

# QUALITY EDUCATION



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# **QUALITY EDUCATION**

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Quality Education

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My work on this book is dedicated to  
individuals and innovative organizations  
committed to fighting illiteracy.

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## FOREWORD

The past decades have, in terms of education, witnessed a historic change: boys and girls around the globe have been brought to school. After this huge success – giving access to education to nearly all—the world is ready for the next step: a joint effort to provide universal quality education.

This is a mission in which strongly I believe. I am very happy to see Dr. Alleem shares the same passion.

Today, we are facing a situation UNESCO is calling “a learning crisis.” Half of the world’s children and young people are not even learning the basic literacy and numeracy skills after spending years in school. We cannot afford this to continue and let the world be divided into two.

Firstly, there is a better half where young people can get a quality education that gives them multiple skills to cope in the world of artificial intelligence, robotics, and space science and continue learning throughout their lives. Secondly, there is another half where the education fails the young people completely and they leave school without retaining even the basic skills.

The United Nations’ sustainable development goal number four is about quality of education. This gives us hope. With joint efforts of multiple actors—the UN family, its 193 member states, educational institutions at all levels, and the private sector—the learning crisis can be defeated. A right formula needs to be found to make sure that every child

leaves school equipped with skills fit for the 21st century and has the basis for life-long learning. Children attending school today will stay in working life until the 2080s, and giving them the right set of skills should be the priority of education. With commitment and political will, the necessary resources can be mobilized and their use focused efficiently to produce learning, not just attendance, at school.

Finland stands ready to share its experience of developing an education system that, in the first four Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) rounds, stood as the best in the world and still is among the highest ranking. The Finnish recipe includes providing equal learning opportunities to all, having highly educated and well-respected teachers, and building the education system on trust. We hope to see such a success story taking place in every single country. Quality education is, after all, the biggest gift we can give to the next generation. Each and every child deserves it.

Marianne Nissilä

**Ambassador of Finland to the UAE**

# INTRODUCTION

## PREVALENCE OF EDUCATION

*“Knowledge is power  
if applied and shared.”*

—Dr. Rashid Alleem

Hello, and welcome to *Quality Education*. On March 15, 2016, I had the privilege and honor of meeting His Excellency the late S. R. Nathan, former president of Singapore, in his office at the Singapore Management University, where he had served as a distinguished senior fellow at the School of Social Sciences. There, we had a long discussion on how to make the world a better place to live in by applying the principles of sustainability by focusing mainly on quality education. The two of us agreed with Nelson Mandela’s quote: “Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” That education, however, must be quality education.

I’m glad that you decided to join me on this journey through *education quality*. There is no doubt that quality education is such an important tool for life that I felt compelled to start

my Alleem 21 sustainable development goals list with quality education. Learn, and once you have learnt, teach others in turn, because education is the source of real happiness. Let us open the door of happiness with some of the knowledge that I feel necessary to share with the world.

Why did I decide to write this book? I wrote this book because I want to make a difference in the world and highlight many individuals and innovative organizations in the world who are making progress and improving millions of people's lives through quality education.

I have deliberately left this book short and sweet because I know that almost everyone is time-challenged.

The journey begins now.

Rashid Alleem  
Sharjah, UAE  
February 29, 2020

# **PART 1**

## **EDUCATION VOGUE**

# CHAPTER 1

## Educational Freedom For Everyone

### 1

#### EDUCATION IS A HUMAN RIGHT

What is quality education, and why is it a human right?

Quality education enables people to develop all of their attributes and skills to achieve their potential as human beings and members of society. In the words of the Delors Commission (UNESCO, 1996): “Education is at the heart of both personal and community development; its mission is to enable each of us, without exception, to develop all our talents to the full and to realize our creative potential, including responsibility for our own lives and achievement of our personal aims.”

As per the Unite for Quality Education campaign, below are listed some points describing what is quality education and why it is a human right.

- Quality education is a human right and a public good.
- Governments and other public authorities should ensure that a quality education service is available freely to all citizens from early childhood into adulthood.
- Quality education provides the foundation for equity in society.

- Quality education is one of the most basic public services. It not only enlightens but also empowers citizens and enables them to contribute to the maximum extent possible to the social and economic development of their communities.





## 2

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### PROGRAM FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ASSESSMENT (PISA)

As we all know, education is the most important thing in most nations' agendas, especially for students at an early stage; hence, the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) is a worldwide study of 15-year-old school pupils' scholastic performance in mathematics, science, and reading conducted by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in member and non-member nations. Initially conducted in 2000, it was the first study of its kind, and since then, it has been repeated every three years with a view to improving educational policies and outcomes. The study measures problem-solving and cognition in everyday life.

An article posted by the World Economic Forum on April 29, 2019, states that the way the world measures success in education has been changing since 2000, when the OECD launched the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA). The idea of this initiative was to enable countries to make cross-national comparisons of student achievement using a common/standard metric to increase human capital. In other words, higher academic achievement should correlate with earnings in the future and a country's standard of living. As PISA states, it publishes the results of the test a year after the students are tested to help governments shape their education policies.

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