

# Enhancing prospects

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The tertiary education sector has been an area of both concern and focus lately. The implementation of the National Higher Education Mission and a greater awareness of our dismal performance in university world rankings has garnered a lot of attention and resulted in a renewed focus on uplifting the quality and reshaping the higher education landscape in the country. The role of education in shaping the lives of citizens and future of a nation is undebatable. The need to promote education at tertiary level should be the highest priority in a developing country like India. The recent US election is the biggest example of how economic prosperity at national level doesn't necessarily trickle down to individual citizens who are disillusioned by the lack of prospects owing to the lack of tertiary level education.

There is a direct relationship between economic condition of the individuals and their ability and motivation to pursue tertiary education. This relation also extends to individual's level of education and ability to enhance their economic prospects. If the majority of people are devoid of education beyond high schools, it is bound to skew their global outlook and instill a sense of insecurity in all span of life be it employment, education, health or a general sense of being. Protest rallies erupted across US soon after the elections results were announced when Donald Trump emerged to be the 45th president elect leading to many people taking to the streets of New York, Los Angeles, Chicago shouting slogans of "not my president", resulting in the arrest and even attack on many protestors.

It is interesting to note that many of these protestors were young people, pursuing tertiary education. While many reasons could be identified for the flabbergasting victory of the new president elect, an important clue lies in Trumps exclamation "I love the poorly educated". He received maximum backing over all from voters who only had a high school degree or lacked college education while most college graduates, over 50 per cent supported Hillary Clinton. A post-election analysis by Alec Tyson and Shiva Maniam indicated that, Trump received largest share of votes among whites without a college degree. His share was the largest among any candidate in exit polls since 1980.

The election results are a clear indicator of how education or the lack of it can render the most powerful nation powerless in securing its political destiny. The US elections offer the world this lesson and more than ever highlights the importance of educating the vote bearing masses. As a nation, while we strive towards economic prosperity marking a steady increase year after year, we also have to understand the repercussion of putting tertiary education on the backburner. For a developing country like ours tertiary education needs to be made both geographically and economically accessible.

The renewed political will towards upholding the cause of higher education reflected in the recent announcement by Prime Minister Narendra Modi asking the Indian Universities to aspire appear in the top 100 educational institution globally and offering special economic assistant to both public and private universities.

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