

QUALITY ASSURANCE IN INDIAN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Abstract

Higher education is an effective instrument to build knowledge for an information-based society. The core mission of higher education is to educate, train, undertake research and provide service to the community. Keeping this in view, the objectives of the higher education were set during the 12th plan. The general objective of the 12th Plan was to achieve a profound transformation of higher education so that it effectively promotes sustainable human development and at the same time improves relevance with closer links with the world of work and achieve quality in its teaching, research and community extension functions including lifelong Higher Education is an important tool for the evolution of a society into a dynamic and vibrant system that could respond to the challenges of the times. The quality of education, then, assumes foremost significance, especially for its role in the formation of future generation. This demands that the system of education should be dynamic enough to effectively perform its liberalize role in the society. There had been several efforts over the years in India during both the pre-independent and in the post-independent era, to revitalize the spirit and structure of education to maintain its quality and dynamism.

Keywords: Higher education, quality of education, Quality India, Amartya Sen, UGC Act, mahila mandals

Need for Quality

“QI” may have to be our logo of education for development. “QI” represent “Quality Individual” “Quality institution” and “Quality India”. These three levels are interdependent, occurring both simultaneously and sequentially indifferent combinations. (Prasad.V.S.2004).

Today there has been a wide- spread feeling that the higher education is not effective enough in responding to the challenges of the times and the purpose of education itself has been watered down so much. So, that the value dimension and the aspects of social commitment had almost become out of place in present day’s education. Professor Amartya Sen, Nobel Laureate insists quality in Higher Education. During the inauguration of the four days South Asian Conference on Education on 14th November, 1999 at New Delhi, he pointed out that “University Education in India is in a state of crisis, it is not a crisis of lack of resources. It is deterioration of quality, the Nobel Laureate stated with clarity. He argued that when it comes to higher education there is no escape from seeking the highest quality we can get. Quality would vary from one university to another. However the minimum level of quality should be ensured”. Moreover, it does not provide a clear direction and motivation to meet the future needs of the society. Every year thousands of students came out from Universities with degrees and training, for which there are no takers.

Growth of Higher Education in India

Year	College	Universities
1950-51	578	28
1960-61	1819	45
1970-71	3277	93
1980-81	4577	123
1990-91	6627	184
2001-02	11146	272
2010-11	32974	621
2013-14	36671	712

The present Higher education scenario indicates that there is an urgent need to identify the lacunae in the present day education and set it right, at the earliest, if a particular society should really benefit from the richness of education, upholding the values of justice and equity. In the context of today's unprecedented and rapid changes and the emerging challenges world over, under the forces and processes of globalization, restructuring the post-graduate curriculum, and converting it to become an effective instrument for social change is very essential and urgent.

Quality in Education

In a manufacturing industry the quality can be assessed with the help of many quality control instruments, the minor defects can be rectified with the help of a new technology, whereas in education, the quality cannot be measured by any shortcut method, machinery, or mechanical tool. In educational system the internal mechanisms can be assessed through its output.

Quality and Quality Assurance

Quality is not, however, to be confused with 'quality assurance'. The purpose of quality assurance is to ensure that people continue to do what they believe they should do, as best as they can, week in and week out and to introduce improvements wherever they can. Quality assurance therefore consists of procedures which can be applied equally well to doing the wrong things as to doing the right ones (Jamode V.S. 2004).

The UGC felt the importance of quality in Indian higher education, in order to sustain the quality it launched, Faculty Improvement Programme (FIP), University Leadership Programme (ULP), National Educational Testing (NET), Academic staff College (ASC) and Autonomous Colleges (AC) besides this, it established National assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) in the year 1994 these organization accreditation helps us to know the quality of the educational institution. Accreditation has now been made mandatory for all universities and colleges falling under the purview of section 2(f) and 12B of the UGC Act.

It is natural that the concern for quality should find expression first in the area of tertiary education, which is the epitome of educational edifice. Higher education turns out finished products in the form of skilled professionals, managers and entrepreneurs for industrial, commercial and service sectors. In a low tone, it continues to take credit for producing scientists and investors, thinkers and innovators, philosophers and reformers in all areas of thought and action as also teachers for all kind and levels of education. But the system of assessment and accreditation avowedly adopted for promoting quality focuses the concern on institutions instead of the learners. It appears to be based on the assumption the good institutions would turn out good graduates. This may make the matter simple for employers, who may pick up the products coming out of first grade institutions and level the rest (Om Prakash, 2004). Is it possible for us to leave the rest in lurch? It is essential for each and every institution must form an Internal Quality Assurance cell, to maintain the quality.

Reasons for Poor Quality in Higher Education

- Improper inadequate curriculum design and syllabus.
- Poor infrastructure facilities.
- Lack of commitment among the faculty members, poor quality of teaching.
- Stiff competition due to privatization of education and access to education through Internet.
- Students admission not based on merits.
- Inadequate library facilities.
- Inadequate use of teaching learning materials.
- Adoption of more of traditional methods.

The quality assurance, quality maintenance not only based upon management but includes different attributes like faculties and learners. So, all of them should given hands or quality assurance of Higher Education.

Role of Faculties

Preparation and utilization of teaching plan , in preparation of syllabi with inclusion of latest trends and technology.

1. Adoption of innovative teaching methods.
2. Preparing Audio - Visual and other necessary teaching aids.
3. Active participation in seminars, conferences, workshops, refresher courses.
4. Self appraisal by the teachers.
5. Teachers need to building, and promoting the academic culture and values.
6. Aware of the social responsibilities like motivating the students, sort out learners family problems.
7. Getting feedback.

8. Enriching their knowledge regulating through proper utilization library, latest information sources as systems.
9. Organizing seminars, symposium and workshops.

Role of Learners

1. Learners should change the attitude based on the vision and mission of the institution.
2. Interaction with the teaching faculty.
3. Proper feedback to the faculty.
4. Utilizing the opportunities and participation in extra curricular / co curricular activities..
5. Participation in seminars, conferences, intercollegiate programmes, etc.
6. Cultivating the research attitude, writing examinations like UGC, CSIR NET, fellowship exams TNPSC Group Service exams etc.
7. Personality development.
8. Up gradation of knowledge and skills with the utilization of with the existing infrastructure facilities.
9. Attending bridge / remedial courses, coaching classes etc.

Role of Management

1. Utilize the time and resources which are essential to insist a culture of excellence.
2. Research opportunities for the enlightened scholars.
3. Strictly adhere the rules and regulations of the Government and university.
4. Equipment of laboratory and modern Libraries with more number of books, Internet facilities.
5. Effective management decisions and implementation.
6. Restructuring of faculties and administrative functions when required.
7. Measures should be adopted for continuous improvement of the mutual relationship between the colleges / universities and local communalities.
8. Formation of Internal Quality Assurance cell for periodic assessment.
9. Measures should be adopted for continuous improvement of the mutual relationship between the colleges / universities and local communities.
10. Ensure that, "Commitment to quality assurance" becomes a grass root level.
11. Development of infrastructure facilities like easy to access to Internet, use of computers, etc.
12. Motivating and awarding the contributing staff and students through prizes, medals, financial assistance, etc.
13. Move with other institutions.
14. Utilization of services expert on lien / deputation.
15. Strengthening the alumni.

Research**Role of Faculties in Research**

1. Involving and enlarging the research knowledge.
2. Use of all information sources.
3. Utilization of infrastructural facilities, visiting research centers.
4. Contact and consultation with the experts, by visiting to their places and also by inviting.
5. Formation of research forums, presentation of papers, discussion.
6. Undertaking projects of different categories like case study minor research, major research our projects.
7. Publication of research articles in the reputed journals.
8. Admission of research scholars and guiding them in completion.

Role of Students in Research

1. Involving and enlarging the research knowledge with the latest trends.
2. Development of aptitude and attitude towards research.
3. Participation in the research forum, presentation of papers.
4. Contacting, consulting and utilizing the eminent's experience, research centers facilities etc.
5. Access and utilization of sources of communication and channels.

Role of Management in Research

1. Provide adequate amenities and infrastructure facilities.
2. Creation and promotion of better research climate.
3. Help in acquiring the required requirements.
4. Monetary and non - monetary assistance.
5. Recognizing and awarding the researchers in the appropriate way.

Extension**Role of Faculties in Extension**

1. Adoption of village / slum / area by each faculty, at least for a specific period of 3 to 5 years.
2. Baseline survey and planning for the fulfillment of the needs.
3. Contact with the extension agencies, Govt. departments, helping in the execution of the related programmes.
4. Co-ordinating with the NGO's in utilizing the services for the betterment of the adopted areas.
5. Formation and promotion of youth clubs, mahila mandals, etc.
6. Promotion of SHG and training them in the suitable areas.
7. Maintenance of blood donors directory.

8. Arrangement of training programmes like self employment, on the job training, vocational training etc.
9. Models to students.

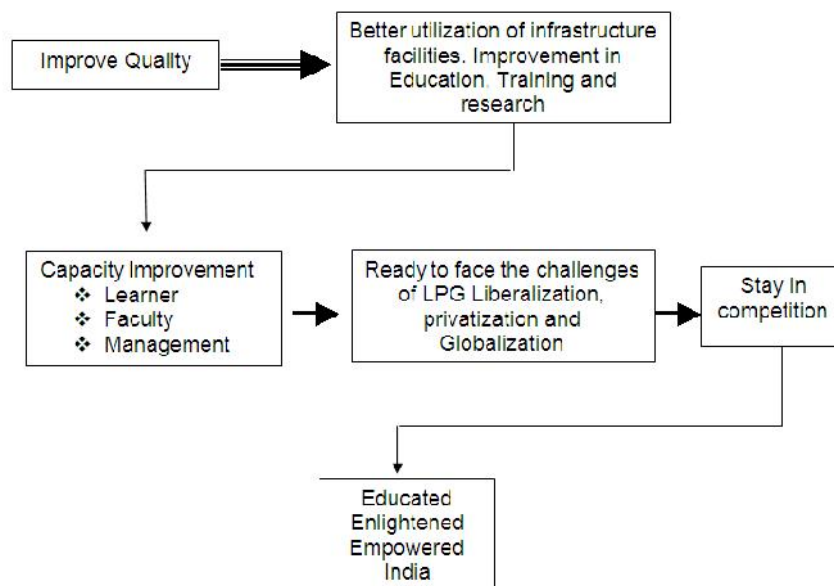
Role of Students in Extension Activities

1. Formation of different groups according to the field of interest.
2. Visiting of the adopted areas with frequent and regular intervals.
3. Co-ordinating with faculty, extensive agencies, Government department, NGO's in the preparation and execution of development programmes.
4. Organizing medical camps of different categories like eye camp, health camp etc.
5. Donation of blood whenever possible.
6. Models to villages.

Role of Management in Extension Areas

1. Having a vision with a particular point of year like 2020.
2. Co-ordinating with Government Department and other organizations.
3. Motivating the faculty and students.
4. Training and entrusting the responsibility to a particular member of the faculty.
5. Possible financial and non- financial assistance for the programmes.
6. Periodical review of the programmes convening the meetings of the lectures of the adopted areas of different faculties.
7. Linkages with the agencies involved in extension.

Rewards for Improving Quality



For effective quality assurance, it is necessary to devise internal mechanisms to monitor activities, identify drawbacks and undertake measures that will improve performance. (Sonwal Paramananda 2005). This Education, Training and Extension should be strengthened with the help of faculties, learner and management. So, mass involvement of learners' teachers and management is needed for a road to an educated, enlightened and an empowered India.

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