

Rejuvenating Higher Education Through Regulatory Bodies

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Abstract: The progress of a nation depends on the strength of Higher Education, especially in the case of Developing Nations like India. Higher Education plays predominant role in the developing our youth. India is going to be the greatest supplier of youth to the entire world. So, we should develop our Human Resources to meet the challenges.

Our Higher Education can be rejuvenated by the combined effort of Teachers, Students, Administrators and Regulatory bodies responsible for improving the system is very essential. So, the paper deals with role of Regulatory Agencies like (UGC, NCTE, and NAAC) to rejuvenate and improve the system of education. The paper high lights the prime importance of regulatory bodies. It describes how policies framed by these bodies can only play a vital role in our safeguarding our Higher Education.

I. INTRODUCTION

Education is an important investment in building human capital that is a driver for technological innovation and economic growth. It is only through improving the educational status of a society that the multi-faceted development of its people can be ensured. In the post-industrialized world, the advanced countries used to derive the major proportion of their national income not from agriculture and industry but from the service sector. Since the service sector is based on imparting skills or training to the students and youth, the education sector is the most sought after. It must provide gainful employment so that the sector is developed in a big way. It has also given rise to controversies relating to introducing changes in the inter-sectoral priorities in the allocation of resources leading to the misconceived policy of downsizing of higher education. It has also advocated privatization of higher education without realizing the danger of making the system a commercial enterprise.

The role of higher education in facilitating social and economic progress has long been recognized. Higher Education improves functional and analytical ability and thereby opens up opportunities for individuals and also groups to achieve greater access to youth and livelihoods. A better educated youth is essential if we are to meet the service supply requirements of faster growth. Higher Education is not only an instrument of enhancing efficiency but is also an effective tool

of widening and augmenting democratic participation and upgrading the overall quality of individual and societal life.

Skills and knowledge are the engines of economic growth and social development of any country. Countries with higher and better levels of knowledge and skills respond more effectively and promptly to challenges and opportunities of globalization. India is in transition to a knowledge based economy and its competitive edge will be determined by the abilities of its people to create, share and use knowledge more effectively. This transition will require India to develop workers into knowledge workers who will be more flexible, analytical, adaptable and multi skilled. In the new knowledge economy the skill sets will include professional, managerial, operational, behavioural, inter personal and inter functional skills. To achieve these goals, India needs flexible higher education and training system that will provide the foundation for learning, secondary and tertiary education and to develop required competencies as means of achieving lifelong learning.

Education plays a pivotal role in achieving development and sustainable livelihoods in a competitive economic environment. Higher educational levels contribute to local economic development in several ways. Thus, educational initiatives and programs are designed by various organizations to promote literacy and develop skills amongst the poorer sections of the society.

WHAT IS HIGHER EDUCATION?

Higher education means more Knowledge in a specialized field, as well as in general matters. Graduating from college means that you completed your requirements and classes, all of which were selected to be part of your curriculum to develop and improve your skills in your chosen major. There are some subjects that are not directly related to the profession you are preparing for, but those “minor” subjects are important in developing your overall intelligence. Without them, we would not know much more than the work we do, and would thus fail to understand the things and events that happen around us.

A higher education means a better salary. The higher your level of educational attainment, the more favored you are for high-paying jobs or for increased wages in your chosen profession. This is in line with the fact that you should have a deeper understanding of the matters at hand and thus be more able to make good decisions for the benefit and profit of your company. Imagine a world without men and women who are at the leading edges of their respective fields; that world would surely be less advanced than our current civilization. It is because of higher education that we have the world as it is today.

Higher education affects your pace in the world, so the next part deals with the how it affects your interpersonal behavior. In college you meet people who are more or less mature, and are adults in most aspects. These are the people you go to class with, hang out with, and just simply talk with. At this point in time, people have their distinct personalities, and the interaction within such a rich environment will surely affect the way you deal with others. The bonds you form with the people you meet and befriend in college may prove useful in your future endeavors, whether you are from the same profession or not.

Lastly, people respect someone with a higher education. Being a college graduate, a master's degree holder or having earned a doctorate in any field shows that you have perseverance, intelligence, and a love for learning. People, whether consciously or not, figuratively tip their hats to those who have toiled through higher education and garnered titles reflective of their achievements.

The path of higher education is long and harsh, and you may find yourself battered by fatigue, illness, stress, and doubts along the way. Remember though, that the true reward lies past the end of the road, so you need to stay on it to receive your fitting glory.

II. CONCEPT OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA

In the six decades since independence the Indian Higher Education system has undergone a remarkable transformation from an elite system, nurtured by colonial roots, to a mass system attempting to meet the demand of a vibrant democracy. In India's ancient seats of learning at Nalanda, Vikramshila, Vallabhi and Takshashila were essentially centres of religion and philosophy through the last mentioned also taught professional courses. They had their own unique traditions and values. The concept of elite universities for the privileged was

slowly replaced by the concept of egalitarian universities, responsible to society and committed to its needs.

Today, a traditional universities is charged with the responsibility of understanding teaching, research and extension activities. The vigorous growth of socially committed universities reflects a confidence in higher education as a major instrument of social and economic progress.

Recent political and economical events, especially the development of free-market economy, highlight the need for “globalisation of universities”. The dynamic nature of higher education imposes upon the universities an obligation to examine their conventional, present and emerging roles, and accordingly modify their functions. Otherwise there is the danger of their being rendered irrelevant. Later, in the thirteenth century the European Universities developed into educational centres of the states, oriented to meet the demand for civil servants, especially priests and lawyers. The universities of the middle age were essentially teaching and training centres. In the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries the need for trained manpower, and an educated labour force, ensured that technology became important in the universities.

SIGNIFICANCE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

The significance of higher education is also stressed by UNESCO, which in a policy paper emphasises. “State and society must perceive higher education not as a burden on federal budgets but as a long-term domestic investment, in order to increase economic competitiveness cultural development and social cohesion”.

The recognition that higher education is essential for development should make it easier for academic institutions to generate (financial) support for their activities. The universities need to highlight the fact that they:

- ✓ Produce and train human resources, (engineers, doctors etc;) required by every productive system;
- ✓ Conduct scientific and technological research that forms the basis for industrial development, and which is essential for a country's survival and development; and
- ✓ Examine every area of human activity and in the process generate information and knowledge that is essential for promoting a better social and economic order.

HIGHER EDUCATION AND GLOBALIZATION

Higher education is implicated in all these changes. Education and research are key elements in the formation of the global environment, being foundational to knowledge, the take-up of technologies, cross-border association and sustaining complex communities,. Though higher education institutions often see themselves as objects of globalization they are also its agents

Characteristically global cities have a high density of participation in higher education; there is a strong positive correlation between the higher education enrolment ratio of a nation or a region, and its global competitive performance (Bloom, 2005, pp. 23-24). Correspondingly, nations and regions that are relatively decoupled from the globally

networked economy are typified by a low density of higher education.

INDIAN EDUCATION PRESENT CONDITION

Soon after gaining independence in 1947, making education available to all had become a priority for the government. As discrimination on the basis of caste and gender has been a major impediment in the healthy development of the Indian society, they have been made unlawful by the Indian Constitution.

The 86th constitutional amendment has also made elementary education a fundamental right for the children between the age group- 6 to 14. According to the 2001 census, the total literacy rate in India is 65.38%. The female literacy rate is only 54.16%. The gap between rural and urban literacy rate is also very significant in India. This is evident from the fact that only 59.4% of rural population are literate as against 80.3% urban population according to the 2001 census.

BENEFITS OF HIGHER EDUCATION (GENERAL)

Higher education has come to be a necessity in most fields. Even administrative assistants and secretaries benefit from some sort of postsecondary education, such as vocational schooling. Securing an education makes jobs easier to find and promotions easier to acquire. Postsecondary education is also important for Americans to earn a decent wage. Wages have remained stagnant since the 1970's, forcing most households to employ both parents in the workforce. Those who are college educated have a better chance of allowing one parent to remain home to care for the children. One person with a Bachelor's Degree is likely to earn the salary of two high school educated adults. Not only do those with college degrees earn more, they are more likely to secure better benefits at work. These graduates enjoy better health and pension plans.

In addition to the career and financial prospects, a higher education often results in a greater level of job satisfaction for employees, assuming they have degrees in a field they enjoy. This makes career planning very important for students entering college. Higher education is expensive, so it is important to get it right the first time. First year students entering from high school should focus on a variety of subjects to give them the best chance of finding the right career path early on.

SOCIAL BENEFITS

Many high schools students considering college have difficulty imagining what their new lives will be like. The many challenges new students face, like meeting new people, taking on a heavier academic load and living away from home for the first time. Many new students are surprised to learn that other new students have the same fears and concerns. Friendships are formed easily for first year students who have a collective understanding of one another's concerns. New students also benefit from the exposure to many different cultures and ways of thinking.

For those entering college later in life, there are still many social benefits. Chief among these is the exposure to other

personalities, coming from all walks of life. Meeting such people broadens an individual's view points and increases his or her understanding of the world as a whole.

SOCIETAL BENEFITS

According to a study by the College Board, a non-profit membership association that connects students to college opportunities, higher education benefits more than just the student. Studies show that college students are more likely to engage in and encourage others to engage in health behaviors. These graduates are more likely to volunteer, vote, and donate blood. They are also more tolerant in the differences of others.

Because college graduates earn more, they also pay more in taxes, providing additional funding to social programs. These same graduates are much less likely to utilize the programs their taxes pay for. They are healthier and less likely to need government assistance or to go to jail. As more students gain college education, there is a snowball effect, creating a healthier, wealthier and more vibrant society. The numbers of Indians with three-year degrees has been steadily increasing since the 1940's. This means that as more students secure Bachelor's degrees, the more important it will be for others to do the same in order to compete in the workforce.

Benefits of Higher Education to Youth: Here are some good reasons for undertaking and completing a course of study in higher education for youth:

- ✓ Even though the number of graduates has risen significantly over the last twenty years, the gap between graduate and average earnings hasn't narrowed.
- ✓ Graduates are more likely to be employed than non-graduates.
- ✓ Whatever we do in our life, career development of a youth will be improved if he gets a degree or diploma from a University or College.
- ✓ If a youth wants to work in some professions (such as Law and Medicine) he has to have a relevant degree and he can find information on a wide range of careers by visiting the career website. Also, Careers Officers may be employed by the Department for Employment and Learning and Job Centres throughout a Country. They are trained to give advice and guidance on career choice and Further and Higher Education. They may get a chance to talk to a Careers Officer in their college and information in the job centre.
- ✓ For those already in work a higher education course can increase their employment prospects.

THE FUNCTIONS OF A UNIVERSITY

The university system has periodically accepted additional responsibilities. Today a university has multiple functions. It is expected:

First, to foster a spirit of free enquiry and promote independence and critical thinking;

Second, to be a repository of knowledge, responsible for its transmission through teaching and extra mural programmes;

Third, to be the place for the pursuit, generation and application of new knowledge, and for the 'search for truth';

Fourth, to be the training ground for competent professionals, including doctors, engineers, business managers and administrators;

Fifth, to render service to society, anticipating its needs and assisting in the fulfilment of economic objectives;

Sixth, to facilitate the information, development and implementation of national policies and programmes ; and

Seventh, to promote value and assist in the preservation of culture and traditions.

In the History of Indian Education the following four types of trends are very clearly visible:

- ✓ Universalism
- ✓ Nationalism
- ✓ Internationalism
- ✓ Indigenization

OVERVIEW OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA

Large Higher Education infrastructure: 344 universities and university level institutions & 16000 affiliated colleges.

- ✓ Regional Imbalances
- ✓ Low Access Rate
 - Although enrolment is over 12 million
 - Access rate is < 9% of the eligible population
- ✓ Variations in Quality
- ✓ Declining interest in Basic Sciences, Humanities
- ✓ Public Investments
- ✓ Emerging Private Not for Profit Participation
- ✓ Educational Institutions can be established only by registered societies, trusts and not by individuals

III. INDIAN HIGHER EDUCATION SCENARIO

- ✓ 40 percent of the Indian population is under 18
- ✓ According to the National Knowledge Commission (which advises the Prime Minister's office on higher education) – Out of the Indians between age group 18 to 24 years, only 7 percent enter a university.
- ✓ Govt. sources 11% The Commission recommends creation of 1,500 colleges and universities over the next several years to roughly double that percentage
- ✓ The Commission estimates that 160,000 Indians are studying abroad, spending an estimated \$4 billion a year.

SYSTEM OF GOVERNANCE OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

- ✓ The Universities are various kinds:
 - with a single faculty, or multi-faculties;
 - teaching or affiliating, or teaching cum affiliating,
 - Single campus or multiple campus.
- ✓ Most of the Universities are affiliating universities
- ✓ Autonomous Colleges:
 - In the autonomous colleges, the degree continues to be awarded by the University; the name of the college is also included. The colleges develop and propose new courses of study to the University for Approval. They are also fully responsible for conduct of examination.

- There are at present 138 autonomous colleges in the country.

IV. ROLE OF REGULATORY BODIES

Our Higher Education can be rejuvenated by the combined effort of Teachers, Students, Administrators and Regulatory bodies responsible for improving the system is very essential. So, the role of Regulatory Agencies like UGC, NCTE, and NAAC etc, to rejuvenate and improve the system of education. They are:

The statutory professional councils:

- ✓ University Grants Commission (UGC)
- ✓ National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE)
- ✓ National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC)
- ✓ All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE),
- ✓ Distance Education Council (DEC)
- ✓ Indian Council for Agriculture Research (ICAR),
- ✓ Bar Council of India (BCI),
- ✓ Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI)
- ✓ Medical Council of India (MCI),
- ✓ Pharmacy Council of India (PCI)
- ✓ Indian Nursing Council (INC)
- ✓ Dentist Council of India (DCI)
- ✓ Central Council of Homeopathy (CCH)
- ✓ Central Council of Indian Medicine (CCIM)

UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION (UGC)

The University Grants Commission was brought into being on December 28, 1953, through an executive order of the Government of India and was made autonomous in 1956.

The main functions of the UGC are to:

- ✓ To enquire into the financial needs of the universities;
- ✓ To allocate and disburse grants to universities for the maintenance and development of such universities or for any other general or specific purpose;
- ✓ It recommend to any university measures necessary for the improvement of university education and advise the university about the action to be taken for the purpose of implementation and recommendation;
- ✓ To advise the central or any state government on the allocation of any grants to universities for any general or specified purpose out of their funds;
- ✓ To advise any authority, if such advice is asked for on the establishment of a new university or on proposals connected with the expansion of the activities of any university.
- ✓ To collect information on all such matters relating to university education in India and other countries as it thinks fit and make the same available to any university;
- ✓ Require a university to furnish it with such information as may be needed relating to the financial position of the university, or the studies in various branches of learning undertaken in that university together with all rules and regulations relating to the standards of teaching and examination in that university relating to such branches of learning

- ✓ National Eligibility Test (NET) is being conducted by the UGC since 1989 for eligibility for lectureship. Eight State level Tests have been accredited at par with NET.
- ✓ A list of fake Universities/Institutions identified by University Grants Commission is published through a press release at the beginning of each academic session
- ✓ The U.G.C is a paying, allocating, and a dispensing body. The main responsibility of the U.G.C is to coordinate and maintain standards.

NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR TEACHER EDUCATION (NCTE)

Since 1973, the National Council for Teacher Education was an advisory body for the Central and State Governments on all matters pertaining to teacher education. The National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986 and the Programme of Action thereunder envisaged a National Council for Teacher Education with statutory status and necessary resources as a first step for overhauling the system of teacher education. The National Council for Teacher Education as a statutory body came into existence in pursuance of the National Council for Teacher Education Act, 1993 on the 17th August, 1995.

ROLE OF THE NCTE

The NCTE performs functions that are regulatory and also concerned with academic development of teacher education. Its functions are wide ranging and include among others planning, programming, advising, and formulations of norms for different teacher education courses. In addition the NCTE is expected to undertake periodic surveys, studies, and researches for promotion of innovations in teacher education and for institutional development.

- ✓ To undertake surveys and studies relating to various aspects of teacher education and publish the results thereof,
- ✓ To make recommendations to the Central and State Governments, Universities and recognized institutions in the matter of preparation of suitable plans and programs in the field of teacher education,
- ✓ To co-ordinate and monitor teacher education and its development in the country,
- ✓ To lay down guidelines in respect of minimum qualifications for a person to be employed as a teacher in schools or in recognized institutions,
- ✓ To lay down norms for any specified category of courses of training in teacher education, including the minimum eligibility criteria for admission thereof, and the method of selection of candidates, duration of the courses, course contents and mode of curriculum,
- ✓ To lay down guidelines for compliance by recognized institutions, for starting new courses or training and for providing physical and instructional facilities, staffing pattern and staff qualifications,
- ✓ To lay down standards in respect of examinations leading to teacher education qualifications, criteria for admission to such examinations and schemes of courses of training,
- ✓ To lay down guidelines regarding tuition fees and other fees chargeable by recognized institutions,

- ✓ To promote and conduct innovation and research in various areas of teacher education and disseminate the results thereof,
- ✓ To examine and review periodically the implementation of the norms, guidelines and standards laid down by the Council, and to suitably advise the recognized institutions,
- ✓ To formulate schemes for various levels of teacher education and identify recognized institutions and set up new institutions for teacher development programs.
- ✓ To take all necessary steps to prevent commercialization of teacher education, and perform such other functions as may be entrusted to it by the Central Government.

NATIONAL ASSESSMENT AND ACCREDITATION COUNCIL (NAAC)

- ✓ National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) is an autonomous institutions established by the University Grants Commission in 1994 NAAC's responsibility is to assess and accredit institutions of higher education that volunteer for the process, based on prescribed certain criteria.
- ✓ NAAC's process of assessment and accreditation involves the preparation of a self -study report by the institution, its validation by the peers and final decision by the Council.
- ✓ 122 universities and 2486 colleges/ institutions have been accredited by NAAC so far.
- ✓ National Assessment & Accreditation Council (NACC) Bangalore - To assess and accredit public & Private institutions of higher learning

ROLE OF STATE GOVERNMENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

- ✓ State Governments are responsible for establishment of State Universities and colleges, and provide plan grants for their development and non-plan grants for their maintenance.
- ✓ The Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) is created for coordination and cooperation between the Union and the States
- ✓ Special Constitutional responsibility of the Central Government: The Constitution gives exclusive Legislative Power to the Central Govt. for co-ordination and determination of standards in Institutions of higher education or research and scientific and technical institutions.

V. CONCLUSION

The Regulatory Bodies like UGC, NCTE & NAAC etc., should perform the duties in correct perspective. It is clear that the quality of Higher Education can be achieved only by the performance of these bodies. The present scenario gives a very bad picture of quality of higher education and most of the universities are like tuition centers only giving master degrees. These degree holders are fit for nothing except they can answer a few essay type questions in the subject. These bodies

should take care whether the institutions of higher learning are discharging their duties or not. In Higher Education research plays a vital role. The quality of research can only bring quality of higher education and Quality Higher Education can bring Quality Higher Resource to the Nation. The progress of the nation in sure way depends upon these quality persons. So, the role of institutions like U.G.C, N.C.T.E & N.A.A.C those a long way in bringing drastic change in the way of Higher Education.

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