

FEE WAIVER IN HIGHER EDUCATION: PROSPECTS AND PROBLEMS IN RURAL COLLEGES

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Introduction:

The higher education system is the most effective human resource development program and one of the best fastest growing education system in this earth. After independence the Government of India has giving importance to the academic development of the state. The students taking admission to the specified institution do not have to pay the admission and tuition fees under a government scheme. This scheme is known as fee waiver scheme. Fee waiver is generally given to students who demonstrate financial need. However, some school or college will allow any student to avoid paying the application fee if they meet certain requirements, such as making an official on-campus visit.

For students, who request a fee waiver based on financial need, the exact requirements to qualify will depend on the waiver process the student is using. Some colleges have their own fee waiver application process. However, students can expect a fee waiver if they receive government assistance based on their participation in programs for low-income families.

Fee waiver is nothing but a financial assistance to a student for his study who belongs to be declared as from economically weaker section of the society.

The world community under the United Nations is very concerned about educational development and literacy. World Education Forum has fixed the Goal of Education For All in 1990 and in the year 2000 Dakar, Senegal conference of world education forum took a Framework for Action which re-affirmed their commitment for achieving 'Education for All' by the year 2015, and identified six key measurable education goals which aim to meet the learning needs of all children, youth and adults by 2015. The said six goals are --

- Goal 1: To expand early childhood care and education
- Goal 2: To provide free and compulsory primary education for all
- Goal 3: To promote learning and life skills for young people and adults

- Goal 4: To increase adult literacy by 50 percent
 - Goal 5: To achieve gender parity by 2005, gender equality by 2015
- Goal 6: To improve the quality of education.

UNESCO has been mandated to lead the movement and coordinate the international efforts to reach Education for All. Governments, development agencies, civil societies, non-government organizations etc. are working towards reaching these goals. India as a participant, agreed on the UNESCO's role and takes the overall responsibility of coordinating in the attempts to achieve these goals and show the Collective Commitment to implement the principles of Dakar conference. In the meantime, India declared right to Education as fundamental rights. The Central and Some State governments of India has initiated the implementations of must educational Development. In this perception the various governments have accentuated in action of World Education Forum's goals mainly to promote learning and life skills for youths and adults without any difficulty. Such as-

- 1) Promote learning and life skills for young people and adults
- 2) Increase adult literacy by 50 percent
- 3) Gender equality by 2015
- 4) Improve the quality of education.

The government of Assam and Central Government has taken the policy for achievements of learning and life skills for young people and improve the quality of education along with gender equality. Government pay interest for women empowerment in the state, especially for women education Centre's in Colleges and Universities are established in different areas.

We are expecting more and hoping for the best in our normal life. Economy is our basic energy for mobility and technology is always streaming our system to go for the development. Economic barrier is impediment arising from economic factors and chasing difficulty or constraint to enhancing individual as well as social welfare. Economic barrier is ghastly effecting the higher education specially college education in rural and urban both. Economic barrier leads to despoiled the efficiency of individual and create obstacle to use of individual and social resources as well human resources. If we can overcome our economic barriers and obstacles than we may use our potentiality and credited to higher education, In case of Assam and rest of India, we have lots of human resources and potentiality to enact or participate in growth and development of society, so government argued to give fee waiver to student of different levels of institutions. Students have been receiving high benefits in education sector and institutions also get support from the governments and other sources. The Govt. of Assam has announced fee waiver for poor students to get admission in a government academic institution in Assam. The Govt. of Assam has declared fee waiver plan for students in the year 2016-17 and almost 1.38 Lakhs students got benefit from the

schemes. The major relaxation of the schemes is fee waiver that the person with disability who is allowed for the schemes in all stages or level of incomes. The Major thought of the Scheme that no poor students will leftout from the government objects. Higher education is to be reachable for all. Most of the colleges followed the common fee waiver policy for applied weaker section of students.

Assam is not only a single state in India, Hariyana is the first state to initiate the fee waiver programme to the students. In different countries like Canada and the United states of America have implemented tutorial fee waiver programme in their Colleges and Universities with the objectives to find out the excellent students of the College as well as resources to make more easier to achieve the education and more enrollment in colleges the Governments offered the policy for loan means education Loan's for students. The government wished that the total enrollment should not be decreased and the objects is to be reached.

why we need fee waiver: The number of college students apply depending on a variety of factors, such as financial ability and type of decision status a student is applying to. For instance, if you apply during the early decision process and get accepted, you may only apply to one college. But those who strive to get into their preferred colleges but want a backup should apply to at least three colleges. One college will be their “safety” college, one college will be their “probable” college and one will be their “reach” college. For students who obtain a fee waiver or can afford to apply to more colleges, applying to six or seven college isn't uncommon. A student who applies to 6 (two safety college, two probable colleges and two reach colleges) can easily spend huge application fees, assuming no fee waivers were used. To minimize the expenditure of students should get fee waiver.

To choose a heavy and suitable course the student should get opportunity to select a college and subject as he wants, but he gets fee waiver for substantiating his economy.

Objectives of Studies-

- 1) To understand the benefits of fee waiver in education institutions
- 2) To understand the prospects and problems created for colleges.
- 3) To understand the psychological effect of students and institutions.

Method:

Mainly the researchers use primary method for the study of this topics and used official and Government orders of Assam Government and Central Governments. Mainly observations being a teacher followed for the studies of this subject.

Study areas:

The study area is stipulated in rural colleges of Assam with special reference to Udalguri District of Assam. Being a teacher, researcher has used his own college as a field area to study the subject and subsequently use another nearest college for study and consult.

Some Basic facts about Udalguri District-

Udalguri District is known for tea gardens and forest land. Tea garden land area of the district of Udalguri is 1852 kms. The total populations of the district is 8.32 lakh as per 2011 census report. The locality or inhabitant of Udalguri District is mixed community with different culture. Literacy rate of this district is 65.4% and it located at the foot hills of Himalaya surrounded by Bhutan and Arunachal Pradesh on one side and Darrang and Baska District of Assam in other side. The Communication is very poor, it is merely unreachable from centre to periphery in a day. Academic institutions are with higher part only five (5) degree colleges and two ITI college (Technical) institutions and 12 higher Secondary Schools.

About locality the Mazbat area is mostly covered by 12 numbers of Tea Estate and Tea Tribes, Tea Garden Labor Community, Adivasis, Bodo, Nepali, Garo, Hajong, Bihari and other people are seen here, normally common local language and official language is Assamese and English. In local part mostly Bodo, Bhojpuri Nepali language are used for correspondence. Due to these language problems means of medium of instruction the education system faces a lot of problems. Hence, higher education system is suffering problems of language and mother tongue.

Problem of study: The colleges are run by two specific ways of instructions,

- 1) By the government administrative process.
- 2) The enrollment process of the college, which is totally depend upon the local views to the college and comprehensive quality of students result along with academic environment of the college. The enrollments based only on (A) Locality, (B) Local economy, (C) Quality of the system or results.

In general perception of the people everything is comfortable and smooth but as we know if economy of the people is not good than other elements will fail automatically. Therefore, we need

economy should have power to mobilize itself and support. The administration of Govt. of Assam has provided the waiver of admission fee, tutorial fee, hostel fee (Govt. Hostels) and even free books and uniform are also provided. The Enrollment of students in a college is gradually increasing and students are getting satisfied in normal eyes of the people. But it has created major challenges to the college authority as well as society that the students are not coming to the college for their classes means of learning regularly. Because they have only conscious of free admission, later part they become inactive. Because it is cause of free admission, due to poor economy, they are searching job or working for regular earning. Due to communication and infrastructure problems the students do not feel comfort in the communication process from home to college. So we need more and more infrastructures in our colleges and in the locality. So, local environment may not be identified as perfect for higher education. Students may want to go outside or more college for safety of study. In this regards the students may achieve fee waiver for next colleges where they want to apply.

The major Challenges are that the society moving from digital to high digital infrastructure and technology. Maximum numbers of ICT and other technical education provided to the student in developed areas. Modern technical courses are input in University and Technical Institution. In the same time in Job sector, the industry and institution demanding or require more technical workers or qualified persons. So, our courses are gradually declining and facing lot of challenges.

Now question is whether we need social adjustable and affordable courses in our colleges? During the studies I have found that students are interested only for free admission, scholarship and other facilities. It is believed that the maximum free facility may consume brilliant thought and for skillful.

Present structure of higher education system is not reachable for poor people. If you are poor than the rich resource also demoralizes and hang it and debarred from the best performances.

Problems faced by the Colleges:

- i) Losing the earning sources.
- ii) Problems faced to use local resources and local plans.
- iii) College not ready to take initiative to open the new important courses.
- iv) No advance study programmed, carrier programmed, certificate course and even not able to take any improvise practical programmers and quality improvement may under challenges.
- v) Local environment programmed and cleanness programmed not take due to shortage of money.

- vi) To face the problems of identification of poor students. The numbers of students are huge. It will be difficult to provide support to them.
- vii) Students will fill up the fee waiver demand form to save their money without heisting or screening their economic status.
- viii) Fraud or falls demander and true sense of applicant may mixed-up.
- ix) In rural colleges most of the applicant may from weaker sections family background. Hence fee waiver may create a critical and conflict situation.
- x) Because of fee waiver some students can take admission with any interest in course but fee waiver, and they may create hamper to the regular student.
- xi) Colleges and institutions will be more dependent only to the Government aids and others supports.
- xii) Enrollment and participations of them may increase in comparison to previous, but continuations and quality education may be an issue.
- xiii) Enrolled more students, it means not more and developed quality, it is a contradiction because of dropout also increase similarly.
- xiv) Participations of students in educational institution is related to literacy of state again fee waiver should relate to the economic conditions of the students, but it cannot be considered for quality of educations of state or institutions.
- xv) Especially, in Rural Colleges, numbers of student's enrollments are increases in last few years due to less cost but in stage of higher education the quality and completions of course, infrastructure development, student teacher's ratio etc. are backed under duress which it makes vain.

Suggestion:

- i) Fee waiver is important for the academic development as well improvement of literacy rate in the state but it should have a basis or level, if this faciality of fee waiver provided to the poorer than it will be the best for students and institutions.
- ii) Fee waiver should have different stages in different levels. In spite of one to all and stages there should be different conditions to get fee waiver.
- iii) Highest qualifier or performer should get maximum fee waiver. So that some spirit of competitiveness exists.
- iv) There should be some reviewing measures to encourage the one who have actually utilized the fee waiver as expected.

- v) The academic institutions and colleges should get back the fee amount borne by the govt. once and after the admission is over as immediately as possible so as to enable the college function smoothly.

Conclusion: In digital and liberal age, people are searching for the best performances from individual or institution at any cost. But institution like colleges can never be kept behind from social and intellectual responsibilities. So, fee waiver is very critical issue for rural colleges. It may raise the questions of survivability of a college in near future. Still government of Assam has provided total fee waiver in different categories. So, there does not exist any issue of disciplinary thought. On the other hand, the rural colleges face problems in the scrutiny of the applicant so as to give support to the best performer. It can be suggested that colleges should create own resources to support the applicant of fee waivers as well as to run the institutions smoothly. As far as the implementation of the New Education Policy and introduction of vocational, skill development courses the rural colleges required to be more resourceful than ever, so while promoting any fee waiver policy this aspect must be kept in consideration.

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