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SRIKAKULAM -ANDHRA PRADESH -532001

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TWO DAY NATIONAL SEMINAR ON

NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY 2020

This is to certify that

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the paper titled

Privatization of Higher Education in India.

in Two Day National Seminar on **National Educational Policy 2020** held

on 2nd and 3rd March 2023 organized by Government College for Women (A)

Srikakulam, Andhra Pradesh.

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PERSPECTIVES ON NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL POLICY 2020

75
Azadi Ka
Amrit Mahotsav

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Cover Page Designed by
Dept. of Computer Science & Applications, GCW (A), Srikakulam



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ICSSR Sponsored
TWO-DAY NATIONAL SEMINAR
On
NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY 2020
[TDNS-NEP2020]
[2nd & 3rd March 2023]

Organized by
GOVERNMENT COLLEGE FOR WOMEN (AUTONOMOUS)
Re-Accredited by NAAC with 'A' Grade, 3rd Cycle CGPA 3.09
ESTD: 1968 (Affiliated to Dr B R Ambedkar University)
SRIKAKULAM - ANDHRA PRADESH

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ISBN : 978-93-5813-478-0

Cover-page designed by Mrs. S. Madhavalatha & Mrs. I. Srilakshmi

Printed by Arunodaya Print House, Srikakulam

First printing edition 2023

PRIVATIZATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to analyze the impact of privatization of higher education in the Indian society. The Government of India introduced new economic policies namely globalization, privatization and liberalization. Privatization of education in India introduced new policies and programs to increase employment, outcome and income opportunities and achieve economic development at National and International level. It has brought about rapid change in the educational scenario of India. As a result, privatization encourages the individuals to establish colleges and deemed universities to meet the growing demand for higher education. Consequently, higher educational institutions are found throughout the country. It not only increases the number of higher educational institutions but also increases the number of seats for highly professional courses which are in high demand. Moreover, it decreases the distance between the educational institutions. It causes competition among them to fill the seats allotted by the affiliated universities and maximize socio-economic benefits. However, it creates the gap between the demand and supply of higher education. It not only increases the cost but also decreases the quality of education. Thus, privatization has positive as well as negative impact on education in society.

Keywords: Privatization, Higher Education

Introduction

The term privatization of Education refers to many different educational programs and policies. It is a process which can be defined as the transfer of activities, assets and responsibility from Government, Public Institutions and organizations to private individual and agencies. It is the important source of employment, income and standard of living. So, everyone gives importance to higher education. Consequently, demand for higher education has been increased. To meet the demand for higher education there is establishment of private colleges, autonomous colleges, deemed universities and private universities. Even the number of self-financed colleges of engineering and medical colleges has been increased.

The role of education in a developing country like India is very significant for the purpose of economic production and political decision making. Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization (LPG) policies have contributed to the development and growth of every sector in the world. At the same time, it is important to critically analyze the effects of LPG on the education sector. The policies of LPG have changed the entire educational framework throughout the world. It also decreased the gap between demand and supply of Higher Education. As a result of this, privatization of education has been growing day by day.

Objectives of the Study

- To discuss the background of privatization of higher education in India.
- To analyze the current scenario of privatization of higher education in India.
- To study about the impact of privatization on education.

Objectives of privatization of education in India

- Providing quality education.
- Promotion of technological advancement.
- Reducing gap between Industry and Education

- Achieving widespread private ownerships in the society and reduce the burden of government.
- Providing education in remote areas and small urban areas.
- Generating highly skill personnel for development in India.
- Meeting International Standards of education.

Background of Privatization of Higher Education in India

After 1991 different commissions, reports and committees with new policies have been constituted by government in higher education sector. National Education Policy 1986 fully encouraged non-governmental organizations to take advantage of public. The policy comments that in the interest of maintaining and developing standards of education commercialization will become unimportant. The 'Eighth Five Years plan' (1992-1997) was the very beginning of liberalization, privatization and globalization (LPG) in India. After that a committee was established on UGC funding of institutions of higher education under the chairmanship of justice K. Punnayya (UGC, 1993) named 'Punnayya Committee' (Choudhary, 2016). Then another committee was set up by Dr. Swaminathan (the chairman of the committee) named 'Swaminathan Committee' (AICTE, 1994). The recommendations of both committees determined the goal of higher education with regard to mobilization of resources for higher education, introducing self-financing courses; promote technical education, arrangement of students' loans. Another bill was introduced in the Rajya Sabha in August 1995 (A private university established and regulation bill) to provide self-financing universities in country.

Then on government subsidies in India, a discussion paper was issued by Ministry of Finance, Government of India in 1997. This paper highlighted a change in financing and social sector of higher education. In 2005, Central Advisory Board of Education suggested to construct a body like Higher Education Finance Corporation (HEFC) with an aim of careful monitoring mechanism for the improvement in quality education. In 2008, Government of India constituted Yashpal Committee and submitted report in 2010 (Ministry of Human Resource Development) where it was emphasized an urgent need to bring about changes in education system in regulatory bodies. The Higher Education Commission of India (UGC Act, 2018) presented a bill prepared by MHRD with an intention to step towards the Government's agenda of privatizing education.

Recently, National Policy on Education 2020 trusts over the private Institutions that they will 'do the right thing' and gives undue importance on autonomy of educational institutions. National Education Policy 2020 lays particular emphasis on the development of the creative potential of each individual. It is based on the principle that education must develop not only cognitive capacities -both the 'foundational capacities' of literacy and numeracy and 'higher-order' cognitive capacities, such as critical thinking and problem solving – but also social, ethical, and emotional capacities and dispositions.

Current Scenario of Higher Education

According to the records there are 9,700 total AICTE approved institutes between 2021 to 2022. Of the total, there were 4,100 undergraduate, 4,951 postgraduate and 4,514 diploma courses in AICTE approved institutes. According to the National Institutional Ranking Framework, 7 positions were bagged by prominent Indian Institutes of Technology out of the top 10 institution rankings in 2021. As per QS World University Rankings, 12 Indian institutes made it to the top 100 list.

There are some challenges before Higher education in India the Indian higher education system is facing an unprecedented transformation in the coming decade. This transformation is being driven by economic and demographic change. By 2021, India will be the world's third largest economy, with a correspondingly rapid growth in the size of its middle classes. Currently, over 50% of India's population is under 25 years old. By 2022, India will outpace China as the country with the largest tertiary-age population.

India possessing a large population suffers from sufficient resources to provide govt. opportunities to all in higher education. A huge investment was required and, in this situation, the private investors came forward to cater the chance and support for higher education services (Lal & Kumar, 2019). So, in India higher education system includes both private and public universities. The annual report as on 01.02.2021 of University Grant Commission which was established in 1956 under Minister of Human Resource Development suggests there are 54 central universities, 436 state universities, 125 deemed universities and 388 private universities are there in India. The below given Table represents the number of universities list as on July 2022:

Universities by state and type
The table below is correct as of July 2022.

State	Central	State	Deemed	Private	Total
	universities	universities	universities	universities	
Andhra Pradesh	3	24	4	6	37
Arunachal Pradesh	1	0	1	8	10
Assam	2	17	1	6	26
Bihar	4	18	1	7	30
Chandigarh	0	1	1	0	2
Chhattisgarh	1	15	0	13	29
Delhi	7	10	8	0	25
Goa	0	1	0	0	1
Gujarat	1	28	3	46	78
Haryana	1	20	6	24	51
Himachal Pradesh	1	7	0	17	25
Jammu and Kashmir	2	9	1	0	12
Jharkhand	1	11	1	15	28
Karnataka	1	34	14	20	69
Kerala	1	15	3	0	19
Ladakh	0	1	0	0	1
Madhya Pradesh	2	25	1	39	67
Maharashtra	1	24	21	19	65
Manipur	3	3	0	4	10
Meghalaya	1	0	0	9	10
Mizoram	1	0	0	1	2
Nagaland	1	0	0	4	5
Odisha	1	19	3	8	31
Puducherry	1	0	1	0	2
Punjab	1	14	2	16	33
Rajasthan	1	24	8	52	85
Sikkim	1	1	0	4	6
Tamil Nadu	2	22	28	3	55
Telangana	3	17	3	5	28
Tripura	1	1	0	1	3
Uttar Pradesh	6	31	9	31	77
Uttarakhand	1	11	3	19	34
West Bengal	1	33	2	11	47
Total	54	436	125	388	1003

While many reasons can be cited for the current scenario, these all boil down to decades of feudally managed, colonially modeled institutions run with inadequate funding and excessive political and bureaucratic interference. India should try to become "knowledge economy" to promote inclusive growth. The two major areas to be focused to ensure that Indian Higher Education system is sustainable and meets global standards are:

Quality of Education

Academic Standards and Need of World-Class Quality Higher Education - Quantity and Quality (Q n Q). Most observers agree that Indian higher education, the significant and impressive developments of the past few decades notwithstanding, faces major challenges in both quantitative and qualitative terms. Perhaps the clearest and boldest statement of this issue can be found in the 'Report to the Nation 2006' of the National Knowledge Commission (NKC) which concludes that, 'there is a quiet crisis in higher education in India that runs deep and that it has to do with both the quantity and the quality of higher education in India. In any nation, education is the basic necessity for the socio-economic development of the individuals and the society. In reality about 25 percent of the universities are having world class education. So, improved standard of education as first priority should be offered to the majority by the government authorities with sincere political will. Also, privatization of higher education is absolutely necessary in a vast country like India as government alone is helpless to do so.

Indian government is not giving priority to the development of standard higher education. It should aspire for the international form of higher education system. To achieve that goal, it should adopt uniform international syllabus in its educational institutions. Many national universities in USA, UK, Australia, etc, allow studies in higher education for foreign students in their countries and through correspondence courses as well. In the same way Indian universities of world class education can also offer courses of studies to foreign students taking advantage of the globalization process. In the way to compete globally in the 21st century, Indian 'Higher Education' system should adopt certain benchmarking techniques for improving instruction models and administrative procedures in universities/ colleges to move forward. India needs a thorough study and evaluation of models implemented elsewhere and work out strategies to adopt such models in education system. India is yet to establish world class research facilities, recruiting profound academicians in universities/ colleges/ research institutions etc. to sustain and forge lead in economic development. It is important to understand that countries like China, Singapore, South Korea, etc. are moving fast in investing in education system.

Therefore, it is imperative that our educational institutions are equipped with the desired quality and standards which are essentials for transforming the younger workforce into productive ones. Needless to reiterate that in the higher education system focus on use of technology for effective learning by students also need to be encouraged to have cutting edge over the competitors in the globalized world.

Ethics in Education

Ethics plays a very important role in Education. *Ethics* are interpreted as the discipline of dealing with good and bad with commitment and moral duty. Ethics are well-established levels that make the measures right and wrong. It is classified as unique values such as integrity and discipline, Honesty amid others and applies them in daily routines. Ethics impacts the behavior and permit an individual to make the right options. To manage life and act responsibly is very hard without ethics. The significance of ethics cannot be disregarded in any level of life it's important that they are practiced in the area of Education.

Ethics in Education are important because they assist to run the system smoothly. The Ethics sets the standards of what's acceptable and what's not, therefore, protecting the Interest of both teachers and students. The *Ethics in Education* has been offered a lot of significance over the years and institutions are creating courses that assist students to understand these ethics. *Ethics in Education* are accessible to both the teachers and the students. It's the teacher's duty to make the students aware of the ethics. The school management frequently takes it upon them to acquaint the teacher with the ethics that apply to their profession.

Ethics in Education is appraised as the segment of the human right to Education. The motive of ethical education is not directly learning ethics for its purpose. Its objective is to deploy this body of knowledge for two motives. The first motive is to grow intellectual dimensions that will authorize peoples to recognize ethical dimensions of issues and address ethical issues in the field as various as medicines, economics and policy amid others. The second purpose of ethical education is important to develop critical thinking skills, intentional

on one's purposes, particularly the ability to reflect and the theoretical and practical effect of personal and collective human actions.

Nowadays, ethics has an essential place in all fields of life. Education is also a basic method of human life. So in education ethics has a very vital and productive role. To become a better citizen, ethics should be put as a way in the educational system. Ethics has also become essential in Education, as Education is a fundamental method of human life. Ethics is a very vital subject in Education. In order to understand the significance of ethics, it is essential to put ethics in the educational system.

Ethics is the most essential and functioning branch of philosophy in today's world. Ethics are an important part of the decision-making but students are not taught to think ethically. Students do not understand about ethics. Even they do not understand the difference between ethics and morals. To see it is a better idea to teach ethics to students we require looking at the students. Maybe the morality of students understands ethics and therefore do not need to be taught. Ethics in Education is a broad term for learning experiences and deliberate to help students grow ethically, whether in terms of expanded ethical awareness and understanding or greater motivation to act ethically in the globalized world.

Impact of privatization in Higher Education

Since the past few decades, Indian economy has undergone consequential policy alteration and introduced a new model of economic reforms, commonly known as LPG i.e. Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization. This set of reforms was brought in to help India grow better and communize with the other bigger economies of the world. Out of all, Privatization has brought about breakneck changes in the educational sector, which has impacted our society in both positive and negative ways. Privatization has enabled the private parties such as individual organizations, religious institutions and other non government bodies to acquire the education industry and encourage them to accommodate to the growing demand of education across the country. There is no denying to the fact that privatization has provided a whole new dimension to the education sector and also it has lifted our literacy rate from 48.2% in 1991 to 71.96% in 2015.

Positive Impact of Privatization in Higher Education

1. **To provide of quality education:** Better quality higher education can be provided by private sector. We know, government is facing acute shortage of funds and grants for higher education. On the other hand, demand of higher education is increasing. Then only feasible way is privatization of education.
2. **Reduce distance of educational institutions:** Privatization of higher education increases the number of educational institutions in rural and urban areas. So, the distance is decreased between educational institutions and residential place of students.
3. **Relief of financial burden:** Privatization of higher education decreases the financial burden of state and the central governments on higher education.
4. **Easy access to high education:** To get higher education has become easy due to privatization number of educational institutions, that is, colleges and universities are increased. Again, different methods of communications are developed so that teaching and learning process can be done anywhere and anytime.
5. **Fulfilling the need of the country in LPG:** Private sector is very sensitive for any change which has occurred and for any change which is likely to be occurred. According to change and want of time, it changes itself so as to suit the prevailing situations because private sector is very flexible. With the changes in demand and necessities of society in respect of education changes, private sector education institutions are fully equipped to fulfill such demands and necessities of society. Such demands and necessities cannot be fulfilled by public sector education institutions, as they work according to rigid rules and states and so they themselves are rigid.
6. **Shaping the curriculum in accordance to global, national and local needs:** Privatization of Higher Education will definitely expose the students and teachers to international education standards and thereby throwing better opportunities for employment on a global basis as well as national and local basis. It also will lead to greater reach to rural areas through the online education systems in the long run. The teachers are of the opinion that though higher salaries may be the norm in the short period but in the long run it will stabilize and rationalize.

7. **Free from political intervention:** Private sectors are almost independent of political interventions. According to Honorable Supreme Court, unaided professional institutes are autonomous in their administration and decisions. But they have to follow necessary guidelines notified by regulating agencies regarding admission, examination, recruitment of staff etc.
8. **Competition:** Privatization of higher education brings about radical structural changes providing momentum in the competitive sector
9. **Join any course irrespective of merit:** Privatization not only increase the number of higher education institutions but also helps the students to join any courses irrespective of their merits. So, administration is made according to their fiscal capacity not on intellectual ability. This is the present status in most of the private educational institutions in the Indian society.
10. **Better employment:** Privatization of higher education causes the generation of employment opportunities to the graduates, post- graduates, researcher and trainees in different fields. Generation of employment and income opportunities to educated youth is positive impact of privatization of higher education in the Indian labour market.

Negative Impact of Privatization in Higher Education

Privatization has also negative impacts on higher education and society

1. **Education Becomes Business:** At higher education level, Mushroom Colleges have grown rapidly. Such colleges are becoming the center for selling degrees. After paying money, they need not attend the classes. Such institutions are more in professional courses like Engineering, Pharmacy, Education and Management courses. Due to this, employers get low wages. So, government should check these kinds of colleges in control.
2. **Poor Faculty:** The main object behind privatization of higher education is said to be quality improvement, this object is not fulfilled. In majority of educational institutions quality compromise is observed. Their staff is not properly qualified and provides services for fewer sums. By using such staff such institutions earn considerable amount of profit but in return do not provide better quality education.
3. **Inadequate infrastructure:** The infrastructure facilities in the self-financed college and university are inadequate and poor. Most of the colleges do not have buildings, especially for staff and library, no proper classroom, no technological devices etc. Moreover, basic facilities such as drinking water, hygienic toilet and equipped laboratories are not available in many colleges which affect the learning environment and other related objects
4. **High Cost of Education:** In higher education the privatization always increases the cost of education. The authority collects different fees to increase its income. This situation is beyond the fixed capacity of poor and middle-class income groups.
5. **Capitation fees:** Capitation fee refers to an illegal transaction whereby an institution that provides educational services collects a fee that is more than what is approved by regulatory norms. In the context of Indian Law, a capitation fee refers to the collection of payment by educational bodies not included in the prospectus of the institution, usually in exchange for admission to the institution.
6. **Lack of transparency:** There is lack of transparency in private sector and stakeholders don't get the complete information about the functionality of the enterprise.
7. **Violation of right to education:** Privatization of higher education has resulted into violation of right to education. It has created a big problem in our country.
8. **Disparity in access to higher education:** There are four kinds of disparity in higher education are visible in India: gender disparity, geographical disparity, minority-majority based disparity, and disparity based on economic class. The above-mentioned disparities in access to privatization of higher education.
9. **Focus on quantity:** Private sectors have their focus on quantity and not on quality. This is the reason that quality of higher education is degrading. It is justified that due to the privatization, number of private professional institutes has increased and it is no doubt required to cope up with growing needs but this has been at the cost of quality.

- 10. Lack of Quality Education but restless work:** The private educational institutions do not provide education of better quality. Here one thing which is to be noted that right to education flows directly from right to life under article 21, and right to life means right to live life of better quality and with dignity. So, this quality compromise in private educational institution is violating right to education.
- 11. Exploitation:** Private institutions also exploit the teachers and professors by paying those amounts which are not according to the amount specified by regulating agencies like UGC etc. This may lead to slackening in the efforts of teachers and professors and may finally result in the fall of standard of education.

Conclusion

The private initiative in education, especially higher education is not new to India. Some of the leading universities like Banaras Hindu University and Aligarh Muslim University came up with the efforts, dedication and financial support of community. Since 1990's, trend towards privatization has been on a large scale. Providing free and compulsory education to all is a basic duty of government and it cannot be neglected. Government has to invest more and more funds in development of primary education. A huge cut in expenditure on higher education by government is the direct outcome. It doesn't mean that higher education is not important. Government cannot absolve its responsibility of regulating private institutes. So, some regulating agencies have to be formed which assure quality and transparency and prevent profiteering. There is an emergence need to regulate quality but not growth of supply. There is also a fact that private investors would not run an institute at a loss. If a private sector educational institute cannot at least recover its costs, it would be closed down. At the least, private institutions must be allowed to be commercial i.e., they must be allowed to break-even or make a small fair profit. If they are allowed to do so transparently, there would be no need to disguise their profit and the institute will not compromise with quality. To ensure access to higher education for the weaker section of society, government has to increase public expenditure on higher education. On the whole, an improvement in the standards of education could be achieved through a balanced relationship between public and private sector. Although there are many drawbacks of privatization of higher education in India, it is sure to improve the present educational system.

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