



**Institute of Development Studies Kolkata
&
University of Calcutta**



MPhil in Development Studies, 2013-15

Entrance Test

Date: July 13, 2013

Time allowed: 2 hours

1 Read the following excerpt:

[30 marks]

An alarming state of affairs currently grips the Indian education system. It affects the present and future of millions of Indian children. The continuing failure to enrol and ensure the basic learning of, leave alone meaningfully educate, vast multitudes of children especially those belonging to subordinated groups and to linguistic and cultural minorities bespeaks the failure to breach the link between social underprivilege and educational underprivilege. Even as material prosperity and technological achievements reach dizzy heights under the global capitalist politico-economic order, gender and caste–class inequalities have grown more polarised and patterns of dominance and subjugation more entrenched. For a significant proportion of the country's population, restructuring economies and cultural upheavals have spelt dispossession and displacement, alienation and poverty, indignity and insecurity in an overall context of social conflict and political and ethnic violence. Schools and children are not spared this fate. The violence that pervades society seeps into schools and assaults children's lives. Competition in schools has grown more aggressive and school managements have become more authoritarian. Teachers both inflict and suffer abuse. Children may be physically assaulted, driven to suicide or commit violent acts. In a reflection of horrific forms of gender, caste, and communal violence that plague society, girls are traumatised by sexual harassment, dalit children by caste atrocity and minorities by pedagogies of hate. Far from being safe havens, schools are sites of real, brutal physical, mental and emotional violence that compounds serious problems of teaching and learning.

Education the world over is being relentlessly shaped by neoliberal ideologies and economic agendas of global capitalism. India is also part of the conglomeration of developing nations who are rallied together under a powerful global educational initiative, "Education for All." Major policy shifts owing their origin to the growing global hegemony of neoliberal theories of educational change, dislocate national visions and goals. Against the historical backdrop of education's traditional role in the reproduction of social inequalities, the situation of persistent inequality and growing violence makes it imperative to make sense of the multiple ways in which changing policies and contexts impact Indian education. Despite the state's pivotal role as the main policy maker, financier, provider and controller of the national education system, policy analysis has scarcely engaged with theory and debates on the Indian state or brought them to bear on education policy formation and process. Policy discourse and process are inherently political phenomena and hence the production of policy must be located within the dynamics of social structural power relations in specific historical contexts.

Equality and access have been longstanding policy issues at global and national levels. For India, the problem of educational inequality is one of central historical, sociological and political significance. On the pursuance of equality policy in education hang the life chances of children belonging to segments who are structurally subordinated by the intersecting forces of gender, caste, class, tribe, religion etc. Along with access, the issue of the quality of education receives unprecedented

international and national attention and it is now a dominant theme in contemporary educational discourse. Quality is attributed a central place in securing the global goal of “Education for All”. The issue is not new to Indian educational debate and concern with declining levels of quality has generated much debate and discussion at various points in our educational history. The present discourse however marks a decisive shift. Increasingly the quality of educational systems is being compared internationally. A global discourse on quality shapes national policy change. India has jumped on the new quality bandwagon and has raised quality as a prime agenda of intervention. ‘Poor quality’ education is put forth as the main obstacle in achieving the basic constitutional goal of universalisation of elementary education. Globally derived notions of quality are promoted through externally funded quality improvement programmes. Meanwhile however, local problems of quantitative and qualitative inequality in education seem to have intensified. Their roots lie deep in history but they are now being decisively shaped by contemporary trajectories of (distorted) policy choices and practices. The impact is widely apparent but its systemic nature is not grasped.

Based on your understanding of the above text, answer the questions below. Limit each answer to approximately 50 words.

- a) What indicates the continuing link between social and educational under-privilege?
- b) Identify social divisions that generate violence in the schools?
- c) How have recent changes in policy affected the state of education in India?
- d) Why do we need equality policy in education?
- e) What stands in the way of universalization of elementary education?

2. Write approximately 500 words on any one of the following: [30 marks]

- a) Economic development is necessary but not sufficient for human development
- b) In order to control unemployment the government must restrict entry into higher education
- c) Violence against women is instigated by the way women are depicted in films and advertisements
- d) On development, India can learn from itself
- e) Corruption and the media

3 This section is on interpretation of data: [20+20 marks]

A. The following table shows the number of persons arrested for cybercrimes (IT Act and IPC Sections) by age group during 2012 in India.

Age group	Offence under IT Act	Offence under IPC	Total
Below 18 years	65	2	67
18-30 years	928	248	1176
30-45 years	436	221	657
45-60 years	90	72	162
Above 60 years	3	6	9
Total (all age groups)	1522	549	2071

Based on the above information, answer if the following statements are ‘true’ or ‘false’ or ‘cannot be ascertained without additional information.’ Also provide arguments in support of your answer.

- a) More than two-thirds of the total persons arrested for cybercrimes were arrested under IT Act.
- b) The number of persons arrested under IT Act is higher than the number of persons arrested under IPC for all age groups.
- c) More than half of the persons arrested for cybercrimes belong to the age group 18-32 years.
- d) In controlling cybercrimes, IT Act is more effective than IPC.

B. The following table shows population, number of beds in government secondary and tertiary level hospitals and average number of bed per lakh population for 17 districts in West Bengal.

District	Population (in lakh)	Number of beds	Beds per lakh population
Bankura	31.93	1557	49
Bardhaman	68.96	1987	29
Birbhum	30.15	945	31
Coochbehar	24.79	920	37
Dakshin Dinajpur	15.03	420	28
Purba Medinipur	44.17	659	15
Hooghly	50.40	1520	30
Howrah	42.73	1253	29
Jalpaiguri	34.03	995	29
Maldah	32.90	600	18
Murshidabad	58.64	1127	19
Nadia	46.05	1640	36
North 24 Parganas	90.26	1983	22
Purulia	25.37	606	24
South 24 Parganas	69.09	1492	22
Uttar Dinajpur	24.42	428	18
Paschim Medinipur	51.93	1293	25

Based on the above information, answer if the following statements are 'true' or 'false' or 'cannot be ascertained without additional information.' Also provide arguments in support of your answer.

- a) The district having the highest population also has the highest number of beds in the secondary and tertiary hospitals.
- b) The district having the lowest population also has the lowest number of beds in the secondary and tertiary hospitals.
- c) There are 13 districts with beds per lakh population not exceeding 30.
- d) There are only 6 districts where population exceeds 50 lakh and the number of hospital beds is higher than 1000.
- e) Access to government health facilities is the best in Bankura.
