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Continuous Evaluation System: Basics for Everyone

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Abstract

Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in India have survived a long duration with traditional content in syllabi and examinations. It is really a good thing to know that there is a complete change in many of the cases regarding content, delivery and examination pattern. It is also true but at the same time that mere changing titles of the system and conventions do not assure of any positive impact. It is at this juncture we need to take into consideration the reality of what is happening in HEIs campuses. It is a deliberate fact that the presence of a working system in schools does fetch a much better result but in HEIs, it is not only challenging but difficult also. It is better to stay away from the utopiac statements and begin framing some new policies for shifting examinations to evaluation and assessment.

Key Words: Conventional methods, HEIs, schooling patterns, evaluation and assessment

Introduction:

HEIs in India have seen a working transition from the most conventional to the most recent trends in education. It is also seen in the methodology of teaching-learning process. There is no doubt that the shift is being monitored and also tracked with keen interest from educationalists and academicians but the ground reality is still different. In some of the institutions, we find that the HEIs have taken to the schooling pattern so as to look into the proper process of teaching learning as well as resultant of whatever policies are decided by them. Taking into consideration the facts around, at some places the schooling has been a great success whereas it stood practically impossible. A

Continuous Evaluation refers to a system of **evaluation** of students that covers all aspects of students' development. It is a developmental process of **assessment** which

emphasizes on two fold objectives. This system helps institutions

Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) system was introduced by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) in India to assess all aspects of a student's development on a **continuous** basis throughout the year.

Regular observation of practical skills or attitudes, e.g. collaboration skills, collaboration during tutorials, etc., Regular feedback on teacher's portfolio, paper, etc., Regular assessment of your verbal language skills, Regular testing of insight into theoretical concepts are all necessary for continuous assessment process.

Let's look into some of the most common things that can be taken care of while we go for the evaluation process.

Assessment of teaching means taking a measure of its effectiveness. "Formative"

assessment is measurement for the purpose of improving it. ... **Evaluation** is the process of observing and measuring a thing for the purpose of judging it and of determining its “value,” either by comparison to similar things, or to a standard.

The primary purpose of assessment is to improve students' learning and teachers' teaching as both respond to the information it provides. Assessment for learning is an ongoing **process** that arises out of the interaction between teaching and learning.

Continuous assessment isn't new. Teachers naturally **assess** whether or not their students have understood or mastered a concept or skill before moving on. ... Firstly, it clarifies what content or skills the teacher thinks are **important** to learn which enables students to review relevant material. It is followed by remedial measures also but they can be developed on the basis of individual places. For example, the placement of educational institutions, lot of students, type of courses taught, teaching methodology used in the classroom, material used for facilitation of teaching learning, etc.

There is also a different outlook and approach needed for taking up these processes at grass-root level. The first and foremost thing is the categorization of geography such as rural and urban. It is necessary to have such categorization as it affects the complete process of education. There are some practical difficulties which cannot be overlooked. Remote and distant places are likely to face problems such as availability of resources and infrastructural facilities. They may not be updated for every

new happening and technology based initiatives elsewhere.

In all these matters the process of continuous evaluation and assessment also gets affected and hampered. As there are not proper inputs and mechanism followed in absence of the subjects that are to be assessed and evaluated, the resultant may not stand genuine.

Report of The All India Survey on Higher Education-2014-15 published by the MHRD-India has some of the key highlights:

There are **760 Universities, 38498 colleges and 12276 Stand Alone Institutions** listed on AISHE web portal and out of them 740 Universities, 34452 Colleges and 7627 Stand Alone Institutions have responded during the survey. 256 Universities are affiliating i.e. having Colleges.

- 261 Universities are privately managed. 293 Universities are located in rural area.
- 11 Universities are exclusively for women, 3 in Rajasthan, 2 in Tamil Nadu & 1 each in Andhra Pradesh, Delhi, Haryana, Karnataka, Maharashtra and West Bengal.
- In addition to 1 Central Open University, 13 State Open Universities and 1 State Private Open University, there are 112 Dual mode Universities, which offer education through distance mode also and the maximum (18) of them are located in Tamil Nadu.
- There are 430 General, 90 Technical, 61 Agriculture & Allied, 45 Medical, 20 Law, 11 Sanskrit, 7 Language and 60 other Universities.

- The top 8 States in terms of highest number of colleges in India are Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh and Telangana.
- Bangalore district tops in terms of number of colleges with 948 colleges followed by Jaipur with 590 colleges. Top 50 districts have about 35% of colleges.
- College density, i.e. the number of colleges per lakh eligible population (population in the age-group 18-23 years) varies from 7 in Bihar to 60 in Telangana as compared to All India average of 27.
- 58% Colleges are located in Rural Area. 10.7% Colleges are exclusively for Women.
- Only 1.7% Colleges run Ph.D. programme and 33% Colleges run Post Graduate Level programmes.

Catering to the academic needs with all such variations is a great task and thereby following a system that tracks continuously for assessment and evaluation of learners.

There can be some basic measures taken for the procedural part of continuous assessment and evaluation:

1. There should be a common and universal format for seeking and tracking learners in their respective fields and curriculum.
2. An even centralized platform for filling of such information can be created. Taking into consideration the extra large amount of learners, this seems to be an upheaval task but it can be decentralized for facilitation. Universities and States can be the first category.
3. Measures and policies to be decided for the process needs to be published first and opinions regarding the same can be sought so that the diversity can be made later made into uniformity.
4. Rules and regulations can also be developed so that there is consistency in working out the measures. This binds people together and further disturbances can be avoided for better.
5. The least is learners be made aware of the process that they are likely to get this process for handling. In this case, while a learner opts for this system he/she will not see the things anew and have a positive approach towards it.

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which the council has envisaged in promoting its core values.

Gender Equality: A Challenge in the Journey of Higher Education Institutions

Introduction

UNESCO's World Atlas of Gender Equality in Education, published in 2012 [3], is the clearest example of this international commitment to global gender equality across and including all levels of education. Even though there has been enormous growth in student numbers, including a 500 percent increase across the globe, over the last 40 years, women do not benefit as well as men from their involvement in Higher Education Institutions (HEI).¹ And therefore, Gender Equality and Women Empowerment are envisaged as important Developmental goal wherein Education is regarded as one of the means to achieve development. India being part of international Community, the international commitments are translated as well in its National policy. Effective measures in various fields are being taken to bring about gender equality and empower women. It is well accepted fact that in the process of National Development, Women play a vital role. Women are equal contributors in the process of development and hence, it is essential to link gender equality with sustainable development for various reasons. Firstly, in order to achieve Just and fair sustainable development, it cannot be envisaged without considering the rights, dignity and capabilities of half of the world's population that is women. Secondly, it is morally as well as ethically vital for achieving gender equality and

realizing the human rights, dignity and capabilities of diverse groups of women. Gender Equality, Women empowerment and recognition of women's rights have become more significant and important worldwide in the wake of sustainability.² Keeping in mind disproportionate impact of social, cultural and economic burden on women and girls, it is necessary that our policy actions should be effective enough in addressing the issues faced by them.

Attaining sustainable development implies not only economic and environmental sustainability but also prioritizing social sustainability. Social sustainability implies realization of women's human rights, their attainment of capabilities and wellbeing. Gender equality is a complex phenomenon that requires a continuous and holistic approach to addressing issues such as stereotypes and gender representations, absence of role models and mentors, tokenism, gendered organizations (with gendered structures, assumptions and norms). In the academic and research world, gender inequality is an issue which needs to be addressed effectively if we are claiming development.

Gender Equity and Gender Equality

Educational equity, also referred to as equity in education, is a measure of achievement, fairness, and opportunity in education. The study of education equity is often linked with the study of excellence and equity. Equity in education means that personal or social circumstances such as gender, ethnic origin or family background, are not obstacles to achieving educational potential and that all individuals reach at least a basic

minimum level of skills.³ However, each concept carries implications of fairness and how the students should be treated and the resources to be distributed. It is implicit that all the students irrespective of their gender caste, creed and religion must get an equal opportunity and equal treatment. The importance of educational equity is based on premise that the attainment of education directly correlates to the quality of future life. Thus academic institution that respects educational equity is as strong foundation for strong thriving society. Where equality contemplates sameness, equity is understood as fairness. The educational equity orientation reframes the policy discussion and orients it around ensuring that the educational institutions help all students to achieve, even if that means distributing resources “unequally.” It is the synthesis of both equality and equity that will lead to an ideal society where everyone will have what everyone is entitled to. Thus, there is a direct relation between educational equity, gender justice and development of the society.

Education and Gender Equity

Education is one of the most important means of empowering women with the knowledge, skills and self-confidence necessary to participate fully in the development process. More than 40 years ago, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights asserted that "everyone has the right to education".⁴ Education is the fundamental right which empowers individuals to increase their well-being and contribute in broader economic and social growth. Naturally improvement in education results in growth of economy and in turn growth of

development. With increasing number of women entering in high level of education, greater equality is seen in this sector. However, it is not true always in the absence of inclusive and high quality education. It is necessary for girls and boys, women and men to eliminate gender stereotypes and make education accessible and available across their lifetime. In India girls are perceived as a liability. She needs to be given dowry, another menace, at the time of her marriage. On the top of it spending on her education is considered as an unnecessary expense which the poor parents try to avoid. This is the reason, in India, we have ‘Beti Bachao Beti Padhao’ campaign that aims not only to boost and implement education policy but also to ensure decrease in female infanticide and female foeticide. Not only Education is an imperative for gender equality and women’s rights, but also access to information technologies, revision in curricula and policies to counteract gender discrimination is essential for social sustainability. In addition, there is a need to develop a non-formal educational curriculum to prevent violence against women and girls.

Gender Mainstreaming: a need of an hour

Gender mainstreaming is essential to achieve gender equality and women empowerment. Gender mainstreaming is a process of creating knowledge and awareness of and responsibility for gender equality among all across all the strata. Especially in the Educational sector it is essential to create awareness among all the educational professionals engaged and the stakeholders involved in higher education.

Gender Mainstreaming is the means and a strategy to achieve gender equality in Higher Education Institutions through sensitization and educating the stakeholders. That is why it is much needed to have gender equality at the centre of all the activities right from designing an education policy, curriculum, infrastructure, resource allocation, planning and implementation.

Canvas of Higher education is quite vast encompassing general subject disciplines (sciences, humanities, arts, mathematics, social and cultural sciences), technical (engineering, medicine, agricultural and life sciences and other applied sciences), education and training, vocational and skill based programme, training for the service and hospitality sector, teacher education, management education and so on. It covers almost all types of higher education, training and research institutions. However, Higher education does not stand alone but brings along with it a baggage of social and gender based disadvantages. Hence, it is necessary to address gender inequality- based issues in higher education in the context of burden of non-learning, discrimination induced loss of self-esteem and confidence, or facility with language. Universities and Higher Education Institutions are conferred with a duty to undertake the task of imparting education with adequate concerns of gender equality issues. May be that is the reason while assessing the HEI, the emphasis is reflected in each and every criterion. It is the foundation of all the core values of National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) namely, Contributing to National Development, Fostering Global Competencies among Students, Inculcating

a Value System among Students, Promoting the Use of Technology and Quest for Excellence.

Discourse and policy have been observed in the following four arenas, firstly, Greater access for women in different fields through affirmative action (more seats reserved for women), secondly, greater participation of women in technical and science education, thirdly, nurturing and development of women's studies and lastly, women representation in managerial positions in higher education.

Gender Equity in Higher Education Institutions: a Concern at National Level

University Grants Commission has taken up the step to establish Women's Studies Centres in Universities and Colleges with all the necessary financial assistance to encourage and promote research on women's studies and add to the body of knowledge that informs higher education.

National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC), Bangalore as an independent body constituted for conducting process of assessment and accreditation aims to ensure that its processes are in tune with local, regional and global changes in higher education scenario. It evaluates the institutions for its conformance to the standards of quality in terms of its performance related to the educational processes and outcomes, curriculum coverage, teaching-learning processes, faculty, research, infrastructure, learning resources, organisation, governance, financial well being and student services through the seven criteria. NAAC in its process of evaluation through its Quality

activities. Various activities through Nirbhay Kanya Abhiyan, NSS and NCC in majority of Arts, Science and Commerce colleges help create awareness for achieving gender equality. Such programs also provide a platform and an equal opportunity to not only girls students to express their issues but also to discuss with boys more effectively as it is usually experienced that these issues arise because of the boys.

It is the responsibility of the HEI to provide adequate infrastructural facilities that would suit the needs of all its students. At the same time it is necessary to provide enough facilities to girls in Higher Education Institutions. Separate wash rooms and rest rooms, Ladies room with adequate recreational facilities, sanitary pad vending machines and disposal facilities would enable girls to access the college premises freely and without any barrier. Accessibility of the infrastructural facilities is essential for inclusive education. It is imperative of the HEI to provide ramp facility for all the especially abled students including girls. Special assistance to visually challenged students is also a part of reasonable accommodation to make learning resources available in order to ensure the right to education.

It is the efforts of an institution to provide necessary assistance to students, to enable them to acquire meaningful experiences for learning at the campus and to facilitate their holistic development and progression. Gender equality may be attained through the initiative of the HEI by facilitating mechanisms like guidance cell, placement cell, grievance redressal cell and welfare measures. It is evident enough from the

statistics showing percentage of girls students securing on campus jobs. The careers of distinguished alumni reflect attainment of program outcomes in view of women empowerment and gender equality. Women's self-help groups and women entrepreneurs is the best examples where one can see the gender equality and women empowerment going hand in hand.

Effective leadership by setting values and participative decision-making process where women are given equal opportunity and participation is the key to achieve the vision, mission and goals of the institution and to achieve gender equality. However, in many of the HEI, in spite of proven women competence, the decision making is concentrated in the hands of men. Especially when it comes to financial decision making, this stark reality is very much evident.⁵ There are few institutions where the women though are office bearers, they act as a rubber stamp or puppets at the hands of their husbands or in-laws.

Admittedly, there are very few HEIs where Female Head of the Institutions do not face any hurdle in taking decision favoring female co-worker or girl student. Participation of women in governance is crucial for achieving gender equity. The percentage of women teaching and non-teaching faculty, on an average, is still disproportionate to the percentage of men staff. An educational institution operates in the context of the larger education system in the country. In changing national and global contexts an educational institution has to be responsive to the emerging challenges and pressing issues. It has a social responsibility to be proactive in the efforts towards

development in the larger contexts. Concerns of social responsibilities towards women as a class and explicit values held by the institution in respecting the women and their capacity building is a key for achieving gender equality and women empowerment.

Conclusion

Higher education is a major site of cultural practice, identity formation and symbolic control. There are significant public and private social and material returns on investment in higher education. In the academic and research world, the under-

representation of women persists especially across specific subject areas and senior positions. Whilst there has been huge transformation in women's participation as students, especially undergraduates, in HEI across the globe, this is not matched by significant change in women's participation in academics, professional and governmental decision making. What is needed is an intellectual conviction as well as emotional readiness among all the key stakeholders to face obstacles at every stage and overcome the barriers in achieving gender equality.⁶

¹ See generally, Educ. Sci. 2015, 5, 10–25; doi:10.3390/educsci5010010

² U.N. World Commission on Environment and Development, Our Common Future: Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development, chap. 2, paragraph 1, Annex to U.N. Doc. A/42/427 (Aug. 4, 1987)

³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Educational_equity last visited on 13th Feb, 2019

⁴ See generally, The Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

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