

Participation of Private Sector in Higher Education: A Bird's Eye View



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Abstract

The present scenario of higher education consists of public sector participation alongwith giant private player. With the advancement of Indian society a need of privatization of different sector seems to be necessary to cope with the pace of changing international environment. As a result government of India ministry of human resource development recognized need of private participation in higher education in India alongwith government institution. After allowing private players in higher education Government of India permitted them to open private self resource generated institution to cater the need of imparting higher education to youth of India and thereby generation of direct and indirect employment opportunities in education field as well. A n number of self finance higher institution colleges, universities and stand alone institution were opened in the diverse field of professional education like Medical, engineering, management, architecture alongwith traditional course like arts, commerce, science and education. These institutions with world class infrastructure, skyscraper building, lush green environment attracts the students but least consideration is given on the back bone of this sector i.e. teaching faculty members and other non teaching staff. As a result institutions have to face high teacher turnover ratio followed by high student dropout rate problem. Therefore it is high time to reconsider and reconstruct the governing policies of self resource generated educational institute at internal as well as government level.

Keywords: Privatization, Professional Institutions, Quality Education, Social Transformation, Infrastructure, Stakeholders, Internal Environment.

Introduction

The wave of liberalization, globalization and privatization policies have brought drastic change in the concept of higher education system. Globalization leads to competition, competition based on quality and price. Now the education is not at all considered as free service for society but it is now a marketable commodity just like other goods and services. The consumers are induced to opt for new products much before the life times of the older products. In the market oriented scenario, educational institutions have to face a lot of competition from other education providers both domestic and foreign as well. To face these competitions higher education system is bound to follow the marketing principles while upholding the core values of education like national development, international standard, value system, equity and quality. Prior to independence the growth of institutions of higher education in India was very slow and areas of discipline were also less diverse. For example, in 1946-47, there were only 17 Universities, 496 colleges and student enrolment was 2, 37,546 (New Frontiers in Education, April-June-2004). After independence the main thrust of Higher Education in India was to provide educational opportunities to maximum number of students. As a result there has been a significant increase in the number of Higher Education Institutions in India. At present there is more than 993university level institutions i.e. the Institutions which are empowered to award degree under some act of parliament or state legislature and about 39931 colleges which are not empowered to provide degree in its own name and therefore are affiliated/recognized with any state University and 10725 stand alone institutions that are not affiliated with any Universities and are not empowered to provide degree they run Diploma Level Programme. Such Institutions have been covered the technical Institutes such as Polytechnics recognized by AICTE/State Directorate of technical education, post graduate diploma in management recognized by AICTE. Teachers' Training programme such as District Institute of Education and Training

recognized by National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE), nursing institutes recognized by Indian Nursing Council/State Nursing Council, Institutes directly under the control of various Central Ministries, paramedical Institutes as recognized by Paramedical Council, hotel management & catering institute recognized by National Council for Hotel Management & Catering Technology in India (AISHE 2018-19). Among the major states in Andhra Pradesh private unaided colleges constitutes about 82% followed by Telangana 80% and Uttar Pradesh 78% Tamil Nadu 77% of total available higher education institutions in respective states (AISHE 2018-19). Indian Higher Education System is the third largest in the world behind the USA and China. The recent developments in transport and communication technologies have indeed shrunk the world into a global village. Not only trade and commerce have become globalized but also education, employment, entertainment and indeed everything has got globalized.

Aim of the Study

Present paper is a humble attempt to search the area of challenges of self financed higher education institution and there by suggest the means and ways to face these challenges and overcome them.

Private Higher Education Sector in Present Scenario

Increased purchasing power with citizen of nation, introduction of new course to cater the need of industrial market, deteriorating standard in public sector universities and the inability of public institutions to absorb the increasing demand have led to the establishment of numerous private universities and other professional Institutions. The situation in India has shown rapidly changing as more and more institutions are getting recognition from government and the private sector is moving up in the academic hierarchy by establishing comprehensive institutions. India has a large majority of under graduate students at private institute. The private institutions are basically of two types: Privately managed and receiving a significant part of their funds from government, familiarly known as government aided colleges and privately managed and funded college popularly known as "self financing colleges" which have emerged as a recent phenomenon. In the late seventies the government was in financial crisis, found it difficult to provide additional funds for the survival of higher education. In the wake of liberalization policies during nineties participation of private and voluntary institutions was allowed to set up higher educational institutions on self finance basis. Today, nearly three-fourth of the colleges affiliated to universities is established under the control of private sector and/or non-government organizations and most of them are unaided or self supporting institutions. Most of such institutions were in southern part of India like Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. In Tamil Nadu self financing colleges have outnumbered private-aided and government colleges. The private sector does, however, enroll a higher proportion of graduate and professional students. Today, the

southern states are imparting quality education and are proving themselves as a model of higher education centre in India.

Management of Faculty In Private Sector institutions

Prior to independence institutions were established as a center of education to promote the spirituality and integrity. The usual orientation of private initiative and private funding was only social transformation and leadership rather than monetary gains. Now the socio-economic environment is completely changed. Now the private initiative is normally restricted to market oriented courses which are not a wrong offering because it is the need of the hour, but in doing so they charge very high fees. Management is not much concerned with employing and retaining good faculty members that is the backbone of any educational institute. In fact the faculty is responsible for generating academic spirit and giving shape to the institute. Sen Committee, Malhotra Committee and Rastogi Committee which were established in 1973, 1986 and 1997 respectively strongly emphasized the critical role of teachers in maintaining and improving the standard of higher education. The teacher having similar qualification should have a similar scale of pay, service conditions and working environment as it is given to government and grant in aid teachers that enable the teachers to contribute in educational development followed by national development. These conditions help to enlighten the spirit of dedication to the teaching profession.

Recent View of Private Institutions

Most of the self financing colleges are not adhering to the norms issued by their approving authority viz UGC/AICTE in terms of pay structure, service conditions and working environment regarding their staff. Most of the institutions are paying a fix emolument which is quite low to fulfill their basic need of bread butter. There is no question arises regarding pay salary as per 6th or 7th pay commission recommendation or fulfilling any other Government Order (GO) regarding distribution of salary to staff with a few exception of some engineering and professional colleges. The pay structure and service condition in most of the self finance institutions is inhuman and exploitative in nature because the main motto of owner is profit maximisation and thereby wealth maximisation. They treat these institutions as an industry rather than a noble act for society. This situation is too alarming in self finance courses running in the private aided/self financing colleges. Most of the institutions are running as training centers for newly appointed and inexperienced faculty members as bright and qualified person who do not prefer to stay for a long time in these institutions under such discontented working environment. They are switching over to the other institutions for better salary and opportunities for their personal growth. It is difficult for a teacher to contribute his/her best in the interest of institute if he is unsatisfied.

Challenges before Private Higher Education Sector

Private higher education system has become a central feature of academe in the 21st century. How to perceive the private sector and integrate it into the broader academic system in a country is a key challenge. However the private higher education sector is providing opportunities for higher education to many students who would otherwise not be able to find a place in a public institution. Even then the growth of higher education poses many challenges:

1. Most private higher education institutes set their sights mainly on their own success rather than their role in higher education system or in serving the public in a good manner. Private institutes are ignoring broad public needs.
2. Reliable information concerning private institutions' degree offering job prospects, drop-out rate are often unavailable that are potentially required to a student for seeking the admission in the college.
3. Quality assurance about maintenance of standard of teaching, admission and infrastructure are the serious problem of various academic institutions.
4. Many new private colleges rely upon part time teachers with little commitment and some time with scant qualification.
5. The effective development of cross-border program is also a challenge before higher education sector.
6. The private sector institutions are selling their products by charging heavy fees from students but not providing adequate facility as their main motto is to maximize the profit.

Conclusion-Ways ahead

Most of the private institutions have attractive building, well-equipped laboratories, beautiful gardens and lawns but do not bother for employing good faculty and retaining the same with the institute. Physical infrastructure alone does not provide the quality or standards to any institute. it requires a well qualified, dedicated, experienced staff with high boosted teaching moral and dedicated non teaching employees that can invest their full potential for the grooming of students and thereby pushing the institute at the peak.but unfortunately lacking of these fundamental requirements a number of institutions imparting professional courses i.e. BBA, B.Tech, MBA, M.tech has discontinue and surrender their courses to the concerned approving authority, because "customer satisfaction starts with Employee's satisfaction" and only the satisfied staff can do a favourable mouth advertisement for its organization which is more effective to any other media of advertisement. A satisfied employee always speaks a high for his work place. An educational institution can become a centre of excellence only through the concerted and collective efforts of all the stakeholders' viz. government, principal, teachers, students, non-teaching staff, parents and alumni. A viable effort on the part of Universities, Apex bodies for higher education and ministry of Human Resources Department (MHRD) is very necessary to put in place

formal mechanism for monitoring the internal environment of self financing institutions and that would be helpful in enhancing the image of the teaching profession and higher education of India at global level.

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