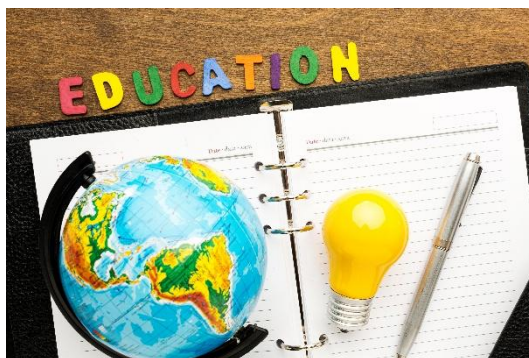


Charu Malhotra, Co-Founder & Managing Director, Primus Partners

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1 in 5 students struggle with problem-solving and critical thinking: Report



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Article Content:

The report emphasizes shifting from rote learning to competency-based education, integrating innovation, digital skills, and real-world problem-solving into curricula.

In Short

- Only 9% of students demonstrate high readiness in essential skills
- 1 in 5 exhibit low readiness in critical skills
- 30% of government and 13% of private school students exhibit low readiness for real-life application of learning.

As India endeavours to nurture and realise US \$80 billion creative economy potential, the leading home-grown consultancy firm, Primus Partners, deep dives into the talent pool,, spotlighting key gaps in the students' education and preparedness with 21st century skillsets. In its recently released report titled 'Shaping Education to Nurture the \$80 Billion Creative Economy', Primus Partners attempts to find answers to evaluate the preparedness of Indian students to meet the demand of this dynamic landscape and the changes needed in the education and skill-building frameworks. Emphasizing the integration of critical skills into curricula, it calls for policy interventions and frameworks to prepare students for a world driven by innovation and creativity.

KEY INSIGHTS OF THE REPORT INCLUDE:

1. Only 9% of students demonstrate high readiness in essential skills like design thinking, critical thinking, and research, indicating strong problem-solving abilities and an investigative mind-set. High readiness would also imply students create real-world solutions, think critically, and verify information sources rigorously
2. 30% of government and 13% of private school students exhibit low readiness for real-life application of learning, indicating a gap in integrating theoretical knowledge with practical

application.

3. 1 in 5 exhibit low readiness in critical skills like problem-solving, critical thinking, and research, often resulting in superficial engagement and requiring additional support.

4. Private schools excel in practical learning, while public schools demonstrate strong observation skills and responsiveness to environmental stimuli.

5. A small group of students, particularly from IB boards, demonstrate high readiness in design thinking and real-world problem solving, but their numbers are limited.

Sharing her perspective on the findings, Charu Malhotra, Co-Founder and Managing Director, Primus Partners, said, "To fuel India's \$80 billion creative economy, the education system must evolve from traditional rote learning to a competency-based curriculum that fosters innovation and creative problem-solving. Employers must also take the lead by prioritizing re-skilling and assessing competencies within their organizations to ensure they are equipped for the future. Digital skills such as logic, process thinking, problem-solving, and creativity have become indispensable in this new era. To better understand how ready our students are to thrive in this dynamic landscape, we conducted an in-depth survey, which forms the foundation of this report. It is crucial that we empower the next generation with the right skills to navigate and contribute to the creative economy."

The report also explores various methods for students and the nation at large to build and hone their core competencies, along with actionable strategies, including pedagogical shifts that can catalyse the development of India's youth. It features insights and perspectives from some of the leading education and industry experts, including Sunanda Sudhir, Principal Middle School at Pathways School Noida; Manit Jain, Co-Founder of The Heritage Group of Schools; Sunil Razdan, Chief Coordinator at Gyan Shakti Vidyalaya; and Mahesh Balakrishnan, Senior Manager, South Asia at International Baccalaureate; Sudipta Mukherjee, Educator, Curriculum Developer, Teacher Trainer, and Dyslexia Language Therapist; Shweta Khurana, Director for Asia Pacific and Japan, Government Partnerships and Initiatives, Global Government Affairs at Intel Corporation; Pooja Kwatra, Educational Consultant, Curriculum Developer, and Teacher Trainer; and Sabeer Bhatia, Co-Founder of Showreel and Hotmail.

SAMPLE SIZE AND METHODOLOGY

The "Shaping Education to Nurture the \$80 Billion Creative Economy" report by Primus Partners was created basis a survey of over 1,500 students from over 22 states and union territories in India, ensuring broad geographical and demographic representation. The target population included students from Class VI-VIII, IX-X, and XI-XII, studying in government and private schools across South, West, East, North, and Central India. A structured questionnaire was developed using Google Forms, featuring multiple-choice questions (MCQs) designed to assess eight key skills critical for success in the creative economy: Problem-Solving, Critical Thinking & Creative Solution, Brainstorming, Teamwork, Real-Life Application of Learnings, Design Thinking, Observation Skills, and Research Skills. The questions were scenario-based, encouraging students to apply their skills in real-world contexts, with four response options representing different proficiency levels-low, medium, and high.