NURTURING ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS (IN THE LIGHT OF NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY 2020 IN INDIA)

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ABSTRACT

The outcomes of National Education Policy 2020 ushered in to creating an entrepreneurial cultural in higher education institutions with multi disciplinary and multi-institutional approaches providing wider options to students for learning through multiple exit and entry, will depend on how academic leaders manage and leverage change in systems and structures of institution. Elucidating on growth and limitations of higher education in India, the paper opines that the poor outcomes in more than a century old higher education system in India are reflection of regulated instable system and lack of leadership. The study discusses the challenges and need for transformational leadership with credible scholarly credentials having value oriented skills and competencies in institutions for successful implementation of key reforms related to increase in gross enrolment ratio, autonomy, research orientation of education through promoting entrepreneurial culture. The paper underpins leadership training to academics to enhance their capacity and capability to work and involve others in the new culture of teaching and learning and they become effective academic leaders cognizant of fundamental ideas and processes associated with change management in order to plan, implement and manage transformational changes in the system and structure of institution.

Keywords: Multi- disciplinary, Challenges, Reforms, Leadership

INTRODUCTION

Higher education system in India, a British legacy, could not leverage the potential of knowledge generation and dissemination through nurturing quality human resources in institutions for nation's progress and prosperity. Highly rigid, regulated and centralized higher education system carried on colonial era policies and practices in teaching, leaning and evaluation culminated in undesirable outcomes. Academic and administrative leaders in Independent India could not rewrite new vision and mission for higher education for taking up new challenges and underestimated its roles in inspiring and involving youth in nation building through entrepreneurial ventures. National education policy is an innovative approach to galvanize and leverage higher education through decentralized, deregulated and decontrolled policies with ample freedom and flexibility to academics and students to learn, relearn and share new knowledge. The new policy has a number of reforms related to systems, structures, programs and policies for holistic higher education. It is so necessary to analyze whether institutions and academics in particular are capable and confident enough to inspire and involve students in new cultural of teaching, learning and evaluation. The effective and efficient executions of new policy entail academics as leaders to work in new cultural of collaborative and participative teaching and learning so that desired outcomes are achieved in time. Keeping these requirements under consideration, the higher education institutions need to redefine and reaffirm their roles to

reconnect with youth having potential and dream for diversified learning. There is need for leadership development programs in higher education institutions so that academics understand and communicate the purpose and benefit of new reforms effectively. The present work shall address following issues In the light of Implementation of National Education Policy:

- To analyze relevance and implications of major reforms in the National Education Policy (NEP2020) for revamping and recreation of the existing higher education set up.
- To highlight the need for developing and nurturing academic leadership in higher education Institutions for effective implementation of the new policy

LITERATURE REVIEW

Higher education, its access and quality has the potential to transform a traditional economy in to a knowledge economy for harnessing the resources for quality livelihoods and life. The national education policy 2020 is a multi dimensional tool to leverage the potential in higher education through an innovative framework for diversified and holistic learning to all. The mandate to increase the gross enrolment from 23 percent to 50 percent by 2030 addresses the premise that higher education access reduces poverty and unemployment. UNESCO is making all efforts to increase the gross enrolment ration in the higher education and its findings show that the evolution of the higher education enrolment from 2000 to 2018 has almost doubled from 19 percent to 38 percent. The access to higher education is the basis for a wide range of critical issues such as reducing unemployment and decreasing poverty. (Daniele et al, 2020).

UNESCO report highlights that the higher education sector has the responsibility of co creating knowledge and innovation and educate citizens as social agents who can become leaders. However, massification of higher education needs to be evaluated. The Universal declaration of human Right (UDHR) adopted in1948 stated that higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit .Merit need to be considered in contexts, recognition the "potential to success" of students in any context. The policy usher in multi disciplinary and intra disciplinary approaches through multiple exit and entry option to the students. 'The improvisation of multiple and flexible learning pathways and entry and reentry paths points to all ages and all education levels, strengthen links between formal and non formal structure and recognition, validation and accreditation of knowledge, skills and competencies acquired through non formal and informal education (UNESCO,2016.p 33). Transferable pathways within higher education permits both horizontal mobility (at the same level of education) and vertical mobility (To higher level of education) and these can occur between and within institution.

Higher education institutions in India could not deliver quality as systems and policies have been rigid, centralized and regulated with no options and freedom. The new policy has provision of freedom and autonomy to higher education institutions. Academic freedom and institutional autonomy are essential for universities to produce the research and teaching necessary to improve society and the human condition (Sjur, Tony & Ira 2020). Autonomy should be given to those who are responsible and have potential to generate resources. "Autonomy is not a privilege for higher education. Not only does it bring dividends but it is also a huge duty & responsibility that no higher education institution can handle".(Kronthaler1999). The twenty first century universities need to create condition for personal development, preservation an transmission of cultural heritage, expansion and dissemination of knowledge and the autonomy of higher

education institutions shall through decentralization will lead to self- governess, self – organization and self –regulation (IIyosjon 2021). Young mind has shaper intellect to understand problems, think and search solutions. The policy has made provision of research in the fourth year of the Four Year Undergraduate Program. Besides, even at the different levels in graduation the emphasis is on experiential learning of course contents.. "Education through Research" for knowledge society is very important and for that we need to reflect upon the so called pedagogy issues: how to teach/learn employability related competencies (Maarten Simon, 2006). There is need for developing and sustaining undergraduate research program as the research process has a very favorable impact on valuable learning objective as undergraduates prepare for their respective professions (Petrlla &Jung, 2008). The logic of inculcating research aptitude among undergraduates is to instill entrepreneurial intent amongst students through entrepreneurial culture in higher education Institutions. The entrepreneurship education is intended to teach skills in order to produce entrepreneurship (R.H Brockhaus1992).

The role of entrepreneurship is mainly to build an entrepreneurship culture that in turn would improve their career choice towards entrepreneurship (Deakins & Glancgy 2005). The effective implementation and achievements of new policy require capable and empathetic academic leadership at different level. In a research study on views of academics on leadership training program it was found that leadership development program helped individual to develop social capital (J, Frantz et al, 2022) . The leadership role is to build, manage and leverage cultural change for transformation of institutions. It could be a change in the size, system ownership, basic assumptions, cultural and technology of the organization (Harigopal. K, 2006). Trained academic leadership is sin quo non for effective transformational change. Training has always been a human resource intervention in organization and it is necessary first to explain the need for change and how it is going to benefit the target group and the role of leadership in sharing vision, establishing and articulating purpose is crucial (Ramanaryana, Rao &Singh, 1998).

Training is to be linked in terms of learning how to work together better and improve learning process in organization (Burke, 1995). The academics using traditional skills and pedagogy tools shall be counterproductive. Often employees take on leadership roles, without obtaining the essential capabilities (Taylor & Machado, 2006) and it is presumed that scholarly efficiencies will translate in to efficient and effective institutional building(Rowley& Sherman,2003, as cited by Frantz, J., Marais, J., & Du Plessis, M.. 2022). The effective implementations of new policy entails a formal leadership development programs for academics in higher education for introducing , managing and leveraging change effectively for achieving desired outcomes efficiently. However, there is dearth of research work and literature on how academic leadership influenced outcomes in the higher education in Asian countries particularly in India.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The paper has provided a framework for effective planning and implementation of National Education Policy 2020. It is an exploratory in nature. It is pure and longitudinal study. It has used both quantitative and qualitative approach to investigation. The study retrieved data from secondary sources like UNESCO, AISHE Reports (MOE), National Education Policy 2020, related research works, newspapers' articles, and journals.

PURPOSE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

The success of any mission entails that the purpose to the stakeholders is crystal clear, well communicated and understood as this motivate, inspire and involve all in achieving the objectives effectively in time, so necessary in the context of higher education. Leadership in Higher education in could not make clear to the teachers and the students the purpose for their being in the center of the higher learning. Insouciance amongst the teachers towards their roles and indifference amongst student towards outcomes has culminated in higher education being unproductive except a few centre of excellence namely IIMs, IITs NITs, ISI, IISc and a few more. One need to understand the purpose and idea of university .The University of Berlin (1810) preambles state that the "The principal was the fusion of teaching and research in the work of individual scholar". The foundational principal of Universities of Calcutta, Bombay & Madras (1885) elucidates that universities shall provide a platform for "Advancement of learning and hence promoting talent, character & Righteous conduct" How far these statement on higher education translated in action need reflection on evolution and contributions of higher education institutions in twentieth and twenty first century.

HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA: 1900 -2000

With the dawn of the twentieth century the trader class and Indians attached with British Government realized that higher education learning awakens, enlightens and is a source of knowledge so necessary for getting respect, reorganization and improving quality of life. Mahatama Gandhi and Dr Bhim Rao Amedkar's educational journey in those challenging era made them icon of hope, freedom and empowerment through learning in higher education centers in India and abroad. During this period educated Indians learnt English, formalized teaching& learning, leveraged potential of print media, realized power of unity, mobilized masses against social evils and dogmas through social reforms and started dreaming Freedom from British Raj. Higher education nurtured leadership for freedom struggle and India got freedom.

Independent India, awakened and inspired, started aspiring for progressive and prosperous Bharat. There were first generation, teachers, learners and first generation in services leaving their fields and penury of generations behind. It was first time realized that higher education learning opens floodgates of opportunities for empowerment, decent jobs, earning, respect and status in society. That was the time to reflect, reorient and reforms in higher education systems, policies and programmes keeping in view the long term vision and challenges. Unfortunately, academic leaderships and planners of yester years could not visualize the need for reforms in British era higher education systems.

HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA 21ST CENTURY

Introspection on the programs, policies & practices designed and in practice for seventy five years without any major innovative modifications and reforms as per the changing environment culminated in an ossified education systems and rickety higher education institutions reflecting that the purpose of higher education has been lost in oblivion. Ignoring its purpose and

contribution in free India, the priority to access in higher education based on political considerations could not be fruitful (Table1).

TABLE 1 EXPONENTIAL GROWTH IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Indicators	1950-51	2019-20
Colleges	578	42343
Universities	27	1043
StudentsEnrolment (Million)	0.2	38
GER (percent)	0.7	27.1%
BA/BSc /BCoM (Million)	NA	184

Source: AISHE 2019-20 Ministry Of Education GOI

B.A ,B Com & BSc programs absorb 80 percent of students in colleges across India., Denying freedom, and flexibility, the inherited colonial legacy, higher education has been a copycat of teaching, learning and evaluation at the school levels. .Making higher education a mass product and neglecting the quality outcomes were the biggest follies of planers at humongous loss to nation as it is irreversible and irrecoverable for the generations to come.

India Skills Report -2021 shows that only 47.22 percentages of Arts Graduates, 40.30 percentage of Commerce Graduates and 30.34 percentage of Science graduates are employable. None of Indian university is in top hundred in the QS World University Ranking and only three Indian institutions are in top two hundred universities. Progression to or in higher education system is not for the sake of passion or learning higher knowledge but it is due to dearth of avenues for employment or self employment.

Following are a few detrimental practices because of which dividends from higher education could not be realized and leveraged for growth, progress and prosperity.

❖   British Era course curriculum, pedagogy, teaching and learning policies and practices promoting rot learning
❖   5 ½ Hrs of Teaching & Learning (A policy mandate)
❖   Annual external evaluation in 3 hours for testing 35percent of course knowledge and miniscule weight age to internal evaluation casting doubt on integrity and transparency of institutions' intent and mechanisms
❖   Students learns for three years & deskilling starts and no scope for relearning
❖   Research last option with meager resources & poor supervision

NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY 2020

To inculcate coherence in policies, convergence of ideas and to bring uniformity by providing a common platform to all, India needs "One Nation One Policy" so as to address accessibility, inclusivity and above all assurance of quality. National education policy 2020 is a new framework for creating a new paradigm of higher education learning centers, where both academics and students shall have freedom, flexibility and scope to unlock their potential through experiential learning. The present study takes up four key reforms in policy in the higher

education institutions and their implications; Gross enrolment Ratio, Autonomy to Institutions, Research orientation at graduate level and Entrepreneurial cultural in Institutions.

GROSS ENROLMENTS RATIO

The gross enrolment in higher education is to be increased from 27 percent in 2021 to 50percent in 2035" as the premise is that accessibility reduces poverty and inequality through providing skills and knowledge for grabbing opportunities for livelihoods. This may have been true in small mature democratic capitalist countries but in most of the Asian and African countries particularly with a populous country like India this argument does not hold water. The initiative SARV SIKSHA AABHIYAN (Education to All) is justified and desirable at the school level education but the same may not be viable and desirable in higher education where the purpose and mission is different. Massification of higher education should not be priority as it not only waste resources but leads to frustration among students as after graduation they go back to learn and do what they could have done after schooling. It may be possible to build physical infrastructure to adjust increasing number of students as it is one time but the essential requirement is qualified, committed faculty with new mind set. AISHEReport2019-20 shows that only 2,9percent of total academics in higher education are professors. Making accessible higher education to all is productive and justified if those seeking entry in HEIs have aptitude and zeal to learn advance knowledge and new skills.. Countries which are paragon of excellence in higher education namely China, S korea and Germany, have a very sound school education which makes the student self dependent and self learner.

Those who have higher aptitude, strong urge and drive for creativity opt for or allowed for higher education and that too after going through tough entry process. China presents an interesting case where filtering starts at the school level for further education. The Economist (July 2nd, 2002) published finding of research paper that "Only 30 percent of working age population (aged 25-64) has high school education". Zhongkao, school entry examination for Senior High School or Ordinary High school or Vocational High School, a summary assessment of 9 years of compulsory education have 25-30 percent success rate. So a big portion of Chinese population is under matriculate. Gaokao, university entry common entrance examination for entry in higher education is a very tough process. American & European universities consider ranking in Gaokao for admissions. Germany presents another case where DVT (Dual Vocational Training System) of one to three year duration at the school level itself is presented as a good alternative to studying at university. India also needs to follow this principal of sound and responsible school education so that those who have right aptitude and mindsets join Institutions of higher learning.

Increasing enrolment in institutions comes with lots of responsibilities on the institutions to communicate, motivate and involve the new entrants to take advantage of diversified learning in multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches. The academics need to be trained on new pedagogy tools to for teaching a group of students across streams. The onus lies on institutional leadership to avoid quantity–quality trade off. Strategies are to be in place for optimum utilization of existing resources as the new policy emphasizes that a large part of capacity creation will be achieved by improving existing facilities substantially. Institutional leadership need to prepare a road map to deal with the mandate of increasing the gross enrolment ration in

the higher education showing availability and utilization of academic infrastructure and required academics with knowledge of new pedagogy tools and leadership traits to motivate new entrants to learn in the new cultural of learning through experiments.

AUTONOMY TO HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Higher education institutions in India could not give expected dividends as major stakeholders , academics and students could not get opportunities to unlock there potential to teach and learn as the scope of flexibility and freedom to think and act as per changing and challenging local conditions and market requirements was not given. British era courses are taught in classrooms using traditional pedagogy for limited time. The teaching, learning and evaluation are controlled and regulated in such a way that there exists no scope of creating and sharing new knowledge. The most unfortunate phenomenon of 21st century is that masses have lost faith in higher education institutions as there is loss of trust, transparency and accountability.. Increasing enrolment in institution should not be taken as kind of awakening for higher leaning but it is ail because there is paucity of alternatives and resources. Worldwide it is proven that higher education institution need autonomy to flourish. Autonomy shall provide myriad ways and opportunities to academics to unlock and unleash latent potential in themselves and students to learn and relearn new knowledge through research projects and field works. An autonomous institution need to instill confidence in students about learning at higher education institution. The new policy envisages the all 45000 affiliated Colleges shall be given academic, administrative & financial autonomous by 2035"**.**

Leaderships of Autonomous institutions have a challenging task of changing and managing cultural of trust, transparency ,accountability and working together . Four critical issues need to be addressed in time. Firstly, purpose of autonomy should be clearly defined, communicated & understood by all stakeholders. Secondly, leadership at all levels is required to mange transition from regulated to autonomy. Thirdly, autonomy survives on promise of quality and its deliverance in all processes, practices and outcomes. Fourthly, autonomy is not privatization. The core values of trust, transparency, accountability and integrity shall be the foundational stones of an autonomous institution. Academics in higher education need to be trained to work collectively in the new cultural giving freedom and flexibly to deign curriculums, work schedule and evaluation processes.

RESEARCH ORIENTATION AT GRADUATION LEVEL

Young minds have sharper intellect to learn through experiments and this makes learning collaborative, participative and hence interesting. The new policy envisages all higher education institutions to be multidisciplinary by 2040. Academics have a key role in inspiring and invigorating students to learn in class rooms and then test the ideas in fields. The policy makes the provision of learning through Research. Learning this way makes students independent and self responsible learner. Students in the fourth year of FUUG program have the options to pursue research project and if CGPA is above 7.5 may opt for PhD program after graduation.. This is an innovation in higher education in India. The moot point to ponder is institutional preparedness for successfully implementing the new policy. The key drivers for the success are qualified academics and industry academia integration. Higher education academics in their new

leadership role have to mobilize, motivate, inspire and guide students in this new learning cultural and also collaborate with industry to be a partner in this mission. AISHE report 2019 -20 has very dismal picture and it highlights the challenges in adopting research led higher education learning. The report shows that only 34.9% colleges offer PG Program and only 2.5 percent have PhD level program.

ENTREPRENEURIAL CULTURE IN THE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

The history of higher education institutions all over the word highlights their contributions in progress and prosperity of nations through innovations and inventions across various fields of human activities. It all becomes possible as these institutions provide ample scope and opportunities to young minds to learn, think and crate new knowledge through experiments. This spirit of entrepreneurship cultural is to be created in the higher education institutions in India .Entrepreneurship cultural in higher education institution does mean teaching motivational and traits theories of entrepreneurship. The role of academics is to make students confident enough to apply their skills and knowledge to myriad socio techno issues. Multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary and multi-institutional approaches in the policy shall provide wider exposure to students to learn, share and experiments across sectors. Institutions promoting and practicing project based course learning is in fact enticing students towards entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship can also be inculcated when students taking part in community outreach programs are given freedom to think, design and implement new practices for improving the outcomes.. Higher education academics need to be reoriented towards their role for promoting this kind of entrepreneurial cultural in the institutions

NURTURING ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP

Hitherto discussed four major policy reforms in the policy necessitates the change in the institutional culture with new belief, changed behavior, compassion and values. National Education Policy is a new vision and its executions for desired outcomes require mission, well understood and communicated to all the stakeholders in the higher education arenas and the role and wisdom of academic leadership is crucial. Traditional Role of teachers in British era higher education set up has always been transferring existing knowledge and students indulging in rot learning and in most courses repeating the same that had been taught at the senior secondary level irrespective of outcomes. Higher education institutions require the human values driven entrepreneurial cultural for self directing learning where students working cohesively apply, create and co-create knowledge for addressing global challenges and become responsible lifelong learners and citizens capable and confident enough to contribute in nation's progress and prosperity. That require academics who are trained in new pedagogy because the motivation and involvement of students shall depends on teaches' creativity, capability and commitment. To make all this possible higher education Institutions shall introduce change in cultural and the responsibility of top leadership is to manage change effectively through involving academics in this transformation. Higher education academics need to think differently and prod students to work in new cultural of collective learning and sharing.. Academic leadership in the institutions at all levels from Institutional head to the second line of leadership comprising deans, heads of departments, conveners of various forums need to understand their new roles and

responsibilities. Capacity building of academics through training both in terms of knowledge of new pedagogy tools and leadership traits is necessary.

TRAINING: NEED, COMPONENTS AND LEVELS

Higher education creates and leverage human capital for progress and prosperity. There is strong argument for training to teachers in higher education particularly in the light of National education policy as higher education Institutions shall undergo transformational change. Higher education academics who have greater challenges and responsibilities to promote entrepreneurial cultural through experiential learning and research projects in collaboration with industries and community need to be equipped with new pedagogy. .Training shall make them capable and confident enough to fulfil students' expectations and aspiration for learning and relearning. Academics need to learn ways and means for involving students in Community participation, project works and field surveys, an essential part in the policy. Besides, working in an autonomous institution require changed mind set to take up new roles and responsibilities as autonomy survive and thrive on fulfilling the promise of quality with full accountability, trust and transparency .National Education Policy is an educational reengineering and that require recreation and academics need be clear of their new roles and responsibilities for designing curriculums and using innovative pedagogical approaches to make teaching and learning interesting, participative and collaborative.. Through training academics will develop adaptability and ability to leverage academic freedom for creating and sharing new knowledge with students

Those who are eligible and willing to be academics in the higher education institutions should undergo mandatory training for leaning innovative pedagogy tools and academic leadership traits for inspiring and involving youths in new cultural .The core purpose of training is to prepare academics to work in new culture where sharing new knowledge is more important rater then transferring text book contents because in the globalised word digital access gives wider and deeper scope to students for peer to peer learning.

Training should be both at pre induction and after that it may be annual or biennial or as per training needs on new concepts and digital pedagogy tools. The successful completion of pre induction training should be mandatory for those who are to be given responsibility to work in the higher education institutions as they shall understand both purpose and mission. Academia–industry integration should be leveraged to train academics on the new trends, requirements and problems. There should be provision of academics-industry experts exchange program and also to work with government agencies, non government organizations and corporate to gain new knowledge on key issues. Once teachers are back In the institutions they can share experience and knowledge with the students and involve and motivates them to undertake project on critical issues in society and business.

CONCLUSIONS

The craving for new knowledge and its application depend on grooming and learning at the school and hence need for promoting vocational training programs at school level so that those who aspire for the higher education have aptitude, will and zeal..Autonomous institutions

running innovative Four year undergraduate program for lifelong learning require effective academic leadership to promote collaborative and participative teaching and learning through research. Academics in higher education need to be trained for taking up leadership role at various levels in an autonomous institution. Institutional leadership should build a kind of eco set up for leveraging academia –society –industry integration for creating entrepreneurial culture. The paper strongly recommends that institutions need to be responsible, always in learning mode and innovative for effective implementation of the national education policy. Sixty six UGC: Human Resource Development Centers (Formerly UGC Academic Staff Collages) in different universities of India need to recalibrate, redesign and reorient their curriculums for leadership development program as per the reforms in the new policy. Cost and Benefit analysis of training may not be done as this has to be nation's priority.

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