Problems in "Higher Education in India & Suggestions for Improvements"

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ABSTRACT

Higher Education System of India is considered as the Third largest education system of the world. University Grants Commission of India is the main governing body to enforce the present Higher Education System. The problems that confront higher education in India today are low rates of enrolment, unequal access, a poor quality of infrastructure and lack of relevance. With new moves being planned on the policy front, it is necessary to find concrete solutions and build on earlier efforts. The National Policy on Education (NPE) that was adopted by Parliament in May 1986 and Programme of Action (POA), 1986, as updated in 1992, are perhaps the last government policy statements on higher education and which have guided actions since the mid-1980s. Now that there are new moves on the policy front, it is necessary to identify the key issues, build on the earlier efforts and then take a step ahead. The problems that confront education today are low rates of enrolment, unequal access, poor quality of infrastructure and lack of relevance. The goals remain the same — expansion with inclusion and ensuring quality and relevant education. This research Paper will emphasize the basic problems of Higher Education System in India in the Present Educations scenario as well as remedies to make the Present Higher Education System more conducive to the present environment.

I.INTRODUCTION

Present Higher Education System of India is considered as the Third largest education system of the world in the term of students next to China and United States. The basic advantage of our popularity in the world higher Education System is English being the primary language of Higher Education and research. India educates approximately 11 percent of its youth in higher education as compared to 20 percent in China.

Our main governing body is University Grants Commission (UGC-India), which enforces its standards, advises the government and helps in coordination between centre and state. Universities and constituents' colleges are the main institutes of Higher Education in India. Presently 47 Central Universities 377 State Universities, 123 Deemed Universities as well as 282 Private Universities are imparting Higher Education in India.

Still there is a massive gap that is created due to the difference in the number of schools and higher education institutes that really needs to be bridged. There is either a lack of seats to accommodate the rest or seats are available in colleges nobody has heard of. As a result of that huge gap, people who have no reason to be in the

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field of education want to capitalize on the shortage of supply. It's no secret that the education industry has long lost its noble cause and is more of a business. Politicians, realtors, businessmen/women - basically anybody who wants to mint some serious cash, start to open colleges. The buzzword globalization has been around for quite some time now, and it caused one of the most important changes in our country's Economy.

Presently in India it is assumed that there is a gradual shift from being a manufacturing hub to a service provider. This was fuelled mainly by the boom in I.T and B.P.O industries, and has had a large role to play in the way our education system has been modelled the past decade or-more. Along with the I.T and B.P.O industries, education institutes started seeing themselves as service providers, rather than being a place where the youngsters were moulded into innovators and architects of the future. The service they provided was that of certifying graduates as "employable by the service industry". Colleges proudly put up banners and hoardings of the 50 different companies that hired their students. These accomplishments act as some killer marketing material, In September of 2013, the government of India passed an executive order to allow the top 400 universities in the world to set up campuses in India and allow them to function independently, without the requirement of Local Partners. This sounded promising and one can see the possibilities when universities such as Duke University and Georgia Tech, both among the top fifty U.S Universities, started to show interest.

II.THE MAIN OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

 The main objectives of this study are as follows:-

- The Introduction about Higher Education System in India.
- The main problems of Higher Education System in India in the present Education Scenario.
- Improvement and suggestions for smoothening Present Higher Education System to make the Indian Education System more conducive as per environment as to make effective and efficient.

III.CHALLENGES OF PRESENT HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM IN INDIA

Basically there are some challenges in present Higher Education System in India. These are as follows:-

3.1   Uneven -Expansion and disgruntled disparities: - The first challenge to be overcome is to increase the present rate of enrolment of 20 per cent. .Our institutional capacity is still low. We have only 722 universities, as against the National Knowledge Commission recommendation of 1,500. The aim should be to arrive at a proper estimate of universities and undergraduate institutions in order to plan a strategy for the next 20 years or so. There are also related issues to grapple with. Given the low rate of enrolment, we need more quality teaching institutions at the undergraduate level. The influence of academicians on policies and the obsession with a flawed notion of excellence in terms of it being only about research have undermined the focus of having good teaching institutions.

3.2   No Research & Development Activities through Teaching: -Nobody denies the utility of research in teaching, but it should not be forgotten that imparting knowledge is equally important. Research and development activities must be enhanced along with teaching activities in the curriculum. More emphasis must

be given on Project Reports, live projects, research activities through innovations, discoveries as well as through patents.

3.3   Disparities in Income Levels: - Another challenge that confronts India is in the disparities in access to education, disparities between the poor and the affluent and in terms of income levels; it was 6 per cent for the bottom 20 per cent of society as against 37 per cent for the top 20 per cent. This is creating imbalance among the students. Presently, we are living in a nuclear family structure. Parents want to fulfill all the demands of their spouse to keep them happy. Let the demand may be right or wrong. The Poor students want to become at par with their rich students to maintain their equal living standards. Sometimes they are choosing wrong practices to reduce this level of income gap.

3.4   Privatization of Education System: - The expansion of the private, self-financing education sector, with its aim of commercial intent, has been another reason for the propagation of disparities. Between 1996 and 2008, private institutions expanded every year at the rate of 10 per cent. In contrast to the situation in India, education has been a great leveler in Europe. Unfortunately, here in India, unequal opportunities have developed unequal human capabilities and converted education into an instrument to further economic inequalities. This is a new and the next challenge.

*3.5   Issues of quality and faculty***:** - The quality of higher education is an equally serious problem. In this area, the 11th Plan recognized three areas for interventions — physical infrastructure, academic reform and ensuring adequate faculty. Infrastructure can be improved with an increase in financial allocation. Academic reform — which includes semester and credit systems, courses by choice, and examination reform — is a process which should be advanced only after the pre-requisites are met. In the case of faculty, which is an issue that has assumed serious proportions, several steps were affected in the 11th Plan. However, it still persists.

3.6   Global-Collaboration: - Apart from these, there is the issue of ensuring the access of Indian education to, global frontiers. In this, a popular view is to allow global universities to set up campuses in India. However, this is countered by some who argue that the presence of a few quality institutions is hardly the solution as far as the majority of rural and poor students are concerned. The alternative is to allow foreign educational institutions to enter into collaborations with Indian institutions on a large scale. In turn, this will help in enhancing capabilities as far as curricular and pedagogical practices, and student-faculty exchanges go. For quality institutions, autonomy as far as academic and administrative aspects are involved is a must. This would also involve the appointment of heads of institutional and executive bodies. It must be remembered that a UGC committee had once suggested the independence of institutions from the government as the bottom line for autonomy. For an education of relevance enabling an education that is relevant to the economy and society is another challenge.

*3.7 UGC-Reforms:-*Another issue relates to reform in the UGC. While attempts have been made in the past, I feel the UGC should have a dual structure — a governing body and a general body. As more than 65 per cent of our universities and about 90 per cent of colleges are in the States, their involvement in policy making at the Centre is a must.

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IV.SIX BASIC PROBLEMS WITH HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA

> *Too much time spent on assessing the problems, rather than finding tangible solutions.*

> *Miss match in supply and demand.*

> *Mushrooming of low quality, money making Institutes.*

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> *India's obsession with the service industry.*

> *Ineffective Foreign Education Providers Bill.*

V.SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING THE PRESENT HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM OF INDIA

Higher Education System of India is very wide. There are some suggestions from experts, governments, corporate and educational institutions as well as expectations from parents and students to have the Higher Education System of India more job oriented as well as conducive to the present environment. The main suggested improvements are as follows:-

- ❖ More emphasis must be given on industry and academia Interface activities to reduce the gap between curriculum and skills.
- ❖ Academic curriculum must be according to the need of corporate needs.
- ❖ Employability skills must be emphasized to more job orientations.
- ❖ Incentives must be provided to technology as well as orientations.
- ❖ Innovative practices must be adopted and encouraged.
- ❖ Mobilization and proper utilization of available scarce resources.
- ❖ Provision of timely updated information system.
- ❖ Need based job orientation courses.
- ❖ Improvements in Quality of education as personality development.
- ❖ Provision of stipends to researchers to create more interests in research.
- ❖ High-Tech library system to provide need based information.
- ❖ Examination reforms to have students support centres to help students.
- ❖ Special incentives to the universities performing best in research and development activities.
- ❖ International Level of Collaboration only in Research and development.

VI.CONCLUSIONS

There is a tremendous increase in higher education after independence. But the qualities education is in dilemmas. India is one of the fast developing countries in the world. There is an urgent need of financial reforms as well as quality standards in our Higher Education System. As always fine print seems to spoil the goods. Firstly, they aren't allowed to take surplus profits out of the country, with the compulsion of a 5 $ million buy in and maintenance of escrow accounts. The foreign education providers Bill can be more effective if stops trying to control and regulate universities and instead be similar to their Singapore and Dubai counterparts - granting quick permissions, infrastructure and subsidies.

 These countries are quickly emerging as top quality higher education hubs for students from around the world. One can see the parallels between FDI and the foreign education provider's bill. A major concern of opening gates to foreign investors was that it would ruin traditional and local industries, while also forcing the shutdown of many small scale industries. If that means death to all the low-quality-cash-generation types of colleges, it can only be good news. Another trade in, more importantly, is students here get access to qualified and world class educators. There is a reason not a single Indian University ranks in the world top 200. Even at top institutes, students are force fed a few kilos of textbooks, spend a relatively short time on hands-on project based learning and are absorbed into fields irrelevant to their subjects.

To compete with the world there is an urgent need of improvements in teaching techniques as well as learning qualitative education. According to the National Knowledge Commission India is becoming developed country by 2020 through knowledge and wisdom. We need higher educated people through their skill development to drive our economy forward. More emphasis is required on institutional building and excellence in research and capability building activities. Our Higher Education System must change according to the needs of the society as well as changing economy and changing world. Thus, the government, policy makers, planners and institutional builders must welcome these suggestions and improvements to achieve future wisdom power in the world.

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