



Academic Development of Higher Education in India

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Abstract: India's higher education system is the third largest in the world after China and United States in terms of enrolment. Accreditation agencies established for the purpose. The main agency which accredits universities and colleges in general education is the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) established by the UGC in 1994. The education plays enormously significant role in building of a nation. There are quite a large number of educational institutions, engaged in imparting education in our country. The purpose of academic development is to help create learning environments that enhance educational quality. In the absence of educational development, teachers in higher education tend to base their teaching on their own experience as students. Recent changes in higher education make the development of academics' teaching skills a priority. National and international competition for students forces higher education institutions to market themselves to all potential students. To help all students to learn in and for this changing environment, academics as university teachers need a better understanding of teaching and learning issues as well as to advance their pedagogic competences.

Keywords: *Higher Education, Academic development, Quality of higher education*

Introduction:

Education in India has different levels such as preschool, primary, upper primary, secondary and higher secondary, technical, and professional and levels of higher education. Data requirements and level at which information is required varies from one level to another level. Information system for each of these levels in India is at different stage of development. Academic development is all initiatives taken -both at the central as at the 'local' level- in order to support faculty members to fulfill their different roles (teaching, research, ...) throughout their academic career. To promote economic and industrial development in a country, the essential requirement is the capacity to develop skilled manpower of good quality in adequate number. India now possesses a highly developed higher education system that offers facility of education and training in almost all aspects of human creation and

intellectual endeavors. India's higher education system is the third largest in the world after China and United States in terms of enrolment.

Accreditation agencies established for the purpose. The main agency which accredits universities and colleges in general education is the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) established by the UGC in 1994, whereas a similar function is done for technical education by the National Board of Accreditation (NBA) set up by AICTE in 1994, and for agricultural education by the Accreditation Board (AB) set up by ICAR in 1996. NAAC proposes to introduce the India Education Index (IEI) for ranking institutes based on academic, research performance and other parameters.

The education plays enormously significant role in building of a nation. There are quite a large number of educational institutions, engaged in



imparting education in our country. Majority of them have entered recently into semester system to match with international educational pattern. However, our present education system produces young minds lacking knowledge, confidence, values and skills.

Majority of Indian higher education institutions have been following marks or percentage based evaluation system, which obstructs the flexibility for the students to study the subjects/courses of their choice and their mobility to different institutions. There is need to allow the flexibility in education system, so that students depending upon their interests and aims can choose interdisciplinary, intra-disciplinary and skill-based courses.

The purpose of academic development is to help create learning environments that enhance educational quality. In the absence of educational development, teachers in higher education tend to base their teaching on their own experience as students. In this way, old teaching methods that focus on the teachers' rather than the students' needs and on the subject matter rather than on the transformation of student knowledge, perpetuate from generation to generation.

College teaching increasingly will be viewed as a true profession in its own right, underpinned by a solid base of knowledge derived from empirical studies on learning and student development, college effects on students, and the management of learning in complex organizations. Professors will be understood to need solid grounding in both theory and practice in both higher education and one or more disciplinary content areas.

Recent changes in higher education make the development of academics' teaching skills a priority. National and international competition for students forces higher education institutions to market themselves to all potential students. Consequently, these institutions attract students with different levels of knowledge and skills. In some countries, as a result of increasing tuition fees, students demand better educational experiences. New technologies and a move towards online learning make it imperative that academics understand how to best facilitate learning in the digital environment.

To achieve these diverse, complex, and often difficult-to-develop outcomes, teachers will use student development theory based on empirical psychological research to adapt their instruction and advising to the needs of individual students. Teachers will routinely conduct classroom research using input, process, and outcome assessment methods to understand their students and their students' educational processes and thus to improve learning.

The need for improved classroom teaching, aims to increase student mobility. Mobility will only bring desired outcomes if students can expect attractive and competitive education at home and abroad.

To help all students to learn in and for this changing environment, academics as university teachers need a better understanding of teaching and learning issues as well as to advance their pedagogic competences. Many current methods, such as widespread lecturing to students, relegate students to passivity, tend to focus narrowly on subject knowledge, and, thus, are inadequate. Instead, effective teaching needs to put



student learning at the centre of the teaching process.

Evaluation of faculty as educators increasingly will be based on the results of modern input, process, and outcome assessments, using multiple criteria and multiple indicators to reveal effectiveness in facilitating learning. Faculty evaluation will focus on the quality with which teachers implement what is currently considered good professional practice in curriculum design, instruction, academic advising, and other educational activities as appropriate to defined and written intended outcome goals and objectives and the characteristics of their students. Evaluation of faculty performance as educators also will focus on their informed contributions to improving the quality of their institutions' educational processes: curricula, courses, and advising and assessment programs.

Recommendations for improving the quality of higher education:

- (i) A well-planned and structured interaction to be developed between Centers of Academic Excellence and other Universities/Institutions;
- (ii) While restructuring the syllabi and courses, efforts should be made to develop an optimal combination of acquisition of theoretical and practical skills. The courses should be so designed that critical reading and interpretation of classics, practical field work wherever relevant, and application of readings and other skills are given importance;
- (iii) Quality of higher education can improve considerably through an extensive and optimal use of audio-visual technologies and Internet. The courses should be so designed to make good use of these modern developments;

- (iv) In restructuring of syllabi, all stakeholders such as students, teachers and users of services should be involved. However, teachers should be given flexibility within the norms and benchmarks decided by the stakeholders;
- (v) Examination reforms, gradually shifting from the terminal, annual and semester examinations to regular and continuous assessment of student's performance in learning should be implemented.

(vi) Quality of higher education can also be improved by inducting quality oriented objectivity in merit promotions of teaching faculty. Specification of weightages for teaching, research publications/ supervision would help in making this transparent and credible.

Conclusion: Increased need to universalize elementary education has resulted in serious focus on elementary education and at the same time rather total neglect of higher education. The paper has reviewed some general presumptions about higher education–higher education – development relationship, the level of expansion of higher education.

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