

MANAGEMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

The higher education system in India has grown in a remarkable way, particularly in the post-independence period, to become one of the largest systems of its kind in the world. However, the system has many issues of concern at present, like financing and management including access, equity and relevance, reorientation of programmes by laying emphasis on health consciousness, values and ethics and quality of higher education together with the assessment of institutions and their accreditation. These issues are important for the country, as it is now engaged in the use of higher education as a powerful tool to build a knowledge-based information society of the 21st Century.

Management of Higher Education

The Indian higher education system is one of the largest such systems in the World. It is estimated that during the X Five Year Plan period (2002-07), there will be a tremendous pressure of numbers on this system and a large number of additional students will be knocking at the doors of higher education institutions in the country. There are also new challenges of management and regulation being faced by the institutions, which require serious attention, both at the institutions in the public sector and also those in the private sector now growing at a fast pace. As a result, the old structures of management established in pre-independent India and working during most of the twentieth century are now required to undergo drastic changes. Besides, the demands of the society for equity and accommodation cannot be neglected any more.

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There are five sub-sections which cover important aspects of the deliberations and recommendations. They are

- **Public/Private Partnership in Higher Education**
- **Governance of higher Education**
- **Access and Equity in Higher Education**
- **Export of Higher Education**
- **Policy Planning for Higher Education**
- **Economics of Higher Education**

Public/Private Partnership

Indian higher education system has undergone massive expansion in post-independent India with a national resolve to establish several Universities, Technical Institutes, Research Institutions and Professional / Non-professional Colleges all over the country to generate and disseminate knowledge coupled with the noble intention of providing easy access to higher education to the common Indian. The Public initiatives played a dominant and controlling role in this phase. Most of the Universities were Public institutions with powers to regulate academic activities on their campuses as well as in their areas of jurisdiction through the affiliating system. Even the private institutions enjoyed large-scale financial support in the form of grants from the public exchequer. Private funds as well as individuals played key roles in the cause of higher education.

Recommendations

- It is the primary responsibility of the State to provide the eligible with good quality higher education at reasonable cost. There shall be no withdrawal of the State from this responsibility. In fact, the investment in this area by the State shall be stepped-up to 3% of the GDP. This is essential for the intellectual strength of the State to address equity concerns.
- Taxing the individuals, who had the benefit of the State resources in the past for their education, and the industries, which are likely to derive advantage from good human resources, are the options for creating such a fund.

- Industries may be encouraged to be partners with educational institutions directly for the development of human resources dedicated to their interests. This could happen in the areas of creating infrastructure, faculty sharing and direct support with funds.
- The industries belonging to a specific discipline or related disciplines shall be encouraged to establish state of the art Research and Training centres to develop the necessary specialized man power.
- Strong quality control measures to assure performance above an acceptable benchmark is essential for the institutions.
- A Total Quality Management for courses offered, monitoring the achievement of the students at all stages of the course, shall be introduced at all higher education institutions.

Governance

It has been observed that policy framework is carefully planned at the level of the Planning Commission, Ministry of Human Resource Development and University Grants Commission. However, the policies are not fully implemented mostly because of faulty management of the institutions of higher education. The administrative structure of the Universities, which was devised in the pre-independence period, seems to be still continuing. The new challenges facing the system of higher education in the country cannot be met without a total overhaul of the structure of management of higher education institutions. This has become all the more necessary because of globalization, which requires talent, competence, drive, initiative and innovation at several levels. This cannot be achieved without overhauling the administrative set up of Universities/Institutions. Therefore Governance of Higher Education was deliberated at length at this Seminar, the main recommendations of which are summarized below.

Recommendations

- The Governmental control in the Universities must be reduced, so that the University autonomy and accountability are strengthened and academic decisions are taken on merit.
- New methods and procedures of financial regulations should be devised and direct interference of the finance department in the financial management of Universities, which is counter productive should be stopped.
- As the Colleges are the feeding sources of the Universities, a better coordination in their working and activities is very much required. The participation of the teaching faculty in through a democratic process should be ensured.
- Complete transparency should be maintained in the working of Executive/ Academic Bodies and other Governing Councils of the Universities. There is an urgency to review the University Acts in different States and revise the same in the light of the new requirements and the challenges being faced by the Universities. New technologies of information and communication should be utilized for obtaining administrative efficiency.
- Higher Education should be developed as an infrastructure for social and economic growth of the Country.
- Students involvement in the area of University/College governance should be encouraged.
- Political interference in the appointment of University teachers and administrators should be totally stopped.

Access and Equity

Today the world economy is experiencing an unprecedented change. New developments in science and technology, media revaluation and internationalization of education and the ever expanding competitive environment are revolutionizing the education scene. A paradigm shift has been noticed in higher education now a days, from 'national education' to 'global education', from 'one time education for a few' to 'life long education for all', from 'teacher- centric education' to 'learner centric education'.

These changes make new demands and pose fresh challenges to the established education systems and practices in the country. Because of interdependence and integration of world economy in recent years, the Indian higher education system has a new role and a challenge to provide to the nation and the world at large, skilled human power at all levels, having breadth of knowledge and confidence to effectively confront the social and economic realities.

Recommendations

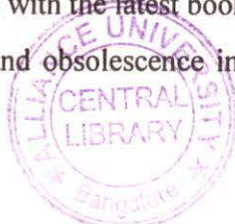
- Strategies for higher education should be set within an educational chain extending from early childhood to post-graduate education to career advancement. Improving the interrelationship of all stages and levels of education should be a long - term policy goal.
- Rural, urban and gender disparities must be kept in mind by policy makers in planning and implementing the higher education system.
- While quantity is important, say achieving, double digit percentage for higher education, quality is paramount. Higher education should continue to be subsidized by the Government in an adequate manner. For improving the quality in education the role of public sector should be enhanced.
- While the Western models of higher education should be suitably adopted, the education planners/implementers and the institutions should devise and develop indigenous ones.
- A liberal milieu in the Indian Universities must be reconstructed. Diversity of opinion and critique of society and its processes need to be encouraged.
- The appointment of bureaucrats, police officers/generals as Vice Chancellors and Registrars must be avoided as far as possible.
- Policies of higher education should be designed to strengthen indigenous research agenda.

Policy Planning for Export

Increasing economic integration across the World over the past decade has cast tumultuous impact on all the areas supporting human life in the developing countries, which constitutes about 80% of the work force. The so-called structural adjustments in national policies and the new international economic order have brought about severe stresses never perceived before. There are exhortations to the policy planners of higher education emanating from GATT regulations made under WTO formulation e.g. withdrawal of subsidies, reduced control of the State, larger privatization and access to corporate players, designing of courses to meet the human resource needs of the markets in the changed scenario, and reliance on self-financing type management. There are also obligations to allow free import of higher education as a service commodity from developed nations in the form of cross-border supply, consumption abroad etc. The cumulative effect of all these factors and the prevailing competitive environment have hustled the morale, confidence etc..

Recommendations

- Most of the areas identified for export of higher education are directly concerned with industries. Therefore, Central and State Governments should introduce a range of programmes and incentives designed specially to improve the links between Universities and Industry.
- The Universities and National Institutes of higher Learning should design their courses in collaboration with industry and such courses be updated regularly, e.g., every year, according to need.
- There should be uniformity, as far as possible, in the standards of the courses, academic calendar and the examination system of Universities.
- To provide a broad choice of courses, credit system should be introduced in the Universities
- Libraries should be fully equipped with the latest books, journals and periodicals.
- Laboratories should be updated and obsolescence in equipment/facilities should be removed on a regular basis.



- Working facilities and workload of teachers should be as per the international norms.
- Teachers should be encouraged to attend various Conventions, Conferences, Seminars, Workshops in their disciplines to update their subject know how.

Economics of Higher Education

Access to higher education needs to be widened in the country, both within the formal system and through other effective innovative measures, such as a truly open system and networking of Universities. It is now imperative on the part of Indian Universities to generate their own resources to a large extent. This could be done through several methods, like raising tuition fee and collecting capitation fee, both of which having severe limitations; and others like, launching courses for foreign students, obtaining donations from philanthropists, etc., which have a good potential. In the globalized World, the State-protected educational system cannot withstand the pressure without making itself competitive. There seem to be four reasons why new policy initiatives should be taken by the Government in this connection. They are:

- (i) The economic returns of primary education far exceed the returns of higher education;
- (ii) The private returns on higher education far exceed the social returns;
- (iii) The State funding for higher education is insufficient in countries like India;
- (iv) Since private sector benefits the most from higher education, it is only just that it should make a decisive contribution. Whether or not one accepts the Government's rationale, new strategies need to be developed for the survival and well being of the higher education system in the present scenario.

Recommendations

- ❖ Raising of student fees to some extent, in consultation with student bodies and parents' organizations.
- ❖ Charging capitation fees and obtaining donations.
- ❖ Launching lucrative and specific courses for foreign students.

- ❖ Developing philanthropy and cultivating an organized culture of giving.
- ❖ Promoting income tax inducement for obtaining donations..
- ❖ Reorientation of educational programmes.
- ❖ Linking education with employment.
- ❖ Launching industry linked human resource development programmes.
- ❖ Reorientation of the management system of Colleges and Universities.
- ❖ Better allocation/utilization of the resources already available
- ❖ Encouraging accountability at various levels of decision making.
- ❖ Obtaining research grants from industries
- ❖ Reorganization of the educational system in the country in line with the changes.
- ❖ Providing professional and vocational education and preparation of students for this.
- ❖ Interrelating with industry; some suggestions for which are:
 - Undergraduate industry-related courses should be organized with care, exposing the students to industry problems and requirements;
 - Undergraduate students should take up industry-related projects and come out with viable solutions;
 - Industry personnel should be invited for extension lectures;
 - Industry personnel should be associated in curriculum development;
 - Faculty should visit industries and get acquainted with current problems;
 - Better contact with alumni to evaluate teaching methodologies and new demands;
 - Vocationalization of Degree programmes;
 - Establishing Liaison Cell for getting feedback from industries
 - Introducing entrepreneurship development programmes for students

Conclusion

The new challenge before the country at the beginning of the twenty first century is to become a developed society by the year 2020, which requires that not only a vibrant economy driven by knowledge has to be ushered in soon, but also a new society where justice and human values prevail has to be created. They have already attained global dimensions, particularly after trade in services has been brought under the purview of the WTO regime. With the explosive growth of knowledge in the past century and with the development of handy tools of information and communication technologies as well as of other scientific innovations, competition has become a hallmark of growth all over the World.

As a result, knowledge is not only going to be the driver of Indian economy, but also, it is going to permeate into all the strata of Indian society for a better quality of life and living conditions. Therefore, India has to rise to the occasion urgently and reorient its higher education system to be vibrant, competitive, meaningful and purposeful.