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Higher Education : An Overview

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ABSTRACT

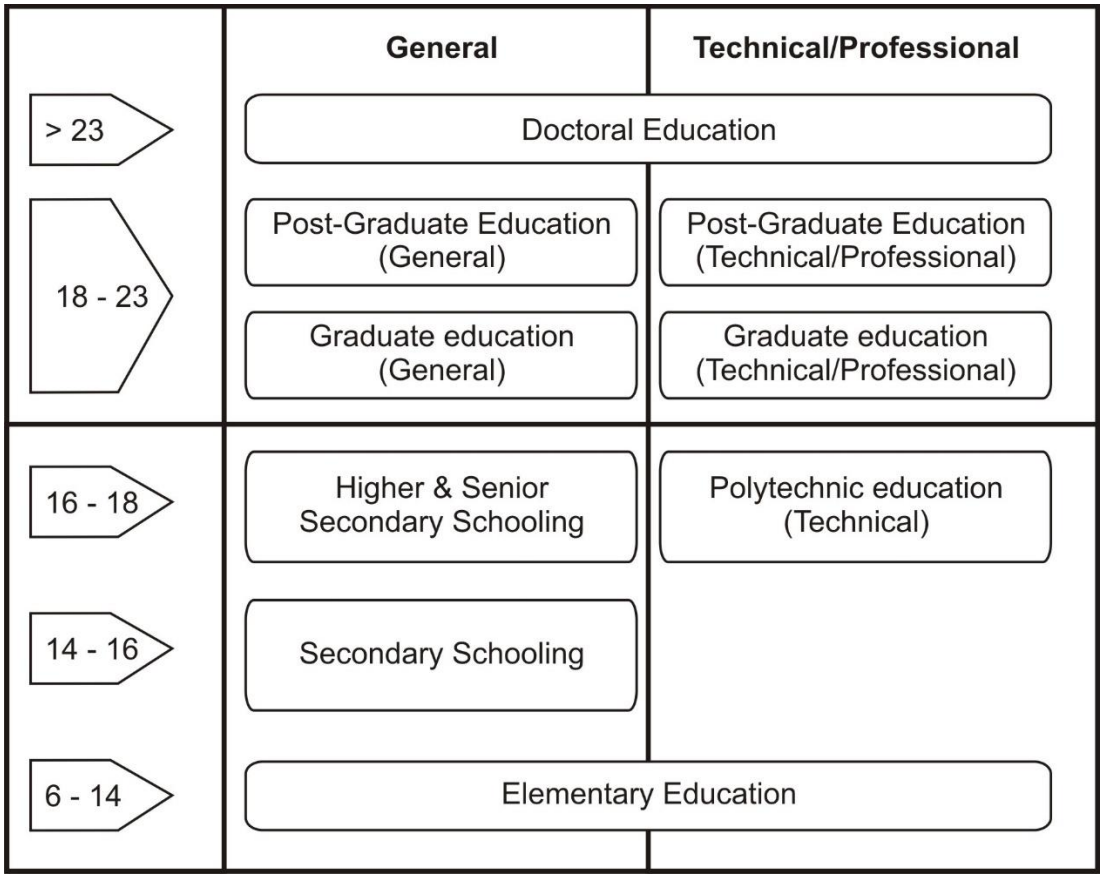
India's Higher Education system is the largest in the world in terms of number of institutions. Higher education in India has undergone rapid development after post-independence era. Every society gives importance to education because it is a panacea for all evils. It is the key to solve the various problems of life. Education has been described as a process of waking up to life also. This article attempts to examine the scenario of higher education in India. Besides the university departments of education and their affiliated colleges, government and government aided institutions; private and self-financing colleges and open universities are also engaged in education. Although there have been challenges to higher education in the past, these most recent calls for reform may provoke a fundamental change in higher education. These disparate literatures have not been tied together in a way that would examine the impact of fundamental change from the policy level to the institutional level and to the everyday lives of college and university administrators, faculty and students. Now the time has come to create a second wave of institution building and of excellence in the fields of education, research and capability building. We need higher educated people who are skilled and who can drive our economy forward.
This paper discussed the issues of higher education and direction to improve the higher education in India.
Keywords: *development, higher education, post-independence, university*

Introduction

A sound higher education sector plays an important role In economic growth and development of a nation. Higher education, in terms of its relevance and importance, enjoys a significant position in the education system as it equips people with appropriate knowledge and skills to be gainfully employed. India has one of the largest systems of higher education in the world offering facility of education and training in almost all aspects of human creativity and intellectual endeavour. In the context of current demographic structure of India where the majority of population is below the age of 25 years, the role of higher education is critical.

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Figure 1: Structure of Higher Education



Source : Deloitte analysis

The general education mainly consists of higher education courses in arts, commerce and science, the technical education on the other hand comprises of programmes of education, research and training in engineering technology, architecture, town planning, management, pharmacy and applied arts and crafts. Professional education includes courses in medical education, law and other specialized fields.

Infrastructure

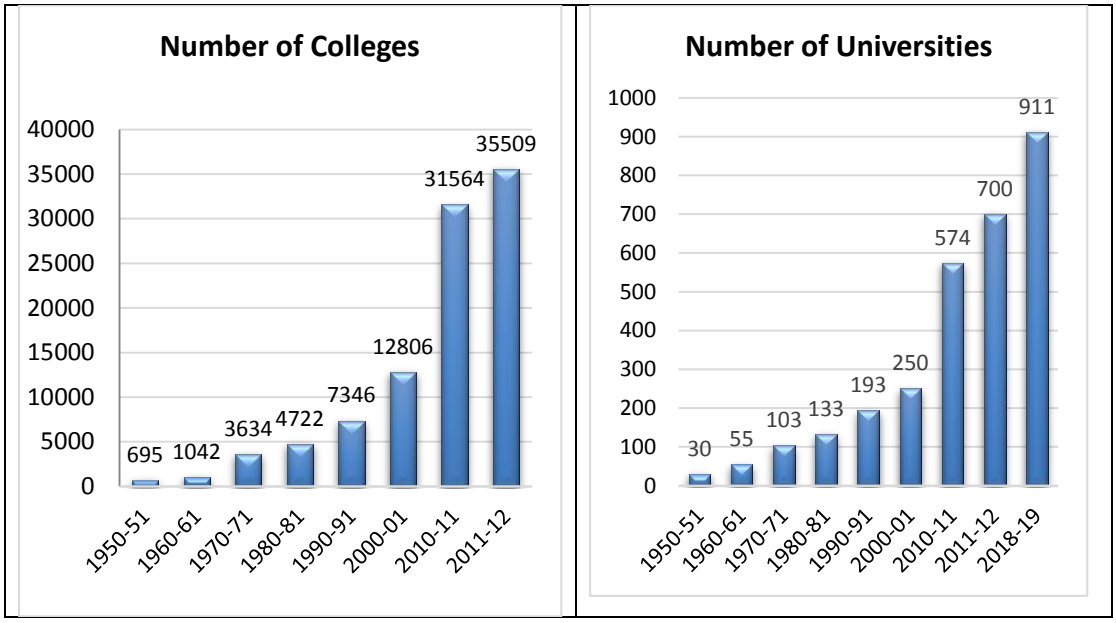
Number of Higher Education Institutions

Higher education in India has witnessed an impressive growth over the years. The number of higher educational institutions (HEIs) has increased from about 30 universities and 695 colleges in 1950-51 to about 911 universities (as of 2018-19) and 35,000 colleges (as of 2011-12) as per a recent UGC report1. With an annual enrolment of above 28 million (including enrolment under Open and Distance

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Learning system), India is today ranked as the third largest higher education system in the world after US and China.

Figure 2: Higher Education Institutions in India

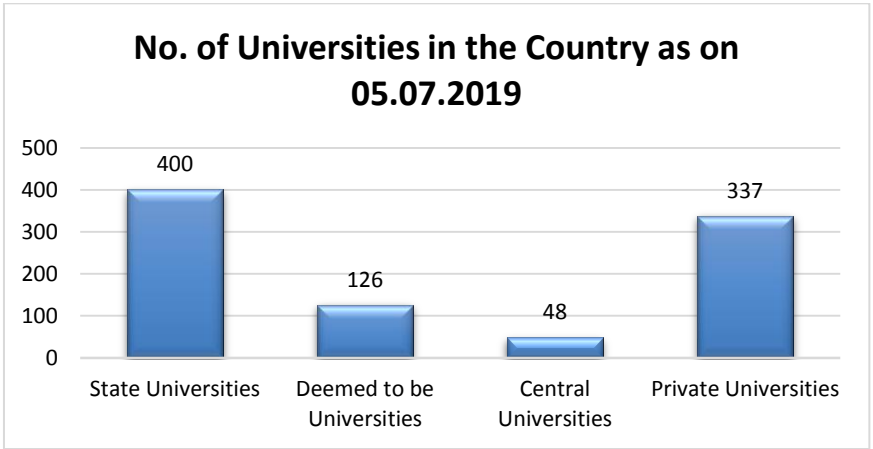


Source : UGC Higher Education at a Glance – June 2019

As may be seen from Figure 2 above, there has been a threefold increase in the number of HEIs in the country during the last decade.

Higher Education Institutions by type

The break-up of number of HEIs in the country shows that the share of state universities is the highest (44%) followed by private universities (36%), deemed universities (11%), institutes of national importance (5%) and central universities (5%).



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The public expenditure in higher education remained close to 1% of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) over the years, which has been quite low in proportion to the burgeoning requirements of this sector. This has led to an exponential growth of private sector institutions. The number of private HEIs has increased by more than 60% during the five year period between 2007 and 2012, as illustrated in Figure 3. As a result, the share of private sector in terms of total HEIs has increased to about 64% in 20122.

Figure 3 : Number of Private HEIs

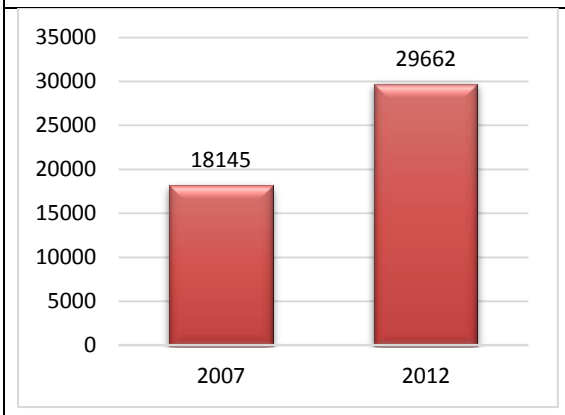
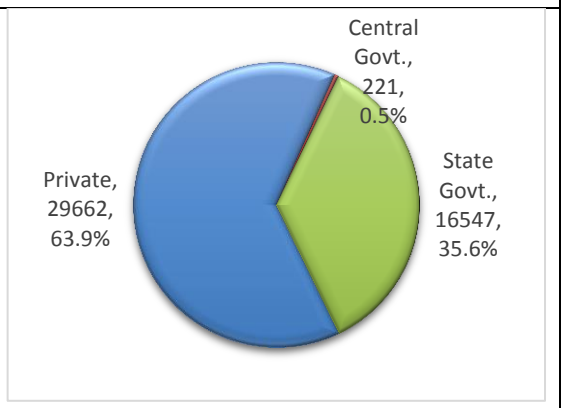


Figure 4 : Typewise Distribution of HEIs, 2012



Source : Twentith Five Year Plan)2012-17) – Social Sectors

Enrolment

Growth in enrolment and GER

The increase in the enrolment figures is consistent with the expansion of HEIs over the years. The total enrolment in higher education has increased from 0.21 million in 1950-51 to about 22 million in 2011-12, while the GER has increased from 0.40% in 1950-51 19.4% in 2012-133.

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Figure 5 : India's GER in higher edcation (in %)

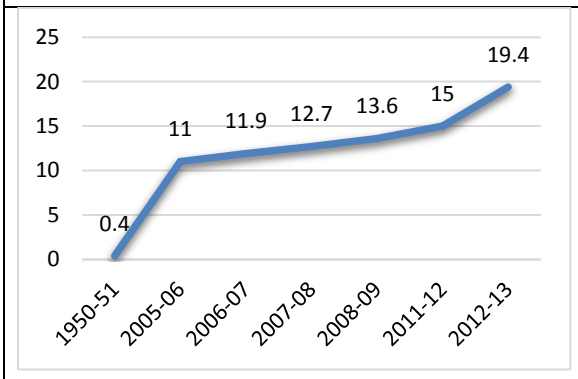
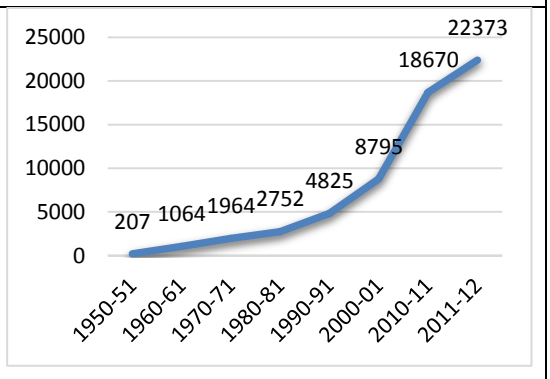


Figure 6 : Enrolment in higher education (in 000')



Source : UGC Higher Education at a Glance – June 2013 and RUSA 2013

While we have been able to cross the GER of 15%, which can largely be attributed to the focused efforts of the 11th Five Year Plan, a lot more needs to done in order to translate the favourable age-structure of the country in to a demographic dividend.

Institution-wise enrolment

The increase in number of private HEIs has also resulted in an increased private sector share in the total enrolment. The share of private sector in terms of total enrolment has grown from 33% in 2001 to 59% in 20124. While the number of private HEIs account for about 64% of the total HEIs, the share of private sector in total enrolment stands at 59%, as illustrated in the following figures. The central and state government institutes on the other hand account for 2.6% and 38.6% of the total enrolments, respectively.

Figure 7 : Share of Higher Education in enrolment

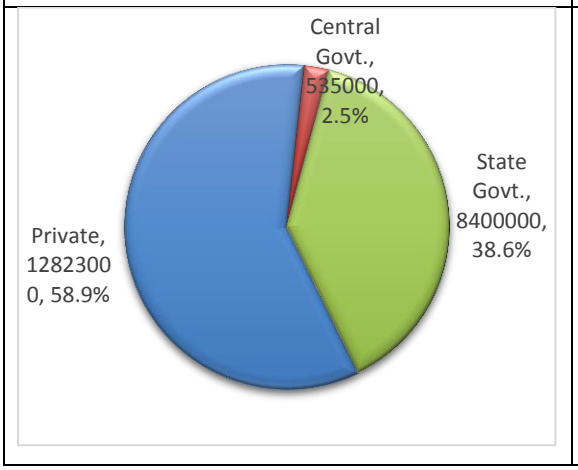
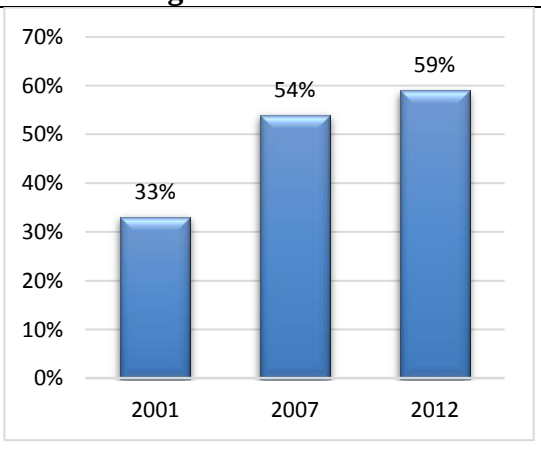


Figure 8 : Percentage share of private sector in higher education enrolments



Source : Twelfth Five Year Plan (2012-17) – Social Sectors

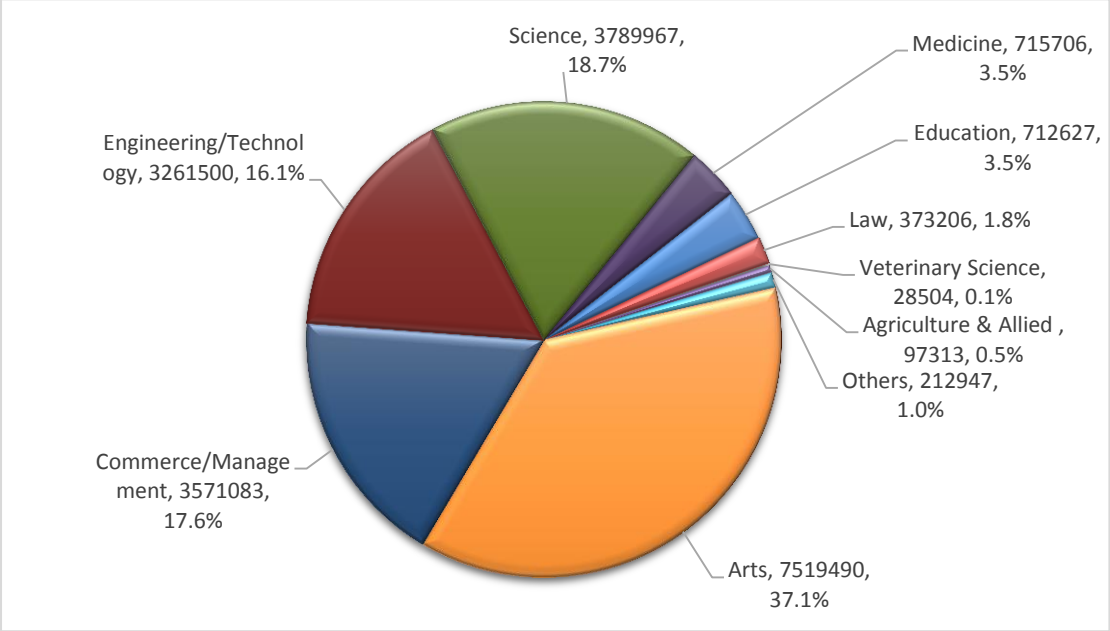
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The government is targeting to achieve a GER of 30% by 20205 which will require creation of additional enrolment capacity at an unprecedented scale. Accordingly, the 12th Five Year Plan envisages creating an additional enrolment capacity of 10 million, which is expected to raise the GER from present level of 17.4% to 25.2% in 2017-18. The 12th Five Year Plan also acknowledges the need for a continued and growing role of the private sector in higher education.

Infact, of the additional enrolment capacity of 10 million to be created during the 12th Five Year Plan, 6.2 million 6 is expected to be created by the private sector.

Enrolment by course

In terms of distribution of enrolment across various courses, Arts has been the favourite choice amongst student with 37.09% of enrolment, followed by 18.64% in Science, 17.57% in Commerce/Management and 16.06% in Engineering/Technology.



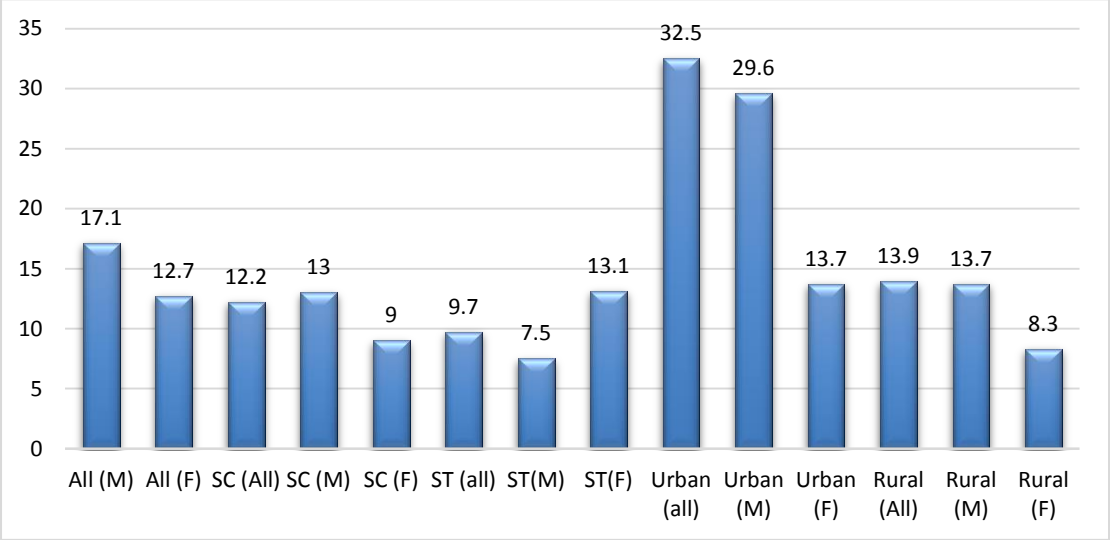
Source : Twelfth Five Year Plan (2012-17) – Social Sectors

Enrolment by social groups

The overarching goal of a progressive higher education system is to ensure that the education is available uniformly to all concerned without any bias. Therefore, it is imperative to understand higher education system on various social parameters. The below mentioned figure provides an overview of GER in higher education for different social groups.

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Figure 10 : GER in higher education on various social parameters (2009-10)



Source : NSS 66th Rund 2009-10 some of the figures have been estimated from unit level data of NSS 66th Round of Employment and Unemployment by Bino Paul, Labour Market Research Facility TISS and RUSA

Qualitative aspects

Faculty

Availability of good quality faculty is a critical input in the functioning of a sound higher education system. While there has been a consistent growth in the faculty strength in higher education, it has not matched the growth in student enrolment numbers. While the student enrolments have gone up by more than 100 times between 1950-51 and 2011-12, the number of teachers has gone up by less than 40 times, which implies the student-teacher ratios have declined by about 2.5 times over this period. This has also led to the country's poor performance on student-teacher ratio at the international level, as can be seen in the figure below.

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Figure 11 : Growth in Faculty Strength

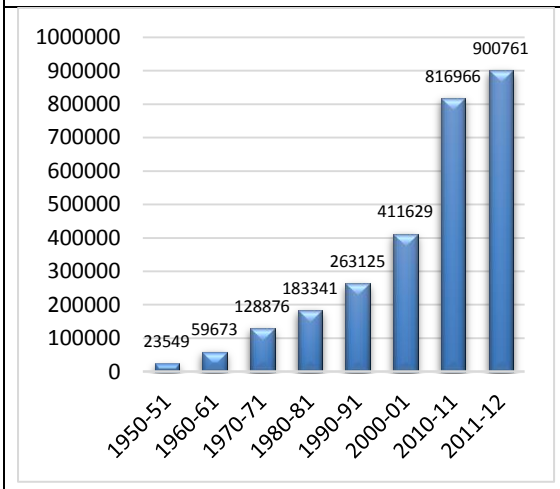
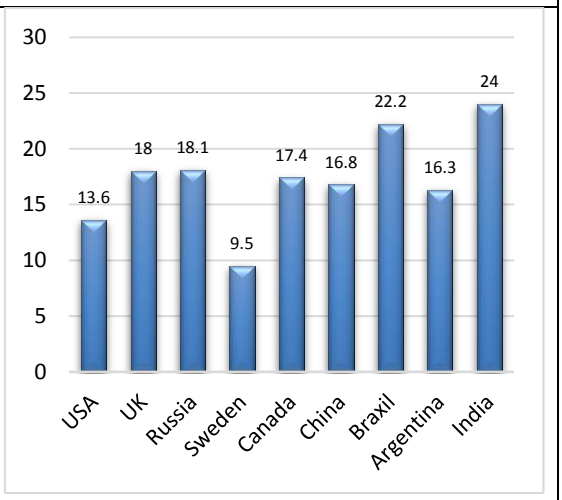


Figure 12 : Student Teacher Ratio in Select Countries

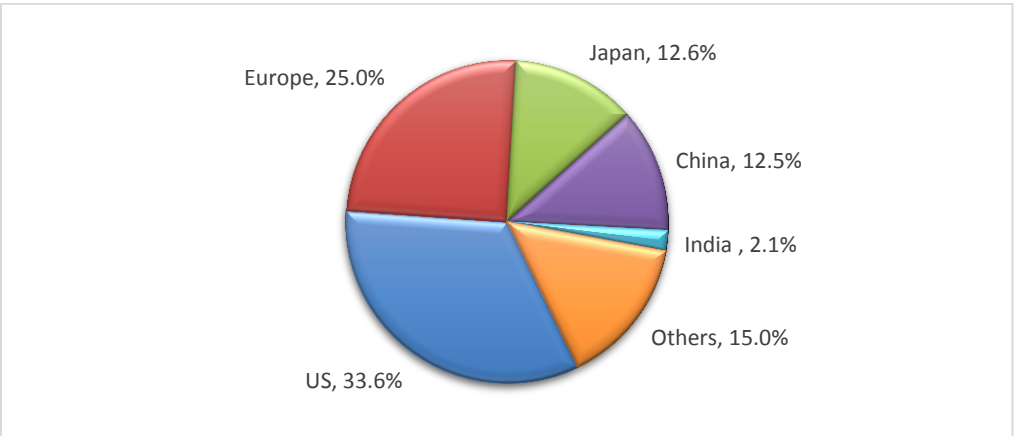


Source : UGC Higher Education at a Glance – June 2-13, UNESCO Institute of Statistics and Statistics of Higher and Technical Education in India 2009 MHRD

Research

Research is an essential component of a higher education system to ensure it remains vibrant and is quick to respond to and anticipate changes arising in the contextual conditions. One of the input parameters to ascertain progress in research is the quantum of spending on research and development activities. As per a study 9, India's share in R&D spending to the total global R&D spending stands at 2.1% while the share of China is 12.5%. Figure 15 compares the R&D spending of India and China with other developed economies. There is clearly a need to increase spending on R&D as we move forward to become a knowledge economy.

Figure 15 : Share of Total Global R & D spending



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Source : Battelle, R &D Magazine – 2009 RD Funding Final Report

Worldwide India was well known as GOLDEN BIRD, due to its natural resources. India has a biggest area and is densely populated and is full of natural resources and forests. India is a leading country in agriculture. Now those have gone when India imported grains, spices etc. There is a revolutionary change and now India is among the biggest exporter of wheat, rice, spices and many other crops. Punjab itself being a small state feeds all the states with wheat, rice etc. The white revolution in Gujarat feeds all the states with milk and milk products. No doubt India is one of the biggest country in the world and is densely populated with the people of various castes and communities. Inspite of full filling all kind of demands of the nationals still India is one of the biggest exporter in the world. Therefore India has a say in world.

India itself is a very big consumer, therefore all other countries are always eager to have trade relations. We have many big and small to the people. Out this nation has achieved tremendous records world wide in Education sector, which results many foreign countries to send their youth for studies to all over India in various universities, who at a time would help their countries to grow.

Most of the colleges today are owned by the politicians, bureaucrats and industrialists. Enjoying a key post in government, they avail all kind of facilities for their colleges and they appoint faculties as per UGC programme. But the same time the self finance college management do not follow GO's/UGC norms to pay the salary to their highly education faculties. No doubt these highly, educated qualified efficient faculties are selected by the nominated subject experts only. Also this approval is granted by the respective Vice-chancellor of the Universities.

The courses/programmes run by the self finance colleges are highly charged from the candidates and students wishing to participate the courses/programmes. Thus exploitation is on extreme. This is encouraged at the universities and its aided colleges has limited seats. At the same time the faculties depute to the courses/programmes have to face partiality of the administration of their colleges and universities which effects the quality and level of education.

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Recently contractual culture has been introduced in this Education sector which is brought in force by politicians, bureaucrats etc. which are very difficult to execute. Therefore this contractual culture makes a history of exploitation.

It is true that a teacher is always a backbone of society. The state of teachers today has been never before. It was a time when teachers held a highly respectful status in the society. But the facts are that in aided colleges a dual policy is ruled under one roof. The regulator much highly paid, but inspite of having same equal qualifications and efficiency the contractual teachers are barely paid Rs. Five to twelve thousand only (Rs. 5000 to Rs. 12,000) at the time they fail to avail facilities as of permanent faculties.

Even the government neglects to look into this matter. The Hon'ble Supreme Court and Hon'ble High Court has direct the Government and Universities to regularize these contractual faculties. Even UGC 14 Plan recommends to regularize there employed teachers and has directed to pay the equal scale to their regular teachers. This unfair policy shows Higher Education to be high source of healthy income.

Today self finance institutions are established by the influence of politicians developed funds, government land, say in government and bribery etc. With the help of fake approvals they run there programmes/courses by inefficient and competent faculties by paying them just a small salary which drops the graph of quality of education.

Recently a moment had come into notice of the Government that one of its university had given an approval of the faculties submitting fake NET certificates. This figure has been recorded 117. Therefore the government cancelled the approval.

Now those days are no more when competent people with the help of their own earned wealth and efforts established institutions for the Education and upbringing of society. Now this concept is completely changed and has become a wealth making industry. How this noble profession of education is in the hand of education mafias, politicians.

Just getting one opportunity to become MLA of the running government and having atleast five Nos. of Degree Colleges. Secondly if getting just a chance of being a

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Hon'ble Minister in the running government and getting an university been established.

Our government just fails to understand the results of this culture which is leading to situation where none of the rules are followed. If the government tries to do so it fails to get them implemented. As her own people are playing a major role in Higher Education programmes and the competent officers fails to restore the weak points because of the influenceable people.

Now an unemployment among the educated people is rising day by day. That's true there is no lack of opportunities. Its fact that the each of these are opportunities for skilled people. Do we, by writing over exploitation develop skills in our students. Government lacking of information over as above said educational programmes shows its negligence towards the Higher Education. Same time the awarded degrees to their participants does not declare the students whether being of self finance programme or the regular. On the other hand the teachers of as above said programmes bear a tag of self finance teachers. There is a G.O. for education of CPF from the salary of teachers. But this is not implemented in about 95% of the colleges.

A G.O. of 23 Aug.2013 directs all the colleges to submit their yearly audited income and expenditures details to their respective universities and to the Government latest by the 30 June of the following year.

Since most of the colleges are owned by the government employees and elected political leader etc., the government fails to take any strict actions against them. Therefore Higher Education Department feels helpless in this matter.

It's a matter of great pride to target year 2020 for higher Education for the Developing India. By negligence of government of the teachers we cannot imagine of a fully developed state/Nation. A strong nation always need a strong back bone for its Higher Education ie skilled teachers. The migration of skilled faculties to the other growing nations shows that they are awarded with great respect, handsome salaries and facilities. Government should take solid measures in this sector to reduce the rates of migration of the teachers.

There are few suggestions for this sector ie.

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1- To establish a balanced co-ordination among UGC and State Government.
2- Strict measures only to approve capable and skilled faculties for self finance programmes running in aided colleges and universities.
3- To pay the same scale and facilities as per UGC norms to all there employed teachers.
4- To prepare and strictly enforce service manuals for self finance teachers not as a 6 lines G.O.
5- To ensure that the GOs are strictly followed by the aided colleges, private colleges and their respective universities.
6- Strict actions should be taken against the management and their administration if found defaulter.
7- Strict and effectives rules for the regular attendance of students not less than 75%.

Conclusion

After independence, there has been tremendous increase in institutions of higher learning in all disciplines. But with the quantitative growth has it been able to attend to the core issue of quality. India is today one of the fastest developing countries of the world with the annual growth rate going above 9%. In order to sustain that rate of growth, there is need to increase the number of institutes and also the quality of higher education in India. To reach and achieve the future requirements there is an urgent need to relook at the Financial Resources, Access and Equity, Quality Standards, Relevance and at the end the Responsiveness. To attain and sustain national, regional or international quality, certain components are particularly relevant, notably careful selection of staff and continuous staff development, in particular through the promotion of appropriate programs for academic development, including teaching/learning methodology and mobility between countries, between higher education institutions and the world of work, as well as student mobility within and between countries. Internal self-evaluation and external review must be conducted openly by independent specialists, if possible with international experts

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