

Higher Education in India: Need More Transformation

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ABSTRACT: It is a known fact that education is one of the most significant tools we have to fight against various socio-economic evils like poverty and inequality and atrocities against under privileged in our society. India has a long history in the field of higher education. During ancient period this country was well known a hub of higher education. The formal universities of our country were providing higher education not only for the students of our country but have also attracted students from Central Asia, China and South-east Asia. Takshila , Nalanda and Ujjaini were well known universities during that period . But due to interference by outsiders these universities were destroyed. After that period this country did not produce any other world-class university for a long time. It was only during British colonial rule that the formal university education was revived in India. The oldest established date listed by UGC is 1857, shared by the University of Mumbai, the University of Madras and the University of Calcutta. Higher education sector has witnessed a tremendous increase in the number of universities and college since independence. The number of universities and colleges increased 41.05 times and 79.89 times respectively since 1950 to 2017. Although the size and infrastructure of higher education in the country since independence have tremendously increased but still the quality of education in these institutions have not much improved. It could be realized from the fact that only seven Indian institutes could find place in top 400 in the QS world Universities ranking released in 2016. Further the higher education system in our country is far away from the reach of the most of the population, especially for the people of the weaker and backward sections of our society. Though the mission of our higher education is to achieve access to education with equality, quality, employability, inclusiveness, still equity and inclusiveness in the system is not much visible. The intensity of enrolment in the rural areas of our country is much low as compared to that of urban areas especially among scheduled casts, scheduled tribes and other backward classes of our country. Why most of our graduates and post graduates who pass out from our colleges and universities are not able to get employment and around eighty percent of our engineers are unemployed. It shows that the higher education system of our country is not up to mark and need further transformation. There is no focus on practical learning and field awareness for the students who are getting education from these institutions. UGC is continuously working and focusing on quality education in higher education sector. Still we are facing lot of problems and challenges in our education system. India has poor gross enrolment ratio for higher education in the world. According to all India survey reports on higher education gross enrolment ratio (GER) is 25.8 percent which is much less than china(39.4 percent), USA(86.7percent) and Germany 65.5percent .Although there have been lot of challenges to higher education system but a lot of opportunities are waiting to overcome these challenges and make higher education system much better. No doubt India is facing various challenges in higher education but to tackle these challenges and to boost higher education is utmost important. In the new education policy may,2019 the government of India have proposed to take various measures to address the various challenges of higher education such as access, equity, quality, affordability and accountability faced by current system of higher education in India but the time will tell how will these measures will be able to address the challenges of higher education in our country in the time to come. In this paper an attempt has been made to understand problems which are associated with the system and tried to find out solution and to make suggestions.

KEYWORDS: Education, poverty, under privilege, accreditation, globalisation, quality, infrastructure, challenges.

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I. METHODOLOGY

Data required for the analysis of different periods are collected from Secondary sources i.e. was collected from books, articles, news papers, reports on education, Ministry of Human Resource Development Government of India and internet, etc.

II. INTRODUCTION

It is a well known fact that education is one of the most significant tools to fight against socio-economic evils like poverty, inequality and under privileged in our society. India has a long history in the field of higher education. During ancient period this country was well known a hub of higher education. The formal universities of our country were providing higher education not only for the students of our country but have also attracted students from Central Asia, China and South-east Asia. Takshila , Nalanda and Ujjaini were well known universities during that period . But due to interference and invasion by outsiders these universities were destroyed. After that period this country did not produce any other world-class university for several hundred years. It was only during British colonial rule that the formal university education was revived in India. The oldest established date listed by UGC is 1857, shared by the University of Mumbai, the University of Madras and the University of Calcutta

III. DISCUSSION

Status Of Higher Education In India

After independence successive Indian governments have invested in governments institutions of higher education keeping in view of providing free and quality education to the youth of this country .It was the effect of governments efforts that higher education sector have recorded much growth after the country got independence in 1947. The University Grants Commission (UGC) set up by the Indian Union government in 1956 with a view to have coordination, determination and maintenance of standards of higher education in India. The University grants commission has designed various programmes and implemented various schemes keeping in view of various factors like academic, administrative and also provided financial support for the growth and development of higher education sector in India and many new institutions of higher learning in the field of medicines, science and technology and others institutions have introduced. Higher education sector has recorded tremendous expansion in the number of universities and college since independence. The number of universities increased to 821 in 2017 from 20 in 1950. Among these there are 49 central universities, 367 state universities ,282 state private universities , 123 deemed universities, 61 institutions of national impotence in which 23 IITs, 31 NITs and 7 IISER's and about 4 institutions established under various state legislations. The number of colleges increased to 39931 as on 31st march, 2017 from 500 in 1950. Therefore the number of universities and colleges increased 41.05 times and 79.89 times respectively during the period. Among states, most of the universities are set up in Rajasthan with 76 universities and most of the private universities with 46 in number are also set up in Rajasthan. Most of the deemed universities are established in Tamil Naidu numbering 28 in this state. In addition 15 professional councils are established, controlling different aspects of accreditation and controlling in India. Higher education in India has recorded impressive growth since Independence. University Grants Commission (UGC), by designing programmes and implementing various schemes through academic, administrative and financial support, has contributed in the growth and development of Indian higher education. In the changing landscape, entrance of private universities is a game changer. Many new institutions of medicine, science, technology and others have been introduced. We have gross enrolment ration of about 17.9 percent now.

Lack Of Quality Education In India

As we analyse the significance of education it will not be wrong to say that education is the Backbone of a Nation. It is the Citizens who create societies and civilizations. It is the key instrument to national human resource development. Therefore the responsibility of every government of a country is to invest in quality education for its children and youth. Although the size and infrastructure of higher education in the country has tremendously increased but still the quality of education in these institutions have not much improved. It could be realised from the fact that even today if we compare the quality of our higher educational institutions at international level we are far behind at this comparison. The QS world Universities ranking which were released some time back, only seven Indian institutes could find place in top 400 institutions in the world. Therefore the quality of higher education in India has not improved and even further deteriorated with the passage of time especially in the fields of knowledge and technology. It indicates that though the infrastructure of higher education in India increased but we are not able to improve quality and there are a few centers of educational excellence in India and others thousands of colleges and universities that are running in the country are not even able to have minimum standards. According to industry reports supported by NASSCOM only 25 percent of technical graduates and about 15 percent of other graduates are considered employable by IT/ITES industries. Another survey conducted on 800 MBA students across different cities in India revealed that only 23 percent of them were considered employable. It really makes a question mark on our higher education system and seeks an answer that in which direction our higher education system is going in the country. It is estimated that India will be amongst the youngest nations in the world By 2030. By that time we will have about 140 million people in the college-going age group and India will be producing one in every four graduates in the world. Although

RUSA have taken some measures to improve Infrastructure in colleges and universities in the country still more steps need to be taken to improve quality of education and making our higher education more industry friendly. Therefore, it is utmost needed to improve the quality of the centres of our higher education otherwise we will further increase unemployment in the country in the time to come.

Problems Of Higher Education In India

As is pointed out earlier that there is much improvement in the number of higher education institutions. After independence the quantity of these institutions has increased. India is among the top countries producing the number of graduates in the world after US and China but the employability of these graduates and the quality of education of these institutions in India is much below than advanced countries in the world. Further the higher education system in our country is far away from the reach of the most of the population, especially for the people of the weaker and backward sections of our society. Though the goal of our higher education policy is to achieve access to education with equality, quality, employability, inclusiveness, still equity and inclusiveness in the system is not much visible. The intensity of enrolment in the rural areas of our country is much low as compared to that of urban areas especially among SC, ST and OBC. Why most of our graduates and post graduates and engineers those who pass out from our institutions are not able to get employment. Around eighty percent of our engineers are unemployed. Many of the graduates are not able to find job because the practical aspect in the curriculum is lacking and could not match with the requirements of business and industry. It is from few decades that most of these government Institutions are some where lacking in providing quality education. There is no doubt that huge amount of money is being spent for upliftment of the education standard in these institutions but lot more to be done in order to provide quality education to our youths. Many of our state universities are not in the good condition. As we know that the budgetary provision is low than is required for funding these institutions. Due to poor funding there is dearth of better research facilities in these institutions and meritorious students of our country are compelled to go abroad in the hope of better research facilities. Secondly India has poor gross enrolment ratio for higher education in the world. According to all India survey reports on higher education gross enrolment ratio (GER) is 25.8 percent which is much less than china (39.4 percent), USA (86.7percent) and Germany 65.5percent).Therefore in this scenario entrance of private institutions may be able to boost up the entire scenario in this sector in India and would also be able to fill the gap of demand and supply. The following problems could be highlighted with the higher education in India:

- Government could not provide adequate funds to government institutions.
- Private institutions are not properly regulated by the government.
- Qualified teachers are not appointed in private institutions.
- Poor salary is being paid particularly in the private managed institutions.
- The acts and statutes that govern universities are out dated.
- Some Indian teachers and scholars are migrating to the western countries for better facilities.
- Lack of research facilities in most of the institutions

Challenges Of Higher Education In India

After accessing the problems being faced by the higher education sector in India, now it can be pointed out that this sector has various challenges that need to be resolved in order to make this sector more effective to meet global standards and to harness our demographic dividend. These challenges can be outlined as under:

- There is supply-demand imbalance in the education sector.
- In order to meet out demand supply requirement active participation of private sector is required with proper supervision. Though higher education sector is opened for private sector and many private institutions also came in this sector but the regulatory norms are not proper to regulate the working of these institutions.
- In the era of globalization we need to update our education system in order to meet global standards.
- Need to expand qualitative professional higher education network in the country keeping also in mind to extend financial and academic support to poor and backward sections of the society.
- In order to improve quality of good research, teaching practices and competitive curriculum we need to collaborate with international institutions.
- Training programmes for faculty members need to be organised to inculcate new skills and expertise to meet out the present day's requirements.
- Need to install smart classrooms and smart laboratories to enhance digital connectivity and e-governance activities in our educational institutions.

In the new education policy may, 2019 the government of India have proposed to take various measures to address the various challenges of higher education such as access, equity, quality, affordability and accountability faced by current system of higher education in India but how will these measures will be able to address the challenges of higher education in our country will be seen in future.

IV. CONCLUSION

After studying the problems and challenges of Indian higher education it can be concluded that Indian higher education system need further transformation. In this journey of transformation the quality must be improved .In order to access the quality of institutions best practice of accreditation and assessment must be followed. NAAC must speed up quality assessment process because only few institutions of higher education have been accredited till date. India needs to create employable workforce so as to harness our demographic dividend. There is a need to strong association between academic institutions and industry to make employable graduates. Private sector institution need to be further boot up so that we may be able to meet out demand supply imbalances in the country and at the same time these institutions need to be regulated properly for ensuring that the private institutions those are entering in this sector have adequate and eligible faculty, research facilities, relevant curriculum and adequate infrastructure and others facilities. There is also need to further expand qualitative professional higher education network in the country. The poor and backward sections of the society must also provide more financial and academic support so that these sections of society may be able to receive the benefits of higher education in India.

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