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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

ROLE OF UGC IN HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM IN INDIA : AN OVERVIEW

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Abstract:

This paper includes the study of UGC role in higher education system in India. The University Grants Commission (UGC) of India is a statutory organisation set up by Union government in 1956, for the coordination, determination and maintenance of standards of university education. It provides recognition for universities in India and provides funds for government recognised universities and colleges.

KEYWORDS:

Role of UGC, Higher Education system, youth empowerment, Institutional Framework, Educational Reforms.

INTRODUCTION:

India's higher education system is the third largest in the world, after china and the United States. In Future, India will be one of the largest education hub. The University Grants commission (UGC) came into existence on 28th December, 1953 and became a statutory body of Government of India by an Act of parliament in 1956. For the co-ordination, determination and maintenance of standards of University education. For the purpose of performing its functions, the commission may Allocate and disburse, out of the fund of the commission, grants to universities and colleges for the maintenance and development, Advise central Government, State Governments and Institutions of higher learning on the measures necessary for the promotion of university education, Make Rules and Regulations consistent with Act, etc. As per section 18 of the UGC Act, the commission shall prepare once every year an Annual Report, giving a true and full account of its activities during the previous year and copies thereof shall be forwarded to the central Government and the Government shall cause the same to be laid before both Houses of Parliament.

NEED & IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY -

The higher educations system in India has grown in a remarkable way, particularly in the post - independence period to become one of the largest system of its kind in the world. The UGC serves as a vital link between the Union and State Governments and the Institutions of higher learning. In addition to its role of giving grants to Universities and Colleges, the University Grant Commission also advices Central and State Governments on the measures necessary for the improvement of University Education. It also frames regulations of teachers on the advice of subject specialists and academicians with whom it frequently interacts in connection with the formulation, evaluation and monitoring of programmes. In the next few decades India will probably have the world's largest set of young people. Even as other countries begin to age, India will remain a country of young people. If the proportion of working population to total

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population increase that should be reflected in a sharp increase in the country's saving rate. If india can find productive job opportunities for working population, that would give India a big opportunity to leapfrog in the race for social and economic development and as a result growth rates would go up.

In an environment of global competitiveness it is important that Indian products of the higher education institutions are as competent as graduates of any other country, not only in their scholastic attainments, but also in term of the value system and richness of their personality. Unless the quality and standard of Indian higher education institutions is enhanced zealously and sustained at a higher level through Innovation, creativity and regular monitoring, it seems to be difficult for the Indian academics/professionals to compete in the world scene.

OBJECTIVES OF STUDY -

1)To find the factors that helps in higher education system.
2)To find the competitive advantages and disadvantages of Indian Higher education system.
3)To give suggestions for improving India's higher education system.

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY -

In this paper, the research was based on secondary data taken from different research reports, journals, research papers and UGC Annual Reports.

Growth of Higher Education System - Some statistics

At the time of Independence of India, there were only 20 Universities and 500 Colleges in the country with 2.1 lakhs students enrolled in higher education institutions. The numbers now have increased 26 times in the case of Universities, 64 times in the case of Colleges and the students enrolment has gone up to 81 times in the formal system of higher education in comparison to the figures at the time of independence.
The number of Universities had gone up to 523 universities - (43 Central, 265 State, 80 State Private, 130 Deemed to be Universities, five Institutions established under State Legislation) and 33,023 colleges in the Higher Education sector. Out of 345 State and State Private Universities, 171 Universities have not yet been declared eligible to receive central assistance under Section 12B of the UGC Act, 1956. So far as the number of universities is concerned, Tamil Nadu tops the list with 54 universites, followed by Uttar Pradesh (49) Andhra Pradesh (42), Maharashtra (41), etc. It is observed from the list that there is an uneven establishment of universities in the states.
As many as 1211 new colleges were established in various states during 2010-2011, thus taking the total number of colleges from 31,812 to 33,023.
The total number of colleges recognized under Section 2 (f) of the UGC Act, 1956 stood at 7802. Out of these, 1385 colleges are still not eligible to receive central assistance under Section 12(B) of the UGC Act, 1956. The maximum number of Colleges recognized so far under Section 2(f) is in the State of Uttar Pradesh (1258), followed by Maharashtra (1055), Karnataka (642) and Andhra Pradesh (495) etc.
The student enrolment in terms of percentages at various levels was as under :

Level	UG	PG	Dip./Cert.	Research
Percentage of total enrolment	86.11	12.07	1.01	0.81

About 90% of all the under-graduate students (131.63 lakhs) and 71% of all post-graduate students (14.51 lakhs) were enrolled in affiliated colleges while the remaining were enrolled in university departments and their constituent colleges. Out of the total research students (1.38 lakhs), 83% were enrolled in the universities.
Out of the total enrolment of students (169.75 lakhs), 36.50% students were in the faculty of Arts, followed by Science 18.57% and Commerce 16.97%, thereby constituting 72% enrolment in just three faculties. While the remaining 28% enrolment was in professional faculties. This uneven distribution is as indicator for initiating a policy change.
The strength of the teaching faculty in universities and colleges had gone up to 8.17 lakhs as compared to 6.99 lakhs teachers in the previous year, registering an increase of 16.9%. Out of 8.17 lakh teachers, 83.5%

teachers are in colleges and the remaining 16.5% in universities.
The number of research degrees of Ph.D. and M.Phil. awarded during 2009-2010 was 11,161 and 10,583 respectively. Out of this, the Faculty of Arts has the highest number with 3490 Ph.D. Degrees awarded and 3589 M.Phil. Degrees awarded, followed by the Faculty of Science with 3742 Ph.D. Degrees awarded and 4367 M.Phil. Degrees awarded. These two faculties together accounted for 65% and 75% respectively in comparison to the total number.
In terms of percentages, the Women enrolment was the highest in Goa (61.2%), followed by Kerala (56.8%), Meghalaya (57.8%), Nagaland (50.5%) etc. and Bihar had the lowest enrolment of 31.2%. In absolute numbers, UP was on the top with 9.8 lakhs women enrolment, followed by Maharashtra (8.6 lakhs), Andhra Pradesh (7.2 lakhs), etc.
Women enrolment was the highest in the faculty of Arts (41.2%), followed by Science (9.14%) and Commerce (16.12%), constituting 76.47% in the three faculties. The remaining 23.53% were enrolled in various professional faculties. The maximum percentage of women enrolment in professional faculties was in the faculty of Engg./Technology.
The UGC provides financial support to colleges under Sections 2(f) and 12(B) of the UGC Act., the number such Institutions is given in Table.

Colleges Recognized by the UGC for Financial Assistance

As on	Total No. of Colleges	No. of Colleges under Section 2(f)	No. of Colleges under Sections 2(f) & 12(B)
31.09.2009	25,951	7,176	5,936
31.03.2010	31,324	7,450	6,028

(Source : UGC)

GER IN HIGHER EDUCATION -

Even though there is a significant growth in student enrolment in higher education system, especially in the last two decades, the GER in higher education in India is still about half the world's average GER (24%) and about two thirds that of the developing countries (18%) and much lower than that of developed nations (58%) (Source : Mid-Term Appraisal of the 11th FYP). There is a considerable debate in the country about the precise level of GER and the actual position may become clear after the findings of the All India Higher Education Survey being conducted by the National University of Educational Planning and Administration (NUEPA) become available. In the mean time, the 12th FYP may consider the level of incremental expansion in GER by 10%.

The targeted GER in higher education was fixed at 15% by the end of the 11th FYP and was accordingly required to grow by 8.9% annually. In technical education, the enrolment growth was targeted at 15% per annum. The expansion objectives were to be achieved through a multipronged strategy, namely (a) targeted increase in the intake capacity of the existing universities and colleges, strengthening of 200 state engineering institutions, upgrading 7 technical institutions, and (b) establishment of new universities and colleges, including setting up of 16 new Central Universities, 14 Innovation Universities, 374 Model Colleges, 8 Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), 7 Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs), 10 National Institutes of Technology (NITs), 3 Indian Institutes of Science Education and Research (IISERs), 20 Indian Institutes of Information Technology (IIITs), 2 Schools of Planning and Architecture (SPAs) and 50 Centres for Training and Research in frontier areas. These new institutions were planned to be established through government funding and also under the PPP mode.

The Problems and Issues Related to Higher Education in India -

The World Bank study has identified the following issues related to the higher education in India :
1.OVer-centralization and lack of autonomy and accountability
2.Resource constraints and wastage.

3.Poor quality and relevance in many institutions.
4.Difficulties in retention of Science and Technology personnel in education.
5.Poor technology and infrastruture support.
6.Limited access and regional disparity.

Except for the IITs and IIMs, the educational institutions are subjected to the control of several organizations at the state and the central government levels. In certain instances the educational institutions and their student bodies have come under the influence of politics. In such cases politics instead of merit has often influenced admissions to these institutions. This has had significant impact in the quality of education at many institutions.

SUGGESTIONS -

Higher Education should be developed as an infrastructure for social and economic growth of the country.
The Governmental control in the University must be reduced, so that the University autonomy and accountability are strengthened and academic decisions are taken on merit.
Students involvement in the area of University / College governance should be encouraged.
Indian government can improve Gross enrolment ratio (GER) by increasing public sponding on education.
Government can also work towards provision of free education to all till graduation.
Private institutes and Universities must follow a minimum stardard to give degrees.
Provision of improved curriculum and teaching-learning material.
Attention to teacher capacity building.
Increased focus on specification and measurement of learner achievement levels.

CONCLUSION -

The UGC has recognized the need for adopting a professional approach towards administration of higher education in the country and has realized the importance of the role played by the academic administrators in regional and national development. The education quality stands at the heart of Education for all. It determines now much and how well students learn and the extent to which their education achieves a range of personal, social and development goals. The government in India under the leadership of Dr. Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister and under the supervision of Mr. Sibal, HRD minister, has taken steps to improve the value of higher education but the steps have to be strictly implemented in all public and private institutes or colleges. The Indian education system improvement is reguired at higher education and research institutions of national excellence. At all levels, there is a need to improve both access and excellence.

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