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Organises

3rd National Conference on Multidisciplinary Recent Trends Research and Innovation

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Higher Education and Research to Build a Better Future: Issues and Recommendations

Shri. M.I. Jobali
Assistant Professor in Sociology PPG Arts college GADAG
Email - mijobali@gmail.com

Shri, Suresh Ajareddy
Assistant Professor in Political Science R.T.E.S Arts Commerce & Science College Ranebennur
Email - Sureshajraddi1978@gmail.com

Abstract: *The paper deals with the higher education system and the research and its traditional form. It also highlights about rethinking research and higher education to build a better future. Further knowledge integration for effective action and some of the issues to consider for making it a happen in India.*

Key Words: *higher education system, critical reasoning, scientific community, Knowledge Integration.*

1. Introduction :

The higher education system in India has grown in a remarkable way, particularly in the post-independence period, to become one of the largest systems of its kind in the world. However, the system has many issues of concern at present, like financing and management including access, equity and relevance, reorientation of programmes by laying emphasis on health consciousness, values and ethics and quality of higher education together with the assessment of institutions and their accreditation. These issues are important for the country, as it is now engaged in the use of higher education as a powerful tool to build a knowledge-based information society of the 21st Century.

2. Access and Equity

Today the world economy is experiencing an unprecedented change. New developments in science and technology, media revaluation and internationalization of education and the ever expanding competitive environment are revolutionizing the education scene. A paradigm shift has been noticed in higher education now a days, from 'national education 'to global education', from 'one time education for a few' to 'life long education for all', from 'teacher- centric education' to 'learner centric education'. These changes make new demands and pose fresh challenges to the established education systems and practices in the country. Because of interdependence and integration of world economy in recent years, the Indian higher education system has a new role and a challenge to provide to the nation and the world at large, skilled human power at all levels, having breadth of knowledge and confidence to effectively confront the social and economic realities.

3. Orthodox view of research

To reproduce the existing levels of knowledge and to improve the critical reasoning capabilities and specific skills of individuals, both as an input into their public and private work activity and into the development of a democratic, civilized, inclusive society for the preservation and transmission through education of knowledge, culture and social values. To increase the knowledge base by pursuing knowledge for its own sake and for the creation of wealth. Scholarship and research should be pursued by universities, both for their inherent value and in order to produce a stock of useful knowledge that might be applied elsewhere for the benefit of society. This is not easily achievable in the developing world's universities, although there may be some good research groups clearly a minority – that manage to work to solve local, regional or national problems and still be part of the inter- national scientific community

4. Rethinking Research and Higher Education to Build a Better Future

Higher education must become more evenly distributed to improve the chances of economic and social development. The role of education in this process is taken as a given – a point of departure and it is assumed that knowledge and skills will be at least as important for the future of the developing in this century as they were for developed and industrialized countries in the past. Admittedly, the worldwide higher education landscape and research and knowledge sectors are undergoing a profound transformation driven by unprecedented global social and economic forces and are embedded in an extremely complex reality, in which no self-evident choices are available and where actions have multiple effects in a dynamically interdependent environment. The size of the academic enterprise has grown tremendously in the past century.

5. Knowledge Integration for Effective Action

There is broad agreement that mankind faces three main challenge in these early years of the 21st century: freedom from want, freedom from fear and the freedom of future generations to sustain their lives on this planet. Science, technology and innovation are central both to the origins of these three millennium challenges and to the prospects for handling them successfully (Annan, 2000). They are important forces in the positive and negative trends of development.

6. Issues to consider

The lack of agreement in the literature as to what constitutes teaching excellence in higher education is striking. Comparative research looking at perceptions of teaching excellence across different disciplines, universities and countries is needed. However, this is un likely to be an easy task, as just as definitions of quality change over time and from one context to another, so too do definitions of excellence.

Future research on teaching quality in Higher Education should take on board the complex relationships between proxies for teaching quality and actual teaching quality. Particular attention should be paid to how definitions of effective teaching evolve over time due to changing student needs, new modes of delivery, changing employer needs and technological innovation. There is relatively little research in to academics' understanding and perceptions of teaching excellence and further research in this area is so rely needed. It would be particularly helpful to look at how academics and students from the same institutions and courses perceive teaching quality and excellence, and also how these perceptions may change over time. There is also the issue of shifting thresholds, and how these can be accommodated in systems designed to measure excellence.

There is a relative paucity of literature on the potential for using types of learning engagement as a metric in a set aimed at identifying learning excellence. This may warrant further detailed investigation as a separate research topic when developing a potential battery of metrics for teaching excellence.

There is no evidence on how teaching quality metrics can be broken down to different groups of learners, particularly groups differentiated by learner characteristics rather than subject/programme studied. The metrics that might pick that up – student engagement – are measured on voluntary completion of survey instruments, which may not be applied to all final year undergraduates in an institution, and will certainly not be completed by all final year undergraduates. Survey instruments are in any case meant to be anonymous. Disadvantage and under-representation will also be specific to programme and to institution, depending on catchment, fees and other characteristics. Some of the issues are:

1. Localization of the state university system
2. Lack of clear policy frameworks for entry of new
3. Education providers to the higher education system
4. Lack of mission differentiation between several types of institutions
5. Trust deficit of public in higher educational institutions
6. Lack of dynamic learning goals and curricular relevance
7. Research Orientation in Higher Education
8. Challenges of the affiliation system
9. Bridging the gap between school education and higher education
10. Last mile problems in ICT for Higher Education
11. Financing patterns and self-financing of higher education institutions
12. Governance Deficit
13. Academic Audit
14. Distance Education
15. Alternative Education for College Dropouts

16. Sports and Extra-curricular Activities

Neither the benefits accruing to Higher Education Institutions from an increase in teaching quality nor the views of employers regarding teaching quality in Higher Education have been systematically explored.

7. Recommendations

1. Establish new universities of higher learning in all disciplines, and increase the number of new and innovative Academic Staff Training Colleges and Interdisciplinary Centres for advanced research in Higher Education
2. Enhance infrastructural facilities and upgrade the existing ones
3. Enhance research in terms of the award of doctoral, postdoctoral, D. Lit., degrees and in terms of research publication.
4. Research output and patents from universities to be increased considerably
5. All institutes of higher education should be classified on the basis of scientifically devised criteria and should be given targets to achieve in terms of research and publication, extension activities and other related areas
6. Establish monitoring and facilitation cells for accessing UGC and other funding agencies.

8. Conclusion :

It is true that enhancing social access to higher education is still important in the country. But, the major challenge before the Indian higher education system is to bring equity in quality of education across the length and breadth of the country. This is more close to the heart of students in rural, semi urban and urban areas, because they also wish to be able to participate in the new economic revolution.

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