



COMMERCIALIZATION OF EDUCATION: CHALLENGES & THE TREATMENT EFFECT

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ABSTRACT

Education should be source of substantive human freedom & individual human society, which ultimately leads to society's overall development. The enabling condition of education influence country's achievement. The very purpose of education is to enhance the quality of life & life management Systems.

KEYWORDS: SAQ Training, Kho-Kho, Speed etc.

INTRODUCTION

Education leads to knowledge driven economic growth & poverty reduction in developing countries in number of ways. High level scientists, professionals, technicians, teachers, civil service personnel, business leaders generate knowledge & lead to capacity building of new nation.

Developing countries will face the risk of being further marginalized in a highly competitive world economy if their higher universities & other higher education institutions are not prepared to capitalize on the creation & use of knowledge.

In this context, the role of government and UGC has certainly changed.

V.N. Rajshekhran Pillai, Chairman (Acting) UGC at conversation address at Satyabhama Institute of science & Technology, Deemed Univ. Chennai (16 Dec.2005) said "Our higher education System has to quip itself for higher endowment in coming years & there is no salvation for higher education unless we are reeed from bondage of affiliation system".

There is certainly a transition in education sector in India. Government desires to shift the responsibility of higher education from its shoulders and follow the pattern of education like that of in developed countries, By giving permission to private universities, autonomy to existing institutions, dual university system etc, are some of the method of it.

DUAL UNIVERSITY SYTEM:

Countries like USA, UK, Canada and Western Europe, Australia and other developing countries have a dual University system. In a dual University system, there are state universities supported by the government and there are self financing private universities which do not receive any financial support from the government. For instance in the USA, several leading universities like Harvard University, Stanford University, University Of Chicago, Princeton University, Yale University, North western University etc., are all private universities. Besides, every state has universities



sponsored and funded by respective state governments. The private Universities enjoy complete academic autonomy and government respect that autonomy without intervening in any way in internal affairs of the private Universities.

There is no system of affiliated colleges anywhere in the world except in the Indian sub continent namely India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. The affiliated colleges came into existence in India due to the policy adopted by the colonial government.

It is continuing till today. The historical reasons are not the only reasons. We should take into account the demographic reasons as well. Indian population which has grown with a rapid rate & other fundamental problems like poverty, illiteracy have pressured the government to be present as the sole provider of educational services.

As per the census of 2001, the overall literacy rate in India has gone up by 10% during 1991-2001. Additional 100 million people have become literate during the last 10 years. It is estimated that out of this 100 million people who have gone through the primary school about 8% to 10% will seek higher education at college level in the next 8 to 10 years. That means nearly 10 million more students will enter the colleges in the next eight to ten years. Whereas the total number of seats available in the 10,000 colleges in India, which have been created over the last 150 years, is currently at eight million, so there is a need to create an additional capacity of 8-10 million college seats in the next 10 years. That means what we have done in the last 150 years we have to repeat in the next 10 years. It is a serious challenge for state governments.

As per the census in 2001, in India literacy was 65.4%. Not more than 10% of our population has education above 10th standard only seven percent of the age group (16-23 years) is in higher education. We expect our enrolment in higher education around 20-25% by 2020.

The student numbers expanded rapidly but state finance have largely remained stable after the 1970. This has led to the entry of "for-profit" entrepreneurs in their market of higher education under the structural adjustment programmes by IMF & world bank in 1970s & 80, the state structure of higher education changed & was opened for privatisation of the state higher education systems.

The state government has to spare more for improving and enhancing the opportunities in the primary and secondary education sectors so that in the next 15-20 years we can achieve nearly 100% literacy level all over the country.

Therefore several state governments are focusing on primary and secondary education in budgetary allocation. Since budget resources are limited government will allocate it for expanding primary education.

That raises a big question. In the absence of government funding, how to create an additional capacity of 8 to 1 million seats in the university sector in the next 8 to 10 years? The government's answer is to invite private sector participation in a big way in creating new universities all over the country.

Several state governments have already initiated steps to create the necessary legal framework for the establishment of private universities on self-financing basis.

In 2002, the state government of Chhattisgarh enacted a separate legislation for the establishment of private universities. Under that act about 10 new private universities have already been notified. They include Sri Rawatpura Sircar International University, the ICFAI University, CV Raman University, MNR University etc.

The State government of Gujarat has notified two private universities (Dhirubai Amabani Institute and Nirma Institute) through separate acts of legislature in March, 2003

The state government of Himachal Pradesh has already created private universities (Jaypee University of Information Technology) in 2002 amendment is in the process of encouraging a few more private universities.

The state government of Madhya Pradesh has passed the act for the establishment of private universities.

The state government of Sikkim has already created a private university (Sikkim Manipal University) in 1994-95 and is in the process of encouraging a few more private Universities.

There are some states like Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Tamilnadu which have pioneered the concept of private education in the fields of engineering and medicine. Expert committees have been appointed for examining the feasibility and legislative process to establish private universities.

At the same time, the government funded universities will continue to operate in the present format with budgetary support from the government. It is necessary that state funding should continue to the government universities so that they provide the safety net to those students who need it.

This dual university system will work well, in India too based on our experience with the school system in the last 30-40 years. Today parents have a choice to send their children either to the government schools or the private schools. In other words in the school system we already have the dual system, which is working well. There is all reason to hope that such a successful experiment which we have done in the school system will also work for the university system.

Is it really trading of education ?

The protagonists argue that “the supply of education should be according to the individual & market needs”. There should be free access of market players. The education is being treated as “producer” & the students as “Consumers”. There should be free competition in the market place. Market players will select a product & enter the market for profit. Underlying principles of privatisations are:

- 1) Market mechanism will stimulate competition
- 2) Tuition fees is a contribution of student to study costs & will create consumer mentality among students

As an impact of this argument, numerous private institutions & universities have come up within India. Foreign collaborations are advertised. Huge amount of fee is being charged. The teachers are treated as labourers. Either poor quality teachers are accepted or fired if the knowledge on new education product is lacking.

International system can be transplanted but the question is, “can India harness the benefit for the society at large given the condition in India ?” foreign universities with their large surpluses see India as a big market not for investment but for running their own infrastructure in their native countries.

TREATMENT -FUELLING EFFECT:

Foreign universities will implement their policies with profit motive. Hence there are less chances to consider wide disparities in India. One of the questions arise here is whether all students will be treated equally & whether admissions are justified on the basis of merit or the money power will govern the admission?

An example can be given from the period of establishment of a foreign University. In the earlier years the admission office became much more interested in the details of an applicant's personal life. Admission officers were told to elicit information about the "Character" of candidates from "person who know the applicants well" and so the letter of reference became mandatory. Candidates had to write personal essays, demonstrating their aptitude for leadership, and list their extracurricular activities.

"Starting in the fall of 1922", Karabel writes, "applicants were required to answer questions on 'Race and Colour', Religion Preference', ' Maiden Name of Mother', 'Birthplace of father' and 'What change, if any, has been made since birth in your own name of that of your father? (Explain Fully)'."

At Princeton, emissaries were sent to the major boarding schools, with instructions to rate potential candidates on a scale of 1 to 4, where 1 was "very desirable and apparently exceptional material from every point of view" and 4 was "undesirable from the point of view of character, and therefore, to be excluded no matter what the result of the entrance examinations might be."

The Personal Interview became a key Component of admissions in order, Karabel writes, "to ensure that 'undesirables' were identified and to assess important but subtle indicators of background and breeding such as speech, dress, deportment and physical appearance."

Information from interviews, references, and student essays was then used to grade each applicant on a scale of 1 to 6. along four dimensions" personal, academic, extracurricular, and athletic. And the most important category? That Mysterious index of "personal" qualities.

Fuelling the treatment- effect idea are studies showing that if you take two student with the same SAT scores and grades, one of whom goes to an International school and who goes to less selective one, the former will make for more money 10 or 20 years down the road.

The same treatment - effect idea can be seen in somewhat similar ways in private schools. child at a very small age of 3 to 5, has to face multiple interviews. Admission forms have Questions on parent' education, the relevant certificates are to be attached to child's application form. the questions like 'How parents can help the schools?' " is again a treatment effect.

There is a threat that, "whether this treatment -Effect Idea Will be applicable to private universities in India ?" If it happens then it will increase the inequality & will be a form of social injustice.

Constitutionally & legally the entry of private entrepreneurs in education can not be stopped.

The challenging task before the state agencies, society & academic would be to sustain the quality, national need, affordable fee structures & stop the commoditisation of education.

The fee structure is problem area especially for self -financing institutions. The mechanism if state level fee committees has not been able to deliver in the spirit of the judgement.

Oppressive controls on fees, teacher salaries , infrastructure and staff strength must be eliminated. The regulatory system must be modernized based on the economics of information and global best practices. Given the weak criminal justice system in our country, the regulatory system must also put the greatest emphasis on fraud detection and punishment while leaving normal individual to function more freely.

Questions raised by privatization & possible answer would be as follows-

1. How can government resolve problem for staff & student?

The eligibility criteria for establishing private universities should be clearly laid down in the acts so that only genuine institutions with the good track record are permitted to establish private universities. As soon UGC guidelines, an endowment fund ranging between Rs. 3 to Rs. 5 crores should be made mandatory. The Accounts should be subject to Statutory audit and the annual report should be presented to the concerned state government every year if any irregularities are noticed, government should intervene and take appropriate steps like change of management, if necessary. private universities are going to play a complementary role to the government universities. Many government universities have a long tradition of scholarship and teaching" they have also good infrastructure . Some of them enjoy excellent reputation both in India and abroad. They have a great network of successful alumni. Hence they have nothing to fear about the private universities. it will take a long time before some of the private universities can attain a level of reputation which is equal to that of some of the

government universities. in the long run the dual universities system will prove to be beneficial for creating healthy competition among various universities whether they are in the government sector or in the private sector.

2. How the fee structure will be decided ?

A private universities has a board of management in which the government nominees are also included. The board of management is authorized to take all operational decisions fro time to time.

3. How the problem of pay scales will be tackled ?

There is going to be competition for attracting the best available talent. Hence good private Universities will have to offer good pay scales to attract and retain talent. Some of them may offer pay scales which are even higher than those recommended by UGC.

4. What students should do to avoid their exploitation?

The student will have to make careful enquires, visit the website and the offices, read the prospectuses and take advice from experienced people. just as the parents are deciding in which school they should admit their student based on several above criteria, the student will have to choose the universities after careful analysis and review of all available alternatives.

5. Can Government issue directives to private Universities?

Private Universities are established through an act of the state legislature. The act gives power to the state government to issue direction to nominate its officers on the governing body and board of management, power to inspect the books of accounts, power to conduct enquiry in case any irregularities are noticed and to order necessary corrective steps. Thus the governing body and board of management, power to inspect the books of accounts, power to conduct enquiry in cased any irregularities are noticed and to order necessary corrective steps. Thus the government will have full power to regulate the private universities. Normally, they may not intervene so long as the private universities are run well.

By establishing private universities, a lot of competition is likely to be created in higher education sector. When the market are competitive with many players, there is little scope for profiteering and exploitation. If any University is seen as exploiting the students by charging high fee, the student have a choice not to go to such universities. Eventually competition will bring down the prices and improve the quality in the long run. It is the lack of competition that result in exploitation and profiteering. The dramatics improvement in quality and drop in tariffs in telecom sector after recent liberalization is a good example.

India being the second most populated country of the world as well as with over 65 percent of India's population below the age of 25, has a potential demographic advantage of having a productive workforce if provided sound education with reasonable fee structure.

India's education standards have improved step by step but more efforts should be done to distribute the benefits to all sections of the society. The entry of private players has transformed the sphere of education completely. The number of universities as well as government schools has not increased in the proportion of increasing population. and the entry of private players has become imperative.

The factors like reservation, Limited seats, and inadequate infrastructure etc. have created a barrier for getting admission in government colleges or schools. Barring a few like Indian Institute of Technology, NIT's, IISC, FMS, Delhi University colleges, there are not many state institutions that one can look forward to joining. India does have a large number of universities but they lack the kind of

infrastructure as well as have faculty shortage . This is one of the reasons why students are driven to private universities and schools.

These private colleges and schools may charge high fees but they also provide a conducive environment, good facilities along with reasonable education standard for growth of students.

The entry of foreign universities in India is another important development which has led to commercialization of education which has created a challenge for the state to provide quality education and facilities .

The government can intervene by regulating some part of the fee structure as well as ensuring that no donations are taken from parents.

If India manages to increase its enrolment to 100 % schools as well as reduce the dropout rate, which has already come down, the country can not only set an example but also be a hub of education in future.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it can be said the privatization of education is a need of the time but, Indian government should implement it effectively with less shocks to largest section of Indian society i.e. middle class. Through proper directives, healthy competition, supervision government can make quality education available to its upcoming generations.

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