



# Redefining the Role of UGC Academic Staff Colleges in the Context of Global Competitiveness of Higher Education

CHANDRAKANT G. BRAHMBHATT  
Assistant Professor,  
ASC Gujarat University, Ahmedabad  
Gujarat (India)

## Abstract:

*The NPE recognized the need for improving quality of teaching and proposed to provide opportunities for professional and career development. So that teachers may fulfill their role and responsibility of higher education. It was proposed to enhance their motivation skills and knowledge through systematic orientation in specific subject's techniques and methodologies and thereby enucleate in them the right kind of values that would in turn encourage them to take initiatives for innovative and creative work.*

---

**Keywords:** ASC, Competitiveness, Higher Education, UGC

---

## 1. Introduction

The National Education Policy 1986 had recommended a comprehensive programme for professional development of teacher in Higher Education System for quality improvement subsequently 45 Academic Staff Colleges have been established in VII Plan by UGC in universities across the country. The current number is 66.

The National Policy on Education (NPE) 1986 in its programme of action makes a pointed reference to the crucial link between teacher motivation and the quality of education.

*Keeping the above objectives in view; the following steps were proposed:*

- (A) To organize specially designed orientation programmes in pedagogy educational psychology and philosophy and socio-economic and political concerns for all new entrants at the level of lecturers;
- (B) To organize such programmes (orientation / refresher courses) for serving teacher covering every teacher at last once in three to five years;
- (C) To organize specially designed orientation / refresher course in IT for new entrants as well as for in service teachers;
- (D) To encourage teacher to participate in seminars, symposia; workshops etc.

## 2. Functions of Academic Staff Colleges

The functions of Academic Staff College is to plan organized implement monitor and evaluate orientation courses for newly appointed college / university lectures within the Jurisdiction of one or more university in a state. It also organizes refresher courses for serving teachers, and orientation programmes for senior administrators and heads of departments principles; officers etc. in the philosophy of orientation and changed management system.

The above objective and philosophy in mind, the Academic College was established by the University Grants Commission to enable in service teacher to:

- (1) Understand the significance of education in general and higher education in particular, in the global and Indian contexts;
- (2) Understand the linkages between economic and socio-economic and cultural development with particular reference to the Indian polity where democracy secularism and social equity are the basic tenets of society.
- (3) Acquire and improve art of teaching at the college/university level to achieve goals of higher education.
- (4) Keep abreast of the latest developments in their specific subjects.
- (5) understand the organization and management of a college / university and to perceive the role of teacher in the total system;
- (6) Utilize opportunities for development of personality initiative and creativity,
- (7) promote computer literacy as well use of ICT in teaching and learning process.

In order to achieve the objectives of the scheme, the curriculum for the orientation programmes may have the following four components:

- (1) **Component A** : Awareness of linkages between society, environment, development and education
- (2) **Component B** : Philosophy of Education, Indian Education System and Pedagogy
- (3) **Component C** : Resource awareness and knowledge generation
- (4) **Component D** : Management and personality development

So far as the refresher courses are concerned, the focus has been on to:

- (1) Provide opportunities for teachers in service to exchange experience with their peers and to mutually learn from each other;
- (2) Provide a forum for serving teachers to keep themselves abreast of the latest advances in various subjects.
- (3) Create the culture of learning and self improvement the teachers;
- (4) Provide opportunities to further widen their knowledge and so pursue research studies;
- (5) Provide an introduction to new methods and innovations in higher education so that the participants can in turn develop their own innovative methods of instruction;
- (6) Bring out publication relevant for enhancing the teaching and research capabilities of teachers.

### 3. Problems of Higher Education

Higher education in India has grown significantly since the country's independence in 1947. At the time of independence the gross enrolment ratio in higher education was mere 0.7 % with a network of 18 universities, 500 colleges and about 799 teachers. The present enrolment in higher education is about 12.5 % with the target of 15 % by the end of 11<sup>th</sup> plan period. The higher education institutional network has grown enormously and it is the third largest system in the world only next to USA and China. The network has 418 universities, 20676 colleges and 5.70 lakh teachers besides premium technical and management institutions.

The higher education system is under stress to provide a required number of skilled human resources equipped with the knowledge and technical skills to cater to the demands of the fast growing economy. The rapid expansion of higher education system has brought several pertinent issue related to standards of its quality to the forefront one of the most important issues is skills and training of teachers to impart quality education to the students. The quality of education hinges on the skill and abilities of teachers. In the present day context teachers play multiple roles including teaching, consultancy extension work, development of instructional material, and

management of institutions. So in higher education as one of the most important issues which every country must invest in to fulfill the effective functioning of teaching and learning system for quality out-puts. The UGC Academic Staff Colleges in the universities have to play a predominant role in building up the required human capital. The entire Higher Education System has to recognize itself to meet the following requirements.

1. To expend quantitatively to meet the multiplying needs due to increased ambition as well as increased number of graduates.
2. To quality of content and technique of education while increasing quantity.
3. The quality of teachers
4. The quality of infrastructure and finally
5. To create proper interface between university and Government; university and industry and university and society
6. To create a system of education which in cost-effective
7. To view education as an enterprise
8. Proper mechanism of resource allocation flow and utilization; and
9. Introduction of proper planning and management practices

Two strong forces which will effect change in the planning and operation during the twenty first century are Globalization and Information Technology Revolution.

#### **4. Challenges of Globalization and Role of ASCs in Improving Quality of Education**

Globalization refers to the growing economic interdependence of countries worldwide through the increasing volume and variety of cross-border transaction in goods and services and of international capital flows and the rapid and widespread diffusion of technology. For nations and their enterprise, it means a new world of international mega-competition. Globalizations affect education as well. Human resource development is the largest service sector. In the context of globalization and technological advancement, the need for and importance of flexible training to bridge the skills gap is heightened. Flexible training includes Enterprise-based training and continuous education, for the creation of a highly skilled and flexible work force as it enables enterprises and nations to achieve competitiveness and workers to achieve employability in a global economy.

Globalization is creating an ever-increasing need to constantly learn to adapt to the needs of enterprise and the individual Enterprises are looking for adaptable people with sound judgment and reasoning, able to solve problems, identify new opportunities and give customer specific services.

If we look at the scenario of Indian Higher Education, we aim at the broadening of the mind, inculcation of values and building of character which is essential for the cultural, social and economic development of a nation. In the new scenario, higher education will be considered as a commercial product/ service and a new set of regulations will become operative and the universities will get a new structure a form and definition. The integration of the two aspects of increased market access and contributing to national development would be a challenging task for higher education in the developing countries. Pretty soon one can envisage the conquest of foreign universities over the higher education institutions in India. In the global competition, there will certainly be survival of the fittest and those who are not conscious of quality and relevance will vanish from the scene.

The quality of higher education in many institutions in the country is mediocre except for a few of the technical, medical and social science institutions. Even these institutions are export houses

rather than attracting overseas students into their fold and earning foreign exchange. It is time to establish centers abroad or to get people to study here. Gradually the mediocre institutions will also wake up to the clarion call of quality in higher education and soon, quality will be contagious to other institutions for survival and then move towards excellence. The University Grants Commission has made a beginning to attract foreign students particularly of African Countries (Ethiopia, Kenya and Nigeria). The recent June 2004 Education Fair in above countries is a positive step.

### **5. Need for Human Resource Development**

Without a strong human infrastructure, the process of development will not become self-sustaining. Quality education as an input, as a process and as an output becomes the instrument to combat the Competition. The Quality of the knowledge society depends on the quality of education. A happy amalgam of competence with values and positive attitude is the outcome we are looking for. This alone can bridge the gap between the higher education graduate's skills and the needs and expectations of the employment sector. Eventually, the higher education system should have the capacity of meeting the education requirements of diverse sector of the society. Globalization or internationalization is the fast developing scenario in all areas. The opening up of international markets and the entering of the multinationals in all countries have given new dimensions to the strategies for growth. Industries and the technologies are reacting at a faster rate to cope up with international competition. However, the universities are yet to react with the required speed. In this new scenario the Academic Staff Colleges will act as an catalyst agency to bring this change through organizing orientation / refresher courses for teaching faculty in the universities and colleges.

There is a rapid growth and development of "knowledge industry", it seems that the quantity of knowledge will be doubling every five years and this will require educational systems to develop ability and capacity to move information more quickly and economically with world-wide applicability. At present ASC's are equipped to run courses which mostly have a regional impact. The ASC's have no experience of facing any competition. They have to restructure themselves to meet these challenges of competition both nationally and worldwide. For some ASC's this need for change may look like a threat; for some it will be a new opportunity for growth. Those who view this as a new opportunity will be the ones who are likely to succeed.

To act globally and in a competitive environment, the university through academic staff colleges must develop an attitude by which students are treated as clients with continuously changing needs and ambitions. Teachers and scientists may have to work more to satisfy the wishes of students and the society than their own internal urges and impulses. The academic freedom will have many restricted earnings. This would definitely create some tensions but avoiding these tensions will only add more tensions between global and local, tradition and modernity, short term and long term considerations.

The Radhakrishnan Commission Report (1948) laments "The civilized peoples of the world are puzzled as to why intelligence and education do not bring peace and order; why religion does not bring brotherhood. One reason is the while professional men in a large degree are in key positions in modern society, education has failed to discharge one of its important responsibilities, and that is, developing principles and philosophy by which professional men should work. The engineers have anyone who pays them well, regardless of the social value of their services. The lawyer's skills are for sale for right or wrong while the physicians seek a place of largest income rather than that of greatest service. While each may be highly skilled, the total effect is that of great internal stress and

even social deterioration.” What Radhakrishnan Commission Report mentioned in 1948 is still valid. The education and the culture developed through education have not met the challenges for a value based national and human development.

The global competition will further complicate this issue. Further, global competition in industry and economic will create more ambitions in the minds of people and hence will give less importance to values other than money and comforts. A sustained human development will be difficult if every human being becomes selfish in this competitive world. When selflessness and service for other members of society is absent, the growth will be individualistic and philosophy will be the ‘survival of the fittest’. New technology and the new money will only add to the tensions and will not contribute to value based development unless conscious planning is done in this direction.

Exploding of information and communication technologies offer a variety of new methodologies for producing and distributing knowledge video conferencing, internet based discussion; use of multimedia, web-based instruction will all bring international expertise and access.

The planning process becomes further complicated when we realize that public financing is no longer easily available for the development of higher education. In spite of the recognition by all democratic government and political systems, the importance of higher education for national and human development, the specific budget allocation for this sector is systematically diminishing. This may be because more importance is given to the issues related to health care, poverty, population, security, development and maintenance of public Infrastructure like roads, electricity, water, etc. Hence, for a successful educational activity it will be harmful if education is dealt with in isolation. New solutions will emerge only if education activity becomes a part of every other activity. Particularly this will be so for generating more resources for education.

Therefore the immediate is to understand the nature of the global environment and develop networking with universities and industries to provide varying cultural and professional experience to students and faculty so that the academic inputs in terms of curriculum and the teaching – learning process and the research output , all will facilitate the achievement and realization of our education mission.

## References

1. 10<sup>th</sup> Plan Academic Staff College Guide Lines.
2. Bali, Arun P. College Teachers Challenges and Responses
3. Higher Education in India at a glance (2012). University Grants Commission
4. Professor Competency in higher education,(1995). UGC New Delhi.
5. Sharma, Jai Narain (2002). Human Resource Management Edition
6. Singh, Amrik (2004). Fifty Years of Higher Education in India: The Role of the University Grants Commission by Sage Publications, New Delhi.