Opportunities and Challenges for Regional Higher Education in State of Bihar

Rahul Nayan

Research Scholar, Department of Zoology, Tilka Manjhi Bhagalpur University, Bhagalpur, Bihar, India

ABSTRACT

In Bihar, the Higher Education sector has witnessed a tremendous increase in the number of Universities/University level Institutions & Colleges and student's enrolment. Education not only generates larger personal and social wealth, but all the aspects of development such as intellectual, social, cultural, aesthetic, economical, moral, and human resources are directly or indirectly related to it. Poor infrastructure, Examination, Curriculum, Memory based examinations, Lack of quality faculty members, Poor teaching methods, Lack offunds, Inconsistent government policies regarding higher education, Vested political motives, Growing privatization, Lack of access and equity etc. are some of the challenges in higher education. There are many more such challenges and This paper critically analyses all those challenges along with the possible opportunities and solutions.

KEYWORDS: *Opportunities, Challenges, Bihar, Curriculum, Education*

INTRODUCTION

Higher education is the key for sustainable growth and development of any State or country because it educates the people in real ground, Enhances the thinking capacity, Develops rational thinking and increases the analytical power of the people (Milem., 2003). Moreover, it creates job opportunity, makes the students fit for the job. To improve the quality of higher education in the Bihar State, we must maintain parameters of quality education. The parameters of quality higher education are: sufficient number of quality faculty members, Profile of the students entering into the higher education, Infrastructure of the educational institutions, Curriculum, Appropriate teaching method, Examination pattern, Learning resources, National agencies, Government policies and Institutional leadership etc (Hoque., 2018).

Challenges and opportunities-

1. **Skill level of the graduate does not match with the expectation of the employers**-
A. Need to focus on the graduate students by providing them such courses in which they can achieve excellence, gain deeper knowledge of the subject so that they will get jobs after recruitment in the companies which would reduce unnecessary rush to higher education.

B. The teachers and lecturers in schools and colleges play the most important role in shaping their students' careers. It is imperative for educators to keep themselves upgraded on the subjects and skills they teach the students.

C. Vocational skills need to be aligned very closely with the education system and need to begin in the early years of Education.

D. Gradually, teach them a particular skill over the next few years, such that when he/she completes graduation, they are ready for employment in the given sector.

E. State and National credit mechanisms can be put in place which will recognize the skilling education undergone by the students parallel to their formal education. Not only would this help in boosting confidence in receiving vocational skill but also increase the social signalling for the training.(India Today.2019)

2. Infrastructures are not at satisfactory level -

A. Classrooms are the backbone of any school infrastructure. There should not only be an adequate number of classrooms for students, but each and every classroom should be pleasant and well-designed. They should be carefully decorated and painted with some light colours.

B. Staff Room & Administrative Block- Not just students, the colleges & department infrastructure should also focus on facilities for teachers. There should be a proper staffroom, where teachers can prepare for their classes, do corrections and interact with each other. Room should also have lockers where they can safeguard their instructional materials, books and personal belongings. Apart from the staff room, the college infrastructure should create special provisions for the administrative block. Not only should the college office be centrally located, but also should be easily accessible to visitors, students or teachers (Timperley. *et.al.*,2007).

C. Playground: Sports and games play a vital role in the development of any child. So, invariably a college infrastructure should have provision for a well-maintained playground. There should be facilities for both indoor and outdoor stadiums. Playground are not just a medium to develop physical strength and balance, they are an opportunity to develop social skills, thinking and problem-solving skills.

D. Library plays an important part in the learning process of the colleges as it's a counterpart of the college's infrastructure. It should be located in a place where it's quietand calm with a soothing ambience for the students to concentrate better.

3. Shortage of Teachers, Lab Assistant, Instructor & Lab Attendant -

A. Increase teacher salaries and staff salaries in colleges and communities where salaries are not competitive or able to support a middle-class lifestyle

B. Offer career advancement opportunities that provide increased compensation, responsibility and recognition.

C. Survey teachers to assess the quality of the teaching and learning environment, and to guide improvements.

D. Incentivize professional development strategies and the redesign of colleges to provide for greater collaboration.

E. Regular recruitment of teacher, Lab Assistant, Instructor and Lab Attendant by commission and government in colleges or in higher education departments.

4. Loose environment of innovation & entrepreneurship education -

A. Create a legal framework that enables entrepreneurship education and make the necessary funds available for support tools and teaching materials.

B. Institutions should have incentive systems for motivating and rewarding faculty staff in supporting students interested in entrepreneurship education.

C. Institutions should have a strategy and action plan for teaching entrepreneurship education programs.

D. Raise awareness and improved knowledge about entrepreneurship education among college management, for instance by holding dedicated seminars.

E. Organise talks and seminars by entrepreneurs to encourage students and to make them aware of the potential and implication of becoming self – employed.

F. Help teachers to become better qualified in entrepreneurship, require entrepreneurship education when teachers are in college/ universities studies, and endorse the on-site training that teachers receive from recognised providers.

5. Poor teaching learning mechanism-

A. Provide Colleges leadership and administrative support: - Administrative support is often the top reason teachers identify for leaving or staying in the profession, or in a given school, outweighing even salary considerations for some teachers.

B. Provide opportunities for professional collaboration and shared decision-making-Teachers' career decisions are shaped by their connectedness to a team working with a shared purpose. Opportunities for teacher collaboration and input are key factors.

C. Provide resources for teaching and learning: Colleges with sufficient instructional materials and supplies, safe and clean facilities, reasonable student-to-teacher ratios, and adequate support personnel can positively affect teacher retention rates, and influence the kind of teaching and learning that can occur. (Ischinger,.2009).

6. Lack of job-oriented curricula-

The development of programs of study, learning and teaching resources, lesson plans and assessment of

students, and even teacher education are all based on curriculum. Curriculum exists for students. It is concerned with both content and process. Content refers to what we want students to learn and process refers to how the content is managed. Curriculum must be characterized by a balance of knowledge, skills and attitudes. It must be organized in a logical and sequential manner while making provision for special interest development. It must encourage critical thinking and provide the student with opportunities to develop the ability to make reasoned judgments (Kurfiss,. 1988).

A. During courses design keeping in mind the requirement of the industry so that once the students graduate they are well – acquainted with the working and able to do work on the demand of the industry.

B. Recruit professional development providers with extensive teaching experience.

C. Establish a department to consult academic institutions on the latest technologies, process or tools driving recruitment.

7. Poor inter disciplinary collaborations-

Interdisciplinary teaching increase student learning by engaging student and helping them develop knowledge, sight, problem solving skill, self-confidence, self-efficacy and passion for learning.

A. College need to create learning experience that periodically demonstrate the relationship of the disciplines.

B. Make connections with faculty from other departments, Industry and the community.

C. Invite guest speakers from the other departments and industry to give a presentation.

D. Partner with faculty from other departments to develop projects that incorporate aspects from different disciplines.

E. Co-curricular activities, such as workshops, seminars, industrial training, internships, etc. provide a multi-disciplinary and multi-faceted approach to learning and teaching. Such initiatives are a fruitful opportunity in the context of higher education (Tremblay., *etal.*,2012).

8. Poor linkage with industry and colleges -

A. Organise training programmes for skill development, vocational education and seminars/ workshop and to be one of the leading sources of technical manpower to cater to demand of the industry

B. Build a pool of students and teachers to work on real –life corporate projects. Similarly invite senior members from the industry to address students and teachers on various topics Role of industry.

Conclusion-

Higher education in Jharkhand has developed a lot in terms of quantity. However, we are still lacking in quality higher education as expected. To improve the quality of higher education the concerned authorities have to concentrate on the parameters (such as sufficient infrastructure, updated curriculum, trained faculties, learning resources, financial help, and well-planned policies) of quality higher education.

References-

[1] HoqueJ. (2018).Quality Concern in Higher Education in India.*Edulight*, 7(13):2278-9545.

[2] Timperley, A. Wilson, H. Barrar& I. Fung (2007). Teacher Professional Learning and Development. *Ministry of Education, Box 1666, Wellington, New Zealand* 6140:160-177.

[3] Ischinger B.(2009).Creating Effective Teaching and Learning Environments. *OCED Publishng*.1:47-62.

[4] India Today (2019).*India Today Web Desk*,3.

[5] Kurfiss, J. G. (1988). Critical Thinking: Theory, Research, Practice, and Possibilities. *ASHE-ERIC Higher Education. ERIC Publications*. 2:164.

[6] Milem J. F. (2003). The educational benefits of diversity: Evidence from multiple sectors. *Compelling interest: Examining the evidence on racial dynamics in higher education*, 126-169.

[7] Tremblay K., LalancetteD., and Roseveare D.,(2012).Assessment of Higher Education Learning Outcomes .*AHELO Feasibility Study Report*, 1:1-192.