



HIGHER EDUCATION AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN INDIA- OPPORTUNITIES, CHANGES AND CHALLENGES

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ABSTRACT

Emerging India owes its newfound growth to tertiary sector in general and tertiary education in particular. India, known as the ancient seat of learning has grown into a knowledge economy. In the present era of knowledge driven economy the role of higher education and women empowerment becomes instrumental in the overall socio economic development of any region or country. Changes in the form and functions of education- individually and institutionally need to be studied also in context of inclusive growth taking into account two key variables via finance ad growth.

Disparities in terms of regions, resources and outcomes are still visible despite internationalisation of higher education and formalisation of quality. The situation is not conducive for enhancing employability of graduates and productivity of labour. We therefore, call for managed expansion of higher education and women empowerment careful integration with manpower planning. This paper discusses opportunities, changes and challenges related to financing, equity of conditions at access into and during the course of studies, and career choice and advancement.

KEYWORDS: *Higher Education, Quality, Women Empowerment*

INTRODUCTION

India's service (tertiary) sector has been growing very fast since the 1990's, owing to liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation. One importance subsector that is contributing to the trend is education. Education plays predominant role in changing the Socio- economic state of the people of society. Higher Education is a powerful tool to build modern value-based knowledge based, culture-based, and rights-based peaceful society which can lead the country towards becoming super power in the world. It is also considered one of the important and strong tools for the development of any country. While primary education is necessary for creating base, higher education is extremely important for providing cutting-edge technologies, ever sharp skills and quality in work and asset creation. Higher education institutions contribute to the growth of a nation by providing specialised knowledge and skilled manpower (Singh 2012).

Higher education can be broadly summarised as education beyond the school level and it starts after the higher education imparts in-depth knowledge and understanding so as to advance the students to new frontiers of knowledge in different walks of life. It broadens the intellectual power of the individual within a narrow specialization, but also gives him

a wider perspective of the world around. According to Barnett (1992) there are four predominant concepts of higher education: Firstly higher education as the production of qualified human resources, secondly, higher education is the efficient management of teaching, provision, fourthly higher education as a matter of extending life chances all these concepts are integrated and give an overall picture of what higher is in the higher education. (Benjamin 2011)

HIGHER EDUCATION: SIGNIFICANCE AND SCENARIO

In the present era of knowledge driven economy the role of higher education becomes instrumental in the overall socio-economic development of any region a country. In the fast pace of globalisation the country has to develop its higher education system to respond to the challenges arising out of the rapid changing environmental factory including global competition to eater to the development needs competitively and strategically. This seems to be herculean taste which requires constant and sincere efforts on part of the every stake holder of the system. Deposit the 150 years of experience with the modern system of Higher education we are yet to travel miles in order convert it the era of globalisation and privatisation of the Higher education we need to develop

into the intricacies of the environment dynamism and to analyse its impact on the system of Higher education in the country (Panda,2011)

Next to China and U.S.A, India has the third largest higher education systems in the world in terms of size and diversity. In India, the university level instituting widely differ in terms of their structure and coverage (Varmudy, 2012)

Table - 1 Growth of Higher Education in India

Year	Colleges	Universities	Enrolment(mn)
1950-51	578	28	0.2
1960-61	1819	45	0.6
1970-71	3277	93	2.0
1980-81	4577	123	2.8
1990-91	6627	184	4.4
2001-02	11146	272	8.8
2002-03	15343	300	9.3
2004-05	17662	342	10.5
2005-06	18000	356	11.0
2006-07	20677	376	11.8
2007-08	22064	408	12.7
2008-09	25951	467	13.6
2009-10	25951	500	16.0
2010-11	32974	621	27.5
2011-12	34908	642	28.56
2012-13	35525	667	30.2
2013-14	36634	723	32.3
2014-15	38498	760	34.2
2015-16	39071	799	34.6
2016-17	40026	864	35.7
2017-18	39050	903	36.6
2018-19	40923	935	-

Source: UGC Annual reports and other publications quoted in University News, April 30 – May 6,2007, University News, March 22-08-2010 and the Hitavada/ Nagpur Daily August3,2010.

In 2010 the number of university has risen to 500 colleges 24,000 students 16 million and about 5,00,000 teachers. As per India, today statistics there are 504 universities and 25,951 colleges including 2,565 women colleges in India. During 2009-2010 around 136.42 lakhs students got enrolled. 56.49 lakhs is the women students in the country. Uttar Pradesh tops highest number of women students joined in the state. These are 5.89 lakhs regular facility members among them 0.90 lakhs are in University and remaining 4.99 lakhs in college.

The percentage of youth in the age group of 18-24 years of these who are able to get access to higher education is only nine percent in 2001. Most developed country have enrolment ratio of over 50 percent while country such as Thailand 37% and Malaysia 27% have significant Higher ration. A NUEPA (New Delhi) study points out that 20% Gross Enrolment Ratio is the minimum threshold level required to contribute to rapid and sustainable economic progress, while the eleventh plan targets India as knowledge hub(Benjamin,2011). In 2018 the number of Universities has risen to 903 colleges, 36 million students are enrolled. During 2018-19 around 40923 colleges and 935 universities are established in India.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Higher education is very important sector for the growth and development of human resources which can be responsible for social, economic and scientific development of country. The university education commission (1948-49).

Under the chairmanship of Dr. S. Radha Krishna, garee the foundations of the Education Commission(1964-66) under the chairmanship of DR. D.S. Kothari symbolized relationship between education and National development of the contemporary society,. Considered as a knowledge society

and the UN agencies including the world bank and UNESCO have declared that the economy are built not only through physical capital, but on foundation of information, learning and adoption, the basic parameters of Higher education on higher education for the 21st century at the world conference on Higher education held in Paris during 9-10 October 1998(Jeelani 2012)

The declaration recognized that every where higher education is faced with great challenges and difficulties related to financing, equity of conditions at access into and during the course of studies, improved staff development, skill based training, enhancement and preservation of quality in teaching research and services relevance of programmers employability of graduates and equitable, access to the benefit of international co-operation. At the same time higher education is also provided with new opportunity in terms of increase in the accessibility of information and knowledge due to innovations in technology like ICT(Chalam,2012).

Inclusion of ICTs in Higher Education

Information and Communication Technologies(ICTs) with include radio and televisions, as well as newer digital technologies such as computers and the internet have been touted as potentially powerful enabling tools for educational change and reform. When used appropriately, different ICTs are said to help expand access to education strengthen the relevance of education to the increasingly digital workplace, and raise educational quality by, among others, helping make teaching and learning into an engaging, active process connected to real life.

Use of ICT in education develops higher order skills such as collaborating across time and place and solving complex real world problems. It imposes the perception and

understanding of the world of the students, these, ICT can be used to prepare the workfare for the information society and the new global economy. ICTs are a potentially powerful tool for extending educational opportunity, both formal and non-formal to previously underserved constituencies and rural populations groups traditionally excluded from education due to cultural and social reasons such as ethnic minorities, girly and women, persons with disabilities and the elderly, as well as others who for reason of cost or because of time constraints are unable to enrol on campus.

Research has shown that the appropriate use of ICTs can easily the paradicymatic shift in both content and pedagogy that is at the heart of education reform in the 21st century. If deigned and implemental property, ICT-supported education can promote the acquisition of the knowledge and skills that will empower students for life-long learning, when used appropriately, ICTs especially computers and internet technologies enable new ways of teaching and learning rather than simply allow before in a better way(Jain,2012).

Enhancing Access and Expansion in Higher Education

India can play a major role in balancing the fast growing global demographic and emerge as a knowledge creating country as well as knowledge provider. Therefore, during the 12th Five years plan, the following challenges kept under for enhancing access and expansion in higher education.

- ❖ A mission for RajhriyaUchchShikshaAbhiyan
- ❖ Upgrading Autonomous Colleges
- ❖ Upgrading of colleges Accredited at “A” grade by the NAAC.
- ❖ Increasing the Intake capacity of the existing university and colleges.
- ❖ Evening university and Evening colleges.
- ❖ Introducing of Under- graduate programs in the Universities.
- ❖ All colleges under 12(B) states from UGC to receive the central Assistance.
- ❖ Salary of the faculty of all state university.
- ❖ Conversion of self financing courses.
- ❖ Establishments of New 800 constituent colleges.
- ❖ Women’s university(Jeelani2012).

Enhancing quality and Excellence in Higher Education

Low quality of education after development in the country. At a time when the country is liberalizing economy and entering the global market, we need to stress quality in higher education. The oxford American Dictionary defines quality as a “ Degree or level of excellence” the official definition of quality by the American National Standards Institute(AMSI) and the American Society for Quality Control(ASQC) is the totality of features and characteristics of a product or services that been on its ability to satisfy given needs. “ In the context of education quality can be defined in terms of satisfaction level of state holders. Students, parents, government and the society at large by developing appropriate knowledge and skills. Component and honest teachers, need based curriculum, adequate Infrastructures, and Ideal student-teacher ratio are some of the parameters of quality education.

Unlike product quality, quality in education is an elusive attribute, an attribute of values which are not easily quantifiable. The product of quality should always be more than the sum of its components. What is more essential is to

known as meaning of quality education in right perspective. Since quality needs intensive capital investment, talent and hard work, therefore there is no short cut to quality. It has been rightly said “quality is not a chance, but a choice; quality is not an accident, but a design, quality is not a destination, but a continuous journey”.

A quality education holds the key to achieving the vowed ambitions and dreams of our educational pioneers like Gandhiji, Tagore and Sri AurobindoGhosh. According to Swami Vivekananda “Education is the manifestation of the perfection already in man” they said that quality remains with the learners education in Indian is considered to be third largest system in the world. On the quality front, there are three academic bodies that evaluate institutional quality through the accreditation process in the Indian Higher education section(Prasad Gautham 2012).

Bench marking for quality enhancement

An increasingly popular approach for establishing performance standards, process, measurements and objectives is benchmarking. A bench mark is a standard of performance. Benchmarking helps organizations to identify standards of performance and adopt them successfully which assists them to target problem areas, set levels of performance, and identify solution to improve result. Best practices adding commendable value to an institute and its stake holders and considered as the standards of quality. NAAC has been using benchmarking as quality enhancement techniques in the form of criterion statement to assess the level of performance in higher education (Kumar 2008).

Criteria for assessment procedure

The NAAC has identified seven criteria to serve as the basis for its assessment procedure:

1. Curriculum Aspects
2. Teaching – learning and education
3. Research, consultancy and extension
4. Infrastructure and learning resource
5. Student support and learning resource
6. Student support and progression
7. Governance and leadership
8. Innovative practices.

The NAAC suggests to constitute a body which will maintain the quality of the institution. Internal quality assurance all (IQAC). The NAAC henceforth, takes up many pre and past-accreditation activity to facilitate quality promotion and sustenance among all institution learning is general and accredited institutions in particular by sponsoring seminars and workshops on quality enhancement. Today accreditation and Re-accreditation of every institution is mandatory. It means every institution must establish IQAC. The teachers will also have to take a project involve themselves in research activity(Benjamin,2011).

Concern for quality physical education in India University

Modern day University has accepted the challenges of the contemporary society to develop the total capacity of students. The fundamental aim of education process is “Around development of the child” Along with the academic focus, colleges need to focus on “ Physical development of children also”. “ A sound mind in a sound body” is an accepted principle and therefore an important component for the growth and development of student. India has witnessed a rapid and tremendous expansion of education at all levels.

The preamble to the National Sports Policy (2001) states “ Activity relating to sports and physical education are essential components of human resources development, holding to promote good health and spirit of friendly competition, which in turn has positive impact on overall development of personality of the youth. Excellence in sports enhance the sense of achievements, national pride and patriotism. Sports also provide beneficial reservation; improve productivity and bolster social harmony and discipline.

The UNESCO International charter of physical education and sports (1980) proclaims that the services of physical education and sports are very essential for human progress and sports as a fundamental right of all. In India several efforts have been made to strengthen the quality of physical education in the University(Thumar Patel 2008).

POLICIES SUGGESTED FOR QUALITY EDUCATION

The following points provide a policy frame work for improving to quality of higher education to global standards:

- Institutions improve on continuous basis because of knowledge and adopting changing styles in learning.
- Adopt new quality control techniques for the all round development of students.
- Replace internal inspection by a continuous internal mechanism of quality assurance.
- Constantly improve instruction, student, student assessment and management to improve quality and maintain cost effectiveness.
- Initiate Institution based on the job training for teaching and non-teaching staff(Latha 2012).

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT THROUGH EDUCATION

“Empowering women is a prerequisite for creating a good nation, when women are empowered society with stability is agreed. Empowerment of women is essential as their value systems lead to the development of a good family, good society and ultimately good nation”.(Abdul Kalam, 2015)

Generally empowerment is considered as development of skills to make a person more confident, self-reliant and to develop ability to take self-decisions. Empowerment is a process of strengthening enhancing the authority autonomy by giving information, delegation of responsibility and offering share in decision making so that the performance in different sectors of life improves. Empowerment makes an individual an able organisation and a good employee in a work setting.

Empowerment refers to enabling people to take charge of their lives. For women empowerment emphasizes the importance of increasing their power and taking control over decisions and issues that shape their lives. Nobel Prize winner Prof. Amartya Sen emphasized during his recent trip empowered, issues like health, literacy and population will remain unsolved problems of the developing countries is the part of the sun continent. Empowerment of women of attempted to address two important issues: Reducing gender equality and building equality in nation’s development.

EDUCATION A MEANS TO WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Education liberates from the eletecy of inequalities and access to mobility, share in decision making and contribution to national development. Educational enhances women’s economic productivity in the form and non-form sectors. In a

study of the productivity of men and women farmers in sub-saharan Africa, the gain in productivity from education was found to be higher for women than men. Studies on the determinants of wage earnings have found the marginal effect of education to be about as large for women as far men once labour force participation, work experience and sector of employment have been taken into account. But discriminatory employment practices against women have limited their work opportunities and have reduced the earnings they can expect to gain from education. Entry barriers against women explicit or implicit in certain occupations serve as obstacles to education. Examples are restrictions against the hiring of married women in wage- paying jobs in the manufacturing or services sectors .(Hassen,2005)

Empowerment through education is ideally seen as a continuous holistic process with cognitive psychological economic and political dimensions in order to achieve emancipation given the complexity of political, social at and international inter relation one has to systematically think about the strategies and concentrate proposals for future action if one hopes to achieve such a goal.

Women’s education is extremely intrinsically as it is their human right and required for the flourishing of many of their capacity. The government announced that literacy would be its key program instrument for emancipation and empowerment of women. Efforts of the government to give impacts to school education,health,nutrition and skill development and women empowerment on general are impeded by continuance of female illiteracy.

Government expects increase in female literacy to become a force multiples for all other social development programs. However this is only the instrumental value of female literacy. Its intrinsic value is in emancipating to Indian women through the creation of critical consciousness to take change of her environment where she faces multiple deprivations and disabilities on the basis of class ,caste and gender.(Manish,2011)

Women’s empowerment process which does not aim to deliver services. But seeks to bring about changes in perfectives about themselves and that of society, with regard to traditional roles, women through education will be able to liberate themselves from their own psychological and social constraints. It enables them to have self respect and have better self image frees them from a sense of dependency and powerlessness by educating women. They become emotionally , socially and economically empowered (Smriti,2009)

CONCLUSION

Growing youth aspirations and massive expansion of schooling in creating a huge demand for higher education. A holistic and balanced expansion approach is needed to encourage the society. More efforts should be on foe consolidating and improving the capacity and quality of existing institutions. New Institutions may be set up to bridge regional imbalance and disparity across disciplines and to address the economics/social and technological needs of the country.

Empowerment bestows on women the qualities of requires self-help, confidence, daring knowledge and skill. Higher education is particular equity a woman with many of the internal and external factory that help in leading a productive life and also to help the nation in its development. Employment plays a vital role in improving women’s status in a society education of women is of prime importance in any women empowerment programme.

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