

Issues Affecting Quality in Higher Education and Recommendations with Reference to New National Policy on Education -2016 in India- A Review

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Abstract:- This study is intended to investigate the issues affecting quality in higher education and the issues highlighted in National policy on education -2016, its recommendations to improve quality in higher education. .

Key Words: Higher education, quality, National policy on education (NEP), quality.

1. INTRODUCTION

The importance of education was well recognized in India, 'Swadeshe pujiyate raja, vidwan sarvatra pujiyate' "A king is honoured only in his own country, but one who is learned is honoured throughout the world." – Indian Vedha. 'Education is the manifestation of the divine perfection already existing in human' – Swami Vivekananda. The aim of education in ancient India was not knowledge, as preparation for life in this world or for life beyond, but for complete realization of self. In Indian context, the fundamental roles of education are nation-building, progress, security, socio-economic development.

India's higher education system is the world's third largest in terms of students, next to China and the United States.

Higher education system is governed by Ministry of human resource development (MHRD), University grants commission (UGC), statutory professional councils like All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) and state governments.

These governing bodies enforce its standards, advise the government, and help coordinate between the centre and the state.

Institutions of India, such as the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), have been globally acclaimed for their standard of education.

However, India has failed to produce world class universities like Harvard and Cambridge. According to the London Times Higher Education (2009)- Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University rankings, no Indian university features among the first 100.

A recent evaluation of universities and research institutes all over the world, conducted by a Shanghai university, has not a single Indian university in the world's top 300. The Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, comes in somewhere in the top 400 and IIT, Kharagpur, makes an appearance after that.

The overall scenario of higher education in India does not match with the global Quality standards. This Lack of quality leads to the following crisis

- (i) Unemployment
- (ii) Less motivation of learners
- (iii) Indiscipline on the campus
- (iv) Unrest among the students on the campus
- (v) Deterioration of quality in teaching and learning process
- (vi) Failure of education administration

The quality in higher education depends on the infrastructure provided on campus like

- (i) High-end research facilities
- (ii) Fully equipped library
- (iii) High tech classrooms
- (iv) Conducive campus environment
- (v) Technology equipped campus
- (vi) Highly qualified faculties

Most of the Indian colleges and universities lack in the above parameters makes it very difficult to provide top quality instruction or engage in cutting-edge research. This gap must be bridged if we want to speed up our path to development.

In order to overcome this issue, the Government has constituted a Knowledge Commission to suggest measures to minimize the problems that higher education sector is facing with and make India a Knowledge super power in the global economy.

2. CRITICAL ISSUES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

The mission of higher education is

- (i) Creating a reservoir of educated population in the field of research and development.
- (ii) Building world class Universities
- (iii) Well trained professional graduates

The present system of higher education does not serve the mission for which it has been started. Many of the institutions are operated as business units. Most of the Universities and colleges do not have qualified faculties, laboratories, infrastructure, libraries etc.,

The National Knowledge commission of India has pointed in its "Report to the Nation 2006", that, "a deep and silent crisis is going in higher education in India". Also, the confidential reports of The National Assessment and Accreditation Council, which is affiliated to the University Grants Commission (UGC) has stresses the fact that one third of the Universities in India are poorly qualified.

Despite various national policies on education is drafted, the results were not as expected because of lack of clear work map, follow-up and they failed to build a strong higher education system.

There are many basic problems facing higher education in India today.

- (i) Inadequate infrastructure and facilities
- (ii) Large vacancies in faculty positions and poor faculty.
- (iii) Low student enrolment rate
- (iv) Outmoded teaching methods
- (v) Declining research standards
- (vi) Unmotivated students, overcrowded classrooms
- (vii) Widespread geographic, income, gender, and ethnic imbalances.

The leading challenges before the higher education system are

- (i) Continuous upgradation of curriculum to keep in pace with rapid growth of science and technology
- (ii) Globalisation and the resultant challenges from the international universities

(iii) Grooming of many private institutions without any method of ensuring maintenance of quality and standard

(iv) Need for adequate funding to meet the demands of various novel innovative programmes

(v) Developing a meaningful and purposeful interface between the universities, National Research Laboratories, industries, government and society, etc.

(vi) ICT in higher education policy

3. ISSUES IN HIGHER EDUCATION AS POINTED NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY-2016 [NEP]

(a) Variations in Quality

In higher education, institutions, such as the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), National Institutes of Technology (NITs), Indian Institutes of Information Technology (IIITs) and the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs), have been globally acclaimed for their high quality of education and also there are large numbers of privately run 'teaching shops', which are generally ill- equipped, and operating with unqualified staff.

The quality of education between these institutions vary widely in terms of infrastructure, library and laboratory facilities, quality of teachers and teaching-learning processes and the fundamental weakness is the lack of transparency and accountability in the system

(b) Teacher Availability

Teacher availability in higher education depends upon enrolment in post-graduate courses and research program. In general, for most students, teaching is not the preferred choice and comes only after private sector and government employment. A related issue is the need to ensure that good candidates enter the teaching profession.

A system of screening has been established at the national and state levels to ensure that teachers meet a common minimum standard to enter the teaching profession Another dimension of the problem is that there is little research on teaching learning in higher education in India

As per the Committee report, that there are several faculty posts remaining vacant in colleges and Universities.

(C) Ensuring Quality in Higher Education

Until recently, accreditation was voluntary, and institutions of higher education had to approach the accreditation agencies to get their institution or program accredited. From the recommendations of the National Knowledge Commission (2007-08) and the Yashpal

Committee (2009) the UGC notified new regulations (the Mandatory Assessment and Accreditation of Higher Educational Institutions Regulations, 2012) making accreditation mandatory for all institutions of higher education other than those in the technical and medical streams.

The current position is that accreditation is mandatory only for general stream higher education institutions receiving grants-in-aid from the UGC. Technical and medical institutions are not required to go through the accreditation process. This is an anomaly and lacuna which needs to be corrected.

Apart from accreditation, ranking of higher educational institutions is another useful indicator of institutional performance. There is no official ranking system for higher education institutions in India.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS OF NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY-2016 [NEP]

(i) The disturbing developments of private, ill-equipped institutions with under qualified staffs are to be streamlined using appropriate control measures.

(ii) The higher education institutions are multiplying fast, on the other hand, commitment towards providing quality program through a structured system and well qualified faculties is not addressed.

(iii) The scope of appointments in higher education institutions are to be based upon subjectivity has to give way to rigorous merit-based selection, preferably through the Public Service Commission or an independent body set up for the purpose.

(iv) There is a need to ensure that competent and motivated teachers enter the profession.

(v) The Committee found that many numbers of faculty posts remaining vacant for many years.

(vi) Most of the government institutions are depending on ad-hoc and guest teachers, which has its worst effect on the quality of teaching.

(vii) For most undergraduate programs, it should not be necessary to insist upon for teachers to possess a doctoral degree. Instead, it should be mandatory for such teachers to attend appropriate training programs in teaching and communication skills, and the use of ICT.

(viii) Budgetary allocations should be increased and facilities for carrying out research should be improved in order to support good researchers.

(viii) Teachers should be recruited and attached to institutions, rather than be part of an organized service where they are subject to frequent transfers. This will help in developing institutional attachment, identification and commitment.

(ix) Accreditation should be made mandatory for all institutions of higher education, including technical education, medicine and agriculture, both in public and private sectors

5. OTHER SUGGESTIONS FOR ENSURING QUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

- 1) Concentration towards Learning Society
- 2) Industry and Institute Connection
- 3) Incentives to Teachers and Researchers
- 4) Innovative Practices
- 5) To mobilize resources
- 6) Coming of Information Age
- 7) Student-Centered Education and Dynamic Methods
- 8) Public Private Partnership
- 9) To Provide Need Based Job-Oriented Courses
- 10) International Cooperation
- 11) Towards a New vision
- 12) Cross Culture Programs
- 13) Action Plan for Improving
- 14) Individuality
- 15) Privatization of Higher Education
- 16) Quality development
- 17) World Class Education
- 18) Personality Development
- 19) Status of Academic Research Studies
- 20) Fair Quality Assurance System
- 21) To increase Quantity of Universities
- 22) High-tech Libraries

6. CONCLUSION

Based on this review, we can conclude that in order to sustain that rate of growth, there is need to increase the number of institutes and Financial Resources, Access and Equity, Quality Standards, Relevance and at the end the Responsiveness are to be addressed. To attain and sustain national, regional or international quality, selection of staff and continuous staff development, through the promotion of appropriate programs for academic development, including teaching/learning methodology. Internal self-evaluation and external review must be conducted openly by independent specialists by striking this right chord, the issues in higher education can be eliminated and the quality is improved and sustained.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I thank and dedicate this work to my parents, wife and children for their cooperation and support for completing this task successfully.

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BIOGRAPHY



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