

## **Global Positioning of Higher Education**

**Dr. Archana Tomar**

**Ms. Hemlatta Rajput**

### **Abstract**

Today, India is in a position where it can reap the demographic dividend with its young population characteristics. The major focus should be on developing the youth with necessary skill set to be able to reap the benefits of demographic dividend. The demographics suggests many countries will need a lot of workforce to run their organizations and institutions. In such a situation how should India move in the areas of training its youth through polytechnics, higher education institutions and prepare curriculum is a matter of concern. Critically we will have to examine how we prepare our youth to take over from this position. What should be the curriculum? Which areas will have to be emphasized? How we can train them in proper skill sets? How we can develop in them the confidence to work in the multicultural settings are some of the concerns that the authors would like to present in this paper.

### **Background:**

Swine flu claimed the lives of 40 more people in the country as the toll from the disease reached 1,115 while the total number of cases breached the 20,000 mark.

The Health Ministry said that 1,115 persons have succumbed to the H1N1 virus while the number of those affected by it stands at 20,795 on March 1.

With heavy rainfall lashing Delhi and other parts of the north, health officials said it was difficult to ascertain whether the rains will have any effect on the incidence of swine flu.

However, the officials said that, during monsoon, the virus increases and it was possible that whatever decline was being seen over the last few days in the intensity of the disease may not continue. They said that there will be no decrease in the virus due to the rains and added that high temperatures are a deterrent for the virus.

Other problems that the world is facing, poverty, hunger, disease and disorder in social fabric and general wellness be it physical or mental.

At the turn of the century, world leaders came together at the United Nations and agreed on a bold vision for the future through the Millennium Declaration. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were a pledge to uphold the principles of human dignity, equality and equity, and free the world from extreme poverty. The MDGs, with eight goals and a set of measurable time-bound targets, established a blueprint for tackling the most pressing development challenges of our time.

### **Introduction:**

Today, India is in a position where it can reap the demographic dividend with its young population characteristics. The major focus should be on developing the youth with necessary skill set to be able to reap the benefits of demographic dividend. The demographics suggests many countries will need a lot of workforce to run their organizations and institutions. In such a situation how should India move in the areas of training its youth through polytechnics, higher education institutions and prepare curriculum is a matter of concern. Critically we will have to examine how we prepare our youth to take over from this position. What is the demographic dividend that we have to offer to the world? What should be the curriculum? Which areas will have to be emphasized? How we can train them in proper skill sets? How we can develop in them the confidence to work in the multicultural settings are some of the concerns that the authors would like to present in this paper.

### **Objective of Higher Education:**

What was the purpose of higher education in our own context when India became free from colonial reigns?

According to University Education Commission -1948-49 have made a number of significant recommendations on various aspects of higher education.

#### **(1) Wisdom and knowledge:**

Since education is both a training of minds and training of souls, it should give both knowledge and wisdom. No amount of factual information would take ordinarily into educated men unless something is awakened in them. Therefore, there should be inculcation of wisdom and knowledge.

#### **(2) Aims of the social order:**

Our education system must find its guiding principle in the aims of the social order for which it prepares. Unless we preserve the value of democracy, justice, liberty, equality and fraternity, we cannot Preserve our freedom.

### **(3) Love for higher values of life:**

The greatness of a country does not depend on the extent of its territory, the length of its communication or the amount of its wealth, but on the love for higher values of life. We must develop thought for the poor and sufferings, regards and respect for women, faith in brotherhood regardless of race, colour, religion etc.

### **(4) Training for leadership:**

One of the important aims of higher education is the training for leadership in the profession and public life. It is the function of universities to train men and women for wise leadership.

Two objectives are measureable and two are qualitative in nature that is development of soul and higher values of life. Have we responded to these objectives, they are important especially in the light of googleization of content.

### **According to The Indian Education Commission (1964-66) following recommendations were made:**

(1) To seek and cultivate new knowledge, to engage vigorously and fearlessly in the spirit of truth and to interpret old knowledge and beliefs in the light of new needs and discoveries.

(2) To provide the right kind of leadership in all walks of life, to identify gifted youth and help them develop their potential to the full by cultivating physical fitness, right interests, attitudes and moral and intellectual values.

(3) To provide society with competent men and women train in agriculture, arts, medicine, science and technology and various other professions, who will also be cultivated citizen individuals imbued with a sense of social justice.

(4) To strive to promote equality and social justice and to reduce social and cultural differences through diffusion of knowledge.

(5) To foster in the teachers and students and through them in society generally the attitudes and values needed for developing the good life.

It kept the focus on the preamble but development of truth, beauty and goodness and universal brotherhood was not emphasized. Objectives became more instrumental in nature.

### **The National Policy on Education-1986 viewed higher education as follows:**

“Higher education provides people with an opportunity to reflect on the critical, social, economic, cultural, moral and spiritual issues facing humanity. It contributes to national development through dissemination of specialized knowledge and skill. Being at the apex of the educational pyramid, it has also a key role in producing teachers for the education system.”NPE 1986 more comprehensively describes the roles and responsibilities as well as the global

demands on higher education to address issues facing humanity. With India's position today as it is ready to reap the demographic dividend described below, global positioning of higher education is even more important.

### **The Demographic Dividend:**

According to the National Commission on Population, it is expected that the age profile of population of India will experience changes in the coming years. By 2016, approximately 50 per cent of the total population will be in the age group of 15–25 years. It is projected that a vast population would enter the working age group in the next 15 years, leading to increase in productive activities and also savings rate as witnessed in Japan in the 1950s and in China in the 1980s. In other words, there would be a tremendous rise in the number of employable work force in the job market which would demand commensurate investment in education. In the literature, Demographic Dividend refers to population “lump” in the working age group of 15–60 which can be described as a major advantage for pushing the economic growth. It suggests that the major challenge before India is how this advantageous demographic profile can be harnessed to reflect in the macro- economic parameters of the country.

India will be one of the youngest nations by 2020 and this changing demographic condition, while providing great opportunities, could pose some challenges too. The comparative figures for China and the U.S. are 37 years, while it is 45 for West Europe and 48 Japan. The average Indian will be only 29 years old in 2020. The global demographic profile in future would therefore, lead to shortage of productive workforce globally but India will experience a surplus. We need to realize that this advantage for us will not be automatically transformed into higher economic growth. Strategic interventions and foresight in terms of encouraging investments in education and skills development by policy makers are needed to reap maximum benefits of demographic dividend.

### **Problems faced by the world:**

The world today is facing many problems, and also it is said that same thinking that created these problems is not sufficient in solving them. Therefore, it is inevitable that we will have to change the ways of solving the problem in different manner. We wish that the higher education takes over the charge of solving the challenges that the world is facing today. Have we entered narrow super specialization without holistically looking at the issues at hand. Are we looking at the higher education as an economic or bread butter winning course/ activity? Or as a more responsible and integrated that can take charge of global problems and issues. We will try to look at the area of higher education.

### **+ 2 Level Of Higher Education:**

One of the area of higher education is vocationalization of higher education. Second aspect is rationalization of higher education. After 10 years of general studies the students can opt for polytechnic education. Polytechnic colleges will have to work in the skills clusters related to the regions and classify them and provide skills set. There is little capacity in vocational education in

India and even that is under-utilized. World Bank Report suggests that the enrolment figure is less than three per cent of the students attending Grades 11-12. This implies that between 350,000 to 400,000 students are enrolled in vocational education, which works out to less than three per cent of the 14 million students or more in Grades 11 and 12, implying that less than one per cent of students who had entered Grade 1 over the last decade or so would have eventually participated in vocational education. For global positioning of the vocational education / polytechnic education, polytechnics could work out their curriculum keeping in mind the manpower planning and needs of particular industries and countries and prepare people for the needed type of tasks and skills. Looking at the international needs curriculum may focus on academic, linguistic and technical skill set. Projections of the needs of probable employers will have to be published in newspapers, social networking sites, etc., School teachers will also have to be reoriented on the need and vision of skilled manpower and its need in India and abroad. International experience suggests that what employers mostly want are young workers with strong basic academic skills and not just vocational skills. The present system does not emphasize general academic skills. The relative wages of workers with secondary education are increasing. All polytechnic colleges cannot and should not have similar curriculum, rather they should divide the curriculum in such a way that they focus on production of skilled and employable workforce who can contribute in the development of the nation in particular and world at large.

The National Skill Development Policy 2009 has proposed the following features for the framework:-

- a) Competency based qualifications and certification on the basis of nationally agreed standards and criteria;
- b) Certification for learning achievement and qualification;
- c) A range of national qualification levels – based on criteria with respect to responsibility, complexity of activities, and transferability of competencies;
- d) The avoidance of duplication and overlapping of qualifications while assuring the inclusion of all training needs;
- e) Modular character where achievement can be made in small steps and accumulated for gaining recognizable qualification;
- f) Quality Assurance regime that would promote the portability of skills and labour market mobility;
- g) Lifelong learning through an improved skill recognition system; recognition of prior learning whether in formal, non-formal or informal arrangements;
- h) Open and flexible system which will permit competent individuals to accumulate their knowledge and skill through testing & certification into higher diploma and degree;

- i) Different learning pathways – academic and vocational – that integrate formal and non-formal learning, notably learning in the workplace, and that offer vertical mobility from vocational to academic learning;
- j) Guidance for individuals in their choice of training and career planning;
- k) Comparability of general educational and vocational qualifications at appropriate levels;
- l) Nationally agreed framework of affiliation and accreditation of institutions;
- m) Multiple certification agencies/institutions will be encouraged within NVQF.

Vocational training colleges will have to work for Life long learning, Skill portability, mobile learning, accumulation of credits and Market portability and continuous up gradation of skills.

### **University level higher education:**

Higher education is focused more on the traditional and compartmental courses and subjects. Need of the time is to work on trans- disciplinary, interdisciplinary course components. There are various models functioning central universities, State universities, deemed to be universities, institutions of excellence, institutions of national importance etc .

#### **PPP model**

The Government is making efforts to improve the education system in terms of various parameters like GER, quality, investments, infrastructure, etc. But we need to recognize the constraints for the Government to make a big turnaround with huge investments in education. Private sector has started playing a distinctive role in improving the education system in India. In this context, it is useful to explore the possibility of public private partnership (PPP) model in education. This is not only going to reduce the burden of the Government in incurring high cost of providing basic infrastructure facilities but also lead to construction of state of the art buildings, labs, libraries, hostels etc. Besides, the collaborative efforts between universities/colleges and corporate sectors would help in organizing joint research and development, students getting exposure to industrial activities in terms of internships, corporate training during vacations and issuing of certificates by corporate sectors for attending internship/training etc. and, thus, facilitating in image building and branding of institutions and making the students more job-worthy.

In terms of teaching, as well as producing job-ready skilled graduates by the millions, India's universities must also ensure that they are nurturing the next generation of free-thinking, global leaders prepared for an uncertain future in a world-class teaching and learning environment.

This means developing global citizens. It means attracting more international students into India to create a rich, multi-cultural study environment. It means embracing new global partnerships,

and harnessing technology, to offer Indian students access the best teaching from all over the world.

The emergence of the new global environment has dramatically reshaped the country's higher education system which has created tremendous opportunities for internationalisation, especially transnational or cross-border education. The dramatic expansion in the number of students going abroad and a significant rise in the number of partnerships with foreign institutions is an example of this growth. Apart from this, inward mobility of international students to Indian institutions has also been increasing in recent years with the majority of the foreign students coming to India from Asian and African countries.

The main attractions of private for-profit institutions in India with foreign tie-ups are: a foreign degree, lower tuition and fees compared to institutions abroad, opportunities to gain international experience by spending a semester in the partnering institution, professional development, academic standards equivalent to those in the partner country, access to extensive online resources, direct admission to the foreign institution's courses after the completion of an undergraduate course in India, internationally recognized degree, international placement assistance, etc. However, discussions about the goals, content, and quality of the programmes offered by these institutions have not been given priority so far leaving open the question of whether students coming out of these institutions can broaden their skills and horizons simply by following an adopted curricula?

The dramatic expansion in numbers of students going abroad and a significant rise in the number of partnerships with foreign institutions is not the result of a government policy. On the contrary, this change can be viewed as an essential aspect of domestic political and societal changes. However, the higher education structure of the country is so stratified that only a small percentage of the relevant age population benefits from current internationalization activities. This situation sustains existing social inequality in the country and therefore, government intervention is needed to provide various forms of assistance to the needy students in order to ensure equitable access to international opportunities.

The Ministry has unveiled an ambitious Rs 1 lakh crore Central funding scheme to link academic, administrative and financial reforms of higher education within States and UTs as part of the Centre's Rashtriya Uchattar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA).

RUSA is a flagship scheme aimed at providing strategic funding to States' higher and technical institutions. It will lead to setting up and upgrade of colleges and universities, facilitating higher education for more students. Other institutions like IITs and NITs are also granted permission to autonomously award degrees.

According to Albatch (2010), there are four fundamental and interrelated forces operating in the domain of academics world over - massification of higher education, increasing dependency on knowledge and development of research universities, and information technology. These very forces, among other things, that conditions and regulates the overall changes that are being observed today in the form of privatisation, accountability, transparency

and evaluation of outcomes. Bench marking of systems and also taking students population to reach the required standard and understanding of the global populace and their issues will also have to be oriented to multicultural education as the students will have to become world citizens.

### **Multicultural education to deal with global teams to solve world issues:**

"Multicultural education not only draws content, concepts, paradigms, and theories from specialized interdisciplinary fields such as ethnic studies and women studies (and from history and the social and behavioral sciences), it also interrogates, challenges, and reinterprets content, concepts, and paradigms from the established disciplines. Multicultural education applies content from these fields and disciplines to pedagogy and curriculum development in educational settings. *Consequently, we may define multicultural education as a field of study designed to increase educational equity for all students that incorporates, for this purpose, content, concepts, principles, theories, and paradigms from history, the social and behavioral sciences, and particularly from ethnic studies and women studies.*"

According to authors Thomas G. Carroll and Geneva Gay, future teachers need to be taught to become changing agents with skills for the following: (1) critical self-analysis, (2) self-reflection and (3) understanding culture. In addition, the authors believe that teachers must develop strategies for teaching both minority and mainstream students. To do this, teachers have to immerse themselves in other cultures (Follo, Hoerr & Vorheis-Sargent, 2). Fieldwork experience, an example of immersion, provides future teachers with the opportunity to communicate and learn from multicultural students while working. ESL teacher Marilyn Bean Barrett pointed out that field experiences needed also to include opportunities for reflection on critical incidents (Barrett, 23). Fieldwork experience facilitates future teachers' observational and analytical skills about the norms, values and attitudes of multicultural students.

Learning from hands on experience is a distinctive skill that you do not receive from a textbook or instructor. To understand the entire spectrum of multicultural education, future teachers must close their textbooks and step into the classroom. To learn the skills of teaching multicultural students effectively, he or she needs to experience doing so. The lack of meaningful multicultural preparation and the fact that most teachers come from isolated ethnic groups, and possess professional preparation that usually excludes direct meaningful interaction with various cultures create problems for proper multicultural understanding (Russo & Talbert-Johnson, 1997). In order to achieve meaningful interactions, ample experience with students of other ethnic backgrounds is required. Through these experiences, future teachers will acquire an understanding of cultural differences and commonalties between themselves and their multicultural students, which as a result will properly train them to handle multicultural classrooms. Having this knowledge of other worldviews, family life, and customs can aid in valuable communication between teachers and students of other cultures, which might lead to healthy relationships, student satisfaction, and positive learning environments for both teachers and students.

The goal of multicultural education is not only to teach children about other groups or countries. It is also to help children become accustomed to the idea that there are many lifestyles, languages, cultures, and points of view. The purpose of multicultural curriculum is to attach positive feelings to multicultural experiences so that each child will feel included and valued,

and will feel friendly and respectful toward people from other ethnic and cultural groups (Dimidjian, 1989). One key to helping young children develop a sense of being citizens of the world lies with the early childhood teacher. The disposition exhibited by this individual in promoting everyone's culture will be the successful factor in the child's development of a multicultural perspective.

### **Challenges and recommendation:**

There are many challenges to the aspiration of the global position of Higher Education.

- The challenges begin with the reading, writing skills of the students aspiring to be university students.
- Apart from language analytical and creative thinking are also important and necessary skills.
- Skills to collaborate and work with relevant others is needed.
- Developing research skills.
- Developing mobile learning culture in the organization
- Developing interuniversity exchange of faculty members to work on problem solution.
- Attitude, aptitude and dealing with world issues head on needs appropriate communication skills along with analytical skills.

Some recommendations for university curriculum:

- Apart from multicultural education, students will have to have problem solving projects collaborative in nature with an interdisciplinary bent.
- Universities will have to work on language, communication skills and research skills of collaborative nature.
- Faculties to have a cross border approach in the teaching learning process and development of skill set.

### **Conclusion:**

Higher education, be it certificate, diploma, degree level courses will have to adapt to the global needs. We are all aware that the problems that the globe is facing today require a more creative, critical and analytical approach. The teaching learning process has to be more focused on working with diverse kinds of people to help the humanity. More holistic courses will have to be developed rather than focusing on narrow super specialization alone. Of course super specialization are needed but there are many general issues that also need attention and can be solved when various people put their heads together. Higher education will have to develop necessary skill sets of the students so that they are self reliant and employable. Unless the students passing out of higher education are self reliant and employable they will not be an asset to the nation and we may not be able to reap the benefits of demographic dividend. Many formulation and combinations will have to be experimented to develop a youth that can work at multifarious levels, with multifarious organization either in the face to face mode or virtual mode. Higher education in India does not have an option but to position itself globally to supply necessary and required manpower to reap the benefit of demographic dividend.

## References:

- Banks, J. A. (2001). Cultural Diversity and Education: Foundations, Curriculum, and Teaching. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Barrett, M.B. (1993). Preparation for cultural diversity: Experiential strategies for educators. Equity and Excellence in Education, 26: 19-26.
- Carroll, T.G. (1990). Who owns culture? Education and Urban Society, 22: 346-355.
- Delpit, L. (1996). Other people's children. Cultural conflict in the classroom. New York: New Press,
- Ms. Swati Mujumdar, Director, Symbiosis Centre for Distance Learning Need for vocationalisation of Education in India <http://www.indiaeducationreview.com/article/need-vocationalisation-education-india>
- The Millennium Development Goals Report 2014  
<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/2014%20MDG%20report/MDG%202014%20English%20web.pdf>
- **Suresh Babu Privatisation Of Higher Education In India: Challenges Of Social Equality**  
[www.academia.edu/427014/PRIVATISATION\\_OF\\_HIGHER\\_EDUCATION\\_IN\\_INDIA](http://www.academia.edu/427014/PRIVATISATION_OF_HIGHER_EDUCATION_IN_INDIA)
- Rahul Nandi: India's Position in the Global Community: With Respect to Higher Education Scenario International Journal of Educational Planning & Administration. ISSN 2249 3093 Volume 4 , Number 1 (2014), pp. 37-48© Research India Publications <http://www.ripublication.com>