



ALARMING SITUATION IN TELANGANA EDUCATION SYSTEM:A CASE STUDY OF CORPORATE INTERMEDIATE COLLEGE STUDENTS IN TELANGANA

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STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

To understand the process and impact of corporate intermediate college student in the educational and social life of students. The proposed research comprises of two components. First, is to understand the socio-political ecosystem within which the corporate intermediate colleges are operating and secondly to understand its impact on students. This approach to the problem will also enable us to evaluate how the experience of corporate education shape not only the particular educational and career choices of the students but also understand the formation of their perspectives and approaches to life in general.



KEYWORDS: *socio-political ecosystem , corporate education.*

CONTEXT

Corporate Intermediate colleges are known for not only the 'good results' they produce but also the 'harsh environment' within which they make the students study. In recent times, there are reports of students rebelling against the college managements including cases of rioting and arson. This presents the dark belly of the success story behind these institutions.

The rise of corporate intermediate colleges are closely connected to the emergence of Hyderabad as an IT destination. When Chandrababu Naidu became the Chief Minister (CM) of Andhra Pradesh in 1995, the state was on a complete decline financially. He had to somehow revive the economy. Realising the potential of the information technology (IT) sector, with a single-minded focus, he worked to attract investments into the sector by de-regulating the processes. In his book "*Plain Speaking*", Naidu recounts how he went out of his way to convince Bill Gates to set up Microsoft in Hyderabad, which completely changed the face of AP. It was a huge achievement considering the fact that Bangalore had already grown into an IT hub by then. As a part of creating the IT ecosystem, the first thing Naidu did was to make it relatively easy for people to set up engineering colleges. When he assumed the office, there were only some 20 odd engineering colleges in the state, when he left, that figure went up to 220. All through his stay in the office, his party was part of the ruling alliance at the centre. So he was able to pressurise the centre to get permissions for establishing new engineering colleges since the whole process was under centre's purview. Yet times, he had to literally fight with the central regulatory authority, the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) to ease up rules.

Once the engineering colleges started adding up, and the IT industry started coming in, it created an enormous interest in the people of the state to take up engineering course. This created huge demand for junior colleges offering Engineering, Agriculture and Medical Common Entrance Test (EAMCET) (state entrance exam for engineering) and Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT) oriented coaching. To cater to the demand, a lot of corporate junior colleges started mushrooming. The state government eased the rules a bit in this area, but mostly bribing would work in overcoming regulations. Once colleges were established, there

was intense competition between these colleges. This created an unprecedented phenomenon, where in, these junior colleges would scout for the best talent in the state and compete to enrol them in their colleges, in the hope that if properly coached they would secure good ranks in EAMCET, and increase the college's reputation. So they would offer concessions ranging from 25% to 100% on college fees depending on the student's score in the 10th standard. A student whether rich or poor if he had scored over 90% in his 10th standard would be eligible for free quality education (including boarding).

It didn't stop here. The idea percolated further down, and there started coming up lot of model and corporate type schools. Again, the competition forced them to find the best talent. These schools, dozens in number, every year, conduct scholarship test for students for 5th standard and above, and top performers are given free schooling. Today, in AP, a 5th standard student, if he shows signs of merit, will not be left behind for lack of finances. This is disbursing Scholarships the market way, the right way. Not only that, James Tooley, a professor of Education policy from England, came to Hyderabad in 2001 to study how the poor were getting educated. He mentions this in his book "The beautiful tree" about how he was delighted to find so many low cost private English medium schools costing only a dollar a month at that time. And they were incomparably better than any public schools in the localities.

But then the accepted wisdom is private education institutes are only there to exploit us. Yet they achieved this despite all the draconian rules and regulations. They made the best out of a very narrow opening they were provided. When there is a clear purpose and when there is competition fuelled by little to no entry-barriers, private businessmen, to earn profits, need to provide quality. It is only when government stifles entry into the market, existing ones become complacent. Here, in the case we discussed, there was a clear demand for technical resource for the IT industry. From parents to students to educational institutes everyone knew what they were doing. This is in a way, a purposeful education. Here, I am not talking about the purpose at the micro-level of how a particular lesson/subject would benefit the student...we have a long way to go before we talk about that, but on a broader level the purpose was evident.

The criticism is that people say this made robots out of the students, with virtually everyone being forced to become an engineer. Two things to this: one, it is a choice parents and students make, you cannot complain about that; you need to use your wisdom. Two, this was nowhere an ideal system. Growth was fuelled by the government, so there will be discrepancies like cronyism and concentration of growth in the sector the govt picks. But as long as the two important resources for industry: land and power are firmly in the government's control, there is little choice but to look for the government initiative. This case study is only to give an idea of how even a little freedom can make a great difference. If we look at the number of students being admitted into IITs, we will understand the whole effect this little phenomenon had from a national perspective. Every year, an average of 20% of the students that get qualified to IITs are from AP alone. This has been happening for more than a decade now. No other state comes close to this achievement.

In early 2000s, with the services industry started coming in, there was a huge demand for "English medium" education even at the lower end of financial spectrum. As this report suggests, AP recorded 100% increase in English medium schools during 2003-06. Highest in the country. But this was a market driven phenomenon, hence we did not hear of schools shutting down until the Government passed "Right to Education" in 2010. A clause in the law, demands a certain minimum standards of physical infrastructure (number of classrooms, a playground, a library, etc.). As per one report, if strictly applied, 95% of schools in the country will not comply with these standards. And the above mentioned schools from the James Tooley's research, which have been educating the poor are now shutting down.

However this story is undergirded by a shocking fact. The Pearson Survey of Teachers Voice 2015 shows that 61% of Telangana and 64 % of Andhra Pradesh students are unemployable. The survey was conducted in 32 cities/towns in AP and 15 in Telangana. The teachers' community also suggested that poor employability skills may be due to lack of involvement by parents in the development of children. The survey revealed that only 34% parents in Telangana and 29% in AP were involved in the overall development of students.

METHODOLOGY

Ethnography has been defined as a qualitative research process and method (one conducts an ethnography) and the product (the outcome of this process is an ethnography) whose aim is to make a cultural interpretation. Ethnography is understood as the systematic study of people and their cultures. It is designed to explore cultural phenomena where the researcher observes society from the point of view of the subject of the study.

Today ethnography investigates contemporary social life and has incorporated a plethora of new methods to report events and details of experience. Nowadays ethnography explains how people represent their culture and how they construct the lives which they live.

OBJECTIVES

The above mentioned approach will hopefully address the following objectives

1. Nature of the life of an intermediate corporate student?

All depends on the students; extra ordinary students can survive there and they will make the most of their hostel lives but for ordinary students, it is a hell. Students can't make calls to their parents in privacy as they may have to make calls through the telephone booth. Many corporate colleges starts from 8 a.m to 7 p.m. The schedule is too far from the reality as they used to have so much of portion for the weekend exams. They are taught all day long and are not even bothered whether the student understands or not. Four tests held in a week, incomplete syllabus, no extra-curricular activities, unlimited homework and more of study hours. These types of institute would help the students to score most of the marks and get into the prestigious Colleges and Universities but they may always suffer from the inferior-complexity which would further result in their degradation.

2. Corporate education to shape the world-views of the student.

=Corporate education means to ensure that student has an upgrade knowledge and expertise in their related fields. Learning and development are the essential things for students that make them competent, efficient and effective on how they shape and view the world.

3. Various Models of Corporate Education.

=Corporate Education Models:

Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths .STEM

Project Based learning. PBL

Interdisciplinary Learning and Neuron Science.

Place Based Education.

Following notes and materials given by the faculties.

More importance to competitive exams like JEE, IIT, NEET.

More study hours, exam-oriented based syllabus learning.

CONCLUSION

Many of the corporate college students are easily cracking the competitive exams like IIT, JEE and after they are getting seats in IITs Engineering, Medical Colleges, they are not surviving because many students doesn't have an application oriented knowledge. Corporate Educational Institutes' students are facing psychological problems due to pressurized education. Many students have committed suicide in Telangana that has counted 385 since the last five years (2014-2018). Most people don't, and hence, there is always this fear of losing out in this rat-race a lot of students feel vulnerable and hopeless. Many come from lower-middle-class backgrounds with student loans or otherwise. The institute charges exorbitant fees and students from such backgrounds feel the pressure even more. The coaching they provide is not competent enough to help all students to excel. It creates an even additional pressure because sometimes you have to

just self-learn. It is just an unhealthy environment where very few people survive and get out of the place unscathed. Rest of us are just led into a delusion that we will get good coaching and succeed. It puts you in a situation where every day you feel like getting out of this mess that you have put yourselves into and a constant dread prevails that if you don't perform you won't ever succeed in life. It is a matter of life and death. It always felt like one. ”

The functioning of these institutes is some sort of an open secret. Parents are aware of the rigorous time schedules and harsh living conditions in the hostels. Even then, they still opt for these institutes because of the almost unmerciful way that competitive entrance exams function in this country. The competition is such that one needs intense dedication, smart preparations and hard work to make it through. Hence, the belief that it is necessary for the child to go through this rigorous 'training' and 'quality education' to ensure a position in the exams. They somehow feel that the pressure to perform will get the better out of their wards. Hence, some amount of perseverance through these harsh conditions is a prerequisite.

But to what ends are we willing to subject 15-16-year-olds to such a controlled and severe environment on the basis of a fractured mindset can never be justified; especially in the wake of the alarming number of suicides which have been reported out of different branches of these institutes across the states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. We must think about how inhuman and mounting the academic stress become that students just out of school are willing to take such a drastic step.

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