

A Demand of Value Based Higher Education System in India: A Comparative Study

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Abstract:

Higher education system is essential for national, social and economic development of the country. There is a need of value based higher education system which empowers youth for self sustainability by inculcating employment skills and hence reducing poverty. India's higher education system is the third largest in the world. This paper includes the comparative study of components of value based higher education system of six countries - UK, China, USA, Australia, Brazil and South Africa with India.

INTRODUCTION

The rising demand for higher education is represented by an increase from 100.8 million tertiary students worldwide in 2000 to 152.5 million in 2007. The higher education sector has undergone major changes throughout the world which led to increased competition for institutions in this sector (Kirp, 2003; Maringe and Gibbs, 2009). According to UNESCO, "higher education is no longer a luxury; it is essential to national, social and economic development". The quest to achieve Education for All (EFA) is fundamentally about assuring that children, youth and adults gain the knowledge and skills they need to better their lives and to play a role in building more peaceful and equitable societies. This is why focusing on quality is an imperative for achieving EFA. As many societies strive to universalize basic education, they face the momentous challenge of providing conditions where genuine learning can take place for each and every learner. Quality must be seen in light of how societies define the purpose of education (EFA Global Monitoring Report, 2005). Quality improves the value of education. So there is a lot of importance nowadays to increase the value of education. In this paper, a trial was made to explain the demand of value in higher education in India. The six goals adopted at the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal, in April 2000, implicitly or explicitly integrate a quality dimension. The goals are early childhood care and education, universal primary education, youth and adult learning, literacy, gender and quality. Countries that are farthest from achieving goals 1 to 5 are also farthest from achieving goal. The broad objective of education is to create a sizeable population of such educated men and women who could understand the world well enough and are able to bring about a change leading to adequate health and education services, a better environment, and elimination of ignorance and deprivation (limitations), which continue to strangle the developing societies. The policy, therefore adhering to the principles of equity, quality and efficiency place added emphasis on the education of the people, who are under-privileged and live in misery (Rao, 2004)¹. In the next few decades, India will probably have the world's largest set of young people. Even as other countries begin to age, India will remain a country of young people. If the proportion of working population to total population increases, that should be reflected in a sharp increase in the country's savings rate. And if India can find productive job opportunities for working population, that would give India a big opportunity to leapfrog in the race for social and economic development and as a result growth rates would go up. China and other countries of South East Asia face the phenomenon of ageing population and India is an exception to this rule.

Therefore, it might be India's opportunity to leapfrog in the race for social and economic development. India's youth can be an asset only if there is an investment in their capabilities. A knowledge-driven generation² will be an asset. If denied this investment, it will become a social and economic liability. Hence, there must be an investment in building the knowledge base of coming generations (Manmohan, 2005)³. Hence there is a requirement of value-based higher education system. India has, today, more than 250 Universities, and many more Research and Development units, and professional colleges and institutions. India has the world's largest chain of publicly funded R&D institutions. On an average, more than 350, 000 engineers and 5,000 Ph.D. scholars graduate from Indian Universities and Colleges every year. With such a vast pool of qualified, English-speaking scientific and technological manpower, India must have the ambition to become a large base of research and a centre for development activity.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To find the factors that helps in creation of value-based higher education.
2. To compare India's higher education with six different countries taken from different continents of the world. These countries are US, UK, Australia, China, Brazil and South-Africa.
3. To give suggestions for improving India's higher education system.

METHODOLOGY

In this paper, the research was based on secondary data taken from different research reports, journals and research papers. The research was based on the comparative study of components of value based higher education of six countries: United States, United Kingdom, Australia, China, South-Africa and Brazil.

The rapid expansion of higher education in India has been at the cost of its quality, in that quality varies with institutions. There are three agencies that evaluate the quality of institutions and programmes. These agencies are evaluated through an external quality assurance in the country. These are the National Assessment⁶ and Accreditation Council (NAAC) to accredit institutions of higher education, the National Board of Accreditation (NBA) to accredit programmes in engineering and related areas, and Accreditation⁷ which does not protect student from fraud and abuse. Public awareness is very low in India. In India, there is no system of collection and compilation of statistical information on higher education in the country. The Ministry of Human Resource Development of the Central government delegated this responsibility to University Grant Commission (UGC). However, University Grant Commission (UGC) has failed to do so (Agarwal, 2006) .

NEED FOR VALUE BASED INDIAN HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

In the socio-economic development of a nation, human capital has a very crucial role. So, there is a need of investment in education In India, education, particularly higher education, is mostly owned by the public sector.

Hence, the role of the State is very important in making literacy levels high. Private sector role is also increasingly becoming important because of wrong kind of state intervention or too little state intervention. About 0.37% of GDP¹² is spent on higher education in India and this is also falling in recent years. Therefore, education in developed countries, have been able to have "market complementary arrangements"¹³ rather than "market excluding arrangements"¹⁴ which will result into widespread literacy levels (Government of India, 2007). The government of India has pursued a five-fold strategy following the recommendations of the NPE¹⁵

Faculty

Shortage of quality faculty is one of the main problems affecting higher education in India today. Teacher shortages often occur due to non availability of suitably qualified people. Further, the academic profession has seen a steady decline in popularity – as a result of lack of incentives and more lucrative opportunities in other professions. Apart from increasing compensation of teachers, there is also a need to introduce performance based incentives in order to ensure teaching of superior quality

Funding

Public expenditure (Centre and States) on education is only around 3.6% of GDP. Government funding of higher education is still below 1% of GDP. The percentage expenditure on University and Higher Education to GDP, which was 0.77% in 1990 to 1991 showed a gradual decrease to 0.66% in 2004 to 2005. Various committees have unanimously recommended that state funding should be increased to 6%. While the Central Advisory Board for Education (CABE) recommends spending 1%

for higher education and 0.5% for technical education, the proportions in 2004 to 2005 are 0.34% for higher education and 0.03% for technical education. India also has one of the lowest public expenditure on higher education per student at 406 US Dollars.

The GCI captures this open-ended dimension by providing a weighted average of many different components, each of which reflects one aspect of the complex concept that is competitiveness. The Global Economic Forum groups these components into ‘12 pillars of competitiveness’:

1. Institutions.
2. Infrastructure.
3. Health and primary education.
4. Macroeconomic stability.
5. Higher education and training.
6. Goods market efficiency.
7. Labor market efficiency.
8. Financial market sophistication.
9. Technological readiness.
10. Market size.
11. Business sophistication.
12. Innovation.

SUGGESTIONS

- A. India has to improve on all factors which affect value of higher education system by setting committees or organizations so that they can keep track and improve on these factors. Thus, the suggestions of these committees and organizations must be implemented.
- B. India has to take better steps to improve gross enrolment ratio by increasing public spending on
- C. education.
- D. Government can also work towards provision of free education to all till graduation.
- E. Government must take steps to improve the number of inbound mobile students by increasing the public spending on programmes or participation in international fairs.

Conclusion

Education for all cannot be achieved without improving quality and hence value. In many parts of the world, a manenormous gap persists between the numbers of students graduating from school and those among

them who master a minimum set of cognitive skills. Any policy aimed at pushing net enrolments towards 100% must also assure decent learning conditions and opportunities.

Lessons can be drawn from countries that have successfully addressed this dual challenge. Better education contributes to higher lifetime earnings and more robust national economic growth and help individuals on other matters that are important to their welfare. International achievement tests reveal that socio-economic status has a strong influence on levels of education outcomes. Two principles characterize most attempts to define quality in education: the first identifies learners' cognitive development as the major explicit objective of all education systems. Accordingly, the success with which systems achieve this is one indicator of their quality. The second emphasizes education's role in promoting values and attitudes of responsible citizenship and in nurturing creative and emotional development. The dual challenge of improving quality and expanding access in an equitable way requires a level of sustained investment that is currently beyond the reach of countries.

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