

Commercialization of Higher Education and its Effects

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Abstract

Education is one of the significant factors instrumental to the development of a country. It should be transformed to the needs of the time and changing scenario of the world. We are living in a world of commercialization- everything has a price tag and conspicuous consumption appears to be the way of the western world. The media and politicians remind us that our educational system must prepare our students to be competitive in a global economy. To meet the futuristic prospects of Indian higher education, teachers should provide with the best trained manpower for a nation such as technologists, scientists, doctors, engineers, policy makers, businessmen etc. It is therefore teachers too should be empowered as a part of reforms for Indian higher education meeting the growing demands of liberalization and globalization going on in the world. Hence, the emerging Indian society needs to make the system of their higher education must innovative and futuristic to face the changing demands of the modern Indian Society. Growing competition within the field of higher education requires universities to understand and mitigate the different external forces that affect the management and orientation of institutions. The globalization of the sector has required universities to not only expand its horizons into distance learning but to interact with international cultures, demands and needs of students

Keywords: Commercialization of education, higher education, teacher.

Introduction

According to the dictionary meaning the word 'commercialize' means: To render commercial, make a matter of trade or the subject to commercialism. To apply commercial or business method, to make use of, or exploit mainly for profit, especially at the expense of quality, or to imbue with commercialism. Thus the word commercialization shows the profit as the main motive behind any activity. The term education has been defined as- the process of developing and training the powers and capabilities of human beings. Thus if there is sale of services or profit motive behind imparting of education or funds come mainly from the receivers of education, we can easily say that there is commercialization of education.

Commercialization of Education:

Commercialization of education means advertising the product (schools, play schools, university) in a way that appeals to the consumer (student and parent). The money put in advertising and infrastructural investment in keeping with the advertisement, is then remitted to the consumers. Thus, if consumers seek better education and educational facility, they have to spend bigger bucks. When a student is reduced to a mere consumer, then what is the fate of millions of poor yet deserving students. Every child has a right to not just education but also an opportunity to get the best. The goal of education is to harness the potential of a child, direct and channelize this potential in the right way. Education has to have an inherently moralistic module in order to achieve its real goals and not just commercial ones. In the modern fast growing competitive world one need not state the significance of education for the dignified life of an individual as well as that of a nation. How one can afford to forget the effectiveness of education in changing society. Echoing this education commission in India stated. "It this change on a ground scale is to be achieved without violent revolution there is one instrument, one instrument only that can be used education other agencies may help but can indeed sometimes have a more apparent impact. But the national system of education is the only instrument that can reach all the people it is not however, a magic wand to wave wishes into existence it is a difficult instrument, whose effective use requires strength of will dedicated work and sacrifice. But it is a sure and tried instrument which has served other countries well in their struggle for development it can given to will and skill do so for India. Commercialization of education has been a big challenge before the fundamental right to education in India. Demands for the qualities education, opportunities in abroad, growing consciousness about the education in India comparativeness and

governmental inability to cope up with the rising demands has resulted into widespread of education and thereby educational institutions in the hands of private persons.

Enormous demands for higher education in India Have led to the Industrialization of education. But Education today is an object of business which has serious and negative effects on our society. The more one can pay, higher the education he can get. Every year, number of students going for higher professional education is increasing in India and therefore, good opportunity exists for all these colleges to make money by offering such courses. In many cases, situations even remain much worst and students feel cheated at the end of courses. The best example is given in a movie, Pathshalla in which some rules were set for the school's profit. We can easily give the example of flourishing MBA colleges across India where average annual fees is around 5- 10 lakh rupees; however, the facilities provided by these colleges are much below average levels. Most of these colleges remain more interested in making good bucks than providing quality education to students. Every year, number of students going for higher professional education is increasing in India and therefore, good opportunity exists for all these colleges to make money by offering such courses. Same conditions do prevailing other professional colleges in India. Under the new scenario, Government-Private partnership is becoming important in Management Education. Now India is a transforming country. We are near to achieve status of developed nation. The demand for higher education has been growing rapidly with comparatively faster growth in enrolment in higher educational institutions than the growth in number of higher educational institutions.

Need and importance of education

Education, as you are aware, is vital to the human resources development and empowerment in the stages of growth of a nation. In any education system, higher education encompassing Management, Engineering, edicines etc., plays a major role in imparting knowledge, values, and developing skills and in the process, increase the growth and productivity of the nation. While the Government is committed to providing primary education and certain facilities/subsidies for higher education, given the higher cost involved in the establishment of higher education institutes, we are witnessing the entry of private sector to run educational institutions. On the need for education, I wish to quote our Father of the Nation, **Mahatma Gandhi, who once said that "education not only moulds the new generation, but reflects a society's fundamental assumptions about itself and the individuals which compose it."** The famous philosopher Einstein while discussing the need for education has projected the following fundamentals:

- To educate the individual as a free individual; tounderstand and use critical thinking skills.
- To educate the individual as a part of society-virtually all our knowledge, our clothes, our food is produced by others in our society, thus, we owe Society and have responsibility to contribute back to Society.
- Through education, knowledge must continually be renewed by ceaseless effort, if it is not to be lost. It resembles a statute of marble which stands in the desert and is continually threatened with burial by the shifting sand.
- The hands of service must ever be at work, in order that the marble continue to lastingly shine in the sun.

While discussing the importance of education, I must state that schools have become the most important means of transforming wealth of knowledge and skills from one generation to another. However, the role of institutions becomes more challenging in the modern world with innovations and technological developments. Investment in education and educational institutions should be viewed as an investment for economic prosperity. In India, there are about 700 Universities & 35,000 affiliated colleges (Table 1) who are providing higher education and accounting for the largest number in the world (enrolling more than 20 million students). In comparison, according to a report in 2010, the U.S. had only 6,706 higher education schools and China had 4,000. It is important that given the large number of schools of higher learning in India, we must target to bring more students under the system. Investment in human capital, lifelong learning and quality education help in the development of society and nation.

Objective of the study

- To identify the different problems faced by students in society
- To find out what are the prospects of Higher education

- To find out the objectives of Higher education
- To find out the benefit of Higher education to Public as well as businessman or Students
- To find out precaution taken by improving the quality of Higher education in India

Research methodology

The paper is based on secondary sources of data, which have been obtained from various website, discussion papers, published article in journals, web articles (internet sources), past studies and news paper etc. With the help of these secondary sources, attempt has been made to find the obstacles coming on the way of Higher education and looking for future opportunities of it in India.

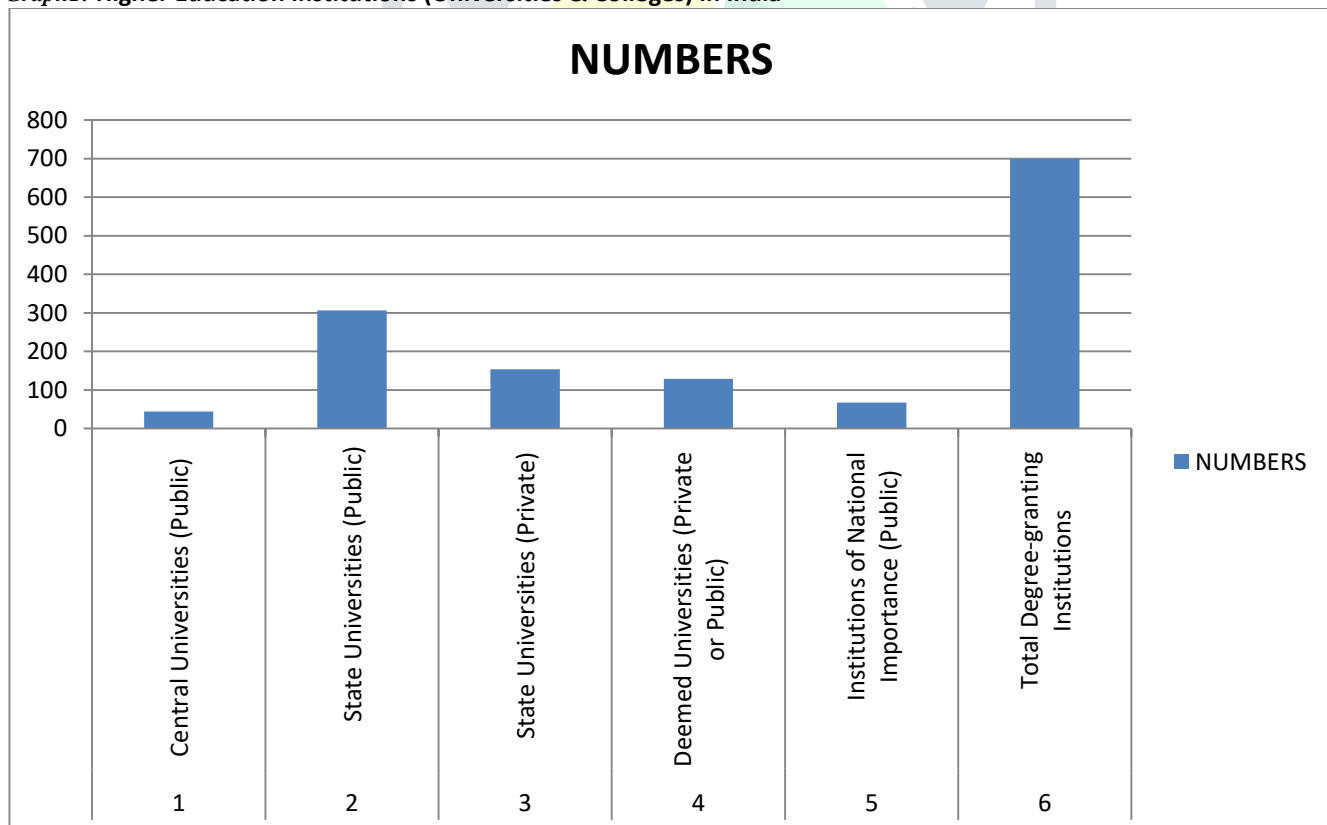
1: Higher Education Institutions (Universities & Colleges) in India

Table 1:

NO	Universities & Colleges	NUMBERS
1	Central Universities (Public)	44
2	State Universities (Public)	306
3	State Universities (Private)	154
4	Deemed Universities (Private or Public)	129
5	Institutions of National Importance (Public)	67
6	Total Degree-granting Institutions	700
7	Affiliated Colleges (Public or Private)	35,539

Source: Statistics on Higher Education, 2012-13 from
<http://www.dreducation.com/2013/08/data-statistics-india-studentcollege>.

Graph1: Higher Education Institutions (Universities & Colleges) in India



Effects of Commercialization

(1) Positive Aspects:

- The increasing demand for better quality higher education in India can be met only by Private Institutions complementing the Universities established by the State. The proportion of students opting for higher education in India is increasing at a rapid rate and the only feasible way out is the privatization of the educational system.
- The Government with the Constitutional obligation to provide free and compulsory Primary Education, has increased the investment in Primary Education, as a result of which, the investment in higher education has proportionately decreased. In order to meet the growing needs of the student population for higher education in the country, it is an imperative for the Government to privatize higher education.
- In case of Private Universities, there would be no political intervention and this would be beneficial for the Universities in terms of being independent. The Hon'ble Supreme Court held that in professional institutions, as they are unaided, there will be full autonomy in their administration, but the principle of merit cannot be sacrificed, as excellence in education is in national interest. The Universities would try and implement new techniques, which would have otherwise been impossible without the permission of the State.
- Private Colleges that are affiliated to the Universities are independent as far administration is concerned. In case of Colleges established by the State, there may be unethical practices. There are innumerable cases which involve unethical practices in Government Colleges in India and many of them in the recent past. Private Colleges
- Affiliated to Universities would run the risk of being stripped of their affiliation if they are caught engaging in such unethical practices by the relevant authorities.

(2) Negative Effects

- If the Private Institutions are given too much independence, it would invariably lead to monopolization of higher education. This would lead to a plethora of problems such as high fee structure, capitation fee, exploitation of professors, etc. A recent case in which there was a hike in fees in colleges in some parts of India, there was a major uproar and the Government had to give in to the pressure. The Honorable Supreme Court in
- Mohini Jain v. State of Karnataka has held that the Right to Education is a Fundamental Right under Article 21 of the Constitution, which cannot be denied to a citizen by charging higher fee known as capitation fee.
- With the advent of privatization, there has been an enormous growth in the number of Private professional colleges. This rapid growth has no doubt contributed to a quantitative increase in the number of colleges providing higher education but this has been at the cost of quality, as the Government does not exercise sufficient control over 'unaided colleges'.
- Most Private colleges although adhering to standard admission procedures like conducting entrance tests, interviews, etc. tend to admit students by charging an exorbitant amount of capitation fee. Merit invariably takes a backseat and those with the ability to shell out more money often tend to get admitted, without fulfilling the admission requirements.

- The State has been supporting the higher education sector by means of providing funds, establishing colleges, etc. since independence. The question that arises is- what is the need to so rapidly change the policy, when for such a long time the State funding has carried on without any impediment?
- With privatization, there is the risk of commercialization of education. Although a competitive atmosphere would be created, some colleges would concentrate on profit making rather than on improving the standard of education.
- Colleges which are privately owned and administered would exploit the teachers, professors, etc. by paying them amounts which are not in consonance with the amount specified by various regulating agencies of the
- State which regulate higher education, like the University Grants Commission, etc. This may lead to a slackening in the efforts of the aggrieved and may ultimately result in a fall in the standard of education.
- Foreign Institutions which have been allowed to enter into franchise with their counterparts in India have begun offering degrees, etc. These Foreign Universities may or may not be recognized in their parent countries due to which there is no control or restriction on the standard of education provided by these Universities.
- A large number of students continue to go abroad for higher education. Only a very small percentage of the student population opts for higher education in India. This may be due to several factors which inter alia include the high fee payable, the capitation fee, the standard of higher education which is not as good as it ought to be, etc.

Suggestions

- The need for financing of education for students, especially those coming from low income households needs special attention. Subsidization for the interest rate of education loan should be based on family income
- The state is primarily responsible for ensuring quality education at all levels and in all regions. State should finance more for state universities and technological institutions for improving quality of education and research.
- Foreign universities are promoting commercialization. Issue like fee control should be attended very carefully.
- A suitable framework in respect of specific issues may be imposed by legislation for the benefit of poor and weaker section of society.
- For the better conclusion and directives about education system government should form a committee of judges, eminent professors and experts not the industrialist like Birla and Ambani.

Conclusion

The development of any nations depends mainly on the standards of its educational system education is the most powerful and effective instrument for inducing radical changes in the behavior of students. It is a powerful instrument of nation's social economic and cultural development. The teacher occupies pivotal position in the system of education. Teaching has been one of the oldest and most respected professions in the world. India is a developing country and it is humbly submitted that it is better to establish all professional institution under the govt. sector then only it is possible to study all type of courses for poor and weaker section of society. Treating the education system as a market place and opening the route for foreign institution in this manner will harmful for Indian education system. And unfortunately despite huge public discontent, media intervention and many court cases the government have not been able to regulate the fee structure and donation in these institution even the court have only played with the term such as payment seats, management quotes etc. without addressing the basic issue of fee structure. So again in my view it should be stopped till the effective and transparent solution about the fee structure and other complexities. The government must take care of public interests specially the poor and weaker section and act to protect public services like education from the predatory elements that preach the ideology of the market place as the solution to every issue. "Whatever it be, it is an obligation of state and the state and its agencies cannot be allowed to trade on education. If the private parties want to share the responsibilities with state it cannot be on the term of trade, business or profession.

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