

# Higher Education: An Open Challenge

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## Abstract:-

**Purpose:** The purpose behind writing the paper is to make a search in near future, the challenges which have to be faced by higher education system in India and the adequacy of running policies and strategies for its development. It also focuses on the enhancing quality and accessibility and how can we bridge the gap between education and Employment.

**Methodology:** Both primary and secondary data were used to see the present challenges in the system which it has failed in proper exaction of the policies. The analysis and conclusions are based on the personal queries to lecturers and university professor specially from Delhi and Rajasthan university. The rules and regulations of controlling agencies like UGC, AICTE and NAAK were analyzed. A few conclusions have been drawn from personal observation and experience and the need for improvement that has been felt and is required.

**Findings:** It has been found that the controlling agencies of HES have adequately developed the system concerning all aspects the HES yet they have failed in developing the very spirit in the machinery that really works. Amazing findings have come out that in spite of having a proper structure, it has failed in providing the proper required and essential education.

**Research Limitation/Implication:** As it has been earlier suggested that the controlling agencies of higher education have concerned every aspect, the paper throws light on the repeated concerns, yet if the spiritual and intellectual thought process is to be given to the problems, the suggestions can be implied, yet it does not claim to have considered all aspects. It has thrown light on major issues.

**Practical Implications:** If a thought is generated, half of it is of course practical, the papers findings and suggestions are practical in the sense that the whole system needs to be reshuffle. If the teaching and administrative machinery is restructured with the main concern of providing better education. It can be practical.

**Originality/value:** The originality of the paper lies in the down to earth discussion that mirrorises the real scenario of higher education that is often felt but not well expressed. If the paper is published reviewed and considered well, it can be valuable for bringing real change, however slight yet the real one.

**Keywords:** Higher Education System (HES)

The long and narrow corridors of History are filled with many a great, Intellectually and spiritually rich persons who have suggested and worked for the betterment of civilizations. Among, all welfares and upliftment, education comes foremost, whether it is higher or baser. The present social conditions are not the outcome of a generation or a century, it is the result of collective human power and labour. In every Age, at every space of the globe, man has made efforts for educating himself, leaving a track for his

progenies to move on. We are also in certain period, willing to gill our next generation the best that we can give. How is it possible that an everlasting bestowal n c can present to our society? Are we, the so-called intellectuals satiate enough to live our life happily without a sense of duty to society? Would it be forgivable for a teacher to depart from the world without leaving a spark on his name? Are we meant to write our name on sand dunes, that bounds to be blown away? Have we lost our sense of being a teacher? Teacher is the greatest word in all languages, have Nye forgot its real meaning? Right from the great sophists in Greek Culture to our present day, and even as long as the man will breath, the value of a teacher has never denigrated and will not be as such. Isn't it our foremost duty to preserve its timeless value? How would it be possible on our part to create a better and well cultured society? Should we assume that after teaching the mechanical curriculum in classrooms, we have fulfilled our duties as a teacher. It is simply a work on our part for livelihood. It is not for which we are supposed to be. At present, we are just trying to literate the society, not educating them. Education aims at what? Simply to make a man capable to earn his livelihood, is not and never the aim of education. It aims to discover and develop each individual's abilities and full moral excellence in order to better serve the society. The curricular emphasis is subject matter of mind : Literature, History, philosophy and religion. Teaching methods focus on handling ideas through lectures, discussion and socratic dialogues. Introspection, intuition, insight and whole part, logic are used to bring to consciousness, the forms or concepts which are latent in the mind. Character is developed through imitating examples and heroes.

Every phase of life, right from birth to death, one needs to educate oneself It plays a conspicuous role in betterment of life. "Studies serve for delight, for ornament and for ability". Without education, a man is nothing more than a dead. As it has been well said that "plants are shaped by cultivation and men by education. We are born weak, we need strength. We are born totally unprovided, we need aid. We are born stupid, we need judgment, Everything we do not have at our birth and which we need when we are grown, is given us by education". Aristotle put the importance of education as such. "All who have meditated on the art of governing mankind have been convinced that the fate of empires depends on the education of youth. However Einstein brings a timeless picture of the system by saying that "Numerous are the academic chairs but rare are the wise and noble teachers. Numerous and large are the lectures halls, but far from numerous the young people who have a genuine thirst for truth and Justice. Numerous are the

wares that nature produces by the dozens, but her choice products are few”.

We all know that, so win complain? Was it not always thus and will it not always thus remain? Certainly and one must take what nature gives as one finds it. But there is also such a thing as a spirit of the times, an attitude of mind, characteristic of a particular generation, which is passed on from individual to individual and gives its distinctive mark to a society. Each of us has to his little bit toward transforming this spirit of the times”.

If we take into consideration the above thought in the context of Indian Higher Education System, where do we stand? Are we any near to the norms of global standard of Higher Education? Where do we lack exactly? We have regulatory agencies like U.G.C., AICTE and NAAC that make and ensure the implementation of policies, controlling the over-ruling universities and institutions. We have all available resources of acquiring knowledge but still we do not meet the actual demand of the nation in Higher Education System. Today, In India, there are 38000 higher educational institutions, 824 universities and 6.4 million students are enrolled in colleges and universities. A few universities like Indian Institute of Technology (IITs) have been globally acclaimed for their standard of education. While the overall scenario reflects a different picture. India has failed to produce world-class universities like Harvard and Cambridge. According to the London Times Higher Education, 2009 survey of world university rankings, no Indian universities features among the first 100. But universities in East Asia have been included in the first hundred. There is not Indian university in the rankings from 100 to 200. It is only when one moves on to the next 100 that we find the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur at 237, IIT Chennai at 284 and the university of Delhi at 291.

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, while china has six. The Indian institute of Science, Bangalore, comes in somewhere in the top 400 and IIT, Kharagpur, makes an appearances after that. Beside top rated universities which provide highly competitive world class education to their pupil. India is also to many universities which have been founded with the sole objection of making easy money. U.G.C. and other regulatory authorities have been trying very hard to extirpate the menace of private universities which are running courses without any affiliation or recognition. Students from rural and semi-urban background often fall prey to these Institutes and Colleges. Today, knowledge is power. The more knowledge one has, the more empowered one is. According to U.G.C., India needs 1500 more universities with adequate research facilities by the end of the 2015 in order to compete in the global market, while we have only 824 universities.

The country lacks the critical mass in higher education. Its gross enrolment ratio (GER) is more 11% compared to china's 20%, The USA's 83% and South

Korea's 91%. This means that in comparison to India, china has double the number of students pursuing higher education. The Eleventh five year plan envisages increase in the Gross enrolment Ratio in Higher Education to 15 per cent of the population in the age group of 18-24 years within next five years. This requires a substantial increase in the number of Institutions and consequently would require an adequate number of teachers for imparting education. Failure to redress the faculty shortage would hamper the achievement of the targets for increase in GER set out by Government.

The overall scenario of Higher Education in India does not match with the global quality standards. Hence, there is enough justification for an increased assessment of the quality of the Country's educational institutions. Traditionally, these institutions assumed that quality could be determined by their internal resources, viz. faculty with an impressive set of degrees and experience, detailed at the end of the institute's admission brochure, number of Books and Journals in the Library, an Ultra-modern campus and Size of the endowment etc. or by its definable and assessable outputs, viz. efficient use of resources, producing uniquely educated, highly satisfied and employable graduates.

Critical appraisals undertaken by the governmental committees and independent academicians have highlighted the crisis confronting the system. Increasing, educated unemployment, weakening of student motivation, increasing unrest and indiscipline on the campuses; frequent collapse of administration, deterioration of standards and above all, the demoralizing effect of the irrelevance and purposelessness of most of what is being done. While the politicians and policy makers have often spoken about the need for radical reconstruction of the system: what has been in reality is only moderate reformism.

At present, the world class institutions in India are mainly limited. Most of Indian colleges and universities lack in high-end research facilities, under investment in Libraries, information technology, Laboratories and classroom make it very difficult to provide top quality instruction or engage in cutting-edge research. This gap has to be bridged if we want to speed up our path to development. The U.G.C. is not only the loan grant giving agency in the Country, but also responsible for coordinating, determining and maintaining the standards in institutions of higher education. The emergence of a worldwide economic order has immense consequence for higher education more so under the changes that have taken place in the recent past with regard to globalization. Industrialization, information technology advancement and its impact on education, aided to these, are the policy changes that have taken place at U.G.C. AICTE, Distance Education Council (DEC). Indian for Agriculture Research (ICAR), Bar Council of India (BCI), National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) and such other regulatory bodies from time to time to accommodate these development and yet maintain quality standards in higher education. It is time for all those who are concerned with policy making, planning, administration

and implementation of Higher Education to revitalize the very thinking on the subject and put it in the right track.

Government after Government, New policies and their implementation has been the subject of debate in parliament. However the New set of rules and policies are implement, yet the adequate results are seldom seen in practical way. Recently, the union minister for human Resource Development Smiriti Irani has said that the improvement of the quality of Higher Education is an ongoing process and the centre has been making constant efforts towards achieving this objective. Participating in a debate in parliament and answering questions related to her ministry. Irani Said, several initiations have been launched for improving the quality of higher education in the country.

These include the Global Initiatives for Academic Network (GIAN) to Support International faculty assignment in Indian higher educational institutions; Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya National Mission on Teachers and Training to address issues related to training of Teachers. She also said that U.G.C. had formulated guidelines on adoption of Choice-based credit system on Nov. 12. 2014 and has also laid down several regulations for setting minimum standards of higher education in the country.

The U.G.C. is implementing schemes for providing quality skill development through higher education namely 'community colleges, B.Voc Degree programme and Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay "KAUSHAL Kendras' in the universities and colleges in the country. During the Twelfth Five year plan, the Rashtriya Uchchar Shiksha Abhiyan (RVSA) seeks to achieve equity, access and excellence in state Higher Educational institutions.

As far as the private universities are concerned, their activities are being reviewed by the U.G.C. as per the provisions, contained in U.G.C. regulations 2003. Deemed universities too are regulated by the U.G.C. regulations 2010 and its amended version in the year 2014 and 2015.

A provision has been made in these regulations to review the status of these institutions through reviews conducted by the U.G.C. with the help of expert committees. Institutions Deemed to be universities are asked to Submit compliance reports in respect of the deficiencies pointed out by the U.G.C. expert committees. The criteria for funding under "RUSA" remains focused on outcome and performance of the state and on prior Utilization of funds and progress of projects in the states.

The present paper focuses in the current planning and policies for improvement and development of the Higher Education in India. However, we have to face many challenges in near future. The policy makers and the regulatory agencies have to be ready for the upcoming challenges, which, if faced with strong equipments, would become opportunities that are to be fully utilized. External resources and structural development is easy to acquire while the intellectual and spiritual structure of system is yet to be reformed from the base level. There is a lot to be done in this field to meet the global demands in terms of quality, reach and access. Highly facilitated and well equipped class rooms does not ensure the quality of education, well-

structured building with attractive staff members are also not a proof of quality education. I personally feel that if a teacher with all higher degrees. is unable to move and inspire his disciples for noble deeds and moral values, his teaching is futile, useless and failure. The Teacher, no doubt, has been appointed due to his higher degrees but who will decide his intellectual and spiritual richness? There may be many issues and reasons alter his appointment, but is there any parameters of measuring, his real quality? If the reforms are to be introduced in real form, a major change in recruitment process must be introduced so as to select only those who, being the experts in their concerned area must have the essential values and ideals of a teacher. This is a major challenge in our educational system.

Besides this, Higher Education has to respond to more competitions, more scrutiny from inside and outside the academy, an uncertain economy and hence diminished public appropriations, more demands for increased health benefits, better financial aid, updated technology and increased security. American universities focuses on what we do best educating undergraduate, training professionals and adding to the knowledge base through research and practice.

Another challenge and opportunity is the pattern of behavior that is emerging for the baby boomer generation and their progeny. Old generation followed a linear progression from birth to school to marriage kids work to retirement in that order. While the new generation of highly educated, self-reliant men and women are seeking challenges, adventures, relationship and meaning through their life. at every age. In Near future, it would be a greater challenge to provide all sorts of education with best quality to New emerging generation.

If it is a challenge, it has also the opportunity to bring educational experiences to these newer generations as they change jobs or pursue academic interests later in life.

To meet all such challenges, a lot is to be done in the field of higher education. A few suggestions can be made so as to improve and reform the quality of education. In India, the teaching faculty is a major issue that has been suffering due to dilutions of selection standards. Teachers must be selected and appointed not only in terms of degrees and certificates or researches, but in terms of spiritual richness, human values, and novel aspirations. The selection process must be as tough as possible without single trace of leniency. Only a spiritually rich teacher can lead to newer dimensions in the field. After being selected, he must have the power to make experiments, bring alternations and to introduce new policies, schemes and methods for refinement.

Higher Education should not only aim at providing a better quality of education, but also must focus on making a better and useful citizen for the country and useful human being for the world at large. So we need to attract the best faculty and best leaders. The best universities and business schools have been shown to hire the best scholars as their heads. The probable reason is that other great scholars will choose to be there because the culture and values of the

place will likely to be more amenable under a fellow researcher. Also a dean, who is a successful scholar, may feel less threatened by someone 'Famous' coming in. Finally, if a dean or pro-vice chancellor of a research is not a good scholar, he or she may have limited credibility and power within the institution. The status quo is much preferable at least among the established faculty. The younger ones are more likely to want to raise standards. We also need to ban the phrase. "Is there anyone in the list who is appointable?" It encourages tolerance for mediocrity.

The curriculum, content, teaching methods and assessment standards, have all to be revamped and upgraded from time to time. To make higher education competitive and global, The credit system must be introduced so that Teaching faculty should always be inspired for innovation and new techniques. Research facilities have to be improved and students must be attracted to take up research work more meaningful without any hurdle.

Multiple regulatory authorities should go, replaced by a single, friendly regulatory authority, giving more autonomy to the universities. It must be least interfering, more supportive, free from any political pressure and follow well-defined assessment criteria for accreditation for the universities to be globally accepted

There is still a wide gap between the industry expectations and universities standards in account of which millions of people are unemployed, unemployable, while thousands of jobs are lying vacant for want of the right personnel. The role of a private operators in the field of higher education has increased and a meaningful private public partnership is a must to cater to the increasing number of users.

What would happen if the schools and business got together? What if the talked and agreed on outcome that includes both academic rigor, critical thinking and the development of a healthy worldview, but also practical skills that will enable the students to be employable 7 What if the students could actually see how their classrooms experience was going to pay off once they graduate 7 It might just keep more students in colleges and keep them engaged. Teachers have a vital role to play here. They must introduce images that represent timeless principles which in

turn spark conversation, which ultimately lead to experience that change their life. When colleges and institutions don't furnish this tool, self starting students frequently obtain the books and prepare themselves. We also need better anticipation of future skills and need to match labour market requirements. Thus the gap between education and employment can be bridged, at least upto a satisfactory level.

## CONCLUSION

After independence, there is a good increase in the number of Higher Educational institutions and the ministry and regulatory bodies are constantly working for the reforming and improving the quality of Higher Education in India. It has been found that only the best policies %yin not ensure the quality but their strict implementation and aftermath effect and rigorous scrutiny must be conducted. Well qualified staff members, with higher pays and powers, both in government and private colleges and institutions is an ardent need. Without the rich spiritual structure within an institutions, best quality can not he anticipated. There must be a proper co-ordination between a universities and market demands to increase the maximum number of employments. The day will not be far when India will universally he acclaimed for best higher education.

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