



Visions of the future- prospects of Higher education in India

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Abstract

India is becoming a global knowledge hub. It is considered as an educational center along with its meteoric rise in economic progress. India is becoming part of global knowledge economy. Hence corporate skill based learning has pragmatically helped this boom. The higher education sector is instrumental in adding to this escalation in didactic activities thereby contributing to the growth of Indian economic status. Indian industries always blame on skill gaps. The growth of industries is not always complemented by the growth of skilled man power resources as required. The industry sector always requires additional resourced man power. Higher education has always been a sick child in India. This needs to be rectified to sustain the present flourishing economic scenario.

Key Words: *Global education hub, progressive economy, skilled man power, industrial needs, mobilizing resources*

"We strongly believe that a stratified three tiered structure that enables seamless vertical and horizontal mobility of students would be able to create the desired intellectual, economic and social value. The implementation framework suggests the student at the center stage to foster innovation and choice, an ICT architecture that will increase access, equity and quality, and a transparent governance framework that will enable autonomy and self –regulation. A framework for governance



has been detailed in the addendum document which proposes a mechanism based on outcomes and strong institutional accountability, clearly delineating the role and responsibilities of the government as well as public and private higher education institutions". (Higher education in India vision 2030)

Introduction:

The HE sector is instrumental in adding to the greater escalation in informative activities. It is thereby contributing to the growth of Indian economic status as well. Growing Indian industries sector and corporate sector are always blaming on skill gaps. The growth of industries in India is not always complemented by the growth of skilled man power resources. The industry sector always requires additional resourced and skilled man power. Higher education has always been a sick child in India with struggling to fill these skill gaps. This needs to be rectified to sustain the present flourishing economic scenario.

Higher Education

Indian HE landscape has been changing since years. Judicious reforms in HE field has

remarkably transformed HE sector. The learning outcomes has improved, enrollment number has been increased. HEIs have been catering to the different educational needs with 3 tier system. Indian HE segment has a well planned expansion post liberalization period. It has emphasized on student centric learning component which has resulted in the increase in the student enrollment as well as outcomes.

As a knowledge hub, India has been a leader in exploiting the technological innovation to its optimal usage. Access, equity and fairness has been its tagline for attaining better performances. Teaching in HEIs has been made an attractive career with rise in facilities, salaries, and research amenities. The governance of HEIs has been made more flexible with more autonomy and



academic freedom. There have been structural changes in HEIs to fill all skill gaps.

Reasons for the growth of HEIs

1. Increased urbanization
2. Enhancement in income levels of people even in rural areas
3. Rapid industrialization
4. Optimal utilization of technology
5. Structural changes in governance in HEIs
6. Voluminous increase in R and D activities at all level of HEIs
7. Augmented chances for India to become a premier global supplier of skilled manpower resources
8. Improved academic interest in all stake holder of HEIs
9. Growth of student power seeking HE

Short Falls of HEIs

1. Outdated regulatory environment

2. Very few cases of Autonomy of academic institutions
3. Declining levels of academic output
4. Graduates are unemployable
5. Inflexible academic Structure
6. Low level of public funding
7. Faculty Research activities are very low
8. Standards of academic research is very low
9. Systemic loopholes
10. The affiliating system is unwieldy
11. Uneven capacity across subjects
12. Low policy makers
13. academic curricula will become more multi-disciplinary

Prospective structural changes in HEIs

A change in syllabus formation structure: Syllabus outlining should be criteria of the HEIs. They know the



potentialities of their students. As of now universities formulate syllabus with traditional base. Each region in India is different in its outreach. The learning outcomes of the students of each region are diverse. The students motivation to seek HE differs from region to region. There have been various reasons of students behind seeking HE .(Agarwal Pawan (Ed) - A Half Century Of Indian Higher Education).Hence a restructuring of the subject content is the immediate need of HEIs re building process. This calls for providing academic freedom in terms of providing autonomy to selected HEIs. This paves way for structuring curriculum at least in selected HEIs. This can be widened later on.(Choudhury Kameshwari (Ed)Higher Education Reform In India)

Cross disciplinary learning:

Today's students are very bright and they are capable of cross-disciplinary learning and thinking. Particularly in subjects like science, engineering, and

technology the need for cross-disciplinary learning has arisen. (Pawan Agarwal (Ed) - A Half Century Of Indian Higher Education).This cross-disciplinary learning demand is manifesting itself in HEIs that seek to be academies of tomorrow and entrepreneurial hubs focused on bringing business corporate minds and creative minds together. HEIs need to think about serving as a modular cross-disciplinary learning flat form.

Stress on online learning:

Online learning and distance learning should become the agenda of HEIs. As of now, traditional learning is slowly loosing charm. At the same time, new statistics also reveal that while distance education has been growing at a faster rate than traditional higher education ever since 2003, Universities need to strategically balance both platforms and also think about how they support the never-ending, 24/7 nature of today's learning that extends beyond the classroom. (Choudhury



Kameshwari (Ed) Higher Education Reform In India). Institutions that begin to best leverage an appropriate balance can make better use of time in the classroom and also define tailored approaches to how the professor, student and material work together across the platforms. (Pawan Agarwal (Ed) - A Half Century Of Indian Higher Education).

Student recruitment both in campus and out campus:

To best recruit and retain students, HEIs need to evaluate how they offer a student the practical experience that prepares him to be vigorous and self-motivated to stay ahead in the future competitive world. That means HEIs need to embrace sustainability and vibrancy as key components to campus life. (W. Bell (Ed) Reinventing HE -The Promises Of Innovation) .Scores of other universities are realizing students value their life experience just as much as their academic experience. This is pushing universities to find

creative ways to fund new spaces and programming for students. The key here is strategically providing students with key resources that give them more opportunity to make the most of their collegiate life experience. (W. Bell (Ed) Reinventing HE -The Promises Of Innovation).

Needs greater investment in technology:

Today's students are multi faceted , multi talented ,multi oriented They would be introduced to lots of educational electronic gadgets even before they enter HEIs. Hence inside the campus they would expect more learning devices.

This increased use of educational electronic devices calls for greater technological demands. A campus has to intensify its investment on IT infrastructure. HEIs seeking to solve today's challenges will need to respond immediately with robust access and bandwidth upgrades.

Engaging the teacher and student consistently:

Today



HEIs are finding ways to keep their teachers and students busy with work and more work. Teachers have been given extra projects through UGC ICSR ISR etc. They are made to work as student counselors, Career guides, project fellows, R and D heads, model technicians etc. They have to model themselves to act like all-rounder which calls for updating one; skills and aptitudes. When a teacher himself is busy with scholastic work, he will definitely be a positive impact upon his students. (W. Bell (Ed) Reinventing HE -The Promises of Innovation). Thus HEIs needs to respond to the "mobility shift" which allows educators and students to be dexterous and engaged from anywhere. These extra work should enable students and teachers to maximize their educational understanding.(Choudhury Kameshwari (Ed)Higher Education Reform In India)

The expanded search for new funding models should continue: The historic practice

of providing funding to state HEIs based on enrollment is already shifting to performance-based models. These models will redirect educational priorities and investment to help more students succeed while also redefining an institution's responsibility to its students and its community.(W. Bell (Ed) Reinventing HE -The Promises of Innovation). While the performance model discussions are more apparent for the state-funded institutions, their impact may extend further as it pertains to incubation, research and corporate support. Already, it is gaining momentum and leaders need to be highly involved with their build-out.

Conclusion- Thus a well planned expansion of HEIs emphasizing on student centric learning component will assist in the enhancement HEIs. This will provide more chances of exploiting the technological innovation. Across the world there have been many changes in HEIs. India should also diversify into more vocational based education which



fills the skill gaps. This is the appropriate answer to the unemployment crisis as well. If HEIs can restructure themselves to become smarter in recruiting and retention the students in and off campus, then the whole idea of HE sector is going to revolutionize. Policy makers should think twice in this direction and redirect educational priorities.

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