

Innovative Qualities of Education Sector that Kills Quality and Employability in IT sector

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Abstract

The higher education sector in India is in turmoil, struck harsh by a tornado. It is being repeated over and over again and publicized highly that hardly a fourth of graduating engineers, and an even smaller percentage of other graduates, are of employable quality for IT -BPO jobs. This had created a whirlpool situation where people started introspecting and similar opinion was echoed by other sectors which initiated a widespread debate. Increased industry academic interaction, “finishing schools”, and other efforts were initiated as immediate measures to conduit skill deficits. These, however, have not worked as some feel that these are merely band-aid solutions; instead, radical systemic reform is necessary.

The present study examines the causes of failure in imparting quality education by the teachers and the policies that kill the research and Innovation and highlights possible solution to overcome the drawbacks of the present education system.

It is important to provide facilities and infrastructure to teachers, give them dignity so that talent pool is attracted towards teaching profession. Autonomy to educational institutes should be given. Corporate houses should be invited for running competitive International institutes.

Keywords: Band-aid Solutions, Employability, Finishing Schools, Flexibility at Workplace

1. Preamble

The higher education sector in India is in turmoil, struck harsh by a tornado. It is being repeated over and over again and publicized highly that only one third of graduating technical students and an even smaller percentage of graduates from other streams are of employable quality for IT jobs. This initiated tremendous run for improving the condition. Technical Institutes started giving additional courses in communication and soft skills. A kind of “finishing school” concept was built up. This was a band aid solution and could not develop a tower on a weak foundation. The present need is of a strong foundation.

The present study examines the causes of failure in imparting quality education by the teachers and the policies that kill the research and Innovation and highlights possible solution to overcome the drawbacks of the present education system.

Quality teaching in higher education is very important so that number of employable youth increase. But, higher education sector is facing dynamic and tremendous challenges. The various challenges are the students that enroll are very poor in communicative skills. The quality of English is so poor that it hampers the performance in other subjects as well. The pedagogy should be such that it should be able to take care of the students need and

at the same time should be able to meet the employers demand as well.

Dr. Babsaheb Ambedkar, a great visionary had a great concern about the quality of education. He firmly believed that only good quality education and research can lead to the progress of the society and the country at large. He expressed his grief stating that the “Universities have been founded for just conducting exams”¹. He expressed concern in the year 1927 but, in so many years time there has been no growth in the standards of education and still we find a steady decline and students’ preference to go abroad for education.

The major cause that Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar had found out was that the teachers are heavily burdened with work and hence are not capable to give required performance. The teachers have to rely on guide books and notes for teaching because of lack of time. According to him, “it was the biggest blunder... and the major reason for no improvement in the research standards in Higher education...” He also mentioned to professor Hamilton and Munshi “in such an environment, new knowledge and curiosity would be stifled... which would lead to a loss for the society. Teachers teach for 13 hours a week so they do not prepare due to lack of time and read notes and guides to somehow complete the course. Teachers should be given time to do research work and

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other good work¹. With this technique teachers will be able to support quality education and the differences would be seen in the quality of graduate and Ph. D education. They will teach the best way and will be able to bring innovation in teaching and will amount to saving money².

There has been a tremendous effort by UGC to improve the quality of higher education in the country. It has come out with various rules and regulations like the one under discussion where the timings for teachers have been increased to 6 hours 40 minutes instead of 5 hours per day. All these policies sound very good in an AC room where policies are framed over sumptuous lunches by people who are actually unaware of the ground realities.

The foremost problem is that college timings are very long that is six hours and forty minutes every day and there is no research facility within the premises. Teachers sit outside and bask in the sun and chat while the staffroom gets swept (Figure 2). West and a few corporate are promoting flexibility in time to get the best of talent (Figure 1). University wants to drive away talents. Newton got an idea bathing in the water tub he cried 'Eureka'. Teachers have to cry within prison walls of colleges. Universities still have an advantage that they have departmental library and central library. They also have an edge that they have online journals like JSTOR and SAGE a treasure house for research which can be accessed anywhere with wi fi facility for free. But college teachers do not have any facility even after using their own dongal. Some colleges have converted balcony into a library, where teachers and children both study (Figure 3). This creates an unfair competition and is the very reason that college teachers can never compete with university teachers, since they do not have good research facilities and good reading space. Reading space for faculty is just one table, where there is a good fish market. A research cannot be conducted in such an environment. How can one focus or get new ideas. The teachers have become a prisoner of time. The world is moving ahead with the idea of flexibility of time. Furthermore, UGC also gives a step treatment to teachers from college. JNU teachers get a lot of travel funds for attending conferences abroad, but teachers from colleges do not get and so again they are trapped in their stagnated well. UGC does not even reply or assign reason for rejecting travel proposal or minor research projects of the teachers from the colleges. The regulatory bodies and administrative bodies need lessons and training themselves for competency management.

Another, reason why the teachers of the colleges cannot compete with teachers from the Universities and world at large, is that Google scholar does not acknowledge the work of teachers, who do not have email id of the university. Hence, the teachers from the colleges lag behind and the knowledge they create does not get disseminated to the world. There is always a lurking fear of their intellectual property being stolen.



Figure 1. Flexibility in corporate.



Figure 2. Teachers basking in sun chatting and reading newspaper while rooms are getting cleaned.



Figure 3. Balcony being used as college library for teachers and students (open air).

The teachers working in colleges are considered to be inferior, since they are considered to be the personal employees of the management and are not treated any more than the employee that works in a grocery shop. The teachers are employed for menial work like distributing pamphlets in front of the cinema theatre to collect students for admission to the college. Sometimes, the teachers are also accused of drawing fat salary, but working for fewer hours. Sri Lanka which is much smaller than India and lags behind in economy, the start salary of Assistant professor is 130000 Sri Lankan rupees plus ever year he is allowed to buy a duty free imported car. Moreover, the infrastructure and the library

are excellent. This clearly shows that government has got great respect for teachers. A teacher's work is teaching and research. If the teacher does not keep herself updated or upgraded continuously, then she will be unable to give results. This would result in students, who would not be able to compete with world at large. In global era there would be a great loss incurred to the nation.

Neither, NAAC nor UGC is bothered to see if the colleges are providing infrastructure or research facilities to the faculty. The college managements are busy collecting record by keeping teachers in jail quoting ridiculous documents. NAAC committee and UGC are also just focusing on collecting papers. It is wastage of human resource and paper. In small countries they make poo paper out of elephant dung and in India government and management creates dung out of paper. This would soon lead to a deluge of competitive foreign universities entering the market. Time has already come to raise public voice like that of Anna Hazare.

Many people advocate free or subsidized education. If you offer peanuts you will surely catch monkeys. Regulations stipulate that educational institute should be not- for – profit but people find devious ways to make money by taking bribes from teachers for getting jobs, asking teachers and students to water the plants and the ground and do other menial jobs of peon cleaning the benches, computers or asking them to maintain the institute by contributing money to save their jobs (Figure 4). This is not being read from a blank slate. It is high time government should drop this veil of farce of “not- for- profit” and let corporate enter this field for profit. This would increase competition and good

education will be available at low cost. Many management, technical and college for medicine run by politicians for example Jawaharlal Nehru College of Medicine Sawangi has an excellent library which can compete with any library in the world. There are excellent labs and provision of quality education, but since there are few such institutes education is expensive. The issue of high cost of education can be tackled by bank loans and easy installments.

The UGC should decide whether to continue the colleges and provide them with all facilities or should try to close all of them down. Gurucharan Das rightly says that India suffers from poor governance. Much cannot be expected from the government that sleeps and is not able to give justice even after a year to Nirbhaya. The impotent old haggish government is hardly competent enough to provide any relief or dignity to college teachers. It is time for the government to bite the bullet.

I had a discussion in 2013 at OPJIT Raigarh with Dr. Ramgopal, retired Director, DRDO who had worked with APJ Abdul Kalam feels that, ‘the teachers have no accountability. They come at any time and they go at any time, but they are think tanks’. I feel that accountability should be tested not by the physical presence of the teacher in the campus but, by regularity in conducting given classes. Soon college teachers would become empty tanks. There is no time for research or facility for teachers of the colleges. Research and innovation are very important for the growth of any country, but unfortunately we will lose more Kalpana Chawlas and Sunita Williams to US because of the dragging Government and Management.



Figure 4. Senior and Junior college teachers watering the ground and arranging benches for college gathering.

Saari umar hum
 Mar mar ke jee liye
 Ek pal to ab humein jeene do
 Jeene do

Na na na....Na na na....Na na na....Na na nana na....

Give me some sunshine
 Give me some rain
 Give me another chance
 I wanna grow up once again²

2. Conclusion

It is a hyper competitive market and hence, it is important to provide facilities, infrastructure and facilities to teachers, give them dignity so that talent pool is attracted towards teaching profession. Autonomy to educational institutes should be given to design the course curriculum and faculty fee. Corporate houses

should be invited for running competitive International institutes. If these steps are taken only then IT sector of India will be able to employ graduates without initial training.

3. Acknowledgement

I would like to acknowledge the management of colleges where teachers are synonym to labor, UGC for such defective policies and my daughter Ishita who compared the teachers with a labor that gave me a clue to write this article.

4. References

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