



Mains Practice Question

Q. Examine the challenges faced by India's education system in providing quality education to all its citizens. (250 Words)

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Approach

- Start your answer by briefly stating the present data facts related to education in India.
- Discuss various challenges faced by India's education system.
- Conclude by suggesting measures to improve the education system in India.

Introduction

- Education is an essential tool for the growth and development of a country. It plays a critical role in building a strong and prosperous society. However, India, being a developing country, faces numerous challenges in providing quality education to all its citizens.
 - According to UNESCO, India has the highest number of children out of school globally, with an **estimated 17 million children between the ages of 6-14 still out of school.**

Body

- **Challenges Faced by India's Education System:**
 - **Inadequate infrastructure:** One of the major challenges faced by India's education system is the inadequate infrastructure. Most of the schools in rural areas **lack basic facilities such as proper classrooms, furniture, and clean drinking water.** This creates a hostile environment for students and affects their learning outcomes.
 - As per survey conducted by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) in 2016 found that around **30% of schools in India do not have separate toilets for girls.**
 - **Shortage of trained teachers:** Another significant challenge is the shortage of trained teachers in India. Many schools in rural areas **do not have enough qualified teachers to teach subjects such as science and mathematics,** which are critical for the students' future.
 - **Quality of education:** Although India has made significant progress in improving access to education, the quality of education is still a significant challenge. Many schools in India focus on rote learning, and the curriculum does not include life skills and practical knowledge.
 - In a survey conducted by the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO), it was found that **around 43% of students in rural India and 34% of students in urban India cannot read and write simple sentences in their language.**
 - **Low enrollment rate:** Despite the government's efforts to improve access to education, the enrollment rate in schools in India is still low, particularly for girls.
 - According to a report by the MHRD, the **gross enrollment ratio (GER) in higher education in India is only 26.3%,** which is lower than the average GER of developing countries (36%).
 - **Inequality in education:** Inequality in education is another significant challenge faced by

India's education system.

- Students from marginalized communities such as **Dalits and tribal communities face discrimination** and are not provided with the same opportunities as students from privileged backgrounds.
 - According to a study conducted by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), students from marginalized communities face discrimination and are **often subjected to physical and verbal abuse in schools**.
- **Technological Divide:** The digital divide is another challenge faced by India's education system. While the use of technology can enhance the quality of education, many **students in rural areas do not have access to computers and the internet**.

Conclusion

▪ Measures to Improve the Education System in India:

- **Increase Government Spending on Education:** The government needs to increase its spending on education to ensure that all children have access to quality education.
 - This will involve **increasing the budget allocation for education** and ensuring that the funds are used effectively to improve the quality of education.
- **Improve Teacher Training and Salaries:** To address the shortage of qualified teachers, the government needs to provide better training and support for teachers.
 - Additionally, teacher salaries should be increased to motivate and retain qualified teachers.
- **Expand Access to Education:** To expand access to education, the government needs to **improve infrastructure in rural areas and ensure that all children have access to schools**.
 - This can be achieved by building more schools and **improving transport infrastructure to ensure that children can travel to school** safely.
- **Focus on Quality of Education:** To improve the quality of education, the government needs to shift its focus from rote learning to experiential learning, critical thinking, and holistic development of students.
 - This can be achieved by **incorporating more practical and hands-on learning experiences into the curriculum**.
- **Address Gender Inequality:** To address gender inequality in education, the government needs to provide incentives for families to send their daughters to school.
 - Additionally, the government needs to ensure that there are adequate facilities for girls in schools, such as separate toilets and changing rooms.
- **Promote the Use of Technology:** To bridge the technological divide in education, the government needs to promote the use of technology in schools.
 - This can be achieved by **providing computers and internet access to schools in rural areas** and training teachers on how to incorporate technology into the curriculum.