Democratisation of Education in Higher Education

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ABSTRACT

The word democratisation is actually a political term. It is also largely used in academic fields for various types of research works, collection of study materials, curriculum or understanding of any concept. However, democratisation of education is a different concept. It is definitely a theoretical idea yetb most of the educational institutions as well as developing governments are trying to accept this and implement this in a positive manner. Education is one of the most essential parameters of development for any country. It determines a nation's literacy rate, international edition, development , resource utilisation, economy and above all, it's all round progress. Education is an umbrella term which encompasses the gaining of knowledge in any educational institution by teaching - learning process. Therefore interaction between teachers as well as learners is an important aspect of education.It creates the ambience for proper transmission of knowledge and enhancement of quality. Although democratisation is a relatively modern term, it came out as a result of efforts and research work of various scholars, researchers, and governments to revolutionise the existing system of education. Although this concept is in its infancy, certain advancements have taken place in this aspect in various countries but much more is yet to come up.

KEYWORDS: *Introduction, democratisation theory, Requisites of democratisation, survey sample, observations*

I. INTRODUCTION

Education can be termed as an accelerating or 'catalysing agent' for any kind of national progress or development. Therefore, reformation of this sector is quite essential for the overall development of any country. Traditional system of education has largely been autocratic in nature. Teacher - student interaction would be very minimal. Teacher played an authoritative role and the process of decision making. That was a kind of imposition of ideas on students without enabling them to prosper their own thinking capacity. Students could not find any other alternative pattern of analytical development as well as self exploration because they were largely entrapped within the rules and agenda of the classroom. This unproductivity was the main reason behind the birth of a new mod3el of education. Its main objective has been to focus on individual welfare , mental development, factual knowledge and in the process ensuring a nation's progress.

DEMOCRATISATION THEORY

Various views have been given on the concept of democratisation of education. Some of the educationists and scholars are quoted here -

According to Michel Foucault, 'every education system is a political means of maintaining or modifying the appropriateness of discourses with the knowledge and power they bring with them' (Ball, 1990)

In the words of Friere, ' education is an active dialogue to make and remake , to create and recreate .. it is not the privilege of an elite, but the birthright of all men.' (2013)

Leaking and Berci asserts that ' A democratised education 3mphasises open access and equal opportunity , including gender and class equality as these have become fundamental issues of political and social structures of modern cultures , especially in emerging nations of the world which are most affected by

pressure for change in government and society' (Liquing, Bercy and He, 2011)

According to Van Niekerk, ' Democratisation of education have led to explosive demands for open admission to institution of higher education' (Heydenrich,

Higgs, Van Niekerk, 2004)

Starr has mentioned that ' new technologies can play a critical role in dramatically improving education quality and catalase economic growth

through the democratisation of education.' (2013)

Mentz pointed out that 'democratic collaboration, both face to face and virtual learning environment empower students to direct their own learning, democratising teacher - student and student - student learning relationships to cultivate autonomous, reflective thinking and decision making.' (2014)

Above mentioned are the views of some eminent educationists which is essential for the proper perception of the democratisation concept.

REQUISITE OF DEMOCRATISATION

As democratisation is a relatively modern concept, there are several factors which prompted its rapid growth in the early years of the 21st century. Some of
the identified causes are -
1)	To mark a shift from the traditional process of education in which the views of the student would be least significant
2)	To reform the autocratic nature of the educators or teachers
3)	Create a better teaching - learning environment
4)	Enable the students to explore themselves and a variety of ideas
5)	Develop analytical thinking among the students
6)	Assist students to gain factual information apart from the bookish knowledge
7)	To make the student an active classroom participation
8)	Enhancement of observation, rationality and empiricism among students
9)	To include the views of students while preparing the educational curriculum
10)	Provide a breeding ground for several new concepts and terms.
Therefore these are some of the reasons which have contributed to the development of the concept of democratisation of education.

SURVEY SAMPLE

A survey had been conducted on the implementation of the concept of
democratisation of education. Following are its highlights
1) Area of survey
Two schools have been surveyed in North 24 parganas, Kolkata, West Bengal in January 2014. One is a private school named Auxilium convent and the other is a government school named State Girls High School.
**2)	Research question**
To what degree has education been democratised ? Are the school authorities , students , teachers even aware of the concept ? Is it implemented in a proper form of partially just for name sake.
**3)	Hypothesis**
It is assumed that the teachers and students are aware of the concept of democratisation as it is a technical era. They are also implementing it in its fullest sense.
**4)	Research Methodology**
Face to face interview on the basis of random sampling.
**5)	Participants involved**
Students of standard 11 and 12, Principal of the school, subject teachers.
**6)	Highlights of Research work -**

Criteria	Private School	Government School
Teacher's awareness on democratisation	Aware	Partially aware
Student's awareness on democratisation	Aware	Aware
Implementation by teachers	Moderate	Minimal
Role of institutional head	Encourage the teachers for a conducive classroom environment	No initiative
Student 's role in its implementation	100% but get the ground to implement only under a few teachers	100% but rarely get any ground of implementation
Satisfaction level of students	Moderate	Minimum

7) Observation
The hypothesis is partially correct and partially wrong. Truely, the institutional authorities, students as well as teachers are aware of the concept but do not implement it properly. Teachers seem to be satisfied with their own teaching technique but the students are not. They want greater participation in the teaching - learning process.

8) Remedies
On the basis of the above observation, following remedies can be suggested for the creation of a congenial environment -
a)   Regulation by the educational authority for the teachers to observe cooperative teaching methods in the classroom
b)   Allowing students to design the daily curricular
c)   Training of teachers so that they can allow students to put forward their ideas freely
d)   Assign students with creative inquiry work on certain non bookish topics

II.   CONCLUSION

Although the idea of democratisation has not taken its fullest shape, it is undoubtedly one of the best ways of transmission of knowledge. However, if the educators take it as an ego that their dominance is lessening in the teaching domain, it would be definitely a stumbling block in the path for realisation of the objective of uniform implementation. Proper development of the concept can take place only when the educators accept its content in an affirmative way and shift away from the traditional biasness. A combined positive effort of teachers as well as students will only help in realising its basic objectives.

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