



## QUALITY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND WAYS TO IMPROVE IT.

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### Abstract:

*The role of higher education in national development is well established as it is this level of education which provides top-level of manpower like engineers, doctors, managers, scientists, bureaucrats, technocrats & teachers etc. who are responsible for accelerating the process of development further.*

### KEYWORDS:

Quality , Education , scientists , technocrats.

### .INTRODUCTION

The institutions of higher education are also required to undertake research to generate new knowledge for the scientific & technological advancement and make their knowledge & resources available to community through extension and consultancy services. They are accountable to students, society, and employer and in short to all stakeholders.

### CONCEPT OF QUALITY

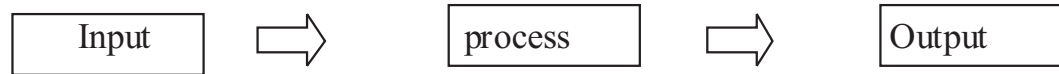
The concept of quality has been drawn from industry. Not very long ago education and industry sanctioned independently of each other and displayed very contrasting ethos and values. This is no longer true now as in recent years the two have moved towards each other, borrowing ideas & practices. Thus in industry the values of hierarchy, power and control are being replaced by the values of autonomy, cooperation and sharing of responsibilities- values generally associated with the world of academia. On the other hand, educational institutions are adopting corporate patterns of organization, including strategic planning, delineation of responsibility and accountability. It is therefore, not surprising that the concepts are being considered for application in the field of education . Quality by itself is a very complex issue and can be interpreted in several ways.

### QUALITY INDICATORS AND IMPROVEMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Before we start thinking about improving the quality of higher education , it becomes necessary to think about what constitutes quality in higher education? In other words what are the indicators of quality and how can the quality be measured and improved? In the field of higher education, the indicators of quality may be understood in terms of input, output and process variables.

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### INPUT INDICATORS

The system of higher education can succeed in achieving its objective only to the extent certain inputs are provided to the system. They are related to resources and factors employed to produce an institution's output. It is, therefore, necessary to take a review of the inputs required for the efficient working of the system of higher education for achieving the objectives. These input variables work as an important indicator of the quality of higher education. The inputs provided to the system are of five types.:

Intellectual resource  
 Administrative support  
 Academic infrastructure  
 physical facilities  
 Financial resource

### QUALITY GAP

A survey conducted by UGC (2007) as quoted by kasetwar (2008) reveals that:  
 On almost all indicators i.e. faculty standards, library facilities, computer availabilities student-teacher ratio, higher education is in crying need for up gradation.  
 90% of the colleges and 68% universities across the country are of middling or poor quality.  
 the dropout rate among ST is maximum (61.5%) followed by SC (51.21%) and OBC (50.09%)  
 There is only one computer fro 229 students.  
 Among 2956 colleges only 10% made 'A' grade, 66% were 'B' grade and 24% were 'C' grade.

The above facts clearly show the need for improving the quality level of the higher education in our country.

### Ways to improve India's quality of higher education.

- 1.Reduce spending of public money on higher education and research for non-performing institutes and universities. Only teaching does not justify huge spending by some so-called “elite” institutes/universities. All institutes/universities should be graded and judged as per their performance and public monetary support should depend on that.
2. Introduce strict accountability of public money for any research in any institute or university. And any research finding, using public money must be mentioned in an open source for public access). If hundreds of corers of rupees are spent on “developing Bt- crop for insect resistance”, then public have the right to know what is the outcome from that huge spending of tax payers' money. And if needed, a farmer or other researcher(s) should be able to access that information and more importantly the materials developed in such projects, as claimed by the researcher/institute.
- 3.Private institutes and universities must follow a minimum standard to give degrees.
- 4.Start “tenure track” system in Indian institutes/universities.
- 5.Increase spending substantially on primary and high school education (Both qualitative and quantitative). Increase the salaries of teachers at least at per with university lecturers and put stringent quality control while recruiting the teachers and introduce accountability among them. We must increase substantially the number of primary schools and quality of those and improve on physical infrastructures like school buildings, a minimum standard of school laboratory and library, a decent play ground, some internet connected computers in libraries etc.
- 6.Change the education system from the primary level (reduce work load, put more importance on physical activities, encourage original thinking etc). There should not be any form of evaluation (exam ) till age 10 years (i.e. till class 4 level). Subsequently the exam patterns should change and put more emphasis on original thinking and problem solving rather than emphasizing database-quiz type format. Basic education should be in mother tongue but English also should be compulsory from class 1.

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7. Provide increased opportunities for students in rural and semi-urban India (in form of transparent information dissemination, transparent selection for fellowship/scholarships and recruitments).

8. For the long run:

Abolish reservation policy altogether. Provide quality primary and high school education free for all. We have an obligation to give something back to our country which will have a long term impact on the whole society. These are few of my thoughts. Let's start a vibrant discussion and let us know your opinion in this matter.

#### CONCLUSION

The rapid growth of higher education over the years has resulted in the dilution of its quality and standards, which in turn has affected the quality of man power produced. There is therefore, a need to develop a quality culture in our institutions of higher education. This will require the quality of mental infrastructure more than that of the physical infrastructure because quality depends upon our vision, sincerity of purpose and conviction to do our duty there is an linkage between quality and excellence. Excellence would be attained only through establishing quality education in vast majority institutions of higher education.

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