Bridging the Educational Divide

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Abstract: **This paper presents an overview on Bridging the divide between an under-educated rural youth and an urban young scholar, and bring them to the same level of education.**

Keywords: bridging, education.

1. Objective

Bridging the divide between an under-educated rural youth and an urban young scholar, and bring them to the same level of education.

2. Introduction

It is often said the 'knowledge is power'. The debate on 'why do we need education', is one that has many strong arguments for and against. However, in our present society, the need for education cannot be denied...

The importance of education is emphasized through these words of US President Barack Obama, when he said, 'In an economy where knowledge is the most valuable commodity a person and a country have to offer, the best jobs will go to the best educated - whether they live in the United States or India or China'. He makes a very important observation, pertaining to the need of education in holding a good job and flourishing in a successful career.

While there are many arguments that draw direct relations between education and success, it is precisely this limited point of view that defeats the entire purpose of education. Limiting the purpose of education to getting a job, is an insult to the significance of human lives. Our purpose is to make meaningful contributions to all that we are part of. Education does many things, but most importantly, it empowers an individual to think, question and see beyond the obvious. We are born with a natural tendency to question, however over time we turn compliant, and slowly begin to accept all the way it is, no longer questioning. Education must satiate the question, but never put out the fire.

Some of the obvious reasons why do we need education are:

- Education broadens your horizon and gives you a better understanding of the world around you and how things work.
- The world needs education as it is the basis of a civilized structured society.
- Another reason why we need education is because it reduces social and economic disparity, allowing progress to be equally shared.

- Advancements in all fields, including science and technology are made possible through education.
- Studies indicate that educated people have longer life expectancies. They also tend to exercise more and play more sports. The also understand the implications of diet and lifestyle on their health enabling them to make healthy choices.
- On an average, educated people have jobs that are more meaningful and interesting than those held by uneducated people. They are usually in a position to make decisions at work. This results in higher job satisfaction that often also contributes to better quality of life.
- Educated people are found to have higher self-esteem. Their lives are more planned and thus have more direction. They have better problems solving skills and are consequently better equipped to handle everyday decisions.
- Another trend noticed, is that children of educated parents are more likely to receive an education and have higher cognitive development, than children of uneducated parents.
- Educated people are in a better position to contribute more positively to society and even towards the planet, as they understand the implications of their choices and actions.

3. Illiteracy in India

Illiteracy in India is characterized by wide gaps between the urban and rural populations. The rural population depends mainly on agriculture and the rate of illiteracy is high, while the urban population is more of the 'employee class' and also more educated. Even amongst the male and female population, there is a wide disparity in literacy. The male literacy rate is 75.96% and female literacy rate is 54.28%. The social system in India promotes education for the male gender while the female population, especially in the deep interiors of the country, is kept away from schools.

Every issue that our society faces is like a link of a chain. Each issue is connected to another, either directly or indirectly. The chain of issues in this society that we live in, the strongest link of that chain is illiteracy. Illiteracy is the mother of all issues as it gives birth to many other issues like poverty, unemployment, child labour, female foeticide, population burst and many more.

It is very hard to digest that the land of the Vedas is one of the countries with the highest illiteracy levels and shows the

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155

inability of our government to utilize programs like Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and National Literacy Mission. Even countries like Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Vietnam, Thailand and the like have achieved, in lesser time, a much better percentage of literacy. Literacy is a reasonably good indicator of development in a society.

4. Objectives of the study

The main objectives of the study are:
1. To identify and fill the wide gap between the urban and rural populations in terms of Illiteracy in India.
2. To device a literacy kit which serve as tool to ease the process of promotion of literacy in rural India.

5. Hypothesis

1. There is no significant difference between achievers or under achievers with respect to literacy.
2. There is no significant difference between understanding level of rural and urban youth of the same age group.
3. Need is to bring both the stratas of population under the same level of education and bring rural and urban literacy at par.

6. Methodology

IGNOU's - Bachelor Preparatory Program (BPP)

Indiara Gandhi National Open University's - Bachelor Preparatory Program (BPP) is one of its kind. Bachelor's Preparatory Programme is offered by the University to those students who wish to do Bachelor's Degree but do not have the essential qualifications of having passed 10+2. In the absence of such a qualifying certificate these students are deprived of higher education. To enable such students to enter higher education stream IGNOU has designed this programme.

Program Code: BPP
Eligibility: No formal qualification
Min age as on 1st January of the Academic Year: 18 Years
Duration (Min): 6 months:
Duration (Max): 2 years
Program Fees: Rs. 850/-

Medium of Instruction: English / Hindi

Taking this unique course into consideration, this research is designed. Placing the course at the center, our entire methodology revolves around the same. Serving as an opportunity for RURAL learners who have had made a default in continuing/ completing their formal education, this course provides them a platform to stand at the same level with regular URBAN students through non-formal education.

7. Methodology

Data analysis in the form of schematic charts is presented herewith:
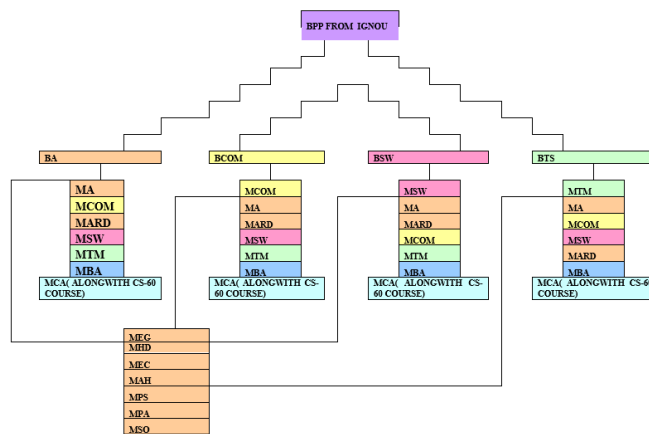

Fig. 1. Non-formal stream elaborated

Where the abbreviations denote their actual meaning as follows:
- (BPP) Bachelor Preparatory Program
- (BA) Bachelor of Arts
- (BCom) Bachelor of Commerce
- (BSW) Bachelor's in Social Work
- (BTS) Bachelor's in Tourism
- (MBA) Master of Business Administration
- (MCOM) Master of Commerce
- (MCA) Master of Computer Applications

Table 1
Structure of BDP (Bachelor's Development Programme) at IGNOU

Prog. Code	Eligibility	Age	Duration		Programme Fee
			Min	Max	
BPP	No formal qualification	18 year	6 months	2 year	Rs. 850/-
BA α	10+2 or its relevant or BPP from IGNOU	No bar	3 year	6 year	1-year Rs. 1, 700/- 2-year Rs. 1, 600/- 3- year Rs.1, 600/-
B.Com β	10+2 or its relevant or BPP from IGNOU	No bar	3 year	6 year	1-year Rs. 1, 700/- 2-year Rs. 1, 600/- 3- year Rs.1, 600/-
BSW μ	BPP from IGNOU or 10 + 2 or its equivalent	No bar	3 year	6 year	1-year Rs. 2, 900/- 2-year Rs. 2, 800/- 3- year Rs.2, 800/-
BTS ∞	BPP from IGNOU or 10 + 2 or its equivalent	No bar	3 year	6 year	1-year Rs. 1, 800/- 2-year Rs. 2, 500/- 3- year Rs.2, 500/-

α BA(Bachelor of Arts), β BCom(Bachelor of Commerce), μ BSW(Bachelor's in Social Work) & ∞ BTS(Bachelor's in Tourism)

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156

Table 2
Formal versus non-formal stream

AGE	LEVEL OF EDUCATION											
	FORMAL STREAM					NON-FORMAL STREAM						
1												
2												
3	NURSERY											
4	KGI											
5	KGII											
6	STANDARD I											
7	STANDARD II											
8	STANDARD III					FUNCTIONALLY LITERATE YOUTH, FOR EXAMPLE VIII FAIL/ PASS OR X FAIL/PASS						
9	STANDARD IV											
10	STANDARD V											
11	STANDARD VI											
12	STANDARD VII											
13	STANDARD VIII											
14	STANDARD IX											
15	STANDARD X											
16	STANDARD XI											
17	STANDARD XII	PCM (PHYSICS, CHEMISTRY, MATHS)	PCB (PHYSICS, CHEMISTRY, BIOLOGY)	ARTS & HUMANITIES	COMMERCE (BUSINESS, ACCOUNTS, ECONOMICS)	BPP FROM IGNOU						
18	GRADUATION YEAR I	BE, BSC, BCOM, BCA, BBA, BA	MBBS, BSC, BCOM, BCA, BBA, BA	BCOM, BCA, BBA, BA	BCOM, BCA, BBA, BA	GRADUATION YEAR I FROM IGNOU	BA	BCOM	BSW	BTS		
19	GRADUATION YEAR II	BE, BSC, BCOM, BCA, BBA, BA	MBBS, BSC, BCOM, BCA, BBA, BA	BCOM, BCA, BBA, BA	BCOM, BCA, BBA, BA	GRADUATION YEAR II FROM IGNOU	BA	BCOM	BSW	BTS		
20	GRADUATION YEAR III	BE, BSC, BCOM, BCA, BBA, BA	MBBS, BSC, BCOM, BCA, BBA, BA	BCOM, BCA, BBA, BA	BCOM, BCA, BBA, BA	GRADUATION YEAR III FROM IGNOU	BA	BCOM	BSW	BTS		
21	MASTER'S DEGREE (PREV)	MTECH, MSC, MCOM, MCA, MBA, MA	MD, MSC, MCOM, MCA, MBA, MA	MCOM, MCA, MBA, MA	MCOM, MCA, MBA, MA	MASTER'S DEGREE (PREV) FROM IGNOU/ ANY OTHER UNIVERSITY	MA	MCOM	MSW	MTM	MBA	MCA(ALONGWITH CS-60 COURSE)
22	MASTER'S DEGREE (FINAL)	MTECH, MSC, MCOM, MCA, MBA, MA	MD, MSC, MCOM, MCA, MBA, MA	MCOM, MCA, MBA, MA	MCOM, MCA, MBA, MA	MASTER'S DEGREE (FINAL) FROM IGNOU/ ANY OTHER UNIVERSITY	MA	MCOM	MSW	MTM	MBA	MCA(ALONGWITH CS-60 COURSE)
23	MPHIL (2 YEARS)	MPHIL IN ANY OF THE ABOVE STREAMS	MPHIL IN ANY OF THE ABOVE STREAMS	MPHIL IN ANY OF THE ABOVE STREAMS	MPHIL IN ANY OF THE ABOVE STREAMS	MPHIL (2 YEARS)	MPHIL IN ANY OF THE ABOVE STREAMS					
24		(PHYSICS, CHEMISTRY, MATHEMATICS, COMMERCE, MANAGEMENT, COMPUTER SCIENCE, ECONOMICS, POLITICAL, SCIENCE, PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, SOCIOLOGY, ENGLISH, HINDI ETC.)	(PHYSICS, CHEMISTRY, ZOOLOGY, BOTANY, COMMERCE, MANAGEMENT, COMPUTER SCIENCE, ECONOMICS, POLITICAL, SCIENCE, PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, SOCIOLOGY, ENGLISH, HINDI ETC.)	(COMMERCE, MANAGEMENT, COMPUTER SCIENCE, ECONOMICS, POLITICAL, SCIENCE, PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, SOCIOLOGY, ENGLISH, HINDI ETC.)	(COMMERCE, MANAGEMENT, COMPUTER SCIENCE, ECONOMICS, POLITICAL, SCIENCE, PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, SOCIOLOGY, ENGLISH, HINDI ETC.)		(ECNOMICS, POLITICAL, SCIENCE, PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, SOCIOLOGY, ENGLISH, HINDI ETC.)	COMMERCE, MANAGEMENT	SOCIAL WORK	TOURISM MANAGEMENT	COMMERCE, MANAGEMENT	MATHEMATICS, COMPUTER SCIENCE
25	PHD (2 YEARS)	PHD IN ANY OF THE ABOVE STREAMS	PHD IN ANY OF THE ABOVE STREAMS	PHD IN ANY OF THE ABOVE STREAMS	PHD IN ANY OF THE ABOVE STREAMS	PHD (2 YEARS)	PHD IN ANY OF THE ABOVE STREAMS	COMMERCE, MANAGEMENT	SOCIAL WORK	TOURISM MANAGEMENT	COMMERCE, MANAGEMENT	MATHEMATICS, COMPUTER SCIENCE

- (MEC) Master of Arts (Economics)
- (MEG) Master of Arts (English)
- (MHD) Master of Arts (Hindi)
- (MAH) Master of Arts (History)
- (MPS) Master of Arts (Political Science)
- (MARD) Master of Arts (Rural Development)
- (MSW) Master of Social Work
- (MSO) Master of Arts (Sociology)
- (MTM) Master of Arts (Tourism Management)

8. Conclusion

This paper presented a study on bridging the divide between an under-educated rural youth and an urban young scholar, and bring them to the same level of education.

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[4] http://www.ignou.ac.in/ignou/studentzone/programmes/2