

Economic Development in Jharkhand: Need of Qualitative Higher Education, Challenges & Opportunities

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⇒ Introduction:

The development of any economy depends on various factors. One of the factors, playing major roles, is Human Resources; which is purely the result of qualitative higher education. Our economy and society depend on economic-development for which the qualitative education facilitates concrete base. This increases the productivity, efficiency and consistency of the economy and society as well.

Proper education makes citizen skillful, which accelerates the productivity of man. By the improvement in the quality of education provided, a person can utilize his talent and efficiency to the optimum level. He will be full of moral virtues also.

The higher education system in Jharkhand is full of doubts and is victim of irrational policies of Governments. In comparison to other leading states of the country, the quality of higher education in Jharkhand is at low level. The budget expenditure on education of Jharkhand is merely 2.37% in comparison to central budget i.e. 4.40%. Now-a-days, Education, Skills, and knowledge possession have become crucial determinants of a person's and a nation's productivity.

⇒ Scenario of Higher Education in Jharkhand

In the year 2016, **Ajoy Kumar Singh**, Secretary, Department of Higher, Technical Education & Skill Development, Government of Jharkhand shared state government's plans to improve the technical and higher education scenario of Jharkhand.

The major challenge for the state, at this moment, is the access to higher and technical education. Against the national average of 23 Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER), we have only 13 GER in the state. In terms of deficit of number of colleges/ institutions in higher education, we have college population index of 8 viz-a-viz national averages of 26. So, in order to match the national average, we require 692 colleges. Similarly, we require 80 polytechnic colleges and 26 engineering colleges

to match the national average. It clearly indicates that there is a large deficit of colleges/institutions in the state and in order to address this crucial issue, the government has planned to construct and open about 100 new engineering, degree and polytechnic colleges in near future.

According to the Secretary, Department of Higher, Technical Education & Skill Development, Govt has been also encouraging private institutions as government alone can't fulfill this gap. Government of Jharkhand (GoJ) notified model guidelines for setting private universities. Due to this effort, three new universities, namely Amity, Pragma and ISEC, have opened their academic sessions recently.

In 2018, a new university named 'Ramchandra Chandravanshi University' also came in existence. It is founded by renounced academician and Minister of Health, GOJ Mr. Ramchandra Chandravanshi. GoJ has also open Raksha Shakti University which is a government institution and trying to increase the access of higher education by running second shift in several colleges.

⇒ About the Quality of Education

Application of refined technology in the field of higher education can accelerate its quality as per need and to make competent it at global standard. It provides e-learning platform in higher and technical education. GOJ has taken initiative of making all the campuses Wi-Fi enabled. The project has already been initiated by the department of higher education and skill development. In the first phase, GOJ is going to enable about 5 university and 30 colleges in the state. GOJ has been also planning to upload video and audio lectures on websites also in the process of building e-library.

There is a massive gap between industry requirements and what is being taught in colleges. The passed-out students are not getting jobs. In order to address this issue, Govt of Jharkhand has changed the course curriculum. Govt of Jharkhand has instructed universities to change the curriculum so that the gap between industry and academic institutions can be bridged. Govt of Jharkhand is also encouraging tie-ups between universities and industries.

Govt of Jharkhand already signed MoU with Cisco, Oracle and Tata and MoU with Siemens is also expected soon. These companies will be bringing new software, technology and solutions to provide better education to students of Jharkhand, which will enable students to get immediate jobs. Skill development certificate courses in colleges are also being introduced. These courses will get integrated in our education systems so that students studying in regular courses can get relevant hands-on experience to help them while working in industry.

⇒ Role of private institutions:

Govt of Jharkhand will be offering the land to such institutions on subsidy and at Government rates. For engineering and polytechnic colleges, government plans to construct the

infrastructure and then hand-over to the private entrepreneurs to run the colleges. Education and skill development is a major thrust area and it is certainly the major focus area for the government.

⇒ Role of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in education in Jharkhand

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in education is allowed in India under the automatic route, without any sectoral cap, since February, 2000. There is no offshore campus of any foreign university in India. In India there are 106 institutions running technical programmes in collaboration with over 125 foreign universities and institutions. There are only 10.5 million students enrolled in all higher education institutions in India. That is just 11% of the relevant age group (17-23) population.

According to 2004-05 survey, 80,466 Indian students were enrolled in USA universities and 15,000 Indian students were enrolled in the UK universities.

Advantages of FDI in Indian Education: If international educational institutions come to India, then students would be able to get foreign education in India, cheaper. The seats are limited in the Indian educational institutions and so FDI in the educational sector would result in more opportunities for the Indian students. The Indian students will get libraries and labs that are of world class standards. The setting up of international educational institutions in India will draw students from the neighboring countries to come and study in those institutions in India and this will help the country to become an important destination for education. It will enable the Indian students to come in touch with the best professors from across the globe. FDI in education will also lead to higher number of Indian students getting jobs in internationally acclaimed companies.

⇒ Challenges in Higher Education:

1. **Lack of rational education policy** – In Jharkhand, the higher education policy is full of doubts and confusions. The existence of ‘Non-aided Education Policy’ introduced by the Government of Bihar in 1980s, was also adopted by Govt of Jharkhand. It is proved as the worst education policy, which destroyed the quality of higher education as well as the career of working teachers in Non-aided colleges. Higher Education of Jharkhand state is severe victim of such policy. **There is no existence of such ‘Non-aided Education Policy’ anywhere in India except Bihar and Jharkhand.**
2. **Division of higher education institutions in various classes**: Higher education institutions i.e. colleges in Jharkhand are divided in such classes –
 - Constituent colleges
 - Minority colleges
 - Deficit Grant colleges

- Permanent Affiliated colleges with annual grant-in-aid
 - Affiliated colleges without annual grant-in-aid.
3. **Irrational appointment of teachers**, like 'contractual' basis.
 4. **Huge vacancies in departments** – Almost in all universities there are large number of post of teachers/faculties is vacant. Some departments run without faculty.
 5. **Large gap in teacher-student ratio as per UGC norms.**
 6. **Gap between the required expenditure and actual expenditure per student.**
 7. **Lack of infrastructure and basic amenities in institutions** like – sufficient classrooms, laboratories, canteen, common rooms, potable water, toilets, library, playgrounds, Wi-Fi, internet etc.
 8. **Year wise rapid growth in admission, but sluggish development in infrastructure.**
 9. **Poor attendance of students in classes and using of unfair means.**

⇒ Causes of Low quality of Higher Education in Jharkhand

1. **Lack of good faculty** - Scarcity of quality faculty is proving to be a great stumbling block in the transformation of higher education in Jharkhand. According to a government report, there is a massive need for expansion in higher education; but there is also a lack of deserving Ph.D. candidates for faculty positions in the higher education. This has created a shortage of almost 54 percent in the faculty talent pool in higher education, such a deficiency will greatly prove to be a stumbling block, which mainly due to the adverse decisions taken by policymakers, bureaucrats, and university administrators.
2. **Lack of new teaching methods** - The Indian higher education system has been following lecture drive method for several years. This has turned ineffective and not sufficient in many areas. Besides, there is a lack of teacher's learning and development areas need which is should be in the form educating them. There are no approaches like mentoring, spot visits, practical educational tours and involvement in research projects with peers. Finally, one need to change the teacher's training curriculum along with content, subject and methodology. Teachers must be encouraged to take short duration professional training courses, which could help to strengthen the teacher's learning and development areas. Further, there is no syllabus for integrating development concepts; like emotional competencies, life skills and info-savvy skills etc. Education institutions often lack the importance for pointing out on the learning outcomes than content teaching. Many institutions never take the initiative to collaborate or participate with international institutes in order to get the exposure of digital learning methods or technologies.

3. **Teaching system by traditional classrooms with delivering lectures, chalk-duster and black board.**
4. **Poor attendance of students in classrooms.** It is seen below 50% in the most of colleges in the state of Jharkhand.
5. **Lack of continuous / relevant evaluation of learning progress of students.**
6. **Dependency of students on various 'Guess Papers' and 'guides' in market.**
7. **Irrational question paper setting** - Asking examinees to answer any 5 questions out of 10 or 11 question in question paper.
8. **Hasty evaluation system** – Directing examiners to evaluate 30 answer books in approx. 4-5 hours per day. Sometimes examiners are compelled to evaluate 40 to 50 answer books per day.
9. **Marking system** – Marking system of written answers is not at par to other universities or Examination Boards; like CBSE, IGNOU etc. At some instances, Examiners feel fear of 'Show Cause' or clarification in providing more marks for answers.

⇒ **Suggestions & Recommendations**

The University Grants Commission (UGC) has recently modernized the syllabus pattern of Under-graduate and Post-graduate courses to improve the quality of education system. Various universities in Jharkhand have adopted Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) enforced by UGC. This is a big step in the improvement of higher education system.

But, the examination system also needs to apply some sophisticated techniques and applications. So that, the probability of malpractices and use of unfair means may be brought down to zero level. In order to achieve this target, it is necessary to make the infrastructure of institutions sound and relevant. The government also, in its budget, should make provisions for enhanced percentage of expenditure on education.

⇒ **Government initiatives for the issues:**

A number of initiatives have taken by the government to tackle / reduce the demand supply gap in higher education system. It has been proposed to set up colleges at the block level as 'Model Degree College' to standard quality. Of these, some institutions will be set up under Public Private Partnership (PPP). Besides, a new proposal by the Human Resource Development Ministry has been proposed to replace the University Grants Commission, which is the governing body for all the colleges and universities. The new Higher Education Commission of India will also govern the functioning of the universities and colleges, but it would give a special authority of acting as 'self-governing' bodies.

Govt of Jharkhand has taken initiative to promote quality of higher education in the state to induce the colleges and institutions for going through accreditation by the competent body

'National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC)' of Central Government. Various colleges are being accredited per year in phased manner, which is very good indication to ensure and promotion of the quality of higher education in Jharkhand.

⇒ Conclusion ⇐

Jharkhand has shown remarkable development over the years by taking various initiatives. However, a lot are yet to be done. This includes providing better autonomy to institutions, introduction of branch new regulatory system in order to enhance the existing education system to a world class level, improving teachers' qualification, making necessary recruitments, providing sufficient funds to education system, regularization of classes etc.

The need of quality-check for private institutions, procedures of financing universities etc. is also warranted, since most of the educational institutions are run by either big private players. There is a necessity of broad academic development plan including Replacement of 'Non-aided education policy' with better policy is also required. This will certainly help the quality improvement of Human resources on which our economic development is really depended.

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