

Role of Higher Education for Sustainable Development

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Abstract

The economic boom and impact of globalization has made a vital impact on higher education. This has resulted into many ideas and thoughts of sustainable development through quality higher education. The goal of achieving innovation and constant upgradation is considered means of survival, rather than an achievement. In order to survive in the global competitive market, Indian education system, in general, has faced a serious risk, following the impact of globalization. This paper addresses the process of sustainable development by creating social responsibility through meaningful education. Education for sustainable development enable people to build the knowledge, values and skills to take part in decisions about the way we do things, both locally and globally, to improve the quality of life, conserving the nature for the future. It is a right time to inculcate the sense of social responsibilities into the younger generation through proper education and training. This paper also discusses the ideas promoting a better education system, creating an excellent sustaining entrepreneurship and skills, for the betterment of the society by developing good future leaders. The rise and positioning of a country depend solely on good leaders, provoking us for the development of the economy and shaping of any Nation. Emotional Quotient (EQ), Intellectual Quotient (IQ) and Spiritual Quotient (SQ) should be brought up along with technical skills and soft skills to build the better citizens.

Key words:

Sustainable development, Social responsibility, Entrepreneurship, Emotional Quotient, Intellectual Quotient, Spiritual Quotient.



Introduction:

Education plays a vital role in the growth of any country. It takes ages to make a nation into a developed country. ***“When you know better, you do better”*** is a famous quote said by Maya Angelou, an American poet, actress and known personality in the American Civil Rights Movement. No country could bring a revolutionary change in it unless its people are educated enough to meet the challenges. Education makes a man realize about himself, his goals and help to achieve success in life. There are three main domains of education, which are imparted or could be imparted through different ways. The Education which teaches the concerns about the society is called ***Social Education***, other that concerns with the professionalism is called ***Vocational Education*** and the most importantly third which develops a personality both inner and outer is called ***Spiritual Education***.

The goal of this paper is to provide insight about how one can interlink these three domains viz Social, Vocational & Spiritual Education to have more meaningful education system.

Indian Higher Education system

We are living in the modern age of science where we use technology everywhere for our ease and comforts. Technology is very much important in our daily life, it is present in almost all the domains of human life, being entertainment, home appliances, transportation services, security & surveillance, health sector, food industries and many more. Therefore, it is very true that no nation can make the progress and develop, unless or until it promotes technology in the different fields. The higher & technical education produces technical and skilled manpower to fulfill all type requirement described above.

The Ministry of HRD, Govt. of India says, ***“Technical education plays a vital role in human resource development of the country by creating skilled manpower, enhancing industrial productivity and improving the quality of lives of its people”*** mentioned in the UGC Steering Committee (2002 - 2007). Higher & Technical Education covers programs in engineering, technology, management, architecture, town planning, pharmacy, applied arts and crafts, hotel management and catering technology. The world's largest democracy, India, has shown a tremendous growth of its techno- economic powers, over the last 65 years of post-independence era, sustaining the economic growth around 8% during the last 10 years. Indian economy is the third largest economies of the world and above all making India proud by making the requirement of skilled and trained manpower of the advanced nations of the world for their outsourced qualified and skilled manpower to manage the businesses, knowledge industries and research center, both in India and abroad. All this could be possible primarily because of a continuous support offered by India's ever growing Higher & Technical Education sector. Since the early eighties, due to rapid industrialization and economic growth, engineering and technical education in India have been developing faster than anywhere else in the world stated by Palit, S.K., (1997) & Palit, S.K., Voumard, P. and Ito, K., (1997). Just think of India adding to its existing strength of technical education, 08 new IITs, 07 IIMs, 15 Central Universities, 10 NITs, 05 IITs, 20 IIITs and thousands of state engineering colleges during the last decade (K. L. Chopra and P. B. Sharma). There has been a phenomenal growth of technical institutions during the last two decades. The figures of a number of institutions and intake at undergraduate and post-graduate levels in the different branches of technical education between the years 2006-07 and 2014-15 have been reported already in detail by several researchers (AICTE Review Committee, 2015) (Yadunath Singh and Meeta Solanki, 2016). On looking at the reports, it will be seen that the number of institutions rose from 1511 in 2006-07 to 3389 in 2014-15. The intake rose from 6.59 lakh to 16.93 lakh. The intake in post-graduate courses in management grew over the same period from 2.47 lakh to 4.55 lakh.

Sustainable Development

Sustainable Development is important vision (Yadunath Singh and Meeta Solanki 2016) of any Governing

Body for future and impacts on every area of policy and practice. It covers following *six* objectives to be achieved.

- 1. Social Progress:** Recognizing the needs of everyone
- 2. Environment friendly:** Effective protection of the environment
- 3. Conservation of Natural resources:** Sensible use of natural resources
- 4. Stable economy**
- 5. Reduction in unemployment**
- 6. Maintaining the ethics & moral**

Social Progress

It has been observed that with increase in urbanization and with increase in education, the person is becoming more and more introvert. Today we find many problems in our society like depression, stress, family disputes, child abuse and many more. We find that the definition of education is limited to admission in lavish – ultra modern school and colleges, where the parents find their wards studying with high society and they can feel proud of spending money. Today the parents are less concern for their children's inner growth, rather they are interested in outer growth, which they can showcase in the society. This is the real reason of societal problems. The gap between parents and children is increasing day-by-day. The families are breaking in to small ones, human values are not properly transformed from adults to the kids and so on. The only solution of this is proper education right from school, where the system should be uniform and helping the child to grow positively, where the child learns how to help others, respect elders, work hard etc. This is called really social progress.

Environment friendly

As we are increasing our luxury and comforts, we also increase the use of energy and in turns polluting the environment by exhausting the waste. The real education teaches the person, how to save environment. *Go Green* and *Run for River* are few projects which are getting popular slowly, as we have recognized the need of saving our environment for our future generations. Today we find that rivers are drying, trees are cutting and environment is polluting. The only solution to stop this is through education.

Conservation of Natural resources

As we discussed saving environment, we also need to develop the sense of responsibility amongst the students to conserve the natural resources like trees, water, crude oil etc. They are our life line. If we don't save the natural resources by their effective & sensible utilization, our next generations won't be able to see & use all these resources, infact in many countries, the scarcity of these resources have resulted into a state of war and fight.

Stable economy

The outcome of education should be skill and it is this skill which leads to generation of employment and once people start earning and they continue their earning, they can contribute into the economy of the country and it is due to this stable economy, the country can further improve their education system. So, it's a win-win and viz-viz situation for both. So, stable economy is one of the prime objective for sustainable development.

Reduction in unemployment

As discussed in previous point, stable economy will help reducing the unemployment. It is this quality of the society through which it progresses and prosper. If everybody is happy and get bare minimum

contentment in terms of money, majority of the societal problems will be solved. People stops doing wrong, they stop stealing, may be stop lying, stop procrastination and leave happy and honest life.

Maintaining the ethics and moral values

This is one of the most important objectives to be achieved for sustainable development. If we want to progress in life, we have to maintain high level of ethics and values in our day-to-day life. Most of the developed countries are developed today by following these standards. One such incident I recall during Tsunami in Japan, the malls and shops were without their owner and there were no control and monitoring on the customers, still the customers were honestly making their payments after their shopping. Instead of cheating the owner, who might be fighting with draughts, they were fulfilling their moral responsibilities by paying honestly. It is due to this quality of people, Japan could have recovered not only from this Tsunami but from many such huge natural disasters.

Research Gap

Ever since era of independence, there is a continuous deterioration of ethical and moral values at large in Indian society. In pre-and early years of independence, persons were judged based on ethics and moral they commanded in life more than their financial health. Ever since then, continuous deterioration in value system is being seen. Socio-political environment has played very big role in corrupting the Indian society. This has led to all-round destruction of human values, ethics and moral, which in turn has badly affected the professional education. Without ethics and morality, professionals cannot bring about drastic or significant development in the country. The situation has become more and more grave with opening up of economy and globalization of trade and industry, wherein our engineers and technocrats are required to compete with their counterparts with rest of the world, who are competent professionals possessing high standards of ethical and moral values. Volumes and volumes of literature are flooded with importance of ethics and moral in professional education and it has shown its delighting results to all those who possess them. Hence it is necessary to introduce components of ethics and moral in professional education. Thus, outcome based education mentioned in figure 1, is not only the urgent requirement of the higher education of 21st century but it is equally important for quality improvement and sustainable development of technical education.

Research findings

The points discussed in above section 3, could be achieved by developing such an education system, which is based on following outcome parameters mentioned in figure 1. Every higher education system should be designed in such a way that develops the skills mentioned in figure 1. These are considered to be the basic parameters for every student before he or she graduated from the university. Our system should be such designed starting from framing of syllabus to the declaration of results, that all the parameters mentioned in figure 1 are thoroughly imbibed and assessed into the students.

Figure 1 Education outcome parameters



Conclusion

I am sure, if we could be able to achieve all the outcome parameters viz creativity, general knowledge, practical skills, hardworking ability, ability to work in team, leadership quality, confidence level, stress handling ability, soft skills and above all Emotional Quotient and Spiritual Quotient, then the nation would sustain, the entire civilization would sustain for centuries to come. It is the role of higher education to develop such a strong base for the development, which also can be sustained for long time.

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