



International Research Journal of Arts and Social Science Vol. 10(6) pp. 1-3, November, 2022

Available online <https://www.interestjournals.org/arts-social-sciences.html>

Copyright ©2022 International Research Journals

Research Article

Higher Education in India Challenges and Opportunities

Desh Raj Bajhwa*

Higher Education Commission, Govt. P.G. College, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra, Ambala City – 134003, Haryana, India

*Corresponding Author's E-mail: drbajwa7@gmail.com; drbajwagovtcollege@yahoo.co.in

Received: 04-Nov-2022; Manuscript No: irjass-22-81319; **Editor assigned:** 07-Nov-2022; Pre-QC No: irjass-22-81319(PQ); **Reviewed:** 21-Nov-2022; QC No: irjass-22-81319; **Revised:** 24-Nov-2022; Manuscript No: irjass-22-81319(R); **Published:** 30-Nov-2022, DOI: 10.14303/2276-6502.2022.74

Abstract

Higher education in India has expanded rapidly over the past two decades. This growth has been mainly driven by private sector initiatives. There are genuine concerns about many of them being substandard and exploitative. Due to the government's ambivalence on the role of private sector in higher education, the growth has been chaotic and unplanned. The regulatory system has failed to maintain standards or check exploitation instead; it resulted in erecting formidable entry barriers that have generated underside results. Voluntary accreditation seems to have no takers from amongst private providers and apparently serves little purpose for any of its stakeholders. The higher education system in India grew rapidly after independence. By 1980, there were 132 universities and 4738 colleges in the country enrolling around five percent of the eligible age group in higher education. Today, while in terms enrolment, India is the third largest higher education system in the world (after China and the USA) with 17973 institutions (348 universities and 17625 colleges) and is the largest higher education system in the world in terms of number of institutions. There are different types of universities and colleges in the higher education system in the country. They vary terms of their academic, administrative and financial arrangements. Universities can either be established by an Act of Parliament or by the state legislatures. Those established by the Act of Parliament are the central universities and the ones set up by the state legislatures are state universities. Some higher education institutions are granted the 'deemed university' status by the central government through gazette notifications. A few institutions are established by the Parliament / state legislatures as institutions of national importance. Universities, deemed universities and institutions of national importance are degree-granting institutions. The expansion of higher education system in India has been chaotic and unplanned. The drive to make higher education socially inclusive has led to a sudden and dramatic increase in numbers of institutions without a proportionate increase in material and intellectual resources. As a result, academic standards have been jeopardized. There are many basic problems facing higher education in India today. These include inadequate infrastructure and facilities, large vacancies in faculty positions and poor faculty outmoded teaching methods, declining research standards, unmotivated students, overcrowded classrooms and widespread geographic, income, gender and ethnic imbalances. There is an inadequate and diminishing financial support for higher education from the government and from society. Many colleges established in rural areas are non-viable, are under enrolled and have extremely poor infrastructure and facilities with just a few teachers. Apart from these, the system of higher education has met several setbacks with regard to its regulatory framework, funding and Frances and the much debated and controversial move of privatization of higher educational institutions. These underlying issues will be identified and addressed in the paper.

Keywords: Higher Education, India

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Aims and Objectives

The objectives of this paper are to identify the major issues and problems relating to the system of higher education in India (A. Singh, 2004). The researcher has narrowed down the scope of this paper to three main concerns relating to higher education viz., the present regulatory framework, and privatization and funding and financing (C. Premsia). The paper examines various arguments, cases and recommendations in highlighting the issues concerned.

Scope and Limitations

The scope of this paper is limited to the identification and study of the major issues concerning the Indian higher education system.

Mode of Citation

A uniform mode of citation is used throughout the paper.

Sources of Data

This paper is based on researched compiled from numerous articles, working papers, statistical data and case laws.

Research Questions

The following questions are sought to be addressed in the course of this paper (D. Kanpur, 2004).

- What are the major issues and problems affecting higher education in India?
- Why is the existing regulatory mechanism problematic for the growth and development of higher education in the country?
- How can student loans help in improving the accessibility of higher education?
- How can the issues discussed in the paper be addressed to resolve the existing conflicts?

Cauterization

The paper is divided into three broad chapters

Chapter 1: The problems with the existing regulatory framework are identified along with a discussion of the recommendations of various committees (H. Weiler, 2006).

Chapter 2: This chapter deals with the issue of privatization of higher education in India.

Chapter 3: The decline in public expenditure on higher education and the inextricable link between the present regulations and funding/finances of educational institutions is examined in the last chapter (J. Tilak, 2004).

CONCLUSION

Government regulation of higher education has been the

subject of an acrimonious debate across the policy spectrum (J. Tilak, 1992). Proponents argue that regulation is essential for delivering quality education. Without regulation, they further argue, profit maximization rather than education would be the *raison d'être* of private education institutions (N. Jayaram, 1979). In their opinion, the abysmal quality of most private institutions-despite decades of stifling regulations-justifies more government intrusion; not private institutions-despite decades of stifling regulations-justifies more government intrusion; non less, it is perceived to be State's responsibility to protect those who avail of higher education. The inability to incentives quality in private institutions of higher learning is the key failure of India's education regulators (P. Agarwal, 2006). Rather than improving quality, the state's stranglehold on higher education has created an artificial shortage leading to an acute supply-demand mismatch. The demand for higher educational institutions then the growth in number of higher educational institutions (P. Mehta, 2005). The regulatory process is thoroughly politicized; it is well documented that most private colleges are owned by politicians or well-connected business houses. The poor quality of such institutions offers a readymade excuse to impose even stronger government regulations, notwithstanding the fact that high entry barriers-ostensibly erected to improve quality of such institutions to thrive in the first place (P. Nair, 2004). While the regulatory bodies seek to guard the portals of higher education, and are entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring adherence to minimum guidelines by existing institutions, however, these regulations. In their current form are simply erecting entry-barriers rather than working to remove the asymmetry. Regulation, therefore, needs to be well structured and thoroughly researched to take full account of relevance, therefore, needs to be well structured and thoroughly researched to take full account of relevance, requirement, practical constraints and market realities (P. Rani, 2003). The objective of encouraging growth of educational institutions rather than restricting them should not be lost sight of higher education offers a wide variety of subjects and with continuing education it needs to be demand driven. Over the last few decades, higher education has been handled casually and, for the most part, is lacking in initiative or direction (S.Kaul, 2006). In addition to this, the process of accreditation remains a strenuous bureaucratic exercise. While the bogus or poor quality colleges are a matter of concern for every regulator, the problem in India is that University Authorities do not have a proper monitoring and surveillance system for colleges (S. Sharma). This leads to episodes of sudden de-recognition as in the case of Chhattisgarh University and a large number of affiliated colleges which was very distressing for a large number of students. Another important measure to be undertaken is that of decentralization. The purpose of decentralization is to eliminate or reduce the cumbersomeness and inefficiency, to convert high costs per unit into low costs and replace diseconomies of scale. In the absence of decentralization, the introduction of new techniques becomes meaningless

as the already over expanded monolithic system does not leave any room for improvement.

REFERENCES

1. Assessment and Accreditation in Higher Education (New Delhi: Association of Indian Universities 2004).
2. Decentralization of Higher Education System (New Delhi: Association of Indian Universities 1991).
3. Reforms and Innovations in Higher Education (New Delhi: Association of Indian Universities 2001).
4. Singh A (2004). Challenges in Higher Education. *Economic and Political Weekly*. 39: 2155-2158.
5. Premsia C Higher Education in India: From Socialism to Capitalism.
6. Kanpur D, Mehta P (2004). Indian Higher Education Reform: From Half Baked Socialism to Half Baked Capitalism", (CID Working Paper No. 108), Cambridge, MA: Centre for International Development at Harvard University.
7. Weiler H (2006). Higher Education in India: Critical Issues", Stanford University.155.
8. Tilak J (2004). Absence of Policy and Perspective on Higher Education. *Economic and Political Weekly*. 39: 2159-2164.
9. Tilak J (1992). Student Loans in Financing Higher Education in India. *Higher Education*. 24: 289-404.
10. Jayaram N (1979). Higher Education Reform in India: Prospects and Challenges. 28: 46-58.
11. Agarwal P (2006). Higher Education in India: The Need for Change Working paper No. 180, New Delhi: Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations.
12. Mehta P (2005). Three-Part Series on Regulating Indian Higher Education: Part II: Critiquing the Regulatory Regime.
13. Nair P, Kumar D (2004). The Financing of Higher Education: A Broader View", *ICFAI Journal of Infrastructure*. 3: 21-34.
14. Rani P (2003). Economic Reforms and Financing Higher Education in India National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration.
15. Kaul S (2006). Funding Higher Educational in India: Seizing the Opportunity," Working Paper No. 179, Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations, New Delhi.
16. Sharma S. Higher Education: Recent Reform Initiatives in India.