



Innovation to Excellence New Initiatives in Education at Gujarat

VIKRANT THAKORBHAI PATEL

Abstract:

The paper examines the new initiative in education at Gujarat because the 21st century is an era of knowledge. Gujarat has achieved considerable prominence in India as well as in the entire world due to its phenomenal enterprise. Gujarat has achieved considerable prominence not only in India but also in the world due to its phenomenal enterprise in science, technology, research, education, trade and commerce, proper administration and preservation of traditions. Major steps have been taking to bring the young generation of the state into mainstream activities. The government of Gujarat formed various initiatives to implement the mission. The Researcher wants to analyze the purpose and importance of the following initiative in education.

1. Knowledge Consortium of Gujarat (KCG)
2. Society for Creation of Opportunity through Proficiency in English (SCOPE)
3. Gujarat Knowledge Society (GKS)
4. Gujarat Educational Innovations Commissions (GEIC)

1. Introduction

The 21st century is an era of Knowledge. Human wisdom and knowledge have become transnational and is being transferred globally. Gujarat is being achieved an amazing process of development in science, technology, arts and commerce. The world has almost become a 'Global Village'. Human mind is being explored and exploited to its fullest in the domains of knowledge and learning world over. The days are coming when India is going to be a global leader and a torch-bearer in world. The Gujarat is expected that every citizen of Gujarat is able to take initiatives on his own and is aptly equipped with rich and noble values of our glorious cultural and historical heritage.

The Gujarat State has featured in the world history for over 5000 years. Entrepreneurs from Gujarat have been engaged in business as well as another field across the world. Gujarat has achieved considerable reputation not only in India but also in the world due to its phenomenal enterprise in science, technology, research, education, trade and commerce, proper administration and preservation of traditions. In this scenario the Higher Education of the State has emphasized on new policies and action plans declare within the youth of Gujarat. Gujarat has developed the Higher Education because of global competition and to encourage them to display their talents empowering them to meet challenges of the newer changing order of the world.

2. Knowledge Consortium of Gujarat (KCG)

Vision: KCG envisions to generate and provide ideas and paradigms for achieving excellence in education, educational management and policy framing for education in general and higher education in particular.

3. Objective

1. Extensive **sharing** and **dissemination** of knowledge
2. To provide greater **Access** and **Equity** of Higher education in the State
3. To facilitate academic reforms in the State which lead to **Quality assurance** in Higher Education

4. Innovative Initiatives of Knowledge Consortium of Gujarat (KCG)

- Saptadhara
- Udisha
- Sandhan
- Mission Mode, Implementation (MMI) and
- Academic and Administrative Audit (AAA)

4.1 Saptadhara

The Government of Gujarat has introduced 'Saptadhara' in 2009, under the auspices of Mission for Excellence in the colleges and universities. This initiative gives focus on various areas of education, art and knowledge. It will lead to overall development of the youth. The 'Saptadhara' is known as Bands of Activities or Dhara. The following are activities of 'Saptadhara':

- Knowledge Band: Knowledge Band is based on knowledge. There are Quiz, Debate, Elocution, Essay Writing and Extempore activities are organized by colleges and universities.
- Creative Expression Band: Creative Expression Band includes the activities such as Translation, Story Writing, Padpurti and Poetry Recitation etc.
- Fine Arts Band: Fine Arts Band includes the activities such as On the Spot Painting, Collage, Poster Making, Clay Modeling, Cartooning, Rangoli, Spot Photography and Mahendi etc.
- Theatre Band: Theatre Band includes the activities such as One Act Play, Mime, Mimicry and Skit etc.
- Music and Dance Band: Music and Dance Band includes the activities such as Classical Vocal Solo, Classical Instrumental Solo (Percussion), Classical Instrumental Solo (Non-Percussion), Light Vocal, Western Vocal Solo, Group Song (Indian), Group Song (Western), Folk Orchestra, Folk / Tribal Dance and Classical Dance (Indian) etc.
- Yoga and Sports Band: Yoga and Sports Band includes the activities such as Yoga, Athletics and Indoor / Outdoor Games etc.
- Community/Social Service Band: Community/Social Service Band includes the activities such as Plantation, Blood Donation, Rally for Awareness and NSS Activities etc.

4.1.1 Objectives of 'Saptadhara'

- Mission for Excellence
- Nurturing talent of the students
- For the all-round development / Holistic Development of the students
- To make our students enable to experience the joy of aesthetic pleasure and to learn from our great traditions of knowledge by way of taking up activities of 'Saptadhara'.

4.2 Universal Development of Income Generating Skills through Higher Education Agencies (UDISHA)

Higher Education Commissioner is introduced UDISHA, the placement initiative and is now implemented by KCG. UDISHA also performs the role of a lighthouse and torchbearer for the students of Gujarat as it gives a 'direction' to their professional life. Youth, between the ages of 16 to 26 for them the decisive decade, and it is filled with dreams for a better life through better education, job opportunities, lifetime relationships and a progressive career. Employability of educated youth is a challenge and that is faced by the entire country.

On one hand, there is a dearth of good employees in various job sectors- automobiles, textiles, banking, financial services, telecommunications, hospitality and even teaching. On the other hand, students passing from the system are looking forward to find the right employers from various sectors and industries. To address this problem.

4.2.1 Aim of UDISHA

The aim of UDISHA initiative is to bridge the gap between the employers and employees. UDISHA aims at directly bridging the gap between job seekers and the job providers and increasing the employability of the graduates of Gujarat, in the near future.

4.2.2. Objective of UDISHA

- Develop students' profile for the placement
- Identify their interest and capabilities through Aptitude Tests.
- Train them in Soft Skill, Functional English and ICT in accordance with the demands of the market.
- Development linkages with Job providers.
- Make necessary arrangements for placement by organizing job fairs at State, District and College level
- Bring uniformity in job placement efforts and procedures in all colleges across the state.
- Take feedback from employers and Students who get employed.

4.2.3 Activities of UDISHA Club

- Providing information about career options and job avenues
- Career counselling and placement
- Training for developing Soft Skills- Communication, Etiquette, grooming and work culture
- Motivational activities & leadership skills
- Organizing mock-interviews to equip students with interview skills at college level
- Arranging local campus placements

UDISHA clubs are established in the colleges of Gujarat State. Online registration of students as a member of UDISHA Club through www.egyan.org.in portal has begun. College profile and Students profile will be made available to employers. Thus, UDISHA is the effort of the State Government to provide a platform where students gather under the umbrella of UDISHA, create an identity and interface with industries to ensure that job seekers and job providers meet at no extra cost.

4.3 SANDHAN –The All-Gujarat Integrated Classroom

SANDHAN was initiated and launched on 14th July 2009 by the Office of the Commissioner, Higher Education, Government of Gujarat. The VSAT facility of Department of Science and Technology, called BISAG, could be leveraged better by setting up an All-Gujarat Integrated Classroom, under the name 'SANDHAN'.

Under SANDHAN, every college in the State of Gujarat is funded for setting up a DTH system and a SANDHAN Classroom with TV facility. Subject specific Lectures are telecast from a Studio, through VSAT on various topics under the stream of Arts, Science, Commerce, Law and Home Science. SANDHAN delivers the special lectures for various purposes such as: Samavad, Gyanmanch, Kalamanch, Education-Industry Linkages (EIL) and Ucch Shikshan Prabhag- Aapana College Aangane etc.

4.3.1 Special highlights of SANDHAN

- **Roobaroo:** The two-way communication channel through which students & teachers can interact with the experts at the studio.
- **Launch of DVD's:** Colleges can create a Digital library by purchasing DVDs of several lectures telecast at SANDHAN at cost price and make them available to students throughout the year.
- **Launch of lectures through Youtube:** Selected lectures have been uploaded in Youtube for open to access to all through internet.

4.4 Mission Mode Implementation (MMI)

Mission Mode Implementation (MMI) is a structure developed mainly to plan, implement, mentor and handhold Colleges in Higher Education, to implement qualitative academic reforms in an efficient and effective manner.

4.4.1 Objectives of Mission Mode Implementation (MMI)

- To help move from plan to result in a time bound manner
- To set targets
- To identify specific action plan to reach the result
- To follow up with teams
- To review performance regularly
- To alter action plan where necessary and make programs result oriented

Further, several Educational Initiatives have been spread through the Chalo College Abhiyan.

4.4.2 Chalo College Abhiyan

Through MMI, Chalo College Abhiyaan is conducted by KCG periodically. The Abhiyaan, reaches the 1032 Colleges in the State to ensure that every college and every student has access to maximum benefits of the Institution. It also ensures that the Initiatives that the Education Department has introduced for the benefit of students and teachers reaches them. More than 600 colleges across the State were personally visited by KCG Teams during 2011-12 to create greater participation in SAPTDHARA, UDISHA, SANDHAN, SCOPE and AAA.

4.5 Academic and Administrative Audit (AAA)

4.5.1 Aim

To create awareness and facilitate capability building among Colleges in the State in processes and systems that can ensure quality enhancement and realization of the goals set in Higher Education. In order to achieve and sustain quality in its higher educational institutional, the Education Department launched a drive for assessment and accreditation by National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) from 2006-07 onwards. NAAC accreditation, takes place once in five years, followed by reaccreditation after every five years. The gap of five years slackens the quest for excellence. It is a systematic effort of community driven, concurrent, continuous, internal evaluation and mentoring of the Institutions of the State at a periodicity of a year.

4.5.2 AAA operates through

- Colleges completing and submitting the AAA Tool kit designed systematically by KCG.
- A Team of 4 members identified by KCG, duly oriented to conducted AAA visit, personally visiting the College.
- Arriving at a consolidated AAA Score.

4.5.3 Objectives of AAA

- To move in the direction of an accreditation and audit mechanism that enables mentoring more than monitoring.
- To arrive at a state specific Composite AAA Grade.
- To use the AAA Scores of Institutions to identify areas for special focus and improvement in Higher Education.

5. Digital Education Learning Laboratory (DELL)

SCOPE is also the implementing agency for DELL (**Digital Education Learning Laboratory**), it is setup in government and grant-in-aid colleges across the state. In this scheme the complete infrastructure including furniture, computer systems, server, LAN, softwares, AV facility is provided.

6. Gujarat Knowledge Society (GKS)

6.1 Aim

GKS aims to prepare the youth for new knowledge-based economy and society to stimulate creation of world class knowledge resources by developing new competencies and skills.

- To bridge the education system and industrial demands by providing qualified individuals
- Impart necessary training
- To be an important link that will benefit both students as well as organizations.
- To polish and provide edge to working individuals.

6.2 Operations

GKS is an organization established under the Education Department of the Government of Gujarat. Commissioner of Schools has been appointed as the CEO of this organization. GKS activities across the Gujarat state has been divided zone wise. There are four zones such as Ahmedabad, Saurashtra, Surat and Baroda. Zonal Coordinators are appointed to each zone and monitors the GKS activities in their respective zones.

6.3 Activities: The primary activities are divided mainly into three steps

6.4 Enrollment Procedure

- GKS with the help of training partners announces the list of courses to be offered.
- Monitors the registration of students in offered courses
- Regulates the payment and reimbursement of fees.

6.5 Training Procedure

- GKS has implemented rigorous measures and checks to sieve out its 14 training partners. These training partners are functional in four zones such as Ahmedabad, Saurashtra, Surat and Vadodara.
- GKS has already established training centers in each zone with the help of training partners.
- GKS monitors the process of trainer selection and assessment and helps to find some of the best trainers in the respective field in order to impart the training.
- GKS will provide information booklets, pamphlets, posters; advertisements to every training partner/center to help candidates reach the centers easily. Apart from imparting knowledge, GKS also opens up new growth opportunities for trainers.

6.5 Placement Support

- GKS makes every effort to provide employment opportunity to the candidate.
- GKS also conducts Job Fairs to aid its students.
- The database of GKS registered students is maintained in GKS MIS and are made available to corporate/industries. For this GKS has already made tie ups with elite bodies like.
 - Director of Employment and Training
 - Secretary Dept. of Science and Technology
 - NASSCOM
 - CII
 - FICCI
 - Gujarat Chamber of Commerce and Industries
 - Semi Government Bodies
 - Public Sector Units
 - BPO's like Azure, Motiff, ICICI Bank and other private organizations

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7. Gujarat Educational Innovations Commissions (GEIC)

Gujarat Educational Innovations Commission was established in February 2009 to promote conception, experimentation and implementation of Educational innovations in the State of Gujarat where innovations receive central attention and where the Great ideals of education are conceived, developed, experimented upon on a regular and sustained basis.

7.1 Vision

The vision of GEIC is to enrich the present system of education so as to make it more and more responsive to the Ideals of Indian Nationalism and Internationalism, inculcate the spirit and importance of Scientific, Original and Critical thinking, emphasizing the correlation between science and spirit, peace, international understanding, universal fraternity in conjunction with ideal of liberty and equality.

7.2 Mission

The mission of GEIC is to conduct and promote experiments with a methodical effort so as to bring about concrete implementation of innovations, exploration of the highest aim of life, and exploration of human potentialities and fulfillment of the highest aspirations of humanity.

7.3 Objectives

To conceive, experiment upon and implement such innovative educational proposals as would transform the objectives, contents and methods of education in a way that blends the vision of greatest pioneers and educationists of India's Freedom Movement as also of Progressive Educationists of the world with the needs of ever-increasing problems of the contemporary world.

- To develop the educational system that reflects the highest ideals of Indian culture and imparts among students' vibrant spirit of patriotism and largest concern for the highest welfare of humanity, world peace and world unity.

8. Conclusion

To promote, sustain and foster all innovative programs related to the earliest stages of parental care up to the highest levels of excellence and leadership, -- covering thus the entire gamut of the educational system appropriate to the knowledge society and ideal of unending education. Apart from these, several other initiatives including SCOPE, Training and Capability Building, Research & Innovation and introduction of CBCS stand out as steps of the Education Department, Government of Gujarat towards attaining excellence in Education, leading to support India as a force to reckon by the entire globe.

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