

POLICY WATCH

Last fortnight a little known Jombay, a talent assessment and analytics platform, hit media headlines. It claimed that a significant percentage of students from top business schools in India score below industry standards in terms of sales acumen and customer focus. The schools surveyed were Indian School of Business (ISB) Hyderabad, IIM Ahmedabad, IIM Kolkata, IIM Lucknow and IIM Bangalore among others.

The source of this survey may not have been well known, but its findings did not surprise anyone. Experts in the field of academics have watched with alarm the government's increasing penchant for interfering with the manner in which business schools admit students. The State has also tried, at times, to regulate the manner in which teachers are recruited and paid. None of this bodes well for world class academics. Competitive populism There is another cause for worry. State governments too have been playing competitive populism. They have allowed the academic filters at the school level to get dismantled and become dysfunctional. The Right to Education (RTE) Act (the brainchild of Kapil Sibal, the former Union Minister for education and human resource development) accelerated this malaise ([http:// www. dnaindia. com/ money/ report-policy-watch-stress-on-numbersrather-than-quality-makes-educationoutlays-flawed-1946086](http://www.dnaindia.com/money/report-policy-watch-stress-on-numbersrather-than-quality-makes-educationoutlays-flawed-1946086)).

Not surprisingly, standards of education at the school level have plummeted. As a result, more students get 'pass' marks at secondary (SSC) and higher secondary (HSC) examinations than warranted. Unwilling to detain too many students at higher levels of learning, the system now produces more sub- standard graduates than ever before. The unemployables Consider the findings of organisations like Nasscom, TCS and McKinsey, all of which have claimed that only 15%30% of the graduates in India are employable. This problem was evident as early as the 1970s. Once again, the pace has accelerated.

Also, look at the number of graduates that exist in the country, and the money the government spends on

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