

## Information on Global Challenges to Higher Education

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**Abstract** The scientific world is shrinking in the world community. Every new research in any field of science, technology and education in any part of world, is shared like a family. Henceforth the challenges to higher education are needed to be perceived in the global perspectives. The basic challenges to higher education can be categorized as following: Demand for greater levels of access, Improvement in the quality of higher education and Improvement in Equity. Higher education needs to shift from superficial bases of education to practical lands. If education cannot help a young man to encompass the true knowledge then righteousness of higher education is to be questioned. Final goal of education is the achievement of self. Thus education should be more flexible and linked to the employment sector. Independent institutions from universities have to be encouraged. Modular programmes, short term courses, choice based credit system, possibility of bringing mature learners in higher education. To combat global challenges to higher education we need more consistent and explicit linking of good teaching to salary adjustments, faculty appointments and very humanistic approach to democratic values.

**Keywords** *Globalization; Universalization of Resources; Digital Functional Knowledge of Computers; Higher Education; Education of Research Level; Qualitative Education*

### 1. Introduction

Globalization has terminated the distance of geography and has made the world a “global village.” Globally affirming India has the large higher education sector i.e. third largest in the world in students number, after China and United States. There are about 300 million students in the school age group. Higher education in India takes place in nearly 16000 institutes in India. According Selvam (2009) for 100 crore Indians, we have 345 Universities while Japan has 684 Universities for its 12.7 crore people. USA with 27.6 crore population has 2364 Universities. In UK and Germany there are 104 and 330 Universities whose populations are 5.58 and 8.2 crore respectively. If the strengths of India are to be considered, it has long academic tradition with profuse academic freedom, centrally sponsored and controlled higher education institutes, diverse curriculum and democratic ideals with a technology blooming but developing economy.

Despite all these strengths India is confronting various dire challenges like demand for creating high quality learning environment especially in science and technology, technology enabled education like virtual class rooms, smart schools and online learning; meeting the chore lines of democratic values of bridging the gap between those who need the information but lack the skills to get it from the skilled class. It is quite mentionable here that all developing nations are facing vulnerable challenges. These challenges to Higher education have rocked the world like anything. With the changing pace of time the focal point of higher education is not only exposed to basic or fundamental education but also to meet dares of socio, political and cultural aspects of higher education. The basic challenges to higher education can be categorized as following:

- a) Demand for greater levels of access;
- b) Improvement in the quality of higher education;
- c) Improvement in Equity.

## **2. Demand for Greater Level of Access of Higher Education**

### **2.1. Access to Rural and Marginalized Population**

In fact the greater part of the world is living in the villages and it finds the world highly globalised and knowledge-based. It is found that mainly the student population, which receives international higher education, is from developing or underdeveloped countries. As in the beginning of this paper it is mentioned that India is having meager resources of higher education to nourish such a good number of aspirants of higher education. Moreover the approach to the needy one is very shady. Information communication technology has reached only to the most sumptuous one. The extremity between the widely using ICT and less adept users of higher education is worrisome.

### **2.2. Digital Gaps**

Developing interactive multimedia learning material is not only an exceedingly interesting challenge but also very radical in nature. Daily some new innovation is added in the higher education by the ICT in CIA {computer assisted instruction} or virtual reality. To coop with currant researches and changes it is desired that the instant access should be available to everyone otherwise the digital gap is going to be unfathomed.

### **2.3. Digital Needs of Rural**

In fact the needs of the women in higher education are quite changing in the global era. The minimum literacy in the computer education will not serve the purpose. The education has become a trade now. About 44% of adult women in developing countries could read or write. They family Obligation and about 10 hours daily in productive activity impair education.

### **2.4. World Market and Delivery of Education to World Community**

Another greater challenge to higher education is to have competitive advantage. The economic, social and technological forces have influenced manufacturing processes, financial services, government policies and our teaching practices with learning behavior. Now the access to the world is of meeting the international standards of job and placement. In the global village every worker has to work as knowledge worker.

### **3. Improvement in the Quality of Higher Education**

#### **3.1. Academic Library**

It is found that very good libraries are available in very few higher education institutes. Enriched libraries exist within the campus of most advance institutes. Public access is certainly tough. Moreover qualitative automatisation, on line access and e-resources is seriously needed by the academic libraries.

#### **3.2. Qualitative Improvement in Curricular and Assessment Practices**

In the fast changing educational forum, it is found that obsolete standards of traditional educational system, co-curricular activities and rotten practices of assessment have suffocated the proper growth of higher education. The education has become only degree oriented rather than job oriented. Consequently the number of degree holders has increased and the number of eligible applicants is decreased. As the unemployability is linked with the drawbacks and pulls and pushes of changing higher education therefore an insight is seriously required.

#### **3.3. Revised and Reinvented Role for the Schools, Teachers and Educational Policies**

Another challenge to improve the quality of higher education is the need of analyzing the role of school, teacher and the student. The school has to play the role of center of ICT, Life skills and developer of democratic values. The teacher has to become a facilitator of latest knowledge with its suitable applications, transformer of the society with the help of technology and producer of knowledge workers and stringer of values. And student has to become a real knowledge worker and harbinger of true society.

#### **3.4. Exploration of Various Resources of Education**

Both financially and physically resources are quite meager to meet the demand of the hour. As in the case of India it commonly said that India is rich but Indians are poor. It implies that the proper usage of resources and exploration of them is widely required. To compete with the global changes we need to work on wide scopes of available resources.

#### **3.5. Qualitative Dealing of Core Issues of Curriculum Development**

Curriculum development has become the central issue of this century. The integration of information technology in education, development of human resources for cultural and ethical dimensions have become the core features of curriculum development.

#### **3.6. The Challenges of Accreditation**

To meet the international challenges of education a regulatory authority is acutely is required. Only radical different official accreditation can make a difference between a society of frustration and society of success. Selvam (2009) suggests that a finer, more sensitive, more professional, and more human official accreditation system are needed. This may lead to the creation of a new profession—the profession of certificatory.

#### **3.7. Qualitative Changes in 3 Ls i.e. Language, Law and Learning**

To focus on these 3 Ls it is highly felt that qualitative parameters are needed to be practically implemented in teaching learning process.

### 3.8. Degrading System of Universities and Higher Education Institutes

It is of great concern that we have only a few good institutes of higher education and they are quite insufficient for such huge population. As we have entered in the age of learning societies so we need a supporting system of changing and demanding knowledge for lifelong learner. More over globalization has made the education a commodity and the student a product and higher education institutes the factories of preparing and shaping for world standards.

### 3.9. Accountability in Teaching and Research Performance

The accountability of teachers to give their best and bring forth the best of the potential of their students' needs high impetus. Similarly the lack of research aptitude in the teachers has crumbled the heritage of education in India. Therefore this aspect of higher education demands real input.

## 4. Improvement in Equity

Equality and equity are two different concepts. Educational opportunities should be provided to every one equally. But at the same time the concept of equity has erupted as a massive challenge in front of higher education in the society. The just and impartial distribution of scholarships and fellowship to the able students from impoverished or disadvantaged region is the area to be focused upon. Following features of higher education need serious over view.

### 4.1. Inclusive Education

Education should be extended in such a manner that everyone either normal or differently abled is taught in the same class room. Disabled children should interact in the natural environment with society, neighbors and the normal people. Differently abled should be treated with positive attitude and their personalities should be shaped to make them creative citizens for the nation. If we cannot provide proper education to dumb, deaf or any type of differently abled students where does stand our inclusive education. Students and teachers and even policy makers are in fix how to implement inclusive education in higher education.

### 4.2. Woman Education

Gender inequity can be seen not only in the developing countries; rather in the whole world the glimpses of disparity are clear. Globally and according to recent statistics enrolment ratios in primary schools were 74 % and for girls against 837 for boys. This imbalance is more atrocious as we move into the post-primary sector where the difference between girls and boys or men and women was between 15 and 55 percent depending on the location. At the end of the last century we find:

- 1) 44 percent of adult women in developing countries could not read or write.
- 2) 60% of the world's illiterate are women.
- 3) In a review of 47 countries, women aged 25 years and older and who went to school received less than two years of schooling while men as much as twice.
- 4) Generally women receive about half schooling than men.

In short gender disparity is found in economic, social, political and educational discrimination.

### 4.3. Teacher Education

In this global era the need of teacher education is widely recognized. Out dated methods of teaching, absence of content-courses, unrealistic courses, absence of professional attitude and isolation of teacher education institutes etc. are a few problems of teacher education.

#### 4.4. Human Rights Education

While providing equity to the world, higher education has to inculcate human rights in itself. The race of human beings needs acknowledgement in itself. The sanctity of human rights is as important as the right of living is.

#### 4.5. Virtual Education

Virtual class room which provides an attendee a live access to multi media should be in the approach to every desiring one.

Conclusively it can be said the impediments in front of higher education claim immediate dealing. Following suggestions are proposed.

#### 5. Suggestions

Basically higher education needs a shift in the paradigm. The following pillars could give better perspective to higher education:

Four Pillars of Higher Education.

- a) Learning to know (LTK)
- b) Learning to do (LTD)
- c) Learning to live together (LTLT)
- d) Learning to be (LTB)

Higher education needs to shift from superficial bases of education to practical lands. If education cannot help a young man to encompass the true knowledge then righteousness of higher education is to be questioned. Final goal of education is the achievement of self. Thus education should be more flexible and linked to the employment sector. Independent institutions from universities have to be encouraged. Modular programmes, short term courses, choice based credit system, possibility of bringing mature learners in higher education.

Another solution to the degrading standards of higher education particularly universities is to carve overprotection and sponsorship of them. The best institutes of higher education have become best because they have utilized their resources in the best way.

Similarly the curriculum needs a shift from content to learning pedestal. The customization of content should be learning outcomes and the learning preferences of student. Curriculum planners need to take care of every participant of higher education.

Role of teacher has become of mentor, facilitator and a resource personal of E-Learning. The mode of delivery of higher education should be technological. The death of distance will reduce the cost and save sufficient time for better learning and earning

Woman education should be free from gender biases. Their appointments should be non-discriminatory and promotional practices should be air and square. Similarly their education and training should include leadership, communication skills, managerial skills, visioning capacities and decision making skills.

Social cohesion should be maintained by higher education institutes through exhibiting professional ethics. If an institute rewards academic performance honestly and fairly and its faculty adheres to codes of conduct then it will have an exclusive impact on a nation's social cohesion.

For financial management it can be universally said that dilemma pertains to both public and private institutes. The funds could be raised from traditional resources like fee and rent etc. Some diversify new resources of revenue like copyrights on inventions or investing in equity markets can be explored.

Research in higher education is a very weak link. No exclusive findings are up to now report in higher education. Consequently very poor phase of collaborations is going on. Industry is waiting for quality products and patents eagerly.

World class universities should have world class professors and students and a culture to sustain and stimulate them.

The prerogatives of higher education should be:

- To build up the personals who can lead economical, social and political transformation.
- To form the personalities who can advertise and find out the resources which can make democracy successful?
- To form intellectual personalities so that social transformation may get proper help.
- To accept National/cultural heritage.
- To develop inventions and discoveries to form healthy mind and body.

## 6. Conclusion

In nut shell, keeping in view the fast pace of advanced countries towards mass higher education; we need to do commendable job in university research. More universities should be funded. There must be encouragement to establish private universities with adequate safeguards to ensure equality and healthy management. To combat global challenges to higher education we need more consistent and explicit linking of good teaching to salary adjustments, faculty appointments and very humanistic approach to democratic values. Finally we want a learning society in the coherence of human values so that this world could be better place to live in.

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