



Higher Education in India : Challenges and Opportunities

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Abstract

The present paper is focuses on Higher Education in India. It is also focuses on challenges and opportunities for higher education in India. Research in Higher Education publishes empirical studies that enhance our understanding of an educational institution or allow comparison among institutions. It focuses on postsecondary education, including twoyear and fouryear colleges, universities, and graduate and professional schools. Papers in the journal assist faculty and administrators in making more informed decisions about current or future operations and in improving the efficiency and effectiveness of an institution.

Over the past decade, new dynamics have emerged in each of the key domains of higher education, research and innovation (HERI), which are the integrated base for the Forum's activities. In higher education, these include: (i) demand; (ii) diversification of provision; (iii) changing lifelong learning needs; and (iv) growing Communication and Information Technology (CIT) usage and enhanced networking and social engagement, both with the economic sector and with the community at large. In scientific research, the tension between basic and applied research is the core issue, thus linking to the "think global, act local" challenge. This necessitates more flexibly organized research systems, and pragmatic approaches which promote "Big Science" while also nurturing science which serves society in the widest sense. In the innovation field, the dynamic comprises both "research for innovation" and "research on innovation". Partnerships amongst governments, the economic sector and research universities are growing exponentially, so that new knowledge becomes linked to development goals. But innovation often occurs outside academic environments, as a result of inventive thinking and creative experimentation. Indeed, research system experts must understand the critical factors involved in order to advance this process.

Keywords : Higher Education, Human Development, Research and Innovation, Quality Improvement, Opportunities and Challenges

INTRODUCTION

Education is an important index of human development. Among various levels of education, higher education has a influential impact on development. Higher education empowers the individual with necessary skills and competence for achieving important personal and social goals. Higher education is indeed a vital tool for intellectual and cultural developments and a mean for achieving wider social aspirations. Revolution in information technology have brought new challenges of higher education.

The responsibility of institution of higher education in the context of the changing scenario is not only confined to imparting education but also to forecast the future needs of economy. Education is central to the human capital development and economic development of any country. Even for India, where only 12% of the addressable population goes to college and nearly 70% of the population

is in rural areas, education is considered a very important channel for socioeconomic mobility. Unfortunately, despite huge demand and need of education, policy framework in India has stifled access quality and innovation in education.

Skills and knowledge are the driving forces of economic growth and social development of every nation. Their relevance and importance has amplified with the increasing pace of globalization and technological changes all over the world. Countries with higher and better levels of skills adjust more effectively to the challenges and opportunities of globalization.

As India progressively moves towards becoming a “knowledge-based” economy, it becomes increasingly important that it focuses on advancement of skills and these skills have to be relevant to the emerging economic environment. Earlier skill development largely meant development of shop floor or manual skills. Even in this area there are major deficiencies in our workforce which need to be rectified.

CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND

There are several types of higher education institutions in India, viz. universities, deemed to be universities, colleges, institutions of national importance, post-graduate institutions for estimates. Universities can be set up by an act of the Parliament or by the State Legislature. Only universities and deemed to be universities and the institutions of national importance are generally authorized to grant degrees. Other post-graduate institutions and polytechnics that are recognized by the All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE) can grant post graduate diplomas and diplomas. Detailed information on the structure, regulatory institutions, courses and processes of admissions in the Indian educational system is provided. In what follows, we highlight a few key features of the higher education system.

In the new knowledge economy the skill sets can range from professional, conceptual, managerial, operational behavioral to interpersonal and inter-domain skills. In the 21st century as science progresses towards a better understanding of the miniscule, that is, genes, particles, bits and bytes and neurons, knowledge domains and skill domains also multiply and become more and more complex. We provide a brief but comprehensive overview of linkages between higher education and the high tech sector and study the major linkages in India. We find that the links outside of the labor market are weak. This is attributed to a regulatory structure that separates research from the university and discourages good faculty from joining, which erodes the quality of the intellectual capital necessary to generate new knowledge. In the labor market, we find a robust link between higher education and high-tech industry, but despite a strong private sector supply response to the growth of the high-tech industry, the quality leaves much to be desired. Poor university governance may be limiting both labor market and non-labor market linkages. Industry efforts to improve the quality of graduates are promising but over reliance on industry risks compromising workforce flexibility. Addressing the governance failures in higher education is necessary to strengthen the links between higher education and high tech industry.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The present study was carried out with following objectives in view.

1. To suggest the strategic measures for improvement of quality in Higher Education.
2. To study the role of Research in Higher Education in the new age of globalization.
3. To study the opportunities for Higher Education in the need for quality improvement.
4. To study the challenges and opportunities before Higher Education in India.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For the present research study the data pertaining to the above objectives was collected and reviewed the literature on the topic concerned. The literature was thus collected by visiting various libraries. Some Government offices were also visited for getting office record and statistical data. The secondary data is also collected from various websites.

With the above objectives keep in mind the instructed Interview Method and Desk Research Method was basically adopted. The Secondary Data is collected from various reference books related to Higher Education, Commerce Education, Higher Education Sector, Commerce & Management, and Marketing & Finance etc. For said research study secondary data is also collected from the National

and International Research Journals which are related to Commerce, Management, Marketing and Higher Education.

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

The Hypothesis of present research study is as under :

1. Higher education empowers the individual with necessary skills and competence for achieving important personal and social goals.

MAJOR CHALLENGES FOR RESEARCH

Current issues facing the research function and its environment include equity; quality; relevance; ownership; and international networking. An evergrowing number of nations of varying size have now given priority to developing their knowledge base through higher education, research and innovation, and to commit the necessary resources to this goal. Success stories are becoming more common in all regions, and they are characterized by specific indicators:

1. Innovative policies in higher education and research and in Science, Technology and Innovation (STI).
2. A will to improve and profile the necessary infrastructure, including universities.
3. Efforts to train and retain and attract highly-skilled human capital (HC).
4. Increased levels of investment in research and higher education.

The mandate of the UNESCO Forum is to chart these important processes and help promote their replication and adaptation worldwide, in order to render the global knowledge society a more level playing field

OPPORTUNITIES FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

1. Scope for development of faculty performance : Many educational institutions are non performance or withdrawal of subsidy due to paucity of funds such institutions may disappear and give rise to new education systems which will emphasize on self evaluation, introspection and improved faculty performance.
2. Qualitative education programmes : many educational institutions are excessively dependent upon Govt. grants and hence they are forced to function in a rigid structure taking non cognizance of changing times and demands. With GATS institutions may venture out of these controls and provide new qualitative and competitive education programs fine-tuned to the changing times.
3. Qualitative teaching-learning material : The fourth mode of supply under GATS (Distance learning, Open and Virtual Universities will enhance the use of modern communication technology and provide global open access to anyone, anywhere and anytime.
4. Improvement in the rate of enrolment in higher education: In India the enrolment in higher education is just 6% of the relevant age group as against 50% reached by developed countries. The economy will experience an increased rate of enrolment due to increase in the number of seats supplied by new entrants in education.
5. Improved resource allocation but it could manage to allocate only 3.5% of GNP due to resources crunch. Entry of private sector will enhance the future well being of H.E. which is crucial in the context of Governmental financial austerity.
6. Cost-effective education programs : One of the modes of supply of education under GATS is commercial presence i.e. entry of foreign institutions in the domestic market. This will make transnational education more cost effective for students who would otherwise have gone abroad Expenses on education abroad are saved by making it available locally also the cumbersome visa and immigration process can be avoided.

STRATEGIC DIMENSIONS FOR QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

Economic globalization and liberalization can be achieved if Indian educational institutions give due attention on enhancement of skills and up gradation of knowledge in order to match the human resources to the need of the new international scenario where employment opportunities of quality improvement which needs the attention of stakeholders of higher education for the success.

1. Training the teachers and by conduction orientation courses with a view to adapt to new changes as the market demands.
2. Appointment of super specialized teachers in educational institutions with reasonable remuneration should be followed.
3. Due emphasis to the learning process than teaching process through students participation is needed.
4. Infrastructure facilities should be improved with updated international standard having internet, automated telephone, payment of fees by credit cards, sufficient class rooms and sports facilities etc.
5. The economy of a country depends upon the utility of the educated man power in the global context. The kingpins of an institution are its teachers. They would be expected to be more alert and sensitive to the needs and aspiration of the students and the society.
6. Better transparency and accountability may cause self-appraisal and improvement in faculty performance.
7. Creating capacity for entrepreneurial and innovative skill must be one of the objectives of education. Many entrepreneurship courses should be started in the educational institutions.
8. There should be continuous assessment and counseling. Special attention should be paid on counseling to guide the face the challenges in their life.
9. Teachers should frame the curriculum with new knowledge with the help of interdisciplinary interactions. It should be based on societal needs and market demands.
10. Yogic meditation has stood the test of science and medical experiments. It will provide an insight for character development and spiritual direction.
11. Creation capacity for research and enquiry in colleges should have the highest priority. Research oriented curriculum should be improved. Project works would be feasible method of initiating the students thinking and introducing them to reality.
12. Application oriented research must be encouraged Institutions should encourage the teachers to undertake research projects and consultancy services.
13. Making consultation with industries for services must be followed. Visits to centers of excellence with better infrastructure and professional talks.\
14. Working library and active network facilities should be improved in the institutions.
15. Developing a harmonious and integrated personality would just not be possible if system does not inculcate values of culture, heritage and traditions. Indian heritage, culture and values need to be thoroughly studied, analyzed and incorporated comprehensively in the educational system right from the initial stage to higher dimensions of education.

CONCLUSION

Liberation has opened the gates of education market for meeting competitiveness, challenges and change. In the wind of globalization, the student is searching for quality education to enter into global job market, whereas Institutions, teacher, administrative is not yet geared up to plug off the gap : Many traditional Universities in India still are with their bad old recruitment, looking State funding indifferent to self financing courses, outdated examination to self financing courses, outdated examination system, obsolete teaching methods low standards. Time has ripped and reaching 2005 years, that foreign Universities are entering into India soil for competitiveness. By all manses, very shortly, new twist and turns would be seen in higher education system. Education is an important index of human development. Among various levels of education, higher education has a influential impact on development. Higher education empowers the individual with necessary skills and competence for achieving important personal and social goals. Higher education is indeed a vital tool for intellectual and cultural developments and a mean for achieving wider social aspirations. Revolution in information technology has brought new challenges of higher education.

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