

## Emerging Issues and Challenges in Higher Education in India

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Received: January 15, 2019

Accepted: March 02, 2019

**ABSTRACT:** Higher education in India has expanded rapidly over the past two decades but it suffers from several systemic deficiencies. As a result, it continues to provide graduates that are unemployable despite emerging shortages of skilled manpower in an increasing number of sectors. The standards of academic research are low and declining. Some of the problems of the Indian higher education, such as – the unwieldy affiliating system, inflexible academic structure, uneven capacity across various subjects, eroding autonomy of academic institutions, and the low level of public funding are well known. Many other concerns relating to the dysfunctional regulatory environment, the accreditation system that has low coverage and no consequences, absence of incentives for performing well, and the unjust public funding policies are not well recognized. This paper discusses emerging issues and challenges faced by Indian higher education.

**Key Words:** : Higher Education, Issues, Challenges

### Introduction

No doubt that India faces today a number of problems pertaining to illiteracy, poverty, unemployment, crisis of moral and spiritual values (Word Bank, 2000). But in the last few years every individual, a parent, guardian, teacher, administrator or nation is concerned with the problem of student unrest is as under:

1. The participation of students in demonstrations, strikes, processions, mass meetings, walk outs, setting libraries on fire, damaging laboratories and university properties, indulging in ragging like activities on campus. These are the nationwide issues emerged out of students' unrest.
2. Economic difficulties: The majority of students come from the ordinary class and many of them are unable to provide for their minimum necessities of life. Economic miseries have grown due to the rising prices, habits of wasting money on luxuries. Students hold part time jobs in order to pay for their educational expenses and must divide their attention between a job and university career. These are some of the causes of students' unrest. It is very difficult to enumerate all the causes of student unrest as they cover a wide spectrum of spheres.
3. The student in modern society is involving more intensely in social change. The modern student is breaking away from the traditions and restrains, new culture and new thinking – Gandhi-giri for Gandhi's philosophy, *Anna-giri*
4. Glamour on the campus affordable or not for that purpose our students are ready to go an extreme.
5. The techno savvy generation of students has arrived and their increased potential and aspiration for techno based learning cannot be overlooked and therefore, keeping pace with this new generation learners is emerging as one of the most important issues in Higher Education.
6. The concept of effective governance in HE sector needs to be thoroughly innovated to be able to effectively deal with the new challenges confronting on us.
7. The poor performance of the universities in research- It has been observed that India shows poor status in research and development, research per million is just 194 which is very low compared to other countries.
8. Low expenditure on Higher Education figures related to expenditure on higher education is not satisfactory.
9. Status of Higher Education in India Even though the HE system of India is third largest in the world but it has many issues like:
  - i) Access to the higher education system is still restricted to a small portion of the society.
  - ii) Low public expenditure on HE as percentage of GDP.
  - iii) Large rural-urban divide in access and
  - iv) Shortage of faculty and poor infrastructure
  - v) Necessity to be focused in proposed action plan in Higher Education in India.
  - vi) The student in modern society is involving more intensely in social change. Glamour on the campus affordable or not for that purpose our students are ready to go an extreme.

- VII) The concept of effective governance in higher education sector needs to be thoroughly innovated to be able to effectively deal with the new challenges confronting on us.
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### **Emerging Challenges**

The system of Indian Higher education is the second largest in the world which fulfills the educational needs of millions of students who come from different sections of the society because it is the student community that can help to generate healthy academic atmosphere in institutions of higher learning. Undoubtedly, India is facing today a number of problems pertaining to poverty, unemployment, and disappearance of moral and spiritual values. Our diverse education system has posed in great challenge for the educational institutions. Varieties of colleges, universities, technical institutions have produced and different types and quality of Education. Some of them are really imparting qualitative education while a few others are doing the worst job.

Another challenge that Higher Education has to face is the teaching of English in the multilingual context (Gupta, Ashwini and Datta, 2005). Language has been accepted as a major vehicle for conveying thoughts. Therefore, the use of languages other than English in higher education needs to be viewed creatively. Moreover, there is a need to improve language competence in general. Some more challenges are as under-

#### **1. Economic Difficulties**

Economic difficulties are the most upsetting challenge for the present higher education system. The numbers of students are coming from the middle classes; many of them are unable to provide the minimum necessities of life for themselves. Students are bound to do part time jobs in order to pay for their educational expenses it leads to divide their attention between a job and education. Near about seventy five percent of the total students community today, have been facing the financial problems. Earn while learn scheme cannot adequately support student to face economic challenges.

#### **2. Policy Vacuum**

The complexity of Indian higher education has made it difficult for both central and state governments to implement programs of reforms and developmental policies in systematic and coordinated manner. In 1985, the Indian Ministry of Education proposed an extensive reform package that included such measures as a cessation on the expansion of conventional colleges and universities; a fair and robust admissions regime based on scholarly merit; a new accreditation and accountability scheme; decentralization of educational planning; and a campaign to ensure 'academic de-politicization'. As sensible as these reforms were, they were widely resisted by most state bureaucracies and universities, and produced little improvement; subsequent reform attempts have met a similar fate, while the system has become ever more complex and unwieldy, and the challenges ever more urgent.

#### **3. Interference of political factors**

Most of the Institutions, imparting education (Aided-non-aided) are owned by the dominant political leaders. They have established their own youth cells and encourage students' organization on political basis. Some exploit the students' energy for their political purposes. The students forget their own objectives and begin to develop their careers in politics.

#### **4. Lack of Resources**

Lack of resources has been a major issue. Within a system that is overloaded, the growth of private higher education in India has been rapid, but is taking place in a policy vacuum, as a major private education bill has languished in the Indian Parliament for over two decades. At the same time, the regulatory framework, accreditation mechanisms and the processes of quality assurance remain confused. The techno savvy generation of students has increased their potential and aspiration for techno based learning cannot be ignored and therefore, keeping pace with this new generation learners is emerging as one of the most important issues in Higher Education. Although individual researchers and some institutions perform creditably, serious problems afflict research performance in India. In various global ranking systems, such

as Shanghai's Jia Tong, Indian universities perform poorly, with only the Indian Institutes of Technology and Management ranked in the top three hundred.

### **5. Lack of Moral values**

Our old morals and values have been threatened due to rapid growth of science and technology and subsequent industrialization. The young generation's dissatisfaction and revolt is the outcome of a decomposing system of values.

### **Conclusion and Suggestions**

Most commentators, appreciated that, apart from a very small group of selected public sector institutions and a few emerging, privately-funded ones, Indian higher education is in deep trouble. In the globalized economy, the competence and the quality of our product have to meet the world standards. Globalization is progressing so rapidly that we have no alternative rather than to accept the fact and that the Higher Education has been playing crucial role in preparing ourselves for task.

The Higher Education system is witnessing significant transformations and reforms. The globalization of economic activities and development in science and technology accelerate the emergence of new types of higher education institutions. The IIT have proved highly successful in terms of providing high quality higher education in specific fields. They have, when compared to the traditional colleges and universities, been relatively expensive. Higher education in India plays many roles. It is of extraordinary importance to many and reforms are often seen as significant threats to specific, social arrangements that provide benefits to powerful groups. The politics is the result and most often the changes are not implemented language has been a similar issues in which government attempted to solve in difficult social and political problem through policy relating to higher education. Despite its many distinct advantages, such as having the third largest student numbers in the world (after China and the United States), the use of English as a primary language of higher education and research, a long tradition of academic freedom and a highly talented pool of students, India is burdened by a system of mass higher education that is bureaucratically inflexible, hampered by poor governance structures and characterized by uneven and modest quality at best.

To conclude, Higher education in India is an extraordinarily important part of modern Indian society and it is tangled in the political and social systems of the society. It is in need of change, development and important. In order to effectively plan for reforms and improvement, it is necessary to have in realistic perceptions of what is possible and what is not.

### **References**

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