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# The Dark Side of IIT Coaching: Pressure, Suicides, and Profit-driven Institutes

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Countless Indian students strive for admission into prestigious Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs). However, behind the allure of academic excellence and lucrative careers lies a harsh reality of intense pressure, student suicides, and profit-focused coaching institutes. This feature story delves into the experiences of IIT aspirants, highlighting the alarming suicide rates caused by coaching stress. We expose discriminatory practices, parental burdens, and the lack of support systems. With growing distress, we urge strict government intervention to address these pressing issues and protect young lives.

## Table of Contents

- The Dark Side of IIT Coaching
- Government Intervention and the Way Forward
- The Way Forward
- Government Regulation
- Equal Opportunities
- Support Systems
- Parental Education and Involvement
- Education System Reform
- Individualized Approach
- Public Awareness and Advocacy
- Analysis and Outcomes

### The Dark Side of IIT Coaching

The chase for a limited number of IIT seats places Indian students in a fierce competition, causing immense pressure and sky-high expectations.

Kota, a small city in Rajasthan, has become the center of IIT coaching, attracting over 1.75 lakh aspirants annually. However, this concentration has led to distressing suicide trends. Andhra Pradesh and Telangana alone witnessed 50 student suicides in just 60 days. Kota, infamous for its coaching institutes, experienced 17 suicides in 2016 and 12 more in 2017.

Samyukhta's tragic story exemplifies the devastating consequences of pressure. With a remarkable 95% in her 12th-grade exams, she succumbed to overwhelming stress and took her own life, shedding light on the dark reality faced by many students.

Profit-driven coaching institutes exacerbate the problem, promising success while neglecting the truth that many students fail. This selective marketing distorts success perception and amplifies pressure on aspiring IIT students.

Coaching institutes segregate students into batches based on perceived aptitude, deepening hierarchy and strain for those in lower-ranked batches.

Students face not only academic but also financial burdens, with families investing significant sums in coaching institutes, heightening pressure and sacrificing mental well-being.

The journey toward IIT admission begins with a false sense of preparedness. As competition intensifies, students find themselves ill-equipped, leading to frustration, anxiety, and even cheating.

The competitive coaching environment fosters loneliness and inhibits genuine connections, with students viewing peers as rivals.

## **Government Intervention and the Way Forward**

The alarming rate of student suicides and the negative effects of profit-driven coaching institutes demand immediate government attention. Institutions should prioritize student welfare over profits, subject to stricter regulation, audits, and assessments.

Discriminatory practices in coaching institutes should be addressed, providing equal resources and opportunities to all students.

Support systems within coaching institutes, such as counseling services and mentorship programs, should be established to assist struggling students.

Parental involvement should focus on support, guidance, and encouragement, educating parents about diverse career paths and nurturing their children's talents and passions.

Education system reform is crucial to reduce student burden, shifting from rote learning to holistic assessments measuring critical thinking and creativity.

Students should be treated as individuals with unique talents and interests, aligning educational journeys with their aspirations.

## **The Way Forward**

To tackle the challenges associated with IIT coaching, it is crucial to adopt a multi-faceted approach that involves various stakeholders and implements concrete measures for change.

## **Government Regulation**

The government must establish stringent regulations and closely monitor coaching institutes. Regular audits should assess the quality of education, mental health support, and overall student well-being. Guidelines should prioritize students' welfare over profit margins, ensuring a safe and conducive learning environment.

## **Equal Opportunities**

Discriminatory practices within coaching institutes, such as segregating students into batches based on perceived aptitude, need to be eliminated. Equal resources and opportunities should be provided to all students, irrespective of their initial performance or ranking. This will foster a sense of inclusivity and reduce the psychological strain on students.

## **Support Systems**

Coaching institutes should establish comprehensive support systems for struggling students. Accessible counseling services, mentorship programs, and psychological support can help students cope with stress and overcome challenges. Creating a nurturing and inclusive environment that prioritizes mental health will contribute to the overall well-being of students.

## **Parental Education and Involvement**

Parents play a crucial role in shaping students' experiences and outlook. It is essential to educate parents about alternative career paths and emphasize the importance of supporting their children's true talents and passions. Parental involvement should focus on providing guidance, encouragement, and emotional support, rather than imposing unrealistic expectations.

## **Education System Reform**

The education system should undergo a significant transformation to reduce the burden on students. Rote learning and exam-oriented preparation should be de-emphasized in favor of holistic assessments that evaluate critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and creativity. This shift will promote a more balanced and comprehensive approach to education, nurturing students' overall development.

## **Individualized Approach**

Recognizing that students have unique talents and aspirations, the IIT admission process should include aptitude tests and screening mechanisms to identify those genuinely interested and suited for the path. By aligning students' interests with their

educational journey, the pressure and stress associated with coaching can be alleviated, resulting in a more fulfilling and rewarding experience for students.

## **Public Awareness and Advocacy**

It is essential to raise public awareness about the dark realities of IIT coaching and advocate for necessary changes. By initiating conversations, sharing stories, and shedding light on the challenges students face, society can collectively work towards creating a supportive and nurturing environment for young minds.

## **Analysis and Outcomes**

Addressing the deep-rooted issues surrounding IIT coaching requires a collaborative effort from the government, educational institutions, parents, and society. Stricter regulation, equal opportunities, support systems, parental education, education system reform, individualized approaches, and public awareness are key elements of a comprehensive solution. By prioritizing student well-being, promoting inclusivity, and fostering a balanced approach to education, we can pave the way for a brighter and healthier future for aspiring IIT students.