

Politics of Education- a Synonym for Pollution

Dr. Neelam Tikkha

English, MMV, RTM Nagpur University, Nagpur,
Maharashtra, India

Abstract— *A number of educational institutes have become iniquitous places for exploitation of parents, students and teachers. A child learns a lesson of corruption right from the day he takes his first step in school. At every step of his education he learns a lesson of the importance of money. He also understands that the kind of money needed for education is not possible through honest living.*

This paper explores the various types of exploitation that are taking place especially in Educational system.

Keywords— *Educational institutes, exploitation, corruption, iniquitous, fee for poor*

When man was sent to earth there was no legal system no “... kingdom, nor king; there was neither governance, nor governor, the people protected themselves by dharma. (Fitzerald)

Educational Institutes were considered as temples of learning in the past. Now, they are suffocating dungeons of Crime. A child gets stuffed with the polluted air and swells in pride with the art of corruption. At every step of his education he learns a lesson of the importance of money. He also understands that the kind of money needed for education is not possible through honest living.

This paper explores the various types of exploitation that are taking place especially in Educational system.

The child takes his first step in school by paying donation. One lesson learnt is that money is important not the means. A parent however strong in character will soon bow down with the pressures of exploitative educational institutes since government education is so poor that parents cannot even think of making future of their children in government schools. The scene is not different even in villages. Even the villagers do not want to send their children to private schools. This situation is wonderfully taken advantage of by the private schools. The same loop continues for further education. It is called KG to PG scheme. A number of politicians are running institutes from kindergarten to post graduations and if a parent booked the seat in advance the student will clear all the exams even if he does not study well.

So, if in India, Kalmadi had purchased 40 rupees toilet rolls for 400 rupees and if mobile phone spectrum had been given away to favored companies at prices so low that it had lost the government between 40000 crore and 160000 crore in license fees and if pricey apartments in Mumbai had been grabbed by politicians, officials and generals then no wonder it is the courtesy of these schools where more than virtue, vice is being taught.

A youth considers a corrupt man as ‘bhala admi’ since he feels that at least by taking money he is doing the work which government officials are not doing even by taking fat salaries. They have become capable in avoiding the work wonderfully. I quote here the example of a Joint Director Higher Education Nagpur who had asked a teacher to get clarification letter from UGC Chairman or HRD minister knowing very well that none of them are going to reply for an individual case. Every time he would ask for a paper and when that document was submitted he would ask for another and then another to avoid arriving at a decision. The language used was ‘ha disun yet nahin’ (meaning we cannot see the paper). His office had lost all self appraisal forms of 18 years submitted by the teacher. He followed a dilatory tactics to avoid decision by asking one paper after the other and then repeating the round. It reminds me of a song – a song quite popular during a religious festival in Maharashtra in which there is a funny communication between mother in law and daughter in law. Daughter in law wants to visit her mother’s house and mother in law does not want to allow her to go, so she asks daughter in law to plant a bitter gourd creeper. This way she has avoided her for at least a year. Then again year after year, she keeps delaying her visit by putting forth yet another challenge and the turn to send her to her mother’s house never comes. (Folklore)

Similarly, Joint Director Higher Education, Nagpur did to a teacher who had to be given promotion. He would ask her to do refresher courses from UGC sponsored Academic colleges and when the refresher courses were done then he would ask her to get a letter from HRD minister or from UGC chairman if the teacher wanted promotion. He knew fairly well that none of them would give any letter for individual case. Rightly, a senior IAS addressed Joint Director as ‘head butcher of a slaughter house’.

Educational institutes are money making and money laundry business for politicians. There are a number of schools and colleges where there are bogus admissions and teachers on roll are also sometimes bogus. Several cases are going on Nagpur University for not taking action against colleges “An RTI query has confirmed that 'ineligible' persons, like the president or secretaries of college managements, were awarding internal marks to students, including session marks in the engineering faculty. This was widely expected since over 125 colleges had been operating without a single regular lecturer, which led to a ban on admissions in these colleges by NU.

This malpractice has been admitted by NU for at least the last three academic session, 2010-11, 2011-12 and 2012-13. This information was provided by NU assistant registrar (confidential) Raman Madane in reply to a RTI query posed by Sunil Mishra.” (Ganjapure)

A senior IAS officer rightly remarked that ‘if a number of private colleges are closed down then India will be rid of great bogus financial burden.’ Government has given permission to start many educational institutes, which provide same courses, in the same locality. This mushrooming of institute has led to competition among institutes for getting students to be admitted in the institution which has become a nerve racking business.

Medical profession was considered very noble profession but it has also been drowned in the troubled sea of corruption. A Post Graduate seat is sold from anywhere between 1.5 crore to 2 crores.

People earlier opened schools and colleges as a token of philanthropic act, but now they are being opened for exploitation of parents and teachers. The parents are exploited financially but teachers are exploited profusely in a variety of ways.

The condition is going day by day from bad to worse. The kinds of exploitation that are prevalent are:

1. Exploitation by asking donation from prospective teachers for job which can be between 30 -40 lakhs.
2. Sexual Exploitation of women.
3. Involving teachers to involve in non academic activities like distributing pamphlets to get admissions, collecting donation for the institute.
4. Collecting fee for the poor students.

It is a systematic exploitation where in you run from one loop into another. I would quote here an example of a prestigious college in Nagpur, who had a lecher working as the secretary of the institute. He was a kind man and made all his mistresses principals of the institutes to whom he was secretary. He was such a big philanthropist that he would celebrate birthdays of only female teachers in his personal office cabin outside the college. He was a provider of a financial service to Nagpur University and some politicians, with whom he had friendly relationship, gave him wonderful immunity. He appointed almost all female teachers in coeducational institute and anybody, who did not succumb to his demands, was thrown out of the institute. He would go to such an extent that he would even ruin the institute by cutting down the intake of the number of students so that the teacher could be removed by showing reduction in the workload. The institutes were for fulfilling his ego and spreading the rein of tyranny. There was a teacher who fought a legal battle for 15 years to be reinstated and even after court orders the institute did not allow by filing one case after the other. High court orders are a roar of toy tigers for the Joint Director and College.

A mark of loyalty, which can be appreciated with his mistress, is that she is fighting the legal battle even after his death. The ego of the lecher was pampered. The institute lost a section and a qualified teacher forever. Not only was this, the salary for worked period, was also not paid to the victimized teacher. The institute even went up to the apex court that is Supreme Court. The institute must have spent a lot of money fighting the legal battle as compared to the salary due to the aggrieved teacher. Moreover, an incompetent ad hoc teacher was dragged on for 15 years and with court's orders perpetually since he was from reserved category. The reserved category teacher can come drunk to the college, can be abusive but if any action is taken against him he goes to the court saying ‘jatiwadi shivya dilya’. He creates fear in his colleagues that he would file atrocities act. The communal affinity is so strong that he finds witness as well. And if judge is also his brethren than what more is wanting. He would devise rules for shielding him. Indian constitution has divided country on communal grounds more than it has united.

People from reserved category and people in power are immune since in India there is a guarantee of Domino's Pizza being delivered in 20 minutes but no guarantee of justice being delivered even in 20 years. Judicial delay is the most common form of injustice. The former chief justice of the Supreme Court, JS Verma claims that although article 21 of the constitution guarantees a speedy trial to everyone in reality status of person did matter. In day -to -day experience of the marginalized and powerless there is no redress for example in Ruchika Girhotra's case Rathore left courtroom smiling. Media caught that insolent smile which raised furor in public and debate over the way proceedings were

executed in his case. Rathore presented his wife with Mercedes Benz and a special fancy number 'CH 01 AM' which he had been bought for Rs. 905,001, for his lawyer wife saying with impudent air that 'My wife is number one after all'. The powerful can delay the case till their death for example; Quattrochi in Bofor's scam. The feeling of injustice, born of delay, defeats the human spirit and is one reason Indian despair over their 'soft state.' Judges are happy to give adjournments because they do not want to be unpopular. Almost there is no penalty for victimizers, but, surely a victim who is a common man, is elated to the standards of a criminal.

The 16th December 2012, Nirbhaya Delhi rape case is still going on. First, she was raped and brutalized now her family will be mentally raped and brutalized in the courtroom till their death. It is 'death do us part' funda in legal battle.

Gurucharan Das observes that "Max Weber famously defined the state as the owner of a monopoly in violence, and the rule of law is meant to enforce and constrain that monopoly. A private citizen who engages in violence is jailed. But in a weak state like India with a weak rule of law, where the police and judiciary can be influenced, criminals get away. They use force with impunity to settle disputes against their enemies and suddenly they find they are superior to the state. To institutionalize this superiority they join politics- and lo and behold, a lawbreaker has become a law maker." (Das)

My experience of sitting through in two different courtrooms in High Court made me get two different picture of judiciary one of a vulture with penguin coat and another of a gentle human. Justice Nirgude sincerely tried to dispose cases most sympathetically. He went even to the extent of guiding the litigants saying that 'At what cost are they fighting the case? Disturbing yourself, your family and losing a lot of money'. His approach was to dispose of the cases honestly, but at times the system chained him and he felt helpless. The legal process for an honest person is like Sisyphus's¹ punishment where in you are punished more if you win the case since implementation of the court order is just like rolling an immense boulder up a hill, only to watch it roll back down, and to repeat this action forever. The judiciary is sick and old limping hag, who continues to live like the mythological Trishanku who hangs between the two worlds forever.

Furthermore, Honorable Justice Nirgude also remarked 'the way education institutes work is shameful. We would be free of great burden if cases from educational institutes are removed from the court'. He very poignantly put forth that, 'My eyes get filled with tears to see management and heads of the institute bringing small people working in aanganwadis and baal wadis to the court. How difficult it would be for small people to spend lakhs of rupees for fighting a legal battle.' (Author's observation July 10th, 2013.) The exploitation of client is huge and the biggest exploitation that takes place is at the hands of lawyers. It is a matter of concern that lawyers charge a lakh of rupees for every hearing and there is no guarantee that they will win the case. Earlier, it was said in fun, 'if a person could not get a white coat gets a black coat but, now the very same people who can get law degree easily, as compared to other professional courses, are the biggest exploiters and have become vultures in penguin coat.

We need a battalion of people like Justice Nirgude, who can bring about change but, they are tied down with a flailing system, where rich and powerful consider court judgment to be roaring of a toy lion and can continue cases till death, like the famous example of Quattrochi in Bofor's case and Ruchika Girhotra's case.

In one of the cases, where politicians had put hoarding with their pictures Honorable Justice Nirgude said that; 'This can only stop when people themselves feel ashamed of such display of their pictures.' (Author's observation July 6th, 2013.) People in power who fight legal battle are fighting a battle of ego to demonstrate their control and superiority on common people. I reiterate this situation in the words of Justice AV Nirgude; "It is a common knowledge that political workers erect their own hoardings with their pictures on it, probably to demarcate their area of control." (Ganjanpure, Speed News)

I had worked as corporate trainer in HUL and once carried gift for the manager and junior manager which was a very small gift but they refused to take since they felt that they can accept only things that everyone in the factory can enjoy. But, if you see the government and government undertakings they expect cut from even small people like trainers and are least bothered about the quality of training that is being disseminated by mediocre people who bow down before such exploitation.

A few institutes like GS College Wardha have become aware of the changing direction of winds. The entry of foreign collaboration and online courses and if human resource is not qualitative the institute will soon meet the same fate that of corporation schools - a slow death. The Principal of the GS College said: The President of our college Mr. Bhargava always says: 'We want quality. If a good teacher has any problems sort it out make situation convenient for her so that she joins the institute even to the extent of adjusting the time table for her convenience.' Mr. Bhargava in fact once said ' We fought with the government for a teacher who taught English and when the government did not pay the

salary, we paid though teacher left the institute since government did not grant approval for her post'. If we do not set up good example we will drive bad people to our institute. Most institutes take an undertaking in writing that if government does not grant salary they will not be paid a single penny. It is dharma that disciplines the individual.

A teacher who has come by paying donation to get the job will never be committed to work. But such honest institutes are few and foreign universities when they come to India will reduce such exploitation of teachers. The quality and competition would be the buzz word.

Another, example where quality was valued was Aravali Management Institute Jodhpur. I had been there as a guest faculty and learnt a lot from the students and the Director Mr. Varun Arya. It was a wonderful institute linked to CAT but was murdered at the hands of Government because Mr. Varun Arya refused to follow corrupt means by paying bribe to the Government for getting various sanctions. Varun Arya in one of his speeches opines that CBI in the government, in India, is the most corrupt and outside the government media is the most corrupt. Justice Nirgude is also of similar opinion. 'He said that when I joined in 1978 the situation was better at least there was some investigations being made but now even CBI does not do any investigation. He also quoted an example of a friend who had left CBI and had started his private investigation firm since he was interested in investigation as a serious business.'

A friend of mine who is an IAS suffers from overdose of stress. She says; 'An ordinary goon (a politician) can hold us for the whole day on ransom. Our hands and legs are tied, but we are expected to run. We are so helpless that if we want to help genuine people, who really deserved to be helped, we cannot help since we are tied down within a degraded system. Power in the hands of politicians is worst than power in the hands of IAS officers and now the power is in the hands of corrupt politicians. I am not corrupt and I do not know who will frame me for what.' Similarly, my brother suffers from anxiety stress and sleeplessness because of the same reasons, that he has not learnt the lesson of corruption in school or at home.

A manager of a multinational company in Silvassa was beaten up for not paying politicians money for contesting election. The company had to follow the policy of sending a cheque regularly as protection fee.

The lesson I learnt at school in moral science was god punishes those who are evil. The lecherous secretary died after prolonged illness. The management must have obviously gone through a harrowing time though for a short while when 'ten lakhs or more' penalty was slapped on them by the contempt court judge.

CONCLUSIONS

In fine, The best out of the worst exploitation or the silver lining to the cloud is collecting fee for poor since at least poor students who do not belong to reserved category get educated and some of them are really doing a good job. The other types of exploitation will continue to hover like vultures on the society and only God can help.

India will not improve unless we have battalion of people like Justice A V Nirgude, the IAS officers I mentioned earlier in this article, President of GS College, Varun Arya and companies like HUL who are epitome of uprightness and believe in quality. I feel it is high time when people need to 'protect themselves by dharma' as said in *The Mahabharat* and I reiterate in the words of Adv Justice Nirgude the victimizers should feel ashamed themselves. *The Bible* talks about flood where God decided to destroy sinned humanity. Are floods at Kedarnath a precursor of more devastation to get rid of sinned humanity????

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The author would like to dedicate the article to Justice A.V, Nirgude whose gentle approach and sincere efforts made her a great admirer and fan of his.

REFERENCE

- [1] Ganjapure, Vaibhav. 'Ineligible' persons awarded marks in NU colleges, TNN Jun 26, 2013.
- [2] Das, Gurucharan. *India Grows at Night*. New Delhi: Penguin books, India, Pvt.Ltd., 2012.
- [3] Fitzgerald, James (translated). *Mahabharata*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2004.
- [4] Folklore. *Word Press*. nd. 9th August 2013 <<http://www.wordpress.com/2009/09/15/Bhulabai>, Downloaded on 9th August, 2013.>.
- [5] Ganjapure, Vaibhav. " 'Ineligible' persons awarded marks in NU colleges." *Times Of India (TNN)* 26 June 2013.
- [6] —. "Speed News ." *Justice Av Nirgude* 9 August 2013.