



PRIVATIZATION AND COMMERCIALIZATION OF HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT :

Education is the key to participation in the global economy of the 21st century that is why we need which is victim of the gap between policy and act of the government. Education has power to change the thoughts and consequently society. The people who live below poverty line, who are unable to live life with human dignity, can only bring in mainstream by educating them. Realization for right to education is only way towards realization of all human rights. When the right to education is denied, it precludes the enjoyment of many, if not all, other human rights. In present era the aim of education goes much beyond the literacy. Education is necessary to built society that are fair and just for all their citizens, that respectful universal values of democracy and human rights and whose development, social as well as economic will be equitable and sustainable.

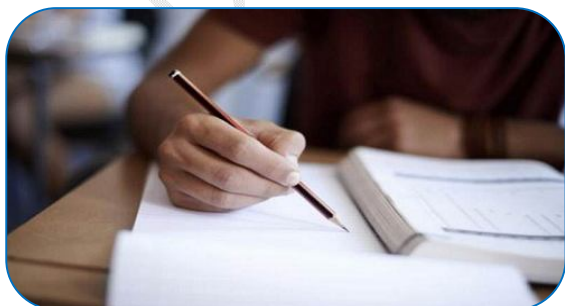
KEYWORDS : human rights , consequently society , poverty eradication.

INTRODUCTION

It can be helpful to achieve goals of poverty eradication, gender inequality, corruption, prevention of terrorism and violence. In India, over the years, there have been private initiatives in education initially for philanthropic reasons and eventually in professional and even in general higher education not only to meet the growing demands but also to realize the huge and quick profits potential. Privatization of higher education has emerged in several forms and types in the recent decade in India. Commercial private higher education emerges from market forces and tied to economic and global forces. They thrive on the principles of commercialism, primarily focus on vocational courses and highly pragmatic.

WHY PRIVATIZATION IS HAPPENING?

There are many factors which is driving education to privatization. Some of the people believe that family's rights to choose its own education is paramount and that the burden of proof should be on Govt. to explain why they would deprive parents of this right.



- **Demand-Side Pressure**

The first factor that can be cited to explain privatization in educ is that for many parents education is viewed as an important way to gain social and economic advancement, therefore, the demand for education is high, and if government can't afford to provide and fund all the education that parents expect for their children, then those parents seek private suppliers.

• Supply-side Pressure

The second factor that motivates privatization is the decline in the quality of and in some cases the reductions in funds available to the public sector. Many parents may feel that the local public school is insufficient in providing education of the type that is most needed. These parents consequently seek alternatives, often in the private sector. The decline in the quality may be that the public school system has reached a capacity constraint with rapid population growth, govt. schools may be overcrowded, and therefore school providers are needed.

The factors and forces for the entry of Privatization

- At the global level, the world bank's new philosophy of restructuring the economy of third world countries advocated the induction of capitalist strategies of market forces involving competition, privatization, disinvestments in public sector, publication of subsidies and labelling of higher education as a non-merit, private-good".
- The Supreme Court's judgements declaring education as an occupation, connecting it with an individual's right to earn livelihood by pursuing an occupation, and declaring it an individual's right to establish an educational institutions, gave tremendous fillip to private entrepreneurs to enter the field and prosper.
- The scenario of Indian Higher education itself provided enormous force to the entry of the private, for profit incentives, both by default and by design.
- Demands for new skills in the context of exponential growth of several sunrise industries like BPO, KPO, etc. have been increasing and the conventional state-un as well as state-aided institutions have neither capacity nor will to meet them, hence the birth of institutions to meet them.
- There has been an incredible upsurge to pursue courses for foreign degrees at affordable price; this has opened the market for tie-ups and franchising with foreign universities.

Distortion of values due to Privatization

- Collecting exorbitant amounts for admission, euphemistically called donation/capitation fee.
- Imposing the unauthorized additional charges under the garb of development, voluntary help etc.
- Collecting hefty amounts for admission on management quota, NRI quota etc.
- Manipulating admission of candidates from outside the official merit list at heavy charge.
- Appointing inadequate faculty, poorly qualified, underpaid and unmotivated.
- Providing no support for faculty renewal, up gradation of materials, research, extension and extra-curricular activities.
- Existence of a pervasive climate of moral void and feeling among the students of being cheated by not ensuring value for money.

Some of the Changes due to Privatization

- The new ideology led the institutions of higher learning to change their logo from "Lead me to Light" or something like that to "hundred percent placement" or "earn and learn" etc. the institutions thus changed their intrinsic objectives to those that suited the market needs.
- Shifting to consumerism.
- Seeking relationship with productive sector.
- Generating money from seed structures.
- Marketing the courses.
- Selling courses at different rates.
- Changing teachers into knowledge workers.
- Shift from intellectual houses to business houses.
- Question of access and equity.

Privatization and Commercialization of Higher Education-Recommendations by NUEPA:

1. The objectives of higher education and basic research for any society, particularly one striving to grow into a knowledge society, are not only to address the knowledge needs of the present time, but also to project the knowledge needs of the future, as far as possible. It is the responsibility of the state to try to determine the futuristic vision with the help of identified groups of knowledge workers, and influence the course of development in pursuit of that vision with appropriate funding.
2. The state is primarily responsible for ensuring quality education at all levels and all regions. This would entail strengthening of public institutions as also their quantitative expansion.
3. Commercialization is manifesting itself in a variety of forms such as the full recovery of the cost of higher education in Govt. and Govt. aided institutions high fees in self-financing private professional colleges' deemed and private universities.
4. Commercialization of higher education can have adverse implications both in terms of access and equity. It may even create internal imbalance and distortions higher education such as excessive importance to the IT-related sectors at the cost of the social sciences and humanities.
5. Foreign universities are promoting the process of privatization and fuelling commercialization. Issues like regularly by the various professional bodies to control fees. Fine tune quality and suitable legislation for the entry of foreign universities would have to be immediately attended to.

IMPACT OF PRIVATIZATION ON GLOBALIZATION

There is a great impact on education due to globalization, privatization and commercialization. System of education is at the crossroads. Teacher is a responsible person in the society. Nowadays teacher has become a slave under the privatization. The education is our primary right; accordingly the Government should provide schools, colleges and universities to strengthen the qualitative education. But the Govt. has failed to provide the facilities to the poor people and more over it is encouraging corporate system which means the education has become commercialization. We don't find any qualitative education in those institutions because lack of well qualified persons and infrastructure facilities. One can't escape from wondering at the inverted priorities where greater emphasis was placed on higher education than on primary education. The parent had to spend more on his child for first standard than on his University degree. Many University students spend more in a day out of their Pocket money than their entire annual tuition fee which is only a few hundreds of rupees while the actual cost of University education runs into tens of thousands per each student. The policy pursuits of the Govt. in the past few decades have not only resulted in ever increasing millions of illiterates but also severe shortage of seats in higher education. This great imbalance in demand and availability of seats especially in technical and professional courses led to the kind of competition which has traumatized the younger minds. The education should impart the knowledge of history and culture of our nation to the future generations. Education should be socialized, constitutionalized and there is no question of caste and creed in the form of socialization. But the education is presented as a consumer item and students are treated as commodities for value addition and exhibited as finished product off the mechanized assembly line. Colleges are no longer centre of all-round development but mere coaching centres and grinding workshops.

The major part of the blame for this pathetic situation lies with the Govt. for its failure to react to the aspirations of the people a growing educational needs of the society creating an inhuman competition. Unhealthy competition has crossed all limits of tolerance and has trivialized higher education. While competition is a great instrument of quality assurance, one should also be conscious of the fact that it should not lead to the risk of deforming of society into nothing but a rat race.

Globalization or not, the policy pursuits of Indian Govt. have never been right as far as education is concerned. Otherwise, we would not have been one among the most illiterate nations of the world 50 years after Independence. Fundamentally, education was related as welfare instead of being considered as basic infrastructure. The expenditure on education was meagre and the priorities misplaced.

COMMERCIALIZATION OF EDUCATION

Liberalization at the global level implies entry of private enterprise into the public sector economy. It subsumes commercialization as a legitimate component to earn profit through seemingly limited. Unfortunately however in our country there is a fast diversion towards commercialization in higher education as a result of several forces working for it. The forces are given below:

1. Economic value:

Among all the human values in the materialistic world of today, the economic value is becoming predominant in one's life. This drives an individual or a group of individuals into entrepreneurship and activities that would excel others in pursuit of economic achievements. It is not limited to trade/business sector; it has also entered into other social welfare sectors such as health, education etc.

2. Social compulsion:

Individuals wish to get name and fame in the society. Philanthropists have set up educational institutions may be without any commercial motive. But this is also now getting vitiated by financial gains even through social welfare ventures. Commercialization has taken over the earlier social service motivation to money making motive.

3. Political opportunism:

Some of our law makers are also motivated to enter in this area which they feel would not only lead to more financial gains but also stability in their own careers.

4. Psychological attitude:

Some individuals develop strong positive attitude towards gainful economic activities. They have urged to earn huge wealth and assets. This money oriented life style drives people to engage in commercialization in their respective field of work.

5. Culture of corruption:

In the very recent years, there have been several quick changes in our cultural outlook. Social responsibility towards society has deteriorated and surrendered itself to profit earning only. The cultural changes include trends such as- sacrifice to selfishness, social welfare to personal gains, fair means to any means, ethical behaviour to apathy and moral value to no morality.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- I. It is suggested that institutions should not depend upon tuition fees. The philanthropy of the general public and the industrial and commercial organizations, which should be allowed to set up, manage and finance institutions of education.
- II. The participation of private bodies in investment and management of education should be encouraged, complete privatization of these sectors of education should be ruled out.
- III. Globalization as an effective instrument of international exchange of goods and service has to have a humane face, based on ethical considerations rather than on cut throat competition.
- IV. It is therefore, this is more so in the field of education which is intimately concerned with the development of human capital. Any thoughtless entry into the global education market can end up in harming the vital interests of students for generations to come.
- V. The stakeholders should come forward against the commercialization. The culture of corruption should be discouraged, as it encourages commercialization of education.
- VI. The Govt. should allocate sufficient funds in proportion with GDP as in the case of Developed countries. The Conventional Universities must mobilize financial resources by way of offering consultancy services to the community and industry.

Effects of Privatization of education in India

i. Education as human right

Education is accepted as a human right and figures in the UN declaration on Human Rights. But one needs to specify that Education as human right refers to basic education or the level of education that is considered to be a basic need of every human being in order to live a life of human dignity.

ii. Unplanned Expansion

The mushrooming growth of private engineering, medical and teacher education colleges in the country stands testimony to the quality taking a back seat in higher education. The sudden rise in the number of colleges has given rise to scarcity in the human resources and physical facilities, and since it is seen as a marketable commodity, the management will see only for profits rather than providing quality education.

iii. Discrepancy between the rich and poor

The process of privatization may increase the gap between rich and the poor. As a highly paid goods it is accessible only to those people who can buy it, in turn higher education may be a dream come true to the down trodden section of the community.

SUGGESTIONS FOR QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

Instead of wasting our time in debating whether to accept or reject the process of privatization of higher education, we need to deliberate consideration for the improvement of quality in higher education

- **Clear Mission**

The private bodies starting institutions at higher education should have a clear mission to enhance the values of education and serve to the society whereby they do not see education as a mere selling commodity or business but see it with a service motto with minimal profits.

- **Funding**

The private bodies should have a meticulous plan for funding the different courses, the funds raised to run a course should be utilized in a proper way and the profits gained through the self-financed courses should be again reinvested to improve the physical facilities, labs, human resources and research work.

- **Evolving the quality norms and standards**

The UGC in consultation with accrediting, academic and professional agencies should evolve stringent quality norms and standards for universities, against which their performance can be adjudicated.

- **Improving infrastructural facilities**

Human resources development plays a pivotal role in the effective and efficient functioning of any system, hence the faculty recruited should be qualified, competent and on a permanent basis who has a flair for teaching and research.

- **Curriculum**

The curriculum should be framed by the experts in the concerned field taking into account the changing circumstances to meet the needs of the industry, which will be able to give a good job to the students after the completion of their course.

- **Information and Communication Technology**

The role of ICT in changing the character of education has long been recognized. These have been instrumental in introducing new educational methodologies that have allowed the development of the concept of student-centred learning.

- **Quality Research**

As in developed countries in India also higher education institutes should be primarily research institutes. The main output of these institutions should be research, patents and new technologies, intellectual property rights, students learn best by researching, only then it is relevant and up to date.

- **Improvements in Methods of Evaluation**

Another important aspect in maintaining the quality in higher education is the method of evaluation. The students should be evaluated in such a way that they can face the global job market after the completion of course.

- **Transparency and Accountability**

Even though it is a private organization it should have an obligation to the public. In the current context of condemnation of official secrets and appreciation for right to information, the private institution should function in the twin principles of transparency and accountability.

- **Assessment and Accreditation**

All the private institutions should voluntarily undergo the scientific institution's evaluation process of self-assessment for clearly determining how far the institution has progressed and how in further it should progress to accomplish in providing the quality education.

- **The role of Govt. in maintaining quality in higher education**

The Govt. at the state and Centre should formulate clear-cut norms to regulate and maintain the quality in higher education. At present the following agencies are carrying on the task of accreditation. The tasks before agencies are monumental. (a) National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) (b) National Board of Accreditation (NBA)

CONCLUSION

Education is the key to participation in the global economy. It is necessary to build a society that is fair and just for all citizens. Quantity and quality of highly specialised human resources determine their competence in the global market. Globalization can lead to unregulated and poor quality of higher education with the worldwide making of fraudulent degrees or other so-called higher education credentials. Privatization of higher education has emerged in several forms and types in the recent decade in India. Commercial private higher education emerges from market forces and tied to economic and global forces. Commercialization will not only denude education of all the noble values and ideals associated with it. It will also lead to widening the gap of social disparity. Some recommendations were suggested for the betterment.

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