

EDUCATIONPLUS

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R. W. Alexander
Jesudasan

With over 1,100 universities and nearly 45,000 colleges catering to around 4.5 crore students, India continues to strengthen its position as one of the world's largest education hubs. The country also aims to achieve 50% gross enrollment ratio (GER) in higher education by 2035. To achieve this target, India must strengthen all areas of higher education. Government and private institutions are working towards this, through various initiatives such as the One Nation One Subscription (ONOS).

What is ONOS?
The scheme aims to provide nationwide access to major scholarly e-journals from prominent publishers across disciplines such as STEM, Medicine, Management, Social Sciences and Humanities. The UGC's Information and Library Network (INFLIB-NET) centre is to act as the implementing agency for ONOS. The scheme will give 6,400 institutions across the country (including central and state universities, colleges and research institutions) and 1.2 crore students, faculty, and researchers access to over 13,000 top journals including global ones such as *Elsevier*, *Springer-Nature*, *Taylor & Francis*, and *Wiley*. The Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF) Act seeks to



Fuel a knowledge economy

Why the One Nation One Subscription should be extended to private universities and colleges

boost research HEIs in smaller towns with plans for central funding to support Indian authors in paying Article Processing Charges for quality open-

access journals. However, private universities have been left out of the ambit of ONOS. Before the 1990s, the higher education land-

scape was dominated by government-funded institutions. Economic liberalisation also led to various transformational measures including establishment of

private universities and colleges. As a result, today, around 80% of students pursue higher education in private universities and colleges. In the last two decades, the number of these colleges and universities has expanded in response to the increasing demand for higher education.

Research focussed
Apart from offering programmes in emerging fields such as Robotics, AI, Fintech, Precision Technologies, Cybersecurity, Design Thinking and more, they also offer international exposure, industry-

linked learning, interdisciplinary and flexible academic options and other benefits to students. Many of these institutions are located in urban and semi-urban areas and account for nearly 36% of the student population. Apart from this, many private universities have positioned themselves as research- and innovation-focussed, as Bansal et.al. (2019) note.

Some are very large with multiple campuses, modern infrastructure, and faculty members enabling them to compete with and match the research output of well-known government-funded institutions. Some even project themselves as the second-largest contributors to India's research output after the IITs. Quality publications, spending on faculty development and infrastructure creation, automation of libraries, including establishment of digital libraries, RFID, and other technological advances have all contributed to this.

Considering that private HEIs have made immense contributions to the education landscape and the growth manifested in many areas, extending ONOS to such institutions would help the country achieve the goal of a developed India by 2035. This will not strain the country's financial resources and will help India develop a robust knowledge economy.

The writer is the former rector of Reva University, Bengaluru; former Pro Vice-Chancellor of HITS, Chennai; and former Principal and Secretary of Madras Christian College, Chennai.

SCHOLARSHIPS

STEM Scholars
An initiative by Nasscom Foundation and supported by Optum CSR initiative. **Eligibility:** Students in the third and fourth-year of B.E. or B.Tech in Computer Science, Pharmacy, and Life Sciences or pursuing in the fourth of fifth year of a five-year Integrated Engineering Programme in an institution in Delhi, Bengaluru, Chennai or Hyderabad and have scored minimum 65% in Class 12 and have an annual family income not exceeding ₹800,000. **Rewards:** ₹30,000. **Application:** Online **Deadline:** December 26 www.b4s.in/edge/TCPS34

Tata Capital Pankh Scholarship
An initiative from Tata Capital **Eligibility:** Indian students who are in Classes 11 and 12 or degree or diploma programmes in recognised institutions and have scored minimum 60% (80% for professional courses) in the

previous academic year and have an annual family income not exceeding ₹250,000. **Rewards:** Up to 80% of course fees **Application:** Online **Deadline:** December 26 www.b4s.in/edge/TCPS34

Suzlon Scholarship
An initiative by Suzlon Group **Eligibility:** Female students in Class 9 and students in the first year of B.E. or B.Tech. or diploma in Engineering domiciled and enrolled in recognised institutions in Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Daman, and Puducherry and have scored minimum 50% and have an annual family income not exceeding ₹600,000. **Rewards:** ₹6,000 a year for school students; ₹60,000 a year for diploma students; ₹120,000 a year for those in degree programmes **Application:** Online **Deadline:** December 26 www.b4s.in/edge/SZSP4

Courtesy: Buddy4study.com

The Indian six

Six students have been selected as Rhodes Scholars-Elect for India 2026. They are Manhar Bansal from NLSIU, Bengaluru; Yogita from Université Paris-Saclay and Adam Mickiewicz University,

Poland; Nikhita Sampath from St. Joseph's College of Law, Bengaluru; Taif Altaf, a Young India Fellow from Ashoka University, Sonipat; Suprabath Reddy Dwaram from ISI, Delhi, and Aniketa Kabir from Azim Premji University, Bengaluru.

Reframe your thinking

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



OFF THE EDGE
Nandini Raman

I am in Class 12 (Humanities). My interests are History and Literature, but people say it is better to pursue Economics or Psychology. Would International Relations, which will enable me to study global history, be an option? Literature is one of my passions. I love reading and the creative aspect of the arts. What courses can I take that align with my interests? Naina

Dear Naina,
The key is to find ways to connect your interests to careers. International Relations and Global Studies address your interest in global history and provide a structured, respected academic and career path. Look up programmes such as B.A. (Hons) International Relations, Global Affairs, or Political Science with an IR specialisation, which can lead to careers in diplomacy, policy research, international development, journalism, or public affairs and risk analysis.

If Literature and Creative Arts excite you, consider a B.A. (Hons) in English Literature or Comparative Literature or a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Creative Writing (offered by some institutions). Career paths could be content strategist, copywriter, editor, technical writer, journalist, social media manager or teaching in schools/colleges. You can also look at a hybrid interdisciplinary path which can combine your interests. For example,

History, Literature and Media Studies can lead to a career in documentary filmmaking, historical research for films or television, or arts journalism. A combination of History, Literature and Cultural Studies or Museum Work can lead to jobs such as curator, archivist, museum educator, or cultural resource manager. History and Public Policy or Public Administration can lead to paths such as policy analyst, legislative assistant and so on.

Look at History and Literature as foundational subjects and research for specific courses within the larger degree. For interdisciplinary majors, look up JNU's School of International Studies, Ashoka University, Christ University, and St. Stephen's College and Lady Shri Ram College in Delhi University that allow you to take electives across departments.

I am a Political Science student and want to pursue a PG Diploma in Rural Development. Which are the best institutions for this? Also, what will be the job opportunities? Susan

Dear Susan,
A PG Diploma in Rural Development is a strategic value addition to a Political Science degree. Research programmes offered by IIM-Ahmedabad, TISS Mumbai and Tuljapur, Xavier Institute of Social Service and Institute of Rural Management, Anand, that offer related courses. Other institutes that you can consider are National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Hyderabad; and Indian Institute of

Health Management Research, Bengaluru and Jaipur. Also research State and Central Universities for programmes.

Job opportunities exist across the government and public sector, in NGOs and non-profits, the banking industry, and in the corporate sector. The first offers roles such as rural development or block development officer in organisations such as NABARD and State Rural Livelihood Missions. NGOs require people to coordinate and manage projects and monitor and evaluate them. The corporate sector will offer roles across CSR projects and managing projects in rural areas. Banking and Microfinance offer roles in regional rural banks and in branches in rural areas.

I finished B.A. (Hons) Hindi in 2023 and teach at an NGO. I'm preparing for the SSC CPO exam. I worry that I might fall behind in my career. Aayushi

Dear Aayushi,
Leverage your Hindi expertise and look for content or copy writing roles in digital marketing agencies, news portals, ed-tech companies and marketing companies. Create a portfolio with samples of your writing in Hindi. Consider translation or subtitling in OTT platforms, media houses, publishing companies and other agencies. Platforms like Upwork and Fiverr have many translation gigs to build experience. Your experience at the NGO can also lead to a CSR job in a corporate or other NGOs. Beyond SSC CPO, try for the UPSC, State PSC Exams, Railway Recruitment Board,

and Staff Selection Commission exams for roles across various ministries. Banks also need candidates proficient in the local language, so attempt the banking exams. Be active on LinkedIn, Naukri.com, and Indeed.

I am doing B.Tech. Civil Engineering. I am from a lower-middle-class family and everyone expects me to prepare for the Civil Services. What are my other options? Sai Ganesh

Dear Sai,
Reflect and decide your action plan and then talk to your family about your path. For now, focus on your course, as it can lead to a good job via campus placement and allow you to address the financial pressure at home. Apart from considering jobs at core construction and infrastructure companies, also consider an MBA in Project Management from a good institute or a Master's in Public Policy from institutes such as IIM-Bangalore or TISS or a Master's in Urban Planning or Transportation Engineering. These are much in demand and will prepare you for high-level roles.

You can also consider jobs in PSUs such as ONGC, BHEL, or NTPC, for which you may need to take the GATE or their own exams. Also, look at taking State PSC Exams where the competition is less intense than the UPSC. Government Fellowship Programmes, like the Young Professional Fellowship or roles with NITI Aayog, are fixed-term roles that involve working directly with government ministries on key projects.

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 with the subject line Off the Edge.



J. Avaniija

In an age where Artificial Intelligence generates reports, robots perform surgeries, and algorithms shape the content people see, it might seem that the future of technology will depend entirely on engineering breakthroughs. Yet another truth is emerging: the most influential tech leaders will not only be skilled coders, engineers, or designers but also those who connect technology with human values, who understand not just how to build, but why, and for whom.

Essential skills
This shift toward human-centric leadership is essential. Challenges such as climate change, data privacy, digital inclusion, and algorithmic bias cannot be addressed by technical expertise alone. They require ethical judgment, empathy, cultural awareness, and a systems-level understanding of society, with these foundations effectively nurtured in the classroom.

For years, technology education in India has produced graduates with strong technical skills but has prioritised technical mastery over societal impact. Students are rewarded for correct answers instead of for asking the right questions and projects are judged mainly on functionality rather than broader consequences. As a result, innovations sometimes overlook negative outcomes. If an AI tool performs accurately but reinforces social bias, its harm outweighs its success. If a supply chain system cuts costs but increases carbon emissions, the long-term damage surpasses short-term gains. Strengthening technical education requires embedding ethical foresight, user empathy, and cross-disciplinary thinking as essential skills rather than treating them as optional.

Classrooms must evolve from centres of instruction into spaces that cultivate leadership alongside technical knowledge. This includes embedding ethics in technical subjects and en-

couraging real-world, community-focused projects. For example, an electronics assignment to design solar-powered devices for rural schools is a technical challenge that also teaches students to consider affordability, durability, and user needs. Cross-disciplinary learning is equally vital. Computer Science students must engage with subjects like Ethics, Economics, or Social Sciences as with algorithms.

Collaborative skills
Leadership is not just about managing projects; it is also about working effectively with people. Activities that develop teamwork, problem-solving, and communication skills equip students to lead in diverse and multicultural settings. Success in education is often measured through grades, campus placements, and starting salaries. While important, these metrics do not fully capture what makes a great leader. Collaborative achievements, long-term societal impact, and the ability to work across disci-

plines, cultures, and geographies must also be recognised and rewarded.

Achieving this requires stronger collaboration between industry and academia. Tech companies can mentor students on projects addressing real community challenges, such as AI-based crop monitoring for small farmers, affordable fintech solutions, or assistive technologies for people with disabilities. These experiences demonstrate that technology is not only about efficiency or profit, but also about enhancing well-being and opportunity.

With the world's largest youth population and a growing technology sector, India can influence the direction of global innovation. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 promotes interdisciplinary learning, critical thinking, and values-based education, but policies alone are not enough. Universities must create space for ethical debates, foster projects that connect science and humanities, and engage students with communities to develop real-world solutions. Such an approach benefits both society and business, as global markets increasingly value environmental and social responsibility. Global markets are placing greater emphasis on environmental and social responsibility. Future leaders who bring together empathy and foresight will not only navigate risks effectively but also identify opportunities that others might overlook.

The future of tech leadership depends not on technical skills alone, but on choices that prioritise people, the planet, and purpose. Educators, policymakers, and industry mentors must integrate ethics, sustainability, and values into learning so that responsible action starts in the classroom.

The writer is Professor, Department of Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning, School of Computing, Mohan Babu University, Tirupati.

