the completion of elementary education. There is also a provision for special training of school drop-outs to bring them up to par with students of the same age.

The RTE Act requires surveys that will monitor all neighbourhoods, identify children requiring education, and set up facilities for providing it. The World Bank education specialist for India, Sam Carlson, has observed: "The RTE Act is the first legislation in the world that puts the responsibility of ensuring enrolment, attendance and completion on the Government. It is the parents' responsibility to send the children to schools in the US and other countries."

The Right to Education of persons with disabilities until 18 years of age is laid down under a separate legislation - the Persons with Disabilities Act. A number of other provisions regarding improvement of school infrastructure, teacher-student ratio and faculty are made in the Act.

Education in the Indian constitution is a concurrent issue and both centre and states can legislate on the issue. The Act lays down specific responsibilities for the centre, state and local bodies for its implementation. The states have been clamouring that they lack financial capacity to deliver education of appropriate standard in all the schools needed for universal education. Thus it was clear that the central government (which collects most of the revenue) will be required to subsidise the states.

A committee set up to study the funds requirement and funding initially estimated that INR 1710 billion or 1.71 trillion (US\$38.2 billion) across five years was required to implement the Act, and in April 2010 the central government agreed to sharing the funding for implementing the law in the ratio of 65 to 35 between the centre and the states, and a ratio of 90 to 10 for the north-eastern states. However, in mid 2010, this figure was

upgraded to INR 2310 billion, and the center agreed to raise its share to 68%. There is some confusion on this, with other media reports stating that the centre's share of the implementation expenses would now be 70%. At that rate, most states may not need to increase their education budgets substantially.

A critical development in 2011 has been the decision taken in principle to extend the right to education till Class X (age 16) and into the preschool age range. The CUBE committee is in the process of looking into the implications of making these changes.

The Ministry of HRD set up a high-level, 14-member National Advisory Council (NAC) for implementation of the Act. The members included Kiran Karnik, former president of NASSCOM; Krishna Kumar, former director of the NCERT; Mrinal Miri, former vice-chancellor of North-East Hill University; Yogendra Yadav – social scientist. India Sajit Krishnan Kutty, Secretary of The Educators Assisting Children's Hopes (TEACH) India; Annie Namala, an activist and head of Centre for Social Equity and Inclusion; and Aboobacker Ahmad, vice-president of Muslim Education Society, Kerala.

A report on the status of implementation of the Act was released by the Ministry of Human Resource Development on the one year anniversary of the Act. The report admits that 8.1 million children in the age group six-14 remain out of school and there's a shortage of 508,000 teachers country-wide. A shadow report by the RTE Forum representing the leading education networks in the country, however, challenging the findings pointing out that several key legal commitments are falling behind the schedule. The Supreme Court of India has also intervened to demand implementation of the Act in the Northeast. It has also provided the legal basis for ensuring pay parity between teachers in government and government aided schools. Haryana Government has assigned the duties and responsibilities to Block Elementary Education Officers–cum–Block Resource Coordinators (BEEOs–cum–BRCs) for effective implementation and continuous monitoring of implementation of Right to Education Act in the State.

It has been pointed out that the RTE act is not new. Universal adult franchise in the act was opposed since most of the population was illiterate. Article 45 in the Constitution of India was set up as an act: The State shall endeavour to provide, within a period of ten years from the commencement of this Constitution, for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years.

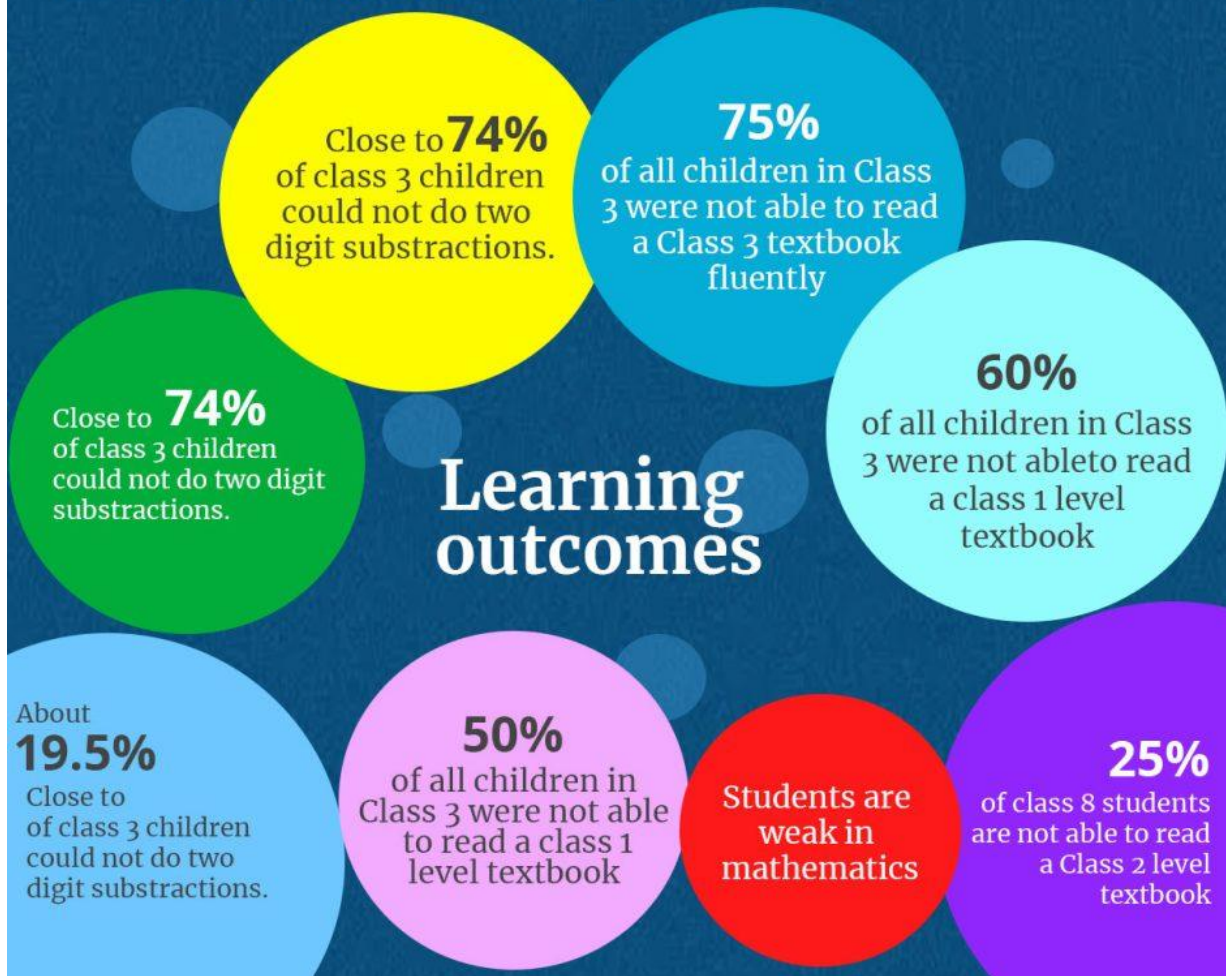
As that deadline was about to be passed many decades ago, the education minister at the time, MC Chagla, memorably said: "Our Constitution fathers did not intend that we just set up hovels, put students there, give untrained teachers, give them bad textbooks, no playgrounds, and say, we have complied with Article 45 and primary education is expanding... They meant that real education should be given to our children between the ages of 6 and 14" - (MC Chagla, 1964).

In the 1990s, the World Bank funded a number of measures to set up schools within easy reach of rural communities. This effort was consolidated in the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan model in the 1990s. RTE takes the process further, and makes the enrolment of children in schools a state prerogative.



Facts and Figures

The Right to Education (RTE) Act is still a mirage in a number of cities and towns. Though enrollment rates have improved, learning outcomes have not shown much progress. The learning outcomes as per the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) of 2014 are illustrated below.



<https://www.careindia.org/blog/right-to-education-act-2009/>

<https://www.sas.rochester.edu/eco/undergraduate/papers/vasu---rte-india,-2020.pdf>

This paper shows that with the inclusion of private schools enrolment under the RTE increased substantially. Even after accounting for a switch from government to private schools there has been a significant increase. However children have not shown improvement in math and other learning outcomes.

<https://scroll.in/article/1004724/the-right-to-education-act-has-brought-hope-but-the-pandemic-has-shown-flaws-that-should-be-fixed>

Part IV
Nine is Mine: A part of the Vada Na Todo Abhiyan



The Nine is mine campaign across India

<https://www.nineismine.in/>

WHAT IS NINEISMINE?

The NINEISMINE campaign grew out of Nelson Mandela's call to ordinary citizens to keep governments accountable to fulfilling the MDGs. Children in India took upon themselves the task to ensure the fulfillment of Goals 2 and 3 and 4 – all of which refer to children. Later the campaign grew to realize the exclusion issue of children particularly in the context on India. They, therefore, incorporated a strong focus on the “last child”. However, keeping alive the need to ensure that all sections of India (the children of privileged middle-class and excluded communities) all interact together to find common solutions. The NINEISMINE campaign believes that “Child rights abuses anywhere are a concern for children everywhere”.

<https://www.governmentspendingwatch.org/campaigns-and-advocacy/education/36-india-nine-is-mine-children-s-voices-against-poverty-a-campaign-by-the-wada-na-todo-abhiyan-keep-your-promises-coalition>

Despite being a middle-income country, 8.1 million children aged between 6-14 were not in school in India during 2009. Wada Na Todo Abhiyan (the Keep Your Promises campaign) is a coalition of CSOs that acted to change that fact, and through a wide range of popular campaigns, the coalition expanded up to 105 organisations by 2007. The coalition tackled the issue of education through the Nine is Mine campaign, which was launched in 2006 and called on the Indian government to spend 9% of GDP on education.

Through a wide range of campaigning techniques, public enthusiasm was engaged, with actions taking place across 15 states involving children, schools and communities. The public was engaged and made aware of the issue, with children one of the key actors in the campaign, coming up with slogans and 300,000 children signing a petition to government to keep its promises on education. Children also played a key role in the lobbying effort, with a delegation meeting the Indian prime minister.

The lobbying effort had a huge outcome; with the Prime Minister coming out and announcing a 20% increase in the education budget in 2007 for the next year's budget. Beyond this, the government committed to a full-scale implementation of the Right to Education Act. To achieve this commitment, over the following five years roughly US\$40 billion would be invested in just elementary education, a huge increase from the US\$41 billion that was invested in 2009 on the whole education system including secondary and tertiary.

https://www.gichd.org/fileadmin/uploads/gichd/Media/GICHD-resources/rec-documents/Leaving_no_one_behind-Mine_Action_and_SDGs.pdf

There does not seem to be a report of how the Nine is mine campaign in India led to the creation of Children's parliaments around the SDGs. However this report does point out the significance of actions related to sustainable development and its impact on the SDGs

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/children/childrens-rights-and-2030-agenda-sustainable-development>

In March 2017, pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 31/7, the High Commissioner for Human Rights presented **a report** to the Human Rights Council on

the protection of the rights of the child in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In March 2017, the **annual full-day meeting** during the 34th session of the Human Rights Council explored how the 2030 Agenda can advance children's rights. A **summary report of discussions** can be found here. In 2018, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights was requested in **resolution 37/20** to provide inputs on this matter to the global reviews of progress taking place under the **High-Level Political Forum**, in broad consultation with stakeholders. These inputs highlight the human rights risks and challenges that children face in the theme and goals under review each year, as well as good practices that can be applied at national level to leave no child behind.

<https://worldslargestlesson.globalgoals.org/>

A UNESCO/UNICEF initiative to inform children and young people about the Sustainable Development Goals.

Part V

Partnerships and the Way Forward



Staff of SMA with Nari Niketan

A proposed partnership between St. Mary's of the Angels and Institute for Ecology and Livelihood Action: Walking with the marginalised as a precondition to realise the goal of sustainable development for overall well being

Background: In response to a request from St. Mary's of the Angels (Fatehpura), Institute for Ecology and Livelihood Action, Udaipur had preliminary discussions to understand how the goal of walking with the marginalised could help to concretely realise the goal of sustainable development for overall well being. This draft concept note is to help discussion within SMA as to the strategic interventions needed to realise this goal.

Goal: Walking with the marginalised oppressed and disadvantaged sections of the society (leave no one behind) to realise agenda 2030 (the 17 Sustainable Development Goals) outlined by the United Nations in 2016.

Hypothesis/Assumption: Gandhi's talisman of the last man provides the key to realisation of Our Common Future outlined in the Brundtland Commission report of 1987 and the subsequent actions at Rio, Nagoya, Hyderabad, Paris, Egypt etc.

Overall Objective: To develop an outreach programme for SMA, Fatehpura that uses their strengths to respond creatively and practically to the challenge of uplifting the marginalised oppressed and disadvantaged sections of society.

Objective 1: To use the space of SMA school Fatehpura, after school hours in a creative manner that can help marginalised, oppressed and disadvantaged sections to get access to the best education/training, lab, library and other facilities necessary for the children/ youth and in particular the girl child / adolescent girls and destitute women.

Objective 2: To develop partnerships with Government, NGOs, CBOs and civil society in manner where SMA, Fatehpura can play a facilitating role to add value to the work done by these organisations with the communities and agenda mentioned above.

Objective 3: In partnership to work on action research agenda related to orphan/abandoned and socially disadvantaged children and women, single woman headed families, families of incarcerated parents and children, differently able, third gender etc.

Objective 4: To explore the relevance of networks and forums like the National Inclusive Children's parliament and other forums working with women and children as platforms for larger awareness, public advocacy and development of leadership among the disadvantaged sections.

Plan of Action for development of Children's parliament around the SDGs by St. Mary's of the Angels Fatehpura and Institute for Ecology and Livelihood Action: All SDGs for all persons

Goal: Development of Children's parliaments based on agenda 2030 and the 17 SDGs spells out a plan for concrete realisation of the slogan think globally act locally, act locally spread globally.

Objective 1: Creation of a Children's parliament around the 17 SDGs appropriately modifying the module developed by PRATYeK.

Objective 2: Development of three thematic areas through which to operationalise the realisation of the SDGs namely

- Group on Biodiversity and natural resources building on the development of a herbal garden prototype at SMA campus in Fatehpura.

- Group on Ecosystems Assessments using Geo-Spatial tools starting with ecosystem mapping of SMA campus, Udaipur city and surrounding areas.

- Group on Documentation, Communication and Policy Advocacy starting with development of a children's corner in the school library, issues related to development of a clean and healthy campus at SMA and children friendly ecosystem governance of Udaipur city and nearby areas. Engagement with Nari Niketan as an outreach programme to start with.

Objective 3: Integration of the activities of the three groups to give thrust to Objective 1 and development of partnerships with other schools through shared goals and related activities.

Objective 4: Engagement in issues related to governance and their impact on children in particular.

Initial Activities:

- a. Development of the herbal garden on the plots assigned for the purpose by SMA.
- b. Engagement with Nari Niketan as a Social Outreach programme followed by others.
- c. Monthly session facilitated by IELA for two periods on the second Saturday of the month and follow up during the month with the help of the designated teacher(s) in charge of the particular group.

The rest of the activities based on the four objectives above will flow from a, b and c above depending on the nature of interest taken by the teachers and students.

Expected outputs:

- a. By April 2024 (namely the start of the next academic year, it is expected that in collaboration with the designated teachers, the way the three thematic groups will function will be clear.

b. By the start of 2025 (in time for the Platinum jubilee of SMA) it is expected that base line documentation and the outreach approach towards the marginalised and in tune with principles of sustainable development principles outlined in Agenda 2030 under the 17 SDGs will be clear.



Viren Lobo who was influenced by liberation theology during his college days did an MBA from Institute of Rural Management Anand. He has been working the development sector since he passed out from there in 1985. Employer, employee and other contradictions observed by him during his thirty year stint at Society for Promotion of Wastelands Development (SPWD) forced him to examine the relevance of Marxism as a way of looking at reality in relation to change he sought to bring. During the course of his work covering more than twenty States, he noticed a link between the livelihoods and ecology which he pursued strongly as Executive Director SPWD. The limitations of existing organisations to deal with the complex questions society posed motivated him to set up Institute of Ecology and Livelihood Action as the transition needed to address issues he was looking into at that time. The contradictions arising out of the a series of Bills that were passed during the last five years encouraged him to use the enforced sedentary life imposed on him to use his creativity to write plays. These were the first of a series which have helped serve the purpose of putting on paper the complex dilemma and diverse social opinions he came across.

About Especioza Trust:



Especioza Trust is named after my great, great grandmother who widowed at an early age brought up her only son Aogustinho (seated in centre). Shortly after a family reunion in December 2013, we got news that the family home at 84 Porvorim had been illegally sold to a builder. My aunt Marie stepped in and after getting the required mandate from the family not only got the family home back but the previous ancestral home of 85 Porvorim as well. Since then it became her project in memory of her widowed great grandmother till her death on her mother Amy Lobo's 117th birthday (25th July 2019). Since the informal trust set up by her could not achieve fruition I decided to keep the struggle and memories alive by carrying on her mission to bring unity within the family and dedicate the work of the Trust to all widows and single women of the world. My Aunt/Cousin Hazel Cardozo the daughter of Liban Pinto one of the two brothers born on my birthday (6th September) has helped me to give this project shape. The other brother Lucian in whose name the house was, also happened to be born on my birthday as well. The spiritual connection and the necessity for me to step in also come from a lot of other quarters which need not be documented here.

Viren Lobo