



CHALLENGES BEFORE HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA

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Introduction

India's higher education system is the world's third largest in terms of students, next to China and the United States. Unlike China, however, India has the advantage of English being the primary language of higher education and research, India educates approximately 11 per cent of its youth in higher education as compared to 20 per cent in China. The main governing body at the tertiary level is the University Grants Commission (India), which enforces its standards, advises the government, and helps coordinate between the centre and the state. Universities and its constituent colleges are the main institutes of higher education in India.

The present format of Higher education in India was started in 1857 with the inception of universities in the three presidency towns. At present, India possesses a highly developed higher education system which offers facility of education and training in almost all aspects of human's creative and intellectual endeavors such as 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.

In India some institutions of India, such as the Indian Institutes of technology (IITs), have been globally acclaimed for their standard of education. The IITs enroll about 8000 students annually and the alumni have contributed to both the growth of the private sector and the public sectors of India. However, India has failed to produce world class universities like Harvard and Cambridge. Universities in East Asia have been included in the first hundred. Hong Kong has three, ranked at 24, 35 and 46; Singapore two ranked at 30 and 73; South Korea two ranked at 47 and 69 and Taiwan one in the 95th position. Notably, China's Tsinghua University and Peking University are ranked at 49 and 52 respectively. There is no Indian university in the rankings from 100 to 200. It is only when one moves on to the next 100 that we find the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur at 237; IITMadras at 284 and the University of Delhi at 291.

Keywords :Higher Education, Challenges, Opportunities.

Objectives of Research Study

The present research study has following objectives.

1. To study the present status of Higher Education in India.
2. To examine the Higher Education System in India and United States.
3. To study the challenges before Higher Education in India.



Hypothesis of Research Study

The present research study has following Hypothesis.

1. The environment of doing research in Higher Education is developing day by day.
2. Higher Education in India is resulted in flowering the overall personality of students and teachers.
3. India's Higher Education system is gradually shifted from chock & duster to mouse & monitor.

Research Methodology

The said research study is based on secondary data. Such secondary data was collected from the various reference books related to Education, Higher Education, E-commerce, Marketing Management, Marketing Research, Mobile Commerce, Commerce Education, Management Education, and Online Education.

The Secondary data is also collected from various websites and other related literature.

For the present research study secondary data is also collected and reviewed from the various National and International Research Journals which are related to Education, Higher Education, Commerce & Business Education.

Higher Education System in India & United States

Education in India is mainly provided by the public sector, with control and funding coming from three levels, federal, state, and local. Child educations compulsory. The Nalanda University was the oldest university system of education in the world. Western education became ingrained into Indian society with the establishment of the British Raj. Education in India falls under the control of both the Union Government and the states, with some responsibilities lying with the Union and the states having autonomy for others.

Higher Education in India starts after the higher Secondary or 12th standard. While it takes 3 years for completing a BA, BSc or BCom pass or honors degree from a college in India, pursuing an engineering course would take four years and five years for completing a bachelor of medicine or bachelor of law degree, Postgraduate courses generally are of two years duration. But there are some courses like Master of Computer Application (MCA) that are of three years duration. For those who cannot afford to attend regular classes for various preoccupations can pursue correspondence courses from various Open Universities and distance learning institutes in India.



Table 1.1 : Higher Education System in United States and India

	United States	India
Size	Large and Complex	Large and Complex
Diversity	Highly diverse	Very little diversity
Role of Central (Federal) Government	Federal government has maintained an arms-length distance relationship with universities. The central government does not establish and maintain any institutions of higher education. It is responsible for majority of students' grants and loans almost half of the students receive federal financial aid.	Establish and provide grants institutions of higher education maintaining direct relationship with some of them. Small central funding for higher education largely goes for maintaining these institutions. Very small central funding for the rest of the system
Role of State Governments	Mainly authorise educational institutions to operate within states and license entry into certain professions; States prevent fraudulent practices of the higher education institutions and provide oversight of the minimum or threshold capabilities.	Most public higher education institutions funded by state governments. States have limited role in maintaining standards. Because of reducing funding role and weak oversight, states are considered as weak links in the Indian higher education system. Many state institutions operate outside the states
Higher education institutions	Strong commitment to internal accountability through regular programme reviews and systematic activities to assess student outcomes.	Commitment to internal accountability and external accountability (mainly to affiliating the universities) varies widely across range of institutions.
System	The federal government, the state governments and the voluntary accreditation agencies called the 'Triad' play complementary roles with clear division of labour. Each carry out distinct activities with distinct purposes taking different paths to the same super ordinate goal of providing high quality education with diverse offerings and sound investment of public funds.	The central government, the state governments, largely statutory government controlled bodies like the UGC, professional councils and the universities (particularly the affiliating the afflicting universities) and the voluntary accreditation agencies create a multi-layered burdensome regulatory system trying to achieve often conflicting objectives. Due to poor public funding and weak regulatory mechanism



Challenges Before Higher Education in India

The main challenges before the higher education is the Growing Privatization of Institutions and Universities. A More Commercialized Politicized Research System. India can no longer continue the model of general education as it has been persisting in for the large bulk of the student population. Rather, it requires a major investment to make human resource productive by coupling the older applications in the new economy and having adequate field based experience to enhance knowledge with skills and develop appropriate attitudes.

There are many basic problems facing higher education in India today. These include inadequate infrastructure and facilities, large vacancies in faculty positions and poor faculty thereof, low student enrolment rate, outmoded teaching methods, declining research standards, unmotivated students, overcrowded classrooms and widespread geographic, income, gender, and ethnic imbalances. Apart from concerns relating to deteriorating standards, there is reported exploitation of students by many private providers. Ensuring equitable access to quality higher education for students coming from poor families is a major challenge. Students from poor background are put to further disadvantage since they are not academically prepared to crack highly competitive entrance examinations that have bias towards urban elite and rich students having access to private tuitions and coaching. Education in basic sciences and subjects that are not market friendly has suffered.

There is an inadequate and diminishing financial support for higher education from the government and from society. Many colleges established in rural areas are non-viable, are under-enrolled and have extremely poor infrastructure and facilities with just a few teachers. A series of judicial interventions over the last two decades and knee-jerk reaction of the government - both at the centre and state level and the regulatory bodies without proper understanding of the emerging market structure of higher education in India has further added confusion to the higher education landscape in the country. There is an absence of a well-informed reform agenda for higher education in the country. A few efforts made now and then are not rooted in the new global realities based on competition and increased mobility of students and workforce.

Opportunities in Indian Higher Education

The opportunities in Indian Higher Education is as follows :-

1. Improve linguistic skills, intercultural experience.
2. Improve employability of students through recognition of qualifications and study periods abroad.
3. Academic exchange of knowledge, ideas, contacts.
4. Political Involvement.
5. University Collaboration.
6. The planning of educational programs according to the time needed through regional and international cooperation among universities.
7. The acceptance of more numbers of scientific boards and foreign students in universities.



8. Preparation of facilities for scientific boards to use new technologies.
9. Development of humanistic resources for the realization of social, economic, cultural consequences of universities internationalization.
10. The protection of researchers, scientific boards and young managers in Higher Education.
11. The effective cooperation in planning, executing, accessing of the international research projects.
12. The cause the effective and more international scientific cooperation among the universities.
13. Exchange experiences among universities.
14. Participate in high level masters/doctoral courses.
15. Receive double/multiple/joint degree from consortium of excellent universities.

Suggestions for Improving Quality of Higher Education

There are some suggestions and Expectations from Government, Industry, Educational Institutions, for improving quality of higher education-

- 1. Industry and Academia Connection-** Industry and Academia connect necessary to ensure curriculum and skills in line with requirements. Skill building is really very crucial to ensure employability of academia to understand and make sure good jobs (keeping in view knowledge + skills+ global professional skills = good jobs).
- 2. Innovative Practices-** The new technologies offer vast opportunities for progress in all walks of life. It offers opportunities for economic growth, improved health, better service delivery, improved learning and socio-cultural advances. Though efforts are required to improve the country's innovative capacity, yet the efforts should be to build on the existing strengths in light of new understanding of the research-innovation-growth linkage.
- 3. To mobilize resources-** The decline in public funding in the last two plan periods has resulted in serious effects on standards due to increasing costs on non-salary items and emoluments of staff, on the one hand, and declining resources, on the other. Effective measures will have to be adopted to mobilize resources for higher education. There is also a need to relate the fee structure to the student's capacity to pay for the cost. So that, students at lower economic levels can be given highly subsidized and fully subsidized education.
- 4. Incentives to Teachers and Researchers-** Industry and students are expecting specialized courses to be offered so that they get the latest and best in education and they are also industry ready and employable. Vocational and Diploma courses need to be made more attractive to facilitate specialized programs being offered to students. Incentives should be provided to teachers and researchers to make these professions more attractive for the younger generation.
- 5. High-tech Libraries-** Our university libraries have a very good collection of books, but they are all in mess. A library must be online and conducive for serious study. Indian universities should concentrate more on providing quality education which is comparable to that of international standards.



- 6. Public Private Partnership-** Public Private Partnership is most essential to bring in quality in the higher education system, Governments can ensure PPP through an appropriate policy. University Grants Commission and Ministry of HRD should play a major role in developing a purposeful interface between the Universities, Industries and National Research Laboratories as a step towards Public Private Partnership.
- 7. Coming of Information Age-** The world is entering into an Information Age and developments in communication, information and technology will open up new and cost-effective approaches for providing the reach of higher education to the youth as well as to those who need continuing education for meeting the demands of explosion of information, fast-changing nature of occupations, and lifelong education. Knowledge, which is at the heart of higher education, is a crucial resource in the development of political democracy, the struggle for social justice and progress towards individual enlightenment.
- 8. Student-Centered Education and Dynamic Methods-** Methods of higher education also have to be appropriate to the needs of learning to learn, learning to do, learning to be and learning to become. Student-centered education and employment of dynamic methods of education will require from teachers new attitudes and new skills. Methods of teaching through lectures will have to subordinate to the methods that will lay stress on self-study, personal consultation between teachers and pupils, and dynamic sessions of seminars and workshops. Methods of distance education will have to be employed on a vast scale.
- 9. Cross Culture Programmes-** After education, tour to all the places in India and world as far as possible with the cooperation of government is necessary so that one can understand about people, culture, arts, literature, religions, technological developments and progress of human society in the world.
- 10. International Cooperation-** In India universities have been a primary conduit for the advancement and transmission of knowledge through traditional functions such as research, innovation, teaching, human resource development, and continuing education. International cooperation is gaining importance as yet another function. With the increased development of transport and communication, the global village is witnessing a growing emphasis on international cooperation and action to find satisfactory solutions to problems that have global dimensions and higher education is one of them.
- 11. To Provide Need Based Job-Oriented Courses-** The main purpose of Higher Education is all round development of personality. But the present day education is neither imparting true knowledge of life and nor improving the talent of a student by which one can achieve laurels in the field one is interested. So, combination of arts subjects and computer science and science and humanities or literature should be introduced so that such courses could be useful for the students to do jobs after recruitment in some companies which would reduce unnecessary rush to higher education. The programme must be focused on graduate studies and research and



developing strategies and mechanisms for the rapid and efficient transfer of knowledge and for its application to specific national and local conditions and, needs

12. Quality development- All types of quality depends on its all functions and activities: teaching and academic programs, research and scholarship, staffing, students, building, facilities, equipments, services to the community and the academic environment. It also requires that higher education should be characterized by its international dimensions: exchange of knowledge, interactive networking, mobility of teachers and students and international research projects, while taking into account the national cultural values and circumstances. The level of education and knowledge being imparted by many colleges ... is not up to the mark. Instead of concentrating on quantity, these institutions should concentrate on quality. The approach of doctoral research in social sciences needs to be more analytical and comparative and be related to society, policy and economy.

13. Privatization of Higher Education- In any nation education is the basic necessity for the socio-economic development of the individuals and the society. In reality only 20% of the population is educated in India. So, improved standard of education as first priority should be offered to the majority by the govt. authorities with sincere political will. Also, privatization of higher education is absolutely necessary in a vast country like India as government alone is helpless to do so.

14. Personality Development- Higher Education should be for the flowering of personality but not for the suppression of creativity' or natural skill. In the globalized world opportunities for the educated people are naturally ample in scope. As a result business process outsourcing (BPO) activities have increased, competition in the world trade leading towards the production of quality goods and their easy availability everywhere in the world market. That is the way the world can be developed for peace, prosperity and progress by able and skilful men.

15. Examination Reforms- In India's Higher Education 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.

Conclusion

According to Prime Minister of India Dr. Manmohan Singh 'The time has come to create a second wave of institution building and of excellence in the fields of education, research and capability building'. We need an educational system that is modern, liberal and can adapt to the changing needs of a changing society, a changing economy and a changing world. The thrust of public policy for higher education in India has to be to address these challenges. However, one university can't make much difference. If the government welcomes more such initiatives, the future will be ours. We will be able to match and compete with other countries and the dream to be the world's greatest economy won't be difficult to achieve.



India is well known for its large pool of technical manpower, a fair proportion of which finds employment in developed countries, especially in the West. As a happy sequel to the story, India has recently witnessed a big boom in the BPO/KPO sector. In order to sustain this trend, and to ensure that India does not throwaway this key advantage, it is imperative that we continue to produce a critical mass of highly skilled manpower at an accelerated pace. An enabling academic and economic setting is a key factor determining the fate of our nation in the wake of the knowledge sector boom.

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