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SOCIETY OF TRAINING AND RESEARCH MANAGEMENT
AURANGABAD (M.S.)

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Privatization of Higher Education in India

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Introduction

Education in India is provided by the public sector as well as the private sector, with control and funding coming from three levels: central, state, and local. Takshasila was the earliest recorded centre of higher learning in India from at least 5th century BCE and it is debatable whether it could be regarded a university or not. The Nalanda University was the oldest university-system of education in the world in the modern sense of university. Western education became ingrained into Indian society with the establishment of the British Raj. Education in India falls under the control of both the Union Government and the State Governments, with some responsibilities lying with the Union and the states having autonomy for others. The various articles of the Indian Constitution provide for education as a fundamental right. Most universities in India are controlled by the Union or the State Government.

Education Policy

The national policy of education (1986) and program of action (1992) lay down the objectives and features of Indian education policy. It includes:

- Development of International cooperation and peaceful coexistence through education.
- Promotion of equality. It could be achieved by providing equal access and equal condition of success to children.
- A common educational structure (10+2+3) for the whole of India.
- Education for women's equality. The Indian education should be used as a tool to change the status of women in the society.
- Equalization of SC population with others in the matter of education. This is ensured by giving incentives to parents who send their children to schools, providing scholarship to SC students for higher studies, reservation of seats in institution of higher studies in India, recruitment of SC teachers.
- Opening of primary schools in tribal area for promotion of education in ST people.
- Development of curriculum and study material in the language of tribal people.
- Emphasis on the education of minorities.
- Adult education - Initiation of National Literacy Mission, for teaching illiterate people of age group 15-35. And making them aware of the day-to-day realities of their surroundings.
- Special emphasis on early childhood care and education by opening up of day care centers, promotion of child focused programs.
- Increasing the scope of Operation Blackboard for upliftment of standard of primary education in India.
- Secondary education curriculum should expose the students to differentiated roles of science, the humanities, and social science.
- Redesigning of courses of higher education to meet the increasing demand of professionalism.
- Providing enhanced support to the research work in Universities. Efforts to relate ancient Indian knowledge with the contemporary reality.
- Setting up of Open Universities and Distance Learning centers to promote the goal of education as a life long process.
- A combined perspective of technical and management education.
- Minimum exposure to computers and training in their use to be the part of professional education.
- The All India Council for Technical Education will be responsible for maintenance of norms and standards, accreditation, funding, and monitoring of technical and management education in India.
- Multiple task performance for teachers such as teaching, research, development of learning resource material, extension and management of the institution.
- Providing teachers a better deal to make education system in India work in proper way, as teachers are the backbone of the system. Providing better facilities to institutions and improved services to students.
- Development of languages in great deal.
- Measures to be taken for easy accessibility of books at minimum costs to all sections of students.
- Strengthening of science education for the development of spirit of inquiry and objectivity in the minds of students.

- The purpose of examination to be to bring about qualitative improvement in education. It should discourage memorization.
- Methods of teacher recruitment to be recognized one to ensure merit and objectivity in the system.
- Overhauling of the system of teacher education and establishment of District Institutes of Education and Training (DIET) to organize courses for elementary school teachers.
- Reviewing of educational developments by the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE)
- Involvement of local communities for school improvement programmes.
- Review of the implementation of the parameters of the policy every five years,
- Strengthening the base of pyramid of Indian population for proper development of education system in India.

Privatization of Higher Education in India

Swami Vivekananda quoted "Education is the manifestation of perfection already in men". Education is compulsory for each and every individual who wants to succeed in any area of life. Primary education till the age of 14 years is compulsory and free in India and is maintained by the government. But when it comes to higher education, the trend of privatization is sadly noticed in India. The largest drawback resulting from privatization of education is increase in the fees as a result of which most of the students who are interested in continuing their studies are forced to quit because they cannot bare the expenses. The question that arises is that why cannot government provide free higher education? We are all aware of the fact that any individual who only had his primary education is not eligible for earning the bare minimum that is required for his or her survival. Though most of the people do not accept this bitter truth but the fact remains.

If we take a close look at the statistics of developing countries we will see that India as a developing country lacks far behind when it comes to analyzing the ration of people with higher education as compared to the other developing countries. The proportion of the University and College going students is 6% in India while the figure is 20% in Egypt and Thailand, 10% in Turkey, 11% in Brazil, and 16% in Mexico. In developed countries on the other hand, the ratio of the students opting for higher education is nearly 40%. If India dreams of becoming a developed country in the near future, it is extremely essential that more and more students opt for higher education.

As a result of privatization in higher education, the scheduled caste, scheduled tribes and the other backward classes have a limited access to these educational institutions. The most crucial issue is the lack of adequate funds in higher education. The funds have increased from 1.2% to 3.6 percent in the recent years but it is still not the required 6% as it should ideally be. If India wants to progress and assert itself as a developed nation, educating the youth is the key to open this door. The Union government has a declared objective saying that the Lion's share for the funding of higher education should come from private institutions. The truth is that the fees of higher education is largely increased by adding so called compulsory extra-curricular activities in the University and College curriculum. The kids who can afford higher education gets it and the ones who cannot are devoid of it. It is essential on the part of both the Union and the state governments to take strict actions against this evil for the progress of the nation as a whole.

The private initiative in higher education has not been a new phenomenon in India, for instance, some of the prestigious modern universities in India even established by the efforts of certain dedicated individuals with private financial aid. This, indeed, was a unique in India as a form of public private partnership. The concept of private institution, however, in the initial stage was meant to be sheer arbitrary, and was a relative category to express miscellaneous classes of educational institutions. Such an arbitrary term, without much complexity gained public image from its inception and became a normative language in the domain of philanthropy. Hence, philanthropy was understood by the fact that private institutions were being supported by the public. During British rule, through the directives of East India Company, the policy of grand-in-aid system was executed to encourage private institutions. There were three types of private institutions, for instance, nationalist, sectarians and caste communities, were operational with the support of individual philanthropist and local notables, before independence. Even, in the post-independent India, private sector was continued to be thrived and become a major domain in shaping the system of higher learning in the backdrop of the constitutional provision. Such historical patronage, led to the outgrowth of private higher education institutions over the years, and they constitute three-fourth of the total. There were two types of private institutions; aided and unaided. If the former was privately managed and publicly funded, the latter was both privately managed and funded colleges. In this respect, no doubt, the role of private initiative in higher education has been very crucial in the initial stages of independence. It has been reported that many of the private educational institutions were to be non-viable and mediocre. It was largely due to the poor quality of delivery in their services and inadequate enrolment rates of students. True, private aided educational institutions were to be abided the norms laid down by the statute of the concerned universities. They also used to receive financial aid from the state regularly, therefore, for financial matters; private aided institutions did not have any significant role in sharing the cost of education. In spite of the fact that the state has authority over affiliation, pattern of aiding, and regulation of education, it failed to comply with constitutional promises of social justice. In

other words, dominant culture has silently been reproduced in the educational institutions as the managements simultaneously enjoyed their local/estate power with knowledge governing power.

As a result, these managements were continued to remain as sectarian and partisan organization of their own locality, community and organs of political parties. Moreover, these very institutions played key role in the local politics to circulate among the party cadres and supporters. Because of their affiliation with local political power structures, these managements used to receive under patronage and partisan prestige. Much relaxed UGC rule, in fact, fuelled the process from bad to worse. Since most of the private agencies drawn from the elite sections of society, education was yet another domain through which they continued to govern on the state of education. In other words, system of education thrived into half-backed capitalism, from half backed socialism, in the backdrop of mixed economy of India. In addition to that, there were 20 fake universities illegally operating throughout India and highest number was found Uttar Pradesh (9) followed by Delhi (5). Its logic is clear as the demands vouch for the creation of new institutions, no matter even for expanding private players in education sector. This trend, perhaps, makes indispensability of the middleclass in the private education sector as they are the only probable group can buy education by paying huge fee. The emerging discourses on the privatization of higher education world over, especially among developing societies, indicates the fact that they have commercial intent to reduce education to be as sheer commodity. It is in this context, the state of education in India needs to be critically examined in the light of the political economy in general and education policy adjustments in particular.

Conclusion

The formal admission ceremony was known as 'Upanayana'. With the accomplishment of this ceremony the child had to leave his home for the 'ashrama' where he would receive education. It was supposed to be the rebirth of the child and was known as 'Dvijya', which means, "twice born". Sanskrit was the language of teaching. It was supposed to be the language of learned men. The academies of higher learning were known as 'Parisads'. The education system involved of three basic processes, which included 'Sravana', 'Manana' and 'Nidhyasana'. In the 'Sravana' stage of education, students received 'shrutis' knowledge, this was passed orally from one generation to another. The second stage was 'Manana' which means that pupils had to think themselves about what they have heard. They have to make their own inferences and assimilate the lesson taught by their teacher into the life. The third stage 'Nidhyasana' means complete comprehension of truth and its use in the life. The present educational system of India is an implantation of British rulers. Wood's Dispatch of 1854 laid the foundation of present system of education in India. Before the advent of British in India, education system was private one. With the introduction of Wood's Dispatch known as Magna Carta of Indian education, the whole scenario changed. The main purpose of it was to prepare Indian Clerks for running local administration. Under it the means of school educations were the vernacular languages while the higher education was granted in English only. British government started giving funds to indigenous schools in need of help and thus slowly some of the schools became government-aided.

No wonder, policies for enhancing accessibility and expanding more educational opportunities in India, are implicitly guided by principles of inclusiveness and social justice and at the same time, reducing the elite domination in the existing social system. The introduction of social justice is being debated, in this regard, becomes central to make sense of the conditions of equity and address cumulative inequalities that are structurally imprinted in the social system itself. However, the new challenges in the domain of the political economy of higher education in developing countries are in twofold; narrowing unequal accessibility between several social and cultural groups and satisfying the requirements of the global market. The vision, principle and goal of the higher education policy of India today delineate these broader themes.

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