



QUALITY OF SECONDARY EDUCATION AND PRIVATE TUITIONS

Dr. Renu Singh

Associate Professor

Department of Education

U.P. Autonomous College, Varanasi

Abstract:

Quality school education is essential for building an open, democratic society, maintaining social structures and values and for improving the quality of life of people in any country. In the post liberalization period, major political and socioeconomic transformations have taken place leading to reforms in the education systems. The aims of their reforms have been the creation of an effective and high quality educational environment for all children in consonance to the emerging market needs. Therefore, Policy initiatives and interventions on provision of equitable access and quality education have contributed significantly to the ongoing expansion in school education sector. These reforms have produced unpredicted consequences which are influencing the access and quality of school education. One of such significant practice is private tuitions which has affected the quality of education system in general and particularly secondary education system in India. The present paper describes the factors influencing the growth of private tuitions and their implications on quality of secondary education.

Keywords: Quality of Secondary Education, Private Tuitions.

Introduction: Quality school education is essential for building an open, democratic society, maintaining social structures and values and for improving the quality of life of people in any country.

School education in India constitutes twelve years of schooling. While most of the states have accepted the 5+3+2+2 (10+2) pattern of school education, i.e. five years of primary schooling, three years of upper primary education two years of secondary and higher secondary education each as recommended by the Kothari commission and suggested by National Policy on education (1986). There is common curriculum for first 10 years of schooling and at higher secondary stage diversification into different stream of humanities, commerce and sciences takes place.

School education is imparted through schools managed by government and private organization, societies, trusts etc. Central government also manages schools at secondary and higher secondary level namely Kendriya Vidyalayas, Navodaya Vidyalaya, Sainik School, Military School etc. The number of secondary and senior secondary institutions has increased more than 1.5 lakhs (2005-06) while the enrolment at secondary and senior secondary stage has increased to more than 38.4 million

(MHRD, 2008). Secondary education is the crucial stage of the schooling system in India. It serves as a gateway to higher education and the labour market. Presently there is public examination at the end of the class X and successful candidates are admitted to +2 stage. They are allotted different streams of subjects based on their choice, performance and availability of places. At the end of +2 stage, i.e. Class XII again there is a public examination for admission to higher education. These examination are conducted by central and state boards of education established in most of the states. However due to lack of equivalence in the evaluation process followed by different boards management of quality aspects of secondary and senior secondary education is a continuing challenge.

During the last two decades along with the mainstream school education phenomenon of private tuitions has also become widespread to supplement school education. In 1970s and 1980s accessing private tuitions or coaching was limited to academically challenged students whose parents were not able to guide their children. On the other hand high performing students also used to attend tuitions but for competing in entrance examination and that also usually prior to examinations. Thus, during that period these coaching classes fulfilled a need and benefited many. Moreover, the retired experience teachers, educated family members, students specialising in the required subjects and a few school teachers used to provide private classes. Slowly the scenario change more school teachers joined the tuition during 1980's. It started emerging as a lucrative practice to earn more money, and students taking tuitions were favored with the information and content of question papers so that they can secure more marks. It was also observed that teachers reserved better notes and study material for the student taking tuition from them. This practice further flourished due to our examination oriented education system.

On the one side was regular schools meant for providing holistic education and on the other extreme was coaching and tuition centres catering to only examination needs. As a result the equilibrium started shifting towards these coaching classes and the practice of taking tuitions has reached to an extent that attendance in school is only meant for obtaining official entry tickets for taking examination.

The formal schooling system has emerged as an instrument for developing academic, social and life skills and is being considered as an investment. Written examinations have become the determiners of success and failure. Consequently the present competitive examination oriented educational system has led to seeking learning alternatives like private tuition and coaching for enhancing academic achievement.

Private coaching has become a big business, totally commercialised with extensive resource materialization and employing many people. Thus, it appears private tuition system has emerged as a parallel education system with even increasing demand.

There are several possible reasons for the growing reluctance of private tutoring. First private tutoring can be considered some forms of private supplementary education, it thrives in countries where the public education system fails to satisfy the needs of the students. Second, private tutoring can result from corruption in the education system where teachers require their students to go to their extra classes to supplement their income because they are poorly paid. Last but not least competition in all the fields including education is another factor which is influencing the practice of private tutoring. Another factor, which influence the extent of private tutoring is existing examination oriented system as well as the student have to perform in examination to transit over to other levels of education. It is also observed that in teacher centered education system also private tutoring is more prevalent.

Implications of private tuitions on quality of secondary education:

The increasing trend of availing private tuition indicates strongly about the lack of quality of education provided in the educational institutions. The rigidity of formal school education system may be one of the reason encouraging to invest resources in private tuition to their children. This has significant impact on equity, equal opportunities and access issues in education. There is need to develop inherent flexibility so that students have more choice in selecting courses as per their aptitudes.

Curriculum and content of the syllabi of different grades need to be reviewed and restructured regularly to make it relevant and skill oriented.

In order to reduce the demand for private tuition need for change in the existing examination oriented education system.

Strengthening of the available classroom teaching learning facilities is essential Regular in-service training to improve teaching learning methods. The independent entrepreneurs like students, educated unemployed youth & educated house wives represent a different class of tutors. There is need to develop standard benchmarks within which tuition provides operate.

It has been emphasized that although quality of education is an elusive concept, yet provision of good physical and academic infrastructure along with supply of high quality human resources both for imparting instruction and for governance of the system, are critical to achieve good quality education. Quality is not merely a measure of efficiency, it also has value dimension. The attempt to improve the quality of education will succeed only if it goes hand in hand with steps to promote equality and social justice.

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