

Reformation in Higher Education– The Need of the Hour



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Abstract

Higher Education in India is one of the largest system in the world but it has become more challenging, need based but often neglected. India is still lagging behind in the competition of higher education in respect of advanced and many of the developing countries in the world. So, to meet the challenges of globalised world, effective education system especially at Higher Level should become most indispensable means. Thus, Higher Education of India needs reformation in all aspect for substantial improvement. The authors have focused some points to ensure quality improvement in Higher Education.

Keywords: Reformation, Access, Substantial Improvement, Assessment, Value Education, CBCS, Research.

Introduction

Education in all its forms and at all levels is the single but most potent instrument of social, economic political and cultural upliftment. It is a fulcrum of life for 3’P i.e. Peace, Progress and Prosperity. It provides seedlings for culture and civilization. Education in general and Higher education in particular is the fundamental to create a knowledge-based society. It broadens the intellectual power of the individual and enables him / her to acquaint with the wider perspectives of the world around. According to Ronald Barnett (1992) the significance of higher education can be realized from four basic grounds.

1. Higher education as the production of qualified and skilled human resource.
2. Higher education as training for a research career
3. Higher education as the efficient management of teaching provisions.
4. Higher education as a matter of extending life chances.

In true sense, what is Higher is Higher Education. UNESCO in its policy paper on “change and development of Higher education” emphasized that “State & society must perceive Higher education”, not as a burden on federal budget but as a long term domestic investment, in order to increase economic competitiveness, cultural development and social cohesion.

So, to meet the challenges of globalised world, effective education system specifically at higher stage, has become most indispensable resource.

Though Higher Education in India is 3rd largest in the world having a huge number of universities yet, access to higher-education remains confined to a mere 7% percent of the population. In fact higher education remains a distant dream for a large part of Indian population.

The view of knowledge commission can be underlined in this head as –

“There is in fact, a quiet crisis in higher education in India” that runs deep. It is not yet discernible simply because there are pockets of excellence and enormous reservoir of talented young people and an intense competition is there in the admission process.

Aim of the Study

The higher education system as a whole, is faced with many challenges such as: financing, management, access, equity, curriculum formulation, assessment, evaluation, accreditation, etc. These issues are vital for bringing quality improvement in higher education. The objective of this paper is to put some suggestive measures for bringing qualitative improvement in higher education and ensure a global standard of higher education with a well planned expansion and a student centric learning driven model of education at higher level.

In some important spheres, we continue to reap the benefits of what was sown in higher education 50 years ago by the founding fathers of Republic. The reality is that we have miles to go. The proportion of our population, in the age group 18-24, that enters the world of Higher

education is around 7 percent, which is only one half the average for Asia. The opportunity for higher education, in terms of number of places in universities, are simply not enough in relation to our needs. What is more, the quality of Higher education in most of our universities requires substantial improvement. Majority of our higher educational institutions suffer from the issues like shortage of faculty of high caliber, poor infrastructural facilities, ineffective teaching strategies, traditional stereotyped curricular, faulty evaluation system, poor library facility, faulty admission criteria and poor financial management etc. These issues seriously affect the quality of higher education.

How to Overcome these Challenges to Ensure Quality Improvement in Higher Education

Faculty Development

Faculty is the life blood of the higher education. So significance should be given to recruit competent faculty having world class credentials.

Financial Support & Infrastructural Facilities

Government should not abandon its responsibility of liberal funding of higher education and provision of bringing optimum support for development of infrastructural facilities to higher educational institution.

Access

A better educated citizen can only put sufficient help for smooth functioning of Democracy and can share his responsibility effectively. So higher education should be accessed by all irrespective of caste, creed, religion, language, gender and socio-economic status. There should be social equity for the need of higher education basically for disadvantaged group.

Curriculum

The accelerated growth leading to an increased demand for skilled men-power and the need to enhance competitiveness in globalised economy have demanded for a total change in curricular pattern of higher education. The need is framing – curricula which emphasize on training of skill, improvement of employability and challenges the frontiers of knowledge. For this significance should be given on vocationalization of education and productive education specifically at higher education stage.

Value Education

We should always remember that education should serve the community and it should not be treated as commodity of trade. Education at university stage must lay stress on value education and emphasis should be given on co-operation rather than competition, sharing of experience rather than personal improvement and learning to live together rather than living in mutually hostile camps.

Research

Higher Education should lay stones on research an innovative work. Students of higher education should be encouraged to do research work in new areas of social, economic, political & scientific issues. Government should provide incentives to the researchers for innovative work.

Adopting CBCS System

CBCS system popularly called choice based credit system. It is a model programme of the union ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) towards the goal of standardizing higher education. CBCS provides choices for students to select from prescribed courses such as core, electives or minor, soft skill courses etc.

Assessment

Another important aspect that needs to be developed and modified the evaluation system of Higher Education. The evaluation of higher learning should be modified as per with international norms importance should be given on introduction of continuous internal assessment at higher education stage.

Conclusion

To meet the access of higher education attempt should be made on setting up new universities by both govt. & public efforts but focus should not only be on increasing the number of universities & institutions, quality of education imparted & the methodology imparting quality education must get focus. The objective of higher education is to prepare students for a balanced life with knowledge, skill and values attached to it. These institution should have aim at making human life better not only through economic upliftment earned through the knowledge gained by the graduates but also through social, moral, ethical and spiritual strength imparted to them. Our policy maker, administrator and curriculum maker should think holistically to provide world class higher education to the people of India.

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