

Higher Education In The Societal Development Of Modern India: A Need Of Scientific Thinking



Education

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ABSTRACT

This paper highlights higher education refers to education in post higher secondary institution, colleges and Universities. There are three aspects of higher education. Higher education play significant role in developing enlightenments, enrich racial experiences, attainment of moksha, transmission of knowledge, conservation and preservation of beliefs, values, culture etc and constructs a modern society with best attitude of the people in the right direction.

The term education is used in a variety of contexts and with different shades of meaning. In its broadest sense, any act of experience that has a formative effect on the mind, character or physical ability of an individual can be called as education. Education may also connote a system of institutions organized by society to deliberately transmit its cultural heritage its accumulated knowledge, values and skills- from one generation to another.

In terms of the institution common to the higher education includes all education above the level, of the secondary school given in colleges, universities graduate schools, professional schools, technical institutes, teachers colleges and normal schools.

Higher education refers to education in post higher secondary institution, colleges and Universities. It is higher education, firstly because it constitutes the topmost stage of formal education and more importantly because it is concerned with processes in the more advanced phases of human learning. The entrants are about eighteen years of age and therefore, they are mentally mature and capable of performing at the abstract level.

They can analyse, synthesise and group concepts and ideas of all kinds. Their creative faculties are also developed adequately. Naturally the content of course methods of interaction and organization of work have to be very different from what they are at the schools.

Three Aspect of higher Education :

Three aspects of higher education are of relatively recent origin. One of them is that social, economic and industrial developments have created a pressure towards greater specialization. The tendency has been strengthened due to expansion of knowledge also, since within given time it is not possible to include vast areas of disciplines or subject in the Curriculum. Whereas two centuries ago students could study philosophy Mathematics and medicine in their Universities programmers today these subjects are studies usually by different faculties or institutions. Philosophy gave birth to the psychology and many specializations including various sciences. History led to the new area of political science, geography led to a specialization in geology and so on. Because specialization, today's students in higher education knows more and more about less and less and sometimes special efforts are necessary to create a brother understanding of subjects and disciplines.

The second aspect is that as societies grow more complex, more selective and efficient means of cultural transmission evolved. The result is the formal, institutionalised system of education. The need of producing students of comparable base of knowledge and standard of achievement by a large number of institutions, has led to formalism in evaluating or examining of students.

Thirdly, research has emerged as one of the most significant dimensions of higher education today creation of knowledge is a tangible of the education system because of which the Universi-

ties have acquired a new social status, particularly, in the developed countries. In fact there exists a symbiotic relation between research and specialisation of knowledge and skills.

Higher Education as Enlightenments

Higher education as we have it today is the outcome of a long socio- historical process of evolution. A basic character of education is that it informs a person and it enlightens him about things not know and thus initiated him into asking all sorts of questions about nature about life, about society and its organizations. One is made capable for thinking for himself and finding answers to the questions which one consider important or significant for one's life. In this sense education is said to be 'liberating' force. It makes the individual free and capable of ordering his or her life according to his own choice or playing a more active role in his or her society either to preserve it or to change it.

Higher Education as a Racial Experience

In early society Education was not a separate component of human activity. It was a means of handing over racial experience from the elder to the younger generation. Literacy was restricted to a small proportion of the population even in free countries, what to say of dependent or colonial countries. The idea of a universal education or education for all, is a part and parcel of other socio-political ideas of recognizing that all men are equal before the law or that every member of the society has a vote and possesses other basic human rights. This is the general context in which education has been used in our society for many centuries. Advanced knowledge particularly in the form of science and technology is being deliberately used by countries which are called developed today. Incidentally all of them having been colonial rulers in the past who want to maintain their supremacy and domination over the rest of the world. It is quite clear that education is on the one hand a liberating force for the individual but on the other hand, for this very reason it has been used for suppressing the individual in all societies, and for the same reason in the developing countries which have attained independence. It would be a tremendous social force for economic, social and cultural advancement.

Higher Education as Attainment of Moksha

The higher development of the human individual is one of the time honoured functions of education. To the ancient Indians, it was spiritual perfection or the attainment of Moksha higher education during vedic and Upanishadic times aimed at preparing individuals for such a life. To the medieval Christians in Europe, the aim of education was to prepare the individual not for this life but for the life to come in the other world.

Higher Education for Developing a Responsible Citizen

In the present world, higher education plays a significant role in developing responsible citizens for the society because it is the higher education that develops all senses of human beings in terms of moral, social, ethical, cultural, technical. Vocational and professional values and skills at the higher level. The best knowledge understanding, application, skills, values, attitudes, critical and rational thinking, and reasoning power at the highest level would have been developed through higher education.

Ultimately in totality, all these lead the human beings in the right direction to become good, constructive and responsible citizens in the society.

Higher Education as a Transmission of Knowledge

The role of higher education in relation to knowledge has been so predominant in history that higher education has come to be equated with production and dissemination of knowledge. In fact, the emergence of higher education as a distinct stage or education with its own aims, content, and pedagogy was due to the substantial increase in the fund of knowledge and even more to man's increasing desire and need to know more. The medieval ancestors of the modern universities started as universities, communities of scholars, committed to the search for and dissemination of knowledge.

Higher Education As a Secular Interpretation of Knowledge

There was a brother, secular interpretation of knowledge. The Madarsahs in India founded during the medieval period by Muslim were basically centres of Arabic learning and religious scholarship but the curriculum also provided the knowledge of logic and philosophy, law and even astronomy much like their counterparts in Europe. The growth of science and technology during the later centuries not only vastly increased man's fund of knowledge but also opened up more avenues for creativity. Knowledge came to be differentiated and specialized into different disciplines. The need now was manifold: to preserve what is known to refine it, to transmit it, to explore new knowledge and to expand its frontiers.

Higher Education as a Conservative Role

In its conservative role, higher education has tried to preserve and transmit through instruction, the existing social culture, its belief and value systems customs, traditions.

Higher Education as a Creative Role

Higher education has not only functioned as residual institution has not only functioned as a residual institution merely to preserve existing social patterns but also taken a more active role, that of enriching social heritage by adding on to it, and by creating new knowledge, ideas, technologies and forms of art and craft, and by creating among students the urge to think independently.

Higher Education As Cultural Transmission

As Culture grew in complexity due to industrialization and its social effects, and particularly in democratic societies higher education assumed an additional role to its traditional one of

transmitter of cultural heritage. It functioned as an objective critic of the social order its value and belief systems, its customs, and traditions. In modern times, societies look up to higher education to create an intellectual climate to examine all policies, plans, and achievement and to enable discernment of the directions in which society is moving.

Higher Education and Modernity

The relationship of education with modernization has attracted considerable attention in recent years mainly two contrasting themes have emerged as dominant in social science literature on the role education in modernization, on emphasizing position functions of education, contents that education promotes modernization the other emphasizing its unwholesome consequences asserts that education regards development.

A modern society is a rational society; rational in its social economic, and political arrangements. In its elementary sense, nationality implies use of reason as a governing factor of individual action as well as of corporate activity. In its scientific sense rationality signifies a commitment to the rule of evidence. In its applied sense, it refers to the choice of intrinsically best suited means to the attainment of a given empirical and from the point of view of both the individual actor and the knowledgeable observer.

A modern society is a rational society in all the three senses of the term :

1. It retains rational practices and abandons irrationals.
2. It cares for the rule of evidence in regulating social transactions.
3. It emphasized the logical unity of means and leading to increasingly more efficient modes of living.

To illustrate a modern society is characterized by the pr

imacy of secular over sacred, scientific world view over superstitions would view, universalism over particularism, individually over community, achieved framework over ascribed civic role over subjects image. All these attributes were in a word, social correlates of rationality and it is undeniable fact that higher education plays significant role in this direction.

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