

Teaching shops pose existential threat to Haryana colleges

timesofindia.indiatimes.com/blogs/cultural-inputs/teaching-shops-pose-existential-threat-to-haryana-colleges

Jagdish Batra

July 19, 2023



Jagdish Batra

Dr Jagdish Batra is a senior academic, currently working as Professor of English at O.P. Jindal Global University, India. He has nearly four decades of teaching and research e ...
MORE

The UK government's decision to come down heavily on the teaching shops offering 'rip off' degrees is indeed welcome, as it paves the way to help Indian students to avoid being hoodwinked. It is no secret that the cheats in UK as in India are up to the same tricks when it comes to awarding degrees for money without providing any knowledge or skills.

In Haryana, and as a corollary all over the country, such teaching shops are creating a big headache for regular colleges. Even in the garb of regular colleges, some private players are acting much like the teaching shops. For them, attendance in classes is not mandatory. In most cases, these institutions are not equipped with the paraphernalia to impart quality education. So, thin attendance or the large number of absent students helps them financially. These colleges 'help' the students pass final exams through devious means like arranging copying, and in this the teaching staff employed on extremely low wages is forced to 'cooperate'. The performance of the faculty employed is judged on the basis of their students who pass the exam. Surprisingly, one comes across cases where such students have also topped exams of universities to which they are affiliated. Such colleges get a good number of students even if the fees are high. One also hears the plea that the students want to prepare for competitive exams and so, this facility offered by certain colleges is appreciated.

Again, the coaching centres preparing students for competitive exams mostly work on the model of teaching shops. Students are not imparted any real education, instead they are 'helped' to pass the exam. Some centres are seen to be proudly claiming to ensure government jobs for their 'trained' students. There is scope to believe that they resort to nefarious means. The magnitude of the rot can be imagined from the fact that before the exams of the bygone semester started, the Haryana police had swooped down on certain groups which offered written contracts to prospective candidates to assure them success

in exam for a price, of course! They provided rate-list for each class and subject which the candidate wanted to pass. The routine crackdowns on the shady coaching centres have brought out their nexus with the mafia involved in question paper leaks, impersonation in taking exam, etc., and making huge money by fleecing the candidates and distorting the education system.

All combined, the private colleges and teaching shops providing easy short-cuts pose an existential threat for good colleges in Haryana which are facing shortfall in intake during the current academic year. One college principal revealed her anxiety on another count also, which is that while those who can pay join reputed private universities or go abroad, the lower middle class or poor candidates are lured by the charm of easy conduits to securing good marks or jobs. It must, however, be clear to such students who choose the easy path the the future prospects are going to be bleak.

There have been instances reported in the press in the past – and not all is well even now what with the yearly publication of the list of ‘fake’ universities on the UGC website — of private universities running in two rooms and awarding degrees upto the levels of Ph.D. and D.Litt! Such universities also exist abroad and unscrupulous people here offer such degrees honoris causa! Of course, nothing of such sort happens without payment of a heft amount, and yet there is growing number of people – some well-known socially – whose temptation to put the suffix ‘Dr.’ with their name overshadows any ethical concern.

In this context, the observation by the UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak is also worth consideration. Braving criticism from opposition, he has pointed out that some 30% graduates do not get highly skilled jobs or take up further studies. This is stated to be reason enough for his government to undertake remedial action. Here in India, we need some strict action against shady institutions. Merely notifying year after year, fake universities on the UGC website is not enough. One hopes action is also undertaken against such institutions which cheat the public of huge funds and misguide youth into using unfair short-cuts rather than learning to put in hard work.

Top Comment

3 days ago

Disclaimer

Views expressed above are the author's own.