



HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA: A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Education in general and higher education in particular is the soul of the any country in the world. Education and health are the top priorities of all the nations. Without giving higher education opportunities to its youths a country can not develop. India is one of the developing countries in the world. In terms of population, it has second place in world. Therefore, it is a big challenge for a country like India to deal in higher education. System of higher education in India is changing rapidly. Since independence, the system of higher education in India has grown remarkably. It is the largest higher education system in the world in terms of the number of institutions. Despite this, GER (Gross Enrollment Ratio) is very poor. There are many inadequacies that affect the system.

Key Words: Challenges, Education, Government, Higher, India, Institutions, Knowledge, System, Universities, World.

Introduction:

Man has always been in search of knowledge. India is the land of scholars and learners. Education in general and higher education in particular is the soul of the any country in the world. Education and health are the top priorities of all the nations. Without giving higher education opportunities to its youths a country can not develop. India is one of the developing countries in the world. In terms of population, it has second place in world.

Higher Education in India a Rewiew:

In ancient times, India was regarded for its universities like Taxila, Nalanda and Vikramshila all over the world. Learners from all over the world came in India to get knowledge in these institutes. Establishment of modern universities in India was first recommended by British Colonial Administration in 1854. In 1857, universities in Calcutta, Bombay and Madras were set up by British rule. When India got independence, there were 20 universities and 591 colleges. After independence, the growth has been very impressive. India now has a highly developed higher education system that offers a facility of education and training in almost all aspects of human creation and intellectual endeavors. India's higher education system is the third largest in the world after China and United States in terms of enrollment. However, in terms of the number of institutions, India is the largest higher education system in the world. According to an annual report of MHRD 2009-10, India had 26455 institutes of higher education, including 504 universities and university level institutions and 25951 colleges. The education commission set up in 1964 under the chairmanship of Dr. D.S. Kothari had recommended that government should spent at least 6% of its GDP on education. However, in over 47 years, we have been able to achieve only half of the target. Knowledge commission additionally recommends an increase of at least 1.5% of GDP for higher education out of a total 6% of GDP for education overall.

In India the institutional framework consists of universities established by an act of Parliament or of a State Legislature (State Universities), Deemed universities, Institutes of National Importance and Institutions established by State Legislative Act and college affiliated with University (both government-aided and unaided).

In India technical education is treated as a separate sector. There are many centrally funded institutions like IITs, IIMs, NITs, IISc etc. State Governments have also set up technical institutions. AICTE approves and regulates technical institutions in India. India has also developed an open University system to encourage distance learning. Indira Gandhi National

Open University (IGNOU) is the pioneer and now there are about 14 universities in India. The open universities in India are regulated by the Distance Education Council of India (DEC), New Delhi. Universities in India both, public and private are spread across the country. U.G.C. is the main governing body that maintains the standards in higher education, advises the government and helps co-ordinate between centre and states. Despite this impressive statistics, Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) in India is very poor as compared to the other developing nations. Currently India's GER stands at 15% and government has targeted it to take to a level of 20% by 2020. There are some other inadequacies also like demand and supply gap, poor focus on research and lack of quality education affecting the system of higher education in India.

Government has taken many initiatives to meet these challenges as follows:

- A proposal for establishment of an autonomous National Commission for Higher Education and Research (NCHER)
- A proposal to establish 14 innovation universities aiming at world class standards.
- Review of the functioning of existing Deemed universities.
- Passing of the Right of children to free and compulsory Education Bill.
- Launching of new scheme of educational loans for economically weaker students.
- Establishment of NAAC (National Assessment and Accreditation Council) by UGC to maintain the quality and standards in Higher Education.
- In fact, government has done considerably well if we analyze the statistics and there are some very good proposals brought by the government.

Conclusion:

The system of higher education that started in India in ancient times is now taking a new shape. In this paper we presented the development of higher education in India. We have also identified the key initiatives by the government. Central and States governments are doing best efforts to bring the quality and quantity in higher education. Central government is responsible for major policies related to higher education in the country. It provides grants to the U.G.C. and establishes central universities. It is also responsible for declaration of Educational institutions as Deemed to be University. State governments are responsible for establishment of State universities and colleges and provide grant for their maintenance.



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