

Invigorating education system of India with special reference to quality

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Abstract

Education plays a significant role in the development of a country. It is the education that helps in transforming the economy of a country. Educational institutions are considered as source of knowledge and awareness producing institutions which train manpower and keep them ready as organizational inputs for different sectors of economy. Similarly, in India, the higher education sector has taken big strides since independence and has contributed tremendously towards producing qualified and skilled human resource, thus enabling it keep human resource ready for all sectors of its economy. However, the quality has continuously been subject of criticism at the hands of academicians, scholars, social leaders and employees. The present paper has focused on the role of different agencies in maintenance of quality in the education sector and how to maintain standards in the education sector. Policies have to be framed in such a way so that quality does not get effected. All the facilities should be provided by the academic administrators under one roof. The newly established Institutions should set benchmarks which will help them in creating their own unique brand identity.

Keywords: Education, Quality, Research, Internationalization

1. Introduction

Higher education, especially at the university level is of paramount importance for India's future. India requires both highly trained people and top-quality research in order to be able to formulate the policies, plan the programmes and implement the projects that are essential to economic growth and development. Preparing individuals for positions of responsibility in government, business, and in professions is a central role of the universities and supporting these individuals in their work with research, advice and consultancy is another equally important role.

The quality of university education, like other levels of education can be measured through an analysis of: (a) inputs such as teaching and non-teaching staff, curricula, facilities and technologies for teaching and learning arrangements for students' catering and institutional management; and (b) outputs such as tests and examinations. Physical planning in the universities in many countries does not commensurate with their rate of growth and expansion as more students are enrolled, the academic administrators of universities continue to accommodate them in the existing facilities. This has often led to an over-stretching of such facilities. As a consequence, there is congestion in lecture theatres, workshops, laboratories, and libraries. The required inputs are seriously lacking in most universities. The massive expansion of enrolments without a corresponding increase in the number of teaching staff has meant that the staff to student ratio has risen.

The improvement of quality can be achieved through a variety of measures. Urgent attention should be paid to the establishment and gradual implementation of standards of provision for the full range of inputs to teaching and research. The provision of libraries with the necessary books and periodicals should be the highest priority, closely followed by supplying laboratories and workshops with consumables and materials needed for equipment maintenance and repair.

1.1 Role of NITI Aayog- Indian Scenario

Recently National Institution for Transforming India (NITI) Aayog replaced the Planning Commission of India. Different Five-year plans were developed by the planning Commission. Some plans yielded better results while some plans remained incomplete. NITI Aayog is different from the Planning Commission in the sense that strategies will be formulated in consultation with the states.

Coming to our educational sector, in every five-year plan education was given a top priority. But still a lot needs to be done. In the first five year plan (1951-56) University Grants Commission was established. It was set up to take care of funding and take measures to strengthen the higher Education in the country. Five Indian Institute of Technology (IITs) were also established as major technical Institutions. Similarly in the second 5 Year plan (1956-1961), Tata Institute of Fundamental Research was established as a Research Institute. Between the years 1961-1966, many primary Schools were started in rural areas. State Secondary Education boards were formed. States were made responsible for secondary and higher Education. From time to time every 5 year plan included various steps to improve Educational Scenario.

In India there are about 45 Central Universities, 322 State Universities, 19 IIMs, 16 IITs, 30 NITs, 128 Deemed Universities and 192 Private Universities. No doubt Educational Institutions are being set up from time to time but it should not be at the cost of quality. There is mushroom growth of colleges and private universities which is becoming the main obstacle in the uplift of Educational Sector. A Proper mechanism should be followed by Government in giving recognition to these Institutions. We have some private institutions that have played an instrumental role in the growth of sector. Various famous private institutions have helped in creation of Knowledge networks, Research and Innovation center. Thus private Sector can also not be

ignored. In NITI Aayog we hope that proper parameters will be laid down in assessing the educational scenario of the country.

There is shortage of Faculty in State and Central Universities. All the positions should be filled up. According to National Assessment Accreditation Council (NAAC), 62 percent of Universities and 90 percent of Colleges showed average or below average performance in 2010. No Indian Institute features in the top 20 Educational Institutions.

These rankings are primarily based on Quality of Research Output ratio. The Research output of Indian Institutions is very low as compared to the top institutes of the World. More and more focus should be given on Research. We have enormous talent, but the only thing which we need is a right platform and that platform can be provided by the policy makers.

Policies pertaining to Education are largely appropriate but there should be proper Implementation and execution of policies. MOUs should be signed with the leading Universities of the World. The curriculum of education should be revamped and revitalized. Many Institutions like NCERT, NAAC etc. are becoming irrelevant as they have deviated from their vision. They need to rediscover their sense of purpose. There should be Internationalization of education, research environment has to be created and there should be practical application of Research.

Decentralization will encourage institutions to be more flexible and innovative. The Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) from time to time has started various schemes but they should not be merely on papers but also implemented in letter and spirit. They should also monitor quality on a regular basis. It is because of these reasons that none of the Indian higher education institutions figure in the top 200 Universities of the world. There are various parameters on which these rankings are being given. Some of the reputed globally recognized ranking methods are Shanghai Jiao Tong University Academic Ranking of World University (ARWU), QS World University Rankings, Times Higher Education World University Rankings etc. In ARWU, the rankings are based on quality of education, quality of faculty, research output and per capita performance while in QS World University rankings the focus is on public perception, faculty student ratio, citation per faculty, International faculty, International students. Similarly in Times Higher Education World University Rankings, the ranking criteria is based on International outlook, research, staff to student ratio, Ph.D./UG Degrees Awarded, Environment, Research Impact-Citations and Industry Income.

1.2 Maintaining Standards and Avoiding dilution in Jammu & Kashmir

Jammu and Kashmir was given All India Institute of Medical Science (AIIMS) and Indian Institute of Management (IIM). It came as a good news for the people of Jammu and Kashmir State. AIIMS and IIMs have created their unique brand identity not only in India but also at global level. The Indian Institute of Management (IIMs) are a group of institutes that are imparting Management Education and Research in India. In Management Education of India, they are the leading Institutions. Every Student aspires to be a part of IIM Family due to the attractive placement packages offered to its students. AIIMS is a Medical college and Medical Research

public University. AIIMS have been consistently being ranked top by different survey agencies. The various reasons why it has created its unique brand image is because of excellent medical facilities being provided, excellent Library facilities, focus on Research etc.

While expanding these Institutions in different states a lot of care has to be taken. There is no doubt that by setting these Institutions, it is helping in increasing the standard of Education and Medical sector but at the same time it could dilute the brand image of these leading Institutes.

The newly established Institutions should set benchmarks which will help them in creating their own unique brand identity. Brand dilution can be avoided with the help of Benchmarking. In Benchmarking authorities will have to identify the best Institutes in their sector and will compare their results with those Institutes they aspire to be like. Benchmarking will help these Institutes to become more competitive. By looking at how top IIMs like IIMA, IIML, IIMC, etc. and AIIMS in Delhi are doing, they can identify areas where they are underperforming. By choosing institutes that are on the leading edge, they can identify best practices. SWOT analysis can be undertaken in which these institutes will come to know about their Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. Benchmarking will help to answer- How well are we doing compared to others?, How good do we want to be?, How do they do it?, Who is doing it the best?.

Now the Question that arises is how benchmarking process should be undertaken. First step should involve selecting the administrative process to be studied, identifying how the process will be measured, and deciding which other institutions to measure against. After this, data is to be collected by the Researchers about the Institutes being studied. The next step will involve analyzing the data which has been gathered to calculate findings and to develop recommendations. It will be at this point any gap in performance will be known and accordingly steps will be taken for improving the standards.

If all this is taken care of, the time is not too far away when IIM and AIIMS of Jammu and Kashmir will become famous in a very short span of time thus creating its own brand image rather than following their parent brand image.

2. Conclusion

On several points current processes in higher education touch upon questions and issues related to quality. Many policies and practices have been developed without much concern for quality. There is mushroom growth of educational institutions which needs to be stopped. Policies have to be framed in such a way so that quality does not get effected. All the facilities should be provided by the academic administrators under one roof. The newly established Institutions should set benchmarks which will help them in creating their own unique brand identity. Brand dilution can be avoided with the help of Benchmarking.

There should be no congestion in lecture theatres, workshops, laboratories, and libraries. The required inputs are seriously lacking in most universities. All this needs to be taken care off. In order to sustain, there is need to increase the number of institutes and also the quality of higher education in India.

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