

# EDUCATIONPLUS

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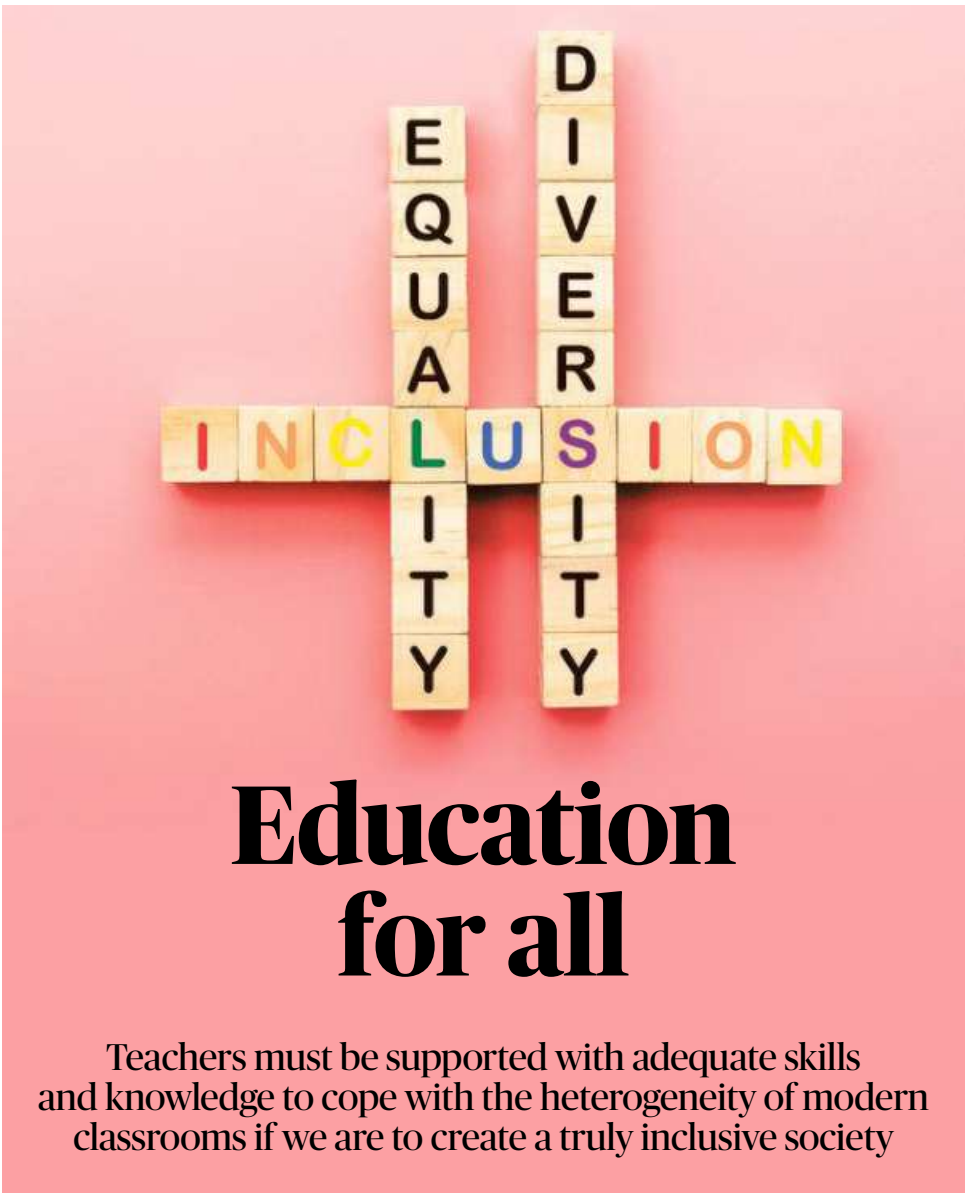
Ankur Madan

Lakshmi became a teacher to fulfil a childhood dream. She loved being in a classroom filled with energetic, curious young minds. Since she was fulfilling her passion, she thought being a teacher would be easy. In a few months, she realised how inadequately prepared she was despite her teacher training and love for the job. Teaching a class of 40 or more children from diverse social, cultural and linguistic backgrounds with varied interests and abilities, at different levels of readiness to learn, is no mean task.

This situation is not unique to Lakshmi's classroom. Across the world, not just in India, classrooms are becoming increasingly diverse and heterogeneous. That heterogeneity is a norm and not an exception is a reality that we must embrace and prepare our teachers for, if we want to provide quality education for all our children and create a truly inclusive society.

Under-prepared

There is, however, growing evidence that teachers in mainstream school systems feel under-prepared with the knowledge, skills and dispositions required to work in inclusive classrooms, particularly those with children with different abilities, such as children with disabilities and gifted children. It is also well-established that teachers in mainstream classrooms are the key players in ensuring effective inclusion and that their feelings, atti-



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tudes and apprehensions must be addressed.

There are both curricular and systemic reasons why teacher education (TE) programmes in the country have failed to prepare teachers adequately for inclusive classrooms until now. There is an urgent need for course

correction in this regard.

India's commitment to inclusion received a major impetus in the form of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and the Rights of Persons with Disability Act 2016. The National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE), while still working

on a new curriculum framework for TE, has launched the much-awaited four-year Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP). It remains to be seen if this programme, through its theory and teaching practice component, will be able to equip teachers with the

competencies required to practise inclusive education effectively.

Strategies

While these systemic changes and recommendations are underway, it is worthwhile to understand the direction that we need to take to prepare teachers for inclusion at the pre-service and in-service levels.

**Inclusion is a collaborative effort:** While teachers are key to creating inclusive classrooms, school leaders, parents, non-teaching staff, peers and the community play an important role and they need to be sensitised and adequately prepared to play their part. Special educators can play an important role in extending support to teachers in mainstream classrooms by providing resources for teaching and assessment when needed, as opposed to taking on the primary responsibility of teaching children who face learning difficulties in segregated settings. There are no 'specialised' pedagogies that teachers need to learn to work with diverse learners. Instead, we need to focus on breaking attitudinal barriers and offering non-traditional, innovative teaching skills that can benefit all children.

**Focus on differences, not deficits:** It is important to recognise that differences in children's learning abilities as part of a human condition and teachers and other stakeholders need to shift their focus from a bio-medical approach that underlines a child's deficits to the socio-

logical and psychological aspects of disability, forms of marginalisation and disadvantages. Teacher educators need to embrace inclusive teaching practices in their classrooms to teach aspiring teachers, and teachers in every classroom must be prepared to embrace the principles of inclusive pedagogy that focus on differences.

Equipping teachers is key:

Importantly, the role of in-service teacher professional development programmes in inclusive education must be recognised. Teachers should be encouraged to attend such programmes and be nominated by their school boards and management. TE programmes must also have teaching practise components with significant opportunities to observe, interact with and teach children from diverse backgrounds. Such programmes should become opportunities for career advancement. Institutions such as universities, private entities and non-governmental organisations offering such programmes in innovative formats, such as blended or online, with flexible structures should receive due recognition and support from state governments.

Teachers like Lakshmi, who enter the teaching profession with enthusiasm and passion, must be supported with adequate skills and knowledge to meet the challenges of contemporary classrooms in India.

*Views expressed are personal*

The writer is a faculty member at Azim Premji University.

## SCHOLARSHIPS

### Prodigy Finance - GyanDhan Engineering Scholarship

An initiative from GyanDhan along with Prodigy Finance.

**Eligibility:** Open to Indian nationals who have completed their UG at an Indian university and have secured admission for a Master's in Engineering at an American, Canadian or British institution by September.

**Rewards:** \$2,500  
**Application:** Online  
**Deadline:** August 31  
[www.b4s.in/edge/PFGE4](http://www.b4s.in/edge/PFGE4)

### Cultural Talent Search Scholarship Scheme

An initiative by the Centre for Cultural Resources and Training (CCRT), an autonomous organisation under the Ministry of Culture, Government of India.

**Eligibility:** Open to students between 10 and 14 years who are attending a recognised school or come from a family with a tradition of performing arts. Monthly family income should be below ₹8,000.  
**Reward:** ₹3,600 per annum and a one-time reimbursement of ₹9,000.  
**Application:** Through

post to CCRT, 15-A, Block D, Sector 7 Dwarka, Delhi 110075  
**Deadline:** August 31  
[www.b4s.in/edge/CTSSS2](http://www.b4s.in/edge/CTSSS2)

### Bharti Airtel Scholarship Programme

An initiative of the Bharti Airtel Foundation.

**Eligibility:** Open to a citizen and resident of India enrolled in the 2024 cohort a UG or five-year Integrated courses in Electronics and Communication, Telecom, Information Technology, Computer Sciences, Data Sciences, Aerospace and Emerging Technologies at the top 50 NIRF institutions across India. Annual family income from all sources should not exceed ₹8.5 lakhs.

**Reward:** Support for tuition fee, hostel and mess fee and a laptop.  
**Application:** Online  
**Deadline:** August 31  
[www.b4s.in/edge/BHRSP1](http://www.b4s.in/edge/BHRSP1)

Courtesy: buddy4study.com

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## Do your research

Uncertain about your career options? Low on self-confidence? This column may help



OFF THE EDGE  
Nandini Raman

**I am doing BCA but am not interested in coding. I am considering an MBA rather than MCA. Is this a good choice?** Neha

Dear Neha,

Switching from BCA to an MBA can be a viable and rewarding choice, especially if you are not interested in coding and prefer to focus on management and business aspects. An MBA opens up opportunities in various sectors and industries like finance, marketing, human resources, operations, consulting, and entrepreneurship and equips you with the essential management, leadership, and business skills. It offers excellent networking opportunities through seminars, workshops, internships, and corporate interactions. Finally, it can help you develop entrepreneurial skills, business acumen, and a strategic mindset to start and manage your own business or venture. You can do a general MBA or one with specialisations in Finance, Marketing, HR, Operations, Information Technology, International Business and more. These are all full-time programmes over two years. There are Executive MBA (EMBA) (one or two years) and online courses designed for working professionals that offer part-time, weekend, evening, or online classes. Research and explore various programmes, specialisations, and courses and identify the most suitable one based on your interests, career goals, and preferences. Prepare for entrance exams like CAT, MAT, XAT, CMAT, GMAT, and so on. Understand the eligibility criteria, admission

process, and deadlines to plan and prepare accordingly.

**I am in the fourth year of B.Sc. Environmental Sciences. I want to do M.Tech. Bioengineering or any other bio-related courses. Some colleges are okay with a four-year Bachelor's programme while others are asking for an M.Sc degree. Also, I didn't do Maths in Class 12. How can I fulfil the Maths criterion? Will credits from IGNOU or SWAYAM be accepted?** Soumya

Dear Soumya,

You may encounter varying admission criteria across different colleges. Check the specific eligibility criteria of the institutions you want to apply to. Regarding the Maths issue, some colleges may offer remedial or bridge courses. Consider enrolling in one to fulfill that criterion. Check the specifics of the curriculum and credits that IGNOU and SWAYAM offer, ensure they are recognised by the universities you want to apply to. Gain research experience, participate in research projects, internships, workshops, and training programmes in Bioengineering, Biotechnology, and related fields to enhance your academic profile, practical skills, and research capabilities required for the M.Tech. programmes

**I am a first-year ECE student, enthusiastic about cybersecurity. I aim to pursue a Master's degree in Cybersecurity in the U.K. How can I initiate my cybersecurity education and balance it effectively with my ECE coursework?** Geerthivash

Dear Geerthivash,

Research and explore the cybersecurity field to understand its various domains, such as network security, information security, ethical hacking, cryptography, digital forensics, and cybersecurity management. Then, identify your areas of interest to tailor your education and career path. Enroll in online courses, certifications, and training programmes in cybersecurity to gain foundational knowledge, technical skills, and practical experience in cybersecurity fundamentals. Consider certifications like CompTIA Security+, Certified Ethical Hacker (CEH), and Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP). Join communities, forums, groups, and organisations, such as Cybersecurity and Information Security (CIS), and Information Systems Security Association (ISSA), to connect with professionals, enthusiasts, and experts, participate in discussions, share knowledge, and stay updated. Identify and integrate cybersecurity concepts with ECE coursework. Create a study schedule, and allocate dedicated time slots for cybersecurity learning and coursework. Consult and seek guidance from your professors, advisors, and cybersecurity experts to discuss your interests and aspirations and explore interdisciplinary opportunities. Research and identify reputed universities, colleges, and institutions offering a Master's programmes in Cybersecurity in the U.K. Explore the curriculum, courses, faculty, research areas, facilities, and

opportunities offered by the universities to identify the most suitable programme based on your interests, aspirations, and preferences. Check the eligibility criteria, deadlines, procedures, course fees, scholarships, grants, assistantships, and financial aid offered by universities, government agencies, and private organisations to fund your studies in the U.K.

**I am in an IB school. Is IBDP accepted in Indian colleges and will IBDP commerce stream get me into top management colleges?** Vedha

Dear Vedha,

The IBDP is recognised and accepted by the Association of Indian Universities (AIU) for admission to undergraduate programmes in Indian universities and colleges. However, the recognition and equivalency may vary across institutions, programmes, and states. You will need to specifically check the policies of the institutions you are interested in. Top management colleges such as the IIMs, Indian School of Business (ISB), Faculty of Management Studies (FMS), and others may consider IBDP scores along with other admission criteria like entrance exams, interviews, group discussions, and academic records. Shortlist reputed institutions, explore their requirements, eligibility criteria, curriculum, courses, entrance exams, faculty, and facilities to identify the most suitable one based on your interests, aspirations, and preferences.

**Disclaimer: This column is merely a guiding voice and provides advice and suggestions on education and careers.**

The writer is a practising counsellor and a trainer. Send your questions to [eduplus.thehindu@gmail.com](mailto:eduplus.thehindu@gmail.com) with the subject line Off the Edge

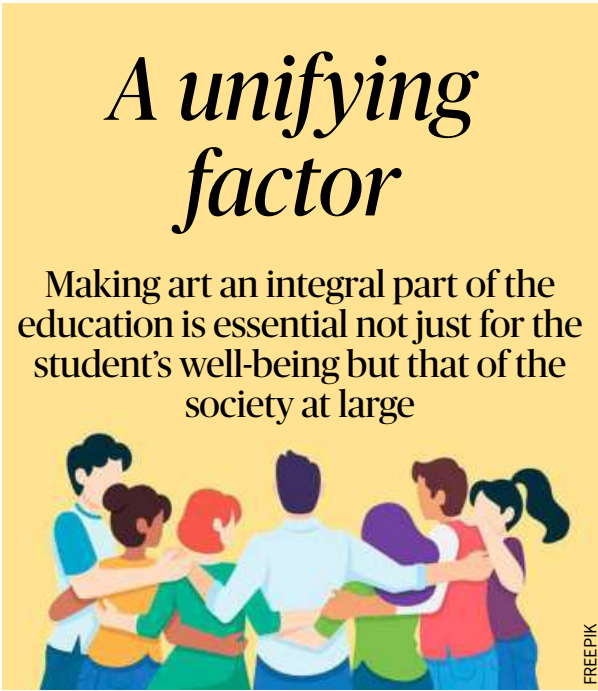
Rakesh Gupta

French impressionist Edgar Degas famously said, "Art is not what you see, but what you make others see." Art reveals new perspectives, offers insights into different worlds and cultures, and has the power to change perceptions. Throughout history, art and culture have played crucial roles in easing tensions between nations and fostering dialogue.

Every country has a Ministry or Department of Culture, reflecting the universal recognition of culture's importance. It is widely acknowledged that no society can thrive without culture, which is the foundation of human connection and expression.

Self expression

Art can be a powerful tool for students to express themselves and for parents and teachers to gain insights into their thoughts and feelings. As a tool for self-expression, art helps reduce stress and promote well-being. A student who may not be able to communicate through words



can use art forms to talk about their deepest feelings.

However, today, art often takes a back seat in our education system. It is treated as a luxury rather than a necessity. Many institutions lack dedicated art departments and this neglects art's vital role in nurturing creativity and fostering emotional health. The National Education

Policy (NEP) 2020 has transitioned from STEM to STEAM and incorporated A (Arts) into the curriculum to ensure that students receive a balanced and enriching educational experience.

When students participate in performing arts and cultural exchanges, they are exposed to various world views without bias. These experiences

help them appreciate diversity and cultivate empathy. Art and culture offer a broader perspective and help people become more socially aware and inclusive.

For art and culture to truly make a difference, they must be seamlessly integrated into the curriculum, without being perceived as an extra. This requires collaboration between schools, policymakers, cultural organisations and local artists so that art can become mainstream and students get real-world experiences.

Today, news about conflicts between nations, people and communities is an everyday affair. The only way to create a harmonious world is to appreciate our differences. Early exposure to art and culture can help us realise this vision. By making these elements a central part of their lives, students will grow into adults who can transcend boundaries, promote social change and build a more just and empathetic society.

The writer is Founder, Routes2Roots.

## SAVE THE DATE

### Admissions and competitions

**ICRI** invites applications for its Ph.D. in Clinical Research Pharmacovigilance and Clinical Data Management programme, offered in collaboration with Sushant University.  
**Eligibility:** Postgraduates in Life Sciences, Pharmacy, Dentistry, Biotechnology, or Microbiology.  
**Entrance exam:** January 15  
<https://tinyurl.com/3w29xfck>

**Badruka School of Management** invites applications for its two-year, full-time residential Post Graduate Diploma in Management (PGDM) programme for 2024-26.  
**Eligibility:** A recognised

Bachelor's degree in any field; Class 10 and 12 marks from a recognised board. Valid score in CAT, GMAT, XAT, CMAT, MAT  
<https://tinyurl.com/2s35437k>

**The University of Birmingham Dubai** invites applications for its B.Sc. Psychology programme. Scholarships are available.  
**Eligibility:** 75-80% in Class 12 board (CBSE)  
<https://tinyurl.com/5frxyu2y>

**The University of Strathclyde**, Glasgow, the U.K., invites applications for its M.Sc. Advanced Computer Science with Data Science starting in January 2025.  
**Eligibility:** Minimum second-class (2:2) Honour's degree or international equivalent in Computer Science, Maths, Physics, Engineering or a numerate

discipline. Some programming or database experience is required. Minimum IELTS score of 6.0 (no component below 5.5).  
<https://tinyurl.com/bddp6u9c>

K12 Techno Services, in association with the Commonwealth Youth Council, Commonwealth Student Association and Global Understanding for Sustainable Development, is hosting **Mekathlon 2024**, an international STEM competition for students between 8 and 18 years.  
[www.mekathlon.com](http://www.mekathlon.com)

**JoinDevOps** has launched and online DevOps with AWS (Hindi, Tamil and Telugu) course, which integrates software development and IT system management using Amazon Web Services (AWS).

**Eligibility:** Freshers, CS graduates, BCA and MCA graduates looking to enter the DevOps field,  
<https://www.joindevops.com/contant>

**IIT-Kanpur** has launched SATHEE IBPS with the support of the Ministry of Education. This programme helps candidates prepare for banking exams conducted by the Institute of Banking Personnel Selection (IBPS). More details at <https://ibps.iitk.ac.in/>

Cambridge University Press and Assessment, in collaboration with Get Set Learn, launched **Young Pioneers**, a three-stage entrepreneurship programme for students of classes 7 to 10. Visit <https://www.youngpioneers.in/>



