Research Perspective : Role, function and place of private universities in India

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Abstract

Education enhances development in society. Indian Higher education system composed of Government Universities and the private Universities. The Universities education system stands at the Apex of education system in a country. They also work as the torch bearer and care taker of the education system in the society.

There are various stages of education out of which the university education is the most important one. There is basic difference between university education and other lower stages of education. A little care of the creation and updating of their reading materials are required at the lower level, whereas at the university level the lot of research and brain storming apart from the huge resources are required.

When the government of India felt the crunch of various types of resources and the participation of private players in the field of education, the government of India opened the doors for the private players in the field of education which led, to some extent the elevation of literacy rates and the poverty in India. The private universities are playing a crucial role in fulfilling the aim and objectives of all round development of the society.

The private universities in India, being in an infancy stage are facing a lot of problems in general and the financial resources in particular; in a hope on being mature the problems will wither away with the advent of entrepreneurship and innovative development in the educational sector.

Keywords: crunch, education system, entrepreneurship, innovation.

Introduction

When the government of India felt the crunch of various types of resources and the participation of private players in the field of education, the government of India opened the doors for the private players in the field of education which led to some extent the elevation of literacy rates and the poverty in India. The private universities are playing a crucial role in fulfilling the aim and objectives of all round development of the society. The higher education of a good quality is critical for a nation to become globally competitive. In the contemporary Indian scenario of knowledge revolution, good quality in higher education determines the growth of a nation. In India there is a large number of unemployed graduates and postgraduates, there is a shortage of skill workers who can acquire new skills and innovate. It is in this context that private universities may take a lead in innovating their programs and curriculum, keeping in mind, the trend and current competitive market scenario in India.

The private universities in India, being at an infancy stage are facing a lot of problems in general and the financial resources in particular; in a hope on being mature the problems will wither away with the advent of entrepreneurship and innovation development. The Government of India's new initiatives and enthusiasm in supporting the higher education is to be appreciated. The initiative of starting several new IITs, 5 IISERs, 14 National Universities and 16 Central Universities with better administrative compliance, and with an open, free and creative academic environment will undoubtedly change the horizon of higher education in the country.

Present Higher education Scenario in India:

Higher education in India in general and states in particular is in deep trouble. There are variations in terms of course curriculum, number of papers, faculty positions etc, within state itself. The backwardness of a region gets reflected in the education system. The Universities in the states are in a neglected state where no adequate funds are available and many of the faculty positions are lying vacant. The various traditional courses like MA in various fields of social sciences are not lucrative for the private and unaided institute.

Commercialization of higher education is changing the character and structure of higher education. It is questionable, why the universities located in remote or backward regions are not making progress. It is further to find out if a separate criterion for evaluating and assessing may be evolved and implemented for assessing their performance, where old and traditional universities are lagging behind in terms of quality, whereas newly established colleges and Universities are performing better in terms of available infrastructure and quality.

The private institutes are operating like government institutes, maintaining records and lot of paper work. The professors are involved in completing the formalities, hence the genuineness in the system is slowly vitiating. Research work is undertaken because of the requirement for higher salary and promotions. The passion, interest in particular field is not the factor to drive the researcher for the research work.

The motto in Indian higher system should be the right person in the right position without interference of any political pressure, will definitely solve the problem in higher education

All the activities / policies of universities are good on papers and rules, but the implementation part to be taken care of. The only good system in papers by UGC is not enough but the proper implementation is desired and required

Features of Education System Higher Education in India is in a pathetic condition. The central government funding on education is less than1% of GDP. Thegovernment sponsored capacity building is not sufficient to meet the emerging need for higher education. At present 14.6million students are enrolled in higher education sector. According to FICCIE&Y report to achieve 30% gross enrolment rate (GER) over the next decade the country would need an additional capacity to cater to 25 million new seats. The extra capacity generation would need an extra Rs.10 lakh corers by 2020. At the current budgetary current budgetary allocation for education, the fund would be insufficient. Private sector can bridge the gap in budgetary allocation and required allocation. About 35 - 40 % of teaching staff shortage at Indian universities is a key challenge. The Eleventh Plan aimed at providing quality education toall by focusing on access, equity and quality. The broad issues to be addressed include, inter alia, accessibility, quality, equity, affordability, inclusiveness, funding and regulation, which require a cohesive and integrated approach for solutions.

Poor Employability

Poor industry academia linkages, neglect of soft skills, inability to solve real time problems, mismatch of curriculum and industry needs lead to poor employability of graduates. Lack of uniformity in curriculum Lack of uniformity in various courses being offered by educational institutions. There is no uniformity in the content, pedagogy, and forms of assessments by different private institutions.

Poor Regulation Only161 universities and 4,371 colleges were accredited by The National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) as on March 2011.

Outdated Curricula The curriculum followed in most of the institutes is not able to keep pace with the fast changing economic and socio-technical environment.

Shortage of Faculty

Institutes of higher education are facing acute shortage of good quality faculty. The high ranking students prefer to join the industry due to better career prospects. The restrictions on the academic qualifications sometimes create the challenges in hiring a good quality professionals from the industry. With a GER of 18.8% and enrolment of 17.6 million, access to higher education in India is currently restricted to a limited population There is wide disparity in Higher Education GERs across states, urban and rural areas, gender, and communities.

Inter-state disparity: 31.9% in Delhi vs. 8.3% in Assam

Urban-rural divide: 23.8% in urban areas vs. 7.5% in rural areas

Differences across communities:6.6% for SCs, 6.5% for STs, 8.7% for OBCs, and 17.2% for others

Gender disparity: 10.6% for female vs. 14.4% for male

Faculty shortage: 45% of the positions for professors,51% positions for readers and 53% positions for lecturers were vacant in Indian universities in 2007-08

Deficient physical infrastructure: 48% of universities and 69% of colleges have infrastructure deficiencies

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Poor academic standards: The system is plagued with outdated curricula and ill-equipped libraries (average 9 books per student vs. 53 in IIT Bombay)

Unaccredited institutions: As of March 2011, only 161 universities and 4,371 colleges had been accredited by NAAC.

Steps taken to improve the higher education in India: The Government of India has set itself an aggressive target of achieving 30% GER in Higher Education by 2020, which translates into doubling the GER in the next 8 years. As per recent estimates by NUEPA, in order t achieve this target an additional investment of Rs. 9.5 lakh crore* (USD190 bn), which includes capital expenditure and operating expenditure, has to be made in the next 8 years. To give a perspective, the total allocation to the entire education sector under the 11th Five Year Plan (2007-12) was Rs. 2.7 lakh crore (USD55 bn) out of which higher education's share was only about 30%. Therefore, given the limited support, which Government can provide to this sector in terms of investment, the private sector needs to play a much larger role.

Growing role of private sector: The private sector's role in the higher education sector has been growing at a rapid pace over the last decade and needs to further expand an accelerated rate in order to achieve the GER target.

Existing & Future Opportunities for Private & Foreign Sector Participation:
The number of people entering the Indian higher education sector is growing at a significant rate. According to MHRD data, enrolments have increased from 15.5 mn (GER of 12.4%) in 2006-07 to 17.3mn (GER of 15%) in 2009-10 these figures also reflect an increasing number of young working- age people who continue in the education system instead of dropping out. The number of people in the age bracket of 15-24 years enrolled in educational institutes grew from approximately 30mn in 2004-05 to over 60 mn in 2009-10. These trends present a huge opportunity for private and foreign sector players looking to provide quality education and services in this sector.

Causes for the low standards of Indian Universities- Present Scenario:
Though the Indian educational institutions are toiling with current available resources to standardize the educational institutions as an academic social institution and establishing themselves at an appropriate level, however this Academic Institutionalization Process is in an incubation stage. India has diversified and multi - talented personalities available in plenty, but unfortunately the talent recognition and retention is almost absent. Which form the basis of brain drain? If somehow, the talented people reach at the level of some importance in which

they can either influence the decision making process/ procedure, or in a position to formulate the policies to strengthen the existing educational system, at this movement they are either sacked, some time even straight away, due to the organizational politics or harass in such a way, so that they do not even think of coming back to the education sector in future or transfer them to some other inactive departments in which they normally need not play any role, this dismal situation along with some other factors, has led to the Non existence of Indian academic institutions even in the world's top two hundred academic institutions. There are very few academic institutions, which keeps on boasting of themselves and keeps on competing only within the domestic institutions, not even thinking of, forget about the focusing on international competitive scenario.

Few of the main causes are lack of funding, lack of tangible and non tangible resources, corruption, dense urbanization not leaving any room for future development specially for the integrated / bigger academic institutions (improper urban / town planning), the encroachments and post affect of historical primordial illiteracy factor which was almost omnipresent in the vast demographic area, in the Indian population and the organizational politics actively available in the Indian academic institutions, which normally lead to the brain drain and weathering away of the requisite talent from the Indian academic institutions specially in higher educational institutions. Most dangerous one is the organizational politics. It is the organizational politics in the higher education system, in India, which erodes the talented people to such an extent that they are sometime even forced to take the Banvas (exile). Even the educational institutes of repute are the victim of this phenomenon.

It is requested, that the higher educational institutions in particular and the educational institutions in general should be directed to nurture the talent, not to torture the talent and if found torturing the talent, then it should be treated as the rarest of the rare and should be treated accordingly by scraping its recognition status in the totality and severe punishment to the culprits.

It will not only stop the Indian brain drain, but will also help a lot in infusing the moral values in Indian Academic as well as The Social institutions, along with the motivation to the talented organizational employees to surmount the Indian reputation in the international as well as domestic scenario. If this is implemented in its totality then we can see how Indian educational institutions progress leap and bounds and leads the world in a state of academic accelerated excellence. This is my personal experience as I have seen the educational institution's

working from within. This is not to point out any particular institution, but to put the facts in open forum.

The role of private universities in India

The eradication of illiteracy: The private universities are doing well for the eradication of illiteracy from the society in the country in general and in the local area in particular. Besides eradicating the illiteracy it also eradicates the poverty from the society as a university is able to employee about one thousand odd employees from the area leading to the eradication of poverty.

The development: The private universities are also doing well for the social, cultural, economic and entrepreneurship development in the country through various research and development programs in the academic field.

The values and ethics: The citizens are imbibed with values and ethics through the education imparted by universities, Widening of horizons, the elevation of living standards: The conceptual and application horizons of the citizens are widened; with the help of education the citizens become aware of better utilization of all types of resources for the comforts and longevity.

The control of antisocial activities: The crimes are less in the educated society, the atrocities against the weaker section of the society is minimized. The witchcraft and other old traditional evils wither away with the help of educational orientation of the citizen in general and the youths in particular.

The corporate social responsibility: The private universities are also discharging their corporate social responsibility by elevating the level of education, providing employment opportunity to the masses, developing the surrounding areas, providing various types of facilities to local population thereby elevating the living standard of the area.

Research and development: The private universities also do take various types of research and developmental activities, which benefits a lot to the society at large. For example under the research and developmental activities, one of the private Universities in Rajasthan has taken up successfully the bamboo project in its campus at Jaipur.

Creating a healthy competition: In all the educational hubs in general and the universities in particular create a healthy competition among the competitors to be the achiever and the winner by leaving behind its rival university, all the competing universities are benefited as it is a win - win situation

Benchmarking and branding: With the help of healthy competition all the educational institutions thrive and struggle for the betterment as they are struggling for the good cause, they are motivated with this motivation they try to beat their rivals with full strength thereby giving the maximum possible output. Under this type of competition as the performance of each employee is on the peak, results in branding.

Drawbacks: The system of private education in India is not a defect less one; it has some shortcomings which are to be taken care of. The following are the drawbacks:-

The hiring and firing system: There has been an acute shortage of faculties in the in all the areas of teaching in general and research in particular. (as indicated by Aditi Tandon /TNS- The tribune, Chandigarh, India – main news dated 10th Aug 2011)This phenomenon is not only evident in case of private universities but the government universities are also affected in the same manner. At present about 3,83, 868 teachers are felt short and in the next five years as per the projected demand it will be 13,17,331. This shortage led to the fluctuation in the availability of the faculty during the semester, as the faculties are lured by the competitors of the domain in question.

As the theory of demand and the supply is applicable, the faculty when they get a substantial hike in the salary and the facilities, the switch over is not the problem at all. When the switch over is applicable, the employer try to hold the faculty in question on some or the other pretext or hold his payment in most of the cases.

This type of loss, the shifting faculty tries to make it up with the substantial increase in payment from the new employer. The faculty gains but the student lose, resulting in Win- Lose situation where the one party wins and the other looses, and the students are the most sufferer in this type of situation. Here the student in question is not the single but the class as a whole In another cases when the faculty is fired some time on reasonable ground but most of the time not being reasonable though the ground shown are always reasonable, from the employer's point of view. There are well known reasons which the private university teacher's community understands well. Again the main looser in this case are the students, where the main objective of the private universities or even the government universities is the all round development of the student. The genesis of both the above quoted situation, the credit goes to the shortage of the faculties.

The maintenance of minimum man power: Though there exists the policy of minimum requirement of the man power authenticated by the apex governing bodies, but thanks again,

to the shortage the question arises how to fill the gap. The gap of the shortage of faculties can be filled by deputing the faculties from the industries and other sister concerned areas and departments.

The various types of shortcuts used in private universities: Sometime various types of shortcuts are used during the admission, teaching, etc just to complete the semester, which leads to the degradation of quality of education at the University level.

The job security in the private universities: It is a well known fact and actually speaking there is no job security at all in the private universities, this phobia enhances the apprehension with respect to the future prospectus of the faculty and further deteriorates the problem of job shifting for the slight and marginal hike in the pay.

The fee structure in the private universities: The fee structure is not monitored by the government properly as there appears a lot of difference between the theory and practice of fee structure. There are some universities, where no extra fee is charged other than the static but the case is different in some other universities

The shortage of required funds: Once the governments are unable to feed the required fund and the resources then how we can expect that the private universities, most of them are having meager sources of funds to cater the huge requirement of various resources that is why some universities tries to lure the students for the admission to cater the requirement of their fund. It is also necessary to realize the fact that private institutions have additional hurdles compared to those faced by the Government universities, as they need to generate funds for developing the infrastructure and pay the salary of their staff and faculties, which comes from the tax-payers' money in case of government universities.

The role of government agencies: The exponential increase in the new private universities in India led to the overload of various types of work of government agencies resulting in short cuts and leading to apathy and delay in various types of grants approval and accreditation.

The level of students taking admission in the private universities: Though the quality of education, the basic aim of the higher educational institutions is in focus and students give preferences to the better universities, but it remains the well known fact that the students longs for the governmental higher educational institutions, baring a few, where after a particular no. of admissions the students are shown the label of seat full, just to extract the additional and marginal admission amount.

The level of teachers' quality in private universities: The level of teachers in private universities are still below mark as a lot more has to be done in the field of orientation and faculty development programs. Though some universities are doing well but some are doing well only in documents not in reality.

The minimum qualifications: At most of the time the minimum qualification of the faculties and directors in most of the private universities are compromised.

The governing bodies: The selection tenure and the qualification of the governing bodies are compromised at various levels and in various situations. The difference between the vision and mission of the university and the focus to achieve it: in some of the universities there appears a difference and diversions in the vision and mission statement and action taken. In many instances we can see the paradoxical situations.

The culture of the private universities: As the type of leadership, internal and external environment nurtures the culture of private universities, the local culture has been found dominant one in the low profile universities, where as in some high profile universities, the national and international (mixed) culture has been witnessed.

Disparity in designations: There appears to be a lot of disparity in the designation of government and the private universities. The designation of professor is found to be used in plenty in the private universities in the younger age where as this is not achieved so easily in the government universities.

Suggestions

For the better teaching learning outcome the course curriculum has to moderated by scrapping the rotten old age irrelevant to the modern demand

The modern methods of teaching like smart class room and power point methods will also be adopted

The introduction of mentee mentor system will be more effective

Apart from class room teaching, out of the class teaching like industrial visits, educational tours, surveys, training will be organized

The students should be motivated to participate in extra curricular activities and personality development programs

Concept of Basket courses - to allow student to choose subject related to his hobby etc.

The challenges private university face during incubation period:

The following challenges are likely to be faced by a private university during incubation period:-
* Funds
* Admissions
* Faculties and staff
* Location
* Legal requirements
* Awareness campaign (Mktg)
* Infrastructure
* Academic and non academic
* Facilities
    * Housing
    * Hostels
    * Catering
    * Shopping complex
    * Sports
    * Gym
    * WIFI
    * Parking
    * Security
    * Hygiene and sanitation
* Landscaping
    * Plantation
    * Gardens
    * Fountain
* Brand image

The challenges private university will face in future & how to overcome them:
The following challenges are likely to be faced by a private university in future
    Funds
    Admissions – in required and desired stream / program
    Training and placement of students
    Faculties and staff - – in required and desired stream / program.
    Legal requirements – approval and renewal of CTO
    Infrastructure maintenance development and expansion - – in required and desired stream / program
Academic and non academic
    Academic development and accreditation
    Facilities
        Theatre / Auditorium / Conference hall
        Power backup
        Housing - expansion
        Hostels - expansion
        Catering
        Shopping complex
        Sports – maintenance and expansion

        Gym - maintenance and expansion
        WIFI - maintenance and expansion
        Parking - maintenance and expansion
        Security
        Hygiene and sanitation - maintenance and expansion
    Landscaping
        Plantation   Gardens   Fountain

Suggestions to bring up new university campus to something unique & excel:
The most important aspect of building a good private university is the passion for creating something different and unique. This holds good for both the stake holders as well as the individual leader. For the uniqueness fund has to be infused at a regular interval which ensures the focus of leadership is on the academic excellence rather than selling for the admission. By having a tab and feeling the pulse on academic, administrative and infrastructure by organizing workshops, seminars, faculty development programs and national and international conferences. Conducting sports events, industrial visits, personality development of students, training and placement of students. The university will not only show it presence in the local region but also at the national and international level and will be in a branding and commanding position

1. **Passion:** the most important aspect of building a good Private University is the Passion for creating something new and different. This holds good for both owners/ promoters as well as academic leadership in place.

2. **Patience:** have the courage to wait and let things settle down over years. Five years is a decent time when you can start expecting some return on investments. Universities have a long gestation period and expectation of a return just like a factory is not going to be possible.

3. **Pockets:** Promoters need to have deep pockets and be able to fund the project for a few years. This will ensure that the faculty and the leadership is focused on academic excellence rather than selling for student recruitment.

If these three aspects can be put to practice, the private Universities have a great future in India. These three aspects related to what is necessary from the promoters point of view. There are aspects that come in the domain of Academic Administration which should be left to those who know what is best for the Universities to grow. I would however like to put a list that would provide a broad framework for good academic culture to exist.

An apex body by the government be set up to look into the quality of research papers and their publishing, ability to control the awarding of cheap higher degrees. It should be made mandatory for all the universities to show the details of their faculties on the university website. The inspecting bodies like UGC, AICTE, BCI, DCI, MCI, PCI, NCI should furnish the various types of details in time to the appropriate higher authorities so that damage control measures are taken at the early stage. They should also make some surprise visits/ inspections also to confirm the earlier credentials. The gap of the shortage of faculties can be filled by deputing the faculties from the Industries and other sister concerned areas and departments.

Conclusion

Though the private universities are currently having the various types of teething problems but with the help of healthy competition all the educational institutions thrive and struggle for the betterment, as they are struggling for the good cause, they are motivated and with this motivation they try to beat their rivals with full strength thereby giving the maximum possible output. Under this type of competition as the performance of each employee is on the peak, will definitely result in all round development of the society and definitely pave the way for a bright future and better place of Indian private universities.

Book Review
Payoff Principle

Book: Payoff Principle
Written By: Dr Alan R Zimmerman
Publication: Greenleaf Book Group Press

Dr. Sanjeev Tandon*

This book serves as a guidebook for finding the purpose, passion, and process that guarantee our success- at work and at home. It has been designed from the extracts of his thirty years of research. Dr Alan Zimmermam (Author) compiled the noteworthy advice of well- known politicians, sports personalities, and social scientists. He in a simplified way tried to explain these questions, "where we hope to go with our life, our career, and our relationships?", "What will it take to get the payoffs; we really want on, and off the job?" The book is divided into 14 chapters. In the mad rush to succeed in life, few people bother to look inside themselves for the three secrets discovered by Dr Zimmerman, but they can make all the difference. He reveals the Payoff Principle as Purpose + Passion + Process = Payoff. The Payoff Principle shows us how to uncover and practice, what truly matters to us. The first chapter talks about, what a person really, really, really wants? Is he enjoying what he does? The second chapter describes the Payoff Principle and the Producer. It provides an elaborative detail of a producer as a motivator, disciplined person who willingly take responsibility and take constructive risks. The chapters third and fourth signify the power of purpose and the practice of purpose respectively. In this book the author teaches us, how to apply the formula for achieving success at work, at home, and where so ever we go. The fifth and sixth chapters illustrate the

power of passion and the attitude of passion. The book guides us sharing that when we find purpose in what we do, exhibit passion for the outcome, and master the process to make it happen, then we are in a mode to produce the payoffs we want, need and deserve in every domain of our life. This book is practical and proven to work, and it contains timeless treasures for our heart, mind, and soul. The seventh and eighth chapters detail the persistence of passion and the character of passion. It offers a fresh, clear framework to transform our life. According to the author, plenty of successful people have done exactly that. Chapters nine and ten explains about the power of process and the process of affirming achievements. The author stressed upon the power of the process of continuing education. In chapter eleven Dr Zimmerman pushed the concept of continuing education strategy. He propagated the process of connective communication. The messages being shared in the book are so powerful that we cannot afford to skip it. The author through his chapter thirteen vividly forwarded the concept that "talking is sharing but listening is caring". Chapter fourteen in a simple manner explains the concept, "the payoff principle continues to pay off. The book in totality helps to unleash the extraordinary in an individual. Read this book and take charge of your future.

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