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• मेहकर •

India in 21st Century : Achievements, Opportunities and Challenges

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One Day Interdisciplinary National E-Conference on
**India in 21st Century: Achievements, Opportunities
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Organized By - M.E.S. Arts & Commerce College Mehkar,
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Social Sector in India

Dr. Meghraj Shinde
SJAAS College, Mehkar

As education and health are two major areas of concern in the context of social sector development and human development achievements, this book explores their situation in India. The liberalization of the Indian economy had a major impact on the growth rate of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP), with the economic growth of the country jumping from the so-called Hindu growth rate of 3.5% to 8-9% per annum. The literacy rate increased to 74.04% in 2011 from 12% in 1947, while the universalization of elementary education has been achieved to a great extent, and dropout rates have decreased. However, despite considerable progress, exclusions and wide disparities still exist. Combining access with affordability and ensuring quality with good governance and adequate finance are still of great concern.

On the health front, significant achievements have also been made, with a number of diseases eradicated or on the verge of elimination. There has been a substantial drop in the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) and Infant Mortality Rate (IMR), and life expectancy has increased from 36.7 years in 1951 to 67.14 in 2011. The crude birth rate has been reduced from 40.8 in 1951 to 20.6 in 2012, and the crude death rate from 25.1 to 7.43 in the same period. These achievements are impressive, but at the same time our failures appear even more glaring.

As such, this volume brings together contributions from eminent Indian scholars on a range of social issues, including linkages between growth, poverty and the social sector; the efficiency of social sector spending in India; disparity in health statuses; IPR protection in health innovations; pollution and health; the





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universalisation of elementary education; problems faced at the higher levels of education; and issues of child labour.

As per the Human Development Reports (HDRs) published annually by the UNDP since 1991, India has consistently improved on the human development front and is grouped among the countries with 'medium human development. But, some components of human development indicators for health and education continue to lag behind the improvement in income, and India rank in terms of Human Development Index (HDI) and Gender Development Index (GDI) continue to be low compared to even some countries of 10.5 Trends of expenditure on social services and total expenditure by the general government (Centre and States combined) between 1986-87 and 2004-05 (BE) (Table 10.3) indicate that : (a) Despite fluctuations, total expenditure of the general government as a proportion of total expenditure increased marginally from 18.9 per cent to 19.3 per cent, with peak of 22.3 per cent in 1999-2000. (b) Share of education in social service expenditure increased from 45.6 per cent to 48.8

When Rajasekhar Kaliki, former director of Google Technical Services, moved out of the corporate world and joined Kaivalya Education Foundation, a non-profit organisation working towards making education accessible to all, he was certainly not the odd one out in the new setting.

"Of the 20-member leadership team at the Foundation, at least 10 of them had left the corporate world to join the social-impact sector," says Rajasekhar. Kaliki joined the Foundation as its chief technology officer. Similarly, all the others from the corporate sector filled specific roles that were in alignment with their core competencies. So, they were doing their same thing — only that the goalposts had shifted.

Professionals at the peak of their careers joining the social sector is the best thing that can happen to the sector. Not only because it gets the best possible talent, but because talent comes paired with zeal. Kaliki says as a student, he saw his family struggle to pay his fees, and that there is a strong impetus within him to work in this area of the social sector. There is strong reason why the social sector needs more Kalikis.





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Towards the end of 2019, Careers in Impact, an initiative of Sattva that recruits mid and senior talent for social sector, did a study of positions lying vacant in the social sector. Their findings: 42% of jobs in the 5 to 10 years of work bracket were not taken; and it was 15% in the 10-20 year bracket. Of the 609 social organisations listed with Arthan Careers, 70% struggle to fill the key mid and senior level positions, says Satyam Vyas, founder and CEO of the technology driven, socially responsible, human capital venture in the impact space.

"There are people who want to work in the social space but do not have the requisite skills. The challenge is to find people who are at the peak of their career and who also want to make a social impact," says Srikrishna Sridhar Murthy, CEO, Sattva.

Increase in funding

On the positive side, social sector funding has increased by 11% in the last five years, as per Bain & Co Philanthropy Report. This increase has largely been fuelled by contribution from the government, followed by philanthropy.

Murthy says that with more funds coming into the sector, organisations need specialist skills.

Training programmes

With the aim of building talent for the social sector, India Leaders for Social Sector (ILSS) organises a nine-day residential programme for senior leaders from diverse backgrounds. Incubated by Central Square Foundation, it has 20-30 professionals in each batch.

"Sixty seven alumni from our first six batches are currently in the social sector. Of these, 45 are crossovers who did not previously have any exposure to the social sector, the remaining are leaders from the sector itself," says Anu Prasad, founder-director, ILSS. Recently, ILSS completed its 7th programme.





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Individuals in the age group of 40-45 years are in the majority. During the last batch, a bank sent its key CSR associate for the programme, says Anu.

Though there are transferrable skills that will enable these professionals shift to the social sector, there are certain nuances to working in the sector that they should understand, she adds. "We want them to transition for the right reason. So, we look for people who are committed, and want to contribute towards nation building, and who are open to unlearning things and have the humility to see themselves as a student," says Anu.

Lower salaries

Prahalathan KK, co-founder, Bhumi, a volunteer organisation, says that while making the switch, mid-level talent would like to see their pay maintained. "They need to understand that most non-profits cannot match the pay," he says. Hiring managers point out that pay structures in the sector have certainly improved, but still one should be ready for a pay cut.

To get more mid-level talent to join the sector, Satyam Vyas feels funding organisations must invest in people. He says, as per reports, at least 13% of CSR funds are unspent. "Corporates can give funds for capacity-building programmes for non-profits. This will lead to more returns for the organisation."

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