



TREND IN RECONSTRUCTING THE HIGHER EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABILITY: STUDENTS' AND TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVE IN THE ERA OF NEO-LIBERALISM

* Pradnya Patil & ** Dr. Shefali Pandya,

* Research Scholar & ** Retd. Sr. Professor & Former Head, Department of Education, University of Mumbai

Abstract:

This paper explores trend in reconstructing the higher education for sustainability: students' and teachers' perspective in the era of neo-liberalism. Study reveals different realm and possibilities like teachers' availability, job-related skills, competition, higher enrolment, conducive environment, and privatisation. In higher education this all are not a new terms in India. However, since India started grab the neoliberal policies in 1991, the objectives of higher education in India have increasingly shifted from philanthropy to profit-making. The present study took survey method of quantitative approach is used. Total sample comprises of 486 students and 46 teachers altogether 532 no. of sample surveyed. Three-stage sampling technique was used to select the samples. From HEIs from entire Navi Mumbai area. The attempt made to show how the trend in reconstructing higher education system in India is gradually changing to achieve its United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) commitments by 2030.

Key Words: Neo-Liberalism, Higher Education

Copyright © 2022 The Author(s): This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY-NC 4.0) which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium for non-commercial Use Provided the Original Author and Source Are Credited.

Background: The term neoliberal implies a policy relating to or denoting a modified form of liberalism tending to favour free-market capitalism.

Neoliberalism: The term in English was first used by the French economist Gide (1898) to describe the economic beliefs of the Italian economist Pantaleoni. The term "néo-libéralisme" previously existed in French. Neoliberalism is a policy model aimed at bridging politics, social studies and economics and seeks to transfer control of economic factors to the private sector from the public sector.

Neoliberalism in Higher Education: Neoliberalism manifests in three major trends in higher education: privatization, commercialization and corporatization (Kezar, 2004). Neoliberal economic policies in higher educations are characterized by the growth of capitalist and corporate influence (Apple, 2000; Chomsky, 1998; Rhoades, 2003). "In the neoliberal model, higher education is ideally integrated into the system of production and accumulation in which knowledge is reduced to its economic functions and contributes to the realization of individual economic utilities" (Morrow, 2006) .

Sustainability In 1987, the United Nations Brundtland Commission defined sustainability as "meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

Education for sustainable development (ESD) is UNESCO's education sector response to the urgent and dramatic challenges the planet faces. ESD allows every human being to acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values necessary to shape a sustainable future. Three pillar of ESD environmental, social and economic.



Need of the Study: A review of the literature indicates that very little attention is given on the research area, namely, students' and teachers' perspectives on neo-liberalism in HE in the Indian context. A few studies conducted on teachers' availability, job-related skills competition and higher enrolment, conducive environment, privatisation in relation to ESD. There is a dearth of research studies on neo-liberalism in HE with a specific focus on students' and teachers' perspectives. Hence the researcher has decided to explore this hitherto unexplored area.

Objective of the Study:

- (a) To compare students' and teachers' opinion about the statement "Nowadays, students are consumers of education. Hence, teachers need to be available whenever students need them."
- (b) To compare students' and teachers' opinion about the statement "In the present context, higher education gives importance to developing job-related skills in students rather than values"
- (c) To compare students' and teachers' opinion about the statement "Competition between higher education institutions is more about the higher enrolment rather than actual learning outcomes."
- (d) To compare students' and teachers' opinion about the statement "Maintaining conducive environment in educational institutions is becoming a challenge due to growing privatisation in higher education institution."

Hypothesis of the Study: The study was conducted with the following hypothesis:

- (a) Research Hypothesis 1: H_{11} : There is a significant difference in the students' and teachers' opinion about the statement "Nowadays, students are consumers of education. Hence, teachers need to be available whenever students need them."
- (b) Null Hypothesis 1: H_{01} : There is no significant difference in the students' and teachers' opinion about the statement "Nowadays, students are consumers of education. Hence, teachers need to be available whenever students need them."
- (c) Research Hypothesis 2: H_{12} : There is a significant difference in the students' and teachers' opinion about the statement "In the present context, higher education gives importance to developing job-related skills in students rather than values"
- (d) Null Hypothesis 2: H_{02} : There is no significant difference in the students' and teachers' opinion about the statement "In the present context, higher education gives importance to developing job-related skills in students rather than values"
- (e) Research Hypothesis 3: H_{13} : There is a significant difference in the students' and teachers' opinion about the statement "Competition between higher education institutions is more about the higher enrolment rather than actual learning outcomes."
- (f) Null Hypothesis 3: H_{03} : There is no significant difference in the students' and teachers' opinion about the statement "Competition between higher education institutions is more about the higher enrolment rather than actual learning outcomes."
- (g) Research Hypothesis 4: H_{14} : There is a significant difference in the students' and teachers' opinion about



the statement “Maintaining conducive environment in educational institutions is becoming a challenge due to growing privatisation in higher education institution.”

- (h) Null Hypothesis 4: H_{04} : There is no significant difference in the students’ and teachers’ opinion about the statement “Maintaining conducive environment in educational institutions is becoming a challenge due to growing privatisation in higher education institution.”

Methodology of the study: The main aim of research is, study trend in reconstructing the higher education for sustainability: students’ and teachers' perspective in the era of neo-liberalism. The present study is aimed at ascertaining the differences between students’ and teachers’ perspectives in the era of neo-liberalism about trend in reconstructing the higher education for sustainability: Therefore, the study will use the causal-comparative method.

Sample: In the present study, the survey method of quantitative approach is used. Total sample comprised of 486 students and 46 teachers. Sample selected consisted of boys and girls from degree colleges affiliated to the University of Mumbai. Three-stage sampling technique was used to select the samples. At the first stage, HEIs was selected from entire Navi Mumbai area. There are seven nodes in Navi Mumbai area like, CBD Belapur, Vashi, Nerul, Koparkhairane, Ghansoli, Sanpada and Airoli. At the second stage, HEIs using stratified sampling technique. At the third stage, students and teachers were selected from these selected HEIs using simple random sampling technique.

Data Analyses:

Objective 1: To compare students’ and teachers’ perspectives on neo-liberalism in higher education regarding “Nowadays, students are consumers of education. Hence, teachers need to be available whenever students need them.”

Research Hypothesis 1: H_{11} : There is a significant difference in the students’ and teachers opinion about the statement 1 “Nowadays, students are consumers of education. Hence, teachers need to be available whenever students need them.”

Null Hypothesis 1: H_{01} : There is no significant difference in the students’ and teachers opinion about the statement 1 “Nowadays, students are consumers of education. Hence, teachers need to be available whenever students need them.”

This null hypothesis was tested using the Chi-square test.

Following table shows the data about chi-square analysis of statement 1.

TABLE 1: CHI-SQUARE DATA ABOUT STUDENTS’ AND TEACHERS’ OPINION ON STATEMENT 1

Sample	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree.	Total
Students (S)	3 (0.62%)	20 (4.12%)	30 (6.17%)	254 (52.26%)	179 (36.83%)	486
Teachers (T)	1 (2.17%)	11 (23.91%)	9 (19.57%)	14 (30.43%)	11 (23.91%)	46
Total	4	31	39	268	190	532





Following table shows chi-square analysis about students’ and teachers’ opinion on statement 1.

TABLE 2: CHI-SQUARE STATISTICS ABOUT STUDENTS’ AND TEACHERS’ OPINION ON STATEMENT 1

Sr. No.	Statement	N		χ^2	df	P	S/NS
1.	Nowadays, students are consumers of education. Hence, teachers need to be available whenever students need them.	S	486	45.84	4	<.0001	S
		T	46				

Finding:

The obtained chi square statistics reveals that for the Statement No. 1 about students’ and teachers’ opinion is 45.84 and $P < 0.0001$. Thus the null hypothesis is rejected in this case. It may be concluded that there is a significant difference in the opinion of the students and teachers about statement 1. 89.09% and 51.34% students and teachers respectively agree with this statement. This implies that only half the number of teachers agrees with the fact that teachers need to be available to students whenever students need them.

Objective 2: To compare students’ and teachers’ perspectives on neo-liberalism in higher education regarding “In the present context, higher education gives importance to developing job-related skills in students rather than values”.

Research Hypothesis 2: H_{12} : There is a significant difference in the students’ and teachers opinion about the statement 2 “In the present context, higher education gives importance to developing job-related skills in students rather than values”.

Null Hypothesis 2: H_{02} : There is no significant difference in the students’ and teachers’ opinion about the statement 2 “In the present context, higher education gives importance to developing job-related skills in students rather than values”.

This null hypothesis was tested using the chi-square test.

Following table shows the data about chi-square analysis of statement 2.

TABLE 3: CHI-SQUARE DATA ABOUT STUDENTS’ AND TEACHERS’ OPINION ON STATEMENT 2

Sample	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree.	Total
Students (S)	15 (3.09%)	47 (9.67%)	50 (10.29%)	241 (49.59%)	133 (27.37%)	486
Teachers (T)	0 (0.00%)	6 (13.04%)	6 (13.04%)	25 (54.35%)	9 (19.57%)	46
Total	15	53	56	266	142	532

Following table shows chi-square analysis about students’ and teachers’ opinion on statement 3.

TABLE 4: CHI-SQUARE STATISTICS ABOUT STUDENTS’ AND TEACHERS’ OPINION ON STATEMENT GIVEN BELOW

Sr. No.	Statement	N		χ^2	df	P	S/NS
1.	In the present context, higher education gives importance to developing job-related skills in students rather than values.	S	486	3.35	4	>0.501	NS
		T	46				

Finding:

The obtained chi square statistics reveals for the Statement No. 2 about students’ and teachers’ opinion is 3.35 and $P > 0.501$ which is more than 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted in this case. It may be concluded that there is no significant difference in the opinion of the students and teachers about statement 2. 76.96% and 73.92% students and teachers respectively agree with this statement.

Objective 3: To compare students’ and teachers’ perspectives on neo-liberalism in higher education regarding “Competition between higher education institutions is more about the higher enrolment rather than actual learning outcomes.”

Research Hypothesis 3: H_{13} : There is a significant difference in the students’ and teachers’ opinion about the statement 3 “Competition between higher education institutions is more about the higher enrolment rather than actual learning outcomes.”

Null Hypothesis 3: H_{03} : There is no significant difference in the students’ and teachers opinion about the statement 3 “Competition between higher education institutions is more about the higher enrolment rather than actual learning outcomes.”

This null hypothesis was tested using the Chi-square test.

Following table shows the data about chi-square analysis of statement 3.

TABLE 5: CHI-SQUARE DATA ABOUT STUDENTS’ AND TEACHERS’ OPINION ON STATEMENT 3

Sample	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree.	Total
Students (S)	5 (1.03%)	33 (6.79%)	77 (15.84%)	261 (53.70%)	110 (22.63%)	486
Teachers (S)	0 (0.00%)	4 (8.70%)	8 (17.39%)	21 (45.65%)	13 (28.26%)	46
Total	5	37	85	282	123	532



Following table shows chi-square analysis about students’ and teachers’ opinion on statement 3.

TABLE 6: CHI-SQUARE STATISTICS ABOUT STUDENTS’ AND TEACHERS’ OPINION ON STATEMENT 3

Sr. No.	Statement	N		χ^2	df	P	S/ NS
1.	Competition between higher education institutions is more about the higher enrolment rather than actual learning outcomes.	S	486	1.85	4	>0.7633	NS
		T	46				

Finding:

The obtained Chi Square statistics reveals for the Statement No 3 about students’ and teachers’ opinion is 1.85 and $P > 0.7633$ which is more than 0.05. Thus the null hypothesis is *accepted* in this case. It may be concluded that there is no significant difference in the opinion of the students and teachers about statement 3. 76.33% and 73.91% students and teachers respectively agree with this statement.

Objective 4: To compare students’ and teachers’ perspectives on neo-liberalism in higher education regarding “Maintaining conducive environment in educational institutions is becoming a challenge due to growing privatisation in higher education institution.”

Research Hypothesis 4: H_{14} : There is a significant difference in the students’ and teachers opinion about the statement 4 “Maintaining conducive environment in educational institutions is becoming a challenge due to growing privatisation in higher education institution.”

Null Hypothesis 4: H_{04} : There is no significant difference in the students’ and teachers opinion about the statement 4 “Maintaining conducive environment in educational institutions is becoming a challenge due to growing privatisation in higher education institution”.

This null hypothesis was tested using the Chi-square test. Following table shows the data about chi-square analysis of statement 4.

TABLE 7: CHI-SQUARE DATA ABOUT STUDENTS’ AND TEACHERS’ OPINION ON STATEMENT 4

Sample	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree.	Total
Students (S)	11 (2.26%)	32 (6.58%)	91 (18.72%)	257 (52.88%)	95 (19.55%)	486
Teachers (T)	0 (0.00%)	4 (8.70%)	6 (13.04%)	27 (58.70%)	9 (19.57%)	46
Total	11	36	97	284	104	532



Following table shows chi-square analysis about students’ and teachers’ opinion on statement 4.

TABLE 8: CHI-SQUARE STATISTICS ABOUT STUDENTS’ AND TEACHERS’ OPINION ON STATEMENT 4

Sr. No.	Statement	N		χ^2	df	P	S/ NS
1.	Maintaining conducive environment in educational institutions is becoming a challenge due to growing privatisation in higher education institution.	S	486	2.33	4	>0.6753	NS
		T	46				

Finding:

The obtained Chi Square statistics reveals for the Statement No. 4 about students’ and teachers’ opinion is 2.33 and $P > 0.6753$ which is more than 0.05. Thus the null hypothesis is *accepted* in this case. It may be concluded that there is no significant difference in the opinion of the students and teachers about statement 4. 72.43% and 78.27% students and teachers respectively agree with this statement. Maintaining conducive environment in educational institutions is becoming a challenge due to growing privatisation in higher education institution

Conclusion:

The preceding analysis reveals that a large majority of the students feel that teachers need to be available to students whenever students need them as compared to teachers. However, there is no significant difference in students’ and teachers’ opinions about developing job-related skills in students, strong competition between higher education institutions being more about the higher enrolment rather than actual learning outcomes and maintaining conducive environment in educational institutions becoming a challenge due to growing privatisation in higher education institution.

Implication of the Study:

Therefore, reconstructing HE should focus on development of job-related skills in students, giving more importance to achievement of learning outcomes and thinking of ways to create a conducive environment in the institution despite challenges of privatisation.

References:

Gide, Charles (1898). “Has Co-operation Introduced a New Principle into Economics?” *The Economic Journal* 8:490-511.

Kezar, A. J. (2004). Obtaining integrity? Reviewing and examining the charter between higher education and society. *The Review of Higher Education*, 27(4), 429-459.

Apple, M. W. (2000). Between neoliberalism and neoconservatism: Education and conservatism in a global context. In N. C. Burbules, & C. A. Torres (Eds.), *Globalization and education: Critical perspectives*, p. 57-77. London: Routledge.

Chomsky, N. (1998). *Profit over people: Neoliberalism and global order*. New York: Seven Stories Press.

Rhoads, R. A. (2003). *Globalization and resistance in the United States and Mexico: The*





ERJ



Global Potemkin village. *Higher Education*, 45(2), 223–250.

Morrow, R. A. (2006). Foreword—Critical theory, globalization, and higher education:

Political economy and the cul-de-sac of the postmodernist cultural turn. In R. A. Rhoades, & C. A. Torres (Eds.), *The University, State, And Market: The Political Economy of Globalization in the Americas* (pp. xvii-xxxiii). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

<https://www.un.org/en/academic-impact/sustainability> retrived 18/04/2023

<https://www.un.org> > economic-and-social-council

Cite This Article:

* **Pradnya Patil** & ** **Dr. Shefali Pandya**, (2023). *Trend in Reconstructing the Higher Education for Sustainability: Students' and Teachers' Perspective in the Era of Neo-Liberalism*, **Educreator Research Journal**, Volume–X, Issue– III, May – June 2023, 127-134.