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## Education and Poverty Correlation with Society and Economy

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**Abstract** Education plays a pivotal role in reducing economic poverty by equipping individuals with skills and opportunities for socio-economic progress. In rural areas, poverty is exacerbated by limited job prospects, low wages, and lack of access to education. Similarly, urban communities face poverty due to systemic factors like healthcare, employment disparities, inequality, social exclusion, and restricted educational access. Education also impacts and mitigates mental biases, enhancing critical thinking, decision-making, and reducing the influence of cognitive biases. Biases in educational stream selection perpetuate gender and social stereotypes, restricting opportunities and hindering academic paths. While critics argue that educational systems reinforce inequality and perpetuate cycles of poverty and wealth, others attribute student success to resilience or improved intellectual abilities. Though poverty is a complex issue, education offers the most viable and exciting solutions. It profoundly shapes the mental, physical, social, and economic aspects of individuals, serving academic, vocational, and societal purposes. Countries like Germany and South Korea, which boast high literacy rates, coincidentally have low unemployment rates, highlighting education's role in economic growth and human development.

**Keywords** Education, individual, critical thinking, Development

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### 1. Personal beliefs and possible biases.

Before beginning, I'll state my personal beliefs which can be a turn out of possible biases. I am irreligious, am an Atheist, politically I am at the hard centre and I am an enthusiast in philosophy, literature and history [1-4]. I have an highly Iconoclastic nature, so I may be more pessimistic on the issues I state rather than being optimal.

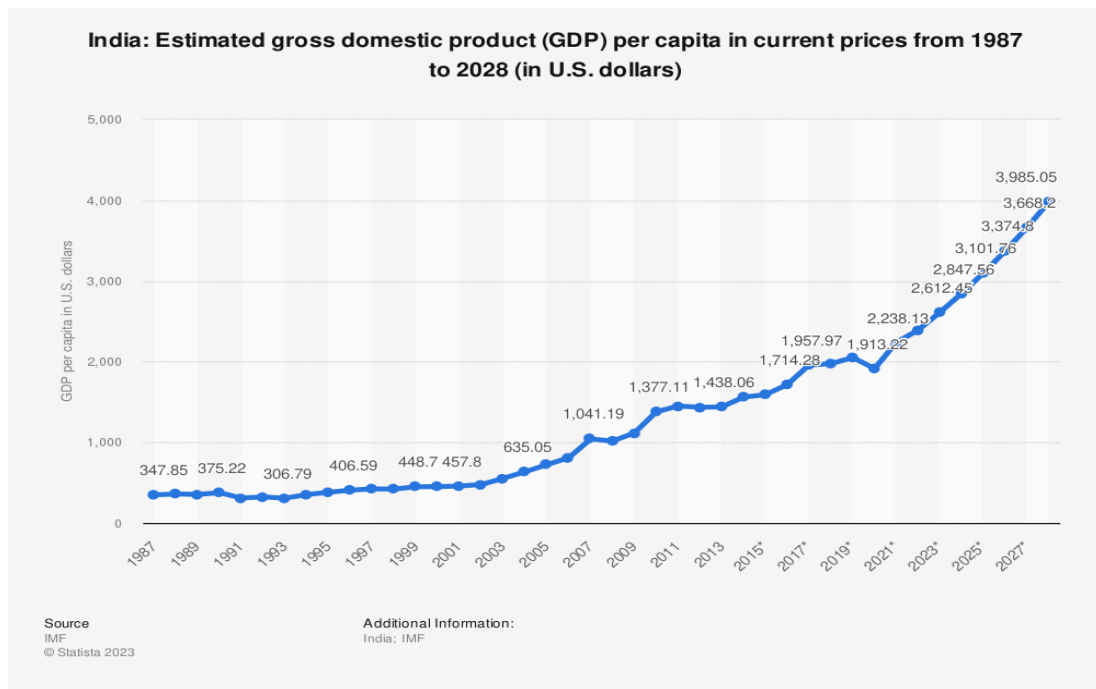
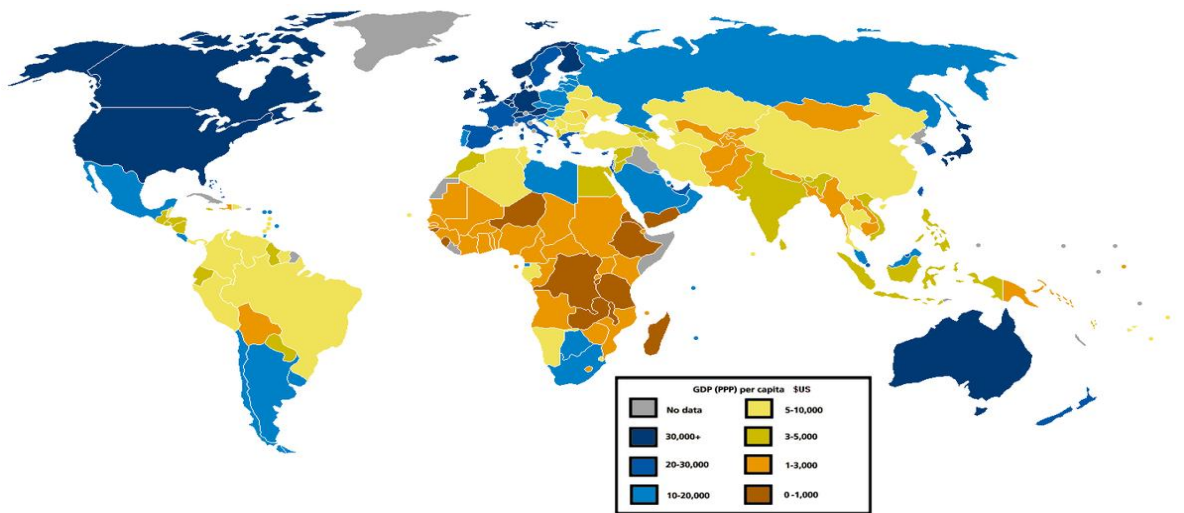
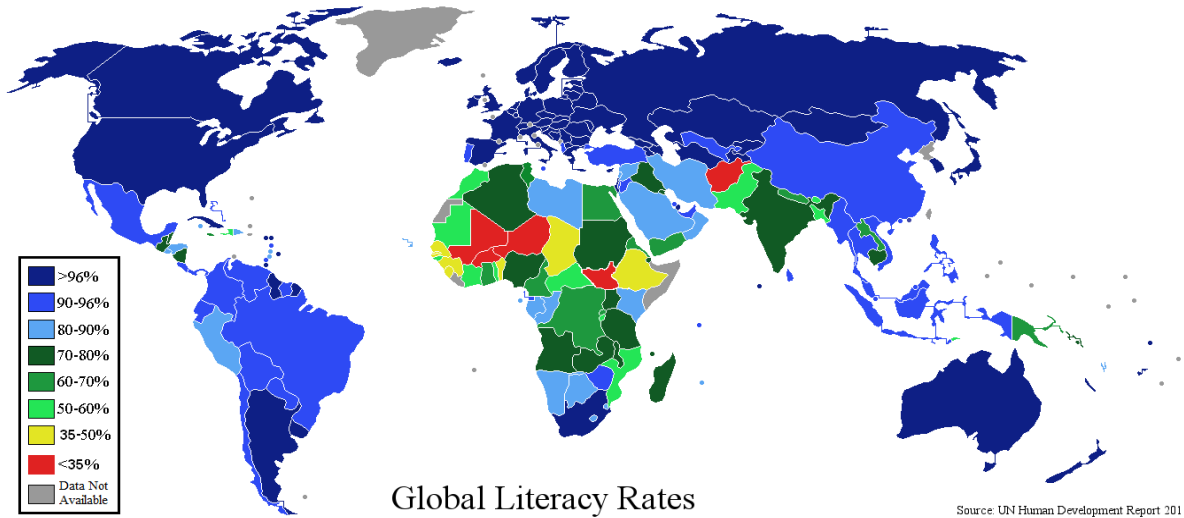
### 2. What do I mean by education?

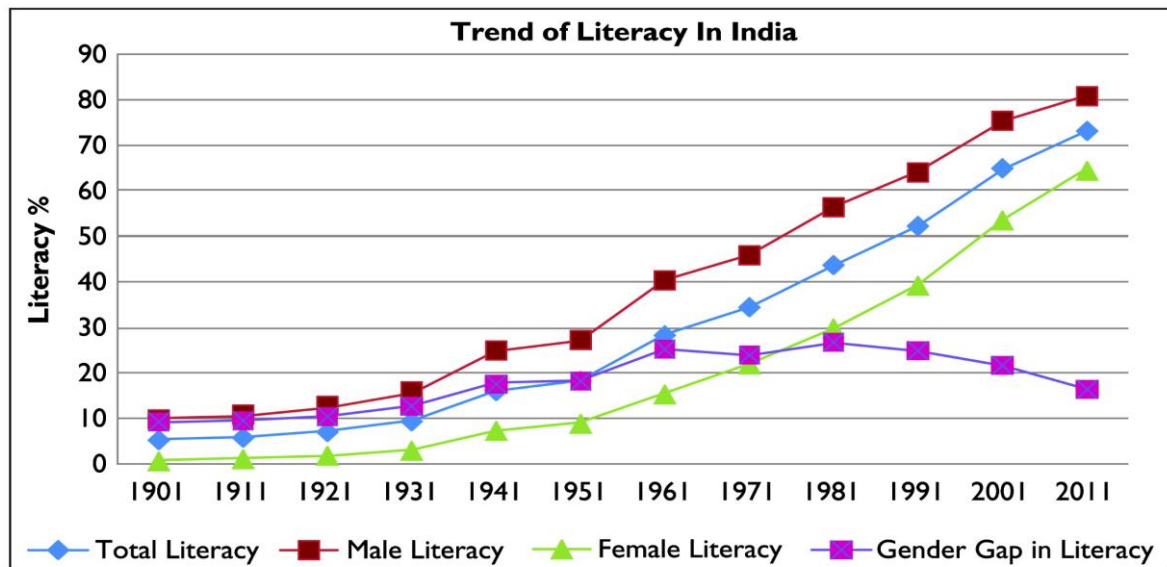
I think it would be fair to first give the meaning of education, the process of receiving or giving systematic instruction, especially at a school or university [5].

And its contemporary, i.e literacy, the ability to read and write.

Let's move on to find out whether education and our economy are correlated or not, because we got our meanings right, I hope, maybe there is some problem with this itself but that's a later topic [6]







**Figure I.** Literacy Rates and Gender Disparity in India

**Source:** Based on data from Census of India 1901–2011.

More the gdp of the country, highly likely it's to show signs of development [7]. We can make this into a syllogism.

P1 - Increase in GDP PPP leads to development

P2 - Increase in education leads to increase in GDP

C - Therefore, education leads to increase in development

### 3. Positives of Education

I suggest that the prevailing belief in the goodness of development is closely tied to the positive role of education [8]. How can we be sure that education consistently leads to development, and is the assumed inverse link between poverty and development accurate? Additionally, are there other factors influencing education, and does it always have entirely positive outcomes? [9].

I'll lay the positives first,

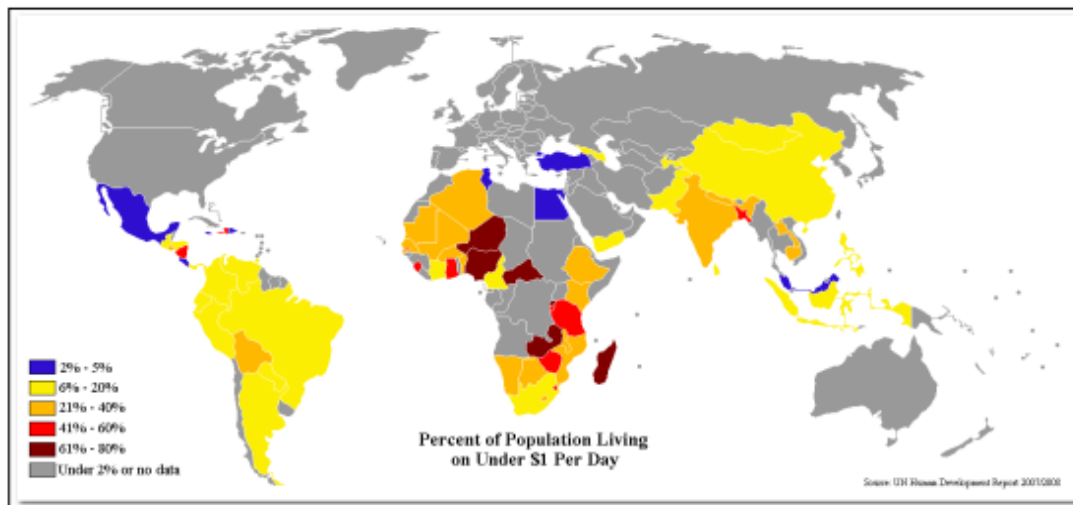
1. As I stated, education leads to an increase in GDP, hence development.
2. Education leads to an increase in technology and natural sciences.
3. It leads to development of new ideas, morals and systems.
4. Personal Development
5. Empowerment
6. Economic Opportunities
7. Social Mobility
8. Cultural Understanding
9. Health Literacy
10. Innovation
11. Social Cohesion
12. Global Awareness
13. Personal Fulfillment

### 4. Poverty: Economical, Philosophical

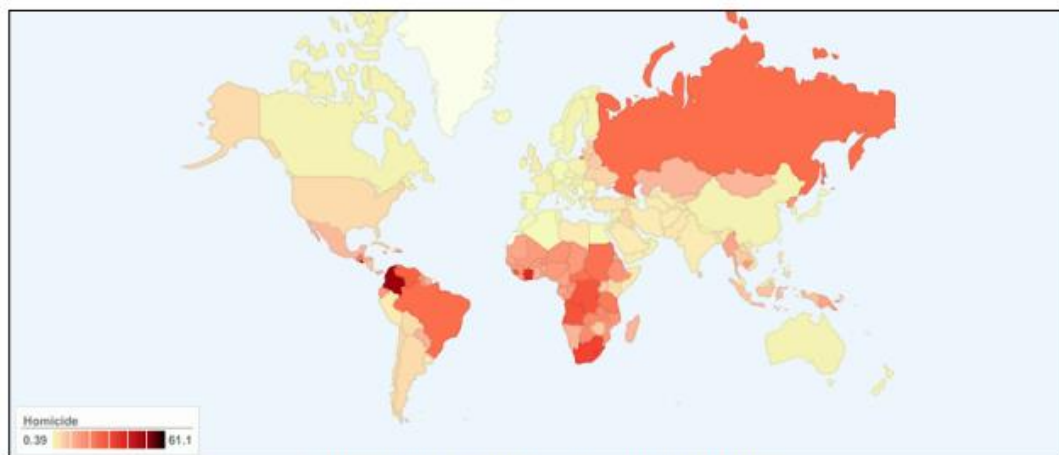
Now I'll get to the other half of the topic, which is poverty. I have put poverty into two main portions - one being economical and the other being philosophical [10]. Before all of that I'll define poverty, here's the dictionary definition - it is the state of one who lacks a usual or socially acceptable amount of money or material possessions. This is the economical one, let's talk about this for a while.



So, if there is economic deprivation, the rate of crime will be more, I suppose



Source: UN Development Report 2007/2008



Source: United Nations Development Report 2008

The assumption quite checks out. Another assumption can be made that poverty leads to instability, I think an example of 90s Russia is the most fitting here [11]. As a Russian immigrant, Konstantin Kisin said, referring to his book “An Immigrant’s Love Letter to the West”

“After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia was in complete chaos, an authoritarian communist society suddenly changed into a liberal democracy, from a state of unfreedom to freedom at an instant, you saw inflation go above the roof, and a constant threat of anarchy [12]. At the domestic level, nearly everyone went from a respectable job or position to poverty. If you were to be an average middle class doctor in Russia at that time you would have utter chaos even in your family, you would see your food supplies be cut short, your job worth nothing anymore, your son would be conscripted to go the chechnya to fight a decade long war and your daughter would be sold as a prostitute [13]. The major cause of all this was economic deprivation in the Soviet and then Russian society. This is what poverty can do in a highly educated and scientific society.

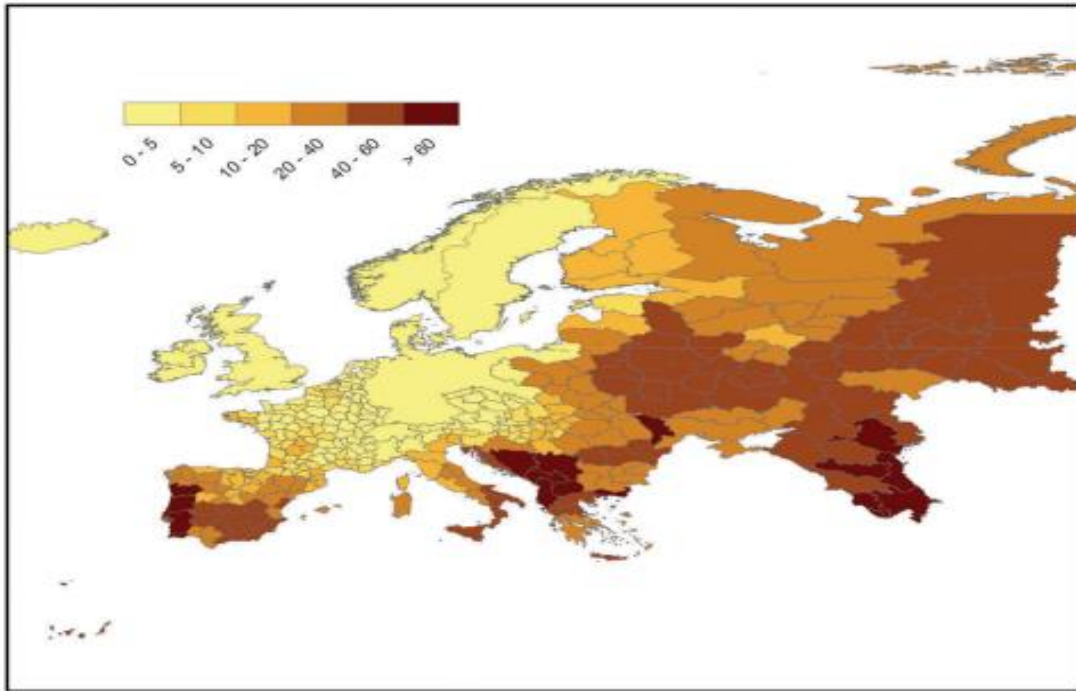
These are 2 causes of economic poverty in society, and it doesn’t sound quite fun. But is all of it bad? I’ll come to that later. I have to define the philosophical explanation of poverty now, referring to the Oxford dictionary of philosophy - poverty is a state of denial of a thought or idea to be better or to concede the fact that our own may be incorrect. According to me that is mental poverty. I have written a book, Thoughts of a sixteen year old, where I talk about such poverty, which’ll be published by mid-March, I hope [14].

Such poverty can be seen everywhere now, as everyone has a doctorate from the most prestigious university of the world, i.e the whatsapp university. Such mental poverty has positives although, as it leads to social cohesion, as seen in the history of our species, we have flourished by creating fictions. I’ll talk about these fictions later.



### 5. Negatives (including dogma and religion)

Does anyone here believe that education is good? How about all the good? So there is only one thing in the world that is all good, ie. education, I'll play with the opposing racket, are we sure that education is all good? There are positives which are accepted by all of us, but there are several negatives which have huge consequences, but these are some negatives which we either don't want to talk about or have made ourselves too incredulous to talk about. Education can't be a reliable source to check the society itself, I would concede that society tries to interfere with its pathetic nonsense and tries to add it to the education system for the sake of cohesion. There have been several examples in history regarding this. Take one of the most literate areas in the world during the 1930s, you know what I am talking about Germany [15].



Illiteracy in 1930.

### Data by Kirk (1946)

A huge historical question arises, How can one of the most literate societies in the world turn into one of the most immoral and homicidal societies?[16] How can one of the most educated people on the planet elect a leader that is just like a movie villain? If education is good for the society it would entail that either what happened was a critical decision or something interfered with education. What about Kurt Waldheim, who served in the presidential office of the federal republic of Austria, and was the UN secretary general from 1972-81? If you don't know who I am talking about, you all really need to educate yourself. Kurt Waldheim was in the Waffen SS in world war 2 and had allegations of several war crimes by the United States Departments of Justice and of State. And how can I forget the poor people of Darfur, who had been given the Kofi Annan way and now there is nearly no one left to kill. Is this the height of mental poverty or not? Maybe, we need to relook into the definition of "education".

I'll follow several philosophers like Nietzsche, Kirkegard, Camus on their proposition that the herd always corrupts the ideas of the genius for its own sake [17]. I think that society plays a huge role in it. So, I believe this is fair evidence for the connection between Education, Poverty, Society and the economy.

I think most of the problem lies in mental poverty or the "philosophical" part of poverty. If we change this we can attempt to ask and solve these questions.

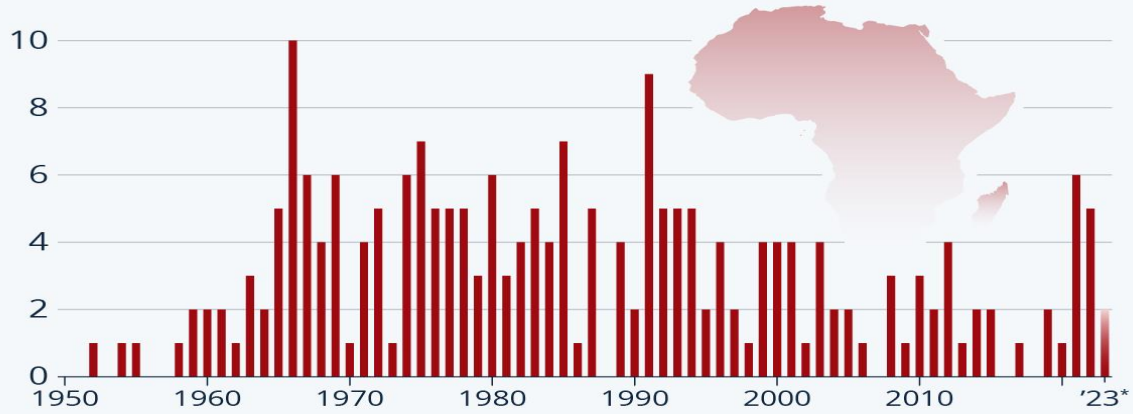
Solution of poverty is prosperity. What do you need for prosperity - entrepreneurs? Let's take an example of a place which is known mostly for its extreme poverty and military coups, Africa!

Here's some data to begin with [18]. I don't have explicit data for poverty, but here are some that correlate.



# A Renewed Wave of Coups in Africa?

Number of coups d'état (successful and unsuccessful) per year in Africa since 1950



\* As of July 31, 2023

Sources: Powell and Thyne, Cline Center at the University of Illinois, VOA News, Statista research

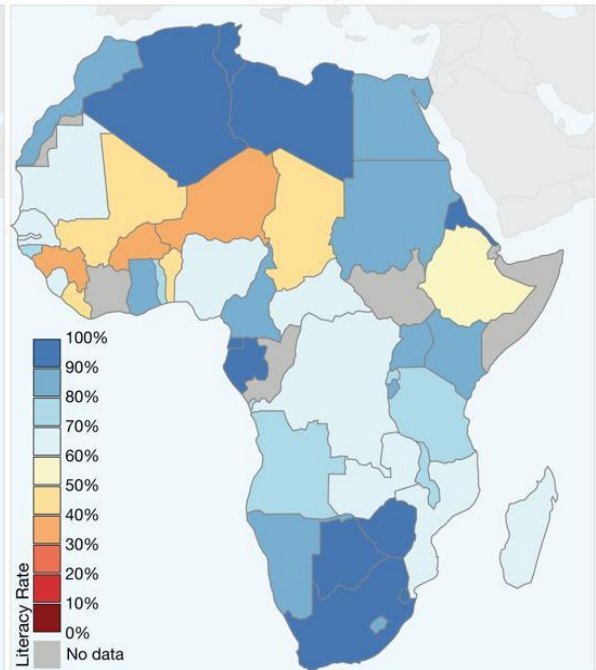
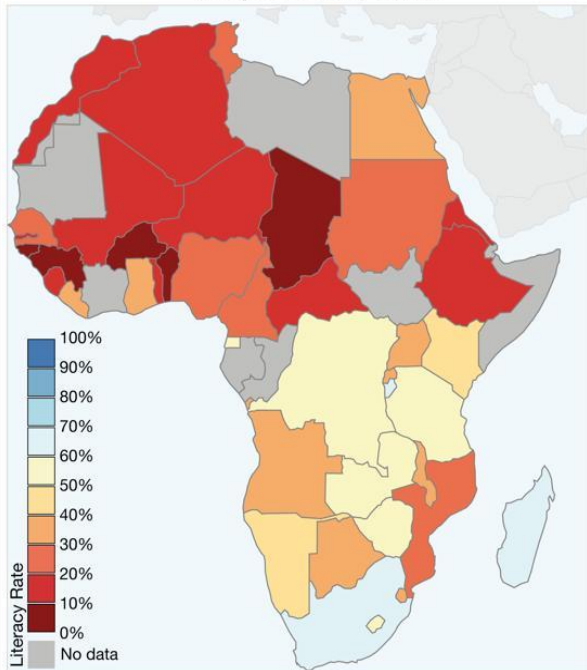


## Literacy rate in Africa by generation



Literacy rate of the older generation (65 years and older)

Literacy rate of the younger generation (15-24 years)



Data source: UNESCO (latest available data)  
This data visualization is part of AfricaInData.org – an Our World in Data project.

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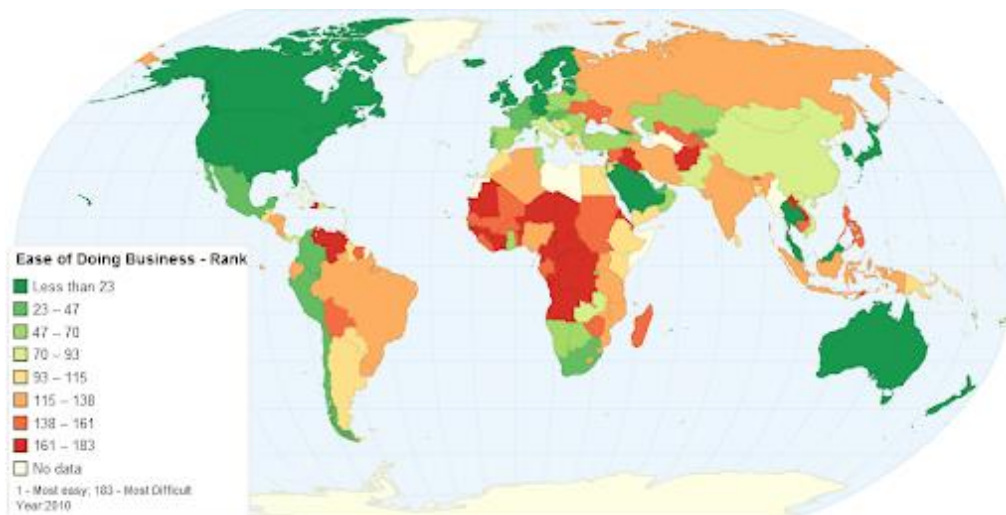
I posit that we all agree that violence is not a good thing and it's rare that violence leads to a solution. Africa is a place where we saw a decline of violence since the 2010s, which was great news for Africans and for non-Africans [19]. Unfortunately, we see it rise again, which is very concerning especially for the continent in which we are standing. So, I showed a map of the literacy rate of Africans between the ages of 15-24 years. This is good progress, but let's coup back to the map of the Coups in Africa. Here are mostly countries that once were in the French Colonial Empire. I'll talk about them as I am well read in the history of that region.

Most recently I think it was Niger, where the government was overthrown by the military [20]. Burkina Faso had two putsches in 8 months. Sudan is in another bloody draining civil war. Things are not looking good for Sub-Saharan Africa. So how does education have a relation with this?

There has been a lot of video footage of these coups taking place, with much of it showing the youth marching through the streets, [21] burning French, EU, and other flags, spraying gunshots, and destroying infrastructure. Unfortunately, the footage is too upsetting to display right now. The question that arises in my mind is that if the literacy rate of the people belonging to the same age group is at an all time high, why are we seeing an increase in violence? Perhaps, the progress of education hasn't fulfilled its goal? Or is there something wrong with education itself? Or is it the definition of education that is causing the problem? Or is there some other political issue causing the issue?

The majority of historians concur that Europe's brutal colonialist rule is the primary reason Africa is lagging behind other emerging countries like India, who itself was a colony of European nations, majorly Britain and part of it were under France and Portugal [22].

But I would concede that this answer, that colonialism is the reason why Africa is behind most of the world, is a banal one or even an excuse, and I am glad that my position is shared a Senegalese entrepreneur, Magatte Wade, she claims that the idea of Socialism and Communism has played a role too in Africa. Her hypothesis is that, after WW2 when the French and the British were forced to get rid of their colonies by the USA (as it was a treaty by the allies with the US to do so after the War), Africa was at last in this decolonization [23]. Most of the social reformers or freedom fighters were belonging to the opposite side of the political spectrum as compared to the western liberal capitalists. As the Cold War began, Europe and the US were looking for allies, so they wished to look South, but Africans didn't want to collaborate with the Europeans because of the past Africa had with Europe [24]. The new leaders of Africa would do anything to not align with the Western Liberal Democracies. So with whom did they align with? The Soviet Union ofcourse. Leading to a society with minimal economic freedom and a very low chance to open up new companies. This still has an impact on the ability to start businesses. Here's some data to back this up:-

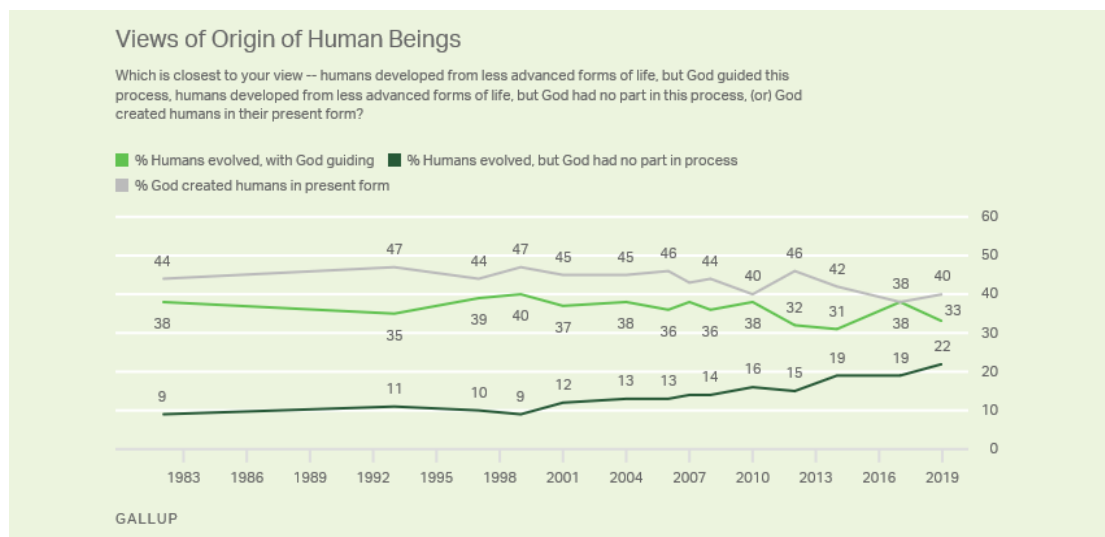


In India we have a start-up revolution going on. There are constant workshops being organised, especially for us young adolescents in our country, [25] creating so many jobs and increasing our economy, there are still a huge number of people who are desperate to move to the West, but not as much as in Africa. I'll quote Magatte Wade herself,



“I’m literally haunted, I have grown up with stories, stories after another of people like you who pack themselves into little fisherman’s boats trying to make it to Europe in search for a better life, and oftentimes the boats tips and they are at the bottom of the ocean right now, serving as fish food [26]. I am haunted because when they decide to take the air route, all of a sudden somewhere above England, where we are, a body drops from the plane because it was thought that it was a good idea to hide in the landing gear of that plane on their way to, looking for work in Europe. I am haunted because when they think the air route is not safe, the sea route is not safe, they go for the land route, then they get stuck in Libya. And when you are stuck in Libya on your way again to Europe to get a job, right now someone like me (referring to the colour of her skin), I am sold for exactly between 300 and 500 dollars. Yes, we are in 2023 and yet we have this going on! What do they have in common? [27] The only thing they have in common is that they wanted a better life.” This is from her speech, “Unlocking Africa’s potential” at the Alliance for Responsible Citizenship. It’s available on YouTube and I urge all of you to look at it, it is highly thought provoking.

I will conclude my paper by saying that, based on the data I have, I am confident that there is significant manipulation of education [28]. This fiddling, I am talking about here, is mostly done due to religion. For eg:- Gallup’s survey indicated that belief in creationism has been relatively stable, although it has declined slightly in recent years. Its most recent poll found that 40% of Americans still believe in creationism [29].



(from Wikipedia) However, as of 2014 at least 13 US states allow pro-creationist content to be taught either in charter schools or private schools that are at least partially supported by government funding.

I’ll take another place where the face of education is completely shifted to an institution of spreading hatred, the middle east [30], particularly Palestine. From researches and articles in the Israel Forever Foundation based in Washington.

Antisemitism has been a concern in the Palestinian education system, particularly in textbooks and educational materials. Critics argue that certain materials used in Palestinian schools have contained inflammatory rhetoric, stereotypes [31], and historical distortions that perpetuate negative views of Jews and Israel. Some textbooks have been accused of promoting hatred and intolerance, contributing to a hostile environment.

Meanwhile, in Palestinian schools “kindergartners have performed at graduation exercises with blood-soaked hands while toting plastic AK-47s and dedicating their lives to jihad, and older children have been recruited to hide explosives on their bodies to transform themselves into shahids - a new generation of kindling for radical Islam’s cult of death.

In my own country, India, you see a rise of Hindu nationalism, according to Pew Research

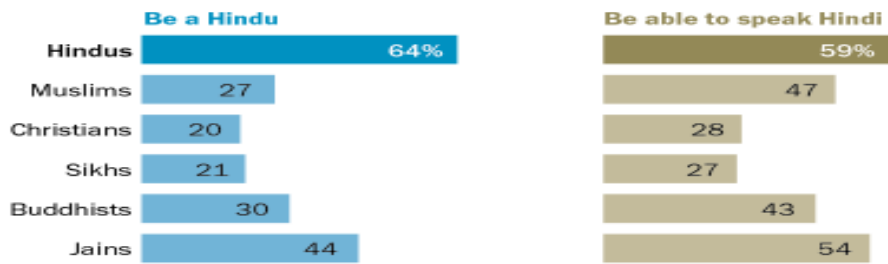
Hindus are more likely than other Indians to associate national identity with the Hindi language [32]. While India has dozens of major languages, a majority of Hindus (59%) feel that being able to speak Hindi is very important to being truly Indian. Hindus who link their religion with national identity tend also to link the Hindi language with being authentically Indian [33].





### Hindus in India say being Hindu, speaking Hindi very important to being ‘truly’ Indian

% of Indian adults who say it is **very** important to \_\_\_\_ in order to be truly Indian

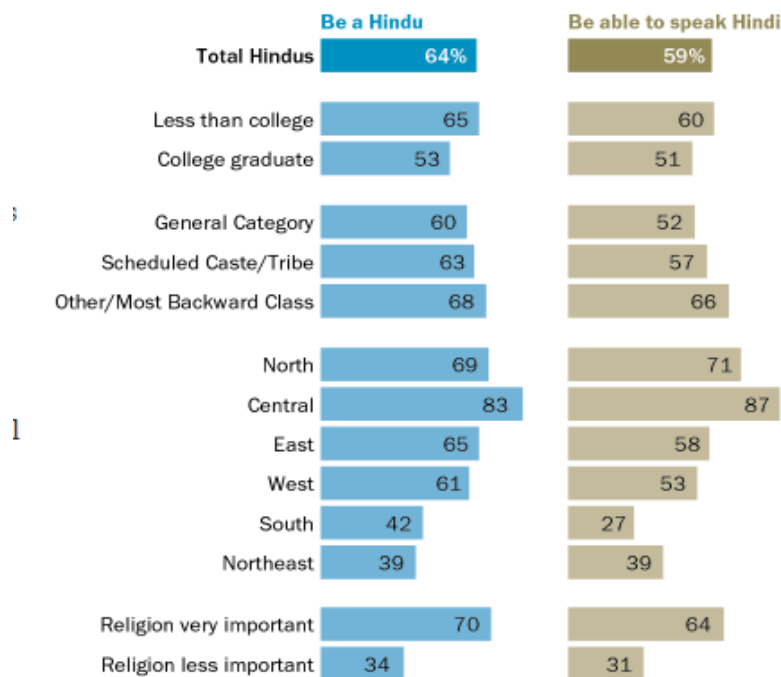


Source: Survey conducted Nov. 17, 2019-March 23, 2020, among adults in India. See Methodology for details. "Religion in India: Tolerance and Segregation"

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### Hindus’ views on religion and national identity vary by region

% of Indian Hindus who say it is very important to \_\_\_\_ in order to be truly Indian



Source: Survey conducted Nov. 17, 2019-March 23, 2020, among adults in India. See Methodology for details. "Religion in India: Tolerance and Segregation"

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Hindus with a college degree are less likely to connect language and religion with national identity. Roughly half of Hindu college graduates (53%) tie being Hindu with being truly Indian, compared with nearly two-thirds of other Hindus (65%). Religious observance plays a role as well: Among Hindus who say religion is very important in their lives [34], 70% say being Hindu is very important to being truly Indian, compared with 34% among less religiously committed Hindus.

The concern I find with this is that Hindu Nationalism is on the rise in our country. It's just like Christian Nationalism in the USA. According to the Guardian, this ideology is tearing India apart, several Indian humanists, rationalists (anti-superstitionists) and Atheists like Dr. Narendra Shabolkar, Malleshappa M. Kalburgi and Govind Pansare have been shot dead for calling for a scientific temperament and ending blind faith.

The issue here is that increase in Education leads to decrease in religious faith, which has been seen all across the world, especially the Western world. Which leaves an extremist minority, which may perform things I told you above.

## 6. Conclusion and critiques of the paper

I conclude with the proposition that I have more questions than answers, but I love jumping into controversial topics so my conclusion is not to rely fully on education as there are always socio-cultural factors influencing it. I'll quickly summarise the points in the paper.

1. Redefinition of education is required
2. Education is the wind beneath our wings, but it's essential to remember that not every journey is charted solely by the pages of a textbook.
3. We need to keep in mind that there are several factors that influence education itself. It can be the source of manipulation, as it can corrupt the youth very easily, binding the youth towards a similar goal of putting belongingness over truth. I'll take an example from Nazi Germany again, the German youth was indoctrinated in Hitler's racial nonsense from a very young age, leading to a firm belief in that idea. Peter Burghusion, a youtuber who uploads "street epistemology", as he has given it this name. He asks several questions to streetwalkers on whether they strongly agree, strongly disagree or lie somewhere in between. He asks questions on worldly issues like, Israel palestine, the Trans debate, Abortion etc.
4. We must encourage critical thinking, which can be done by first providing knowledge about principles of philosophy, logical fallacies

I'll end with a quote by C.S Lewis, which he gave in a sermon in the Oxford church in 1939 when Germany had invaded Poland.

"The insects have chosen a different line, they have sorted first the material welfare and the security of the hive, and presumably they have their reward, but Men are different, they propound mathematical theorems in beleaguered cities, conduct metaphysical arguments in condemned cells, make jokes on scaffolds, discuss the last new poem whilst advancing on the walls of Quebec and comb their hair at thermopylae. This is not panache, it's our nature!"

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