

The nuisance that is convocation ceremony

Ceremonies get value only if they are conducted **appropriately**. **Mimicking** an **auspicious** ceremony only **demeans** its value

Does education have any value in life? Does a degree guarantee a job? These questions always **rhyme** in our society.

Of course, these questions need detailed discussion. But the root cause of these questions is the declining value of education in today's society, due to the **mockeries** shown by education institutions. Even from **kindergarten** onwards, many private educational institutions conduct graduation ceremonies, making a mockery of our education system. We are demeaning the value of actual degree certificates through these ceremonies.

According to UGC, "Convocation" means a ceremonial assembly of a university, normally held for **conferring** Degrees and other awards to its eligible candidates. Usually, it is the universities that conduct convocation ceremonies in India. But in recent times, many colleges conduct convocation ceremonies or graduation ceremonies. The programme is conducted in a grand manner inviting **eminent** personalities; in some cases, even the vice-chancellors of universities attend the function. The funny thing is that **even students** who failed university examinations also **get** a certificate at these graduation ceremonies. Some college authorities make poor students and parents believe that these certificates have more value than the ones issued by the universities. The ceremony itself is a huge business involving many event managers. **A photo** in graduation **attire can convince** the public that the particular person is a degree holder. This can **fetch** them status and demand in the marriage market. It's like what we see in the movie 'Three Idiots.'

After attending the graduation ceremony conducted by their colleges, students post on social media **stating** that they have officially become graduates. During earlier times, the convocation ceremonies are performed only by universities where the university authority **hands over** graduation certificates. Every student dreams of wearing the ceremonial convocation dress and taking a photo with the degree certificate. There was a time, before the 1990s, when every household used to hang pictures of their graduating family members. During that time, **students** from every stream and every level, undergraduate to higher degrees, **had** the **privilege** to attend convocation ceremonies conducted at universities. Society viewed a university graduate with **awe** and much respect. With the increase in the number of graduates passing out from our universities, the convocation ceremonies are **limited** to professional courses and higher degrees like PhD.

The value given to original degree certificates issued by good universities **is** slowly **diminishing** because of ceremonies conducted by these private institutions. The students and society **at large** are finding it challenging to understand which is genuine and which is fake. There are many people with "Dr." **affiliation** in our community, whose degree is awarded by private institutions. **These institutions**, which are mostly registered societies, **provide honorary** doctoral degrees by charging **hefty** fees. They even give professional awards after taking huge fees from the **nominees**. Ceremonies

get value only if it is conducted appropriately by the appropriate agency **concerned**. **Mimicking** an auspicious ceremony **will** demean its value. Can we mimic our marriage ceremony to show it to someone? All educational institutions should respect the value **associated** with various ceremonies and show the correct path to the students and society. Otherwise, our students shall carry certificates that have only a paper's value and have value only on social media platforms. We need to build quality graduates in every **domain** of knowledge in nation-building. For this, educational institutions should **stay away from** such **gimmicks** that make a mockery of our education system and should show the true path to our youngsters. [Practice Exercise]

- Red/blue coloring of words in the sentence indicates subject verb relationship; where 'red' denotes 'subject' and 'blue' denotes 'verb'.

Vocabulary

1. **Nuisance** (noun) – Annoyance, irritation, bother, disturbance, inconvenience परेशानी पैदा करने वाला स्थिति
2. **Convocation** (noun) – a ceremony held at a university or college when students receive their degrees etc. on successful completion of a course दीक्षांत समारोह
3. **Ceremony** (noun) – Ritual, rite, observance, function, procedure समारोह
4. **Appropriately** (adverb) – Suitably, properly, fittingly, correctly, aptly उचित ढंग से
5. **Mimic** (verb) – Imitate, emulate, copy, mirror, simulate नकल करना
6. **Auspicious** (adjective) – Propitious, promising, favourable, fortunate, opportune शुभ
7. **Demean** (verb) – Disgrace, degrade, belittle, devalue, debase अपमानित करना, नीचा करना
8. **Rhyme** (verb) – Resonate, chime, echo, match, correlate समानता दिखना
9. **Mockery** (noun) – Ridicule, derision, scorn, burlesque, lampoon हंसी का पत्र
10. **Kindergarten** (noun) – a school for very young children, aged from about 3 to 5 तीन से पाँच वर्ष की आयु के बच्चों का स्कूल;
11. **Confer** (verb) – Bestow, grant, award, present, endow प्रदान करना
12. **Eminent** (adjective) – Distinguished, renowned, prestigious, illustrious, notable प्रख्यात
13. **Attire** (noun) – Clothes, dress, outfit, garment, clothing वस्त्र
14. **Convince** (verb) – Persuade, assure, satisfy, reassure, sway मनाना
15. **Fetch** (verb) – Bring, get, carry, deliver, retrieve लाना
16. **State** (verb) – Declare, announce, proclaim, assert, affirm बताना
17. **Hand over** (phrasal verb) – Deliver, give, present, provide, submit सौंपना
18. **Privilege** (noun) – Advantage, benefit, entitlement, right, prerogative विशेषाधिकार
19. **Awe** (noun) – Admiration, respect, reverence, wonder, amazement आश्चर्य
20. **Limited** (to) (adjective) – Restricted, confined, restrained, bounded, curbed सीमित
21. **Diminishing** (adjective) – Decreasing, reducing, declining, lessening, dwindling घटता हुआ

22. **At large** (phrase) – In general, broadly, universally, generally कुल मिलाकर; सामान्य रूप से
23. **Affiliation** (noun) – Association, connection, attachment, alliance, relationship संबंध
24. **Honorary** (adjective) – given as an honour (without the person needing the usual certificates, etc.)
25. **Hefty** (adjective) – Large, substantial, sizable, considerable, massive बड़ा, काफी अधिक
26. **Nominee** (noun) – a person who is suggested for an important job, prize, etc. नामांकित
27. **Concerned** (adjective) – Involved, implicated, interested, affected, related सम्बंधित
28. **Associated** (with) (adjective) – Connected, related, linked, correlated, allied से सम्बंधित, से जुड़ा
29. **Domain** (noun) – Area, field, territory, realm, sphere क्षेत्र, विभाग
30. **Stay away from** (phrase) – Avoid, keep clear of, steer clear of, shun, eschew से दूर रहना, टालना
31. **Gimmick** (noun) – a trick or device intended to attract attention, publicity, or trade. नौटंकी/ हथकंडा

Summary of the Editorial

1. The editorial questions the value of education and degree in society, focusing on the declining value of education due to certain practices by educational institutions.
2. There is criticism of the tendency among private institutions to conduct graduation ceremonies from kindergarten onwards, which the author sees as a mockery of the education system.
3. The author explains that according to UGC, convocation should be a ceremony held by universities to confer degrees and awards to eligible candidates.
4. The trend of colleges conducting convocation ceremonies, often in grand fashion with prominent guests, is highlighted as an aberration.
5. The fact that students who haven't passed their exams also receive certificates in these ceremonies is highlighted as an issue.
6. Some college authorities mislead students and parents into believing these certificates hold more value than those issued by universities.
7. The graduation ceremony has become a business opportunity for event managers and a status symbol, reinforcing societal perception of educational achievement.
8. The issue of students announcing themselves as graduates on social media after attending these ceremonies, instead of after officially receiving their degrees from universities, is addressed.
9. The author reminisces about a time before the 1990s when a university graduation was held in high esteem and every graduate was entitled to a convocation ceremony.
10. The increased number of graduates has led to convocation ceremonies being limited to professional courses and higher degrees like PhD.
11. The value of authentic degree certificates from reputed universities is diminishing due to the mock ceremonies conducted by private institutions.
12. The difficulty of distinguishing between genuine and fake degrees is causing confusion and concern in society.
13. The author criticizes institutions that provide honorary doctoral degrees for a fee and then carry the "Dr." prefix.
14. The author argues that ceremonies should be conducted properly by the appropriate agency to maintain their value; mimicry of such ceremonies devalues them.
15. The editorial concludes by urging educational institutions to respect the value of ceremonies, build quality graduates, and refrain from practices that make a mockery of the education system.

Practice Exercise: SSC pattern Based

1. **What is the primary concern raised by the passage regarding convocation ceremonies?**
 - A. Convocation ceremonies are too costly to organize.
 - B. Many students are not passing their university examinations.
 - C. Private institutions are devaluing the significance of degree certificates through premature and widespread convocation ceremonies.
 - D. Convocation ceremonies are not usually attended by eminent personalities
2. **According to the passage, which of the following statements is NOT true about convocation ceremonies?**
 - A) Convocation ceremonies are traditionally conducted by universities in India.
 - B) Even students who fail university exams receive a certificate at some graduation ceremonies.
 - C) A photo in graduation attire can enhance a person's status and demand in the marriage market.
 - D) The author believes that conducting convocation ceremonies in colleges enhances the value of the education system.
3. **Which of the following statements is NOT supported by the passage?**
 - A) The respect and awe associated with being a university graduate have diminished over time.
 - B) Private institutions charging hefty fees for honorary doctoral degrees have increased.
 - C) Original degree certificates from reputable universities have lost value due to the proliferation of private institutions.
 - D) Convocation ceremonies have always been limited to students of professional courses and higher degrees.
4. **The main theme of the passage is:**
 - A) The value of social media in modern society
 - B) The rise of private education institutions
 - C) The degradation of education value due to the misuse of convocation ceremonies
 - D) The increase in demand for higher degrees like PhD
5. **Based on the passage, which of the following most accurately represents the author's viewpoint?**
 - A. The convocation ceremonies are a nuisance because they have increased in number.
 - B. The value of a university degree has diminished because too many people are now earning degrees.
 - C. Private institutions providing honorary doctoral degrees and professional awards for fees have degraded the authenticity and value of such ceremonies and certificates.
 - D. Social media platforms are the main cause of devaluing the graduation ceremonies and certificates.
6. The following sentence has been split into segments. One of them may contain an error. Identify the segment that contains a grammatical error. If you don't find any error, mark 'No error' as your answer
How many / eggs were put / into the basket?

- A. How many
B. No error
C. eggs were put
D. into the basket
7. Select the most appropriate option to fill in the blank.
This app is a very _____ one for online shopping
- A. Convenience
B. Competency
C. Convenient
D. Capable
8. Select the option that will improve the underlined part of the given sentence. In case no improvement is needed, select 'No improvement required'.
We might as well watch a film on TV as there's nothing much to do
- A. No improvement required
B. may as such
C. may as well as
D. might well
9. **Select the correct active voice form of the given sentence.**
All the inmates were rescued from the building by the firemen.
- A. The firemen are rescuing all the inmates from the building.
B. The firemen have been rescuing all the inmates from the building
C. The firemen have rescued all the inmates from the building.
D. The firemen rescued all the inmates from the building.
10. **The following sentence has been split into four segments. Identify the segment that contains a grammatical error.**
We have / not met / some of our friends / since six months.
- A. since six months
B. We have
C. Not met
D. some of our friends
11. **Select the correct active voice form of the given sentence.**
All the prize winning books have been displayed on the tables.
- A. We have to display all the prize winning books on the tables.
B. We are displaying all the prize winning books on the tables.
C. We have displayed all the prize winning books on the tables.
D. We will be displaying all the prize winning books on the tables.
12. **Select the option that can be used as a one-word substitute for the given group of words.**
The examination or observation of one's own mental and emotional processes
- A. Assessment
B. Introspection
C. Inspection
D. Valuation

13. **Given below are four sentences which are jumbled. Pick the option that gives their correct order**
- A. Schools are closed for the Christmas and winter break at this time of the year.
 - B. Christmas and New Year are the time of the year to celebrate.
 - C. All over the city, winter carnivals and Christmas bazaars lend fun and warmth in the cold.
 - D. For the second time in a row, we are likely to see restrained celebrations for fear of the pandemic raising its ugly head again.
- A. BADC B. BACD C. ABCD D. BCDA
14. **Select the most appropriate meaning of the underlined idiom in the given sentence.**
When I asked for an expensive dress for my friend's wedding, my mother reminded me that **money does not grow on trees**.
- A. Money is freely available to spend
 - B. Money is like leaves of a tree and freely available
 - C. Money grows on shrubs and there's plenty
 - D. Money is hard earned and limited
15. **Select the most appropriate synonym of the given word.**
Redundant
- A. Superfluous
 - B. Arrogant
 - C. Essential
 - D. Ignorant
16. **Select the most appropriate synonym of the given word.**
Urge
- A. Reply
 - B. Refuse
 - C. Protest
 - D. Appeal
17. **Select the option that expresses the given sentence in reported speech.**
The teacher said, "Asif, go and wash your hands."
- A. The teacher told Asif go and wash your hands.
 - B. The teacher told Asif go and wash his hands.
 - C. The teacher told to Asif to go and wash his hands.
 - D. The teacher told Asif to go and wash his hands.
18. **Select the most appropriate meaning of the given idiom.**
Lie low
- A. Sit on a low chair
 - B. Lie down and relax after a tiring day
 - C. Fly a plane at a low altitude
 - D. Try not to be noticed
19. **The following sentence has been split into four segments. Identify the segment that contains a grammatical error.**
The policeman asked / many people but / no one was knowing / how the accident happened.

- A. how the accident happened
 - B. The policeman asked
 - C. no one was knowing
 - D. many people but
20. Select the option that can be used as a one-word substitute for the given group of words.
In exactly the same words as the original
- A. Verbatim
 - B. Copy
 - C. Imitation
 - D. Duplicate

Answers

1. C 2. D 3. D 4. C 5. C 6. B 7. C 8. A 9. D 10. A 11. C 12. B
13. B 14. D 15. A 16. D 17. D 18. D 19. C 20. A

EXPLANATION

1. **C) Private institutions are devaluing the significance of degree certificates through premature and widespread convocation ceremonies.**

The passage discusses the author's concern with the widespread use of convocation ceremonies, starting from kindergarten level in private institutions. The author believes that these events, especially when they include students who have failed their university exams or when they are made to seem more valuable than official university certificates, are making a mockery of the education system and devalifying the significance of actual degree certificates. The options A, B, and D are details present in the passage but they do not represent the primary concern being raised.

2. D) The passage discusses various aspects of convocation ceremonies, particularly the criticisms of their current execution in certain educational institutions.

Option A is mentioned in the text, where it says, "Usually, it is the universities that conduct convocation ceremonies in India."

Option B is directly stated in the sentence, "The funny thing is that even students who failed university examinations also get a certificate at these graduation ceremonies."

Option C is alluded to in the sentence, "A photo in graduation attire can convince the public that the particular person is a degree holder. This can fetch them status and demand in the marriage market."

Option D, however, contradicts the author's views. The author suggests that convocation ceremonies are being reduced to a farce, especially when they are conducted in private educational institutions and colleges. Therefore, the author does not believe that conducting convocation ceremonies in colleges enhances the value of the education system. Hence, option D is the correct answer.

3. D) The passage suggests that the respect for university graduates (A) has diminished and that there's an increase in private institutions granting honorary doctoral degrees for a fee (B). It also highlights that original degree certificates from reputable universities have lost some of their value because of ceremonies conducted by these private institutions (C). However, the passage clearly states that convocation ceremonies were once open to all students but are now limited to professional courses and higher degrees. Therefore, option D is not supported by the passage and is the correct answer.

4. **C) The degradation of education value due to the misuse of convocation ceremonies**

The primary theme of the passage is the decreasing value of education due to the misuse of convocation ceremonies, particularly by private educational institutions. The author discusses how these ceremonies, which were once symbols of achievement and respect, have been exploited to such an extent that they're now devaluing the significance of actual degree certificates. While the passage does touch upon elements of social media, the rise of private institutions, and the demand for higher degrees, these are not the main themes of the text.

5. Option C is the correct answer. In the passage, the author expresses concern over the value and authenticity of degrees and ceremonies being diminished due to the practice of private institutions charging fees for honorary doctoral degrees and professional awards. The author believes that these practices are making a mockery of the education system and are confusing students and society about the genuineness of the degrees. Options A, B, and D do not accurately capture the author's main point.
6. No Error
7. **Convenient** (adjective) –suitable, appropriate, advantageous, opportune सुविधाजनक
- **Convenience** (noun) – appliance, comfort, amenity, benefit सहूलियत
 - **Competency** (noun) – ability, capability, proficiency, skill, expertise योग्यता/ क्षमता
 - **Capable** (adjective) – able, competent, proficient, skilled, adept सक्षम, योग्य
8. No improvement required
9. The firemen rescued all the inmates from the building.
10. 'Since six month' के बदले 'for six months' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि हम past, present या future में 'period of time' के साथ 'for' का प्रयोग करते हैं लेकिन 'point in time' के लिए 'since' का प्रयोग होता है!
11. We have displayed all the prize winning books on the tables.
12. **Introspection** (noun) – The examination or observation of one's own mental and emotional processes अंतरावलोकन
- **Assessment** (noun) – the act of judging or deciding the amount, value, quality, or importance of something मूल्यांकन
 - **Inspection** (noun) – the act of looking at something carefully, or an official visit to a building or organization to check that everything is correct and legal निरीक्षण
 - **Valuation** (noun) – a professional judgement about how much money something is worth किसी वस्तु का मूल्य-निर्धारण
13. **BACD**
Christmas and New Year are the time of the year to celebrate. Schools are closed for the Christmas and winter break at this time of the year. All over the city, winter carnivals and Christmas bazaars lend fun and warmth in the cold. For the second time in a row, we are likely to see restrained celebrations for fear of the pandemic raising its ugly head again.
14. **Money does not grow on trees** (phrase) –Money is hard earned and limited पेड़ों पर नहीं उगता पैसा
15. **Redundant** (adjective) – Superfluous, outmoded, disused, surplus, unneeded अतिरिक्त
- **Superfluous** (adjective) – Extra, surplus, redundant, unnecessary, unessential, excessive अनावश्यक

- **Arrogant** (adjective) – Conceited, haughty, egotistical, bigheaded अभिमान्नी
- **Essential** (adjective) – Vital, indispensable, important, crucial, critical, needed आवश्यक
- **Ignorant** (adjective) – Unaware, uninformed, ill-informed, unfamiliar, oblivious अनभिज्ञ

16. **Urge** (verb) – Advise, beg, appeal, exhort, advocate, ask, beseech अनुरोध करना

- **Protest** (verb) – complain, object, remonstrate, dissent, dispute विरोध करना

17. The teacher told Asif to go and wash his hands.

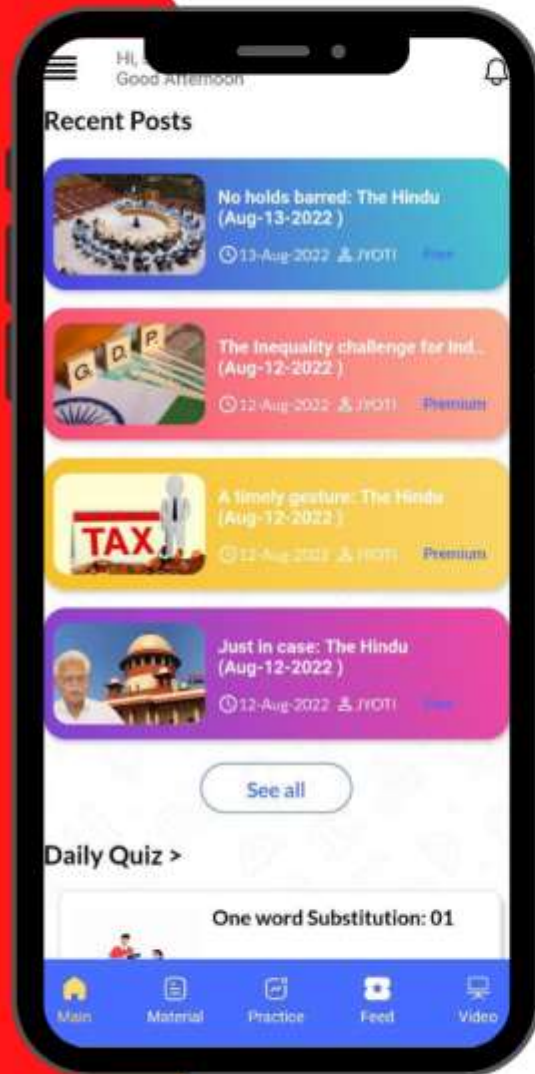
18. **Lie low** (phrase) – Try not to be noticed चुपचाप रहना (कि आप पर ध्यान न जाए)

19. 'no one was knowing' के बदले 'no one had known' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि दिया गया वाक्य indirect speech में है ! और अगर हम वाक्य को Direct speech में बदलते हैं तो यहां 'knew' का प्रयोग होगा। अतः 'was knowing' का प्रयोग गलत है ! और Direct-indirect conversion में V^2 को 'had + V^3 ' में बदलना पड़ेगा !

तो सही वाक्य होगा: The policeman asked many people but no one had known how the accident happened.

20. **Verbatim** (noun) – In exactly the same words as the original शब्दशः

- **Imitation** (noun) – the act of copying somebody/something अनुकरण
- **Copy** (noun) – something that is made to look exactly like something else प्रतिलिपि



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