

**PROBLEMS & PROSPECTS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA IN THE CONTEXT OF NATIONAL KNOWLEDGE COMMISSION**

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**Abstract**

*Knowledge makes a man complete. He thinks better act better and experiences better. Through knowledge the communication and the exchange of ideas and experiences is possible. Knowledge breaks up the mind as real maintain the body. Real knowledge is something else. It cultivate certain qualities in man which enable him to act properly. It implies certain values which must be cultivated through education. The article focusses on Knowledge as the main instrument through which other aims can be achieved, because it awakens the brain of the individual.*

**Keywords:** *problems & prospects of higher education, higher education, national knowledge commission, knowledge commission, education*

The aim of National Knowledge Commission is to transform India into a vibrant knowledge – based society. In pursuit of this aim the commission identified five key areas of the knowledge viz.- Knowledge Concepts, Access to Knowledge, Knowledge Creation, Knowledge Development and Development of better knowledge service. The Commission has also developed three tier recommendation system. The recommendations already submitted cover Library, Translation, Language, Knowledge Network, Right to Education, Vocational Education, Higher Education, National Science and Social Science Foundation and E-governance. Most of the areas of knowledge so far covered by distinct working groups for specific recommendations are connected with Library, whatever may be its form. India has a long tradition of learning Higher Education provides people an opportunity to reflect on the critical, social, economic, cultural and spiritual issues facing humanity. Higher education has provided wisdom and expertise which equips young people for their future roles and social leaders. Higher education is now regarded as an institution not only for developing knowledge and training young minds, but also for disseminating and applying much knowledge.

**Table 1 - Growth in Higher Education in India**

Institutions	Year			
	1950-51	1990-91	1996-97	2001-20
Universities(incl. Deemed)	30	117	214	248
Colleges	750	7346	9703	12342
Enrolment(000s)	263	4925	6755	8000
Teachers(000s)	24	272.7	321	396

Source: (UGC annual reports 1996-97, 2001-2002)

**Table 2 - Some Basic Statistics on Higher Education in India**

Sl. No.	Year	
	1947	2005-06
1. Universities	18	335
2. Colleges	500	17625
3. Students	228804	4.72 lakh
4. Teachers	10.24	4.72 lakh
5. Doctoral degree holders	Na	16,602

Sources: Kale R.K. (2006:2) GOI: MHRD (Annual Report 2005-06:19)

**Table 3 - Students Enrolment in Higher Education in India (for age 19-24), given in %**

Year	1993	2002
Total gross enrollment ratios	5.3	9
Male	6.8	10.3
Female	3.6	7.5

Source: Wu, Kin Bing; and Others (2008: 30)

**Table 4 Provision of Education in 5 years plans**

Plan	Year	% of the total outlay
i	1951-56	6.79
ii	1956-61	4.50
iii	1961-66	4.87
Holiday	1966-69	
iv	1969-74	5.21
v	1974-79	3.26
vi	1980-85	2.59
vii	1985-90	3.55
Holiday		
viii	1992-97	4.91
ix	1997-2002	4.25
x	2002-2007	N.a.

Source: Kanti Biswas (2002)

**Table 5 - Share of higher education in total expenditure on Education in five years plan in India**

Plan	Year	% of the total outlay
i	1951-56	9
ii	1956-61	18
iii	1961-66	15
Holiday	1966-69	24
iv	1969-74	25
v	1974-79	22
vi	1980-85	22
vii	1985-90	16
Holiday	1990-92	12
viii	1992-2002	10

Source: Government of India (1995), Budgetary Resources for Education (1951-52 to 1993-94), Ministry of Human Resource Development, New Delhi

**Table 6 - Share of expenditure of higher, technical and university Education in the tenth five-year plan (2002-07)**

University and higher education	6516.00
As % of total plan outlay	2.32%
Technical education	1776.50
As % of total plan	0.63%
Higher and technical education as	
% of total plan outlay	2.95%

Source

Change the system of regulations for higher education: The establishment of an (IRAHE) will allow for a uniform of regulation for higher education in the country. But again this according would create more problems than it could solve.

Establish 50 National Universities: It will enhance the choice of courses in different streams for the students. Along with professional subjects, it should include humanities and social sciences. Increasing the varieties of discipline will enhance its quality.

Reform existing Universities: Universities will definitely increase the quality and effectiveness of higher education. Individuals opting for higher education must do so to improve their performance



rather than to just increase the number of certificates and degrees.

To promote and enhanced the quality: Enhancement in quality is very essential in higher education for positive growth and development of the society. Evaluation process must be taken very sportingly as this will encourage individuals to enhance his/her quality and performance.

**Access to knowledge**

Language: An inclusive society is the foundation for a knowledge society. Language is a store house of emotional communication. Language is significant, not only as a medium of instruction or a means of communication but also as a determinant of access. Therefore understanding and command of the English Language is most important determinant of access to higher education, for employment possibilities and social opportunities.

Libraries: Provides widespread of knowledge and serve as a local centre of information and knowledge, and to be a legal gateway to national and global knowledge. In order to achieve this goal, existing libraries must modernize then collections, services and facilities.

Teacher to be evaluated by students: The teacher, while imparting education should view his/her role differently. He should focus on students learning, rather than his own teaching. Teacher should not consider himself to be the source of all information and ideas. He should assist guide and help. Information and ideas should be supplied by the students. This is a new approach to both teaching and learning. If we can apply this approach to other areas of teaching, the entire school system can be revolutionized. Proposal by NKC for reforming right to education, Bill by a Central Legislation (right to education is one's fundamental rights). Education at grass root level should be healthy enough in order to bring quality in Higher Education. And steps taken for the economically, historically, socially underprivileged

student to ensure access to education in a more effective manner is a good point. Lastly, the commission generate an opportunity to think and work to the path of a better knowledge society.

**Comments**

The NKC recommends a systemic reform in higher education. The reform supports neo liberal agenda to reduce state control without going into the root cause of the crisis. Some of the recommendations are bound to have far reaching implications and need systematic understanding. The idea of an Independent Regulatory Authority for Higher Education (IRAHE) to accord degree granting power to institutions will not only centralize the decision making, it will also go against the spirit of federal character of democracy as legislative control of state to establish university will become unnecessary. The norm-based approach to grant license is likely to support the expansion of private higher education causing a big departure from the need based approach to establish universities.

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