

From the Editor's Desk..

Higher education should be based on quality, not quantity; receive merit-based funding; and be free of unnecessary bureaucracy. Not the least of the benefits of educational reform is to foster the pride of achievement at national and international levels.



- Ahmed Zewail, Nobel Laureate

The Higher education scenario in India is at crossroads, mainly due to some major upheavals in the existing regulatory authorities. According to experts and academics, a lot more efforts need to be put in to attain the desired levels of research and internationalization of Indian campuses. India has had a rich culture of erudition; in fact the formalized methods of Vedic learning helped inspire the establishment of large teaching institutions such as Taxila, Nalanda, and Vikramashila which are often characterized as India's early universities. Despite such a rich educational heritage, only a handful of Indian varsities feature in global rankings. Paucity of funds coupled with its largely linear models with limited focus on specialization is what ails the Indian higher education scenario. The gross enrolment ratio (GER) in higher education is 24.5—which means that out of every 100 youths eligible for higher education, less than 25 are pursuing tertiary education.

The two regulatory bodies, namely University Grants Commission (UGC) and All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) are at the helm of affairs. These bodies can prove their mettle as facilitators and provide impetus to the quality of education provided. Taking note of the shortcomings, the Human Resource Development Ministry proposed certain constructive steps; however the sensitivity of the political situation hindered the progress of such reforms. Hence the exigency of the situation is to expedite introduction of constructive reforms to aid the advancement of the higher education.

Right from late 1990s, Europe made sincere attempts at making higher education systems more powerful and competitive. The Sorbonne Declaration, EU's Lisbon Strategy and EUs' Modernization agenda have helped bring in the right governance, funding structure and process as a precondition to achieve these goals. Such efforts paid off and Netherlands tops today as one of the desired destinations for students wanting to pursue higher education. These measures are indeed exemplary and the Indian Government could emulate such success stories.

The need of the hour in India is to define and bring changes in the higher education sector. Researchers with innate talents have to work with Government bodies on finding solutions to the impairing problems plaguing the higher education sector. Come, let's join our hands and collaborate with policy makers to take Indian higher education to greater heights!!!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anitha'.

Dr. Anitha Ramachander

Chief Editor