Reformation in Higher Education System: Current Needs and Opportunities

Shah Mittal Prakashkumar
Research Scholar
Kadi Sarva Vishwavidhyalaya,
Gandhinagar

Dr. Kusum Yadav
Kadi Sarva Vishwavidhyalaya,
Gandhinagar

Abstract

Education is a reflection of one's hard work which aids oneself to grow and develop simultaneously. It illuminates one's personality. It acts as a key structure to achieve success in one's life and lays many opportunities for development. With the help of updated knowledge one can face various difficulties in life without any fear. It's a shadow of one's culture, ideology, belief and nature. Many scholars believe that change is the only thing which is constant in life. Hence, if we follow old traditional conventions of teaching learning process in current scenario, it shall not only hamper our growth but also prove to be a big hindrance in the development of the society. Higher education in addition to basic education is instrumental in reducing poverty and achieving prosperity. So, after reformation in basic education, it is now a turn of higher education to create equal opportunities for all individual and develop economic independence and provide security to the society by raising the standards of individuals dwelling in it by reforming the mode of higher education.

Higher education helps in creating educated citizens who are more likely in community building activity reflecting their sensibility, disciplinary values and accomplishment. Hence, a well systematic and structured policy should be laid and followed to achieve these targeted benchmarks.

Keywords: Higher education

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Introduction

Teachers are the prime providers of education and are considered to be the vital members of any education system. In olden times, teachers were placed at a stage former to God, however, in the present era, the society looks up to them with high amount of distrust. The reason behind this is people are more connected with each other through knowledge imparting sources and gadgets which are keeping their knowledge updated. The quench of knowledge is now satisfied by usage of various gadgets. Education is now considered as only a benchmark for entering any institution and people believe that their growth in the same is just due to their knowledge developed by other means.

Gandhiji believed that the role of education is not only to impart education but also to provide a good livelihood. Education doesn't only give theoretical knowledge to a man but also equips him with all the necessary skills required for the earning of the livelihood. India being developing country, it becomes very essential that each individual sharpens his/her skills so that he and his family keep progressing in their life.

Basic education aims to provide knowledge for developing concepts, develop interest, create inquisitiveness and provide exposure to ground essential things. Higher education in addition aims in developing a cultured, democratic, thoughtful, well-grounded and skilful individuals who can make a remarkable role in the growth of the society and economic independence of the society. However, there are certain problems faced by higher education in India as stated by NEP 2020 and of which few are as listed below:

1. Less emphasized curriculum developing cognitive skills and its respective outcome,
2. Limited institutional and teacher autonomy,
3. A rigid separation of the study with narrower streaming of the specialized areas of the study,

4. Ineffective regulatory system,

5. Low standards of Undergraduate programme,

6. Improper accreditation,

7. Improper Funding systems,

8. Opening online system for education,

9. Lack of adoption of multidisciplinary approach.

Hence, it becomes essential to reform this level so as to make a remarkable progress in the development of fruitful citizens.

Existing Higher education system in India

The destiny of India is being moulded in her classrooms,' the Education Commission of 1964-66 correctly observed.

In fact, classrooms are where the country's future citizens are raised, trained, educated, and motivated to accept new challenges and face changing circumstances. "Indian higher education has grown dramatically over the last six decades, but this expansion has been largely unaffected by the many plans and proposals to guide it.

At the same time, while expansion has been the hallmark of higher education and systemic reforms have largely failed, much has changed in Indian higher education. Much of this change has been negative, with deteriorating standards for much of the system, student political activism and there is little doubt that this trend will continue.

There is no room for practical knowledge in our higher education system. Our education system mainly focuses on theoretical knowledge. The education and social system in India is very strict with children and completely ignores their feelings, opinions and ambitions. Children are encouraged to learn from the age of 3. Those who do not perform are treated like idiots and ostracized by parents and society. Also, there is a concept of single disciplinary approach.

Hence, it becomes essential that new reformations should be made. With regard to this, National Education Policy(NEP) 2020 has laid few remarkable features for the same in its policy of 2020.

REMARKABLE FEATURES OF NEP 2020: HIGHER EDUCATION

- Recognizing, identifying, and fostering the unique capabilities of each student, by sensitizing teachers as well as parents to promote each student's holistic development in both academic and non-academic spheres.

- according the highest priority to achieving Foundational Literacy and Numeracy by all Students by Grade 3, flexibility, so that learners have the ability to choose their

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learning trajectories and programmes and thereby choose their own paths in life according to their talents and interests.

- no hard separations between arts and sciences, between curricular and extra-curricular activities, between vocational and academic streams, etc. in order to eliminate harmful hierarchies among, and silos between different areas of learning multi disciplinarily and a holistic education across the sciences, social sciences, arts, humanities, and sports for a multidisciplinary world in order to ensure the unity and integrity of all knowledge.

- Emphasis on conceptual understanding rather than rote learning and learning-for-exams.

- Creativity and critical thinking to encourage logical decision-making and innovation; ethics and human & Constitutional values like empathy, respect for others, cleanliness, courtesy, democratic spirit, spirit of service, respect for public property, scientific temper, liberty, responsibility, pluralism, equality, and justice.

- promoting multilingualism and the power of language in teaching and learning life skills such as communication, cooperation, teamwork, and resilience.

- focus on regular formative assessment for learning rather than the summative assessment that encourages today's 'coaching culture'

- extensive use of technology in teaching and learning, removing language barriers, educational planning and management;

- respect for diversity and respect for the local context in all curriculum, pedagogy, and policy, always keeping in mind that education is a concurrent subject;full equity and inclusion as the cornerstone of all educational decisions to ensure that all students are able to thrive in the education system.

- synergy in curriculum across all levels of education from early childhood care and education to school education to higher education;

- teachers and faculty to be considered as the heart of the learning process – their recruitment, continuous professional development, positive working environments and service conditions;

- a 'light but tight' regulatory framework to be formed to ensure integrity, transparency, and resource efficiency of the educational system through audit and public disclosure while encouraging innovation and out-of-the-box ideas through autonomy, good governance, and empowerment;

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- Outstanding research to be considered as a co requisite for outstanding education and development.
- Continuous review of progress should be done based on sustained research and regular assessment.

Keeping these features in to consideration, we should strive to raise the standards of Higher education. This level can be achieved by reaching the milestones periodically.

1. **Taking University and College Education to a higher level**

Quality higher education must aim to develop good, thoughtful, well-rounded, and creative individuals. It must enable an individual to study one or more specialized areas of interest at a deep level and also develop character, ethical and Constitutional values, intellectual curiosity, scientific temper, creativity, spirit of service, and 21st century capabilities across a range of disciplines including sciences, social sciences, arts, humanities, languages, as well as professional, technical, and vocational subjects.

A quality higher education must enable personal accomplishment and enlightenment, constructive public engagement, and productive contribution to the society.

2. **Restructuring the institution and consolidation**

NEP2020 has suggested the following points with regard to this area:

- By 2040, all higher education institutions (HEIs) shall aim to become multidisciplinary
  Institutions, each of which will aim to have 3,000 or more students. There shall, by 2030, be at least one large multidisciplinary HEI in or near every district.
- Development will be in both public and private establishments, with a solid accentuation on creating an enormous number of remarkable public organizations.
- The in general advanced education area will mean to be an incorporated advanced education framework, counting proficient and professional instruction.

3. **Emphasis on Multidisciplinary Approach**

Departments in Languages, Literature, Music, Philosophy, Indology, Arts, Dance, Theatre Education, Mathematics, Statistics, Pure and Applied Sciences, Sociology, Economics ,Sports, Translation and Interpretation, etc. will be established and strengthened at all higher educational institutions. The 4-year programme may also lead to a degree 'with Research' if the student completes a rigorous research project in their major area(s) of study as specified by the HEI.

4. Providing vocational opportunities to students and offering scholarships by proper synchronisation with the funding agencies.

5. Framing qualitative and quantitative learning outcomes so as to track and measure the achievements and teaching learning process.

Opportunities of raising the standards of Higher education

NEP 2020 has suggested the following four verticals to be formed to achieve and monitor the developments in Higher education:

1. The principal vertical of Higher Education Commission of India(HECI) will be the National Higher Education Regulatory Council (NHERC). It will work as the normal, single point controller for the higher schooling area including educator instruction and barring clinical and lawful schooling.

2. The second vertical of HECI will, be a 'meta-certifying body', called the National License Council (NAC). License of establishments will be based fundamentally on fundamental standards, public self-revelation, great administration, and results, and it will be done by a free environment of authorizing establishments regulated and directed by NAC.

3. The third vertical of HECI will be the Higher Education Grants Council (HEGC), which will do subsidizing and financing of advanced education dependent on straightforward models.

4. The fourth vertical of HECI will be the General Education Council (GEC), which will outline expected learning results for advanced education programs, moreover alluded to as 'graduate ascribes'. A National Higher Education Qualification System (NHEQF) will be formed by the GEC.

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