

Issues and Trends in Contemporary Indian Education – I : Part : I

MEANING OF SECONDARY EDUCATION SYSTEM

Secondary education occupies a very strategic position in the educational pattern of the country. It is the link between primary education and higher education. Primary education is intended to provide minimum requirements for survival where as secondary education enables an individual to become a full members of the complicated society.

After independence our country achieved a great remarkable changes in the field of secondary education. The Government of India, Soon after attainment of independence appointed a number of committees and commissions to review the system of secondary education.

The various committees recommended certain suggestions for the improvement of secondary education both quantitatively and qualitatively. Tara hand Committee in 1948 suggested the multipurpose type of secondary schools without discouraging the unipurpose schools.

The university education commission 1948-49 which was appointed under the chairmanship of Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, remarked that “our secondary education remains the weakest link in our educational machinery and needs urgent reform.” The landmark in the reconstruction of India’s secondary education is the secondary education commission report 1952-53.

The commission was appointed by the Government of India, on September 23, 1952, under the chairmanship of Dr. A. Lakshmanswami Mudaliar to review the existing defects in the secondary education and made some suggestions regarding the improvement of secondary education.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

Various committees have given their valuable suggestions regarding the aim and objectives of secondary education after independence.

These are as follows:

Aims of secondary education according to secondary education commission (1952-53):

1. To bring all round development among the learner.
2. To train the young mass of the country to be good citizens who will be competent to play their part effectively in the social and economic development of the country.
3. To promote social virtues, intellectual development and practical skills of students.
4. To Train character of students to enable them to participate creatively as citizens in the emerging social order.
5. To improve practical and vocational efficiency of the students.
6. To develop a scientific attitude of mind to think objectively.
7. To inculcate the qualities necessary for living harmoniously and efficiently with one’s fellowmen.
8. To develop artistic and cultural interests which are essential for self-expression and development of all round personality of pupils.

Objectives of secondary education according to Indian Education Commission (1964-66):

1. The main objective is “national reconstruction by raising the standard of living of our people.”
2. The education is to meet the needs of a modernizing democratic and socialistic society.
3. It would promote productivity.
4. It would strengthen social and national integration.
5. It would consolidate democracy to adopt as a way of life.
6. It would accelerate the pace of modernization.
7. It would enable students to participate in productive work in school, home, workshop, farm and factory etc.
8. It would develop social, moral and spiritual values among the students.

As per the recommendations of Indian Education commission, education was reconstructed for the economic and cultural development of the country. Importance was given on qualitative development of secondary education by relating education with the real life situations of the students. The NPE, 1986 and the Revised NPE, 1992 have discussed about the aims and objectives of education in general out of which some are relevant to secondary education.

These are as follows:

1. Secondary education is meant essentially for all round development, material and spiritual.
2. It develops manpower for different levels of the economy, ultimately promoting self-reliance.
3. It develops a sense of good citizenship among the learners.
4. It would inculcate democratic values, rights and duties in a democratic set up among the students.
5. It would strengthen the “whole world as one family” view and motivates, the younger generations for international co-operation and peaceful co-existence.
6. It should provide equality of educational opportunity for all not only in access, but also in the conditions for success.
7. It would inculcate in children scientific temper and independence of mind.
8. Minimum Levels of Learning (MLL) would be laid down and steps need by taken for fostering among students an understanding of a diverse cultural and social systems of the people.
9. It enables to develop physical health through physical education among the students.

Besides these, the secondary education should be based on a national curricular frame work which contains a common core along with other components that are flexible.

The common core would include the history of India's Freedom Movement the constitutional obligations and the other content essential to nature and national identity. Promotion of vocational efficiency should form an integral part of secondary education.

PROBLEMS OF VOCATIONALISATION OF EDUCATION AND THEIR REMEDIES

(1) Wrong Attitude:

All the while more respect has been paid to the intellectual activity than physical labour. On the basis of work or labour, the caste system has been built in India. The roots of division of labour based on thousands of years of caste system have gone deep into our society. The people engaged in handicrafts and other physical works for earning their bread are not looked with respect.

So this problem is not that easy to solve. The youth force in the country should be given education to change attitude towards work and physical labour. Good earning potentiality of various vocations can also help changing attitude of the modern youths.

(2) Dearth of Institutions:

All technical and vocational institutions established after Independence cannot be said to be adequate. The youth of the country with aims of receiving technical education can hope for a bright future; but such institutions are very few in considerations to such a huge population.

This problem can be solved with establishment of more such institutions for imparting technical and vocational education at all stages. So the Government at the Centre as well as in the states should provide for more institutions to cope with the increasing demand.

(3) Narrow Curriculum:

In Technical and Vocational Institutions there are provisions for only technical subjects. There is no place for liberal education. So with their technical knowledge the young men are not able to acquire knowledge of human relations and social objectives of productions. So it is needed that curricula of technical and vocational education should be broadened with general and liberal education.

(4) Unsuitable Medium of Instruction:

In almost all technical institutions of modern India, English is the medium of instruction. The students who have passed through medium of Hindi or other Regional Languages find it very difficult to receive technical and vocational education in English.

Such students are disappointed and leave vocational and technical institutions after a term of stagnation. So, this sort of frustration also brings about a loss of money, time and energy.

(5) Dearth of Teachers:

Meritorious and able persons having received technical and vocational education are always after fat salaries and other material gains. They are not after teachership. Besides, sufficient respect is not accorded to teachers in society.

Consequently, such institutions are deprived of able and talented persons Government can solve this problem in attracting talented persons to be teachers in technical and vocational institutions. Teachers should be given decent pay packets and the society should respect these builders of men.

(6) Lack of continuation education:

Young person's complete the technical and vocational education and get employed. In the beginning they are with full of knowledge, but in course of time they forget many things. This brings lack of efficiency in their work. Part-time instructions should be provided to such persons employed in jobs in order to improve quality of work.

Refresher Courses may be organized with a view to acquainting these in service people with the recent development of knowledge in the field of Science and Technology.

(7) Lack of Practical's:

Mere theoretical knowledge will not suffice for successful candidates to go for establishing small workshops and small industries.- So a practical training should be properly organized and young enterprisers need be given Practical knowledge of starting industries and setting up business firms.

RMSA

This scheme was launched in March, 2009 with the objective to enhance access to secondary education and to improve its quality. The implementation of the scheme started from 2009-10. It is envisaged to achieve an enrolment rate of 75% from 52.26% in 2005-06 at secondary stage of implementation of the scheme by providing a secondary school within a reasonable distance of any habitation. The other objectives include improving quality of education imparted at secondary level through making all secondary schools conform to prescribed norms, removing gender, socio-economic and disability barriers, providing universal access to secondary level education by 2017, i.e., by the end of 12th Five Year Plan and achieving universal retention by 2020.

Important physical facilities provided under the scheme are:

- (i) Additional class rooms,
- (ii) Laboratories,
- (iii) Libraries,
- (iv) Art and crafts room,
- (v) Toilet blocks,

- (vi) Drinking water provisions and
- (vii) Residential Hostels for Teachers in remote areas.

Important quality interventions provided under the scheme are:

- (i) appointment of additional teachers to reduce PTR to 30:1,
- (ii) focus on Science, Math and English education,
- (iii) In-service training of teachers,
- (iv) science laboratories,
- (v) ICT enabled education,
- (vi) curriculum reforms; and
- (vii) teaching learning reforms.

Important equity interventions provided in the scheme are:

- (i) special focus in micro planning
- (ii) preference to Ashram schools for upgradation
- (iii) preference to areas with concentration of SC/ST/Minority for opening of schools
- (iv) special enrolment drive for the weaker section
- (v) more female teachers in schools; and
- (vi) separate toilet blocks for girls.

Implementation mechanism of the Scheme

The scheme is being implemented by the State government societies established for implementation of the scheme. The central share is released to the implementing agency directly. The applicable State share is also released to the implementing agency by the respective State Governments.

Revision of certain norms of the Scheme

The Government of India has approved the following revised norms of RMSA, with effect from 01.04.2013 :

- To permit State/UT Governments to use State Schedule of Rates(SSOR) or CPWD Rate, (whichever is lower) for construction of civil works permissible under the RMSA.
- To increase the Management, Monitoring Evaluation and Research (MMER) from 2.2 percent to 4 percent of the total outlay under the programme, with 0.5 percent of the 4 percent earmarked for national level and the rest of the 3.5 percent as part of the State allocation. In cases of States where even with this enhanced allocation of 3.5 percent MMER would not be adequate and would hamper the activities under the head, within the 3.5 percent of the overall State MMER component; variations across State/UTs can be approved by the PAB, subject to a maximum of 5 percent of the outlay in any particular State/UT.
- To subsume the other Centrally Sponsored Schemes of Secondary Education– Information and Communication Technology (ICT)@ School, Girls’ Hostel, Inclusive

Education for Disabled at Secondary Stage(IEDSS) and Vocational Education(VE) in their existing form under the Umbrella of RMSA.

- To extend the benefits of RMSA to aided Secondary Schools (excluding infrastructure support/core areas, i.e. Teacher's salary and Staff salary) for quality interventions as per RMSA umbrella schemes components for aided schools.
- To continue existing fund sharing pattern of 72:25 for the remaining of the 12th Plan the period for non-NER States and 90:10 for NER States (including Sikkim).
- To authorize the RMSA Project Approval Board (PAB) of the Ministry of Human Resource Development to consider for approval Integrated Plan of the umbrella scheme of RMSA, including the four subsumed Centrally Sponsored Schemes of Secondary Education.
- To authorize the release of funds to the RMSA State Implementation Society directly for all components of the RMSA umbrella scheme.

HIGHER EDUCATION

Introduction

India's higher education system is the world's third-largest in terms of students, next to China and the United States. India's Higher Education sector has witnessed a tremendous increase in the number of Universities/University level Institutions & Colleges since independence. In the prestigious **Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University Rankings 2020**, only three Indian Universities- IIT-Bombay, IIT-Delhi and IISc (Bangalore)- have been included in the top 200 institutes.

Issues and Challenges in India's Higher Education Sector

- **Enrolment:** The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of India in higher education is only 25.2% which is quite low as compared to the developed and other major developing countries.
- **Equity:**
 - There is no equity in GER among different sections of society. GER for males (26.3%), females (25.4%), SC (21.8%) and ST (15.9%).
 - There are regional variations too. While some states have high GER some are far behind the national figures.
 - The college density (number of colleges per lakh eligible population) varies from 7 in Bihar to 59 in Telangana as compared to All India average of 28.
 - Most of premier universities and colleges are centred in a metropolitan and urban city, thereby leading to the **regional disparity** in access to higher education.

- **Quality:** Higher Education in India is plagued with rote learning, lack of employability and skill development due to the low quality of education.
- **Infrastructure:** Poor infrastructure is another challenge to higher education in India. Due to the budget deficit, corruption and lobbying by the vested interest group (Education Mafias), public sector universities in India lack the necessary infrastructure. Even the Private sector is not upto the mark as per the global standard.
- **Faculty:** Faculty shortages and the inability of the state educational system to attract and retain well-qualified teachers have been posing challenges to quality education for many years. Shortage of faculty leads to Ad-hoc expansion even in the premier institutions.
The Pupil-to-teacher ratio though has been stable in the country (30:1), however, it needs to be improved to make it comparable to USA (12.5:1), China (19.5:1) and Brazil (19:1).
- **Outdated Curriculum:** Outdated, irrelevant curriculum that is dominantly theoretical in nature and has a low scope for creativity. There is a wide gap between industry requirements and universities' curriculum that is the main reason for the low employability of graduates in India.
- **Accreditation:** As per the data provided by the NAAC, as of June 2010, not even 25% of the total higher education institutions in the country were accredited. And among those accredited, only 30% of the universities and 45% of the colleges were found to be of quality to be ranked at 'A' level.
- **Regulatory issues:** Management of the Indian education faces challenges of over-centralization, bureaucratic structures and lack of accountability, transparency, and professionalism. As a result of the increase in a number of affiliated colleges and students, the burden of administrative functions of universities has significantly increased and the core focus on academics and research is diluted.

Regulatory Framework Of Higher Education In India



- **Research:** Poor fund allocation in research, Low levels of PhD enrolment, fewer opportunities for interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary research, Low levels of industry engagement, Low quality of research work, etc. are some of the factors affecting the research ecosystem in India.
- **India's investment in R&D has remained constant at around 0.6% to 0.7% of India's GDP.** This is below the expenditure of countries like the US (2.8), China (2.1), Israel (4.3) and Korea (4.2).

Recent Initiatives Taken by the Government

- **Education Quality Upgradation and Inclusion Programme (EQUIP) has been recently launched:**
- This is a five-year vision plan to improve the quality and accessibility of higher education over the next five years (2019-2024).
- Double the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education and resolve the geographically and socially skewed access to higher education institutions in India.
- Position at least 50 Indian institutions among the top-1000 global universities.
- **Revitalising Infrastructure and Systems in Education (RISE) by 2022**
- Qualitatively upgrade the research and academic infrastructure in India to global best standards by 2022.
- Make India into an education hub by making available high-quality research infrastructure in Indian higher educational institutions.
- To allow access of HEFA funding to institutions like Central Universities, AIIMS, IISERs and newly created Institutes of National Importance, without creating any additional burden to the students.
- Higher Education Financing Agency (HEFA) has been tasked to mobilise Rs. 1,00,000 crores for this initiative.
- **UGC's Learning Outcome-based Curriculum Framework (LOCF)**
- LOCF guidelines, issued by UGC in 2018, aims to specify what graduates are expected to know, understand and be able to do at the end of their programme of study. This is to make student active learner and teacher a good facilitator.
- **Graded Autonomy to Universities & Colleges:** 3-tiered graded autonomy regulatory system has been initiated, with the categorization based on accreditation scores. Category I and Category II universities will have significant autonomy to conduct examinations, prescribe evaluation systems and even announce results

- **Global Initiative for Academics Network (GIAN):** The programme seeks to invite distinguished academicians, entrepreneurs, scientists, experts from premier institutions from across the world, to teach in the higher educational institutions in India.
- **All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE):** The main objectives of the survey are to- identify & capture all the institutions of higher learning in the country; and collect the data from all the higher education institutions on various aspects of higher education.
- **National Institutional Ranking Framework** was developed in 2015. The rankings are published annually since 2016. It outlines a methodology to rank educational institutions across the country based on five broad parameters:
 - Teaching, learning and resources;
 - Research and professional practice;
 - Graduation outcomes;
 - Outreach and inclusivity; and
 - Perception.

Way Forward

- **Regulatory and governance reforms:**
 - Restructure or merge different higher education regulators (UGC, AICTE, NCTE etc.) to ensure effective coordination.
 - Amend UGC Act to give legislative backing to regulatory structure.
 - Allow foreign institutions to operate joint degree programmes with Indian institutions.
 - Link University grants to performance.
 - Select Vice-Chancellors of universities through a transparent & objective process.
- **Creating ‘world-class universities’:** 20 universities – 10 each from the public and private sector – are being selected as ‘**Institutions of Eminence**’, to help them attain world-class standards of teaching and research. **A graded mechanism** to ensure additional funds flow to top public universities should be developed, as in China & Singapore.
 - The **Draft National Education Policy, 2019** recommended Restructuring of the higher education system into Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3.
 - Tier 1 includes research universities focusing equally on research and teaching, Tier 2 includes teaching universities focusing primarily on teaching; and Tier

3 includes colleges focusing only on teaching at undergraduate levels. All such institutions will gradually move towards full autonomy - academic, administrative, and financial. The idea is to spread 'research culture' at the undergraduate level.

- **Increased focus on vocational and profession led education:** Include vocational subjects in mainstream universities to allow for greater acceptance and utility for vocational learning.
- **Accreditation Framework:** All higher education institutions must be accredited compulsorily & regularly, by agencies, empanelled through a transparent, high-quality process.
- **Performance-linked funding and incentives:** All central universities should develop strategic plans for getting into the top 500 global universities rankings in the next 10 years. Funding to these institutions should be linked to performance and outcomes through the MHRD and newly constituted Higher Education Funding Agency
- **Distance and online education:** Broaden the scope of Massive Open Online Course (MOOCs) and Open and Distance Learning (ODL) to provide access to quality education beyond geographical boundaries.

QUALITY CONCERNS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Unlike Technology the higher education needs continuous up gradation. The issue of better quality in higher education has been a great concern for all who are directly or indirectly associated with the education and academic system. The reason is very obvious since the higher education could not keep required pace with the changes in technology, new trends of education system, occupational diversity, Global market trends and so on. from time to time. Obviously, education system that could not serve the needs and expected aspirations of the market is not received well and pose questions on its efficiency and effectiveness.

Though the issue of quality in higher education is most talked about but it is equally true that this issue is least understood in its true spirit. The different stakeholders viz. students, teachers, academic institutions, regulatory bodies, professional, government, market Pundits and others have their own perspective and gauge the quality of higher education on different parameters in their own framework. In India, the graduates are assumed as products where their career prospects depend on the very quality of education they pursue. To ensure the degree of quality, we have two broad parameters one, the accreditation of academic programs by the government agencies and others and grading of academic institutions by private professional agencies based on predetermined parameters. However, in reality, both the approaches per-se, have their own limitations and suffer with a foolproof mechanism. This gives much scope for improvement to focus on all round qualitative aspects to prepare

There is no meaning in discussing what has gone wrong with the quality in the past, let us discuss few measures that help the quality of higher education where it becomes conspicuous.

1. There is strong need for a clear demarcation among students if their preference is just to gain a useful employment, give a practical shape to their start up idea or strengthen the academic and research skills. The delivery mechanism and kind of exposure necessarily have to match with the preferences to bring the excellence.
2. The accreditation or grading system in United States is the primary source of information and awareness to protect students against the institutes that are involved in various mal practices and operate under commercial motives. In India, we probably rarely come across such information. The grading and accreditation mechanism taken up by some of private agencies is guided by commercial motives and self vested perceptions. There is a need to have an overhauling of various aspects of quality performance parameters. For instance, the norms for giving weight to research and publications should be guided by quality of publications and not by numbers. Similarly, faculty with PhD is another criteria where quality of doctoral degree obtained needs more weight. Likewise, there are many parameters where quantity parameters overrun the quality aspects.
3. The corporate sector aspirations need to be pursued in terms of occupational diversity. Gone are the days where a mechanical engineering passed out student will stick to engineering job. Today we find many successful CFOs with engineering background, a good number management professionals managing operations more efficiently and so on. Therefore, the higher education institutions have to develop delivery mechanism in that direction to fit into occupational diversity.
4. The most developed and advanced technology has changed the very shape of academic environment, quality of teaching, nature of exposure etc. While, the teacher teaches in class, the students have everything at their tab and at times, the students are more updated than a teacher. The students prefer and are keen on learning evidenced based business practices. The students need to know and understand the concurrent best business practices being followed across the globe.
4. The quality of teachers in general and higher education in particular has posed serious challenges. The unregulated growth of higher education in India in the recent two decades has had large ramifications. Many engineering and management institutes have hired teachers at low cost overlooking the very quality of teacher.
5. Unlike Japanese concept of quality as continuous improvement, it is equally important in higher education as pre-defined principles and concepts hardly match with the organizational learning and technology. This calls for strengthening the concept of

continuous improvements bringing innovations and desired quality in academic contents and delivery.

6. Leadership in higher education that involves promoters, Board of governors, Director etc. play a very significant role as institution building in true sense is herculean task that requires time, patience and lot of self sacrifices. In majority of higher education institutions this aspect calls for serious efforts.
7. Each institution needs to decide key performance indicators and benchmarks based on specific quality parameters and work on it consciously. That becomes a roadmap for all stakeholders.
8. New and changing trends in higher education across the Globe have to receive priority and a careful evaluation to incorporate in the required quality parameters.
9. Last but not the least, the changing attitude and approach among students pursuing higher degree call for a serious consideration as there seems to be a large deterioration over the years. The kind of passion in learning and understanding lack in majority of students.

Finally, the quality in higher education should infuse as self consciousness rather than giving more thrust to merely complying with regulatory guidelines.

PRIVATE INITIATIVE IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA : RATIONALE AND PERSPECTIVES

Higher education in India today is ridden with problems which are many and various. Some of the most crucial ones that confront us are somewhat controversial and, at any rate, in need of a thorough scrutiny in the overall interest of the country. The issues are, however, inter-dependent and include: (i) broadening of access in higher education; (ii) ensuring equity in higher education; ((iii) the financial crunch, and (iv) the move to privatise higher education as a remedial measure.

The Crucial Questions

There are indications to partially privatise higher education in India as a remedy to most of the problems and issues raised above. The following crucial questions, therefore, need to be consciously raised:

1. What is the rationale for privatising higher education?
2. What exactly are the issues related to access and equity in higher education and how would privatisation tackle them?
3. Will private effort be able to generate the requisite finance for higher education?
4. How has privatisation delivered goods in the educational systems abroad?

5. Will private funding of the university system eventually be a substitute to the statutory and constitutional requirement of the State to maintain institutions of higher learning?
6. Will private funding be really available for courses other than those concerned with professional and technical higher education?
7. Will privatisation not lead to commercialisation?
8. Is commercialisation of higher education in national interest?
9. Will privatisation not adversely affect interests of the poor and other backward sections of the society?

Access and Equity in Higher Education

India has quite a large system of higher education in as much as we have today 250 universities, over 10,500 colleges and nearly 55 lakhs of students being taught by over 3 lakhs of teachers. And yet the proportion of the University and College going student population in the relevant age group of 16-23 is dismal 6%. This is quite low even when compared with developing countries, the figure being 20% for both Egypt and Thailand, 10% for Turkey, 11% for Brazil and 16% for Mexico. In the developed countries, however, access to higher education is to the tune of 40% and more. Thus, though higher education in India has expanded generally, inadequate access continues to cause concern. This issue, therefore, needs critical examination.

On the one hand we are worried about the so called ‘mushroom growth’ of the universities and colleges, and on the other, are unable to provide access to education even at par with most other developing countries in the world. Further, while enrolment of women and those belonging to SC/ST groups and other backward communities has improved, they are still very much under represented. Thus, the twin issue of access and equity needs to be tackled by adopting alternative strategies.

As we all know, providing increased access to education, meeting the challenge of equity and improving the quality of education all entail large investment. It is all the more necessary to ensure continuous inflow of funds needed for implementing and carrying out relevant programmes and activities. But then there does exist the problem of resource crunch. A suggested way out is exploring additional avenues of generating systems own resources instead of being fully dependent on the State exchequer. It is imperative here that the higher education system has to seek participation both of the Government as well as private and voluntary bodies. Some amount of private funding thus appears inevitable for making up the deficit caused by inadequate state funding.

Financial Crunch

Lack of adequate funds in education is the most crucial issue. While overall investment in education as a proportion of the gross domestic product (GDP) has gone up from 1.2 per cent in 1950s to 3.7 per cent in the 1990s, it is still below the norm of 6 per cent as stated in the National Policy on Education. University education has particularly been hit hard. Most higher education institutions all over the country are facing acute financial crisis. Two important questions immediately intervene themselves: One, what is the justification for so radically changing the 40-year old policy of state support to higher education, and two, how could the state extend financial support to higher education at a time when the country is facing severe resource crunch?

Since provision of free and compulsory education at the elementary stage is a Constitutional commitment, budgetary allocation for this sector of education is continuously on increase while the University and higher education has got a raw deal for the sixth year in succession. This is in keeping with the declared objective of the Union Government that the lion's share of funding for higher education must come from sources other than the Government. The consequence of inadequate investment in higher education is serious. While the Universities are at pain in persuading the Government for increased budgetary allocations, some of them have simultaneously taken measures for generating funds of their own.

It is high time the university system resorted to long-term resource planning instead of taking the state support for granted. Each University will now have to identify avenues of resource generation, both internal as well as external, depending upon the nature of its programme offerings and the locale. The Punnayya Committee set up by the UGC and the Swaminathan Panel of the AICTE have made some broad recommendations in this regard. The internal measures, amongst other things, may include proper utilisation of funds, general economy in expenditures, pooling and sharing of departmental and institutional resources and most importantly, rationalisation of fee structure. As far the external resources, the important avenues include donations from alumni, philanthropists and others, consultancy, university-industry interaction, etc.

In most institutions of higher education, at present, the tuition fees contribute very little towards earnings while the recurring expenditure on each student is much higher. In fact, an upward revision of fees is overdue. The need to raise the tuition fees to at least 20% of the recurring expenditure per student generally and at a still higher level in higher professional and technical courses is being advocated. Increase in fees from the foreign students at further higher levels is being talked about by reserving seats for them in select institutions like the IIT and the IIMS. While measures such as these appear realistic, their repercussions need to

be thoroughly assessed before taking some definite decision in the matter. Particularly, interests of poor students generally and those Indian students who are pitted against the foreign students admitted on the basis of higher fees need to be protected.

By far the least controversial avenue of generating additional resource is that of tapping the philanthropists, alumni and others such as business houses and industrial concerns for voluntary contributions. In order to encourage this the Government of India's financial act provides for 100% tax exemption in respect of donations by a tax payer to a university or institution of national eminence. Again, University-Industry interaction is becoming a plank in this direction. The Swaminathan panel has suggested building up a reservoir of funds by collecting educational cess from industries and other user organisations. Setting up of an Educational Development Bank of India initially with shares of Rs.1000 crore each by the State Governments, Central Government and international financial agencies has also been suggested. Raising money through consultancy work or job assignment by institutions to industries or other professional organisations is yet another avenue being profusely recommended. As an incentive, part of this money goes to individual scholars while the rest is added to the funds of the University. It is pertinent to mention here the official view that avenues generated through enhanced fee structure, consultancy and other activities would not be offset against Government grants with the industries considering "adoption" of one or more institutions of higher education.

A major problem in relationship between industry and academia is that perhaps both do not know what the other wants. While the universities are unable to identify the precise needs of the industry, the latter are unaware about the type of interaction universities look forward from them. Could a beginning not be made by sharing the infrastructure each is known to possess?

Private Initiative in Education in the USA and UK

In the United States of America the concept of private universities is an integrated part of the political and economic philosophy of consumer sovereignty. The state intervention in education is exerted indirectly by regulating consumer response. In keeping with this view of philosophy, the state regulates its concerns about access and equity by providing funds to institutions of higher learning or establishing institutions under its control. The state also largely finances students directly by paying for their education as consumers. If one has inadequate means to pay for education, the state would provide resources for the same. The so called 'voucher system' and various schemes of scholarships and loans come in this category. Thus, the state indirectly subsidises education either through educational institutions or through the receiver of education.

Alongside state funding, American education is the responsibility of the local Governments, parents, students, alumni and, most importantly, private and voluntary bodies. There are universities which are purely private with no governmental subsidy whatsoever. The universities of Yale, Princeton, Perdue amongst others are the world famous universities known for high quality education available to those who could afford to pay.

Thus, there is a dual system of public and private education with traditional distinctions based primarily on the means of their financing and the nature of control. The United States is committed to preserving this dual system of higher education by maintaining both public as well as private institutions.

The higher education system in the U.K. shares some of its features with those in the USA. Self governing nature of the universities and their administrative and financial autonomy are most important. The Universities of Oxford and Cambridge which are nearly 800 years old and the Universities of London and Durham founded in the early part of the 19th century, though not strictly private in the American style and manner, are independent and self governing academic bodies. Their funds, except those required for the capital projects come from their own resources such as income from endowments, consultancy income of the faculty, donations, support from industry, voluntary subscriptions from alumni and tuition fees.

Privatisation of Higher Education in India – Case for and Against

The private initiative in education, especially higher education is not altogether new to India. Some of the leading universities namely, the Banaras Hindu University and the Aligarh Muslim University came up with the efforts of certain dedicated individuals and financial support of the community at large. Again, a large number of educational institutions in the country especially those concerned with general and professional higher education have been established on private and voluntary initiative with or without financial subsidy from the Government.

In the context of the current changing social and economic fabric of the country, it appears almost certain to go in for private funding of education. The recent paradigm shift in Indian economic and political philosophy has led to the demand of private universities so as to meet the challenge of contemplated open economy and the demand for qualitative human resources and high level of R & D.

There are views for and against privatisation of higher education in India. While some have started criticizing the concept even before it has come to be defined and taken off the ground, others consider it very useful and indeed inevitable. So much so that proposals for setting up

private universities affiliating the privately funded institutions are being discussed. For one thing, there is no denying the fact that higher education is comparatively less expensive in India even though under-developed countries like Bangladesh and developed ones like the US, Japan, Australia and many others have successfully switched over to privatisation of education without making it a crass. Can India also think on these lines especially if the money earned can be "ploughed back" into the educational sector for its own improvement?

Summing up, a clear cut policy of the Government of India regarding privatisation of higher education is unfortunately not available at the present moment. We wonder if there is one at all. At any rate, the move is lacking in transparency. One thing is, however, clear from the occasional official pronouncements that there is a need for supplementing Government measures by the efforts of the non-Government organisations and the institutions themselves to generate resources. This, in a way, does amount to partial privatisation calling for caution against, amongst others things the following:

- a. resultant commercialisation of education,
- b. obstacles in merit based admissions,
- c. deterioration in academic standards,
- d. encroachment in institutions & autonomy,
- e. service conditions of teachers, and
- f. education becoming subservient to market logic advanced by the private sector in the country.

RASHTRIYA UCHCHATAR SHIKSHA ABHIYAN (RUSA)

Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS), launched in 2013 aims at providing strategic funding to eligible state higher educational institutions. The central funding (in the ratio of 60:40 for general category States, 90:10 for special category states and 100% for union territories) would be norm based and outcome dependent. The funding would flow from the central ministry through the state governments/union territories to the State Higher Education Councils before reaching the identified institutions. The funding to states would be made on the basis of critical appraisal of State Higher Education Plans, which would describe each state's strategy to address issues of equity, access and excellence in higher education.

Objectives

The salient objectives of RUSA are to:

- Improve the overall quality of state institutions by ensuring conformity to prescribed norms and standards and adopt accreditation as a mandatory quality assurance framework.

- Usher transformative reforms in the state higher education system by creating a facilitating institutional structure for planning and monitoring at the state level, promoting autonomy in State Universities and improving governance in institutions.
- Ensure reforms in the affiliation, academic and examination systems.
- Ensure adequate availability of quality faculty in all higher educational institutions and ensure capacity building at all levels of employment.
- Create an enabling atmosphere in the higher educational institutions to devote themselves to research and innovations.
- Expand the institutional base by creating additional capacity in existing institutions and establishing new institutions, in order to achieve enrolment targets.
- Correct regional imbalances in access to higher education by setting up institutions in unserved & underserved areas.
- Improve equity in higher education by providing adequate opportunities of higher education to SC/STs and socially and educationally backward classes; promote inclusion of women, minorities, and differently abled persons.

COMPONENTS

RUSA would create new universities through upgradation of existing autonomous colleges and conversion of colleges in a cluster. It would create new model degree colleges, new professional colleges and provide infrastructural support to universities and colleges. Faculty recruitment support, faculty improvements programmes and leadership development of educational administrators are also an important part of the scheme. In order to enhance skill development the existing central scheme of Polytechnics has been subsumed within RUSA. A separate component to synergise vocational education with higher education has also been included in RUSA. Besides these, RUSA also supports reforming, restructuring and building capacity of institutions in participating state.

The following are the primary components of RUSA that capture the key action and funding areas that must be pursued for the fulfilment of the targets:

- Up gradation of existing autonomous colleges to Universities
- Conversion of colleges to Cluster Universities
- Infrastructure grants to Universities
- New Model Colleges (General)
- Upgradation of existing degree colleges to model colleges
- New Colleges (Professional)
- Infrastructure grants to colleges
- Research, innovation and quality improvement

- Equity initiatives
- Faculty Recruitment Support
- Faculty improvements
- Vocationalisation of Higher Education
- Leadership Development of Educational Administrators
- Institutional restructuring & reforms
- Capacity building & preparation, data collection & planning