Present Scenario of Higher Education in India  
(Special reference to Uttar Pradesh)

Dr. Pulkit Agarwal*  
Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce,  
Mohammad Ali Jauhar University, Rampur, (UP)

Miss Taiba Ahmad**  
Lecturer, Department of Education,  
Mohammad Ali Jauhar University, Rampur, (UP)

Miss Dalginder Kaur***  
Lecturer, Department of Education,  
Mohammad Ali Jauhar University, Rampur, (UP)

Abstract:

Swami Vivekananda –

“Education is the manifestation of divine perfection already existing in man.”

Education is a systematic process through which a child or an adult acquires knowledge, experience, skill and sound attitude. It makes an individual civilized, refined, cultured and educated. For a civilized and socialized society, education is the only means. Its goal is to make an individual perfect. 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. By the definitions given above we can conclude that education is very important for the human development. In this research paper we studied about the Present Scenario of Higher Education in India (Special reference to Uttar Pradesh)

Introduction:

An Indian student in 2013 was a ‘passive player’ on a predefined education pathway. She had little choice in what she learnt and little say in how she learnt it. The curriculum was predesigned and worse still, outdated and seldom relevant, and the dominant mode of instruction was information-loaded, one-way lectures from the teacher to the student. If one were to describe the transformation in higher education pedagogy from then to now, dramatic would be an understatement. In today’s classrooms, the student is an active participant in the education process and the role of a professor is that of a facilitator as opposed to an instructor. The instruction is designed to engage students in learning experiences that not only enable them to learn content but also to develop greater passion for learning – enabling them to ‘learn to learn’ and to be lifelong learners.
In the learner-centered paradigm of education, students are encouraged to take greater responsibility for their learning outcomes. The professor ceases to be the fount of knowledge filling the empty receptacles of students’ minds; instead, students actively participate in the discovery of knowledge. They are encouraged to be reflexive and thoughtful learners, learning from themselves, their peers and their immediate environment just as much as they would from their professors. Accordingly, the teaching-learning methodology involves less lecturing and rote note-taking and more hands-on activities to allow for experiential and interactive learning.

Over the years, such emphasis on learning has impacted students and learning outcomes in ways that have far-reaching impact for Indian economy and society. Firstly, by stoking students’ innate curiosity and encouraging them to learn in self-directed ways, it has enabled Indian graduates to be independent, critical thinkers. As a result, it has greatly enhanced the country’s innovation capability and entrepreneurial ambition, positioning it amongst the most attractive R&D hubs for dozens of multinationals. Secondly, the learner-centered paradigm has helped India’s thriving human resource base to keep pace with the changing needs of their work environments. Over the years, with evolution of the ‘knowledge economy’, learning and work have become inseparable, making constant on-the-job learning and up-gradation indispensable. Trained to be active and adaptive lifelong learners, the Indian workforce is known to be dynamic and agile even in the face of ‘disruptive’ progress.

The learner-centered approach has helped correct for the problem of equity in Indian higher education. As India’s enrolment numbers grow, and access to higher education expands, the learner-oriented method has helped sensitize educators to difference in learning styles and student expectations that result from diversity in student backgrounds. By placing the student at the center of the learning process, the approach on the one hand has enabled institutions to devise new and innovative ways to reach diverse learners, and on the other, helped students discover and exercise their distinctive learning styles to chart an educational pathway that is personally meaningful and relevant.

The Indian higher education system is facing an unprecedented transformation in the coming decade. This transformation is being driven by economic and demographic change: by 2020, India will be the world’s third largest economy, with a correspondingly rapid growth in the size of its middle classes. Currently, over 50% of India’s population is under 25 years old; by 2020 India will outpace China as the country with the largest tertiary-age population.

Despite significant progress over the last ten years, Indian higher education is faced with four broad challenges:
• **The supply-demand gap:** India has a low rate of enrolment in higher education, at only 18%, compared with 26% in China and 36% in Brazil. There is enormous unmet demand for higher education. By 2020, the Indian government aims to achieve 30% gross enrolment, which will mean providing 40 million university places, an increase of 14 million in six years.

• **The low quality of teaching and learning experience:** The system is beset by issues of quality in many of its institutions: a chronic shortage of faculty, poor quality teaching, out dated and rigid curricula and pedagogy, lack of accountability and quality assurance and separation of research and teaching.

• **Constraints on research capacity and innovation:** With a very low level of PhD enrolment, India does not have enough high quality researchers; there are few opportunities for interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary working, lack of early stage research experience; a weak ecosystem for innovation, and low levels of industry engagement.

• **Uneven growth and access to opportunity:** Socially, India remains highly divided; access to higher education is uneven with multidimensional inequalities in enrolment across population groups and geographies.

Some of the basic differences lie in the academic structures and grading systems itself. In India, colleges follow either the semester based or the yearly examination patterns. On the contrary, most universities abroad especially in countries like USA, UK, Canada, Australia, Singapore and Hong Kong offer course credits. Students typically receive credit hours based on the number of "contact hours" per week in class, for one term. (A contact hour includes any lecture or practical session when the professor is teaching the student while they apply the course information to an activity.)

Most courses at college and university abroad are 3 Semester Credit Hours (SCH) or 45-48 contact hours. They typically meet for three hours per week over a 15-week semester. In USA, the credit unit is known as a Carnegie Unit, in European countries a common credit system known as the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) has been introduced. In India, most engineering colleges follow the course credit system. The number of 'Contact Hours' in a week of a particular course determines its credit value. Typically,
students must accumulate 2 to 5 credits to complete a course. The GPA is calculated on a 10 point scale, with weighted average of the grades received in the respective courses.

A recent study conducted by Indian Institute of Management- Bangalore (IIM-B) shows that the students going for higher studies abroad has increased by 256% in the last 10 years. There remains little doubt on the reasons.

**Problems of Indian Higher Education System**

Higher education in India suffers from several systemic deficiencies. As a result, it continues to provide graduates that are unemployable despite emerging shortages of skilled manpower in an increasing number of sectors. The standard of academic research is low and declining. Some of the problems of the Indian higher education, such as the unwieldy affiliating system, inflexible academic structure, uneven capacity across various subjects, eroding autonomy of academic institutions, and the low level of public funding are well known. Many other concerns relating to the dysfunctional regulatory environment, the accreditation system that has low coverage and no consequences, absence of incentives for performing well, and the unjust public funding policies are not well recognised. Driven by populism and in the absence of good data, there is little informed public debate on higher education in India. Higher education in India has expanded rapidly over the past two decades. This growth has been mainly driven by private sector initiatives. There are genuine concerns about many of them being substandard and exploitative. Due to the government's ambivalence on the role of private sector in higher education, the growth has been chaotic and unplanned. The regulatory system has failed to maintain standards or check exploitation. Instead, it resulted in erecting formidable entry barriers that generate undesirable rents. Voluntary accreditation seems to have no takers from amongst private providers and apparently serves little purpose for any of its stakeholders. Despite, its impressive growth, higher education in India could maintain only a very small base of quality institutions at the top. Standards of the majority of the institutions are poor and declining. There are a large number of small and non-viable institutions. Entry to the small number of quality institutions is very competitive giving rise to high stake entrance tests and a flourishing private tuition industry.

The stakes are so high that quota-based reservation of seats in such institutions in the name of affirmative action has come to occupy centre stage in electoral politics. Despite some merit, it has resulted in fragmentation of merit space and further intensified competition for the limited capacity in quality institutions. While public funding declined (in real terms), enrolments in higher education institutions grew to meet the surge in demand. This further
deteriorated academic standards. As a result, the institutions were forced to raise their tuition fees to sustain themselves. Emergence of private providers and increase in tuition fees in public institutions without any substantial programme for students’ financial aid has made higher education beyond the reach of the poor.

Due to these problems of our higher education system a lot of Indian students are going overseas to study rose a stunning 256% – from 53,266 to 189,629 – in just nine years (2000–2009) according to a study called “Indian student mobility to selected European countries: An overview” by researchers at one of India’s top business schools, the Indian Institute of Management–Bangalore. This is welcome news for the many institutions in Europe and North America that are the main recipients of Indian students, but it is also cause for concern in some quarters in India.

A different study done by the Associated Chamber of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) estimated that the hundreds of thousands of Indian students now studying abroad cost India as much as US $17 billion a year in lost revenue. We should note that the ASSOCHAM study appears to significantly overestimate the volume of outbound students at “over six lakh” (e.g., over 600,000). Other sources, such as the UNESCO Institute of Statistics and the Institute of International Education, put the number of Indian students studying abroad in 2010–2011 in the range of 200,000, which is much more in line with the estimates we see in the IIM-Bangalore report. The paper discusses feasible strategies to overcome this and make higher education affordable and accessible to all.

**Current Status of Higher Education**

This paper takes a comprehensive look at the various facets of higher education in India. It adopts a systems approach for achieving policy coherence and multi-level coordination required to address genuine concerns in the Indian higher education on a long-term basis and uses the experiences of other countries to suggest measures to tackle its various systemic deficiencies.
Uttar Pradesh has a total of 55 universities, the second-highest in all Indian states and territories.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deemed</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>55</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Research institutions

- Central Drug Research Institute, Lucknow
- Central Institute of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants, Lucknow
- Centre for Development of Advanced Computing, Noida
- Govind Ballabh Pant Social Science Institute, Allahabad
- Harish-Chandra Research Institute, Allahabad
- Indian Institute of Pulses Research, Kanpur
- Industrial Toxicology Research Centre, Lucknow
- National Botanical Research Institute, Lucknow
- National Bureau of Fish Genetic Resources, Lucknow
- National Sugar Institute, Kanpur
- Uttar Pradesh Textile Technology Institute, Kanpur.

### Autonomous Institutes

There are six autonomous institutions of higher education in Uttar Pradesh:

- Indian Institute of Management, Lucknow: the fourth IIM to be established in India
- Indian Institute of Information Technology, Allahabad: a premier institute in computer science and allied areas
Indian Institute of Information Technology, Lucknow: one of Indian Institute of Information Technology which are funded by PPP

Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur: one of the sixteen Indian Institutes of Technology

Indian Institute of Technology (Banaras Hindu University), Varanasi: one of the sixteen Indian Institutes of Technology

Motilal Nehru National Institute of Technology, Allahabad: one of the 20 National Institutes of Technology.

Sanjay Gandhi Post Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences, Lucknow

India has failed to produce world class universities like Harvard and Cambridge. According to the London Times Higher Education (2009) Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University rankings, no Indian university features among the first 100. But universities in East Asia have been included in the first hundred. Hong Kong has three, ranked at 24, 35 and 46; Singapore two ranked at 30 and 73; South Korea two ranked at 47 and 69 and Taiwan one in the 95th position. Notably, China's Tsinghua University and Peking University are ranked at 49 and 52 respectively. There is no Indian university in the rankings from 100 to 200. It is only when one moves on to the next 100 that we find the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur at 237; IIT Madras at 284 and the University of Delhi at 291.

Besides top rated universities which provide highly competitive world class education to their pupil, India is also home to many universities which have been founded with the sole objective of making easy money. UGC and other Regulatory authorities have been trying very hard to extirpate the menace of private universities which are running courses without any affiliation or recognition. Students from rural and semi urban background often fall prey to these institutes and colleges. Today, Knowledge is power. The more knowledge one has, the more empowered one is. According to the University Grants Commission (UGC), India needs 1500 more universities with adequate research facilities by the end of the year 2015 in order to compete in the global market.

At present, the world-class institutions in India are mainly limited. Most of the Indian colleges and universities lack in high-end research facilities. Under-investment in libraries, information technology, laboratories and classrooms makes it very difficult to provide top quality instruction or engage in cutting-edge research. This gap has to be bridged if we want to speed up our path to development. The University Grant Commission of India is not only the lone grant giving agency in the country, but also responsible for coordinating, determining and maintaining the standards in institutions of higher education. The emergence of a worldwide economic order has immense consequences for higher education more so under the changes that have taken place in the recent past with regard to globalization,
industrialization, information technology advancement and its impact on education aided to these are the policy changes that have taken place at the UGC, All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), Distance Education Council (DEC), Indian Council for Agriculture Research (ICAR), Bar Council of India (BCI), National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI), Medical Council of India (MCI), Pharmacy Council of India (PCI), Indian Nursing Council (INC), Dentist Council of India (DCI), Central Council of Homeopathy (CCH), the Central Council of Indian Medicine (CCIM) and such other regulatory bodies from time to time to accommodate these development and yet maintain quality students in higher education. It is time for all those who are concerned with policymaking, planning, administration and implementation of Higher Education to revitalize the very thinking on the subject and put it on the right track.

**Recommendations–:**

Uttar Pradesh is ranked 11 in unemployment according to list is compiled from the NSSO (66th round) Report from Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Government of India. The road ahead for India is directly linked to creation of quality Higher Education Institutions in a big way to meet the challenge of the knowledge Hub, which India is fast becoming.

- The Government resources for higher education are simply not enough. Government supervision of higher education is dismal, to say the least.
- Recourse to quality private higher education, both university and non-university is essential.
- India needs to have a proactive demand based policy towards private higher education including foreign institutions/universities desirous of setting up campus in India or entering into joint-ventures. India could offer tax concessions/fiscal incentives for setting up campuses.
- The issue of raising the fees upwards to meet the cost of education is critical if we are to maintain and sustain the quality of our government and aided institutions as private institutions are already using a higher fee structure. In a competitive setting there is no reason why the fees should not meet a reasonable proportion of the cost of education. A figure of 20 per cent of recurrent cost is considered reasonable in the international scale, although in some countries (Like South Korea) it could go up to 40 per cent.
- The need for financing of higher education for students, especially those coming from low income households needs special attention. Like in the United States, we may also evolve a guarantee system, where students coming from low income households are eligible for a student loan without parental security or guarantee so that there is no
discrimination due to the financial background of the student. Subsidization of the interest rate for students should be based on his and his family income. For this innovative financial mechanism needs to be evolved incorporating some of the salient features of the systems existing in UK, USA.

- Broad-band services and provision of computers is an essential requirement of higher education. A Committee for this purpose needs to be constituted to look into providing broad band connectivity to all students along with low priced computer accessibility.

- Open Universities need to be encouraged to offer quality programmes at the least cost. This becomes the most cost-effective way of providing higher education, including technical and vocational education.

- In view of the expanding role of WTO, higher education would soon become an item under it. We should encourage foreign universities to come to India to set up independent operations or collaborate with existing Indian Institutions, colleges/institutes. There is no need for government approvals in FDI in education.

- While a regulatory set up is required to ensure that there is no cheating or hoax, fixation of fees should not be in state control. On the issue of admissions, private player may be given the discretion for admission, but will have to justify merit. Perhaps a Tribunal on Admission Disputes can be set up for those aggrieved by the admission policy of an institution.

- It is also important that a lobby or association of non-aided private colleges be organised, which could then articulate the needs and demands of such institutions and provide a platform to counter the tendency of the bureaucracy to dominate its workings. It could create appropriate pressure for the dropping of the bill in private professional education in its present form.

**Conclusion**

For India to become economically, politically, and socially developed, education is critical. As a result the government must assume the responsibility for providing and financing education, especially basic education. Today, India already produces some of the most talented and intelligent students and workers, but questions related to quality, access, and equity still challenge educational planners. In corroboration, a recent study titled Effective Education for Employment (EEE) by Edexcel stated that there is a huge mismatch between what is being taught in schools, colleges and universities and the knowledge, skills and behavior businesses and organizations are looking for, in new recruits. Even students felt
that their education lacked relevance to the jobs they were hoping to apply for in the future which reinforces the missing element "linking education to careers".

Education has been the passport to opportunity and prosperity - It has enabled individuals, whether in developing or developed countries, to become academics, entrepreneurs, and business and government leaders. And by working together, both private and public sectors can help achieve this goal.

References :-


