How To Set Up Quality Institutes Of Higher Education Across India

The process of setting up, expediting capacities, invite private funding.

India needs more quality institutions. Initial licensing will only lead to hoarding and trading of licenses. Besides, the only way to push quality education is to allow greater supply where the bad ones perish and the good ones prosper. Rules of Law would also ensure that every one gets an equal opportunity in setting up a quality educational institution. Free visas to prevent supply, we would never have had universities with great prospecs like Aamir Khan University, Shiv Nadar University, Ambedkar University, and so on.

Here are some suggestions with regard to setting up of institutions and expansion of capacities:

- Liberalise the setting up of institutions. Make UGC redundant. Prescribe minimum standards for each institution. Anybody who meets the requirements must be accorded approval. Approve the automatic and time-bound.
- Across the world, standard setting and approval has been distinctly separated from accreditation and funding. Make the University Grants Commission (UGC) and professional councils the standard setting and approval body. Remove accreditation to a totally separate unit. For example, take the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) out of the UGC.
- Step setting up of universities by state, especially by the state. If land, essential infrastructure and minimum faculty do not exist, no institution, whether public or private, must be allowed to function. The states in the bigger carpet here. These are institutions that have neither land nor own buildings even a decade after being set up. Step by this state by legislative. The write addition to (e) is to add (f) 2004 Prof. Vagalwar and Arc. Versus State of Chandigarh & Ors. should be made the guiding principle in this regard.
- No restrictions on the number of seats should be imposed. Prescribe required minimum standards per student. As long as the standards are met there should be no restrictions on number of seats. Institutions like IITs are out of the regulatory regime primarily because of issues like this.
- No cap quota for state should be afiliated where there is no funding by the state. The case appeals (2014) 505 of 2015 of P:A. Vimala & Ors. State of Maharastra & Ors dated 12/06/2005 must be the guiding force in such cases. I think clearly said that quotas are forms of backward nationalisation. Get quotas out of privytry funded systems completely. Make it common for both minority and non-minority institutions.

Private Investments in public institutions

We understand the resource constraints imposed on the country. However, contributors in education sector are there for the asking. The number of corporates expressing interest is very heartening. The recent amendments to the Companies Act (with respect to corporate social responsibility by, or CSR, activity) will help to channelise the cashes of corporates funding education.

The Indian School of Business (ISB) Mohali is a good case study for setting up an institute. Around 70 per cent come from the state government. Donations of Rs 50 crores each came from Poonja Lloyds, the Mangla Group, Max group and Bharti Airtel. All came with naming rights for respective institutions. That is what the ISB umbrella. It is sure they will be the better place to land for students in their core. This trend can be harnessed to create great universities with private investments:

- Let each state identify and allocate 100 acres of land for 115 IITs and AIMA and 10 acres in each district for a Kendriya Vidyalaya (KV)'s school.
- To cover the capital costs, let the government sell naming rights with set conditions. The naming rights can be given to corporates/individuals for Rs 200 crores each for a higher education institution and Rs 10 crores for a school. In case M.P.T. districts and about 1,000 crores. We need to double the number of KVs in 3 years flat.
- To cover the operating costs, let the central government fund the cost of salaries for 5 years. These institutions can become self sufficient in these many years. This will ensure that at least 50 such higher education institutions and 1,000 plus KVs are set up and become operational within 5 years. It will also lead to an investment of Rs 40,000 crores (including land). It will ensure we can do right education supply of minimal cost students. These measures will also act as a good check on the fees charged by private players.

This is the second part of a series of articles on the New Education Policy.

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