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ROLE OF THE FACULTY IN ENHANCEMENT OF QUALITY EDUCATION

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Abstract

Faculty motivation is a subject about which much has been talked and very little done in the area of Higher Education. Faculty is the most important factor of Education when we talk of Quality and its enhancement. Efforts have been made to make the salary packages attractive for the faculty in higher education, and, today it can be compared with the best in the country. A few other efforts such as providing them fellowships and scholarships, offering projects, have also increased over the years. Despite these, our higher education system suffers from the lack of motivated quality faculty. The time has come when we all must think very seriously about the ways and means through which we can motivate our faculty members. By doing so, we will be making our institutions academically vibrant and socially justified. This paper to be critically analysed “Role of the Faculty in Enhancement of Quality Education”.

Keywords: Motivation, Aim of Education, Policy Perspective, Inclusive Growth, Regularities.

Introduction

Statement of the Problem

“It always seems impossible until it’s done”

Nelson Mandela

The motivation is important to look at the scene of the faculty today. The role of the faculty today in Education institutions is one of the most complex ones and difficult too. It is a tough job to deal with the present younger generation which is full of enthusiasm, emotions and eagerness. It also has the access to a bigger world of information technology adding to its mobility, spirit and thinking powers. The entire world is undergoing a sea-change in the IT scenario. We are now living in an era where we see changes and developments taking place every minute at rapid pace. This has exposed the younger generation to a new world of knowledge, creativity and information. Along with these, the fast-changing life style has adversely affected the emotional quotient of this young generation. We have never seen such an impulsive generation before; it can take decisions of life and death in a fraction of a second the universe of knowledge has also expanded manifold and now we are in a position to access much more knowledge in the similar time frame. Gathering the knowledge or information is not a challenge today. However, now the challenge is to process it and make it conducive for our use. This is a little easier for those who are at the receiving end. But it is really tough for those who bear the responsibility of delivering it, and that is where the faculty members of the higher institutions come into picture!

There are other factors too in the society which brought changes in the mentality of the younger generation about which we all know and hence those are not discussed here. As it is, it was never ever easy to be a teacher, an ideal teacher. But today the challenge has reached its peak it seems. In this century who was and certainly is the youth icon for India. He always thought of a brighter India, a healthier India, and a happier India. His idea about education is still the land mark in the education philosophy, when he says, "Education is the manifestation of perfection already in men." It is true that our ultimate aim in education is to bring out that perfection from the student and put it for the betterment of the society. The question is does our faculty possess the capability to bring out that perfection? Are they living up to this goal of education?

It is said quite often that today we need the youth to be like Swami Vivekanand in order to build a healthy society, cultured society. But have we ever thought that it was Ramkrishna Paramhans who created Vivekananda out of Narendra? How many of us are like Ramkrishna Paramhans today who has the capacity o groom pupils like Swami Vivekananda? We need a Chanakya to groom a Chandragupta, Samartha Ramdas to make a Shivaji, Ramkrishana Paramhans to create a Vivekananda. The essence of the quality lies today in grooming good, dedicated and motivated faculty in the institutions of Higher Education.

The Role of a teacher

The first principle of true teaching is that nothing: an be taught. The teacher is not an instructor or a task master; he is a helper and a guide. His business is to suggest and not to impose The second principle is that the mind has to be consulted in its own growth. The idea of hammering the child into the shape desired by the parent or teacher is a barbarous and ignorant superstition. It is he himself who must flourish in accordance with his own nature. The chief aim of education should be to help the growing soul to



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draw out that in itself which is best and make it perfect for a noble use The third principle of education is to work from the near to the far, from that which is to that which shall be A free and natural growth is the condition of genuine development.

Looking at what Maharshi Aurabindo has said it is clear that the role of the teacher must be understood in today's scenario and be communicated to the teachers accordingly. It is not only a philosophical jargon but a reality now. Swami Vivekananda said, "You cannot teach a child any more than you grow a plant." We must understand that our role as a teacher is to facilitate the student in acquiring the knowledge and information which is otherwise available in this world. The role of a teacher is identified as facilitator and a motivator. Dr. Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan was a great philosopher who identified the role of a teacher in a similar way. He also combined his thoughts with our mythological teachings and old scriptures. He said that, ... The teacher refines and reconciles the different currents of thought, the Vedic cult of sacrifice, the Upanishad teaching of the transcendent Brahman, the Bhagavata theism and tender piety, the Samkhya dualism and the Yoga meditation. He draws all these living elements of Hindu life and thought into an organic unity. He adopts the method, not of denial but of presentation and shows how these different lines of thought converge towards the same end.'

We may say that a teacher should first be a serious scholar, and then he should perform his role with a complete sense of belongingness to the profession and the pupil. He must also be imbued with and enthused with a certain amount of austerity and renunciation, deep humanity and tolerance.

The Real Challenge in global era

The real challenge regarding motivating the faculty lies here. The UGC in its document on the 12th Plan, "Inclusive and quality expansion of Higher Education." accepts that "shortage of quality faculty coupled with lack of faculty mobility across the region is a major constraint in the development of India Higher Education system. Faculty development programs and insufficient and ineffective in nature."(Page 90)

The real situation is that despite the best efforts of the UGC, MHRD, different State Governments and the Universities, we are unable to get good quality, dedicated faculty in our public institutions. The best academic talent of our country is not attracted much towards the teaching profession. We are getting majority of teachers who do not opt teaching as their first priority. It is a pity that our best talent goes to the applied field and the responsibility of conducting research and innovation rests with other persons placed down in the order of merit. It is quite disheartening to see that even teachers promote their best students to join the applied streams in technology or medicine rather than encouraging them to join pure or core subject streams. This entire process has thus given us a generation of teachers who have joined this profession rather unwillingly and with lack of interest. The declining social esteem is another cause for not getting the best students drawn towards teaching. Material gains or the dominance of power have marginalized the worth of knowledge and satisfaction. In the process, the profession which suffered the most is teaching.

Moreover, our efforts to enhance the quality of education have also put an unnecessary pressure on the teaching community and made their position further vulnerable. The autonomy of a teacher that he enjoyed in the past is vanishing day by day. The teacher has been caught in the vicious circle where he is required to prove himself and is also required to maintain the quality of teaching at the same time!! Is that not paradoxical?

How to Motivate

Albert Einstein said, "Education is not the learning of facts but the training of the mind to think." We must follow this line and think about a programme to motivate our faculty engaged in Higher Education. The report of the "UGC Inclusive and quality expansion of Higher Education" is silent on motivating the faculty. In the document "Attracting quality faculty, promoting faculty mobility and continuous faculty development programmes", it states "The 12th FYP should envisage effective implementation of the brain gain policy. It must envisage newer initiatives to attract quality faculty coupled with mobility across the regions to meet the national level teacher requirements. In this connection, the following appear imminent: (a) student teacher ratio: An accepted national policy for student-teacher ratio should be strictly adhered to in all colleges and universities. The recently approved ratio by the UGC be made mandatory for all universities and colleges. It has come to notice that several departments of the universities covered under Special Assistance Programme (SAP) of the UGC are getting renewal without a serious scrutiny of the minimum required faculty in such departments, hundreds of which do not have the prescribed faculty strength and, in some cases, it is even less than (b) Ban on teacher recruitment to be lifted: the ban on teacher recruitment by some state governments should be immediately lifted and also the private aided colleges should be allowed to fill up the vacancies without hurdles."



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However, the above steps seem insufficient, looking at the seriousness of the problem. It has been observed that motivation as one of the foremost problems in education is often inadequately addressed. In the same report where reforming the Academic Staff College (ASC) has been discussed, it is stated that, "Based on the outcome of the review process of the ASCs by the NAAC, the restructured professional development activities could be facilitated by converting the ASCs as Faculty Development Centres. Faculty development initiatives could include Academic Performance Indicators (APIs) as per the UGC Regulations, 2013.- for faculty appointments and promotions. There is a need for continuous training-cum-capacity building programmes for university/college teachers at all cadre levels. The select number of Deemed/Private universities should also be involved in offering orientation programmes and refresher courses on voluntary basis. Emphasis should be laid on training of even senior teachers through these centres and weightage to be given to those who attend extra programmes in API".

These are ambitious schemes and may take their own time to be implemented with full potential. There is every likelihood that these measures may not even reach to the faculty working in state- funded universities where the majority of students study! Even if such scheme reaches there, it may not be utilized meaningfully because such institutions are as such struggling with basic facilities like inadequate faculty strength, poor infrastructure, scarcity of financial resources, over politicization of education, and of course, the local interference. There is a need to find out solutions at two levels, long term and short term.

Long Term Solution

It is presumed that teacher teaching at the higher level do not require formal training of teaching. It is considered that the knowledge gained at the Masters level or beyond sufficiently equips a person to teach higher classes. To supplement this, concept of orientation and refresher courses emerged which was supposed to compensate for the formal and professional training of teaching. But we can ask ourselves- is that enough to equip the teachers in the present scenario? Perhaps not. It is important to groom, nurture and develop teachers for imparting education at the higher level. A six month to one year course can be designed for the persons aspiring to become teachers in Higher Education. During the course, proper emphasis should be given on his mental framework, teaching skills, communication skills, use of technology and above all on motivation. Eminent academicians may be requested to design such a course and it should be conducted through various ASCs spread across the country. This should be pre job training and be available to those already selected for the job as faculty. This should be made compulsory to those who are joining as Faculty. This may be a precursor to the thought of Indian Education Service which perhaps would change the fate of Higher Education.

Short Term Solutions

Apart from the regular motivational tactics adopted normally by the institutions for its staff a few specific motivational practices as suggested below could be adopted for the faculty. This would be useful in bringing back the self-esteem and professional pride among the existing as well as upcoming faculty. A few actions are suggested here as short-term solution for motivating the faculty:

Summing Up

There can be many more such measure which measures could be institute-specific and some person- specific. If there is a clear understanding while administering the faculty that they are a knowledgeable, creative and intellectual lot, things would become a lot easier. The role of the Vice Chancellor is very important in this and he has to play a role of real motivator. It normally difficult to strike the balance between administering and motivating the people of that level. There are diversified challenges to be addressed to on priority. But please consider the issue of Motivation too on top priority. 'We must not forget the words of former US Secretary of Education, Terrell H. Bell, "There are three things to remember about education. The first one is motivation. The second is motivation. The third one is motivation." I conclude with the message of Swami Vivekanand which he gave to all of us as a source of inspiration: China, one time behind India, is now way ahead, producing two times more PhDs and M Techs. They have installed 300 parks in recent pat and adopted a vision to produce 100 hi- tech firms/ startups each year. Does it present an example to Indian universities and colleges? Should we emulate this world proven

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