Name

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Can we say about an educational system that it is too commercialized?

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We are living in a world of commercialization. Everything is being commercialized, and education is no exception. Nowadays education comes with a price tag. Commercialization in education means that the institutions of imparting knowledge start looking for economic benefits in return. Two significant trends have influenced the commercialization of education in the United States of America (Spector and Kitsuse). The first is the perception of a reduction in funding for educational institutions. The second is the fact that educational institutions are forced to find their own funding resources like autonomous bodies in a time of rising costs. Both of the trends have turned educational administrators into fundraisers. Any educational system trying to earn profits by selling educational programs or degrees will be considered as too commercialized.

Taking into account the current status in public schools, they are an attractive spot for commercial entities to attract young minds. Schools have developed commercial ties with the private sector for funding in terms of allowing them to use school properties for advertisement purposes. Many people have criticized the practice of using educational materials for advertising purpose (Ross). Marketers use public school audience to advertise products, and in return, the school will be receiving money or equipment. Due to the lack of funding from governmental institutions the educators have started establishing strong ties with marketers and commercial entities in the name of improving teaching qualities (Joseph Mbembe). At the public school level, the influence of commercial activities is evident by the syllabus as well because many of the products are being advertised in the books as well. The situation can be alarming if there is a question in the math book of a student of 8th grade that “John is saving $1 per day to buy a pair of Nike shoes that cost $150. For how many weeks will John need to save money? (Molnar)” It is evident by the example that commercialization has deep roots in early school education as well.

If the situation is not alarming yet, then there are companies that exist to promote commercialization in education. There are companies that provide lesson plans, study event management, and similar products but the catch is that all of the materials such as posters will be bloated with advertisements of commercial products in the name of pure education. More than of eighty percent of sponsored education events contain biased and incomplete information.

On the other hand, at higher education level, commercialization of education is inevitable in a society where students can get educational loans easily. If it is harder for students to get out of paying off their debts, then the commercialization of education would be difficult. Colleges trying to over-commercialize the educational system for monetary benefits will struggle to secure more admissions because students will try to explore other options providing better value for the money they spent on education (Sayles). The main reason behind the commercialization trends in higher education institutions in America is that it is relatively easy for students to get Federal education loans. Just because there is an opportunity of making more money from students, educational institutes raised their fee for many programs.

During the late Clinton administration, the US government made it easy for students to obtain an educational loan. At that time the government was able to pay the loans that students were defaulting on. Later in Obama administration, the rules were further loose to get an educational loan. The results are alarming that the US is now in 20 Trillion Dollars of debt to China (Holbrook). It is really difficult to afford such an expense, and the result is that educational institutions have raised their prices. They started adding unnecessary staff and equipment to their educational facilities just to grab more money (Burbules). As there is an opportunity available for students to get a loan, educational institutes are up for making more and more out of the opportunity by raising prices of previous programs. The biggest downside to such commercialization is that degrees go up for sale. The value of imparting knowledge will decrease to the bottom level.

It is happening in most of the countries that students are able to earn degrees by paying higher fees and doing as little work as possible. Due to the exponential increase of commercialization in the education sector it is now possible for students to get their course work done by paying fees to the professional companies and pass exams with minimal margin to earn a degree. In the game of gaining more monetary benefits educational institutes have compromised on the quality of education.

Basic education is the right of every individual, but the increased commercial activities in public schools as well have contaminated the education system. At higher education level the situation is even worse. Any educational system using the degree programs for earning profits will be considered as over-commercialized or too commercialized (Newfield). Even if people may argue that the educational system is not too commercialized and there is still room for that, even though the current situation is not satisfactory at all. Online educational systems using advertising agencies and analytics on their websites are earning profits by site visits as well. All of such systems are too commercialized to impart pure knowledge to young minds and prepare them for future challenges.

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