

ES1103 English for Academic Purposes

CA4 Essay Draft

Title: Students Pay Higher Tuition Costs in India without Having a Substantial Higher Education

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Higher education in India was financed both by the state and the central government initially. Since the last decade, a debate on higher education funding occurs because the tuition fees have to be paid by the individuals. People debated with using the purposes of education as evidences. For public purpose, education affects society through human capital formation[[1]](#footnote-1) and knowledge at a large scale. On the other hand, for personal purpose, it provides the platform for the individuals to have regular source of income for themselves through their skills and abilities. This difference in both purposes has led the policymakers and development practitioners to have different opinions on financing higher education. There are many people supporting self-funded higher education because it will lighten the burden of the taxpayers. However, the lower-income students may find difficulties to pay the high tuition fees. In order to determine whether the higher education in India should be self-funded, the problem and solutions will be further discussed below.

The problem is higher education system lacks sufficient amount of funds from Indian government. India has the third largest higher education system worldwide (Venkatesh, 2012). The size of the higher education market is about 40 billion USD (the United States dollar) per year (Gupta, D., & Gupta, N., 2012). Since the 11th Five Year Plan[[2]](#footnote-2), the targets are being set between 20 and 30 percent gross enrolment ratio (GER)[[3]](#footnote-3) (Rani, 2014). Nevertheless, the central government meets the difficulty of funding this increasing social demand, thus the public disbursement on higher education per student has curtailed (Rani, 2014). Among state grants, tuition and other fees, endowments, and colleges and universities’ own contribution, the latter two are used up. This situation has badly affected the small and rural higher education institutions because their traditional source has been forfeited. Under this pressure, the private higher education has been starting to grow rapidly. In addition to that, an increasing number of public institutes are compelled to resort to self-funded courses and high tuition costs. According to an article by Nandini Sundar (2018), about two-thirds of institutions in India are privately managed. The privatisation of higher education is more profit-oriented, thus students may have to pay much higher tuition costs. Hence, it will create inequalities. The economically backward class would not have much opportunities to enjoy the benefits of higher education. These consequences further affect the higher education institution enrolment rate. As reported by the scholars from Maharaja Agrasen University, India has a low enrolment rate with only 19 percent in GER in 2014 (Sharma, S., & Sharma, P., 2015). As a result, while adult literacy levels are rising, only a small number of Indian citizens are graduated from higher education institutions (Sundar, 2018). Despite that, many students enrol in the professional courses given by the private universities and colleges. This shows that the current higher education in India is mainly given for middle and upper classes. In order to solve this problem, the government has carried out a solution.

Although the financial matter of higher education is a great obstacle for the government (Rani, 2014), they are fully aware that education is significant to meet the socio-economic needs of the country. Therefore, the government increased the public funds for higher education. The Union Budget of India has provided an expenditure of approximately INR 80 thousand crore for the education sector for 2017-2018 (IDR, 2017). Nearly 40 percent of the fund is for higher education sector. However, data shows that only 0.8 percent goes towards capital expenditure, while 80 percent towards teachers’ salaries (IDR, 2017). Under this imbalanced distribution of the education funds, the infrastructure of higher education becomes ineffective. Although most of the public funds for education are concentrated upon the teachers’ salaries, the quality of teaching remains stagnant. This is due to a flaw of higher education system has been occurring for years, that is, teacher absenteeism. For instance, according to an individual, the principal and teachers do not attend college regularly, unless there is an inspection or other special occasions (Sabharwal & Tierney, 2017). Nevertheless, they still receive their salaries as usual. Such staff work attitude can discredit higher education in India. In these respects, the increment of the public education funds might enable many people to study in the institutes without much burden, but they cannot receive quality education to benefit themselves.

To remedy the situation, a measure would be to gain more higher educational autonomy because the rectification of the structure of governance of colleges can be carried out (Rajput, 2018). An independent college can focus on their larger social objectives (Rajput, 2018). For example, the promotion of higher education in the society. Hence, with gaining its autonomy, higher education can manage freely on its financial affairs, including the management of funds and budget allocation. The administrative department in the college can plan the usage of the money wisely to establish various kinds of financial aid and incentives to attract students from economically backward class to contribute to the institute. In addition to that, the college can employ better teachers and award them based upon the merit system (Pandya, 2016). Through implementing these attempts, the college can prioritize substantial research and education (Rajput, 2018). The autonomy can also open to either staff or students to explore knowledge and express their opinions (Pandya, 2016). The teachers can design their courses and evaluate the system without any interference (Pandya, 2016). Therefore, in order to prioritise student welfare and improve the quality of higher education, it is essential for more Indian universities to be autonomous.

In conclusion, this essay has examined the problem of the higher education, along with existing solution and recommended solution. Therefore, self-funded higher education can be implemented in India. With the realisation of the self-funded higher education, people not only can enter the universities or colleges to further their studies, but also appreciate the quality education they have. Although the improvement of the higher education system is inconspicuous, if the government and the universities are willing cooperate to reform the system, it will certainly attract many students to further their studies in Indian institutes.

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1. According to Harbison, the human capital formation is defined as “the process of acquiring and increasing the number of persons who have the skills, education and experience which are critical for the economic and the political development of the country. Human capital formation is thus associated with investment in man and his development as a creative and productive resource.” Retrieved from http://www.economicsdiscussion.net/capital-formation/human-capital-formation-meaning-importance-and-composition/19042 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. In order to develop the Indian economy, the Indian government has been carrying out Five-Year Plan since 1947. The 11th Five-Year Plan was carried out between 2007 and 2012. For more information refer to https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Five-Year\_Plans\_of\_India#Eleventh\_Plan\_(2007%E2%80%932012). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Gross enrolment ratio (GER) is the indicator of the overall coverage of an educational system in relation to the population eligible for participation in the system. For more information refer to 1.7.4.1 of https://statisticsguyana.gov.gy/pubs/Concepts\_and\_Definitions.pdf. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)