



Globalization and higher education

Manju Shukla

Associate Professor, Hindi, Govt. P.G. College, Noida, Uttar Pradesh, India

Abstract

Education in today's time is not knowledge-oriented. Rather it is marks-oriented. The race among students is to obtain high scores so that they can get into prestigious universities or well-paying jobs. However, with this ideology comes concerning problems about the future generation- who will not be proficient, skilled, or passionate simply because they were trapped by competition that came hand-in-hand with globalization.

Keywords: higher education, globalization, skilled, passionate simply

Introduction

Education is essentially concerned about the future. It has a holistic character. Therefore, everyone capable of contributing to it has a duty and responsibility to do so. If the new generation, at the doorstep of the future, finds itself ill-equipped, it will hold us responsible for its inadequacies. Higher education has been accorded as a special place of importance because it provides ideas and means to give shape to the future as well as sustain other levels of education. The quality of life and pace of development of a nation depends on the ideological climate, the widespread perception of history, culture, tradition, and values, and the feeling of confidence in human capability to overcome material, social and spiritual problems of living. Higher education also supplies a wide range of incredibly sophisticated and ever-changing variety of manpower needed in the industry, agriculture, administration, and services.

Higher education cannot have a better goal than the excellence of human life, personality, and society; the excellence of international and national pursuits as well as the excellence of the whole of humanity on the planet earth.

That all human beings be healthy and happy should be the endeavor of higher education. The ambit of higher education should cover all subjects, concerned with living and non-living things. Globalization has also not only underlined the need for higher education reforms but emphasized wider utilization of IT, emphasis on R&D, and investment in human capital development.

Today the government is opening up the education sector for foreign universities but how this measure will help underprivileged students is uncertain. On one hand, the private colleges are marketizing the education system transforming it into a commodity to be sold while on the other hand, the government institutions are suffering from chronic mismanagement and indiscipline. The apathy of the government is reinforced by the silence of the people in this area. Higher education is completely out of reach for the lower and middle classes. The treatment of education as a commodity that can be gained through money or power cannot be accepted.

The question of access and equity has always troubled planners in every country. Globalization, liberalization, and privatization have made it more complicated. The problems of higher education are multi-dimensional. We will discuss here only problems related to curricula, communication, and evaluation. Absenteeism has become a common problem nowadays. Around 60 to 65 percent of students at the undergraduate level remain absent from classes.

In the existing education system, qualifying for the examinations is the sole objective of the students. Thus, the meaning of education is taken to qualify the examinations so as to get promoted to higher classes and not to gain knowledge. Moreover, education imparted to students in social sciences and humanities is not employment oriented.

Each year the number of students enrolling in colleges and universities is increasing. The size of a standard class in colleges and universities is 80 students. The increased number of students in a class is difficult to manage by the teacher with the conventional mode of teaching. In the area of information and communication technology, our degree colleges are lagging behind in their use.

In conventional education, the system of evaluation is very poor. The burning problems at national and international levels, frequent elections in the universities/colleges, state, and country levels have further affected classroom teaching.

Higher education in India has grown rapidly during the last sixty years. The environment of learning has also taken a very radical turn within the classroom and pedagogical process due to the impact of globalization. There are a huge number of universities and affiliated colleges in the country. The quality of these institutions is highly varied and some might even be below the threshold level in terms of basic infrastructure and quality. The University Grants Commission, New Delhi has been committed to the maintenance of standards and to enhancing the quality of higher education in the country. On the recommendation of the National Policy on education (1956) and Programme of Action (POI-1992), the UGC has established a National Assessment and

Accreditation Council (NAAC)- an assessment institution at Bangalore in 1994, to assess and accredit institutions of Higher education in the country. The assessment and accreditation process is broadly used for understanding the 'quality status' of an institution. The accreditation status indicates that the University/ College/ Institution meets the standard of quality set by the accreditation agency in terms of curriculum, teaching, learning and evaluation, faculty, research and development, infrastructure and learning resources, governance and leadership, financial services, and student services. Therefore, the institution should have at least adequate human, financial and physical resources, and the potential to attain its goals.

Now the question arises as to how these problems can be resolved. In our opinion, there are two ways to ensure quality. One is our old view of inspection and strictness by regulatory authorities, reviewing of norms, and accreditation by various government bodies. Here, a point of importance is that if these institutions are not getting any financial support, then why should they care about the various norms laid out by various regulatory authorities. We should think of a new practice based on Milton Freedman's concept of free economy and market competition.

History cannot be reversed; the increasing private investment in the education sector cannot be restrained now and neither is it desirable. The need of the hour is to evolve such a mechanism that restrains the increasing commodification of education and channelizes it to become a source of knowledge and innovation revolution. Globalization has transformed this world into a global village and India, by rejuvenating its higher education, can emerge as a global leader in the field of education only through strong, positive, and firm efforts.

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