

COMMERCIALIZATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND ITS EFFECTS

Diksha

Assistant Professor in Commerce, Department of Business Management and Commerce, Guru Nanak College, Killianwali, District Sri Muktsar Sahib (Pb.)

Abstract

This study aims to examine the commercialization of higher education and its effects. Higher education has become an indispensable part of life in today's competitive world. But due to the privatization of higher education, the emphasis has been shifted from service world to the commercial world. The commercialized education system has affected the performance and productivity of the educational institutions badly which in turn has deteriorated the quality of the education. The students are the ultimate sufferers. Nowadays, the focus of the management, principal and the other faculty members of the educational institutions is on getting maximum admissions rather than on delivering the value education to the students which contributes to the failure of the students. Due to the commercialization, the education which helps in the overall development of the youth is sidelined which was traditionally considered as an important element for the growth of the individual. The economy will also have to pay the cost of the commercialization of higher education as today's youth is tomorrow's asset. To solve the existing problem, government intervention is "a light in the dark room." The government can take corrective measures to improve the quality of the education system so that the economy should not set back.

Keywords: Commercialization, educational institutions and higher education.

Introduction

Education is the key instrument in bringing the social change in any society all over the world. The decade of 2000s has been associated with the process of expansion, privatization and internationalization of higher education. Due to this, the concept of 'knowledge society' has been changed to 'economized knowledge'. Education is no more a noble cause but it has become a business which is diluting the quality of higher education. The private players in this sector are aimed at the profits they get from the educational institutions and are least bothered about the quality of education and the impact it has on the students and the faculty members.

Objectives of the study

- To study the concept of commercialization of higher education.
- To analyse the impact of commercialization of higher education on students, teachers and the quality of higher education.
- To suggest the measures to nullify the negative impact of commercialization of higher education.

Research Methodology

The data has been collected from various secondary sources like web sites, research papers.

Commercialization of Higher Education

Commercialization of higher education may be defined as a process of private ownership and management of educational institutions whereby the investments are made with the motive of earning profits. The objective of the investors is maximum return on their investments in the form of profits from the educational institutions rather than delivering the value education to the students. Nowadays, a number of private colleges and universities have been set up in the various areas which have increased the competitiveness among these universities and colleges. Due to this unfettered competition, the purpose of education has been hijacked. The possible reasons for the commercialization of higher education are-

- People today have become self-centred and money minded and are least concerned for others. They are aimed at getting maximum output out of minimum input.
- Due to increasing awareness among people about the value of education, the demand has increased.
- People are ignorant about the agenda of the private and semi-government educational institutions and are ready to incur heavy expenses for higher education.
- Reduced government funding for educational institutions.

- Young generations are easily influenced by others. So, marketers have become partners with the educational institutions as media creates a long lasting impact on youth.
- Another reason for commercialization of education is the perception that to be successful and to get good marks in the examination, one should resort to the coaching classes due to which the tutors have taken the undue advantage and are running the coaching institutions for earning money at the earliest.
- Businessmen consider education as the safest business. Have AC classrooms, AC buses etc and can hike fees of the course.
- The perception that the public institutions are not as good as private institutions.

Effects of commercialization of higher education

Commercialization of higher education has affected the various sections like students, teachers of the educational institutions and the parents etc. No doubt, it has **advantages** like it has facilitated educational services in every area where it was not available initially, the infrastructure has improved, privatized universities are more professional than public ones, has increased the literacy rate etc but its negative impacts have absorbed the positive ones. Some of the points which highlight the negative effect of commercialization of higher education are listed below:-

- The quality of the education has been deteriorated. So, students today are less likely to perceive the connection between the knowledge and ethical practices.
- Getting a seat in a reputed educational institution has become a difficult practice even though you have the qualification or the required percentage of marks meet the criteria of the institution until you have the enough money to pay their donation.
- In order to minimise their expenses, the administrators of the educational institutions hire teachers who demand the least salary not the person with the higher knowledge standards due to which the students are the ultimate sufferers.
- The teachers also find themselves in a dilemma, dissatisfied with the system which they serve but unable to see a meaningful alternative to it.
- The increments in the salary of the faculty members have also been based upon the number of admissions he gets for the institution.
- Today, the students view education as a means to an economic end and a way of ensuring profitable employment only. They do not perceive it as an important tool for their overall development.
- Students are viewed as consumers of a service of education for a reason, i.e., a ticket to a well-paying job.
- There is a high tuition fees associated with it.
- Students' attitude towards education results in the view that liberal arts and value-based learning have gone out of vogue; which has direct consequences for an area of education like ethical citizenship.
- This attitude of students towards education impedes their ability or willingness to act for the benefit of public good.
- Due to the commercialization of higher education, the real motive of the education, i.e., the overall development of the individual is being violated as the emphasis is being laid on increasing admissions.
- There is a lack of transparency which includes payment of lesser salary to the teachers that does not match the amount they sign in the official records.
- Teachers are not offered an appointment letter at the time of joining by the private institutions.
- The teachers have to go to different schools, colleges etc for convincing the students to get admission in their institution which affects their reputation and also the students have to suffer the loss of lectures.
- The education which is being provided today has made the students egoistic. They are not ready to get themselves employed at the job which is not according to their qualification. It hurts their ego.
- Teachers are viewed as objects which dance to the tunes of investors.
- Also, due to deterioration in the quality of education, education is producing intelligent criminals.
- Commercialization has produced engineers, lawyers, MBAs, post graduates etc in every city, every village, even in every street. But the job opportunities are not enough to absorb such a huge number of qualified persons. So, without focusing on how to create job opportunities, the focus is on pushing the pump of education in order to earn the profits.

Suggestions to curb commercialization of higher education

From the above discussion, it is clear that the commercialization of higher education has many negative impacts which need to be eliminated so as to improve the quality of education. The measures which can be adopted are listed as below:-

- ✓ The government should plan to enable a policy framework to make higher education accessible, equitable and qualitative.
- ✓ It must be carried out in a regulated manner after ensuring opportunity for those who cannot afford it.
- ✓ The steps should be taken so as to ensure that the rich and the wealthy are unable to procure a degree based on the power and money.
- ✓ Every child has the right to quality education. So, profit-making in and of education should play no role.
- ✓ Periodic checks should be made to ensure that the students are delivered quality education and they are made aware of the ethical practices.
- ✓ Sufficient job opportunities should be provided so as to absorb the pool which is being educated.
- ✓ The fees structure of the private educational institutions should be checked and modified so as to make it affordable for everyone.
- ✓ The criteria for the appointment of faculty should be well defined and be followed while recruitment.
- ✓ Regular checks should be made on public educational institutions to increase their efficiency.

Conclusion

The above study analyses that commercialization has made education as a commodity, students as consumers and educators as service providers. It not only has the positive impact but also the negative impact. The negative impact is overriding the positive impact. So, there is a need for government intervention. The government should not do the things which individuals are doing already, but to do the things which at present are not done at all. There is a need of enhanced financing by the government for the higher education. Also, the private institutions need to be regulated. Today's generation and their parents should also be encouraged to opt for the educational institutions which provide them the quality education not the institutions which provide them better infrastructure and other facilities.

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