

IMPACT OF COMMERCIALIZATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Education has a strong correlation with socio economic development of the country because a society having high literacy rate has more chances of development at the economic and social levels as compare to the nations lacking in it. Revolution in information technology and scientific advancements has linked the production and productivity with knowledge which has increased the need of qualified workforce The process of globalization, powered by information technologies, is changing every aspect of life, including attitudes toward teaching and learning. This paper focusing on the main negative implications of the increasing commercialization of higher education, of viewing education as a commodity, students as consumers, and educators as service providers as they relate to the outcomes of the liberal education for the twenty-first century. Commercialization means materializes itself in mushrooming private schools at different levels and public and private universities at high education level. It affects millions of families and as a result there is a significant change in the traditional concepts of education in society, including student-teacher relationship, educational purposes, and attitudes towards knowledge. Commercialization of education may change the relationship among these players through a cost-effect process and product evaluation re-structuring.

Keywords- Education, Commercialization, higher education

Introduction

The paradigm shift in higher education from service to business is a growing concern today. The decade of 2000s has been associated with the process of expansion, privatization and internationalization of Indian Higher Education sector. The commercialization of education has a dreadful effect which is so subtle that it often goes undetected. Another worrying aspect of this commercialization is that the interest of the youth and the kind of education that develops his/her full potential and wholesome personality is sidelined. There is a need for government intervention correcting systematic anomalies. If commercialization persists and continues to grow unchecked, anything and everything will be exploited and manipulated for profit in higher education. Various aspects of commercialized education system affects the students' psychological state as well as general behavior. Commercialization of education can and will happen at two different levels: administrative and instructional. The administrative level would require running the institute like an enterprise, focusing on budgetary cost-effect, seeking resources, product evaluation and corresponding adjustment, new hiring policy, and new relationship between teachers and students. Instructional level commercialization would treat the whole process of teaching and learning as cost-effect driven, focusing on learning/teaching as a necessary step for producing a product, re-adjusting the purposes of learning and teaching.

Impact of Commercialization of Education on Students:

“Mata shatru pita bairi, yena balo na pathita. Na shobhate sabha madhye hans madhye bako yatha.” This is a Sanskrit saying espousing the importance of education. It means that “A mother and father who do not encourage their child’s education are his enemies indeed, an illiterate among educated are his enemies indeed, an illiterate among the educated ones is the same as, in a group of swans the crow, is neither wanted nor admired.” It helps man to indoctrinate values and apply the technical know-how in real life situations. Today India has the largest student population in the world of 315 million. Traditionally, higher education was viewed as a vehicle for dissemination of knowledge which would further assist in getting a good job. Higher education was viewed as an instrument of personal development of individuals to have a better standard of living and an instrument of production and economic growth; and thereby ensuring the economic well-being of people and societies. The traditional function of dissemination of knowledge is under threat. From the concept of a ‘knowledge society’, the thrust has shifted to ‘economized knowledge’ making knowledge a valuable commodity subject to

commercial transactions. The global commercial strategy of internationalization of higher education has resulted in germination of a serious debate between the fruit-bearing capacities of education as opposed to its light-bearing quality.

Commercialization of education may be liberally defined as a process of private ownership and management of educational institutions whereby investments are made with the motive of earning profits. The decade of 2000s has been associated with the processes of expansion, privatization and internationalization of higher education. These have been reflected in policies of various ruling governments, reduction in government funding, ownership and production of higher education by private players- both 'for-profit' and 'not for-profit' and the emergence of foreign providers of higher education. The economy in expenditure achieved by withdrawal of subsidies and raising fees in higher education clearly indicate the lack of political will to abstain from its constitutional obligation of provision of education. In a predominantly public educational system, private institutions must be fit in clearly specified ways. Besides this, the public should have ready information related to the private institutions so that they can make decisions. In addition to checking the general reputation and accreditation, parents and students should get the opportunity to visit the campuses of private institutions and universities, interact with faculty and students and attend a few classes. Further there is a need to differentiate the wheat from the chaff as all public higher education institutions are not good and all private higher education institutions are not bad. The impact of this commercialization of education on the students is that it not only affects the quality of education but also the perception of educational institutions in general.

Today university students increasingly view education and the time they spend at university as a means to an economic end, a way of ensuring profitable employment. This is not to say that there should not be an economic benefit to their obtaining a degree. However, while the outcomes of a commodity-based exchange in the free market are easy to measure and quantify, the outcome of education, unless it is erroneously equated with the degree as an 'embodied' form of capital, is not easily quantifiable. The social and cultural trends that foster a mentality where education equals a degree serve to further obscure the benefits of education that are not easily quantifiable and not immediately cashable. However, in the context of the growing commercialization of higher education and its increasing coding as a commodity that can be purchased like any other, the concept acquires distinct market undertones. This contributes to the perception that students are consumers of a service for a very specific reason seen in limited, commercial terms- mainly as a ticket to a well-paying job. In that sense, students are implicitly encouraged to approach in very similar terms to, say, purchasing a car. Colleges and universities, in turn, feel increasingly compelled to cater to the apparent market-driven demand for utility and choice. The consumer 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, which is by definition value-based. Given the fact that both the institutions and the students live in a commercialized world where everything can be valued in monetary terms the teaching and learning of ethical citizenship is increasingly difficult as students and the public tend to perceive many of its aspects as theoretical, irrelevant and disconnected from the world outside.

Students often internalize this utilitarian and corporate conception of education and incorporate it into their views of themselves and their role in the world. This conception significantly impedes their ability or willingness to embrace the values of ethical citizenship, rooted in responsible action aimed at pursuing truth and knowledge for their own sake, or acting for the benefit of public good. One of the consequences of this process is that students are becoming alienated from the social experience; education is increasingly seen as a disembodied experience and the classroom experience has become sheltered and isolated – divorced in other words – from the community. The dominant corporate trends of the society do not encourage students to see their presence at college or university as a valuable process with a qualitative and unquantifiable benefits resulting in a broadened perception of self, others, the world and the categories of good, evil or justice, in a sense that transcends the interests of any single group or individual. Instead, the prevalent value structures of the society often encourage students to see post-secondary education as an obstacle to overcome on the way to the perfect job. In this circumstances, and with the increasingly commodification of higher education, students are increasingly less likely to perceive the connections between knowledge and ethical practice, less likely to see education as something valuable in itself, and less likely to reflect on the application of classroom education to the world and society outside with the aim of furthering society's moral wealth.

Education as Commodity

Commercialization is the term used to designate the tendencies and practices that create increasing connections between colleges and universities and the economic sector. It also refers to the process of driving public educational institutions to operate as if they were private.

Students as Consumers

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Educators as Service Providers

What are the ethical and civic implications of considering educators as service providers? The answers to this question are related to nature of knowledge and who gets to ask the questions that lead to knowledge and discovery. Academics may not always consciously define the purpose of their research to be for the good of society. However, their freedom to choose to pursue any direction in their research defines that research as being in the interest of the public, as it represents the best possible means of producing truth, or various aspects of a complex truth, which is for the benefit of society in that it contributes to and extends the existing body of knowledge from a diverse array of perspectives

The Negative Impact on Commercialization of Education:

Education today is an object of business, which has serious and negative effects on our society. Some Educationalist or expert say that high employment opportunity, economic development, to face the global challenges, personality development in privatization and commercialization .But It is not true in current educational system in India. The most important impact on below.

1) Corruption in Education System:

Education is fundamental to human progress. It plays a prominent role in all-around development of individual as well as society. Education plays a key role in creating patriotic, disciplined and productive manpower. Educated manpower constitutes precious assets as well as agents for advancing the nation. India's education system is mired in corruption and a high rate of teacher absenteeism in the country was a key factor for it according to the new global study. The UNESCO's International Institute of Educational Planning study on corruption in education released recently says that 25% teacher absenteeism in India is among the highest in the world

2) Profit Maximization:

Commercialization of education always purposed emphasis on profit maximization. It makes education as a business. People make rise about it but day by day it increased rapidly. In many schools for the commercial benefit there have soda machines, candy machines, fast food canteens, café terbia in the boundary of the school or college campus; it is a example of commercialization. From these sources they earn money from the students only for their benefit.

3) High Cost:

The impact of commercialization in education which make education very costlier. In the private institutions the admission fees, monthly fees, development fees, semester fees etc. Were very high. It is not possible to send their children in that type of institution. They demand high amount of donation in admitting the student in various course.

4) Base of Discrimination:

Discrimination based on race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status is prohibited in international human rights conventions, in private institute.

5) Over Burden on Teachers:

The impact of commercialization on education also related with the over burden of the teachers. In the private institutions, for the commercial benefit they pressure on the teachers and give over burden of work for the whole day. They were bound to do the activities provided by the authority. They were busy to take the class, examination, remedial class, tutorial class, to check the examination copy etc. But on the basis of their hard working in the whole day they don't get sufficient amount of money.

6) Less salary to teachers:

The commercialization of education hampers the economic interest of the teachers. In the private institutions the teachers are laden with over burden and work pressure and low salary is like peanuts for them.

Conclusion:

The important thing for the government is not to do things which individuals are doing already, and to do them a little better or a little worse; but to do those things which at present are not done at all. The role of the state in higher education has to be redefined. There is a need for careful planning, enhanced financing and evolving an enabling policy framework to make higher education accessible, equitable and qualitative. We can say that for these people education has today only become a source to make money than providing quality education to students. Economic exploitation is at hike here. Over all privatization and commercialization produces poor human resource, who are unable to sustain in the market, thus they end up losing their money, time and prestige. There is strong need to change the basics of the education policy and system, in order to revive education's real motto.

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