Glimpses of the last week

Collection of the articles published by Dr. Monalisa Bal on Education and Higher Education of India



Contents

* Towards Higher Equity and Excellence: Challenges before Higher Education in India
* Open Distance Learning: Recent Rumblings the Way Forward
* Towards Higher Inclusive Growth: Role of Higher Education
* Make – in – India and Higher Education Policy: The way forward
* Equity and Excellence in Higher education: A case study of convergence in Kiss Odisha
* Excellence through Equity: challenges before Higher Education in India
* Challenges for higher education policy in India
* [RESOURCE INADEQUACY, QUALITY DEFICIT AND POLICY OPACITY: ROAD AHEAD FOR HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA](http://www.wjer.org/WJER_Vol.%201%2C%20No.%205%2C%20October%202014/RESOURCE%20INADEQUACY.pdf)
* From GER to Quality Improvement – Challenges before Higher Education In India
* Inclusive Growth and Excellence: Fascinating Journey in Kiss Odisha
* Towards Higher Equity and Excellence: Challenges before Higher Education in IndiaFull Text: [PDF](http://iiste.org/Journals/index.php/JEP/article/view/15243/15609)





* Open Distance Learning: Recent Rumblings the Way Forward Link: <http://www.oiirj.org/ejournal/july-aug-sept2014/36.pdf>





* Towards Higher Inclusive Growth: Role of Higher Education Link: <http://www.researchjournali.com/pdf/1017.pdf>





* Make – in – India and Higher Education Policy: The way forward Link: <http://isindexing.com/isi/papers/1415449012.pdf>





* Equity and Excellence in Higher education: A case study of convergence in Kiss Odisha Link: <http://www.iosrjournals.org/iosr-jef/papers/vol5-issue2/G0525761.pdf>





* Excellence through Equity: challenges before Higher Education in India Link: <http://www.ripublication.com/ijepa/ijepav4n1_08.pdf>





* Challenges for higher education policy in India Link: <http://www.eajournals.org/wp-content/uploads/Challenges-for-Higher-Education-Policy-in-India.pdf>





* [RESOURCE INADEQUACY, QUALITY DEFICIT AND POLICY OPACITY: ROAD AHEAD FOR HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA](http://www.wjer.org/WJER_Vol.%201%2C%20No.%205%2C%20October%202014/RESOURCE%20INADEQUACY.pdf)





* From GER to Quality Improvement – Challenges before Higher Education In IndiaLink: <http://indianresearchjournals.com/pdf/APJMMR/2014/August/3.pdf>



* Inclusive Growth and Excellence: Fascinating Journey in Kiss Odisha Link: <http://iosrjournals.org/iosr-jhss/papers/Vol19-issue10/Version-9/F0191093843.pdf>





|  |
| --- |
| KiiT International School |
| The prime focus area of Dr. Achyuta Samanta, the visionary founder-director of KIIT University and the Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS, estb. 1992), is the latter institution which provides free-of-charge K-postgrad education to 15,000 aboriginal children drawn from 62 most backward and neglected tribes of the eastern seaboard state of Odisha (pop. 41 million), who are housed, fed, clothed and educated in the world’s largest residential school. However in the 23 constituent schools of KIIT University, and the state-of-the-art KiiT International School, Bhubaneswar affiliated with the Delhi-based Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), Cambridge International Examinations (CIE), UK and International Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO), Geneva, children from all castes, tribes, classes and creeds receive high quality� education. As per an ingenious schema devised by him, surpluses generated by these for-profit institutions power the growth and expansion of KISS.http://www.educationworldonline.net/userfiles/Mona-Lisa.gifWith Odisha’s upper middle class growing in number and affluence, in 2007 Samanta promoted KiiT International School (KiiT IS), Odisha’s first internationally benchmarked school and the first primary-secondary in eastern India to apply for IB affiliation. Since then KiiT IS has rapidly assumed shape and form in trademark KIIT style on a compact 25-acre campus amidst a cluster of KIIT University institutions in suburban Bhubaneswar. The school’s 500,000 sq. ft built-up area spread over five buildings obviously inspired by the Louis Kahn school of architecture (long corridors, cross ventilation and airy classrooms), is supported by a 120-strong faculty recruited from across the country and abroad and hosts 750 students mainly from eastern India and north-east states, but also from 11 foreign countries including Canada, US, UK, Korea, Bangladesh and Nigeria. Of them 550 reside in modern air-conditioned residential suites, each housing either four or two students. Tuition fees range from Rs.2.4-4.5 lakh per year for boarders and Rs.1-4 lakh for day boarders.“Mainly through word-of-mouth publicity, KiiT International School has got off to a good start. We have been able to attract excellent faculty from around the world who have implemented child-centric and experiential learning pedagogies which are rare in this part of the world. While KiiT IS is a 21st century, new age school, it is also culturally rooted. It’s a secular school in which children are consciously taught to respect Indian traditions such as regard for teachers and elders, and life skills appropriate in Indian and Asian socio-cultural environments,” says Dr. Mona Lisa Bal, an alumna of Calcutta, KIIT and Utkal universities and founder chairperson and chief executive of KiiT IS.Given this guiding philosophy, considerable importance is given to co-curricular education in KiiT IS. Children have a wide range of vocal and instrumental music and dance (odissi, hiphop, contemporary, kathak and ballet) learning opportunities. Simultaneously generous sports and games facilities for cricket, hockey, rugby, basketball, volleyball, tennis, golf, chess, carom, swimming and horse riding have been provided on campus and in dedicated sports grounds adjoining the campus. “Although physically complete, KiiT IS is still a work in progress. Our goal is to inculcate international mindedness in our students and mould them into good human beings and true global citizens. We have got off to an excellent start, but we are still consolidating our systems and processes. Our best is yet to come,” says Bal. |
|  |
|  |
| Paradigm shift in teacher�s role  |
|  |
| http://www.educationworldonline.net/userfiles/Mona-lisa.gifOnce upon a time even the most avant garde and progressive K-12 schools were teacher-centric. The teacher was the focus of all attention. She stood at the head of the class, and children listened and did as they were told.However during the past few decades and especially since the dawn of the new millennium, there’s been a global mindshift in favour of student-centric education. Deep research into the human brain, in behavioural sciences, and class-room pedagogies has created widespread awareness that participative and interactive classrooms in which the teacher is a co-learner and facilitator who uses perception, creativity and intuition to make lessons interesting, motivating and synergistic — deliver the best learning outcomes. Suddenly there’s dawning awareness of the accuracy of the Chinese proverb — “I hear and forget, I see and remember and I do and understand.”Gradually — perhaps too gradually — the teachers’ community worldwide has become conscious of the importance of hands-on learning through comprehension rather than traditional rote and memorisation pedagogy. It’s becoming increasingly evident that encouraging students to undertake research and project assign-ments independently with facilitation, aid and advice provided by teachers, arouses their interest and discovery which remains with them life long, whereas memorised learning fades. These days the best teach-ers make lessons theme-oriented and support class-room teaching with new ICT (information communi-cation technologies) which enable thorough compreh-ension and interest in learning and transform students into confident and independent learners.However although teaching children to learn through comprehension and project assignments delivers better learning outcomes, there’s no denying it’s more time consuming. And given high teacher-pupil ratio conditions of most Indian schools, classroom environments tend to be less than conducive for teachers obliged to complete assigned syllabuses. Therefore the time and patience available to make all students thoroughly understand and grasp lessons is limited. Under the prevailing circums-tances, it would be in the national interest for syllabus-framers to limit the breadth and scope of syllabuses, and bear in mind that core concepts taught in a child-centric style are better learnt than wide syllabuses which require to be covered in speed.Contemporary teaching-learning also requires traditionally stern, impersonal teacher-student relationships to be replaced with warmer, empathetic relationships which have a positive impact on students’ academic, social and personal develop-ment. Building an effective and supportive student-teacher connection results in higher levels of academic and personal achievement. When a student feels personally connected, receives guidance and praise rather than criticism, she is likely to respond by way of better classroom behaviour and learning outcomes. This imposes an important and onerous responsibility upon teachers to transform themselves into role models from whom impressionable students can derive personal development inspiration.Peculiar classroom conditions prevalent in K-12 education in India also require burdened teachers to devise innovative solutions to cope with crowded classrooms, problem children and parental expectations in terms of academic excellence. One such solution is to encourage ‘peer’ or collaborative learning, a primary-secondary education system which was pioneered in India but fell into disuse with the dawn of the British raj and has remained so ever since. Under this system, a class is broken into small groups of eight-ten students, each mentored by a quick-learner student leader. These groups learn collaboratively under peer pressure conditions led by class leaders and under the overall supervision and facilitation of subject teachers.Another option available to the overburdened teachers’ community is to encourage self-study and learning. With latter day students having access to the vast library that is the worldwide web and the internet, intelligent teachers can substantially reduce workload and stress by kindling students’ interest in a subject and encouraging self-study and discovery. But to encourage self-study, schools need good libraries — a blindspot of Indian education. Therefore teachers need to actively plead the case for well-stocked libraries equipped with broadband connectivity.Quite clearly, the role and character of 21st century school teachers has undergone a paradigm shift. With students having become smarter and internet savvy, the era when teachers were acknowledged as fonts of wisdom on the basis of unchanged notes and pedagogies of yesteryear is over. Now there is greater onus on teachers to be on top of the latest developments in their area of expertise and nurture students to truly comprehend concepts and subjects while experiencing the joys of learning. It’s an onerous responsibility which our community needs to confront with honesty in the wider interest of our students and society.(Dr. Mona Lisa Bal is chairperson of KiiT International School, Bhubaneswar) |