

Issues and Challenges in Stakeholders in Implementation of RUSA: An Empirical Study

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RUSA is government-initiated scheme which was launched in the year 2013 for providing funds to the universities and colleges owned by the state (Kumar & Joshi, 2017). The central government allocates fund for the general states in the country. The government also provides funds for the union territories and other special territories for the education in those areas. The funding is dependent on the general procedure and outcome of the territories. The structure of flow of funds begins from the center and reaches the institutions after passing from the union and state administrative areas. The higher education receives its funding from the states by critically appraising the education plans. These plans would talk about the quality, equality, and overall excellence in providing higher education to students. This paper gives a view of the challenges encountered by stakeholders while implementing RUSA. The study highlights the issues faced in the process of funding states for higher education. Sample of 167 respondents was collected from respondents through, a "standard questionnaire," which was created on five-point interval scale.

Keywords RUSA, challenges, stakeholders, higher education, issues, GER.

Introduction

The RUSA scheme is initiated to gain excellence in the education system and attain a higher level of responsiveness from people. The ministry responsible for implementing RUSA is MHRD. This scheme is centrally sponsored. The scheme is supposed to be monitored and evaluated for finding the loopholes in the higher education system for future scope of improvement. The main principle of RUSA is improving the GER by 2020 up to 30% (Hartiwi et al., 2020). RUSA or "Rastriya Uchhatar Shiksha Abhiyan" is a scheme which is divided into two parts of the twelfth and thirteenth five-year plans (Singh & Devi, 2014). RUSA is specially developed for higher education system prevalent in the institutions.

The scheme is working towards imparting higher education to those who are deprived of the necessities, they too deserve an equal share of education and hence government is taking initiatives in providing fair education facilities to the disadvantaged groups. The administrative bodies of the states and center are arranging for resources to meet the needs of students to gain new skills for coping with the education standards in the current era. The scheme would enable the management of the colleges to renovate the autonomous colleges which are currently existing and establishing new colleges and higher education institutes in the process (Hossain & Mondal, 2019).

The scheme has helped in creating new degree institutions and various professional institutes by facilitating them with adequate resources and support to build the eminent institutions. RUSA also consists of several programs which are meant for leadership development, improvement of administration, support for recruitment of faculty and staff and so on. The Polytechnics scheme was incorporated with the RUSA scheme for better modification and development of skills of the students. RUSA has also initiated in combining the higher education along with vocational training to facilitate the students in empowering them with better skills in the competitive world (Mehrotra, 2016). Apart from this RUSA is also responsible in reforming the educational institutes in various ways, for instance the capacity of the colleges is increased, and the buildings are restructured to incorporate a greater number of students in higher education. The infrastructure development of educational institutes also come under the scheme of RUSA.

"State Higher Education Councils" must be set up and executed with due alert to try not to cover of liabilities with other such groups previously working in the states to keep away from disarray and turbulent circumstance inconvenient to accomplishing targets of the plan. Still significant are numerous other complex and difficult issues such as, non-accessibility of qualified personnel for teaching, conquering the unbending mentality, infrastructure development, preparing and training the faculty

already existing in the schools and colleges which it is hard to track down the solution in the document concerning how RUSA will tackle with these problems.

Review of Literature

The education system, especially the higher education in the nation is a symbol of development in the global scenario. Any country is recognized with the level of education and its quality provided to its students. Transformation in any form in a nation requires better education system that has the power to bring critical changes in a place. The only key to erase identifiable loopholes is through the means of education. It has the capability to erase different issues with respect to accessibility, values, development, and quality of knowledge transformed from one generation to another. The developmental programs cater to the need of students in expressing their point of view in reference to the society and in writing or grasping important lessons in professional and personal life. This an added advantage to students to create a better society with full understanding about the society, community, and world at large with the knowledge they have gained in their entire academic life.

The education imparted to students enriches them and their lifestyles. The education system for higher classes in India comes in the third position after US and China (Crawford et al., 2020). The administrative body which takes decisions with regards to the Education system in India is UGC, which formulates policies and controls the implementation and evaluation of the central and state education institutions. It bridges the gap between the center and state education system.

Many realistic issues arise while managing higher education system. The most common ones are management and accountability of the processes, the funding, relevance and equity and the policies which are restructured for purposely emphasizing on ethics and values in the education system. The critical processes of accreditation with universities are also listed under the RUSA scheme. These typical challenges are of great importance because they help to build a very strong knowledge and power-based society. The biggest challenge faced by education sector is of facilitating students of all the levels the best quality of education because ultimately, they would be shaping the future of the nation and the world at large.

The number of students is increasing rapidly and to provide equal opportunities to all of them remains an undaunted task. Education is a means to correct the kind of social disturbances and imbalances by giving a chance to youth for creating benchmarks of international standards. The RUSA scheme received its approval from the highest authority of education known as "Central Advisory Board on Education (CABE)" (Wadia & Shamsu, 2020). The scheme was implemented at the first place to deal with higher efficiency in the higher education system. The scheme would investigate matters of education and its infrastructure as well as the resources associated with it for better responsiveness.

The RUSA scheme is an umbrella term which incorporates all the other small initiatives with respect to higher education in the states. RUSA works with the agenda of distributing funds to state owned institutions for developmental needs of the higher education sector. The "State Higher Education Plans" appraises and approves the financial assistance to certain institutes for better delivery of education. However, another body named SHEC must plan and evaluate along with other functions. The funding would be proportionately distributed in different ratios with respect to the states in separate directions and union territories as well. RUSA has a well-planned objectives list which entails functions like interventions of educational programs focusing on programs for development of education and provide equal access of education to everyone.

The scheme takes into consideration recruitment of full time and part time faculties and their training programs in the due course of service in education industry (Das, 2014). The challenges which are posed in maintaining the education system intact are faculty related issues. Therefore, to have a pipeline of best teachers, there must be new vacancies coming up along with filling up those vacancies in due time. The faculty needs to be trained with the required skillsets which are prevalent in the current situation to deal with educational problems. The two major aspects of higher education are quality control and supports. They are known as two central point of value the in the board of higher education. An author concentrated on the significant wellsprings of tracking down higher education system. He reasons that for government owned organization government acceptor and for private establishment gift, charges and pay from enrichment structure are the primary types of revenue.

The author mentions that the public administration-based institutions receive its funds from the government whereas the private colleges and universities get its funding from several donations, student's fees and the income generated from sponsorship of big

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organizations. There is a dire need to implement evaluation, rationalization, coordination among public and private institutes, equity, and research in the higher education system (Donina et al., 2015). These programs are helpful in strengthening the trust of students and maintain a healthy partnership. One eminent author has remarkably pointed out the fact that students who receive their higher education are the pertinent tools to maintain social harmony and justice in the community with their knowledge and leadership. Thus, higher education plays a huge role in shaping the future of any nation.

A researcher evidently pointed out that human values are enriched by the quality of higher education predominant in an area. It helps in creating a value based and democratic society where views of every individual is taken into consideration. Even in the most deprived places education has played a key role. The countries had faced a major setback during the recession in the year 2008 (Levitsky & Way, 2015). However, higher education had significantly uplifted the position of several countries during this period. There are various issues that rise in the system of higher education. Even though there have been several reforms pertaining to higher education the current calls regarding the position of higher education in the nation has hit the nerve and might call for a fundamental change. The purpose of this reform is to throw some light on the objective of higher education and the responsibility of the colleges or universities in the current scenario and focus on learning methods of individuals.

The concern is to develop a new kind of environment where a greater number of highly educated and skilled people come forward for building an excellent economy and implement the policies on the ground level, which are formulated on paper. The aim is to build the capability in individuals while focusing on research and quality education. This can transform the developing nations into fully developed countries. Especially in a country like India where the GER ratio was 13.5 in terms of higher education, whereas countries like US and China have a whopping number of 81.6% and 22.1% respectively (SHARMA, 2014).

The policies must focus on such programs which brings out a large population of students from economically and socially weaker sections of the society to avail a good quality higher education. The opportunity to grab a good education is only accessible to a very less population. Therefore, government initiatives must consider the loopholes in the private higher education institutions to create opportunities for individuals in places that are important in strengthening nation's competitiveness in the world. The amount of money invested in higher education by public administrative bodies must also be increased subsequently.

The advisory board National Knowledge Commission (NKC) has advised the expansion or inclusion of more institutions under the umbrella of higher education for a greater number of enrollments in those institutions (LAXMAN & HAGARGI, 2015). It is a challenging task as the accountability of institutions and autonomous colleges and universities have their own set of policies and procedures. It is important to make schemes which are inclusive of the public, private and autonomous institutions. RUSA is such a scheme which considers the key aspects of higher education and promises to bring the changes in the system. Expansion of institutions have solved many problems but at the same time brought in many challenges as well.

One of the most common issues prevailing in the higher education system is the rural urban divide. The colleges and universities in the rural areas are very less compared to the urban areas and this difference is giving rise to an unproportionate GER. It is recorded that in a certain year, the GER in rural year accounted to be 13% and it was 24% in the urban areas with a 19% national average. The rural population is still vast and entails around 68% of the entire population (Guan et al., 2018). This huge number also demands a greater GER and must not be avoided.

Another important issue in the higher education is Gender Disparity. The estimated number of women in higher education is around 15.8% whereas that of men is 22.8% (Mitra, 2015). The faculties also see a somewhat similar number. The men are enrolled more than the females. The inadequate infrastructure in educational institutes is a problem when there is mass expansion in the institutions. With larger participation, there is a need to include more infrastructure to support the students in availing education. The poor infrastructure is the reason behind lesser employability and poor results in terms of quality higher education. The students need to be well-trained before they start their journey in service. The industrial training has a lot of weightages in the higher education. The industry curriculum must be ingrained in the minds of students for using their skills in the development of industries. Since the number of enrollments are increasing in the higher educational institutions, the faculty must also be in line with the teaching curriculum. More teachers are required to deal with the

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enrolled students. They are the facilitators of good quality education. Henceforth, being the necessity in the education industry.

The RUSA plan has included significant perspectives, yet its execution and adequacy will unquestionably be a difficult process altogether (Anandakrishnan, 2015). There will be significant change in the sponsorship style. Until now the University Grants Commission, the funds that have been allocated will be transferred through state legislatures. States need to give their share of contribution to get the funds from the center. It will to a great extent rely on the need of the state legislatures to add their own funds which isn't liberated from misgivings from many asset states which are devoid of funds and are running under immense obligation. Indeed, even the redirection of funds given by the center is normal, and if this happens it shall be an extraordinary difficulty to the higher education framework which is as of now under pressure.

Objectives

1. To identify the issues in implementation of RUSA.
2. To know about the challenges faced in implementation of RUSA.

Methodology

The study is empirical in nature. 167 respondents participated in the study. The data was collected from them through a structured questionnaire. Mean and t-test application was done to identify the results. The method of sampling was convenience sampling.

Finding of the study

Table 1 displays the gender, where male respondent is 57.48%, and female respondent is 42.51%. The age of the respondents were 22 and 25 years are 28.14%, those between the Ages of 25 to 28 years are 36.53%, and one who are 28 years & above are 35.33%. Looking at the Staff, Administrative staff is 30.54%, teaching staff 41.32%, and Management staff is 28.14%. With reference to the Areas, respondents in rural areas are, 46.11%, and Urban areas is 53.89%.

Table1
Respondent's Details

Variables	Number of respondent	%age
Gender		
Male	96	57.48%
Female	71	42.51%
Total	167	100%
Age		
22 to 25 years	47	28.14%
25 to 28 years	61	36.53%
28 years & above	59	35.33%
Total	167	100%
Staff		
Administrative staff	51	30.54%
Teaching staff	69	41.32%
Management staff	47	28.14%
Total	167	100%
Areas		
Rural areas	77	46.11%
Urban areas	90	53.89%

Total	167	100%
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Table2
Issues & Challenges in implementation of RUSA

Sr. No.	Statements	Mean Value	t-Value	Sig.
1.	Availability and accessibility of qualified personnel for teaching is a challenge	4.22	17.14	0.000
2.	Administrative issues in implementation of RUSA	4.31	15.26	0.000
3.	Lack of smooth and fast communication among institutes involved in RUSA	4.14	14.99	0.000
4.	It is hard to prepare and train the faculty who are already hired in higher education system for teaching	4.19	14.90	0.000
5.	One of the issue is management and accountability of the processes in implementation of RUSA	4.37	15.52	0.000
6.	There is a resistance to change in institutions and their human resources	4.07	15.03	0.000
7.	A difference in quality of institutions and enrolment between rural and urban areas is an issue	4.30	15.14	0.000
8.	Lack of clear regulatory framework for private sector participation in higher education	4.29	16.96	0.000
9.	Gender inequality is another challenge	4.00	12.52	0.000
10.	Very few institutes get regularly accredited	4.10	12.46	0.000

Table 2 displays the Mean values for statement with reference to the "Issues & Challenges in implementation of RUSA," Looking at the issues and challenges, the highest mean score of 4.37 is for the statement "One of the issue is management and accountability of the processes in implementation of RUSA." The second highest mean value of 4.31 is about the "Administrative issues in implementation of RUSA," "A difference in quality of institutions and enrolment between rural and urban areas is an issue" is another issue faced in the implementation of RUSA that have scored mean value of 4.30. Statement "Lack of clear regulatory framework for private sector participation in higher education" and "Availability and accessibility of qualified personnel for teaching is a challenge" has the mean score of 4.29 and 4.22 respectively. "It is hard to prepare and train the faculty who are already hired in higher education system for teaching" has the mean value of 4.19. The statement "Lack of smooth and fast communication among institutes involved in RUSA" shows the mean score of 4.14. The statements "Very few institutes get regularly accredited" shows the mean value 4.10, "There is a resistance to change in institutions and their human resources," and Gender inequality is another challenge are the last two statements that scored the mean value of 4.07, and 4.00 respectively. T-value of all statements in context of Issues & Challenges in implementation of RUSA is significant, because t-value statements are found to be positive and significance value also less than 0.05.

Conclusion

The nature of higher education depends fundamentally on three factors namely, the human resource in the institute, infrastructural and educational facilities provided to conduct the teaching and learning sessions in the universities. Because of absence of experience and awareness, educators are showing neither positive nor negative demeanor towards this program. Henceforth state government should arrange the teachers about this program in a structured manner. They should know the advantages and disadvantages of the program. Numerous perspectives like advancement of research, sponsorship patterns, upgradation of infrastructure of schools and colleges and making universities more independent are yet ignorant by the faculty. Along these lines, it is the obligations of the UGC-HRDC to direct uncommon supplemental class or summer seminar on Rastriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan in which instructors from all streams might partake. Classes, workshops, and meetings on the above subject might be led to train and sensitize the instructors of different states. The universities will put more clarity of mind to expand GER. The regulatory authority might foster a system to screen the advancement of common work in universities and legitimate use of RUSA assets in various parts. T-test has been done to find out the outcome of the research, all the statements are found to be significant as the significant values for all statements is less than 0.05.

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