

Drop In College Admission

Admission of students to non-government colleges has reportedly dropped by about 50 per cent this year. A number of factors account for this marked drop in admission, the central one being thought to be the overall economic hardship of parents and guardians of students. Students of the non-government colleges mostly situated in rural or semi-rural areas largely depend on jagirs, which facility for obvious economic reasons has shrunk to the minimum; for, none excepting a family sufficiently affluent by present standards can afford to feed an extra mouth. Cost of food in hostels has also increased enough to discourage the other category of students whose parents can ill afford such high cost of food. Among other causes may be the increased number of such colleges (a total of 650 now) compared with the number (300) before independence.

It is also reported that in a number of these college teachers have not been receiving their salaries for some months on account of a shortage of funds. With the fall in the admission rate the position is bound to worsen, because the major source of a non-government college's revenue is tuition fees of students. Government grants of the size so far received are also not enough to meet the need. In such contexts it is necessary to review the relative position of government and non-government colleges, the latter being worse off as their number is much larger.

The Education Department has reportedly said that the government had decided to increase the annual recurrent grant to the private colleges with some lump grants for some private colleges now faced with a shortage of funds. While this may partially redeem the position, the overall financial need must remain much larger than can be so met. The problem therefore needs to be examined afresh in the total context of the country's educational needs and the facilities to be created for higher education. Our need at this developing stage is both quality and quantity in education. A feasible plan is, therefore, needed for education to achieve these basic twin ends.