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*Celebrating 10 Years*

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## Questioning The Essence of Learning

### **Dr. Stanzin Dawa**

Principal, Lamdon Model Senior Secondary School,  
Leh Ladakh

Is The Time Ripe  
For Indian Education  
To Go Global?

Unraveling ADHD  
Part 2

Universal Design  
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## Does Empathy Make Us Strong?

### ■ RASHMI MARIAN FURTADO

Senior Editor, TeacherTribe.world

The year has only begun, and I have learnt arguably one of the biggest lessons of my life. I was involved in a project where I had to interact with school students in a large number. These kids were my teachers and the lesson they taught me was of empathy. I am an empathetic individual myself, but I have struggled with it, as I sometimes believed it made me weaker. The recent experience with the school students, made me realise empathy is strength. I only needed to grow up a little to realise its strength.



If you are a fan of X-Men, the fictional group of mutants with certain special gifts, you'll understand the reference of Professor X or Jean who could read others' thoughts and understand their exact emotion. Empathy is that special gift or superpower that we humans have. Understanding what the other person is going through or being in their shoes does not make us weaker. It only makes us stronger.

Practising empathy on an everyday basis opens our minds and helps us understand different perspectives and experiences. This helps us become better problem solvers, as it provides us with a deeper understanding. Empathy ensures us to go beyond our biases, which allows us to find solutions that maybe way more inclusive.

Empathy is also a key component of leadership. People are always drawn to leaders with empathy than to leaders who lack them.

Empathy helps build a work environment and culture where everyone feels valued and motivated. Empathetic leaders inspire trust and loyalty.




Most of all, empathy helps us become better humans. It helps us connect with each other at a deeper level. It just takes a little bit of empathy to understand and connect with each other irrespective of the age. It just takes a bit of empathy to help find solutions and to create a compassionate society. It was the school students I worked with, who taught me this important lesson, which I'll value forever.

Empathy has its own benefits but most of all, it teaches us to respect each other, grow stronger, be sure of what we are and what we want to do. So, this year, let's remind ourselves to be more empathetic towards each other. Here is a famous quote by Henry Ford, "If there is any one secret of success, it lies in the ability to get the other person's point of view and see things from his angle as well as your own."

Time to make empathy our superpower. ■

**Yours Positively!**



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# Is The Time Ripe For Indian Education To Go Global?

## ■ G. BALASUBRAMANIAN

*G. Balasubramanian is a doyen of school education in India. He has held several positions of leadership at CBSE, including Director Academics. He was the brain behind the introduction of several innovations at CBSE, which included frontline curriculum, communicative approach to language teaching, Information Technology, alternatives to homework, etc. He is also an author, poet and a sought-after speaker at educational conferences world over.*

*This article has been taken from G. Balasubramanian's LinkedIn Page.*



For the last two decades, I have held the view that the Indian education system has all the potential to go global. More so, I believe this is the right time for Indian education to redefine its perspectives and scale new peaks in education. If India could become a leader in communications technology, space technology, pharma industries, agriculture and stand the test of time in financial crises, there is no reason why it cannot reinvent itself in education.

Two major factors that have been hindering our growth have been - the mindset and the infrastructure. The idea 'the other side is greener' has impacted our mindset terribly and we have been enjoying and celebrating a sense of inferiority. Unfortunately, the comfort level we have been enjoying with this celebration has played negatively, without educational operatives. With my limited experience and interactions with the school education systems in a few other countries, I have felt

that we have enough potential to lead, provided we could address some critical issues relating to education. The presence of Indian schools in different countries to meet the needs of the Indian diaspora, and most recently the efforts to establish the units of the prime Indian higher education institutes in some countries, show that we have a place, a market and a global opportunity. Unfortunately, even our leading national educational agencies have found comfort levels in meeting exigencies rather than addressing the vital needs of preparing for a global leadership.

In many countries, their educational advances have been on well-articulated commercial prescriptions rather than inclusive and core growth elements. If they have some, there is no reason why we did not have them; rather why we did not let those growth elements demonstrate their power in our environment. A few attempts by some boards to position the international curriculum were very methodically silenced by power players who could not take the load or credit of doing things better.

Given the current opportunities with the global positioning of India as a developing nation committed to become a developed nation in a specified time, it is important to understand the steps to be taken for the Indian education system to go global.

## 1. Policies need to be accommodative.

While the basics of educational policies need to be locally sensitive, it must provide elements that would nurture and empower the global learners and learning communities to feel their relevance in the system. Thus, keeping the universe of the curriculum globally relevant and competitive, opportunities should be given for differentiated methods, approaches and gateways to learn and get certified. With technology being a great promoter of human needs and operations, this possibility cannot be ruled out. Neither language nor content are a threat to global accommodation,

especially for a country that accommodates nearly thirty languages and more. The current NEP has enough strength to deal with this issue.

## 2. Institutions need to be sanitised.

Institutions, both at the higher and the secondary levels, need to be sanitised from politics and intervention of the local players. The wisdom of the learned must be acknowledged, appreciated and understood in so far as they have no conflict with the fundamental constitutional requirements. 'Education for all' and 'quality secondary education for all,' are no threats to growth of enterprise, opportunities, performance and talent. Institutional management needs to be defined on quality issues rather than exhibition of authority by power mongers. While financial growth of institutions needs to be a key concern, commercialisation and exploitation must be eradicated.

## 3. Teacher Quality

Teacher quality, both at the school and the collegiate level, is becoming a matter of concern increasingly. While in most cases, their degrees should not be questioned, they need to be trained to think differently, intelligently, inclusively and intellectually. Thought dynamics of the teachers and the taught are essential to problem solving. With more focus on dealing with key current issues from different perspectives, teachers need to be given more freedom to deal with knowledge in context than textual materials. Professional audit of teachers to mentor them must be in place. The fact that teacher quality is a concern should not be a roadblock for opening the gateways of Indian education to global markets. The evidence of many Indian teachers working abroad both at the school level and at the university level is an indicator that the possibilities do exist.

## 4. Infrastructure development

Many educational institutions in the country have the ambience for

international accommodation. Similarly, they also have the wherewithal to reach out to other countries to highlight their learning dynamics. Unfortunately, the infrastructure in several institutions is either underutilised or used inappropriately. The investment infrastructure in such cases show low productivity. Resource and infrastructure management in schools must be addressed to open more avenues for providing current, relevant, skill-based courses. As such, India is a treasure house of art, sculpture and other forms of cultural heritage. They should attract the global population for study and development. Hierarchical, autocratic approaches to knowledge capsules should give way to more access-based, research-oriented learning.

## 5. Mindset to lead

With a colonial mindset over a century, our belief systems have been impacted significantly. The idea of a poor country, the projection of a superiority syndrome about things from the west, the marginalisation of the oriental culture and a few other indigenous issues have been used to create a defeatist mentality. It appears that the time is ripe to recover. As Norman Cousins points out, “Drugs are always not necessary, but the belief in recovery is.” It is time to acknowledge the intellectual and cultural wealth of the country in different dimensions and let the country develop not only in infrastructure and business, but in quality education also.

Max Mullar once said, “If I were asked under what sky the human mind has most fully developed some of its choicest gifts, has most deeply pondered on the greatest problems of life, and has found solutions, I should point to India.” And like Max Muller, many international scholars have recorded their admiration for India for her intellectual wealth and inclusive culture. I think our education system has contributed to such views from time immemorial. Is there an opportunity again to attempt for global leadership? ■



## Questioning The Essence of Learning

### ■ Dr. Stanzin Dawa

*Principal, Lamdon Model Senior Secondary School,  
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*Dr. Stanzin has over two decades of experience in the development and education sector. He is a trainer, mentor and development professional. Before his association with Lamdon Model Senior Secondary School, he has worked with a broad range of national and international organisations in different capacities. He served as Assistant Director of Programmes, British Council India, Regional Director of Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development, Programme Manager of the Commonwealth Secretariat, Programme Manager of Family Health International (FHI), and Programme and Advocacy Officer of International HIV/AIDS Alliance.*

*Over his career, he has designed and managed multifaceted projects and provided technical assistance in a range of areas to government and non-government organisations: policy, programmes management, scaling up, capacity building, advocacy, knowledge management, community mobilisation, strategic planning, partnership management, resource mobilisation, participatory learning appraisal (PLA) and institutional development.*

*Dr. Stanzin holds a Ph.D. in Gender and HIV, Master's Degree in Peace Studies, Master's Degree in Sociology and PG Diploma in Health. He is also a University Gold Medallist for academic excellence.*

In the journey of education and personal growth, one fundamental trait stands out as a beacon of continuous improvement: the ability and willingness to ask questions. No question is a stupid question. It's often said that no student becomes a failure until they stop asking questions. This simple yet profound idea underscores the importance of curiosity, inquiry and a thirst for knowledge in a student's life.

Asking questions is the very essence of learning. It's the process by which we explore the unknown, seek answers and deepen our understanding. When a student stops asking questions, they inadvertently halt their intellectual growth. Here are some key points that highlight the significance of this fundamental practice:

**The Gateway to Understanding:** Questions serve as the gateway to understanding. When we ask questions, we express our curiosity and a desire to comprehend a subject. It is through questions that we unravel complex ideas and concepts, making them more accessible. A good teacher should be happy if the students are asking questions. It is a testimony to the students' trust and confidence in the teacher's competency. A student should not expect the teachers will have all the answers to their questions. Similarly, teachers should not pretend to have all the answers. The best way to answer a question you 'Don't Know' is simply to acknowledge it, work on it later, and answer in this way you can sustain the trust of the students.

**Critical Thinking:** Questioning encourages critical thinking. It prompts us to analyse, evaluate and synthesise information. By posing questions, students develop the ability to think critically, which is a crucial skill in today's knowledge-driven 21<sup>st</sup> century world.

**Active Engagement:** Asking questions actively engages the mind. It turns passive learning into an interactive process. Engaged students are more likely to remember and apply what they've learned, leading to greater academic success.

**Problem Solving:** Questions are often the first step in problem-solving. They guide us in identifying issues, exploring solutions and making informed decisions. Students who ask questions are better equipped to tackle challenges.

**Continuous Learning:** The pursuit of knowledge is a lifelong journey. Students who keep asking questions not only excel in their current studies, but also develop a mindset that values continuous learning, a quality that's highly sought after in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**Confidence Building:** By asking questions, students demonstrate their active participation in their education. This not only builds confidence in their own abilities but also showcases their commitment to their academic journey.

**Open Communication:** A culture of questioning fosters open communication between students and teachers. It creates a supportive environment where doubts are addressed and knowledge is shared, enhancing the overall learning experience.

In conclusion, the idea that 'no student becomes a failure until they stop asking questions,' highlights the crucial role of curiosity and inquiry in a student's life. Embracing the art of questioning not only leads to academic success but also nurtures essential life skills, such as critical thinking, problem-solving and continuous learning. As students continue to ask questions, they embark on a journey of exploration, growth and empowerment, ensuring a bright and successful future in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and beyond. ■

# Unraveling ADHD

## Part - 2

### ■ Dr.Nandini Mundkur

*MD. Developmental Paediatrician*

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*Dr. Nandini Mundkur is a developmental paediatrician based in Bangalore with specialisation in developmental disorder in young children, namely attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), autism, learning difficulty and behavioural problems. Dr. Mundkur has been in practice for over 3 decades and is considered the pioneer to develop this specialty for the Indian Academy of Paediatrics (IAP) and was the founder member of the childhood disability group of IAP.*



*She has developed an assessment kit for early diagnosis of developmental disabilities in children for paediatricians called the 'NM early intervention diagnostic profile', which is widely used in the practices by many.*

*Dr. Mundkur is the director of CCDD, which is a referral centre for developmental disorders. It has wide based referrals from south Asian regions like Maldives, Bangladesh, Nepal, Dubai and Sri Lanka, besides India. The centre has over 50 children in therapy and seen average of 400 new children per year. Dr. Munkur is also the director of International Children's Peace council which works on socio emotional learning in children.*

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### How can I diagnose ADHD?

When symptoms mentioned in the previous article are present, you need to see a developmental paediatrician or a clinical psychologist for a

diagnosis and also assess for what the deficit in the executive functions are.

## How Can ADHD Be Managed?

For children with ADHD younger than 6 years of age, the American Academy of Paediatrics (AAP) recommends parent training in behaviour management as the first line of treatment, before medication is tried. For children above 6 years, combination of both medications and behaviour management is recommended. Children above 6 years do well with medication along with behavioural management.

Considering the aforementioned factors related to ADHD, it is essential to implement behaviour management strategies, also known as accommodations, tailored to the individual child's needs. These accommodations should be applied across various settings, with a specific focus on monitoring and supporting working memory, executive function and emotional regulation.

The following are some accommodation techniques in various settings, which can be applied in children with ADHD.

### Home Accommodation Technique

- 1. Establish Consistent Routines:** Establishing daily routines can provide structure and predictability for children with ADHD. Consistency helps them know what to expect, reducing anxiety and improving focus.
- 2. Promote Organisation:** Teach and encourage organisational skills, such as using colour-coded folders, calendars, and labels to keep belongings and materials in order.
- 3. Use Timers and Alarms:** Use timers or alarms to help your child

manage time efficiently. Timers can be helpful for setting specific time limits for tasks or activities.

- 4. Use Visual Schedules:** Implement visual schedules or checklists to help your child manage their daily activities, chores and routines. Visual aids are effective in enhancing organisation and time management.
- 5. Implement Behaviour Charts:** Use behaviour charts to reinforce positive behaviours and track progress. Reward your child for meeting specific goals or completing tasks.
- 6. Encourage Physical Activity:** Encourage regular physical activity and outdoor play to help children with ADHD release excess energy and improve focus.
- 7. Offer Positive Reinforcement:** Praise and reward your child's efforts and accomplishments. Positive reinforcement encourages positive behaviours and boosts self-esteem.
- 8. Provide Encouragement and Support:** Be patient and understanding with your child. Offer encouragement and support as they work on managing their ADHD-related challenges.

## Classroom Accommodation Techniques

- 1. Seating Arrangement:** Place the child with ADHD in a location with fewer distractions. Preferably, position them near the teacher, whiteboard or away from windows and doors, to minimise visual distractions.
- 2. Visual Aids:** Use visual aids such as charts, diagrams and graphic organisers to support learning and improve attention. Visual cues

help reinforce instructions and provide a clear structure for assignments.

- 3. Clear Instructions:** Deliver instructions in a concise and straightforward manner. Break tasks into smaller steps and repeat or write down important information to aid memory retention.
- 4. Shortened Assignments:** Modify assignments, if possible, by reducing the length or complexity, allowing the child to complete them more successfully and with less frustration.
- 5. Frequent Breaks:** Incorporate short breaks or movement activities throughout the day. This can help the child release excess energy and refocus their attention during class.
- 6. Quiet Spaces:** Designate a quiet area in the classroom where the child can go to take a break or regroup when feeling overwhelmed.
- 7. Buddy System:** Pair the child with a responsible and empathetic peer who can offer support and reminders when needed.
- 8. Movement Opportunities:** Incorporate movement-based learning activities to engage the child and cater to their need for physical activity.

## Social Setting Accommodation

- 1. Social Skills Training:** Provide social skills training to help children with ADHD. Develop appropriate social behaviours, such as active listening, turn-taking and maintaining eye contact.
- 2. Group Activities:** Engage children with ADHD in group activities or clubs that align with their interests. This can foster social connections with peers who share similar hobbies or passions.

- 3. Structured Play:** Encourage structured play with clear rules and guidelines to help children with ADHD understand the expectations and participate more confidently.
- 4. Role-Playing:** Use role-playing scenarios to practice social interactions and problem-solving. This can help children with ADHD build confidence in real-life situations.
- 5. Peer Education:** Educate peers about ADHD and its challenges, promoting empathy and understanding in social interactions.

## Digital Accommodation

Technology can play a significant role in enhancing functioning in children with ADHD. Here are some ways technology can be used to support children with ADHD:

- 1. Organisation Tools:** App like Habitica, Trello and Epic Win can assist with creating to-do lists, setting reminders and breaking down tasks into smaller steps.
- 2. Home Automation:** Smart home technologies can simplify daily routines and provide structure for children with ADHD. For instance, voice-controlled devices like Amazon Alexa or Google Assistant can help.
- 3. Visual Timers and Alarms:** Time Timer is a visual timer app that displays time remaining with a coloured visual representation, making it easier for children with ADHD to understand the passing of time.
- 4. Focus-Enhancing Tools:** Apps like Freedom, SelfControl, Cold Turkey and Forest: stay focused can limit access to distracting websites or applications during homework time or study sessions. Additionally,



noise-cancelling headphones can help create a conducive learning environment.

- 5. Note-taking Apps:** Notability is a note-taking app that allows children to create, organise and annotate notes. Assistive writing tools like speech-to-text software or word prediction programs can alleviate some of these challenges. Examples of such tools include Dragon NaturallySpeaking, Co:Writer or WordQ
- 6. Interactive Learning Resources:** Many educational platforms, such as Khan Academy Kids, Duolingo and National Geographic Kids, offer interactive and personalised learning content.
- 7. Mindfulness and Relaxation Techniques:** There are numerous apps like Headspace, Calm or Happify that provide age-appropriate mindfulness activities tailored specifically for children.
- 8. Audio books and text-to-speech:** Listening to audiobooks or using text-to-speech software can help kids focus better on reading content if they struggle with reading comprehension.

## Improving Self-confidence, Self-esteem And Emotional Regulation

- 1. Recognise Efforts:** Acknowledge and praise their efforts, no matter how small. Celebrate their achievements and progress, reinforcing a positive sense of accomplishment.
- 2. Focus on Strengths:** Identify and highlight their strengths and unique qualities. Encourage them to use these strengths to their advantage.
- 3. Set Realistic Goals:** Work with your child to set achievable goals. Break larger tasks into smaller steps and celebrate each milestone achieved.

4. **Encourage Independence:** Provide opportunities for them to make choices and decisions independently. This fosters a sense of autonomy and builds self-confidence.
5. **Engage in Skill-Building Activities:** Encourage participation in activities they enjoy and excel at. Engaging in hobbies or interests can enhance self-esteem.
6. **Celebrate Uniqueness:** Emphasise that everyone is unique and that differences are something to be celebrated rather than criticised.
7. **Teach Coping Strategies:** Introduce coping strategies such as taking deep breaths, counting to ten or taking short breaks when feeling overwhelmed.
8. **Practice Mindfulness:** Introduce mindfulness exercises, such as focused breathing or body scans, to help children stay present and manage emotional reactions.
9. **Use Art or Journaling:** Encourage children to express their emotions through art or journaling. This creative outlet can help them process feelings and gain insight into their emotions.
10. **Model Emotional Regulation (for parents):** Demonstrate emotional regulation yourself. Be a positive role model for your child in managing emotions constructively. ■

## Universal Design for Learning (UDL): Accessible Learning for All

■ **Mamta Verma**  
*Educator, Texas, USA*

*Mamta Verma, M.A., M. Ed., is a dedicated educator with almost 30 years of experience as an instructional coach and guidance & career counsellor, currently serving as a District Special Education Administrator in public education in the USA.*



*Mamta is also an accomplished Universal Design for Learning (UDL) presenter on an international level. She has advocated for UDL as a district leader by designing and delivering professional learning and laying the groundwork for systemic implementation. Her primary goal is to eliminate curriculum barriers and introduce UDL strategies, enabling all learners to become 'Expert Learners'.*

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is an educational framework that emphasises on inclusivity, equity and flexible learning experiences for all students. UDL provides multiple means of representation, engagement and expression by removing barriers to learning and ensures that diverse learners can access and engage with the curriculum effectively. The purpose of UDL is to recognise the unique strengths and barriers of individual students and seeks to create an environment where all learners can thrive and succeed.

## Definition and Overview

UDL is an educational framework that aims to make learning accessible to all students, regardless of their individual differences, abilities or learning styles. It is based on the concept of ‘universal design’, which originally emerged in architecture and product design, seeking to create environments and products usable by the widest range of people possible without the need for adaptation or specialised design. In the context of education, UDL focuses on designing flexible learning experiences and instructional materials to meet the needs of diverse learners. UDL empowers educators to design learning experiences by keeping anticipated barriers in consideration. It emphasises on proactive planning to ensure that barriers to learning are minimised upfront, rather than relying on retrofitting accommodations for specific students later. In other words, UDL is a proactive approach not a reactive one.

The concept of UDL was first introduced by architect Ronald Mace in the 1980s, as he sought to create environments accessible to individuals with disabilities. In the early 1990s, the Center for Universal Design at North Carolina State University further expanded the concept to various disciplines, including education.

## Principles of UDL

**A. Multiple means of representation** - This principle focuses on providing information and content in various formats to cater to diverse learners. It recognises that students have different learning preferences and abilities, and by offering content in multiple ways, educators can enhance comprehension and accessibility. Examples of multiple means of representation include using text, images, videos, audio, diagrams and hands-on activities to present information.

**B. Multiple means of engagement** - This principle aims to motivate and engage learners by offering various options for learning activities and ways to maintain interest and curiosity. Different students may be motivated by different aspects of learning and UDL seeks to tap into those individual motivations. Providing choices in assignments, topics and activities can help students become more engaged in their learning process, leading to better outcomes and enjoyment of the learning journey.

**C. Multiple means of expression** - This principle focuses on enabling students to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding in various ways. It recognises that learners have diverse strengths and preferences for communicating their ideas. UDL encourages flexibility in assessment methods, allowing students to express themselves through writing, presentations, discussions, visual arts or other creative means. By providing multiple avenues for expression, students can better showcase their knowledge and skills, irrespective of their learning differences.

## Benefits of UDL for Accessible Learning:

**A. Inclusive education for diverse learners** - UDL promotes an inclusive learning environment where all students, regardless of their abilities, backgrounds or learning styles, can fully participate in the educational process. By providing multiple means of representation, engagement and expression, UDL ensures that diverse learners have equal opportunities to access and engage with the curriculum. This fosters a sense of belonging and reduces stigmatisation, creating a more positive and supportive learning community for all students.

**B. Personalised learning experiences** - UDL recognises that every student is unique and learns in different ways. By offering multiple pathways to learning, UDL allows educators to tailor instruction to meet individual needs and preferences. Students can choose the methods that

work best for them, leading to a more personalised and meaningful learning experience. This personalised approach can enhance students' self-awareness, self-efficacy and overall motivation to learn.

**C. Reducing barriers and promoting accessibility** - Traditional educational materials and approaches can present barriers for some students, especially those with disabilities. UDL aims to remove these barriers by proactively designing accessible content and instructional strategies from the outset. By incorporating various formats, multimedia and interactive elements, UDL ensures that information is more easily understandable and navigable for all learners, including those with diverse learning needs.

**D. Supporting students with disabilities** - UDL provides an inclusive framework that supports students with disabilities, enabling them to participate fully in the learning process alongside their peers. By offering multiple means of representation, engagement and expression, UDL accommodates diverse learning abilities, allowing students with disabilities to access the curriculum and demonstrate their knowledge in ways that align with their strengths. This approach fosters a sense of equity and empowerment for students with disabilities, promoting their academic and social success.

Universal Design for Learning creates a positive and supportive learning community that values diversity and maximises each student's potential for learning and growth. ■

# Healthcare Advancements in India: A Decade of Progress and Future Prospects

## ■ Dr. Vivek Baliga

Cardiologist and Consultant Physician

*Dr. Vivek Baliga B. is a consultant physician and cardiologist, and director of Baliga Diagnostics in Bengaluru. He is a keen advocate of patient education and loves to blog about all things health-related. Learn more about him at [drvivekbaliga.com](http://drvivekbaliga.com).*



India has witnessed significant advancements in its healthcare sector over the last decade, transforming the landscape of medical services and improving the well-being of its population. A combination of technological innovations, policy reforms, increased investments and enhanced accessibility has paved the way for a remarkable healthcare revolution. This article explores the key developments in Indian healthcare over the past ten years and highlights the potential future advancements that lie ahead.

## Healthcare Advances in India: The Last Decade

### Technological Innovations

The last decade witnessed a rapid integration of technology into the Indian healthcare system. Electronic Health Records (EHRs), telemedicine, mobile health applications and digital diagnostics have gained significant momentum. These advancements have enhanced patient care, facilitated remote consultations, enabled efficient health

data management and increased access to healthcare services in remote areas.

## Infrastructure Development

India has witnessed substantial growth in healthcare infrastructure, including the establishment of new hospitals, medical colleges and research institutions. The expansion of healthcare facilities, especially in rural areas, has improved accessibility and reduced the burden on urban centers. Additionally, the growth of specialised centers, such as cancer institutes and cardiac hospitals, has improved disease-specific care.

## Government Initiatives

The Indian government has implemented several healthcare initiatives to promote affordable and accessible healthcare. The National Health Mission (NHM), Ayushman Bharat – Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY) and National Digital Health Mission (NDHM) are notable examples. These initiatives focus on providing healthcare services to the underserved population, reducing out-of-pocket expenses and integrating digital health infrastructure.

## Pharmaceutical and Biotechnology Advancements

India has emerged as a global hub for pharmaceutical manufacturing and research. The last decade witnessed significant growth in the development of generic drugs, biosimilars and the establishment of research and development centers. These advancements have improved the availability and affordability of essential medicines, benefiting both the domestic and international populations.

## Awareness and Prevention

With a focus on preventive healthcare, there has been a notable increase in health awareness campaigns and initiatives promoting healthy lifestyles. Public health programs have addressed critical issues such as vaccination drives, maternal and child health and non-communicable disease prevention.



The emphasis on preventive measures has helped reduce the disease burden and improve overall population health.

## Future Prospects

### Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Data Analytics

The coming decade holds immense potential for the integration of AI and data analytics in healthcare. Machine learning algorithms can aid in early disease diagnosis, personalised treatment plans and predictive analytics for epidemics. AI-driven chatbots and virtual assistants can enhance patient engagement and streamline healthcare delivery.

### Precision Medicine

Advancements in genomics and molecular diagnostics will pave the way for precision medicine in India. Tailoring treatments based on an individual's genetic makeup and lifestyle factors can optimise therapeutic outcomes and reduce adverse effects. Precision medicine holds promise in tackling complex diseases such as cancer and rare genetic disorders.

### Health Insurance Reforms

Efforts to strengthen health insurance coverage and increase awareness about health insurance schemes are expected to continue. Expanding the scope of coverage, reducing exclusions and improving reimbursement mechanisms will enhance financial protection for individuals and reduce the financial burden of healthcare expenses.

### Digital Health Transformation

The ongoing digitisation of healthcare services will accelerate in the coming decade. The National Digital Health Mission (NDHM) aims to create a unified digital health ecosystem, including digital health records, e-pharmacies and telemedicine platforms.

This transformation will improve the efficiency of healthcare delivery,

enhance data interoperability and empower patients to take control of their health.

In conclusion, the last decade has witnessed remarkable advancements in India's healthcare sector, driven by technological innovations, policy reforms and increased investments. Improved accessibility, infrastructure development and focus on preventive healthcare have resulted in significant progress.

Looking ahead, the integration of AI, precision medicine and digital health transformation holds tremendous potential for further advancements in India's healthcare system. By leveraging these opportunities, India can strive towards achieving universal healthcare, reducing health disparities and improving the overall well-being of its population. ■

## Wordtune

Wordtune is a writing tool powered by AI, that helps rephrase, rewrite and correct sentences to help the user have better, clearer and concise

communication through text. It is a website-based application where users can input text material that requires editing or rewording, and generate suitable results. The tool can also be added as an extension on your web browser.



### Features:

- Users can use this tool to check for grammatical errors, improve sentence length and structure, and adjust the tone of a sentence.
- Utilising ideas generated through AI can help you deliver your messages effectively.
- The writing tool includes a thesaurus feature that can be used to make the content sound concise and reduce redundancy.
- Users can highlight text that needs to be edited and click on the option to 'rewrite'. This helps generate an alternative phrasing of the sentence.
- The tool can help embellish a given text and provide details required to deliver clear communication.
- The website offers online translation, with support for up to 9 languages.

### How does it help teachers?

- The capability to rewrite and rephrase sentences is one of Wordtune's salient features. It will help clear communication when writing content, both for the classroom and reports.
- The platform has the ability to detect the tone of delivery of text.
- It can also be utilised to generate ideas by providing additional ideas to a copy of the text. ■

## Teachers Need To Think Outside The Box

### ■ VARSHA PRASAD

Editor, TeacherTribe.world



Recently, I was a part of an ideathon for students, where wonderful and interesting ideas were presented. The ideas, the clarity of thoughts, the execution plans, etc. were detailed and well thought through. The concept of an 'ideathon' paved way for these young kids to express themselves and put forth their ideas and suggestions. The takeaways from this event were numerous ideas from various genres, which when implemented, would make a lot of positive difference.

This event was mentored and guided by parents and the teachers from school. The way the teachers were helping children prep was a delight to watch. This got me thinking about how teachers have amazing ideas too, but refrain from expressing them. Is this because they do not have a platform to express themselves or is it because they are so busy with their 'schedules', that they are not taking time out to channel their creative side?

### Thinking outside the box

Teachers, on a daily basis, deal with students who are more aware and have information on everything. They deal with students who have access to all kinds of information across the universe. The job of the teachers here is not to 'teach' these already informed children.

Their task is to help these children use the information well, at the right time, in the right place.

To do this, teachers require a lot of out of the box thinking to keep children engaged and entertained. In most cases, teachers are burnt out trying to finish the daily, regular classroom chores that, outside the box thinking and creativity takes the backseat. But given the opportunity, teachers are a trove box of ideas too!

## **Why is thinking outside the box important?**

Thinking outside the box in teachers' context can mean ideating, looking for unique ways to teach a lesson, coming up with interesting and distinctive lesson plans, making time for both lessons and fun activities, making time for themselves to be creative, etc.

In the daily sequence of a classroom, teachers get into monotony where it is just classes, exams and paper corrections. This apart, lessons and revisions day on day can become dull for both students and teachers. Thinking outside the box comes into picture here! Teachers can think of ideas that can make classes interesting, they can ideate on teaching plans and methodologies, and creative ways to teach beyond syllabus.

Teachers can -

1. Try to dedicate 15 minutes every week to just ideate on different topics, both personal and professional.
2. Involve students in class once a week, for ideation and outside the box thinking alone.
3. Come up with solutions to problems that teachers and their peers face every day.
4. Meet with peers on a regular basis, or in the staff rooms, to discuss and come up with topics to discuss and talk about.

Schools can -

1. Organise regular teacher meets, only to ideate and think outside the box and to think of outside the classroom scenarios.
2. Organise inter and intraschool ideathons, exclusively for teachers.
3. Encourage teachers to implement a few feasible ideas in class and school, that have resulted out of such discussions and meets.

In conclusion, taking time to be creative and ideate, gives some relief from the daily rut of life. It motivates teachers to show their creative side and at the same time bond well with Gen Z.

Do you wish to share your thoughts on teacher ideathons? Write to me at [varsha@greycaps.com](mailto:varsha@greycaps.com). ■



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