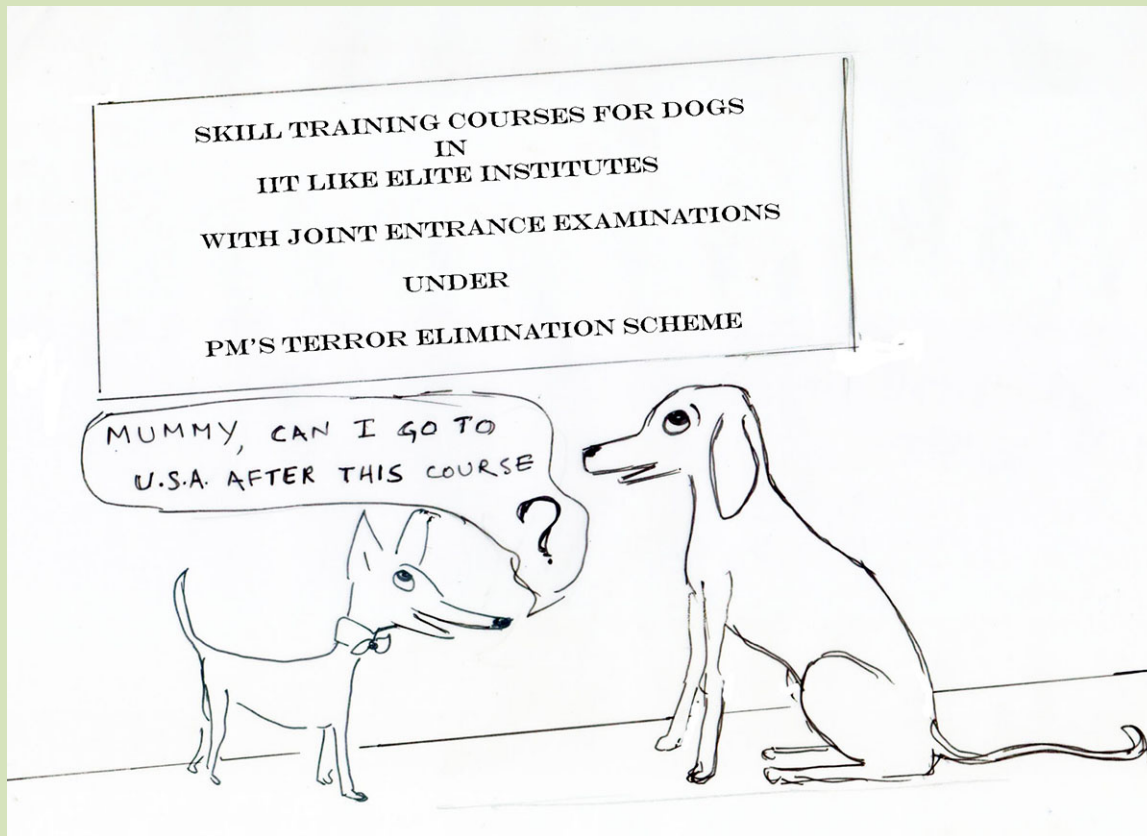


News and Views -6
from a g rao

Seasonal Cartoon



Mud gem 6

Sharing your thoughts is easy

Sharing your food is healthy

Sharing your house makes you Secure

Sharing your wealth is troublesome

Sharing your fame is most difficult

Sharing a skill..... is it possible

Recent additions

- [Colouring Bamboo Strips with Natural dyes in books, manuals and reports](#)
- [ALOs \(Agastya like Organisations\) in aaduko maduko](#)
- [3D letters in wire in Experiences in Teaching and Learning](#)
- [Golden proportion workshop 2](#)
- [Number Monster in Fibonacci caves 2](#)
- In memory lane -
Memory Lane 5 – NID days -
[the story teller Leo Lionni](#)

My thoughts

23, September, 2016

Skill as a Career Option

a g rao

Recently Maharashtra State Government has announced that unsuccessful students in SSC will be given a certificate as, eligible for Skill Development and not as failed!



It is a good move, considering number of failures and the connotation of 'failing' has in our Society. Long back, when I was in the school, it was a regular tragic story that one or two students committed suicide by falling under the train every year!

I have articulated a scheme **Diploma for Dropouts** in the specific context of Bamboo Craft. I hope the Minister concerned will somehow look at it!

We have a huge problem of not just failed candidates but also of 'passed' but unemployable candidates! School Education needs a drastic change!

Developing abilities to solve problems and abilities to think on their own has to be core concern of school Education. 'Skill Development', cannot be detached from 'thinking skill'! It is the mode of Learning which is important.

As far as 'Skill Education' is concerned, we need to understand the 'Sociological factors behind'. For instance no tribal or low income group aspires for 'Skill Education' or so called 'Vocational Training'. When they send children to school, even the poorest parents are dreaming that their son or daughter will one day become a doctor or an engineer if not an IAS officer! Nobody, including a skilled craftsman aspires his child to become a 'Skilled Worker', when they are sending them to 'School' with enormous economic sacrifice! But in reality 80% to 90% of them are unable to support their school education socially and college education economically.

How do we address this problem?

1. By looking at social factors through the eyes of Sociologists like Pierre Bourdieu.
2. Changing the system of Education by incorporating 'Experiential Learning Engagements(ELEs)', based on TLPs(Teaching Learning Platforms)
3. Additional, External Inputs like 'Saturday De-schools' and 'Agastya' like Organisations (ALOs).
4. Offering Attractive, employment linked skill trainings.
5. Modifying criteria of eligibility to University Education to enable people with skill based training to enter higher education!

I will elaborate each of these points

1. By looking at social factors through the eyes of Sociologists like Pierre Bourdieu, a well known French Sociologist, who articulated the concept of 'Social Capital' and its role in '**individual achievements**' through statistical data. 'Social Capital' is a product of social status of a person. It is often linked with economic status. In India it would be coupled with 'Caste Factor' as well! He points out that a person with high social capital has inevitably higher chances of better performance in his/her life! His talk in French with English subtitles, available on You Tube is worth watching.

[Sociology is a Martial Art on Vimeo](#)

In a project titled, 'Doors of Learning', we found that Students of 7th and 8th standard with parentage of inadequate educational background, had difficulty to improve their performance.

- Their parents were unable to help them in their Home work!
- Parents were unable to judge the role of tuition teachers, whom they had engaged at a considerable cost. They were satisfied when the tuition teachers were merely helping the children in doing their home work. They were dependent on children's feed back and immediate performance in the school tests and exams! In the process children had not developed conceptual understanding of the subjects at all, Some parents bought laptops for their children, which was a strain on their earnings! Children were using it only for socializing through Face book!

2. Changing the system of Education by incorporating 'Experiential Learning Engagements(ELEs)', based on TLPs(Teaching Learning Platforms)

It is possible to 'redesign' the school education system, based on ELEs(Experiential learning Engagements). This needs a reorganisation of curriculum framework bringing focus on 'Learning'! Radical changes in school education were experimented in the past. 'Wiskobas' in Germany based on thoughts of Freudenthal was one of them. More than 600 schools based on Rudolf Steiner's philosophy have also been following similar methodology. Only the schools tend to be elitist. The problem has been to get such practices in general schools.

It would be a worthwhile long term plan for the Country!

This needs change of mindsets at all levels. Educationists, Authorities, Teachers and Parents have to be part of it. Wisdom, Technology and Youth will be the driving forces!

A mission mode approach would be one possible solution!

Since the Action suggested is revolutionary in nature, it is not likely to happen with a bang. Since the direction is inevitable, it would take shape in the coming 10years. The direction can be pursued by number of Initiatives by several like-minded individuals and groups.

3. Additional, External Inputs like 'Saturday De-schools' and 'Agastya' like Organisations (ALOs).

I like to propose two such initiatives,

3.1 Saturday De-schools

Saturday de-schools can be held by various individuals and groups all over the country. Small groups of children (20 to 30) can be engaged every Saturday afternoons, without interfering into the regular school programme. If schools approve the groups or individuals conducting, it would be a smooth sail. In ELEs (Experiential Learning Engagements), Saturday schools can identify individual affinity towards a skill. Children may have different skills like drawing or sketching, singing, kinesthetic skills like playing, olfactory skills like recognising perfumes, fine smells, skills in tasting, theatric skills like acting, dancing, etc., It is important to recognise the skill and mentor the child to pursue it into a professional or artistic career. There are various levels children can pursue their skills depending on the social and economic support they can get. What is important is to develop passion for learning a skill and aspiration to pursue it further. In Doors of Learning project we tried to link making a Fort with area calculation, making a diwali lamp with length and angle measurements in a square and rectangle, making tetrahedronal pyramid to fractals etc,

Much Innovation is required to develop such TLPs(Teaching Learning Platforms) to convert them into ELEs to connect school curriculum subjects with life and created experiences.

3.2 ALOs (*Agastya Like Organisations*)

Agastya is a well known organisation run by Agastya Foundation at Kuppam (AP) near Bengaluru.

See their website

<http://www.agastya.org/>

More Agastya like organisations can come up in the country. The orientation can be learning based on concerns of Kamai (earning). I have elaborated this in my article on Agastya Like Organisations (ALOs) on this website.

4. Offering Attractive, employment linked skill trainings

Several Industries are offering internships followed by employment for youngsters after school education. Some NGOs and Trusts like GKD Charity Trust at Coimbatore offer placement and on job training services to Industries. There is a need to create a data bank on such initiatives throughout the country. Govt backed agencies can consolidate such experience and create a frame work for systemizing such efforts.

In craft sector an urgent policy initiative in programmes like MGNREGA is required. I have been talking about a 50-50 scheme in many forums. Govt can recognise NGOs in craft sector which are able to engage craft persons in rural areas. Govt can pay 50% of the wages for 200 days with funds allotted for 100 days. Remaining 50% will be paid by the NGOs for 200 days. The produce goes to NGOs. Thus craft products can be marketed at competitive prices, and craft-persons will be paid

wages at MGNREGA rates for 200 days in a year! The scheme can be extended to other rural enterprises as well! It can create a strong viable base for 'Make in India' in Rural sector

5.Entry for higher studies in University Education

Current 'education' in the country, introduced by 'British rulers' long ago has not changed in its core pattern. Low value for the skills prevails. Person opting for vocational trainings have 'no chance' to get in to University education for higher education.

Unfortunately, in our country these values got reinforced with the structure of 'Caste System'. There is an urgent need for course correction in the University Education System. A possibility of entering into University for higher studies for 'skilled cadre' ought to be there!.

European countries like Germany and Switzerland have already adopted such a system, where people pursuing vocational trades can get in to the general education stream at University level. Such reforms in the University education will send right signals for many people to get into vocational trainings, though very few may be able to go for higher studies.
