

COMPARATIVE EDUCATION SOCIETY OF INDIA (CESI)

14th Annual International Conference 2024



Conference Theme

State, Market and Civil Society: Rethinking Education for Sustainable Futures



22 - 24 November, 2024

ORGANISED BY

Dept of Education in collaboration with Dept of Philosophy
Panjab University, Chandigarh

www.cesindia.net

CALL FOR PAPERS

14th Annual International Conference, 2024 Comparative Education Society of India (CESI)

Concept Note

State, Market and Civil Society: Rethinking Education for Sustainable Futures

Working towards sustainability demands engagement with our dynamic and constantly evolving institutions, which are marked by state, market and civil society. The nature of these institutions and the relationship between them has been undergoing shifts owing to the changing political economy of our times, giving shape to different debates. These debates are multifaceted and operate from different ideological positions with their own set of evidence to support their arguments. In modernity, social relations are imagined as 'public' instead of 'community' with the vision to create a shared space for inter-subjective interpretations and mutual reciprocity to accommodate internal differences, antagonism, and debates. This political shift or transformation is also a function of pedagogical processes that needs to be examined to facilitate the idea of sustainable democracies. Comparative Education Society of India (CESI), as a collective committed to furthering the debates related to education, considers it imperative to understand and deliberate on the relationship education shares with state, market, and civil society and the impact of such linkage on the future of our societies. Therefore, the theme of the 14th Annual International Conference of Comparative Education Society of India (CESI), 2024 has been titled as '*State, Market and Civil Society: Rethinking Education for Sustainable Futures*' to encourage scholars to offer their perspectives and evidence, which may help us foster new imaginations and policy pathways in building a socially sustainable future.

In the last few decades, neoliberal policies and its emphasis on free-market growth have altered every aspect of our lives, and major institutions like education and health have undergone massive transformation. Neoliberalism seeks to expand markets and create new markets where they did not exist before. Markets are advocated and preferred for increased efficiency, neutrality, accountability, and promotion of choice, especially for the vulnerable sections, which often fail to account for intergenerational disadvantages and differential access to resources. In India, for instance, many corporate foundations, private organisations, entrepreneurs/ecopreneurs, and venture philanthropists have entered the education sector. Private organisations are adopting government schools for better management and efficiency, increasingly blurring private-public boundaries. Marketisation and privatisation have permeated all levels of education today, from early childhood care and education to higher education, creating a diverse but stratified system

based on quality, infrastructure and constituencies. With the growing aspirations, we see the entry of hitherto marginalised minorities and women in schools and higher education, scholars working with reparative frameworks caution that this increasing stratification of educational systems is damaging the idea of social justice.

Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), usually understood as not-for-profit organisations, became significant players apart from the state and market in the question of development. They played a significant role in programmes like Education for All (EFA) and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) initiatives in India and, at times, claimed their role as a better alternative to state interventions. However, the right-based framework often questions this claim and demands the state to remain proactive. For instance, with its legal boundaries, the Right to Education (RTE) Act limited the NGOs' role to some extent and fixed the duty of imparting education primarily on the shoulders of the State. In contemporary times, the nature and character of CSO intervention have drastically changed with the entry of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funding initiatives and Inter-Governmental Organisations (IGOs) as other major Non-state, Non-market players who advocate results-based financing and technocratic governance approaches to achieve efficiency and effectiveness in the education sector. The emergence and role of the CSOs therefore needs to be examined vis-à-vis the shifting nature and the role of the state and market in the last decades.

The CSR-IGO-NGO interconnection redefines the idea of 'civil society' and its role, especially in the educational landscape. It becomes therefore crucial to explore how the realignment of roles of the state, market and civil society and diminishing boundaries among these institutions redraw the power relations within the society and shape the role of education in this process. We are also witnessing a shift in imagination and discourses. The role of school as an equaliser and tool for mobility is now giving way to more technocratic and managerial discourses, and its efficiency is measured against fiscal performance. The autonomy cherished by the liberal education principles is being questioned in terms of accountability. The IMF and World Bank redefined the state's role in education through structural adjustment programs and redefined education's role in society by setting research agendas in education. Such developments make it imperative to have more empirical and theoretical inquiries about the growing conservatism, privatisation, centralisation, and vocationalisation of education in our times. Added to the neoliberal discourse is another pertinent area of inquiry in post-colonial societies like India, the discourse of decoloniality. Hence, significant would be to explore and examine the potentiality of the connection between neoliberalism and decoloniality which is otherwise fraught with ambiguities, complexities, paradoxes, and dangers as it can serve the interests of the elites and conservatives, promote dominant narratives, and mute the voices of the marginalised.

As scholars in the field of education, we need to explore the processes through which these institutions create consensus and assume legitimacy among the subjects. We need to explore how these institutions historically shaped ideas and the pedagogical processes of education. How and where are different social groups located in these processes? In what ways do different social

identities, caste, class, and gender negotiate and navigate these institutions? How is margin understood and addressed in the realigning political and economic landscape of state market and civil society? With the growing emphasis on technology, efficiency, and outcomes, it is important to see how the role of higher education and universities is redefined from a critical space that produces informed citizenry and an active public sphere to a system that produces competent market subjects. Lastly, can we explore the existence of a counter-public, that is not always oppositional or counter-hegemonic but sets its parallel world of discourses?

Against this backdrop, the 14th Annual International Conference of CESI invites scholars to explore and critically interrogate the context of state, market and civil society in today's contemporary educational discourse. How do we conceptualise these three institutions/actors and their interventions, linkages, contradictions, and overlaps? How is the interplay between these three institutions shaping larger educational goals and everyday practices of our times? What is happening to educational access, experiences, and questions of justice and equity under these contexts? How is the role of education being imagined, defined or redefined vis a vis the future? What implications do these transformations have for the vision of a sustainable future for our societies?

Invitation for Abstracts for the CESI-2024 Annual International Conference

Subthemes

- State, market and civil society: contradictions, linkages and partnerships
- Higher education and sustainable democracy
- Early childhood education and schooling for a sustainable future
- Decoloniality, globalisation and internationalisation
- Comparative research methods in education
- Global and local influences on curriculum and pedagogy
- Role of teachers, teaching and teacher education for a sustainable future
- Histories of education development in the global south
- Identities, education and inclusion
- Language, arts and culture in education
- Education technology, artificial intelligence and digital social inequality
- Education, nation-states and the margins
- Education, sustainability and the urban
- Education, citizenship and resistance
- The political economy of education
- Financing and management of education

- Policy reforms, policy frameworks, and policy borrowing
- Educational philosophies and sustainable futures
- Philosophical foundations of educational systems
- Integrating ethics into educational practice
- Gendered negotiations and navigation of the educational landscape
- State, market and regulatory frameworks of education
- Stratification, hierarchies and inequalities in education

Important Dates:

Last Date for Submission of the Abstract: **30st June, 2024**

Acceptance of Abstract: **15th August, 2024**

Instruction for Participants:

- Abstract word limit should be between **1200-1500 words**
- Abstracts to be submitted to respective research interest groups (RIGs) of CESI.
- Abstracts beyond the dedicated sub themes are also acceptable provided it is aligned to the vision of the respective disciplinary and thematic Research Interest Groups.
- Only for proposed panels, **a single** document (brief note on the panel theme as well as individual abstracts of the panelists) to be submitted to the respective RIG the panel theme is aligned with.
- Abstracts submissions to be made only through the abstract link to be uploaded on the CESI website: <http://www.cesindia.net>
- **Any submission of abstract over emails will not be accepted.**

For any conference related query contact:

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WE LOOK FORWARD TO YOUR PARTICIPATION