

## Examination Stress is Avoidable

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As one travels along a highway he comes across warning boards telling him 'Dangerous curve: Drive carefully'. A moment of introspection will make it clear that the department which put up this warning is the same as the one who laid this highway. Why lay a road with dangerous curves and then warn the traveling public to be careful in driving? Is it not the responsibility of the Highways department to lay the road avoiding such dangerous curves?

The same is true in respect of examinations. Why should the school education department devise in the first instance an examination system which may lead to stress in the minds of the students and their parents and thereafter advise the children and their parents about examination stress and how they can avoid the same?

What is the purpose of the examination? Examination gives an opportunity for the student to understand how much he has learnt? Cannot this exercise be done without causing stress to the student and his parents? Cannot an education system be devised where no one fails? Cannot a guarantee be given that every young person will have the opportunity to get admission to a course, if he possesses the required qualification?

In an ideal education system, the teacher will teach every student adopting a method and speed that will be suitable to that student to learn. Every student may be required to study a particular book only after he has completely learnt the previous book. In such a system all students sitting in a particular group would have attained proficiency in a subject to the same extent; no one will be considered as failed in a subject or class.

Examinations will not be scheduled on a particular date; a student may say to the teacher that he is now ready to take the examination and it will be held for him. Therefore, the student will not suffer from any examination stress as he is taking the examination when he is ready.

In this type of education system, the extent of knowledge gained by a student in every subject he has studied will be made available to him in terms of grades or marks. As each individual student is informed of his achievements in each subject there will be no direct comparison. There will be no failures.

In the system that is envisaged there will be sufficient number of seats to accommodate every one who has achieved the required grades at the appropriate lower stage. As the student is assured of getting admission in the course of his choice, as and when he qualifies, he and his parents will not suffer from examination stress. As far as Tamil Nadu State is concerned, this stage has been reached in almost all fields except medicine. If an appropriate aptitude test is devised, it may be possible to accommodate every young one who has got the grade.

It is suggested that every effort must be made to achieve what is envisaged in the foregoing or at least move towards the same. In the meantime, in respect of admissions to higher courses, removing all the existing restrictions such as age, number of attempts, must have passed all the subjects at a time etc. and retaining only the criteria of achievements in the lower class may relieve the stress in taking the final examination. Taking the performance of the student in all the previous years of study instead of the marks in the final examination only for admission to higher studies may completely eliminate all examination stress.

If the education system is amended as outlined in the foregoing, every young one in this country will find education as a happy and invigorating experience and study the courses according to his ability and wish, in a manner and a time span that is appropriate to him and blossom into a good useful citizen.