Research Article

VARIOUS PROBLEMS AND SUGGESTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDEPENDENT INDIA

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT

Indian higher education system is the third largest in the world, next to the United States and China. The main governing body at the tertiary level is the University Grants Commission (India), which enforces its standards, advises the government, and helps to coordinate between the Centre and the State.36 Accreditation for higher learning is overseen by 12 autonomous institutions established by the University Grants Commission. 37 in India, education system are reformed. Since independence, India as a developing nation is contentiously progressing in the education field. Although there have been lot of challenges to higher education system of India but equally have lot of opportunities to overcome these challenges and to make higher education system much better. It needs greater transparency and accountability, the role of colleges and universities in the new millennium, and emerging scientific research on how people learn is of utmost important. India need well skilled and highly educated people who can drive our economy forward. India provides highly skilled people to other countries therefore; it is very easy for India to transfer our country from a developing nation to a developed nation. The vision of higher education in India is to realize the country`s human resources potential to its fullest with equity and inclusion. The higher education sector, in recent decades, has witnessed a tremendous growth in many aspects such as its institutional capacity, enrolment, teacher-student ratio, etc. The rapid expansion of the higher education system at the same time has brought several pertinent issues related to equity, efficiency, excellence and access to higher education in the country. 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. It provides an opportunity to critically reflect upon the social, economic, cultural, moral and spiritual issues facing humanity. India needs more efficient and educated people to drive our economy forward. There are many Indian around the corner who known for their capabilities and skills. To develop India as an education hub or to become a prosperous partner in global economy, India has to qualitatively strengthen education in general and higher education with research and development in particular. In this paper the author tries to highlight the various problems of higher education in independent India. The author also tries to shed some light to give the suggestion for the development of higher education in independent India.

INTRODUCTION

India officially the republic of India (Bharat Ganarajya) is a country in South Asia. It is the Seventh-largest country by area, the second- most populous country with over 1.2 billion people and the most populous democracy in the world. It is bounded by the Indian Ocean on the South, the Arabian Sea on the South-West, and the Bay of Bengal on the South-East and Burma and Bangladesh to the East. In Indian Ocean, India is in the vicinity of Srilanka and the Maldives; in addition, India`s Andaman and Nicobar Islands share a maritime border with Thailand and Indonesia.

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Home to Ancient Indus Valley Civilization and a region of historic trade routes and vast empires, the Indian subcontinent was identified with its commercial and cultural wealth for much of its long history. Four world religions-Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism-originated here, where as Judaism, Zoroastrianism, Christianity diversity and Islam arrived in the first millennium CE and also helped shape the regions diverse culture. Gradually annexed by and brought under the administration of the British East India Company from the early 18th` century and administered directly by the United Kingdom from the mid-19th` century, India became an independent nation in 1947 after a struggle for independence that was marked by non-violent resistance led by Mahatma Gandhi. India's higher education system is the world's third largest in terms of students, next to China and the United States. In future, India will be one of the largest education

hubs. India's Higher Education sector has witnessed a tremendous increase in the number of Universities/University level Institutions & Colleges since independence. The 'Right to Education Act' which stipulates compulsory and free education to all children within the age groups of 6-14 years, has brought about a revolution in the education system of the country with statistics revealing a staggering enrolment in schools over the last four years. The involvement of private sector in higher education has seen drastic changes in the field. Today over 60% of higher education institutions in India are promoted by the private sector. This has accelerated establishment of institutes which have originated over the last decade making India home to the largest number of Higher Education institutions in the world, with student enrolments at the second highest (Shaguri, 2013).The number of Universities has increased 34 times from 20 in 1950 to 677 in 2014. Despite these numbers, international education rating agencies have not placed many of these institutions within the best of the world ranking. Also, India has failed to produce world class universities. Today, Knowledge is power. The more knowledge one has, the more empowered one is. However, India continues to face stern challenges. Despite growing investment in education, 25 per cent of its population is still illiterate; only 15 per cent of Indian students reach high school, and just 7 per cent graduate (Masani, 2008). The quality of education in India whether at primary or higher education is significantly poor as compared to major developing nations of the world. As of 2008, India's post-secondary institutions offer only enough seats for 7 per cent of India's college-age population, 25 per cent of teaching positions nationwide are vacant, and 57 per cent of college professors lack either a master's or PhD degree (Newsweek, 2011). As of 2011, there are 1522 degree-granting engineering colleges in India with an annual student intake of 582,000 (Science and Technology Education, 2009) plus 1,244 polytechnics with an annual intake of 265,000. However, these institutions face shortage of faculty and concerns have been raised over the quality of education (Mitra, 2008).

Despite these challenges higher education system of India equally have lot of opportunities to overcome these challenges and have the capability to make its identity at international level. However, it needs greater transparency and accountability, the role of universities and colleges in the new millennium, and emerging scientific research on how people learn is of utmost important. India provides highly skilled people to other countries therefore; it is very easy for India to transfer our country from a developing nation to a developed nation.

Objectives of the Study

1. To identify different problems of higher education in independent India.
2. Suggestion for the development of higher education in independent India.

Methodology of the Study

This study was purely theoretical based. Content analysis of the available documents. Data was collected from two major sources i.e. to study the problems and suggestions of higher education in independent India only the primary source. The investigator were collected data from different types books, journals (including e-journals), documents, articles written by great authors.

Delimitation of the Study

The study is delimited with the problems and suggestions relating to Higher education in independent India.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Different Problems of Indian Higher Education

Co- modification of Education

Higher education is becoming a marketing commodity. It is a billion dollar business. Foreign universities are trying to have a share of Indian educational markets, and have prepared for this during the last decade or more. This shift from education as a social good to marketable commodity is against the Indian culture, and sufferers in these changes will be poor and disadvantaged people of India.

Global Competitiveness

The competition will essentially be for offering quality education recognized at the International level and relevant to the local needs. The major issue is how to raise the quality and standards of Indian education and make it globally competitive, locally relevant and enable it to offer marketing paradigm appropriate for developing societies.

Concerns of weaker institutions

A high disparity in educational standards and quality of education offered by Indian universities and colleges is of great concern to all. National and global competition may create problems of survival of weaker universities and colleges.

Developmental disparities and unsolved Indian problems

Many colleges and universities were started in India for removing regional imbalances and for supporting education of weaker and disadvantaged classes, particularly of women. These institutions and other developmental programs for weaker classes are still facing resource constraints, which are further aggravated by ignorance, poverty and disadvantages of the people they serve. This is resulting in widening divides and in keeping many educated from weaker and disadvantages sections outside the job and employment markets. The challenge of these marginalized and deprived to the system of education is enormous. Weak linkage of education with developmental processes is creating frustration amongst graduates when they find that education is not so useful in employment and in work situations. A challenge is to transform the system from its present model of education to developmental education linking education to developments in society, industry and services sectors.

High cost of higher education

The unit cost of traditional education, particularly of professional education, is quite high and has gone out of reach of the Indian middle and lower classes. Many private entrepreneurs have started educational institutions for offering creamy courses with marketing approach; and have raised fees not affordable to majority. Subsidy to the education by the state is not the right solution in the present situation, when numbers curriculum standards; while this has helped enforce a minimum standard of curriculum to some extent, this has also hindered delivery of updated or differentiated course offerings by private colleges.

Lack of vocational bias

Indian higher education still lacks a vocational bias with a large proportion of students still enrolling in general courses that do not provide job-oriented training. Industry demand for vocationally trained individuals is leading to rapid growth is more industry relevant courses and professional education.

Shortage of well-qualified & trained teachers

Availability of qualified instructors is a key challenge in the higher education segment and hampers quality of education delivered. Reasons for the shortage include low salaries and availability of higher paying alternatives for qualified professionals. There is also currently no training mandated to enhance communication or teaching skills for college instructors, only a higher doctoral degree in the course of teaching is required.

Low access to student loans

The education loan market has been growing rapidly but still caters largely only to students enrolling in leading recognized institutes. With the significant increase in fees witnessed in the space in last five years, easier access to student credit is becoming a necessity for a large proportion of students.

Need for checks and regulations against malpractices. Private investment helps offset the funding crunch in the educational systems but could affect the accessibility of poorer income groups to education. In addition, the privatization of technical and professional education has also brought up issues such as the serious shortage of infrastructure, technical expertise and teaching facilities. Charges of underhand practices in private institutions reinforce the need for effective regulation, transparent systems and the supervision of private education.

Skill enhancement

The next big thing, Shortage of trainers and ICT based interface are likely to challenge classroom based coaching models. Private players are expected to focus on technical education and pre-schools. Also, the gulf between formal education and the market's skill requirements is driving demand for vocational education and skill development services.

Higher Education in India

The impact of the various trends and challenges related to globalisation on higher education institutions and policies is profound, but also diverse, depending on the specific location in the global arena. Different types of aspects and subjects are included in the higher education. The number of students attending graduate and post graduate is increasing in different aspect. In field of higher education, subject specification is emphasis here. Semester system, tutorial classes, grading system etc is a direct outcome of Globalization.

Globalization is likely to encourage the opening of more private/commercial colleges, and the states too are inclined to abridge their financial role. Though a concurrent subject, (higher) education in the states is almost entirely their responsibility, and they themselves are generally in the red. The Central Govt also favours self-financing educational programmes, though as late as 1993 UGC`s Punnaya Committee on funding of higher education stated emphatically: It is the perception of the committee that the state must continue to accept the major responsibility for funding the essential maintenance and development requirements of the Universities. Investment in higher education is crucial to human resource development, and financial starvation of Universities is, in the words of **Bhide**, ` the greatest mistake in our planning process.' He continues,`...we must realize that when resources are meagre it is prudent to plough them in the Universities which have an inherent multiplier effect.'

Keeping in view the global scenario and the Indian situation with regard to higher education we can summarize a few of the points for reconsideration: 1. Goals and functions of higher education. 2. Expansion and access. 3. Quality of education. 4. Teaching and research. 5. Financial support. 6. Accountability. 7. Role of teachers. 8. Teacher training. 9. Social concerns-equality and relevance. 10. Big fee hike. 11. Reduced funding. 12. Misuse of privatization. All these issues and many more require a lengthy debate.

Policies and Recommendations for the development of Higher Education in India

The modern system of higher education in India started in 1857 when the three Universities of Calcutta, Bombay and Madras were established on the model of London University. In 1902, the Indian Universities Commission was appointed to inquire in to the conditions and prospects of Universities. The recommendations of the commission were embodied in the Indian Universities Act, 1904 and the functions of the Universities were centralised.

Radhakrishnan Commission or Indian University Commission (1948-`49)

This commission was set up by the chairmanship of Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan in 1948. The commission suggested an improvement and extension of university education to suit the present and future requirements of India. The commission discussed all aspects of university education, particularly the changes required in the curriculum, examination and organization.

Kothari Commission or Indian Education Commission (1964-`66)

Indian Education Commission was established by the chairmanship of Dr. Daulat Singh Kothari in 1964.The report of this commission was submitted in 1966. On the basis of the recommendations made by the commission, the government issued a resolution on National Education Policy in 1968. The commission was set up for the development of education at all stages in India.

The National Policy on Education (1968)

The National Policy on Education, 1968, is considered to be a major landmark in the history of education in the post-Independence period. A radical construction of the education system was emphasized in the policy. It stressed the improvement in recommended that University education should be placed on the concurrent list. The recommendations of the commission gave a direction to the development of higher education in India.

UGC Policy Frame for University Education

The UGC (University Grants Commission), the apex body of higher education, began to function in 1954. Early in 1956, the parliament enacted the UGC Act. The UGC is responsible for the co-ordination, determination and maintenance of standards, release of grants for higher education in India. The UGC also advises the central and state governments on the steps necessary for higher education. In 1978, the UGC prepared a policy frame for higher education outlining the basic philosophy and strategies for the development of colleges and universities to improve the standard of higher education.

The National Policy on Education (1986)

The National Policy 1986 recommended for development of autonomous colleges and departments, strengthening of research, teacher training, improvement of efficiency, mobility redesigning of courses, creation of a structure for co-ordination at the state and national levels etc.

Growth of Higher Education Sector in India

India has been always been a land of scholars and learners. In ancient times also, India was regarded all over the world for its universities like Taxila, Nalanda, Vikramshila and its scholars. By independence India had 20 universities, 500 colleges enrolling about 2,30,000 students. Since independence India has progressed significantly in terms of higher education Statistics. This number has increased to 659 Universities and 33023 colleges up to December 2011-`12.Ugc is the main governing body that enforces the standards, advises the government and helps coordinate between centre and states. The chart 1.1 and 1.2 shown below depicts the growth of universities and colleges in India from 1970-2012 respectively. The number of universities has grown more than six times in last four decades and the number of colleges has been increased from 3603 in 1970-`71 to 33000 colleges in 2011-`12.
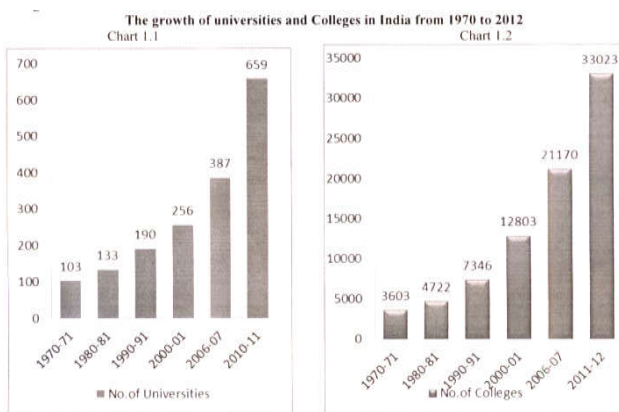
Source: Higher Education in India: 12th Five Year Plan (2012-`17) and beyond FICCI Higher Education Summit 2012.

Suggestions for improving quality of higher education

There are some suggestions and Expectations from Government, Industry, Educational Institutions, Parents and Students for improving quality of higher education.

Student-Centred Education and Dynamic Methods

Methods of higher education also have to be appropriate to the needs of learning to learn, learning to do, learning to be and learning to become. Student-centred education and employment of dynamic methods of education will require from teachers new attitudes and new skills. Methods of teaching through lectures will have to subordinate to the methods that will lay stress on self-study, personal consultation between teachers and pupils, and dynamic sessions of seminars and workshops. Methods of distance education will have to be employed on a vast scale.

Examination Reforms

Examination reforms, gradually shifting from the terminal, annual and semester examinations to regular and continuous assessment of student's performance in learning must be implemented.

International Cooperation

Universities in India have been a primary conduit for the advancement and transmission of knowledge through traditional functions such as research, innovation, teaching, human resource development, and continuing education. International cooperation is gaining importance as yet another function.

To increase Quantity of Universities

We need more universities because we are more in number and present number of universities is too less. On 13th June, 2005 Government of India constituted a high level advisory body known as National Knowledge Commission (NKC) to advise the PM about the state of education in India and measures needed to reform this sector. It was headed by Sam Pitroda and submitted its report in November 2007. NKC has recommended setting up of 1500 universities by 2015 so that gross enrolment ratio increases to 15 percent. It has also called for establishing an Independent Regulatory Authority for Higher Education (IRAHE) to monitor the quality of overall higher education in India.

Cross Culture Programmes

After education, tour to every the places in India and world as far as possible with the cooperation of government is necessary so that one can understand about people, culture, arts, literature, religions, technological developments and progress of human society in the world.

Action Plan for Improving Quality

Academic and administrative audit must be conducted once in three years in colleges by external experts for ensuring quality in all aspects of academic activities. The self-finance colleges must come forward for accreditation and fulfil the requirements of accreditation. Universities and colleges should realise the need for quality education and come forward with action plan for improving quality in higher educational institutions.

World Class Education

Indian government is not giving priority to the development of Standard in education. India must aspire for the international standard in education. Many national universities like in the USA, UK, Australia, etc. allow studies in higher education for foreign students in their countries and through correspondence courses as well. In the same way India Universities of world class education can also offer courses of studies to foreign students taking advantage of the globalization process. To achieve that goal it must adopt uniform international syllabus in its educational institutions.

Personality Development

Finally, education must be for the flowering of personality but not for the suppression of creativity or natural skill. In the globalized world opportunity for the educated people are naturally ample in scope. As a result business process outsourcing (BPO) activities have increased competition in the world trade leading towards the production of quality goods and their easy availability everywhere in the world market. That is the way the world can be developed for peace, prosperity and progress by able and skilful men.

High-tech Libraries

Our university libraries have a very good collection of books, but they are all in mess. A library must be online and conducive for serious study. Indian universities should concentrate more on providing quality education which is comparable to that of international standard.

Public Private Partnership

PPP is most essential to bring in quality in the higher education system. Governments can ensure PPP through an appropriate policy. University Grants Commission and Ministry of HRD should play a major role in developing a purposeful interface between the Universities, Industries and National Research Laboratories (NRLs) as a step towards PPP. Funding to NRLs by the government should ensure the involvement of institutions of higher education engaged in research activities to facilitate availability of latest sophisticated equipment.

Privatization of Higher Education

In any nation education is the basic necessity for the socio-economic development of the individuals and the society. In reality only 20% of the population is educated in India. So, improved standard of education as first priority should be offered to the majority by the govt. authorities with sincere political will. Also, privatization of higher education is absolutely necessary in a vast country like India as government alone is helpless to do so.

Other Suggestions

There is a need to implement innovative and transformational approach form primary to higher education level to make Indian educational system globally more relevant and competitive. Higher educational institutes need to improve quality and reputation. There should be a good infrastructure of colleges and universities which may attract the students. Government must promote collaboration between Indian higher education institutes and top International institutes and also generates linkage between national research laboratories and research centres of top institutions for better quality and collaborative research. There is a need to focus on the graduate students by providing them such courses in which they can achieve excellence, gain deeper knowledge of subject so that they will get jobs after recruitment in the companies which would reduce unnecessary rush to the higher education. Universities and colleges in both public private must be away from the political affiliations, Favouritism; money making process should be out of education system etc. There should be a multidisciplinary approach in higher education so that student's knowledge may not be restricted only up to his own subjects.

CONCLUSION

According to Ex. Prime Minister of India Dr. Manmohan Singh -'The time has come to create a second wave of institution building and of excellence in the fields of education, research and capability building'. After independence, there has been tremendous increase in institutions of higher learning in all disciplines. But with the quantitative growth has it been able to attend to the core issue of quality. India is today one of the fastest developing countries of the world with the annual growth rate going above 9%. In order to sustain that rate of growth, there is need to increase the number of institutes and also the quality of higher education in India. To reach and achieve the future requirements there is an urgent need to relook at the Financial Resources, Access and Equity, Quality Standards, Relevance and at the end the Responsiveness. Education is a process by which a person's body, mind and character are formed and strengthened. It is bringing of head, heart and mind together and thus enabling a person to develop an all round personality identifying the best in him or her. Higher education in India has expanded very rapidly in the last six decades after independence yet it is not equally accessible to all. India is today one of the fastest developing countries of the world with the annual growth rate going above 9%. Still a large section of the population remains illiterate and a large number of children's do not get even primary education. This is not only excluded a large section of the population from contributing to the development of the country fully but it has also prevented them from utilising the benefits of whatever development have taken place for the benefit of the people. No doubt India is facing various challenges in higher education but to tackle these challenges and to boost higher education is utmost important. India is a country of huge human resource potential, to utilise this potential properly is the issue which needed to discuss. Opportunities are available but how to get benefits from these opportunities and how to make them accessible to others is the matter of concern. In order to sustain that rate of growth, there is need to increase the number of institutes and also the quality of higher education in India. To reach and achieve the future requirements there is an urgent need to relook at the Financial Resources, Access and Equity, Quality Standards, Relevance, infrastructure and at the end the Responsiveness.

The present study revealed the current scenario of higher education in India. The key problems related to demand supply gap, enrolment, privatization, etc indicate that the situation of higher education sector is not praiseworthy. However, the key initiatives from the government side provide comprehensive solution though not adequate. Accordingly the thrust of public policy for higher education in India has to be to maintain the high standards of education keeping pace with developments that take place in the fields of knowledge and technology.

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