From Deficiency to Strength: Change in Mindset About Higher Education

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Abstract

The roots of education in India can be traced back to times immemorial. "Education is no exotic in India. There is no country where the love of learning had so early an origin or has exercised so lasting and powerful an influence. From the simple poets of the Vedic age to the Bengali philosopher of the present day there has been an uninterrupted succession of teachers and scholars". Education plays very important role for the development of the society. The paper in hand deals with few vital issues concerning higher education that are responsible for the deviating standard from actual performance and lesser diffusion of higher education beside its insufficient reach to those who need it the best. Both the central government and the state government have drastically reduced the funding to most of the institutes of higher education. Beside some of the funds which are provided by the government to the educational institutions are not properly utilized.

Introduction

Regulatory Bodies For Higher Education

There are four regulatory bodies to regulate the higher education in an effective manner in India. Name of the particular bodies are given below:-

1. University Grants Commission (UGC).
2. All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE).
3. Distance Education Council (DEC).
4. Council of Architecture (COA).

Structure Of Higher Education In India

|	Formal Education	Technical & Professional	Skill Development	Vocational Training
Composition	• Institutes of national importance • Universities • Colleges • Polytechnics	• Engineering colleges • Management Schools • Law, Medical, Pharmacy etc.	• ITIs • ITCs • Private Skill Development Centres	• Finishing schools • English training • Air hostess Academies
Key Regulators	• UGC • State Government • IGNOU	• AICTE • Bar Council of India • Medical Council of India • ICAI	• DGET in case of ITIs/ITCs • Unregulated for others	• No regulator
Accreditation bodies	• NAAC	• NBA	• None	• None
Key Players	• IITs/IIMs/IISc • Amity University • SRCC	• MDI Gurgaon • K.J Somaiya College of Engineering	• ITIs/ITCs • Private centres	• VETA • Frankinn

Source: Deloitte Report on Indian Higher Education Sector: Opportunities aplenty, growth unlimited (2012).

Catastrophe of Higher Education in India

Over the past six decades, India has made tremendous progress in the field of higher education. Enrolment rate in higher education has increased to 20.4% in the academic year 2011-12 which is quite impressive for a developing country like India. Only few leading institutions of higher education in the nation like IIT's and IIM's were known for their worldwide reputation in education and research. Yet, there are certain aspects that are wrong in higher education sector and the concerned sector is in deep catastrophe. According to the Times Higher Education (Worldwide University Ranking Company), in the World University Rankings of the academic session 2014-2015 not even a single Indian Institution of higher education make their way into the list of top 200 universities. These ranking shows that all is not well within the system or management of Indian higher educational institutions. During the last few decades this catastrophe is deepening its roots into the Indian higher education system. Higher education tends to be the prime building block of the society. It nurtures the methodology for the modernisation of society and the country on wide scale. Since the word "Development" is of the utmost popular expression for the progress of any nation, the quality of our education is of foremost significance alongside its access and its potential for the nation growth. Higher education must be surveyed from an extensive point of view in context to various types of changes in the micro and macro environment of the nation. With the advancement in globalization and liberalization, India is the leading player towards the global exposure. In order to improve higher education system in the country government should reconsider content and curriculum of the courses by implementing robust quality management system. The accompanying factors need cautious consideration from government and other stakeholders who are indulged in the higher education.

Lower Budgetary Allocation
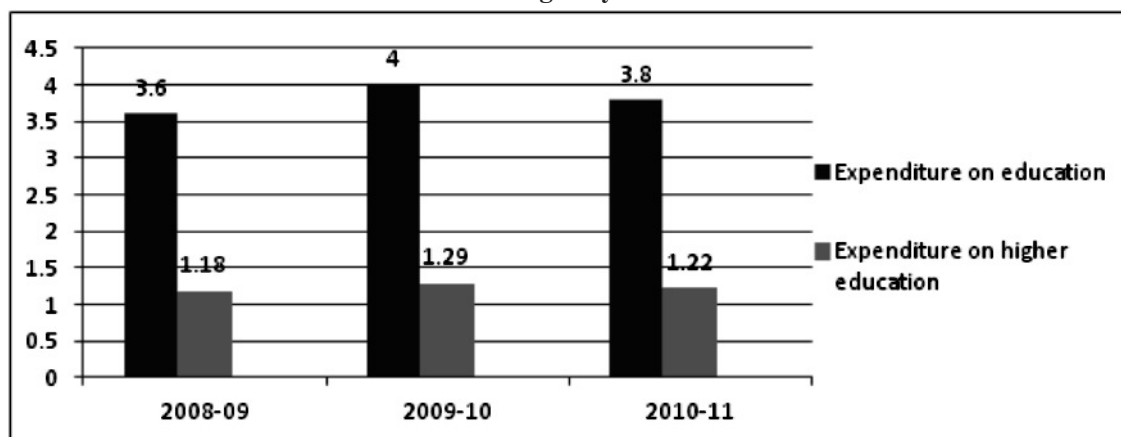
Source: Deloitte Report on Indian Higher Education Sector: Opportunities aplenty, growth unlimited (2012).

Openness And Equity
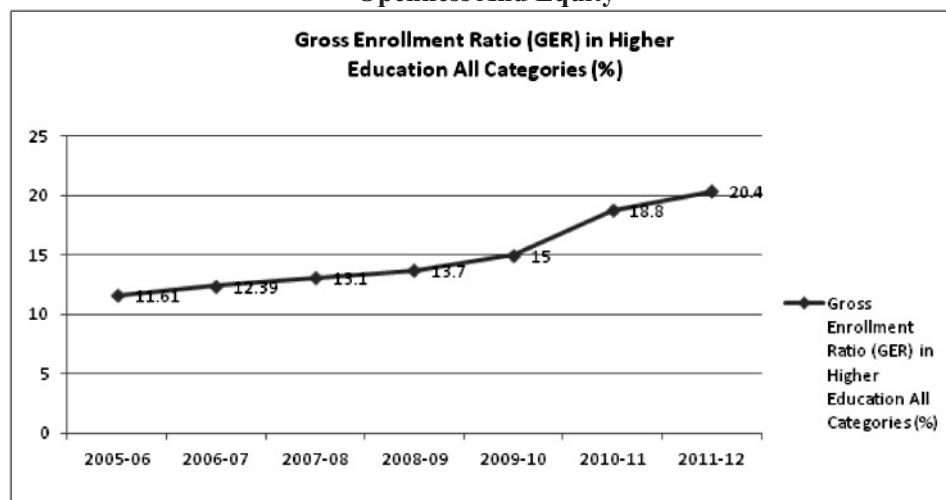
Source - Ministry of Human Resource and Development (MHRD) Annual report 2013

Deficiency of Higher Education in India

1. Seminars, conferences, workshop and other educational programs do not bring desired results.

2. UGC projects are normally not applicable to the needs of the society.

3. Work environment in different colleges especially those governed by the government is poor.

4. Government is washing its hand of the grants that it use to give and has left the institutions to find for them. This is resulted into high fees.

5. There is a lack of talent research programme.

6. Talent found is not groomed properly.

Review of Literature

Singh (2004) observed that political masters play an important role in the working of Universities and members of civil society do not involved in the education in India. He further suggested that, teaching at the under graduate levels should emphasised on practical skills and media should play powerful role in changing the outlook of higher education and improving its effectiveness.

Healey (2005) has explored the disciplinary spaces within which the relationship between teaching and research occur. Three arguments have interwoven the chapter. Firstly, it was suggested that some of the controversy about the research-teaching nexus is due to differences in the way the terms 'research', 'teaching and learning' are used. Generally it is easier to develop the linkages the more acceptable it is to use the terms flexibly to include a wider range of forms. A four-fold typology of different kinds of relationship was suggested based on the extent to which learning is student or teacher focused and the extent to which emphasis is placed on research content or research processes and problems. Secondly, it was argued that disciplines are important for the way in which staff and students experience the research-teaching nexus. Although for some, the boundaries between disciplines are becoming less important, particularly with the growth of interdisciplinary. Thirdly, it was suggested that research based learning structured around inquiry is one of the most effective ways for students to benefit from the research that occurs in departments. The nature of the inquiry is, in turn, influenced by the disciplinary space in which it is set.

Eindhoven (2007) observed that students found research difficult. Most have no ideas how to integrate the diverse ideas generated by the nature of the problems they were investigating. They often came with different attitudes from ours towards their learning. Many perceived learning as a means to external ends such as grades and status among their peers and tutor, and above all obtaining good examination grades. Because of this, they tended to focus on low level learning without having the need to be involved in higher order cognitive processing. When students have acquired the problem based learning skills, they found learning fun and changed their whole perspectives about their learning. Many enjoyed learning for the first time and were keen to continue on doing postgraduate work after their encountered with problem based learning. Some have utilized the skills to help them having their work published within the first few months of their Ph.D. work. They have also completed their Ph.D. ahead of their peers. It is the author's belief that problem based learning indeed helps students develop the necessary research skills they need.

Conclusion and Suggestion

Following are the changes to be addressed by the competent authority of the Indian education System for the improvement in higher education:-

1. Commercialization of Higher education, falling of national character and increasing number of Ad-hoc / contract, part-time based appointments in the universities and colleges.

2. Public higher education institutions should also start extra coaching classes and training facilities for the students so that they can survive in industrial areas.

3. Public higher education institutions should provide scholarship facilities to those students who are first class first position.

4. Plagiarism, lack of sufficient funds, higher rate of illiteracy and mushroom growth of private universities make the study of higher education and issues related to it quite complex.

5. Degradation of standards for the attainment of Ph.D. degree lead by the commercialization of higher education in a big way resulting in the delay of scholarship for deserving students and research scholars.

6. Poor infrastructure of government colleges and substantial number of Ad-hoc /contract appointments of university and college teachers instead of the regular ones due to the political interference in Higher Education.

7. Lower budgetary allocation for education and exponential growth of business education institutes.

8. The education institutions should concentrate more on sufficient coverage of population.

9. Private higher education institutions should start extra curriculum activities for the students who are interested so that they can cope up with the dynamic and spontaneous changes in the environment.

10. In pursuit of the new and better job opportunities Ad-hoc/Contract based appointed teachers leave one educational institute and enter the other one, which leads to problems related to the understanding level among the students as the teacher has been changed for the concerned course.

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