

Personal Economy Series HSBC Work

Focus, ideate, innovate, enable.

Hello and welcome to the personal economy series, your wealth and beyond HSBC premiere in partnership with CNBC TV 18. Now in this series we take a closer look at the things that we value the most- home, work, health and much more. Basically all the things that make up our personal economy. Today in this episode we turn the spotlight on education as we meet two individuals; a professional for whom learning is a constant companion, and the mother of a young student who is in the crucial year of her education.

Speaker 1: I studied journalism and I started out as a television journalist. So somewhere along, after being eight years in the media, I felt that I needed to apply myself differently to my career, apply my skills differently to my career. That is when I decided Arts Management. And.. yes, I studied Arts Management and now I manage a lovely little gallery where I continue learning.

Speaker 2: As a school topper, a college topper, I got a University Gold Medal in B.Com, and I have done my ICWA, I have done my CIIB, I have also done a degree from NIIT. So I love academics; I love to study. Then I was working in foreign bank. Uhh then I got married and then I had my daughter. For the first few years, my parents were taking care, and then when my husband got transferred to Mumbai, I decided I had to quit my job because it was an afternoon session for her over there and she would be alone in the morning. I had to put her under the care of a caretaker which I was not willing to.

Priya Krishnamurthy works as a Manager at a gallery that promotes indigenous arts, crafts and design. Learning is a passion that she constantly pursues.

Speaker 1: It is possible my love for travel that triggered the interest because every time you go out there and you travel, there is something new you learn about the world and you learn something new about yourself. So it becomes, you know curiosity becomes a nature, a second nature to you. And once you start knowing or discovering new things, you want to know more. That is possibly one trigger. Secondly, I am surrounded by such people who are incredibly repertoires of knowledge in some sense; they know so much about all that is happening. When you come in contact with people who know so much about what they do, it could be even the Chaiwala who knows so much about

the way he makes 'chai'; you want to know more. You want to keep asking. Thirdly, I have wonderful people in my life who have never, you know, discouraged me by asking questions; who have never discouraged me from asking why or why not. So when you have people who encourage your curiosity, you continue to ask questions and you want to know more.

When her husband and daughter leave her in the morning, Sudha Kesavan spends her time in online trading. She then dedicates the major part of the day to her daughter.

Speaker 2: By the end of ninth, she decided that she wanted to do law. Also she took up the commerce group though people said that if you are a good student, you should take up only science. You know she didn't pay much attention into that. She has taken commerce, she is doing well. And she wanted to get into a good Law university; she will do from a good university and she wants to do a very good internship. Basically she wants to be either a corporate lawyer or wants to be on her own. As of now we feel that for UG sending her abroad wouldn't be okay because we feel that the Indian Education system for UG is very good compared to most of the foreign university. But as of now, we are planning to send her only for PG.

I think Indians in general, for Indian citizens, education is extremely important. We have always been told that right from the beginning, this is how, these are the exams that we need to clear. Somehow there is an aspiration of every parent their child needs to be the best in the class. So education from a young age has become very important for families. It's only getting stronger and stronger. We did a survey recently and we learnt that 90% of the respondents actually mention that they would rather send their child overseas for higher education. What is interesting is that Indians are actually willing to pay a lot more than what they are currently paying than any other country. This is a global survey across all the countries that we surveyed, Indians were willing to pay about 60-70% higher than what they are currently paying. Other countries said 20-30%, so Indians were the highest. But the institutes that they wanted to go to, the cost of education there was 760% than what they are currently paying. So they are willing to pay 60, which is huge, but they are ready to pay 760.

Now, education plays an important role in the lives of Indians. It is an aspect of our personal economy, that influences and is influenced by the people around us.

Speaker 1: One of the first times I did combine travel with education, or a course was when, one I wanted to know more about Arts and two, I wanted to travel alone. So it just made sense to do a short course in London and then sort of gain more perspective and then travel more around the area. SO when I did this I remember being gaining new friends, gaining new perspectives, and even after the course, it was a short course, we travelled together and we ended up hanging out together, and changing and exchanging perspectives which was fun. And suddenly yhr world opens out to you when you are travelling as well and that was one of the first ways I started combining travel with education or travel with learning I would say.

Speaker 2: The education pressure on the parent in placing the child in a good institution is so high that you know, the entire family works on it. The fact that you will have to study only in a premiere institution has become the order of the day. Earlier what was it? We used to live in a place, nearby school we used to send our children. It is vice-versa now. I find my school, I go take a flat there, I take a transfer or I leave the kids with my grandparents or whoever is able to take care; I am able to do that much sacrifice.

Speaker 1: I have friends who have also told me that you don't need to go to a school to learn because learning can happen all the time you know. There is access to knowledge at your finger-tips today. But I like having the formal structure of going to an institute. I am not saying that I have been to many but uhh because learning also continues but when you end up going to a short course or a post graduate course there is not so much of taking knowledge alone, you are also seeking perspectives.

People who have worked for 10-15 years will say let me try and up my skills by joining an institute. Take a break from work and come back. It is happening a lot as we see, one. Secondly, we also find corporates or organisations are ready to support employees for mid-breads for education. SO you have corporates who say, "Okay, you have worked with us for two or two and a half years. You can take a break; go do a completely different course that will increase your skill sets and then come back to us. So they give you a sabbatical and they

actually encourage you to come back and join them. It allows people to think of education beyond school, college and post-graduation. Again, was not very common in the years gone past. So that is something that is phenomenal that is happening and it is happening a lot.

Speaker 2: One thing I have noticed a change is right from the play school or Pre-KG, the parents are hunting only for the best schools or schools where there is heavy fees and there lots of international and those adjectives added; which I was not looking for when I put my daughter. Today, everybody wants to go into an international school at Pre-Kg level, because they feel that once I complete my 12th standard, I need not look for anything for them. Directly she can go to Canada or US or UK and continue your education because it is easier to shift when you study in an international syllabus.

Speaker 1: Today, at least amongst my peers I know a lot of people who have, who are no longer in the same career they started out with or studied for right after college. Most people that I know are juggling many interests and are also turning their hobbies and interests into careers and opportunities.

Speaker 2: 11th and 12th is a real different story. When my daughter was in her younger age, I used to look at the parents in the school talking about the 12th. I used to think, why they are making so much fuss and why they are talking a lot. But then we have to experience of a class 12 parent. Because the pressure is really enormous. You will have to experience it to face it. Because from the school front, from the peer pressure from the classes and the tuitions, the expectations are so high, and some of the children, their expectations are also really high.

In earlier episodes of the series we watched key moments from the recently held Personal Economy Summit, your wealth and beyond brought to you by HSBC premiere in partnership with CNBC TV 18 where experts shared their life experiences on a variety of topics including their educational journey.

In India, I come from a generation where growing up and reaching a certain stage in life is a little bit like being a man inside a canon. You know in those

circus, you shoot somebody out of a canon. So it was like we were shot outside a canon. And we went, like that, you know you go you study, you go to school, you do well, you go to a certain kind of college; if you do really well, you become a doctor. If you do a little less well, you become an engineer. If you really suck you go in advertising. But you kind of, you just, without recognising it, without thinking about it, you finish studies, you got a job, you have to settle down, and there is a whole conspiracy. That is a foot that everyone wants you to settle down, and you settle down; and you are 35 before you know it. It kind of happens like that. It is a script. All of us kind of are part of this script. Not all of us, but a lot of us in my generation were part of this script. We reach this particular place without thinking about it, without any ide, really speaking, of what we were doing.

And, this is 1998, I am talking about because this is the year I came out of Delhi College of Engineering, engineering class and I wanted to go like yourself in an MBA class. My aspiration was to go to Stanford because of Silicon Valley and everything on the internet was happening there. And, alas! I didn't have money, personal wealth. My family would not have supported the kind of cost that it would have had and I didn't assume that I would get a scholarships because I was one of those poor in education kids who had supplies, compartments. And that was because I studied, and I was a school topper in my Hindi medium school and my engineering college was in an English medium school. So I had all those 'Taare Zameen Par' moments when my alphabets were flying. And anyways, engineering classes are boring, they are anyways flying. Well, congratulations, this is the starting point of your life of a very different kind. As I heard a while back, was talking about that this is the time when your family is supporting you; this is the time when some of you are getting self-supported I am sure about it, but this is the time when you have dreams and you have this typical, vibe of something I want to do, Something that I think I should do because my family wants me to do, this is the script. It does not mean that it is about business or job, I think it is about what you want to do yourself versus your family.

Speaker 1: I think one thing that kept driving me all along was how do you stay relevant and make yourself relevant and fit into the larger picture in a

meaningful way. The art gallery and working with the arts allows me to do that. And the good thing is, I work with people who understand my need to continue learning. There are days when I finish my work early, to attend yet another class. That helps me gain perspective about how the Arts work in India or how the Arts work across the world. And those are things that keep me invested in the work that I am doing. It is... the process of learning is constant.

Speaker 2: Here in class 11 and 12, as a parent my contribution will be more of a motivator; constantly motivating the child saying- you can do it and maybe when he or she is sitting late in the night, providing that little snack or trying to say look I am around, in case you want anything. Because, the amount of study that they need to put in is enormous. The number of problems that they are solving in each subject is running into thousands. So all this can happen only if you are able to be free and contribute. If I myself am under pressure, you know, because of home or office pressure, I don't think I can do that to my child.

There is an interesting finding that people are looking at education as an investment. So people earlier looked at a fixed deposit as an investment, then it became, say let's invest into the equity market for investment because that's going to give me returns. Now people say, investing in my child's education gets me the highest returns. So even if you are not looking at it emotionally because it is your child, look at it from a sheer financial point of view. The returns that you get while investing the money into your child's education, is much higher than anything else. So the need to invest there is very clear. In your goals, how much are you willing to invest towards their education? You got to take into account inflation, you got to take into account exchange rate fluctuation if you are investing overseas, how do you plan that? That is the financial advice that is required but it is important to keep that aside every month, every quarter if you can. So a plan is not a one-time activity; it gets made once, it needs to get reviewed, at least quarterly and that is how you plan your education corpus.

Speaker 2: Now when she is about to join college, she is now telling me, "look both of us have done a very good wholesome life. Now I am getting into college. I have become bigger. You can also join and do your passion; whether it is training, or your online trading. Whatever it is, you also enjoy, make money, let's enjoy together".

Speaker 1: When I look back, honestly I have no regrets. I have lots of stories to tell. I have some really wonderful people that I have met. Uhm.. I have a story for every small thing I have done. Which I think is pretty amazing.

Indeed, our stories our endless; but for now we are at the end of this episode. Stay tuned to the series as we continue to explore all the things that matter to us in our personal economy. Until next time from the entire team, many thanks.