



Research Paper

Higher Education's Repercussions of Privatization: A critical analysis

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Abstract

India has been in the forefront of the global higher education privatization movement, particularly from 2010 to 2020. The main research question in this study is how India's privatization progressed between 2010 and 2020 and how it affected admission to the country's higher education system. This chapter makes use of descriptive analysis and secondary data. While overall government spending on higher education has grown, it has fallen as a proportion of GDP between 2010 and 20. While the public sector has either shrunk or stayed the same, the proportion of students enrolled in private schools has increased continuously and rapidly. Additionally, this chapter explores how ICT may support India's higher education privatization.

Keywords: Privatization, Higher Education, ICT.

I. Introduction

India is the country with the second-largest population in the world, behind China. While the projected median age of the entire population in 2021 was 27.73, the proportion of Indians aged 15 to 34 (34.46) in 2020 was higher than the world average (31.12) (MOSPI, 2017). This youthful population will remain employed for around thirty years until the first component of this group retires. India has a demographic edge as long as it can use its population dividend to its benefit. Knowledge creation and distribution are necessary in order to successfully engage the younger generation in fulfilling productive activities that can support India's economic development. Increasing access to higher education can ease such situations. Joshi and Ahir (2013) claim that Indian higher education has changed from being a "elitist" to a "system for the masses"; the sector has seen significant institutional growth and enrollment growth, particularly between 2010 and 2020. A relatively unchanged state sector and a noticeable increase in the private sector's institutional support for higher education are also observed throughout this time.

The current study article's objective is to investigate the rise of higher education privatization. Education in India: access and financing. The purpose of a literature review is to provide a critical study of the various elements of higher education in India before to 2010 in order to build an understanding of the context in which private higher education expanded between 2010 and 2020. The high-publicity, high-privateness model put forward by Johnstone (1999) was included in the conceptual framework to assess higher education in India between 2010 and 2020. Thus, India's progress in funding private higher education and providing private access to higher education is scored between 2010 and 20. Lastly, findings and implications for policy have been presented. In addition to government and other organizations' publications and studies, researchers have examined a number of various aspects of Indian higher education. As the study considers In 2010, private financing and private access to higher education were both prevalent in India. From now until 2020, this literature review presents a perspective on a number of higher education-related challenges. The educational system in India before to 2010.

The privatization of higher education in India is very new, in contrast to many other countries, like the US, South Korea, Japan, and the Philippines (Altbach, 2013). Privatization has been a major feature of the Indian higher education system over the last 20 years, both in terms of funding and access (2000-2020). Different degrees of higher education privatization are depicted in the future (Tilak, 1991). Tilak specifically cites four models: privately run but government-aided higher education institutions; public higher education but with a reasonable amount of funding from nongovernmental sources; and private sector-led college and university administration and funding with minimal government involvement.

Since gaining independence, the Indian higher education system has faced several financial challenges. These have become worse during the last thirty years. Among them are the issues of whether and to what degree to let higher education to be privatized, as well as the challenge of giving public funding for higher education priority (Agarwal, 2006; CAFE, 2005b).

Understudied funding sources for higher education include philanthropic donations, bank loans, stocks, alumni contributions, and providing commercial services like consulting training or space rental (CAFE, 2005a, 2005b; Gupta, 2004, 2005; Joshi & Ahir, 2015b; Kapur & Mehta, 2004). Agarwal (2006), Joshi and Ahir (2015a), Ambani and Birla (2000), and other authors emphasize the challenges posed by the governance systems. Regarding government support, Gupta (2005) and Tilak (2002) pointed out that tuition and other fees account for the bulk of household expenditure on higher education, with books, travel, stationery, and private coaching coming in second and third. Chandrasekhar, Rani, and Sahoo (2019) point out that household consumption has increased dramatically.

Numerous researchers have examined institutional expansion and the increase in absolute enrollment (2013, 2016a, 2019), including Agarwal (2006), Ved (2007), Joshi, and Ahir. They demonstrate that enrollments rose significantly after 2000, just little between 1980 and 1980, and very little between 1950 and 1980. nearly the course of nearly 40 years, the Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) has gradually grown, going from 1.5 in 1960 to 9 in 2003–04 (CAFE, 2005b; Thorat, 2006). GER, on the other hand, has seen significant growth, rising from 9 percent in 2003–2004 to 23 percent in 2013–2014 (Joshi & Ahir, 2016a). Furthermore, it was mentioned that the majority of the growth in institutions and enrollments has occurred in the private sector. (Agarwal, 2006; Joshi & Ahir, 2016a).

Throughout the process, concerns about equity have been raised regarding gender, ethnic background, geography (rural versus urban), economic background, religion, and interstate versus interprovincial travel (Thorat, 2006; Khan & Sabharwal, 2012; Chandrasekhar, Rani & Sahoo, 2019; MOSPI, 2015; Joshi & Ahir, 2016b, 2019, 2021; Tilak, 2002). The National Education Policy 2020 aims to reform India's present higher education system by placing a strong emphasis on fairness, inclusion, and enhanced quality. The objective is to establish a broad, interdisciplinary system of higher education with updated pedagogies, curriculum, and assessment procedures. the establishment of private colleges with "philanthropic and public-spirited goals." Private universities are specifically asked to pledge to provide excellence and equity in education through freeships and scholarships.

It is anticipated that regulatory regimes for both private and public institutions will be treated equally with regard to governance, educational outcomes, transparency of disclosures (especially in fee setting to ensure reasonable cost recovery and fulfillment of the institute's social obligations), encouragement of regional Indian languages as a medium of instruction, and financial stability and security. The strategy also highlights a tendency toward more autonomy for faculties and institutions, whereby the institutions are run by independent boards with capable members who pursue their academic and administrative goals independently (NEP, 2020).

Most of the aforementioned study is either based on older data or has remained stagnant on a certain time period. Using similar data currently available from official sources for the years 2010 to 2020, the following study attempts to examine the privatization of higher education in India.

The higher education system in India is vast and intricate. India boasts the highest number of institutions and the second-largest number of students engaged in higher education (Joshi & Ahir, 2013). Given the diversity of higher education options in India, Johnstone's (1999) privatization model may be used to understand the unique characteristics of the private higher education system in that nation. Johnstone (1999) defines privatization in higher education as the adoption of management practices and operational guidelines often seen in for-profit companies by both public and private institutions. The characteristics of privatization in higher education include independence from the government, hostile employee relations, top-down decision-making, tuition increases, demand-driven discipline offerings that treat students like clients, increased focus on marketing for "enrollment management," and the decision to forego offering unappealing disciplines in favor of cross-subsidizing some units or disciplines by others (Johnstone, 1999). He goes on to show how high publicness gives way to high privateness.

The National Education Policy 2020 recommends reforming India's present higher education system in order to increase fairness, inclusivity, and quality. Transitioning to a higher education system with several institutions of different specialties, an updated curriculum, pedagogy, and an evaluation system is the aim. the establishment of private colleges with "philanthropic and public-spirited goals." Private schools are specifically asked to pledge to guarantee excellence and equity in education through freeships and scholarships. Regulatory regimes for both private and public institutions are expected to be treated equally with regard to governance, educational outcomes, transparency of disclosures (especially in fee setting to ensure reasonable cost recovery and fulfillment of the institute's social obligations), and the promotion of regional Indian languages as a medium of instruction. The strategy also emphasizes the tendency toward giving faculties and institutions greater autonomy, with the goal of having independent boards with capable members who have both administrative and academic backgrounds run the institutions.

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TYPES OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Central Universities, Institutions of National Importance, Central Open Universities, Government Deemed Universities, and Government Aided Deemed Universities are examples of federally run and supported public universities. The majority of public universities fall into one of two categories: state-run and supported universities.

Government at the state or provincial level (such as State Open Universities and State Public Universities). Additionally, there are private institutions (State Private institutions and commercial Unaided Deemed Universities) that are managed by an individual, a trust, a society, or a commercial company. A high-performing institution of higher learning has been granted special status by the federal government as a "deemed university," allowing it to award degrees in a manner similar to those of universities. They are hence referred to as "Deemed-to-be-universities." Institutes of National Significance are organizations established by a legislative legislation. A number of government schools also provide self-financed courses, where the tuition fees paid by students who enroll in the course cover continuing expenses like the salaries of the lecturers. Only when enough students enroll in these highly sought-after courses will they be able to pay for themselves or make extra money. Private-aided institutions get one-time and ongoing subsidies from the federal, state, and municipal governments.

The parent organizations of universities have greater authority over the financial and academic independence of their associated colleges. Things like tuition fees, course requirements, assessments, and faculty nominations are governed by the policies of affiliated schools. As previously stated, their accredited public, private-aided, or private-unaided colleges are in charge of management and ownership. The three categories of SAIs are private-unaided, private-aided, and government. The governance of Indian colleges, universities, and SAIs is explained in detail by Joshi and Ahir (2015a). The proportional proportions of state private universities and private, unaided colleges in the total number of universities and colleges were found to rapidly increase and drop, respectively, between 2010 and 20 compared to state public universities and government colleges. The proportions of state private universities and private, unaided colleges in total university and college enrollment skyrocketed while enrollments in state public universities and government colleges declined. Therefore, it is evident that India's higher education has similarly experienced the shift Johnstone described, from "high publicness to high privateness." It would be simpler to understand the nuances of each argument in the conceptual framework with the help of the arguments and supporting information given below.

TYPE OF INSTITUTION AND THEIR MECHANISM

As was previously said, private higher education institutions in India include private unaided and aided universities, private unaided and aided deemed universities, and private aided and unaided colleges. This section provides a more thorough analysis of the relevant regulatory provisions. Private universities are supervised by a special system that aims to maintain quality at these establishments and avoid commercialization. To protect the interests of students enrolled in higher education, this is required. To accomplish these objectives, the UGC has set standards for the establishment and functioning of such universities. These regulations must be followed by all private educational institutions that offer degrees, certificates, or diplomas via formal, informal, or distance learning.

Every private university in the country is governed by UGC criteria, which are revised on a regular basis, and were established by a special state act. These colleges' academic boards must inevitably approve the degrees and courses they provide. Additionally, the UGC set guidelines for admissions and fees for private universities. Institutions are also subject to frequent inspections by the UGC, which may ask them for information. Following an inspection and assessment of the institution, the UGC informs the institute of any violations of the specified norms. The university then has a window of opportunity to make the required adjustments. The appropriate action is taken against the institution if it fails to meet the criteria within the allotted time frame (UGC, 2003).

Private support comes from private sources for universities that fall under this category. To ensure that the institution's standards are maintained, the UGC also sets rules for deemed institutions. For an institution to be recognized as a university, it must have been in existence for more than 20 years. Additionally, the institute needs to receive specific minimum ratings from a number of accreditation bodies. There are further conditions linked to the institute's rating, faculty publications, student-teacher ratio, and certain infrastructure-related requirements in order for an institution to be classified as a supposed university. An institution may apply to be designated as a considered university if it meets the above listed requirements. Additionally, the UGC routinely monitors the performance of these universities (UGC, 2019).

Private unassisted colleges are run and financed by private organizations, as opposed to private aided colleges, which are mostly supported by the government but are run by private groups. Nonetheless, all private institutions are under the jurisdiction of their parent organization.

Impact of Privatization in India

In India's educational system, the idea of privatization is not new. Prior to the British era, privatization was prevalent and entirely controlled by members of a particular class. In ancient times, teaching was seen as a noble occupation; yet, during the British era, it became a paid position. In 1854, Wood's dispatch made suggestions that led to the introduction of the grant-in-aid system, which was part of the state system for funding education. Therefore, privatization was limited throughout the British era. The Liberalization, Privatization, and Globalization (LPG) strategy was implemented in 1991, marking the beginning of the privatization of higher education. In India, higher education has become more and more privatized in the last ten years.

The following were the conditions that led to the privatization of education in India:-

1. Inadequate Public Education Funding

In the past, the Indian government has struggled to provide enough funding for the education sector, which has resulted in subpar facilities, a teacher shortage, and subpar instruction in government schools.

2. Quick Population Growth

The demand for education has increased as a result of India's population growth, which has been unparalleled. The lack of educational resources is the result of the government's inability to meet this need.

3. The Middle Class's Development

A sizable, ambitious middle class that prioritizes high-quality education has emerged as a result of India's tremendous economic expansion over the last 20 years. A market for private educational institutions has resulted from this.

4. Policies for Economic Liberalization

Private companies were able to enter a number of industries, including education, thanks to the economic liberalization policies of the 1990s. This made it possible for businesspeople and financiers to put money into the field of education.

5. Development of Technology

Private companies now have an easier time providing high-quality education to a larger audience because to technological developments in the field of education, such as distance learning and e-learning.

Private players mainly engaged themselves in setting up state-owned private universities, deemed universities, and academic institutions with foreign collaboration.

As a result of this, privatization has been growing day by day. The following are the advantages of the privatization of higher education in India:-

1. Increased Educational Access

Students nationwide now have better access to education thanks to the expansion of higher education institutions brought about by the privatization of higher education.

2. Better Educational Quality: Private schools are frequently better financed, run, and furnished with cutting-edge technology and contemporary facilities, all of which contribute to higher educational quality.

3. Course Diversification: A greater variety of courses are offered by private institutions than by state ones. This aids students in selecting classes that are more appropriate for their hobbies and desired careers.

4. Curriculum Flexibility: Private educational institutions are able to customize their curricula to better suit the needs of their pupils. This enables them to focus on practical skills and real-world applications of academic concepts.

5. Innovative Teaching Techniques: Private educational institutions are more likely to use cutting-edge techniques that can improve student learning. They employ interactive techniques that foster critical thinking and problem-solving abilities, such as case studies, simulations, and experiential learning.

6. Industry Partnerships: Private universities frequently establish partnerships with businesses that give students more access to the workforce and employment prospects. This aids in closing the knowledge gap between the classroom and practical job experience.

7. A Better Student-Teacher Ratio: Students in private schools might receive more individualized attention because they usually have a lower student-teacher ratio. This makes it possible for teachers to provide each student with tailored advice and assistance.

8. Emphasis on Practical Skills: Students' employability can be improved by private institutions' emphasis on helping them acquire practical skills. They provide education in skills such as communication, teamwork, leadership, and entrepreneurship, which are essential in the job market.

9. **Emphasis on Personality Development:** Students can develop into well-rounded persons by focusing on personality development in private schools. They provide chances for extracurricular pursuits that foster creativity and individual development, such as athletics, music, and the arts.
10. **Effective Management:** Private schools are frequently run more effectively, which results in more effective instruction. They have improved decision-making and decreased bureaucratic delays by streamlining administrative procedures.
11. **Quicker Decision-Making:** Without bureaucratic hold-ups, private entities are able to make judgments more rapidly. This allows them to react faster than public schools to shifting student needs and market demands.
12. **Better Placement options:** Due to their frequent partnerships with businesses, private universities are able to provide students better placement options. They have a better understanding of industry requirements and can provide students with the necessary skills and knowledge to succeed in the job market.
13. **Research possibilities:** Private universities frequently provide greater research possibilities, which can support the growth of the education industry as a whole. They have greater facilities and resources for research, which can result in the creation of new technologies and knowledge.
14. **International Exposure:** Students can gain international exposure through private colleges' frequent partnerships with foreign universities. This aids in expanding their perspectives and equipping them for a world that is more interconnected.
15. **superior Facilities for Extracurricular Activities:** Sports, music, and the arts are among the extracurricular activities that private schools frequently provide superior facilities for. This encourages holistic learning and aids in the development of students' whole selves.
16. **superior Student Support Services:** Counseling, career assistance, and mentorship are among the superior support services offered by private universities.

This helps students cope with the academic and personal challenges they face during their college years.

17. **Greater Accountability:** Higher educational quality results from private schools' increased accountability to parents and students. They must uphold strict guidelines for academic excellence and operational honesty.
18. **Better Use of Resources:** Because private organizations are required to produce their own income, they frequently make better use of their resources. This results in an emphasis on providing high-quality education and the effective use of resources.
19. **Incentives for Innovation:** To draw students and maintain their competitiveness, private universities are encouraged to develop and enhance their programs. This encourages innovation and ongoing development in the field of education.
20. **Enhanced Rivalry:** schools' entry into the higher education market has boosted competition, which has enhanced student services and educational quality. To be competitive, public institutions have also had to enhance their services.

II. CONCLUSION

India has a vast and intricate system of higher education. The demand on access to higher education in India has intensified due to the nation's desire to contribute as a knowledge economy and the rising ambitions of its inhabitants. The real portion of public spending on higher education as a percentage of GDP has decreased as a result of a limited government treasury and fiscal policies that are prioritized differently. As a result, private higher education continued to bridge the gap between India's supply and demand for higher education. It was noted that the percentage of public sector higher education institutions and enrollments was either stagnating or declining, while the proportion of private institutions and enrollments was increasing quickly, especially during the 2010–20 decade. This is a reference to the shift from "high publicness to high privateness" in higher education. In addition to tuition costs, household spending on higher education was shown to be greater in private institutions than in government ones when books, stationery, transportation, and private tutoring were taken into account. Household expenditure on higher education was shown to be greater in private institutions than in government ones when accounting for the price of books, stationery, transportation, and private tutoring in addition to tuition fees. Private colleges and higher education enrollments in India would surely rise if the trend from 2010 to 20 continues. In order to meet the goals of NEP 2020, public sector engagement in higher education must be increased, since trends show a decline in this area. It will be beneficial to support private higher education.

It is crucial to remember that everybody who wants to pursue higher education should have access to it, even if care must be taken to ensure that India does not compromise one of its objectives. To guarantee that higher education is expanding inclusively and fairly, allowing everyone the opportunity to participate, it is crucial to offer the necessary financial resources, fellowships, and scholarships for vulnerable groups. India needs to commercialize higher education, and this move should be applauded for the opportunities it offers to ensure increased efficacy and accessibility. Consequently, the government may focus on ensuring regulatory frameworks that are responsible, competitive, and accommodating. In addition, the government will be in charge of providing

programs that support cultural heritage and guaranteeing equitable access, whereas privately managed organizations that put the needs of the market first could be less inclined to do so. The National Education Policy (2020) aims to reduce the demand-supply gap and the skills gap between employers' expectations and graduating students' ability. NEP (2020) aims to strike the perfect balance between traditional Indian education and state-of-the-art foreign educational systems by combining the finest aspects of both.

In conclusion, a number of facets of the Indian educational system have been significantly impacted by the privatization of higher education. Critics point to issues of cost, equity, and the commercialization of information, while supporters contend that it has improved quality, expanded access, and improved infrastructure. Although the long-term effects of this change are still not entirely known, it is obvious that a balanced strategy is required to guarantee that all prospective students may continue to attend high-quality, reasonably priced, and accessible higher education. Finding the ideal balance between market pressures and the ethical need to provide comprehensive and fair educational opportunities will ultimately determine the future of higher education in India.

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