

2020-2021 Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching Research Program for U.S. Teachers (Fulbright DA)

India Country Profile

Partner organization: [United States-India Educational Foundation \(USIEF\)](#)

Eligible program dates: August through December

Host institution: USIEF will coordinate with the selected Fulbright DA fellow on host institution placement.

Language requirement: No requirement

Dependent Information: An allowance of \$2,000 per eligible dependent will be provided as part of the Fulbright DA grant. In addition, the Fulbright DA program will reimburse up to \$5,000 per child or \$10,000 per family for dependent school tuition, if necessary. USIEF will provide administrative support to the Fulbright DA fellow and their dependents for procuring appropriate visas and assist with local logistics upon arrival in India.



Country Overview

India is the world's largest democracy, with a vibrant and growing economy, rich history, kaleidoscopic diversity, and an enormous appetite for education. Its education system continues to expand at a rapid pace. India attracts faculty and students to study, teach and conduct research, its expertise extending beyond the technical and business fields to nearly all academic disciplines.

Educational System Overview

Introduction

In India, the federal government has played a key role in formulating national policies for educational development and regulates selected aspects of education throughout India. The federal Ministry of Human Resource and Development through the Department of School Education and Literacy is responsible for formulating policies on secondary education in India.

Secondary Education Scenario in India

The [2011 census data](#) reveals an overall literacy rate of 64.8 percent in India. This number is found to be lower among women and in rural areas. Also, there is a striking regional variation with a high literacy rate of 90.9 percent in Kerala to a low 47.0 percent in Bihar. The variations in the learning rate within the country are an indication of the complexities of the education scenario.



Resources

- *Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE)*, www.cbse.nic.in: The Central Board of Secondary Education was set up to achieve certain interlinked objectives to:
 - prescribe conditions of examinations and conduct public examinations at the end of Class X and XII. To grant qualifying certificates to successful candidates of the affiliated schools.
 - fulfill the educational requirements of those students whose parents were employed in transferable jobs.
 - prescribe and update the courses of instructions for examinations.
 - affiliate institutions for the purpose of examination and raise the academic standards of the country.
- *Council of Indian School Certificate Examinations*, www.cisce.org: The Council has been constituted to secure suitable representation of governments responsible for schools (which are affiliated to it) in their states/territories; the Inter-State Board for Anglo-Indian Education; the Association of Indian Universities; the Association of Head of Anglo-Indian Schools, the Indian Public School Conference; the Association of Schools for the ISC Examination and eminent educationists.
- *National Institute of Open Schooling*, www.nios.ac.in: The National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) formerly known as National Open School (NOS) was established as an autonomous institution under the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India in 1989. NIOS mainly caters to the educational needs of the out of school children in general and those belonging to school drop-outs and socially and economically underserved section of the learner population.
- *Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan*, www.kvsangathan.nic.in: The Kendriya Vidyalayas have a four-fold mission to:
 - Cater to the educational needs of children of transferable Central government including defense and para-military personnel by providing a common program of education;
 - Pursue excellence and set the pace in the field of school education;
 - Initiate and promote experimentation and innovations in education in collaboration with other bodies like the CBSE and NCERT;
 - Develop the spirit of national integration and create a sense of "Indianness" among children.
- *Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti*, www.nvshq.org: The Navodaya Vidyalayas were established with the objectives to:
 - Provide good quality modern education to talented children predominantly from the rural areas, without regard to their family's socio-economic condition.



- Ensure that all students of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas attain a reasonable level of competence in three languages as envisaged in the Three Language Formula (English, Hindi and the local language of a state).
- Serve in each district, as focal points for improvements in quality of school education in general through sharing of experiences and facilities.

Along with these, each state has its own education board to conduct examinations. A lot of effort is being put into improving the country's examination system, which has been termed draconian and stress-inducing. For instance, the CBSE has introduced the Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) to help in improving students' performance by identifying their learning difficulties at regular time intervals.

In addition, there are other issues that beset the education system in the country, such as the prevalence of instructional methods that promote rote-learning, teacher absenteeism, poor infrastructure and inequality in education. At the same time, Indian classrooms offer a unique opportunity to deal with challenges like diversity, first-generation learners and large class-size.

For more information on Indian education, please visit the websites of the following organizations:

- Ministry of Human Resource Development, www.mhrd.gov.in
- National Council of Education Research and Training (NCERT), www.ncert.nic.in
- National Council of Teacher Education (NCTE), www.ncte-india.org

Possible topics of interest to U.S. educators:

Though India has made substantial progress in school education, still there are several challenges that the country needs to overcome to improve the quality of school education. The primary and secondary education phases are critical stages in the education pyramid that feeds into the higher education arena and lay the foundation for a trained workforce.

Though the passage of the "Right to Education Act (2010)" has recognized the importance of education as a fundamental right and has helped in increasing enrollment rates, its impact on learning outcome has been insignificant. The act focuses more on inputs, such as infrastructure, teacher qualifications, standardized textbooks, curricula, etc. more than on important outcomes such as the quality of education.

There are several issues that deserve attention in the primary and secondary education sphere, some of which may be of specific interest to Fulbright DA fellows. First, it is important to improve teacher performance in India's schools by introducing them to new skills which can be implemented in classroom. An inquiry project that examines how innovative teaching methods are introduced, improved, and scaled will be very relevant.



Second, India is trying to improve its education systems by utilizing evaluation. A research project could compare and contrast global understandings of evaluation practice and evaluation's relationship to fostering educational change.

Third, the use of technology in the teaching and learning process is another area that has been prioritized for immediate intervention in the Indian education system. In India, there is usage of technology in classrooms, but these are limited to schools that are well resourced. A research project that investigates how technology can be used to improve learning outcomes, both subject specific and in the broader context, will be welcome.

Fourth, promoting the learning of STEM subjects especially among girl students is a challenge. A project could explore how Indian educators make STEM education interesting and accessible for girl students.

Fifth, the government of India has taken several initiatives to strengthen inclusive education at the school level. Action Plan for Children and Youth with Disabilities (2005), National Policy for People with Disabilities (2006), Inclusive Education of the Disabled at Secondary Stage (2008), and passage of the Right to Education Act (2010) are a few steps in this regard. However, a large section of children with special needs and learning disability are secluded and discriminated against. A research project could identify the issues and challenges of inclusive education in India and consider some transferrable best practices.

Other challenges such as teaching English as a second language and using child centered teaching approaches are of the utmost importance in the context of India, so research projects could consider these topics as well. The next decade will be crucial for India and resources will have to be used judiciously. If we strengthen our primary education system and ensure adequate literacy and numeracy skills, India and its children will come to reap the benefits.

Other Educational Resources:

Draft National Education Policy 2019

<https://innovate.mygov.in/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/mygov15596510111.pdf>

Annual Status Of Education Report 2014

<http://www.asercentre.org/Keywords/p/234.html>

National Council of Educational Research and Training (Survey Reports)

http://www.ncert.nic.in/programmes/education_survey/Education_survey.html

Ministry of Human Resource Development

<http://mhrd.gov.in/school-education>

