

## Book Review:

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### ***Building Golden India:***

*How to unleash India's vast potential and transform its higher education system. Now.*

The conundrum of essentialism in higher education sector for societal development, and at the same time it's insularity from where it operates, Dr Shail Kumar touches relevant issues on higher education through a book called Building Golden India. It looks into the future of India and tries to unleash the potential of its 1.3 billion people. In the next 35-50 years, India must educate and prepare 700 million to 1.3 billion young men and women to undertake either their entrepreneurial or employability journey.

The book is logically divided into clearly defined four sections. The first section sets the context and understands the changes faced by higher education from past, present and then peeps into future. To make India reach the golden age it would be essential to utilise higher education.

Undoubtedly the interests of students, parents, society, industry, and the nation are intricately woven through the higher education system. This book illustrates the current performance of India's higher education system and how it could be transformed to better meet the needs of the nation's students and society. If Higher education could address many of its problems it would enable its people to harness its full potential. The author shares his vision by laying out a clear road map to lead the nation from its challenges and dilemmas to an optimistic bright future. The concrete steps to be taken are based on narratives which are validated by a deep understanding and analysis through data, stories and interesting anecdotes gathered over interviews of hundreds of people who are various stakeholders of society across four continents.

The disassociation of higher education from the society is well discussed in the second section while the contributing factors need to be well assessed. Dr Shail Kumar emphasizes the need to address the key issues or else the heavy price that the nation would pay.

The role of Higher education was always evident including through internationally acclaimed Nalanada University. The author compares the present status of Higher education in India with various other benchmarking institutions so that the learnings can be effective. Using the Nalanda experience of 1400 years ago against United States and Californian higher education system teaches

a lot. He also brings to table the issues that US Berkeley addresses by achieving excellence and thereby leaving a sizeable impact. Stanford University encourages innovation which is the driving force behind its success. The fourth section clearly enunciates the way forward. The non-biased lens makes this book an essential for the policy makers as well as edupreneurs.

The author also discusses the powerful role that technology, MOOCs, and online learning will play in building India's new Golden Age if handled carefully. His approach is pragmatic and persuasive. A complete chapter talks of the deterioration in higher education and identifying the need to fix and how to fix it. His rich and diverse experience from IIT Kharagpur, Indiana University, Bloomington, as co-founder and CEO of two start-ups; and an executive in several Fortune 500 and Silicon Valley-based corporations have made the reading

The book has drawn from his own experience of over thirty years of student, alumni leadership, and professional experiences. Finally, he has also conducted over a hundred interviews with a diverse group of stakeholders in India and across four continents. This book is for you if you are an educated youth, professional, or someone who deeply cares about India and its future through higher education.

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