

A New Direction of Governance and Regulation in Higher Education

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Introduction

Higher education institutions constitute the assembly lines for generation of human capital and nurseries to nurture the researchers. Thus, these institutions are intimately linked to the scale and scope of economic activity and development in a country. No country can afford to prosper in the long run if it neglects the development of facilities for higher education, which is characterised by significant positive externalities. For example, 10 researchers working in isolation will never be able to generate the same level or quality of research as they will do while working in a team.

New Strategies for Teaching Learning

The learning objective and task analysis provide the basis for effective presentation of teaching. In order to bring desirable change, in the behaviour of the learner, teacher has to employ the devices, teaching strategies and teaching tactics. Teaching strategies is a generalized plan for a lesson which includes structure desired learner behaviour in terms of goals of instructions and an out line of plan tactics necessary to implement the strategy. The lesson strategy is a part of a larger development scheme of the curriculum (stones and Morris).

Some new strategies for teaching are as follows:

Program Instructions: Program Instruction is a new strategy of teaching. It is also know as individualized instruction. The response of the learner are controlled by the programmer. The learner does not get freedom to respond but it provides an opportunity to each learner to pace according to his own capacity and ability.

Personalise system of Instruction: Personalise system of instruction is one of the recent innovation which Individualise instruction. The personalize system of

instruction means a system of instruction which is person oriented it lays more emphasis on the individualization of instruction than other method in Higher Education. The instruction is tailored to the need and ability of the individual learner.

Commuter Aided Instructions

When we use the computer in the learning process for achieving some goals or objectives then it is called computer aided instruction.

Module: The instructional Module includes a set of activities intended to facilitate the learner's achievement of specific objective. It is a relatively self contained design for specific purpose and is a part of a broader more comprehensive instructional system.

Model: A model of teaching is a pattern or plan which can be used to shape a curriculum or course to select instructional materials and to guide teachers action.

Out of the above given teaching strategies Model is selected for the present study.

The State of Higher Education in India

Positive Trends: There is no doubt that considerable progress has been made in the provision of higher education in India since 1950-51 when it had only 27 universities or deemed universities. As things stand today this number has risen to 400, and vast improvements have also been made in generating gender equality in access to higher education. At the time of independence hardly 10 percent of the students enrolled in higher educational institutions were women. By the turn of the century, this figure had jumped to 40 percent.

Governance and Regulation

Much of the state of higher education in our country can be attributed to the system of governance and regulation. The system of command and control implicit in the functioning of universities is unworkable and does not promote accountability. These institutions are constantly subjected to governmental pressures and intrusion of political processes. Decisions are often made on the basis of non-academic considerations. This intervention starts right at the top with the appointment of the vice chancellor. University Courts are oversized with 500 members, with the result that they are decorative with no functional use. The same is true of academic councils-large size prevents dynamism in decision making.

The other cause of poor governance is the system of affiliating colleges to the university which yields revenue for the university through fees. There are a total of about 17,700 undergraduate colleges, out of which a mere 1.1 percent are autonomous. The rest are affiliated to universities. Many universities have more than

100 affiliated colleges and there are some with more than 400 affiliated colleges each. With so many affiliated colleges the universities become bulky structures. The need for joint examinations of affiliated colleges prompts standardization and dilution of curricula and examinations with inadequate emphasis on flexibility in response to changing and varying needs of students. There is also no opportunity therefore to nurture centers of excellence within the university systems.

A regulator in higher education usually has five functions:

- license to grant degrees;
- accreditation or quality benchmarking;
- disbursement of public funds;
- regulation of access through stipulation of fees or affirmative action; and
- provision of licenses to practice profession. Apart from the first function the UGC is responsible for all the others. However, it has not fulfilled its function in many cases and the courts have had to step in to fill the vacuum with contradictory judgments being made on several issues.

Current Status

India possesses a highly developed higher education system which offers facility of education and training in almost all aspects of human creative and intellectual endeavors: arts and humanities; natural, mathematical and social sciences, engineering; medicine; dentistry; agriculture; education; law; commerce and management; music and performing arts; national and foreign languages; culture; communications etc. The institutional framework consists of Universities established by an Act of Parliament (Central Universities) or of a State Legislature (State Universities), Deemed Universities (institutions which have been accorded the status of a university with authority to award their own degrees through central government notification), Institutes of National Importance (prestigious institutions awarded the said status by Parliament), Institutions established State Legislative Act and colleges affiliated to the University (both government-aided and –unaided) As on 31.3.2006, there were 367 University level institutions including 20 Central Universities, 217 State Universities, 104 Deemed Universities and 5 institutions established under State Legislation, 13 Institutes of National Importance established under Central legislation and 6 Private Universities.. There were 18,064 degree and post-graduate colleges (including around 1902 women’s colleges), of which 14,400 came under the purview of the University Grant Commission, the rest were professional colleges under the purview of the Central Government or other statutory bodies like the AICTE, ICAR, MCI etc. Of the Colleges under UGC purview 6109 have been recognized by the University Grants Commission (UGC) under Section 2(f) and 5525 under Section 12(B) of the UGC Act, which recognition permits them to receive grants from the UGC. In 2006-07, an estimated 13.93 million students were enrolled in the

institutions of Higher Education as against 10.48 million in the previous year and the faculty strength was 0.488 million as compared to 0.472 m in the previous year. The enrolment of women students at the beginning of the academic year 2006-07 was 4.466 million, constituting 40.40 per cent of the total enrolment. Of the total women enrolment, only 12.35 per cent women have been enrolled in professional courses and the rest in non-professional courses. The women enrolment is the highest in Kerala (66.00 per cent) and lowest in Bihar (24.52 per cent) in terms of percentage enrolment to total enrolment. (Annual Report, Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2006-2007).

Quality Assurance Mechanisms

The Higher Education sector ensures quality of the educational process with the help of accreditation agencies established for the purpose. The main agency which accredits University and Colleges in general education is the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) established by the UGC in 1994, where as 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 Accreditation Board (AB) set up by ICAR in 1996. Some of the other professional regulatory bodies are attempting to set up their own accreditation agencies, for instance both the Distance Education Council (DEC) and the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) are currently discussing with NAAC the procedures for developing their own accreditation mechanisms. Because of their very late arrival on the scene, the progress of accreditation so far has been very slow. As on May 21, 2006, NAAC has accredited only 128 universities and 2879 colleges and reaccredited 4 Universities and 43 Colleges (NAAC Website), where as NBA by June 2005 has accredited merely 1232 programs from 325 institutions (NBA Website) as against a total of 14000 programs in 3589 approved UG and PG and 1608 diploma institutions. Initially the progress of accreditation was very slow but has picked up speed in the last few years, and both NAAC and NBA have plans to complete the backlog of accreditation of eligible institutions during the next few years. In addition to National accreditation, local quality inspection of affiliated colleges are carried out by the affiliating University to ensure provision of adequate academic infrastructure and satisfactory teaching-learning processes. Analysis of examination performance of students is also used by Universities to assess the quality of educational offerings of individual colleges.

Governance

It has been observed that policy framework is carefully planned at the level of the Planning Commission, Ministry of Human Resource Development and University Grants Commission. However, the policies are not fully implemented mostly because of faulty management of the institutions of higher education. The administrative

structure of the Universities, which was devised in the pre-independence period seems to be still continuing. The new challenges facing the system of higher education in the country, cannot be met without a total overhaul of the structure of management of higher education institutions. This has become all the more necessary because of globalization, which requires talent, competence, drive, initiative and innovation at several levels. This cannot be achieved without overhauling the administrative set up of Universities/Institutions. Therefore Governance of Higher Education was deliberated at length at this Seminar, the main recommendations of which are summarized below.

Recommendations

- The Governmental control in the Universities must be reduced, so that the University autonomy and accountability are strengthened and academic decisions are taken on merit.
- New methods and procedures of financial regulations should be devised and direct interference of the finance department in the financial management of Universities, which is counter productive should be stopped.
- As the Colleges are the feeding sources of the Universities, a better coordination in their working and activities is very much required. The participation of the teaching faculty in through a democratic process should be ensured.
- Complete transparency should be maintained in the working of Executive/Academic Bodies and other Governing Councils of the Universities. There is an urgency to review the University Acts in different States and revise the same in the light of the new requirements and the challenges being faced by the Universities.. New technologies of information and communication should be utilized for obtaining administrative efficiency.
- Higher Education should be developed as an infrastructure for social and economic growth of the Country.
- Students involvement in the area of University/College governance should be encouraged.
- Political interference in the appointment of University teachers and administrators should be totally stopped..

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