



CENTRAL BOARD
OF SECONDARY
EDUCATION
BACKGROUND GUIDE

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Letter from the Executive Board

Greetings Delegates!

It gives us immense pleasure to welcome you all to this simulation of **CBSE** at **"SHIS MUN'25"**. We look forward to an enriching and rewarding experience.

The agenda for the session is **"Reviewing Provisions for Students Preparing for Competitive Examinations with special emphasis on the Regulation and Ban of Dummy Schooling Practices."**

This study guide is by no means the end of the research; we would very much appreciate it if the members are able to find new realms in the agenda and bring it forth to the committee. Such research, combined with good argumentation and a solid representation of fact, is what makes an excellent performance. In the session, the executive board will encourage you to speak as much as possible, as fluency, diction, or oratory skills have very little importance as opposed to the content you deliver. So, just research and speak, and you are bound to make a lot of sense.

The Executive Board looks forward to an efficient & progressive committee as the issue is very sensitive. We therefore expect you all to play your roles with responsibility. Hopefully, we, as members of the Executive Board, also have a chance to gain from this committee. We regret any error that may have inadvertently crept into this guide and would appreciate it if you could bring it to our attention. Please do not hesitate to contact us regarding any doubts that you may have.

All the best!

Regards,

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I. Committee Overview

The Board has developed and expanded significantly from 1929 (which was then named the 'Board of High School and Intermediate Education, Rajputana) to reach its present status. In 1952, the Board was given its present name, 'Central Board of Secondary Education'. It was in the year 1962 that the Board was finally reconstituted. The main objectives of the Board were to serve the educational institutions more effectively, to be responsive to the educational needs of those students whose parents were employed in the Central Government and had frequently transferable jobs.

The Board has grown at a rapid pace over the years, and its present jurisdiction stretches beyond the national geographical boundaries. From 309 schools in 1962, the Board, as of 28.06.2024, has 29340 schools in India and 257 schools in 25 foreign countries. There are 1247 Kendriya Vidyalayas, 5280 Government/Aided Schools, 22408 Independent Schools, 648 Jawahar Novodaya Vidyalayas, and 14 Central Tibetan Schools. In order to execute its functions effectively, Regional Offices have been set up by the Board in different parts of the country to be more responsive to the affiliated schools. The Board has 18 Regional Offices & COEs located at Ajmer, Bengaluru, Bhopal, Bhubaneswar, Chandigarh, Chennai, Dehradun, Delhi (East), Delhi (West), Dubai (UAE), Guwahati, Noida, Panchkula, Patna, Prayagraj, Pune, Thiruvananthapuram, and Vijayawada.

The CBSE headquarters constantly monitors the activities of the Regional Offices. Although sufficient powers have been vested with the Regional Offices, issues involving policy matters are, however, referred to the Head Office. Matters pertaining to day-to-day administration, liaison with schools, and pre- and post-examination arrangements are all dealt with by the respective regional offices.

Vision & Mission

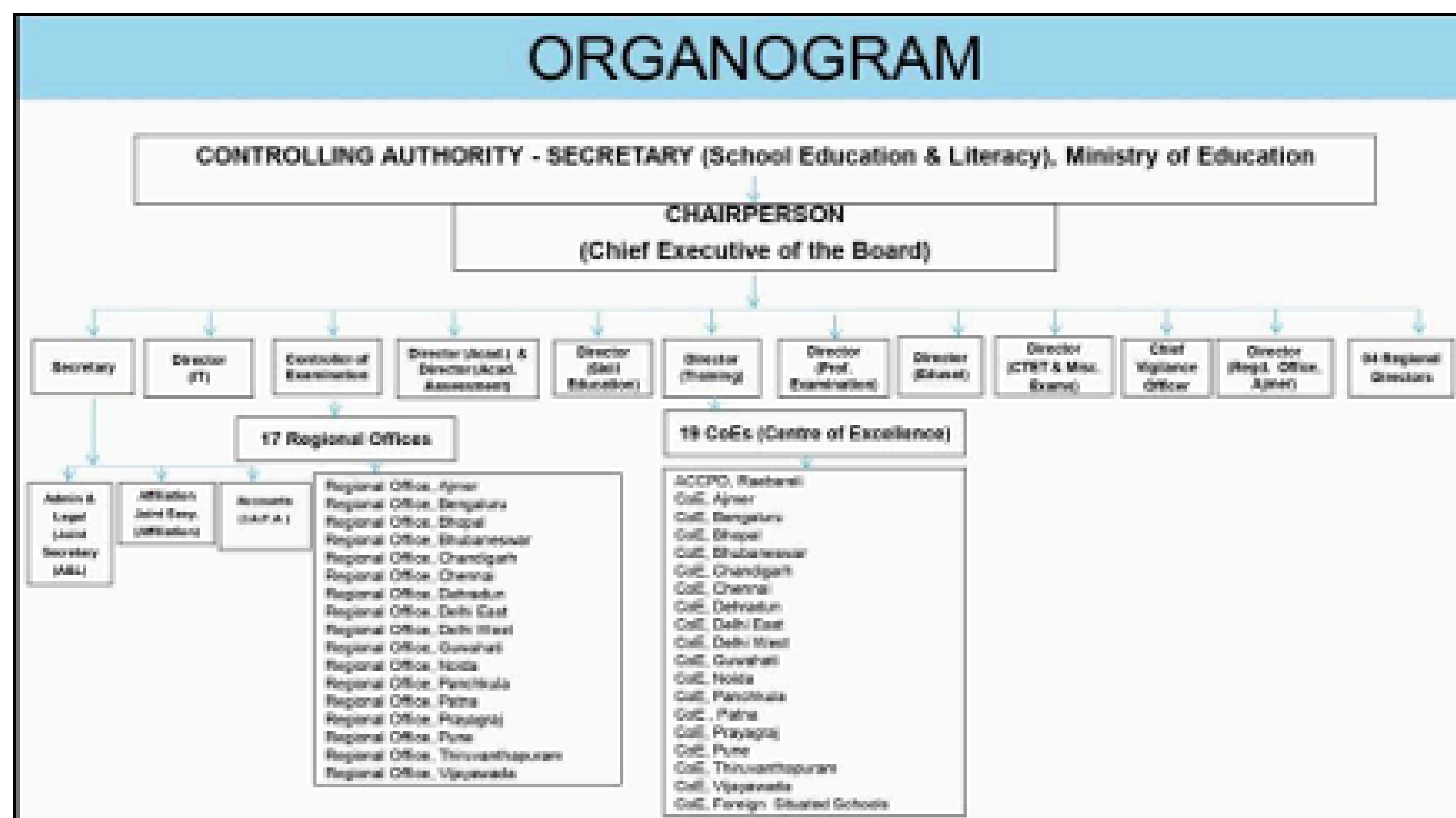
CBSE envisions a robust, vibrant, and holistic school education that may engender excellence in every sphere of human endeavor. The Board is committed to providing quality education to promote intellectual, social, and cultural vivacity among its learners. It works towards evolving a learning process and environment, which empowers the future citizens to become global leaders in the emerging knowledge society. The Board advocates and pledges to provide a stress-free learning environment that may develop competent, confident, and enterprising citizens who promote harmony and peace.

CBSE aims to facilitate learning for the physical, emotional, social, and intellectual well-being of students. The CBSE, a pace-setting National Board of School Education in the country, always aspires and endeavors to be a center of excellence for providing quality education by continuously working on the educational standards to meet the national and global needs through

the process of affiliating schools and conducting examinations of classes X and XII as well as other exams as entrusted from time to time.

The Board focuses upon the following:

- Innovations in teaching-learning methodologies by devising student-friendly and student-centered paradigms
- Reforms in examinations and evaluation practices
- Skill learning by adding job-oriented and job-linked inputs
- Regularly updating the pedagogical skills of the teachers and administrators by conducting in-service training programmes, workshops etc.



The simulation of CBSE will be naturally carried out at a smaller scale, using roughly 40 participants as per RoPs of the unconventional Indian committees. The RoPs shall be explained by the Executive Board before beginning with the formal simulation of the committee.

Note – Representatives are requested to be well-versed with the structure and functioning of CBSE, key educational policies, curriculum frameworks, and recent initiatives by the Ministry of Education. Delegates must reflect informed role-play aligned with their allocated portfolio.

II. Agenda

“Reviewing Provisions for Students Preparing for Competitive Examinations with special emphasis on the Regulation and Ban of Dummy Schooling Practices”

III. Introduction

India's education system is widely recognized for its rigorous and intensely competitive nature. This environment is particularly pronounced in the pursuit of higher education, where a vast number of students vie for a limited number of seats in prestigious institutions. The Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) for engineering and the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) for medical colleges stand as prime examples of these high-stakes examinations, shaping the academic and professional trajectories of millions of young aspirants across the nation. This intense competition often compels students and their families to seek every conceivable advantage in preparation, leading to significant pressure on the educational ecosystem.

In response to this pervasive pressure, a controversial and increasingly prevalent phenomenon has emerged: "dummy schools". These institutions represent a complex workaround within the formal education system, allowing students to enroll without the requirement of regular attendance. The primary objective of such an arrangement is to enable students to dedicate their time almost exclusively to preparing for competitive entrance examinations, bypassing the traditional demands of a standard school curriculum.

This background guide is designed to provide delegates for a Model United Nations (MUN) conference with a comprehensive and multi-faceted understanding of dummy schooling practices in India. It will delve into the origins and operational models of these schools, explore their wide-ranging impacts on students and the broader education system, analyze the existing regulatory frameworks and government responses, and present diverse perspectives from key stakeholders. By examining the complexities of this issue, the guide aims to equip delegates with the necessary knowledge to engage in informed debate, propose effective policies, and contribute to the ongoing dialogue on ensuring equitable and holistic education for all students.

IV. Understanding Dummy Schooling Practices

Definition and Modus Operandi

Dummy schools are formally registered educational institutions, often affiliated with recognized boards such as the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) or various State Boards. The defining characteristic of these schools is that while students are officially enrolled, they are not

required to attend regular classes. This arrangement facilitates a systemic loophole, allowing students to fulfill formal educational requirements, such as eligibility for board examinations, while prioritizing intensive preparation for competitive entrance exams.

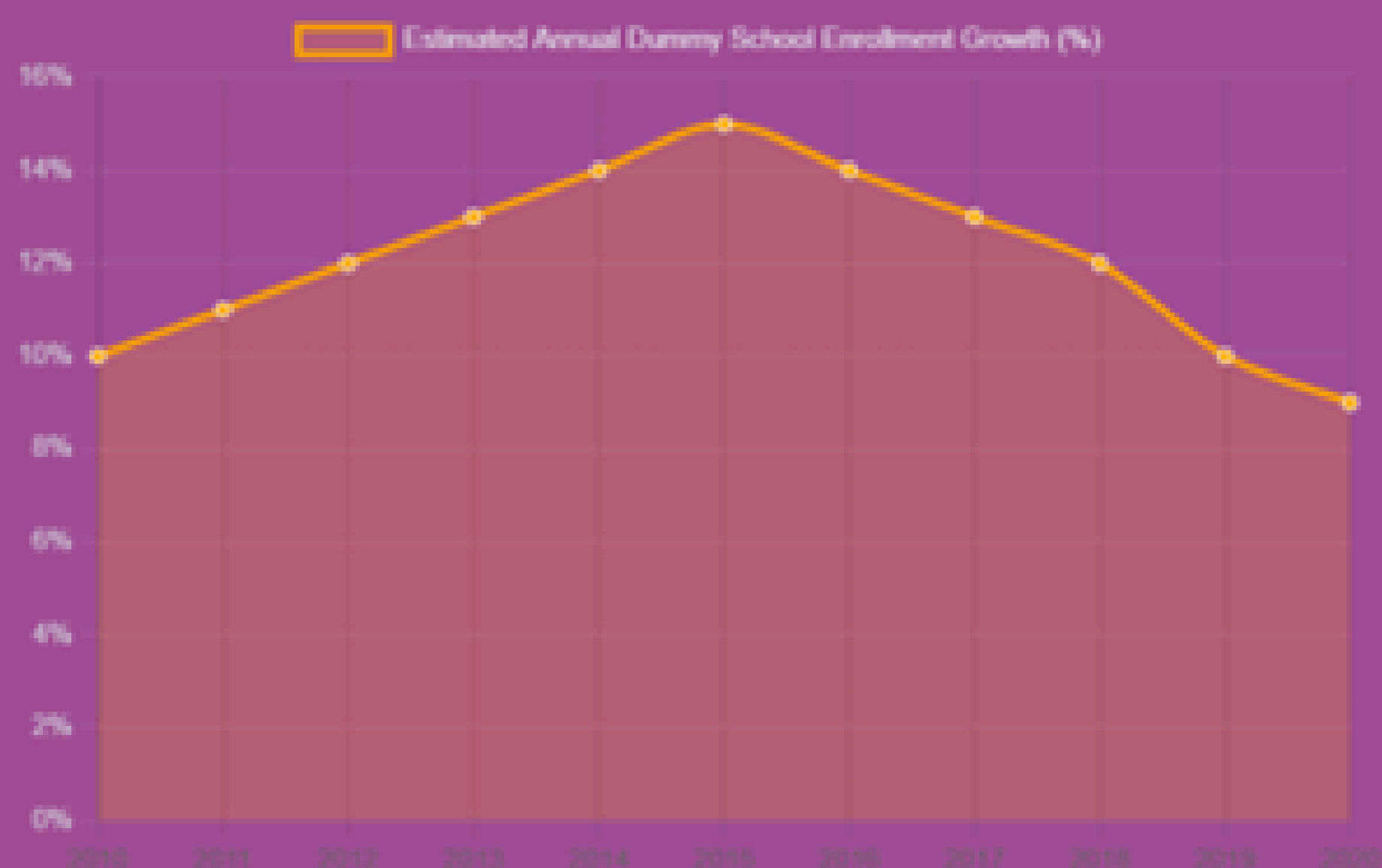
The operational model of dummy schools typically involves students spending 6-8 hours daily at private coaching institutes that specialize in competitive exam preparation. Their presence at the dummy school is usually limited to appearing for board examinations and any mandatory practical assessments. This arrangement is often financially lucrative for dummy schools, as they collect full fees without incurring significant teaching costs or providing active instruction. A mutually beneficial relationship often exists between dummy schools and coaching institutes: the coaching centers gain a steady stream of students who require formal enrollment for board exams, while the dummy schools profit from these enrollments without substantial academic delivery.

Origins and Growth

The emergence and proliferation of dummy schools are deeply rooted in the intense competition that defines India's higher education landscape. The fierce battle for limited seats in premier institutions like the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and government medical colleges drives students and parents to seek every possible advantage. Many students perceive regular schooling as a "distraction" from their primary goal of securing admission to these highly coveted institutions.

Rising Tide: Dummy School Enrollment Growth (2010-2020)

The phenomenon of dummy schooling saw a significant annual rise, peaking around 2018-2019, reflecting increasing reliance on this parallel system.



This trend has been significantly fueled by the rapid growth of the coaching culture across India. Cities such as Kota in Rajasthan, Hyderabad, and Delhi have become major hubs for exam preparation, with a mushrooming of coaching institutes that promise high success rates in entrance exams, attracting students from across the country. For instance, Kota alone sees over 150,000 students joining coaching institutes annually, with a substantial number opting for dummy school enrollments to avoid daily classes.

Societal and parental pressure also play a crucial role. In a society that places immense value on engineering and medical professions, parents often feel compelled to ensure their children gain admission to top institutions. Dummy schools are frequently viewed as a strategic choice to maximize a child's chances of success in these high-stakes exams. Underlying this choice is often a perception among some students and parents that regular schools are inadequate in preparing students for competitive examinations. Some express the view that traditional schools suffer from "subpar management and faculty" and "shit policies," leading them to seek an "oasis of sanity" in dummy schools that focus solely on exam preparation.

Prevalence and Geographic Hubs

The phenomenon of dummy schooling has witnessed substantial growth over the past decade. Data indicates a 10-15 % annual rise in dummy school enrollments between 2010 and 2020, with a peak observed around 2018-2019. Beyond Kota, cities like Hyderabad and Patna have reported significant enrollment figures, with some exceeding 30,000 students per year. This concentration in competitive exam coaching centers highlights the close relationship between the two phenomena.

The prevalence of dummy schooling reveals a deep-seated issue within the Indian education system. The arrangement between dummy schools and coaching institutes is not merely a co-existence but a mutually beneficial setup that exploits a systemic loophole. This mutually advantageous relationship transforms education into a highly commercialized venture, where the primary focus shifts from comprehensive learning to profit maximization through exam preparation. This commercialization leads to the formation of an "underground proxy school" system that operates parallel to and actively undermines the integrity of formal education.

Furthermore, the widespread adoption of dummy schooling points to a significant and growing lack of confidence in the ability of traditional schools to adequately prepare students for high-stakes competitive exams. This perception often leads parents and students to conclude that "regular schooling often feels like a waste of time" and that "school teachers can't teach you for competitive levels". This erosion of trust in formal education devalues its importance, reducing it to a mere formality for board exam eligibility rather than a foundation for holistic learning. This places immense pressure on regular schools to either adapt their curriculum to align with competitive exam requirements or risk losing students to this parallel, exam-centric system.

Table 1: Key Distinctions: Regular Schools vs. Dummy Schools

Feature	Regular School	Dummy School
Attendance Requirement	Mandatory, typically 75% minimum	Minimal or no regular attendance required
Curriculum Focus	Broad, CBSE/State Board syllabus, holistic	Primarily competitive exam syllabus (via coaching)
Extracurricular Activities	Mandatory and encouraged for overall development	Minimal or none
Primary Goal	Holistic development, academic foundation, and well-rounded education	Competitive exam success (JEE/NEET)
Fee Structure	Full fees for instruction and facilities	Full fees for enrollment, often in addition to high coaching fees (INR 50k-1L annually for school, INR 1-3L for coaching)
Affiliation Status	Officially sanctioned and compliant with board norms	Formally affiliated but often violate attendance and academic engagement norms
Teacher-Student Interaction	Regular, direct interaction and mentorship	Minimal interaction, primarily for administrative tasks/exams
Holistic Development	Prioritized, includes social, emotional, and physical growth	Compromised, focus solely on academics

V. Multifaceted Impacts of Dummy Schooling

The prevalence of dummy schooling has far-reaching consequences, impacting not only the students directly involved but also the broader educational landscape and societal well-being.

Compromised Holistic Development

One of the most significant drawbacks of dummy schooling is the severe compromise to a student's holistic development. Regular schooling offers a comprehensive environment that includes extracurricular activities, peer interaction, and a broad curriculum designed to foster well-rounded individuals. Students in dummy schools, by largely skipping traditional classroom learning, miss out on critical experiences such as group discussions, participation in arts and sports, and other formative engagements that shape intellectual and social growth.

Development Deficit

Key aspects of personal growth are sacrificed in the pursuit of exam ranks.

-  Social & Teamwork Skills
-  Arts & Creativity
-  Sports & Physical Health
-  Communication Abilities

This isolation often leads to a deficiency in essential social skills, communication abilities, and the capacity for teamwork, all of which are vital for adapting to dynamic environments in higher education and professional life. Furthermore, adolescence is a crucial period for forming friendships and building social relationships, privileges that dummy schools frequently deny students due to their isolated, exam-centric routines.

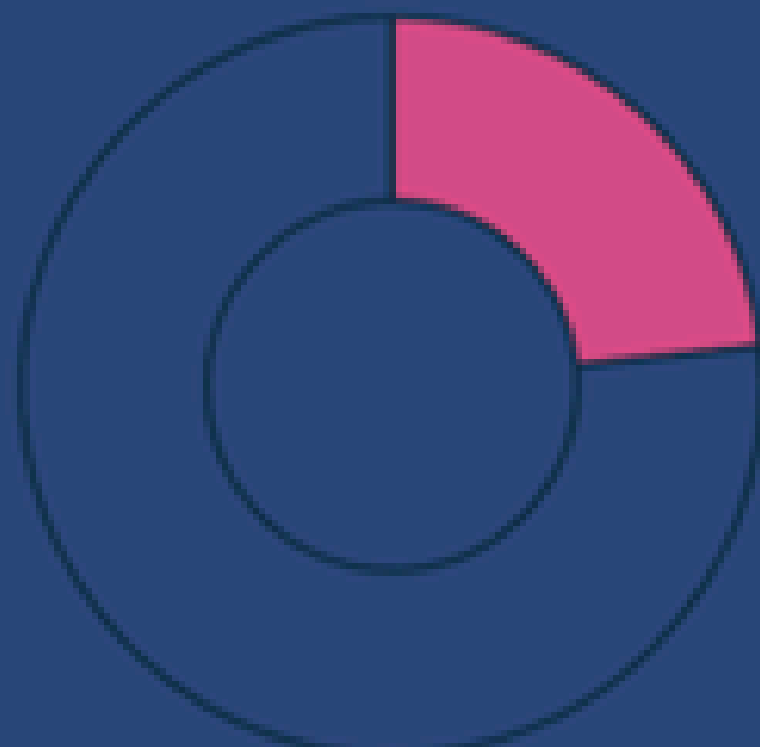
Mental Health Concerns

The intense focus on competitive entrance exams, facilitated by dummy schools and coaching institutes, imposes immense psychological pressure on students, contributing significantly to stress, anxiety, and burnout. The consequences of this pressure are starkly evident in coaching hubs like Kota, which have reported alarming rates of student suicides.

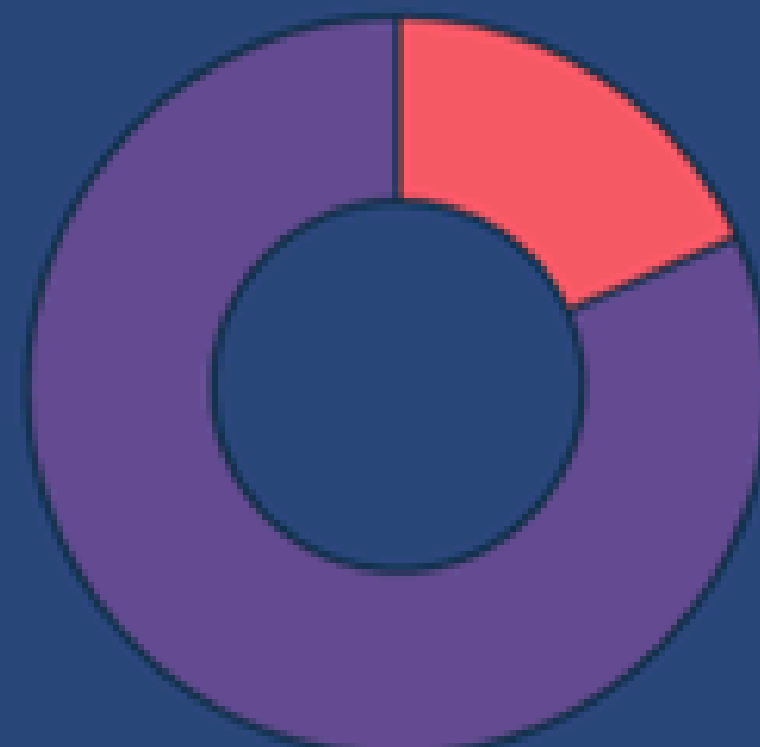
In 2023, Kota recorded 29 student suicides, marking the highest figure ever for the country's prominent coaching center. This follows 20 suicides in 2022 and 27 in 2021. Notably, 2020 and 2021 saw no suicides in Kota, as coaching institutes were shut or operated online due to the COVID-19 pandemic, underscoring the impact of the physical environment and punishing schedules on student mental health.

National Student Mental Health Crisis

The pressure-cooker environment contributes to widespread mental health issues among Indian students.



23.3% report mental health issues



18.4% suffer from depression

Broader studies on mental health among school students in India reveal a concerning picture: 23.3% of school students experience mental health issues, 18.4% suffer from depression, and 65.53% exhibit symptoms of Depression, Anxiety, and Stress (DAS). The isolation from peer interaction and the absence of extracurricular engagement, inherent in the dummy school system, reduce the entire school experience to a singular focus on exam preparation, thereby intensifying stress and anxiety levels.

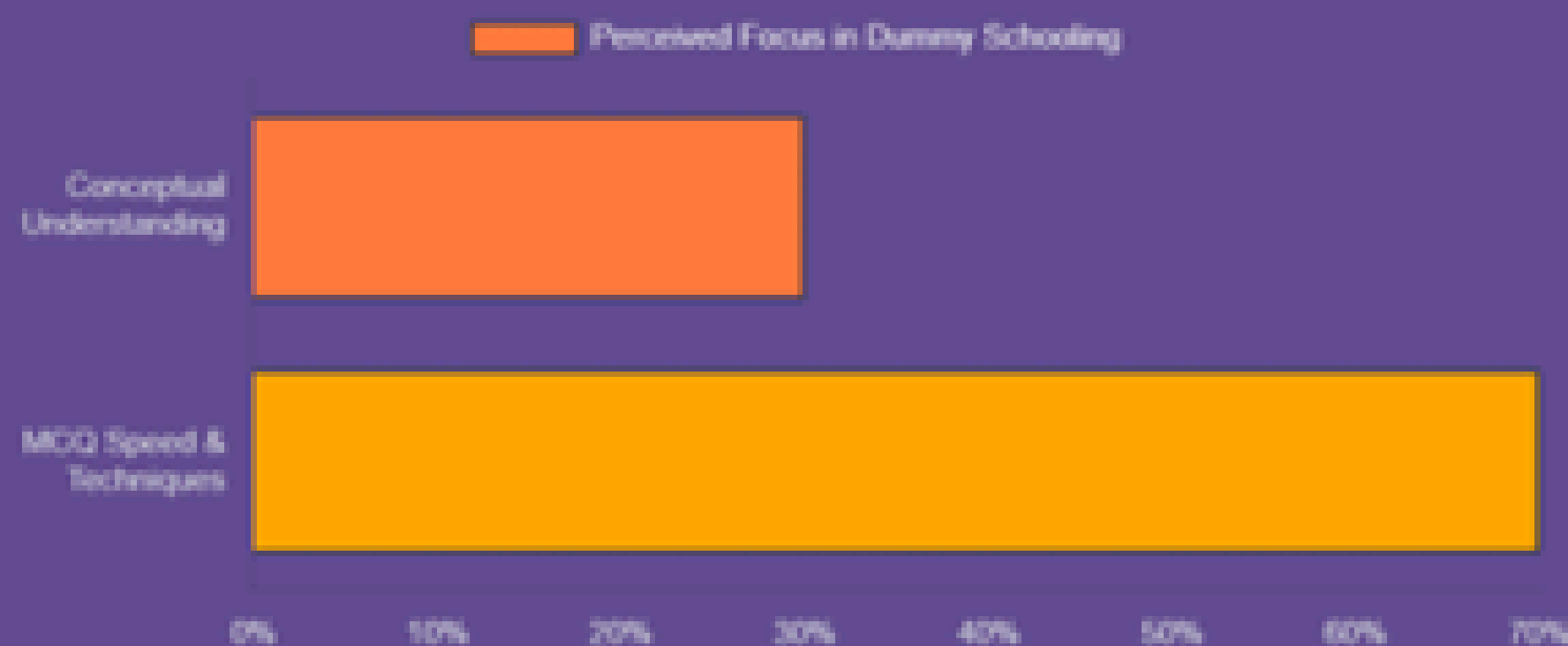
A primary advantage cited for dummy schools is the perceived "time optimization" and "distraction-free preparation" they offer, with the underlying belief that more study hours directly translate to higher productivity and better results. However, this expectation often encounters a fundamental contradiction. Research indicates that "increased study hours do not equal productivity" and can, in fact, "lower productivity levels". The intense pressure and isolation fostered by this environment frequently lead to significant mental health challenges, including stress, anxiety, depression, and the tragically high suicide rates observed in coaching hubs. This creates a "productivity paradox": while students gain more study hours, it often comes at the severe cost of their mental well-being and overall effectiveness. This system, rather than providing a shortcut to success, can "erode a child's personality and potential" and transform students into "pressure cookers". The grim suicide statistics from Kota serve as a powerful and tragic testament to this systemic failure.

Academic Integrity and Quality

The operational model of dummy schools raises serious questions regarding academic integrity and the quality of education. When students do not attend regular classes, the legitimacy of marks, internal assessments, and teacher evaluations becomes questionable, thereby undermining public trust in formal education. Reports of corruption have surfaced, including instances where teachers are allegedly compelled by school management to award "free marks" for practical exams, inadvertently conveying to students that "marks are for sale".

Academic Focus: Depth vs. Speed

The singular focus on competitive exams often prioritizes quick problem-solving over deep conceptual understanding.



Furthermore, the absence of regular classroom instruction can lead to significant gaps in students' foundational knowledge. The singular focus on competitive exam preparation often prioritizes developing speed for multiple-choice questions (MCQs) over fostering a deep, conceptual understanding of subjects. This narrow approach compromises the credibility of school-leaving certificates and board examination results, as these institutions may engage in unethical practices such as fabricating attendance records and inflating marks.

The widespread acceptance and operation of dummy schools fundamentally "undermines public trust in formal education" and "devalues the importance of in-person schooling". If board certificates can be obtained without genuine academic engagement, their value diminishes, impacting the entire educational ecosystem and potentially influencing how future employers perceive Indian academic credentials.

Socio-Economic Disparities

Dummy schooling significantly exacerbates existing socio-economic disparities in the education system. These institutions primarily cater to students from families who can afford the substantial fees of coaching institutes, which can range from INR 1-3 lakh annually, in addition to the school fees themselves (INR 50,000 - 1 lakh per year). This dual financial burden makes such pathways inaccessible to economically disadvantaged students, thereby creating and widening educational inequities. For many middle and lower-middle-class families, a combined annual expenditure of INR 1.5 - 4 lakh on a child's education represents a significant portion of their income, making it a very draining financial commitment.

Systemic Flaws and Commercialization

Dummy schools are a manifestation of a complex interplay of ambition, intense competition, and inherent systemic flaws within the Indian education system. They effectively transform the schooling system into a commercial venture rather than an educational mission. These schools

often operate with minimal accountability for student learning outcomes, as the responsibility for exam preparation is largely shifted to the coaching institutes. The proliferation of dummy schools is a symptom of a deeper crisis rooted in the pervasive commercialization and commodification of education, where the pursuit of profit can overshadow genuine educational objectives.

Regular vs. Dummy Schooling		
Feature	Regular School	Dummy School
Attendance	~75% Mandatory	None Required
Focus	Holistic Growth	Only Exam Prep
Social Life	Peer Interaction	Isolated Study
Development	Well-Rounded	Academically Narrow

Table 2: Advantages and Disadvantages of Dummy Schooling for Students

Aspect	Advantages	Disadvantages
Focused Preparation	Distraction-free environment; More time for competitive exam preparation; Ability to study at own pace; Saves time, effort, and energy; Perceived reduction in stress from schoolwork	Gaps in foundational knowledge; Potential for burnout and reduced productivity; Failure to perform in interviews/group discussions; Risk of losing board credentials if competitive exams are not cleared
Holistic Development	None	Lack of social skills and limited peer interaction; Absence of friends and social connections; Lower overall productivity despite more study hours; Lack of confidence; Compromised holistic development due to missed extracurriculars

Mental Well-being	Perceived reduced stress from school commitments	Increased stress and anxiety; Isolation; Higher rates of depression and alarming suicide rates
Financial & Quota	Access to state quotas for higher education (perceived advantage)	High costs (school fees + coaching fees); Creates significant socio-economic disparity

The severe mental health crisis in coaching hubs, exacerbated by the high-pressure environment often associated with dummy schooling, is a profound human cost of the current system. Table 3 illustrates the tragic trend of student suicides in Kota, a prominent coaching hub.

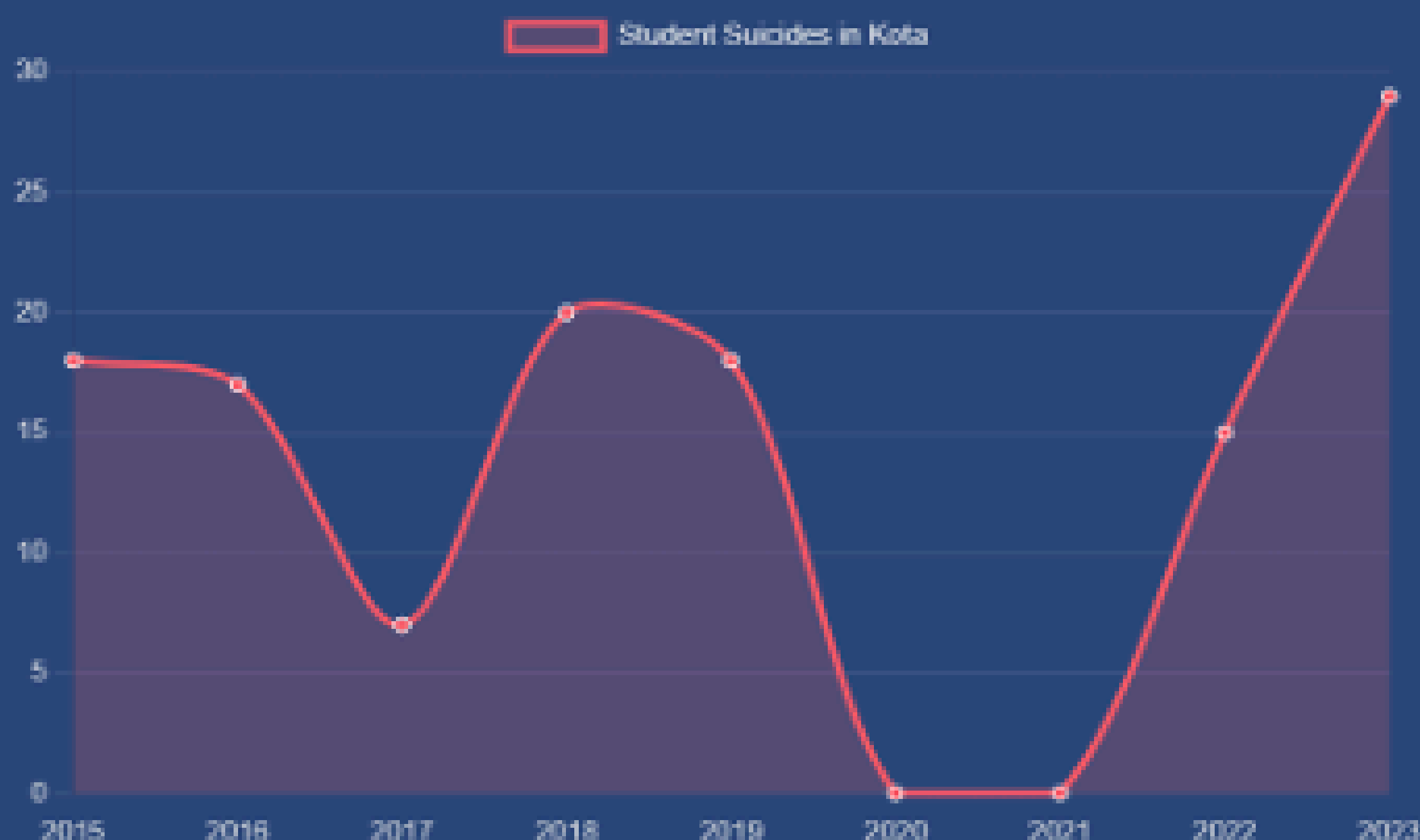
Table 3: Student Suicide Statistics in Kota (2015-2023)

Year	Number of Suicides
2015	18
2016	17
2017	7
2018	20
2019	18
2020	0 (Coaching institutes shut/online due to COVID-19)
2021	0 (Coaching institutes shut/online due to COVID-19)
2022	15
2023	29 (Highest ever)

The data from Kota underscores that while the perceived advantage of "time optimization" and "distraction-free preparation" is a primary driver for dummy schooling, the reality can be a profound "productivity paradox." Students gain more study hours but often at the expense of their mental well-being and overall effectiveness. This system, by promising a shortcut to success, can erode a child's personality and potential, turning them into "pressure cookers" rather than well-rounded individuals. The tragic suicide statistics serve as a stark manifestation of this systemic failure.

The Epicenter of Pressure: Kota's Tragic Trend

The intense focus on exam success, amplified by the dummy school system, has devastating mental health consequences. The rising number of student suicides in the coaching hub of Kota is a stark indicator of this systemic failure.



VI. Regulatory Framework and Government Actions

The Indian government and various educational bodies have established a robust regulatory framework to govern schooling and competitive examinations. However, the emergence and proliferation of dummy schools highlight a significant gap between policy and practice.

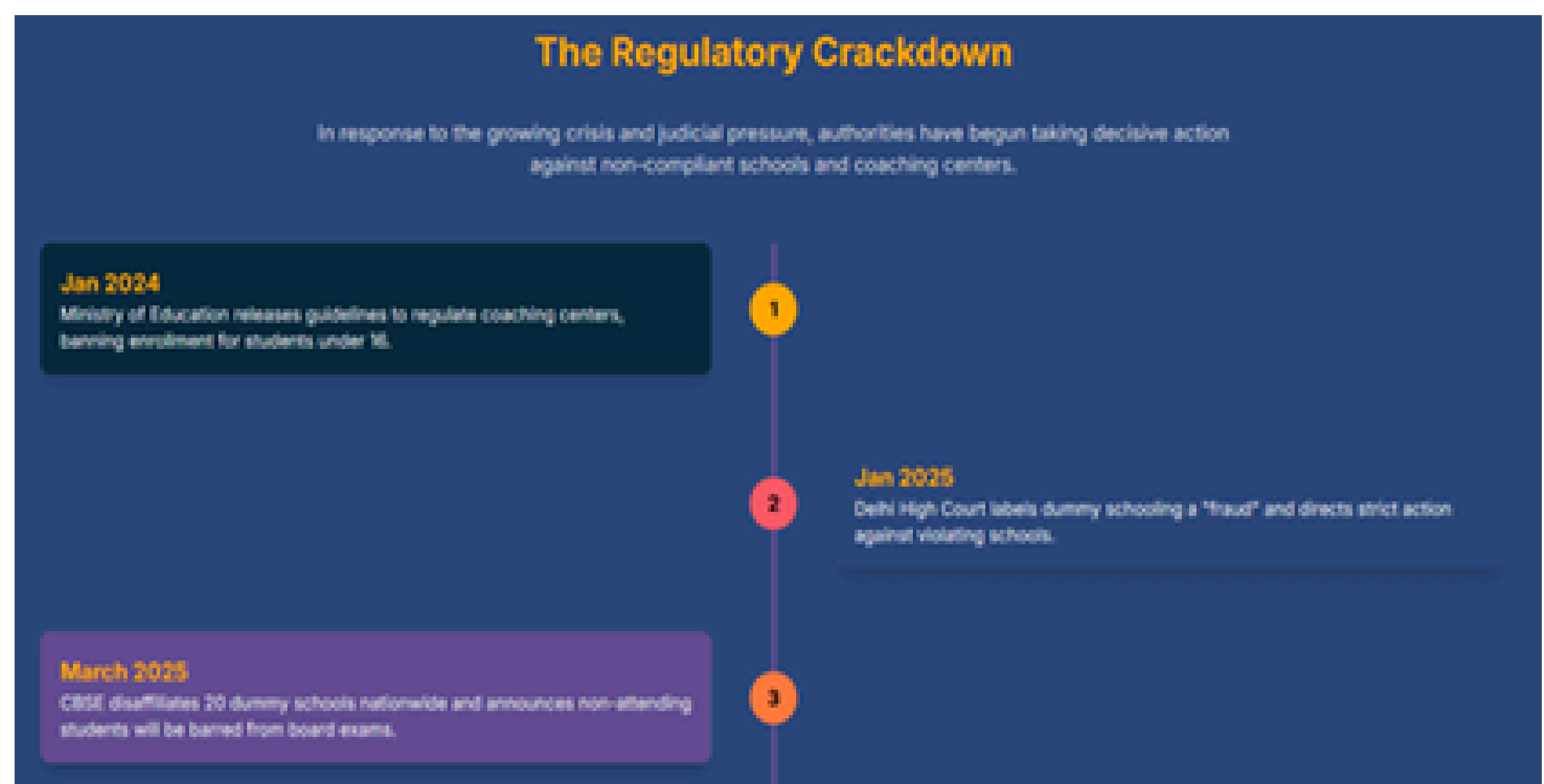
CBSE Regulations and Enforcement

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has clear guidelines regarding student attendance. Its Examination Bye-Laws (Rules 13 and 14) mandate a minimum of 75% attendance for students to be eligible to appear for Class X and XII board examinations. A relaxation of 25% is granted only in cases of specific exigencies, such as documented medical emergencies or participation in national or international sports events.

CBSE has actively responded to the dummy schooling phenomenon. The board has issued warnings of disciplinary action, including disaffiliation or fines, against schools found promoting dummy enrollment. To enforce these regulations, CBSE conducts surprise inspections to verify attendance records. Findings of absent students or incomplete records during these inspections can lead to strict action against the schools, including potential disaffiliation.

Recent enforcement actions include the disaffiliation of 20 schools across 12 states (including Delhi, Punjab, Assam, and Rajasthan) in March 2025, after they were identified as dummy schools. Prior to this, in November 2024, at least three schools in Kota had their registrations cancelled. Overall, CBSE has confirmed taking action against over 300 dummy schools across India.

Looking ahead, from the 2025-2026 academic session, CBSE has announced stricter measures: students who fail to meet the regular attendance requirements will be disqualified from appearing in Class 12 board examinations. The board has clarified that the responsibility for ensuring regular attendance rests with both students and their parents. As an alternative for non-attending students disqualified from board exams, CBSE is exploring collaboration with the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS).

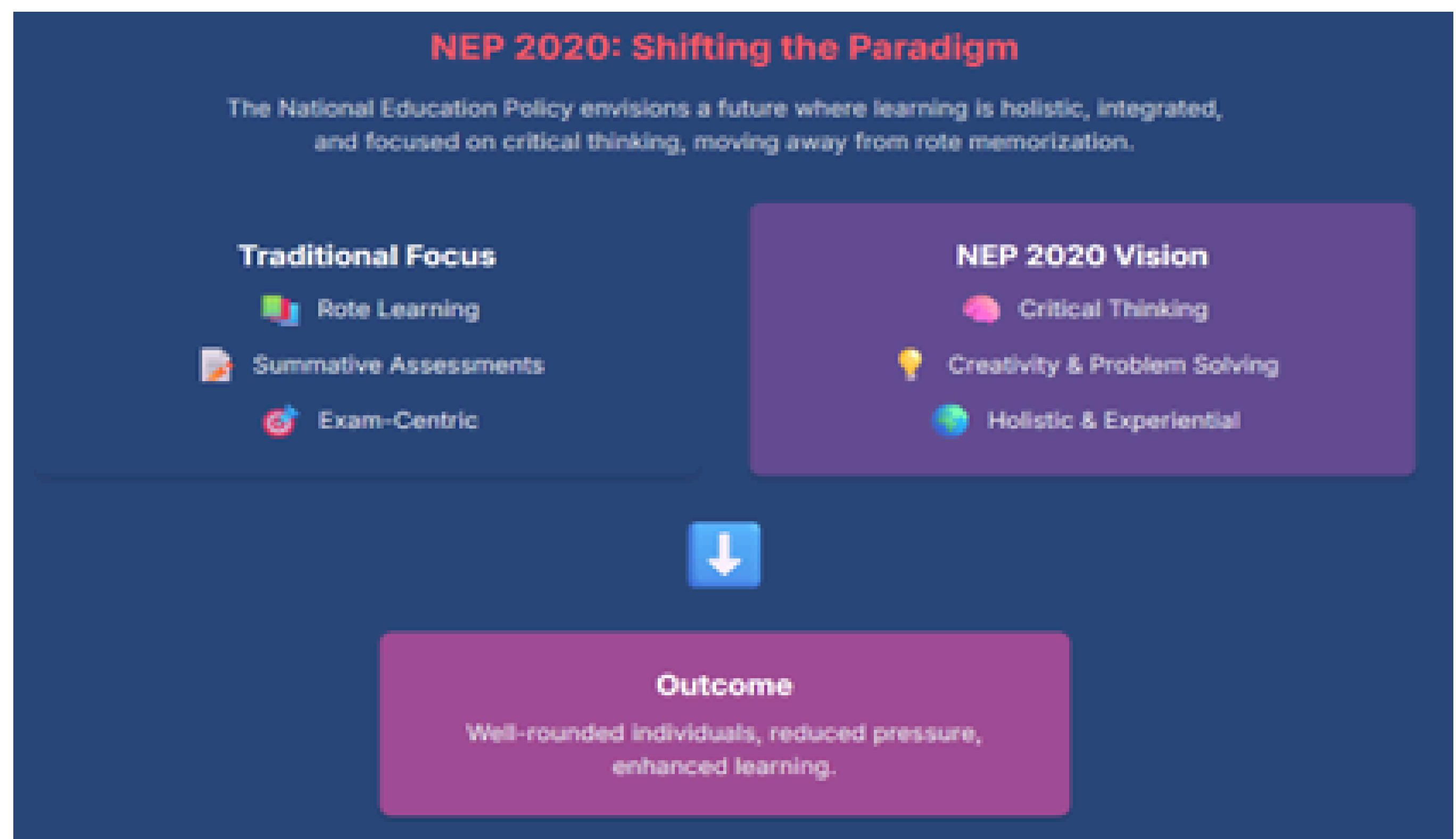


Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009

The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009, is a landmark legislation that ensures free and compulsory education for all children aged 6-14 years. It emphasizes the right to full-time elementary education of satisfactory and equitable quality in a formal school. Dummy schooling, by its very nature, operates in a "legal gray area" and frequently violates both the spirit and the letter of the RTE Act. This is primarily due to its circumvention of mandatory attendance requirements and its neglect of holistic development, which are core tenets of the Act. Furthermore, the Act explicitly provides for children's right to an education free from fear, stress, and anxiety. This provision is directly contradicted by the high-pressure environment of competitive exam preparation, which is often exacerbated by the dummy school system.

National Education Policy (NEP) 2020

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, announced in July 2020, envisions a transformative shift in India's education system, aiming to make it "second to none" by 2040. A central principle of NEP 2020 is to foster holistic, integrated, enjoyable, and engaging learning, with a strong emphasis on critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving over rote memorization.



The policy explicitly acknowledges the pervasive "coaching culture" in India and proposes reforms in the existing system of Board and entrance examinations to reduce the reliance on summative assessments that encourage this culture. To counter the narrow focus of dummy schooling, NEP 2020 mandates a broad curriculum that includes arts, crafts, humanities, sports, languages, literature, culture, and values, alongside science and mathematics, to ensure the comprehensive development of learners. This holistic approach directly conflicts with the exam-centric nature of dummy schooling. The policy also advocates for a shift from summative to formative assessments and aims to reduce exam stress through measures such as the introduction of biannual board exams for Class 10.

Regulation of Coaching Institutes

In a significant move to address the broader ecosystem contributing to dummy schooling, the Ministry of Education released the "[Guidelines for Registration and Regulation of Coaching Centers](#)" in January, 2024. These guidelines aim to establish a structured framework for the operation of coaching centers.

Key provisions of these guidelines include:

- **Registration:** Mandatory registration with local authorities for each branch of a coaching center.
- **Age Restrictions:** Students below the age of 16 are not permitted for enrollment, and entry is allowed only after the completion of secondary school examinations. This provision directly targets the concerning trend of younger students (Classes 9 and 10) enrolling in coaching institutes.
- **Marketing Standards:** Coaching centers are prohibited from making misleading promises or guarantees regarding ranks or marks to attract students. They are mandated to maintain transparent websites detailing tutor qualifications, course specifics, curriculum, duration, hostel facilities, fees, and refund policies.
- **Fee Structure and Refund:** Fees must be fair and reasonable, with detailed receipts provided. A pro-rata refund is mandated within 10 days for mid-course withdrawals, and any fee increase during the course duration is strictly prohibited.
- **Infrastructure:** Coaching centers must adhere to specific infrastructure requirements, including a minimum of one square meter per student in each class, compliance with fire safety and building codes, proper ventilation, lighting, CCTV cameras, first aid kits, and medical assistance.
- **Study Hours:** Crucially, the guidelines stipulate that coaching classes should not coincide with regular school hours to ensure student attendance at formal schools. Weekly offs are also mandatory for both students and tutors.

Despite the existence of robust legal and policy frameworks, such as the RTE Act, CBSE bylaws, and the comprehensive NEP 2020, dummy schools have continued to thrive, often operating in a "legal gray area". This situation points to a significant "policy-practice gap," where well-intentioned regulations face considerable hurdles in effective implementation and consistent enforcement across different regions. The initial denial by the governments regarding the existence of dummy schools further exemplifies this challenge. The reliance on "surprise inspections" by regulatory bodies, while necessary, raises questions about their scalability and fairness, suggesting a reactive rather than proactive enforcement mechanism. This gap allows fraudulent practices to persist and can undermine the credibility of the regulatory bodies themselves.

The new coaching center guidelines, particularly the stipulation that classes "should not coincide with school hours to ensure regular attendance," along with CBSE's mandatory 75% attendance rule, represent a direct attempt to break the "symbiotic relationship" between dummy schools and coaching centers.

By enforcing school attendance and regulating coaching hours, the government aims to force a decoupling of full-time coaching from formal schooling. This indicates a strategic shift towards re-integrating competitive exam preparation within the formal schooling system or at least ensuring that it does not entirely supplant it. The broader objective is to restore the primacy of school education and promote holistic development, acknowledging that the current system risks producing "robots" rather than "efficient humans". The success of this approach, however, hinges on whether schools can genuinely offer adequate competitive exam preparation or if students will continue to perceive them as insufficient.

Table 4: Timeline of Key Regulatory and Judicial Actions Against Dummy Schools

Date	Authority/ Court	Action/Judgment	Impact
January 18, 2024	Ministry of Education	"2024 Guidelines for Registration and Regulation of Coaching Centers" released	Established a new framework for coaching centers, including age restrictions, marketing standards, fee regulations, and class hour stipulations.
September 5, 2024	CBSE	Notices issued to 27 schools in Delhi & Rajasthan after surprise inspections	Legal action considered against violators, reinforcing CBSE's zero-tolerance policy.
November 6, 2024	CBSE	Registrations of at least 3 schools in Kota cancelled	Part of broader crackdown on dummy schools in competitive exam hubs.
January 27, 2025	Delhi High Court	Directed CBSE & Delhi government to take strict action, labeled dummy schools as "fraud"	Judicial pressure for enforcement, highlighted misuse of domicile quotas.
March 2025	CBSE	Disaffiliated 20 dummy schools across 12 states	Significant enforcement step against widespread malpractice and violations of affiliation norms.

March 27, 2025	CBSE	Announced students not attending regular schools will be barred from Class 12 board exams	Major policy shift to curb dummy schooling, increasing accountability for students and parents.
2025-26 Academic Session	CBSE	Policy effective for Class 12 board exams, exploring NIOS option	Formalizes the ban on non-attending students from board exams and provides an alternative pathway.

VII. Judicial Intervention and Legal Commentary

The judiciary in India has played a pivotal role in addressing the issue of dummy schooling, often acting as a catalyst for accountability when regulatory bodies or state governments have been perceived as slow or in denial.

Key Case Laws and the Court's Stance

The Delhi High Court has adopted a particularly strong stance against dummy schooling, unequivocally labeling it a "fraud" and a "fraudulent practice". This judicial condemnation has been a significant impetus for intensified regulatory action.

A **Public Interest Litigation (PIL)** filed by **Rajeev Aggarwal** brought the issue to the forefront of judicial scrutiny. On January 27, 2025, a bench of the Delhi High Court, comprising Chief Justice D.K. Upadhyaya and Justice Tushar Rao Gedela, issued a directive instructing the CBSE and the state government to take strict action against these schools.

The court expressed serious concern over the practice of allowing students to appear for examinations based on "absolutely false information" and "fabricated attendance records," despite their non-attendance in regular classes.

The bench explicitly directed the Delhi government and CBSE to conduct comprehensive surveys and, if warranted, carry out surprise inspections to gather necessary information. The court further mandated that this information be shared between the two bodies to facilitate "necessary action permissible in law against the management of such schools".

The court also reprimanded the authorities for permitting such schools to operate, observing that "students do not attend classes in schools; rather spend time in coaching centres. However, they are allowed to take examinations by education boards where they are required to put in requisite minimum attendance".

Specific Examples

The Delhi High Court's intervention was notably prompted by the PIL challenging the eligibility criteria for MBBS/BDS seats under the Delhi State Quota (DSQ). The petitioner alleged that dummy schools were being used as a "virtual platform" for students to falsely claim Delhi domicile benefits, thereby exploiting reserved seats meant for bona fide residents of the National Capital Territory of Delhi. This specific misuse of the system highlighted a critical loophole that incentivized dummy enrollments beyond mere competitive exam preparation.

Following the court's directives, the Delhi government initiated a crackdown, issuing notices to 10 schools and commencing de-recognition processes. Queen Mary School in Model Town was cited as one such case under scrutiny. In a separate legal proceeding (W.P.(C) 1483/2025 MASTER AGASTYA LAKHERA AND OTHERS v. UNION OF INDIA AND ORS.), the Delhi High Court acknowledged CBSE's concerns regarding Glorious Public School being a "dummy school" due to repeated requests for subject changes and deficiencies identified during inspections. CBSE had already issued a show-cause notice to the school, indicating ongoing regulatory action.

Initially, the Delhi government's counsel denied the existence of dummy schools, characterizing the issue as "exaggerated and mis-characterised". However, the CBSE counsel contradicted this by confirming that action had already been taken against over 300 such schools nationwide. The court, in a sharp retort, highlighted the public awareness of this issue, noting that even popular media, such as web series based on Kota's coaching hub, depicted the misuse of dummy schools, quipping, "Your department doesn't seem to have seen it".

The judiciary's strong stance demonstrates its critical role as a "catalyst for accountability" in governance. The courts have stepped in decisively when executive bodies were perceived as slow or in denial, forcing action and bringing significant public attention to the issue. This judicial intervention has not only compelled regulatory bodies like CBSE and state governments to intensify their crackdown but has also underscored the importance of judicial activism in upholding educational integrity and ensuring adherence to the rule of law.

The Delhi High Court's focus on the "domicile quota loophole" as a specific driver for dummy schooling in the capital city reveals another layer of complexity. The practice of students falsely claiming Delhi domicile benefits to secure MBBS/BDS seats, which are meant for bonafide residents, is a clear example of how systemic flaws in admission policies can be exploited through unethical practices like dummy admissions.

This specific angle illustrates that dummy schooling is not a monolithic problem driven solely by exam preparation but can also be fueled by diverse incentives and existing policy loopholes, leading to further inequities in access to higher education.

VIII. Stakeholder Perspectives and Political Commentary

The phenomenon of dummy schooling elicits a wide array of perspectives from various stakeholders, reflecting the complex interplay of educational aspirations, societal pressures, and economic realities.

Educators' Views

Many educators express profound concern over the "devaluation of schools" and the erosion of "holistic learning" that dummy schooling perpetuates. School principals frequently encounter students who are under immense pressure to prepare for engineering and medical exams, often at the expense of their mental well-being and overall development, leading to shattered aspirations. There is a lament that coaching centers have effectively replaced good teachers, and that "strategic/instrumental learning" has eclipsed the traditional, creative blend of science, arts, sports, and theatre that schools aim to provide.

Some teachers have even reported being coerced by school management to award "free marks" for practical exams, leading to a loss of professional self-respect and, more alarmingly, teaching students that "marks are for sale". The President of the Delhi State Public School Management Association, R.C. Jain, has openly criticized the "ugly nexus" between private institutions and coaching centers, asserting that without strict legal action against both, the prevailing culture will not change.

Parents' and Students' Perspectives

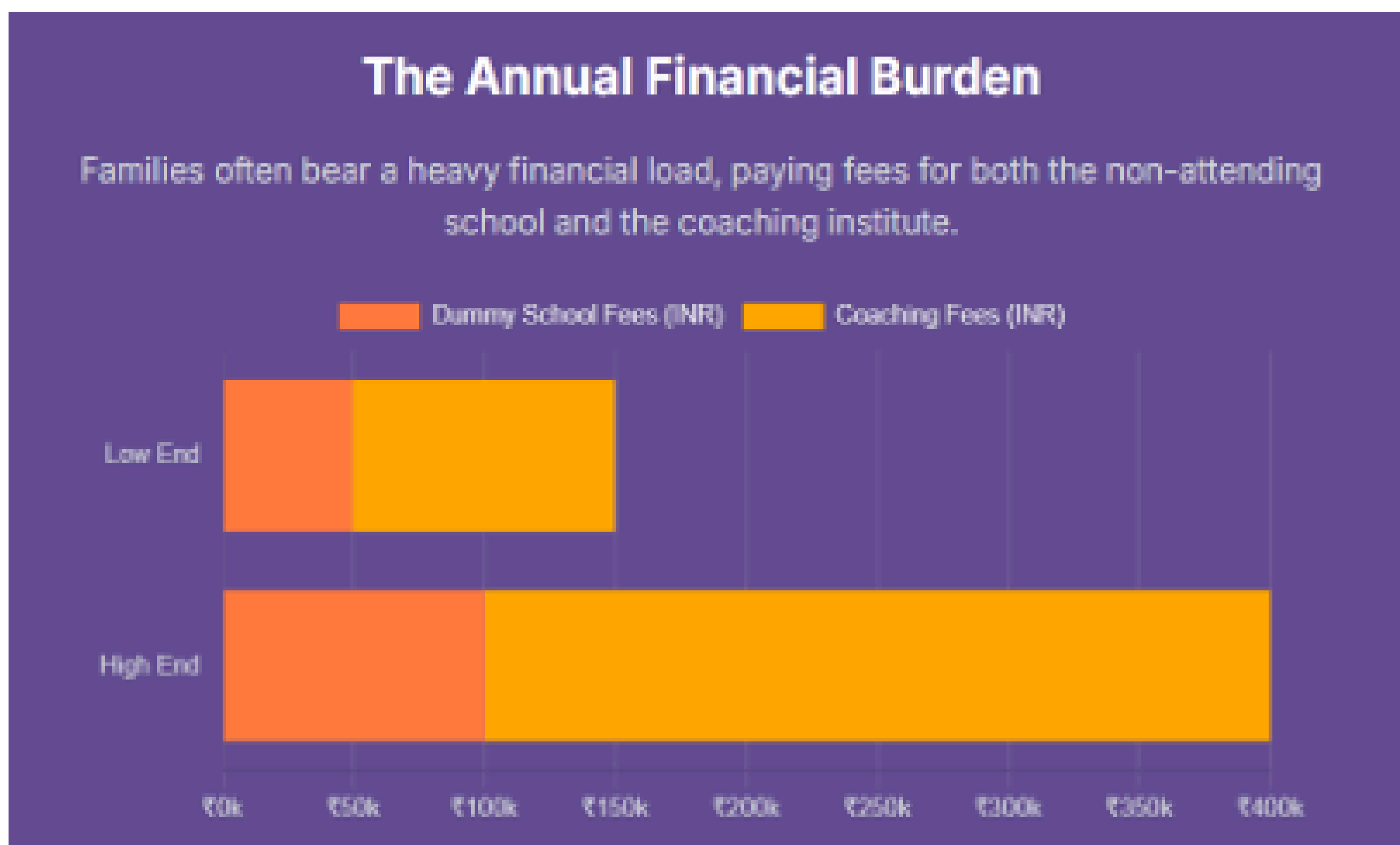
Students and parents often cite several reasons for opting for dummy schools:

- **Time Optimization:** The primary perceived advantage is the saving of time, effort, and energy by eliminating the need for regular school attendance, thereby allowing 6-8 hours daily to be dedicated solely to coaching classes.
- **Focused Preparation:** Dummy schools are seen as providing a distraction-free environment to concentrate exclusively on the competitive exam syllabi, which are often perceived as distinct from the regular school curriculum.
- **State Quota Advantages:** Enrollment in dummy schools in specific states, such as Delhi, is viewed as a strategic means to gain access to reserved seats in higher education institutions.
- **Perceived Better Coaching:** Many students believe that teachers at coaching centers are "better" and possess more experience, particularly those who are IIT graduates, making coaching a more effective learning pathway.

- **Reduced Stress from Schoolwork:** Some students express that this arrangement lessens the burden of balancing traditional schoolwork with intense exam preparation, leading to a perceived reduction in stress.

Despite these perceived benefits, many students enrolled in dummy schools report experiencing immense pressure, stress, and anxiety. They often feel isolated, lacking social interaction, opportunities for friendship, and engagement in extracurricular activities, which significantly impacts their mental peace and overall development.

Some students later express regret over their decision, realizing the importance of regular school for social life and stress relief. Parents, too, bear a significant burden, grappling with high fees and the psychological toll on their children.



The varying perspectives highlight a fundamental "dissonance of expectations" among stakeholders. While policymakers and traditional educators champion holistic development and adherence to legal compliance, a significant segment of parents and students, driven by intense societal pressure and economic aspirations, prioritize competitive exam success above all else.

They often perceive regular schools as inadequate for competitive exam preparation. This gap in priorities creates fertile ground for practices like dummy schooling to thrive, as they offer a perceived pragmatic solution to a deeply ingrained societal problem. Political commentary, while condemning the practice, implicitly acknowledges the systemic failures that give rise to it.

Political Commentary

Political leaders have increasingly weighed in on the dummy schooling issue. Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan has acknowledged that the phenomenon "cannot be ignored" and has called for a "social movement to ostracize" dummy schools. He has also urged private schools to enhance their standards to mitigate the perceived need for external tutoring.

Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot has vocally flagged the issue, particularly in the context of rising student suicides in Kota. He has referred to dummy schools as "fake schools" and stated that enrolling students from classes 9 and 10 in coaching institutes is tantamount to "committing a crime." Gehlot has also pointed to the "parents' fault" in perpetuating this practice.

Congress leader Kanhaiya Kumar has urged the government to regulate coaching centers in light of the increasing student suicides, asserting that "dreams are being sold" and that the "system is making students 'pressure cookers'". The general political sentiment reflects a recognition that the "competition is rising due to the rising race to earn good money," and that the current system requires a "total turnover" because it is "benefitting no one".

This situation also reveals a "victim-perpetrator paradox" concerning parental involvement. While parents are often victims of the high costs and severe mental health tolls associated with dummy schooling, political figures like CM Gehlot explicitly state, "It is also the parents' fault". Educators also note that parents are "increasingly inclined to take shortcuts" and "push their children down narrow paths dictated by societal expectations".

This paradox suggests that simply blaming parents is insufficient; the underlying societal values, economic anxieties, and perceived lack of viable alternatives within the formal system must be comprehensively addressed to shift parental behavior.

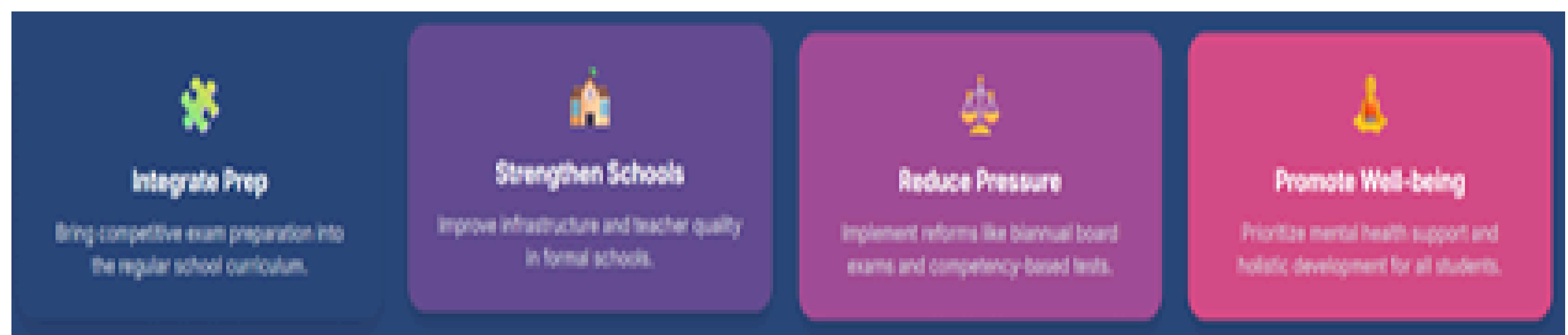
Coaching Industry's Response

The coaching industry, a key player in this ecosystem, offers its own perspective. Some stakeholders argue that traditional schools do not adequately meet the specific needs of students preparing for highly competitive entrance examinations. M.S. Chauhan, director of Vibrant Academy in Kota, while agreeing that dummy school culture should be curbed, questioned why regular schools do not offer an "advanced curriculum and teaching facility that aligns with the training being provided in coaching".

Coaching centers often justify the existence of dummy schools by asserting that their intense coaching schedules leave no practical time for regular schooling. For many coaching institutes, the ultimate objective is financial gain. Dummy schools enable them to effectively double their student numbers with the same faculty, leading to "huge profits without any extra investment".

IX. Towards a Balanced Educational Ecosystem: Reforms and Recommendations

Addressing the complex challenges posed by dummy schooling requires a comprehensive, multi-pronged approach that extends beyond mere prohibitions. It necessitates systemic reforms aimed at fostering a more balanced and equitable educational ecosystem.



Integrating Competitive Exam Preparation into School Curriculum

A fundamental reform involves integrating competitive exam preparation directly into the regular school curriculum. Schools should align their teaching methodologies with the syllabi of competitive exams, particularly those based on the NCERT curriculum, which also forms the foundation for Board exams and tests like CUET. This approach can position schools as "one-stop solutions" for students, thereby reducing the perceived need for external dummy schools.

To achieve this, schools must invest significantly in enhancing their Science and Mathematics faculties, providing structured guidance, counseling, and a supportive environment for exam preparation within the school premises. The objective is to foster essential skills such as problem-solving, critical thinking, and time management as part of the regular school framework, rather than outsourcing them to external coaching centers.

The core dilemma here is the "curriculum-competition conundrum"—how to maintain a broad, holistic school curriculum while effectively preparing students for highly specialized and competitive entrance exams. The proposed "integrated school-coaching programs" are an attempt to resolve this by internalizing the coaching function within schools.

However, this approach carries the inherent risk of schools becoming "mini-coaching centers" rather than truly holistic institutions, potentially compromising the broader vision of NEP 2020 if not carefully balanced. The success of this integration will heavily depend on significant investment in teacher training and resources to ensure that schools can genuinely deliver on both fronts.

Strengthening Formal Schooling

To regain the confidence of parents and students, it is crucial to strengthen the formal schooling system itself. This involves improving infrastructure, enhancing teacher training, and elevating the overall quality of education provided in regular schools. Schools must recommit to providing a well-rounded education that includes robust extracurricular activities and opportunities for social development, aspects that are severely lacking in dummy school environments. Addressing internal issues such as excessive teacher workload and reported corruption in internal assessments is also vital for restoring academic integrity and trust.

Reducing Exam Pressure

Measures aimed at reducing the intense pressure associated with competitive exams are essential.

- **Assessment Reforms:** Shifting from rote learning to competency-based assessments, as advocated by NEP 2020, can fundamentally alter the focus of learning and reduce the singular reliance on high-stakes exams.
- **Biannual Board Exams:** CBSE's decision to conduct Class 10 board exams twice a year starting from 2026 aims to alleviate exam stress and offer students greater flexibility. This allows them to improve their scores and encourages continuous learning rather than last-minute cramming.
- **Common Entrance Tests:** Initiatives like the Common University Entrance Test (CUET) aim to streamline university admissions, which could potentially dilute the singular, overwhelming focus on JEE/NEET.
- **Moderating Entrance Exam Difficulty:** Some political commentary suggests that moderating the difficulty level of entrance exams could allow students to better accommodate a balanced school life alongside preparation.

Enhanced Regulatory Enforcement

Stricter and more consistent regulatory enforcement is crucial. Education boards must rigorously monitor and de-recognize dummy schools, utilizing tools like regular and surprise inspections, potentially enhanced by AI-driven monitoring systems, as explored by CBSE. Robust enforcement of attendance rules and the imposition of penalties on schools found promoting dummy culture are essential.

Government bodies should conduct regular audits and blacklist non-compliant schools. Additionally, legal frameworks should be strictly applied against misleading advertisements and any cartelization practices by coaching institutes that exploit student aspirations.

Promoting Holistic Development

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 lays significant emphasis on promoting holistic development through multidisciplinary and experiential learning. This includes integrating arts, sports, and vocational training into the curriculum to ensure the all-round growth of students.

Initiatives such as "Active CISCE" are designed to promote physical health and fitness by integrating physical activity and sports assessment into the curriculum. Furthermore, schools should prioritize providing psychological counseling and career guidance to support students' mental well-being and to broaden their career perspectives beyond the traditional engineering and medical fields.



Role of NIOS

The National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) presents a legitimate and regulated alternative for students seeking flexible learning pathways and the ability to appear for board exams without mandatory regular school attendance. NIOS offers flexibility, can be more cost-effective compared to dummy schools, and does not impose strict attendance or practical requirements, making it a viable and legal option for competitive exam aspirants.

However, there is a need to increase awareness about NIOS and ensure its widespread acceptance for higher education admissions, as some individuals may perceive its certificates differently from those issued by conventional boards.

This highlights a significant "structural vs. symptomatic" reform debate. Many current reforms focus on banning dummy schools, enforcing attendance, and regulating coaching centers. However, critics argue that these measures primarily address the "symptom of a larger problem". The underlying issues are the intense competition, pervasive societal pressure, and the perceived inadequacy of the formal education system to prepare students for these high-stakes exams.

A truly comprehensive approach is needed, one that combines stricter enforcement with fundamental systemic changes. This includes reducing overall exam pressure through policy adjustments like biannual board exams, promoting vocational education, and genuinely fostering holistic development as envisioned by NEP 2020.

Without addressing these demand-side pressures and improving the quality of regular schools, a ban on dummy schools might simply push the problem underground or lead to the emergence of new, unregulated forms of "shadow education." The role of NIOS as a *regulated* alternative becomes crucial here, offering a legitimate path for flexible learning while formal schools undergo broader, necessary reforms.

NGO and Community Initiatives

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community initiatives play a vital role in bridging educational gaps, particularly in rural areas. Organizations like CRY America are actively working to improve access to quality education by mobilizing communities, providing teacher training, introducing digital learning programs, and establishing community-based learning centers. These initiatives promote quality education, address issues of unequal access, and support holistic development, offering valuable models for broader educational reform across the country.

X. Conclusion

Dummy schooling represents a complex and multifaceted challenge deeply embedded within India's highly competitive education system. While it offers perceived advantages in terms of focused preparation and time optimization for competitive examinations, its proliferation comes at a severe cost. The practice compromises students' holistic development, undermines academic integrity, and contributes significantly to mental health concerns, as tragically evidenced by the alarming suicide rates in coaching hubs like Kota.

Furthermore, it exacerbates socio-economic disparities by favoring those who can afford dual educational expenses and highlights systemic flaws within the education system, including an often-unregulated nexus between schools and coaching centers.

Addressing this pervasive phenomenon requires a comprehensive, multi-pronged approach that extends beyond mere prohibitions. It necessitates stricter regulatory enforcement by bodies such as CBSE and state governments, coupled with a fundamental overhaul of the existing education system. Reforms must prioritize integrating competitive exam preparation within a strengthened formal schooling framework, thereby reducing the perceived need for external coaching.

Simultaneously, efforts to reduce overall exam pressure through policy changes, such as biannual board examinations and competency-based assessments, are crucial. Ultimately, ensuring equitable access to quality education and fostering a balanced learning environment that values well-rounded individuals over mere test scores is paramount for nurturing the future of India's youth and upholding the integrity of its educational landscape.

XI. Suggested Pattern for Researching

To begin researching for the CBSE Committee, participating members should follow the steps below:

- Start by understanding your allocated portfolio—whether it represents a government official, educationist, policymaker, or institutional stakeholder. Study their background, area of responsibility, and their involvement (if any) in the Indian education system or relevant reforms.
- As there may not be a single definitive source outlining your representative's stance on the agenda, delegates must explore multiple resources: official statements, interviews, government websites, policy papers, media articles, academic journals, or social media platforms. Reviewing initiatives and positions taken by similar roles in past education reforms will also be helpful.
- Once acquainted with the portfolio, begin in-depth research on the committee agenda. Use the background guide as a base and expand your understanding through national policy documents (like NEP 2020), CBSE circulars, academic research, parliamentary debates, media reports, and government publications. Break down the agenda into key sub-topics or problem areas for focused analysis.
- Prepare opening speeches and issue-based interventions, including a list of actionable recommendations that CBSE or the Ministry of Education could consider. Ground all your claims in verifiable data—use government reports, statistical findings, or statements from reliable sources to support your arguments.
- To strengthen your performance in committee, it is advisable to study the other delegates' portfolios as well. This may help in identifying points of divergence, potential areas of collaboration, or opportunities to raise well-informed questions.

Finally, we expect all delegates to engage deeply with the agenda and their portfolio, aiming to create a constructive and insightful simulation. Should you have any queries, feel free to reach out to the undersigned.

Note: *This guide is not meant to be exhaustive or authoritative. The brief is meant only to provide the participants with a modicum of information upon which further research can be built and does not in any manner whatsoever reflect the views or political leanings of the Executive Board. The Executive Board shall maintain neutrality at all points in time and do not have any political affiliations.*

Happy Researching !!

XII. Focus Questions

Let us now see some focus areas that can be sought during the discussion in the committee:

- How can the Indian education system effectively balance the demands of competitive examination preparation with the need for holistic student development, ensuring that academic rigor does not compromise mental well-being and social skills?
- What comprehensive measures should be implemented to address the severe mental health crisis, including rising suicide rates, among students in competitive exam coaching hubs like Kota, and what role should schools, parents, and government bodies play in providing robust psychological support?
- To what extent should formal schools integrate competitive examination syllabi into their regular curriculum, and what resources and training are necessary to empower traditional schools to become "one-stop solutions" for students, thereby reducing reliance on external coaching and dummy schools?
- How can existing regulatory frameworks, such as CBSE attendance mandates and the RTE Act, be more effectively enforced to curb the proliferation of dummy schooling, and what innovative mechanisms (e.g., technology, inter-agency cooperation) can bridge the "policy-practice gap"?
- What ethical responsibilities do coaching institutes bear in the context of dummy schooling, particularly concerning misleading advertisements, age restrictions for enrollment, and their symbiotic relationship with non-attending schools, and how can these be legally and morally enforced?
- How can the NEP 2020's vision of holistic, competency-based learning be fully realized to alleviate exam pressure and shift the focus away from rote memorization, thereby reducing the perceived necessity of dummy schooling?
- Given the significant financial burden dummy schooling places on families, what policy interventions can be introduced to mitigate socio-economic disparities in access to quality competitive exam preparation, ensuring equitable opportunities for all students?
- What is the appropriate role of judicial intervention in regulating dummy schooling and related practices, and how can court directives be translated into sustained, actionable policy changes by executive bodies?
- How can the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) be promoted and integrated as a legitimate and widely accepted alternative for students seeking flexible learning pathways, without inadvertently encouraging the circumvention of regular schooling?

- Beyond regulations and bans, what societal shifts and awareness campaigns are necessary to alter parental perceptions and reduce the intense pressure on students to pursue narrow career paths, thereby fostering a more balanced approach to education and future aspirations?

XIII. List of Valid Sources

1. Government Reports
2. PTI, PIB
3. Government Websites
4. Government run News channels i.e., Sansad TV, DD News
5. Standing Committee Reports/ Commission Reports
6. RTI Proofs
7. Parliamentary Standing Committee Reports
8. Questions and Answers of the Parliament
9. CBSE Circulars & Notifications

XIV. Important Links

Constitution of India - <https://www.india.gov.in/my-government/constitution-india>

Ministry of Education - <https://www.education.gov.in/>

Ministry of Information and Broadcasting - <https://mib.gov.in/>

Central Board of Secondary Education - <https://www.cbse.gov.in/>

Supreme Court Judgement Archives - <https://main.sci.gov.in/judgments>

Government Bill Archives - <https://sansad.in/ls/knowledge-centre/government-bills>

Lok Sabha Q/A's - <https://sansad.in/ls/questions/questions-and-answers>

Rajya Sabha Q/A's - <https://sansad.in/rs/questions/questions-and-answers>

Press Trust of India - <https://www.ptinews.com/>

Press Information Bureau - <https://pib.gov.in/indexd.aspx>

RTI Archives - <https://rtionline.gov.in/>