

## Higher education in India: Problems and their remedies

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Digar Singh Farswan, <sup>2</sup> Babita Rani Wasan

<sup>2</sup> H.O.D. B.Ed. Department, Devbhumi Institute of Professional Education, Lalpur, Rudrapur, Udham Singh Nagar, Uttarakhand, India

<sup>2</sup> Assistant Professor, B.Ed. Department, Devbhumi Institute of Professional Education, Lalpur, Rudrapur, Udham Singh Nagar, Uttarakhand, India

### Abstract

India is well known for its large pool of technical manpower, a fair proportion of which finds employment in developed countries, especially in the West. In order to sustain this trend, and to ensure that India does not throw away this key advantage, it is imperative that we continue to produce a critical mass of highly skilled manpower at an accelerated pace. An enabling academic and economic setting is a key factor determining the fate of our nation in the wake of the knowledge sector boom. This paper reviews the prevailing policy environment in this context to evaluate its efficacy in ensuring that India remains ahead of the curve in the knowledge sector which has been growing exponentially in recent years. We provide a brief description of some of the salient features of India's education system, especially in the context of higher education. As one is seeking to provide quality education, the process of accreditation as it exists in the country is assessed. Some indications of the level of public spending on higher education are also provided. A case is also made to highlight the need for promoting a knowledge-based economy. International experiences in managing the money that is engaged in funding higher education have been studied to derive lessons for India as a major constraint to private sector provisioning of higher education is the availability of adequate funds.

**Keywords:** India, higher education, manpower, employment, knowledge

### Introduction

Higher education means an education which is of higher standard than the general education. Higher education in our country was started as early as Vedic Age. Higher education during Vedic age meant the gurukul education after primary education. Its duration at that time was generally of 12 years. During Buddhist period also, higher education meant the education after the primary education and its duration was also generally of 12 years, but its curriculum was more extensive in comparison to Vedic period. During Muslim period, Muslim system of Education was developed in which education after primary education was termed as higher education but its duration was 8 years and its curriculum was also different.

The modern higher education in India was started by the European Christian missionaries. The first to enter India were Portuguese Christian missionaries. A long with primary education, they also established some higher education institutions in Goa, Cochin, Chaul and Bandra. The education of Latin, Portuguese, grammar, music and logic was imparted in these colleges. Of these colleges, the Jesuit college of Chaul and the St. Anne College Of Bandra were more important. But their nature was quite different from the modern higher education colleges. After these the East India Company established the Calcutta Madarsa in 1781, in Calcutta. In this madarsa, the curriculum of the Muslim higher education and the British higher education both were imparted simultaneously. In 1791, the East India Company

established the Banaras Sanskrit College in Banaras. In this college the curriculum of the Hindu higher education and the British higher education both were imparted. Thereafter, in 1800, in Calcutta, they established the Forth William College, entirely based upon the British system of Education. In this college the education of English language and literature and European science along with Indian languages, India History, Hindu and Muslim Laws was imparted. Wood Dispatch, 1854 declared to establish university in India, on the pattern of London University, London. Such University was first established in Calcutta and Bombay in 1857. The modern higher education in real sense was started in this university. The first Indian Education Commission (1882) suggested making the curriculum of higher education more extensive and diversified. In 1904 Lord Curzon got the Indian University Act passed in the Imperial Legislative Council and implemented it as law. Thereafter the Calcutta University Commission (1917) suggested organizing the education of agriculture, Law, aayurvigyan, engineering and teacher education in the universities. As a result, the nature of higher education underwent a change.

In 1948, the Governments of India appointed Radha Krishna Commission. It suggested making the first degree course of 3 Years duration. But only some provinces accepted it at that time. In 1964, the Kothari Commission was appointed. It proposed the 10+2+3 Pattern of education for the whole country. In the National Education Policy, 1968 emphasis was placed on

its implementation and the National Education Policy, 1986 made it compulsory. Therefore, higher education now starts after+2, which is divided into many categories, namely-arts, commerce, science, law, agriculture, medicine, engineering and management etc. The post-graduate education and research work is also organized in all these fields. At present, the nature, aims and curriculum of higher education are of international standard in our country.

### **Aims of Higher Education n Modern India**

The task to decide the aims for different levels of education, in India, was first of all accomplished in wood Dispatch,1854.All the education commission appointed thereafter in India continued the work of clarifying the aims for different levels of education. In 1948, the Governments of India appointed the Radha Krishna Commission. The aims, which this commission decided for higher education, may be presented as follows –

To produce such persons who are physically healthy and mentally intellectual.

To find out the hereditary qualities of persons and develop them through training.

To produce such persons who can take leadership in the field of politics, administration, vocation, industry and commerce.

To produce such persons who are statesman, intelligent and mentally superior and may contribute to social reform.

To prepare such wise citizen who can help in the expansion of knowledge, can discover new knowledge, can manage vocations and fulfill the material demand of the country and can make the democracy a success.

To prepare such youths who can preserve their cultural heritage and can further contribute to it.

To develop the character of the youths.

To develop democratic values in the youths-conservation and refinement of liberty, equality, fraternity and justice.

To develop the feeling of national discipline in the youths.

To develop the feeling of international fraternity and benevolence in the youths.

To bring about spiritual development of the youths.

Thereafter the Kothari Commission 1964-66 expressed these aims proposed by Radha Krishnan Commission in somewhat abridged form. In the National Education Policy, 1986 it is stated that the higher education is a means to achieve higher knowledge, to discover new knowledge, to prepare specialists for different fields of the nation, to develop broad attitude among youths and an all –rounds development of the nation. At present, these are the aims of higher education in India. These aims may be presented as follows-

1. To provide higher knowledge to the youths and to endow them with the ability to discover new knowledge and to identify truth.
2. To prepare specialists administrators, organizers, doctors, advocates, scientists, engineers and technicians for different field of nation.
3. To develop among youths the ability to provide leadership and the proficiency to work in different fields of life.

4. To develop broad attitude among the youths; for instance-social equality, culture and religious tolerance and international understanding.

5. To prepare youths for an all-round development of the nation.

The Kothari Commission (1964-66) supported these suggestions and suggested to adopt an inter-disciplinary approach in the courses. The Commission clarified that all knowledge is related to our life and it is a complete unit from this point of view. It further clarified that inspire of specialization there are many such facts which one can find in every subject. Therefore, courses should be prepared in such a way that besides providing knowledge of any one subject (discipline) it should also clarify the facts of other subjects. This is termed as Interdisciplinary Approach in the field of education. On its suggestion the university Grants Commission established 27 Curriculum Development Centers in the country, to restructure the curriculum of higher education. On the basis of the Interdisciplinary Approach the curriculums of humanities, social sciences and science subjects were prepared at these centers.

In the National Education Policy, 1986 it was declared that the present curriculum of higher education will be reformed, widened and updated. In the plan of Action of this policy, it was stated that the model curriculum prepared by the Curriculum Development Centers will be implemented and at the same time it was also stated that the curriculum of higher education will be reviewed every five years. In the meantime some universities have widened and updated their curriculum, made them of international standard and at the same time they have also made them activity oriented. India, now proudly boasts of the organization of education of almost every subject developed in the world. But most of the universities have not adopted the model curriculum prepared by the Curriculum Development Centers established by the UGC.A great explosion is taking place in the field of knowledge and science in the world, the universities therefore should keep changing their curriculum in accordance with it.

### **Importance and Need of Higher Education**

The intrinsic (true) meaning of higher education is – higher and specializes education of highly talented peoples; such education through which specialists are prepared for different fields of the country. Its importance and need then becomes self –evident. We may express the importance of higher education in the following form-

1. Achievement of Higher Knowledge, Search Of New Knowledge and Identification Of Truth- In higher education youths are provided higher knowledge in humanities, social science, science and other field and are provided opportunity to search new knowledge and to find out the true facts. Through it youths are prepared to make new inventions in the field of knowledge and science.
2. Preparation of Specialists-Through higher education specialists are prepared for different fields of life-religion, philosophy, science, engineering, medical, law, education, organisation administration etc. and as

such human resource of the highest standard is prepared. In the absence of higher education all this is not possible.

3. **Development of Leadership Quality and Work Efficiency-** Through higher education youths are prepared, to skillfully perform any work of their interest, aptitude, ability and capacity. It is generally the highly educated people who provide leadership in different fields of life.
4. **Development of Broad Attitude among Youths-** General education provides ordinary knowledge to people whereas higher education provides knowledge of international standard. The wider the knowledge, the broader is the attitude. People with higher education develop the attitude and feelings of social equality, cultural and religious tolerance and internationalism. In this age of globalization higher education has become more important.
5. **All-Round Development of the Nation-** Two fundamental resources are required for the development of a nation-first, natural resources and second, human resources. It is higher education by which we prepare higher qualities human resources. It is observed that more the availability of high standard human resource in a country more is the development of the nation. The economic developments of a country depend upon industrialization and industrialization depends upon scientists and technicians, engineers and administrators; and they are prepared through higher education. In the way, higher education is a means for an all-round development of a nation. This is the reason that higher education is of great importance.

### **Problems of Higher Education and Their Remedies**

In 1947, the condition of higher education was very pathetic in India. Neither its aims were clear nor was its curriculum utilitarian. The administrative structure of the universities was also not appropriate. The condition of higher education institutions was also not up to the mark. Indiscipline among students was rising. After achieving independence, the attention of our Governments first of all went to the higher education and to suggest reform in higher education it appointed University Commission (Radha Krishnan Commission) in 1948. On the basis of the suggestion of this Commission, the process of reform in the field of higher education began in the country. The National Education Commission (Kothari Commission) was appointed in 1964. On the basis of its suggestions, the National Education Policy, 1968 was declared and some new steps were taken in the field of higher education. The National Education Policy was declared in 1986. In Pursuance of this policy more reforms were introduced in higher education. In the meeting and conferences of Vice-Chancellors held during the last 61 years, many decision were taken and in some universities they were followed too. As a result, lot of reform have occurred in the field of higher education during this period and many of its problems have been solved; for instance-

1. After achieving independence we have expanded higher education on our country to a great extent. The privatization of higher education has been proving

very helpful in it. The Central Govt. has announced to establish at least one Central University, one India Institute of Technology and one Indian Institute Of Management in each state. The Knowledge commission (2006-09) has suggested to establish National University in the Country. It is enough at present. There is no problems of its expansion now, the problems now is to make qualitative improvement in it.

2. **In the meantime, the aims of higher education, in our country have also been decided of which, two aims are most important, first, expansion of higher knowledge and discover of new knowledge and discover of new knowledge and second, preparation of specialists for different fields.**
3. In the meantime the curricula of higher education have been expanded vastly and also updated and the process of necessary changes has also been started in it.
4. In the meantime the problems of the medium of higher education has been solved, either regional languages or English. Though, time to time it is stated that regional languages will only be the medium of higher education in future but this proposition does not seem possible in near future.
5. Some educationists advocate the organization education and vocational guidance at this level. But from the point of view of the new pattern of education, 10+2+3 and the National Education Policy, 1986 it is not very necessary. In the 10+2+3 pattern of education the first ten years of education will be similar for all. In such a situation the need for educational and vocational guidance up to class X becomes redundant. At the +2 stage the average students will be prepared for the university course. Educational and vocational guidance therefore becomes extremely necessary at this level. In the National Education Policy, 1986 it is stated that admission in higher education will be given only to brilliant and laborious student, on the basis of selection procedure. For this, entrance examinations are conducted and the admissions are given on their basis. Then it is not necessary to make arrangement for educational and vocational guidance at this stage.

At present, a continuous effort is being made to solve the major problems in the field of higher education, in our country, but due to the politics of vote and the lack of honesty and dedication some problems remained unsolved. The natural causes and the remedies of these problems are presented here:

### **Problem of Administration, Finance and Control**

From the point of view of administration, finance and control there are three of universities in our country-Central, State and Deemed. of these -the Central University are under the control of the Central Government, State Universities are under the control of the state Government and Deemed Universities are under the control of the founder institutions and the Government. It is however a different matter that UGC gives 'Developmental Grant' to all of these and at the same time gives Maintenance Grants to run the schemes

of Central Government. A dual policy as observed in giving grants to Deemed universities, to same, both types of grants are given whereas to other only the 'developmental grant' is given. There are many types of universities in our country-run by central Government; run by state Governments, run by different types of organizations and management committees; aided by the state and based on capitation fees. And the interesting aspect is that the colleges based on capitation fees may be affiliated to any university. Some of the colleges in the country are given the status of Autonomous College. Though, it is necessary for these colleges to get them affiliated with the University of their Region but they are free to prepare their own curriculum and to conduct the examinations of their students but the degrees are awarded by the affiliating universities.

### **Remedies of the problems**

The following measures may prove effective to solve these problems-

1. The Central and the State Government's responsibility related to higher education should be clearly defined fixed. Whatever rules, related to education, the Central Government to follow.
2. There should be only two types of universities. As far as the colleges are concerned and the state universities. As far as the colleges are concerned they should also be of two types only-Government concerned they should also be of two type's only-Government over the unaided colleges charging capitation fee. Autonomous college have proved ineffective, they should again be changed into general colleges.
3. The administrative structure of higher education should be simplified and clearly defined. The universities should have complete freedom in internal administration and in performance of educational works. Autonomy means to formulate rules on their own. They should formulate rules on their own, in the field of internal administration, curriculum construction, Selection of teachers and research work.
4. Expansion of higher education should be checked. It should be according to the availability of resources and the demand of the Nation.
5. The University Grants Commission should make special efforts to raise the standard of higher education.
6. The state should take two measures to solve the financial problems of higher education-first, increase the education budget and second, control over the expansion of higher education.

The present Government has moved toward the privatization of higher education to solve its financial problem. Privatization in the field of education means recognition to self-financed universities and colleges. This has the probability of more harm tend benefit. This move of the Government is not bad but it should itself undertake the responsibility of higher education, at least of the first 5 percent of the brilliant students otherwise a great many talents would fail to develop in lake of financial support. This will be a social injustice and the same time a grit loss to the nation.

### **Problem of Privatization of higher Education**

The meaning of every word is contextual. Here we have to look at the meaning of the word 'privatization' in the context of the production or any field of public work is owned by the states and it is completely under the control of the state, then in Economics, it is termed as the Nationalization of the source of production or the Nationalization of the field of public work. Contrary to this, when any source of production or any field of public work is owned and controlled by people or private institutions, then in Economics it owned and controlled by people or private institutions, then in Economics it is termed as the privatization of the source of production or the field of public work.

At present, education in our country is in the Concurrent List. It is a public work and its organization is a joint responsibility of the Central and the state Governments. But the reality however that is the Central and the state Governments are unable to organize it properly. Public cooperation was already being sought earlier and some self-financed educational institutions at the pre-primary, primary and secondary level were being recognized but for the past few years, steps are being taken toward making even higher education self-financed and any type of self-financed higher education institution are being given recognition liberally. The Government is now giving recognition even to self-financed universities. Scholars regard this as the privatization of higher education but this is not so which with the Government.

### **Remedy of the Problem**

The major allegation against the self-financed higher education institution is-the economical and academic exploitation of the students. It is but the helplessness of the government to give them recognition in view of the ever increasing demand of higher education. The need of the hour is to solve this problem. For this the following measures may be taken-

1. The main aim of higher education is to prepare specialists for different fields of the nation. To select able and laborious students is an essential prerequisite for it. They are approximately 15% of the concerned age group. In principle, the state itself should organize the higher education for them. But at present, about 9% of the students in this age group are pursuing education in our country and even in the organization of their education too, private institutions are cooperating. Therefore, it is necessary that the Government itself should organize higher education for the first 10% of the most brilliant and the most laborious students and leave the organization of higher education for rest 5% on private institutions.
2. Two things should definitely be kept in mind while giving recognition to any type of self-financed higher education' s-first, its region specific demand and second, the nation and region specific demand of persons education in that field.
3. Recognition to any type of self-financed higher education institutions should be given only when fulfill the conditions. Any type of favoritism or bribery should be stopped in giving recognition. This

is possible only when everyone, involved in the process is honest.

4. The Government should formulate rules for the admission of students even on management seats in these self-financed higher education institutions, and should ensure that they are complied.
5. The Government should make provision of scholarship for the meritorious students studying in the self-financed institutions.
6. There are rules for the institution and also for the administrative and inspection system to ensure that these rules are followed, but corruption has become so ubiquitous that everything is being ignored. Every day we hear one or more scam but hardly anyone is punished. The need of the hour is of stringent punishment and this can be done only by a Government of honest, devoted and patriot persons.

### **Problem of Raising the Standard of higher Education**

Standard of education has two terms- education and standard. The process of education contains three main aspects- theoretical, practical and the result. If we analyze these three aspects we find that the theoretical aspects contains aims and curriculum, its practical aspect contains discipline and other activities of teacher and students, and the result aspects includes the extent to which the aims are achieved for example the increase in the cognitive, affective and co native aspect of the students. The second term in this context is standard. The word standard indicative of a relative condition therefore to measure the standard of any level of education in any society or country we should take in to consideration all the three aspects theoretical, practical and the result. This should be the criteria to measure the standard of higher education also.

### **Causes of the Problem**

There are many causes for the deterioration in the standard of higher education. They may be divided into following categories.

1. Administrative Causes- The government is paying less attention on education and allocates fewer amounts in the budget for it. The result is the lack of resources in the educational institutional. The result is that the number of students in higher education institutions far exceeds their capacity.
2. Educational Causes- There is shortage of resources in higher education institutions. Their courses are also neither update nor utilitarian. Above all neither the teachers teach with full preparation nor do the students take full interest in their study.
3. Social Causes- There is a great shortage of educated and wise persons in our society. No doubt they do get their children admitted in higher educational institutions but fail to ensure that they really study or indulge in some other activities. Such families also lack the environment for study.
4. Political Causes- The unnecessary expansion of higher education in our country at present is due to the political pressure. Politics of Vote is the causes of open admission policy in higher education.

5. Other Causes- Among other causes three are most important- first, formation of student union, second, increasing indiscipline and third, lack of honesty and devotion.

### **Remedy of the Problem**

1. The Government should spent sufficient money on higher education and should equip the higher education institutions, and the same time make the administration more efficient.
2. Higher educational institutions should be well furnished. Their courses should be updated and made utilitarian.
3. The accountability of their teachers should be fixed. A minimum of 75 percent attendance should be made compulsory for the students.
4. The examination system should be reforms. Comprehension and thought provoking questions should be asked instead of simple memory level question.
5. The parents should be made aware about the education of their children and the increasing uproarious culture in the society should be checked.
6. The unnecessary expansion of higher education should be checked. Instead of its expansion attention should be paid to raise its standard. Teaching institutions should be made resourcefull.

### **Conclusion**

In retrospect it may be said that many problems exist in higher education in our country, some of them have already been solved to some extent, for instance- expansion of higher education, clarification of its aims, expansion and updating its curriculum and to decide its medium etc. But some of its problem still needs to be solved. For instance- problem of privatization of higher education, problem of uplifting higher education, problem of indiscipline and student unrest at the higher education level and the problem of reform in the evaluation system. First of all we should solve these problems in the field of higher education because of which it has become meaningless. We have already discussed over it in detail. Two types of resources are needed to solve any problem such as financial resources and the honesty and integrity of working people. If the Government arrange sufficient financial resources for the proper organization of higher education and the people related to higher education work with honesty and integrity, the problems will automatically get solved.

### **References**

1. Agarwal JC. Essentials of Educational Technology, Vikas Publishing House, New Delhi, 1996.
2. Mohanti J. Modern Trend in Indian Education: Current Issues and Strategies in the context of NEP, New Delhi Deep and Deep, 1998.
3. Mukharjee KK. Some Great Educators of the World, Calcutta, Das Gupta & Co. Pvt. Ltd., 1972.
4. Naik JP. Equality, Quality and Quantity: The inclusive Triangles of Indian Education: Bombay Allied Publishers, 1975.

5. Higher Education: Free degrees to fly, Economist, February 26th-March 4<sup>th</sup>. 2005, 63-65.
6. Survey Higher Education, Economist, September 10th-16<sup>th</sup>. 2005, 50.
7. Ashutosh Sheshabalaya, 'Rising Elephant-the Growing Clash with India over white-collar jobs and its Challenge to America and the World', Macmillan India, 2005.
8. Wadhwa X, Harpreet Khurana, Beyond Cost Reduction: Risks & Rewards of Services Sourcing, Columbia Business School 'India and the Knowledge Economy; Leveraging Strength and Opportunities', The World Bank, Report number 31267-IN, 2005.
9. Varieties of Learning: An Interface between Higher Education and Training, Commonwealth Department of Education Science and Training, 2002.