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Growth, Challenges and opportunities in Higher Education:India`s vision 2025

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INTRODUCTION

Knowledge has always been a distinguishingcharacteristic of human beings in view of their uniquecapacity to formulate and continuously transmitknowledge one generation and location to anotherKnowledge Society- has gained prominence due toadvances in Technology and related Applications.Knowledge Societies have to address issues about howinformation and ideas are to be created and, thereafter,adopted at an accelerating speed in the form of economic growth improves quality of Life and sustainable for long time. Over the next 20 years the demand for higher education willdefinitely outstrip the capacity of some countries to meetdomestic need. The Global Student Mobility 2025 Report, prepared by IDP Education Australia, predicts the demand forinternational education will increase from 1.8 million internationalstudents in 2000 to 7.2 million in 2025.By all accounts these staggering figures present enormouschallenges and opportunities. As students continue moving toother countries to pursue their studies, they will remain animportant part of the international dimension of higher education.But student mobility cannot satisfy the hunger for highereducation within densely populated countries wanting to buildhuman capacity and thus fully participate in the knowledge
Society, hence the emergence and exponential growth ofcross-border education programs and providers. These newtypes of providers, forms of delivery, and models of collaborationwill offer students education programs in their homecountries.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Objectives of the present study are as follows:

1. To understand necessity of the vision of higher education in India for vision of 2025.
2. To present the structure and growth of higher education in Indiafor vision of 2025.
3. To examine opportunities and challenges of higher education in India.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The data for study has been collected from secondary sources. The secondary data has been collected through various journals, newspapers, magazines and websites and the data for study is in real and accurate form.

STRUCTURE AND GROWTH IN HIGHER EDUCATION FOR VISION OF 2025

In India 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), and Institutions established by State Legislative Act and colleges affiliated with the University (both government-aided and unaided). Universities and its constituent colleges are the main institutes of higher education in India. The education may be of the nature of General, Vocational, Professional or Technical education. Technical education includes 65 centrally funded institutions like Indian Institutes ofTechnology (IITs), Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs), National Institutes of Technology (NITs), Indian Institute of Science (IISc), etc. along with number of engineering colleges set up by State Governments. All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) approves and regulates these institutions in engineering/technology, architecture, hotel management & catering technology, management studies, computer applications and applied arts & crafts. Vocational Education is another stream of higher education in India. For this a network of public and private polytechnics and vocational institutions exists and they are controlled and supervised by the Councils specializing in respective discipline. India has also developed an Open University system to encourage distance learning. Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) was the pioneer and now there are 14 open universities in ------

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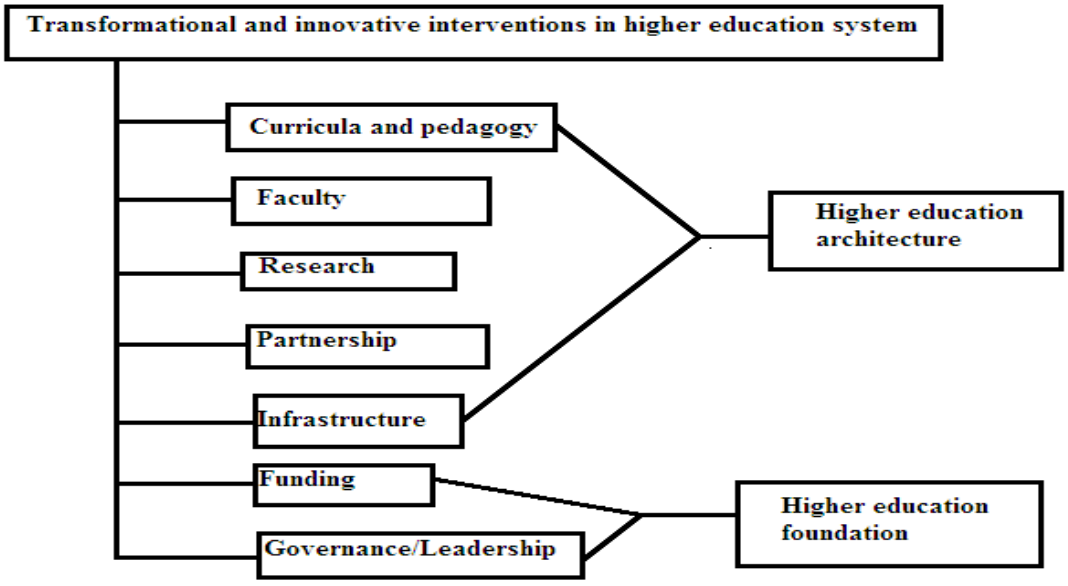
India. The Distance Education Council of India (DEC), New Delhi regulates these universities, maintains the standards, encourages and organizes the activities of Open and Distance learning (ODL) in the country. Higher education sector has expanded due to distance mode of education supported by new information and communication technology (ICT) as it costs 66 per cent less and the students need not leave their homes or profession. The internet and satellite technology are being put to use to further the cause of distance education. The Higher Education sector ensures the quality of the educational process with the help of accreditation agencies established for the purpose. The main agency which accredits universities and colleges in general education is the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) established by the UGC in 1994, whereas a 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 the Accreditation Board (AB) set up by ICAR in 1996. NAAC proposes to introduce the India Education Index (IEI) for ranking institutes based on academic, research performance and other parameters. The outcome will help in the international comparison of institutes. NAAC has entered into an MOU with higher learning institutes of the United States, Taiwan, Norway, and Kuwait and with the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) to facilitate collaborative work on quality assurance in higher education institutions.

Table 1:Innovative trends in variety of courses and career oriented programs have emerged across different streams

Courses	**Innovative trends in variety of courses and career oriented programs have emerged across different streams**
Science	Emergence of applied science courses such as actuarial science, clinical optometry, drug regulatory affairs, biotech dietetics and applied nutrition.
Commerce and Management	Sector focused programs such as family business, retail, finance, real estate and urban or rural infrastructure.
Arts	New courses structure such as four years research focused on liberal arts programs.
Engineering	Rapid growth of niche specialization, e.g. bioinformatics, environmental, thermal power and energy systems.

Source: MHRD Annual report

Figure 1: Transformational and innovations in higher education system



Source: MHRD Annual Report

Table 2: Number of higher education institutions in India

Higher education institutions	Number of universities in India
Universities and university-level institutions	504
State Universities	243
State Private Universities	53
Central Universities	40
Deemed Universities	130
Institutions of national importanceestablished under Acts of Parliament	33
Institutions established under various State legislations	5

Source: www.ugc.in.

Table 2 describes the number of universities and institutions for higher education in India. In India, at present there are 504 universities and university-level institutions, 243 state universities, 53 state private universities, 40 central universities, 130 deemed universities, 33 institutions of national importance established under acts of parliament and 5institutions established under variousstate legislations for promoting higher education for greater involvement of students in higher education.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Following are the challenges and opportunities in higher education:

Curriculum Design/Alignment

The expectation of society is different nowadays. The authorities who decide upon the policies shouldtake a note of the situation. To be competent and to be at par with global competitors, the H.E.institutions should provide interdisciplinary programs to the students to meet the 21st century'shigher education demands (Rae, 2007). H.E. institutions require reorganizing courses, programs, andstructures to suit the aspirations and needs of the students (Hanna, 2003). So H.E. Institutions requireto redesign or align their curriculum to support today's' students to fit globally (Hirsch and Weber,1999). Bridges (2000) also state the importance of curriculum design in today's higher education.

Student Employability

Employability is a very important aspect of H.E. system. Students seek educational opportunitiesto enter the world of jobs (West, 1999). According to Bridges (2000) the real requirement today is toDelhi Business Review, Vol. 14, No. 2 (July - December 2013)take into serious consideration the student placement, and in this process inculcate the requisiteskills and habits viz. original analytical thinking, communication skills, superior presentationskills, working in teams, and information technology. This will help in aligning the students withthe industry. Therefore, H.E. Institutions should make their curriculum more practical and industryoriented instead of traditional methods being followed. Singh and Sharma (2008) have emphasizedthe emerging role the industry could play in the Indian context, in ushering collaboration with theeducation sector; they recommend that industry could play a vital role in increasing the growthprospects of educational institutions. They also emphasized the role of government, industryassociations, R&D institutions, and universities in order to strengthen the interface betweenindustry – R&D – academia.

Quality of Learning and Teaching

The way out to compete with smart people across the globe is to ensure smart learning and qualityteaching. If the H.E. institutions co-ordinate with the industry and other H.E. institutions, then itcan foster towards improved and required set of skills, learning, and teaching (Tiropanis et al.,2009). Therefore, the beneficiaries will be the students who will have more access and informationabout the latest developments across the industry and the teachers will be acquainted with thevalid facets of their subjects (Hirsch and Weber, 1999; Hanna, 2003). Singh and Sahi (2012) validatethe significant relationship between active experimentation learning style and preference for facilitatorinstruction approach, which could help the teachers to improve the quality of learning and teaching.Quality of ResearchThe dire need for today's H.E. institutions is to strengthen their research capacity. In order toachieve this challenge H.E. Institutions require to initiate multiple disciplines (centres) under oneroof. This would help integrating varied areas of expertise and building relationships among differentteams

along with industry experts to establish their research capacity. It has also been acknowledgedthat pruning and nurturing of high quality research is one of the most important tasks carved andfor the H.E. institutions (Hirsch and Weber, 1999; Hanna, 2003).

Compete and Collaborating Globally in Research and Talent

There is a global competition for talent in top students, researchers, & lecturers. Institutions needto compete at a world-class level in teaching & research. H.E. institutions should set a bar forhighest standard of research; this would lead to international recognition which could furtherbring in higher quality and higher standard of research (Hirsch and Weber, 1999).

Adopting Emerging Technology

A varied range of tools which aid H.E. are available these days, thanks to the revolutionary development of information technology (Fox, 1998; Hanna, 2003). The recent technological aids forH.E., offer mobility and access from anywhere and at anytime (Fox, 1998). Technologies like internetand its associated technologies can increase the capacity of an educator more quickly, easily andmore scalable to help students make connections to content, context, and community – resulting inmore powerful learning experience (West, 1999). Gupta, Singh, Malhotra, and Rastogi (2003)advocated the role of information Technology (IT) in teaching and education system, they furtherassert that the IT industry could play a direct role in IT education in particular and education ingeneral. Developing direct linkages with IT industry would strengthen the quality education onone hand and also meet the needs of the IT industry on the other (Gupta et al., 2003).

Assessment

Assessment is a key process in Higher Education. According to Macdonald and Carroll (2006), theH.E. institutions in order to tackle the irregularities in assessment should create effective mechanisms. Assessment should be made student friendly, so that a student never suffers in the pretext of the errors committed by the evaluator or the assimilator.New Generation of Staff

The best-organized institution is worth nothing, if it does not have a qualified teaching staff; unqualifiedstaffs means poor teaching and unimaginative research (Hirsch and Weber, 1999). As per Bridges (2000), to teach the curriculum including employability skills successfully, universities need todevelop the new capacities among their traditional teaching staff and new approaches to theirteaching. H.E. institutions will need to develop faculty and staff dedicated to engaging a diversityof learners with more complex learning needs.

Integration of Knowledge Capital and Cross-Curricular Initiatives

To support better learning and teaching activities, integration of H.E. knowledge capital like researchoutput, learning and teaching materials, etc., is essential (Tiropanis et al., 2009). Also cross-curricularactivity in learning and teaching is essential to improve the standard of the H.E. institutions.According to Tiropaniset. al., (2009), cross-curricular activities in emerging areas by matchingteachers to new programme and module definitely enhance the quality of learning and teaching inH.E. Institutions. Hence, it becomes one of the most important targets of today's demanding anddiverse H.E. (Bridges, 2000).

Higher Education Governance and Management

Higher education institutions' governing bodies are responsible for ensuring the effectivemanagement of the institution and for planning its future development. They are ultimatelyresponsible for all the affairs of the institutions. Generally, they are responsible for approving institutional mission and the strategic plan, financial solvency, resourcing policy, employment andHuman Resource (HR) policy and strategy, estates policy, senior appointments and remuneration,audit, legal compliance, determining educational character and mission, and so on. They are facingchallenges to effectively manage the institutions hence become one of the crucial challenges in H.E.(Hirsch and Weber, 1999). To cope with this challenge, institutions need better leadership who willbe able to provide academic freedom to enable them to make collective decisions with the newrequirements that is the necessity to make and implement important and often unpopular decisionsin a timely manner (Hirsch and Weber, 1999; Hanna, 2003).

CONCLUSION

Although there have been challenges to higher education in the past, these most recent calls for reform may provoke a fundamental change in higher education. This change may not occur as a direct response to

calls for greater transparency and accountability, but rather because of the opportunity to reflect on the purpose of higher education, the role of colleges and universities in the new millennium, and emerging scientific research on how people learn. These disparate literatures have not been tied together in a way that would examine the impact of fundamental change from the policy level to the institutional level and to the everyday lives of college and university administrators, faculty and students. Now 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 higher educated people who are skilled and who can drive our economy forward. When India can provide skilled people to the outside world then we can transfer our country from a developing nation to a developed nation very easily and quickly.

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