

Schooling System Accountabililty

What is the issue?

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- Holding teachers accountable for student test scores enhancing is being vigorously advocated.

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- While test scores are not the only parameter for quality education, neither are teachers the only stakeholders responsible.

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What are the findings of UNESCO?

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- Ensuring inclusive and quality education for all, and to promote lifelong learning is one of UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

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- As part of that effort, UNESCO's new Global Education Monitoring Report 2017/18 made a comprehensive analysis in global education systems.

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- The report points out that providing quality education depends on many stakeholders.

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- Governments, schools, teachers, parents, media and civil society, international organisations and the private sector - all have a shared responsibility.

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Why is test scores oriented approach bad?

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- Using test scores as landmarks is also a bad idea as, 'teaching to test' might become the norm.

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- Teaching to the test is bad way as scores by themselves are an inadequate way of assessing the complex process of learning.

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- Such exclusive focus on test scores has the risk of leaving weaker students behind.

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- It also leaves academically better-performing students with a narrow understanding of what education is all about.

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Are teachers the main cause for underperformance?

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- Teachers are one of the many stakeholders, they tend to be disproportionately targeted for systemic underperformance.

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- It is both unfair and short-sighted to target teachers as the primary reason for poor test scores.

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- While teacher absence, is indeed a problem, very often the reasons for this are beyond the teacher's own control.

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- The overall percentage of teachers not in school was estimated at 18.5% by Azim Premji Foundation.

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- But most of these were due to other official duties or on bonafide leave and absenteeism due to bunking was a mere 2.5%.

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- Hence the larger problem is one of teacher shortage needs to be fixed first.

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Source: The Hindu

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