


Chapter 9

Innovations in Higher Education in India

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ABSTRACT

The present century is an age of knowledge-based economy. Though India's achievement in the field of higher education in the post-independence period is remarkable, gross enrollment ratio in higher education and the quality of higher education in India is not encouraging. ICT infrastructure is one way of stimulating growth in national innovation and economic productivity. According to NSSO survey in India, in higher education, 85.4% of students are able to operate computers, 81.6% of students are able to search the internet, and 78.2% of students are able to e-mail. The Government of India has taken various innovative strategies in higher education including online courses and facilities. The chapter has also highlighted different digital initiatives in higher education in India. In India MOOCs are offered by SWAYAM, IITBX, mooKIT, and NPTEL. Other digital innovation includes E-PG Pathshala, SWAYAM Prabha, e-Shodh Sindhu, Shodh Gangotri, Shodhganga, AISHE, National Academic Depository (NAD), etc.

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INTRODUCTION

The present century is an age of knowledge-based economy. Higher education is in the process of transformation and thereby challenging the traditional system of education. The quick developments and growth of information and communication technology (ICT) have had a deep influence on higher education in India. Introduction of different online courses, E-learning, have opened the opportunities for the teachers and students to perform teaching and learning through internet, a way which is different from the system of traditional classroom (Li et al 2014). The disparity in wealth and quality of life between the developed and developing world has been attracting the attention of the world. India's achievement in the field of higher education in post-independence period is remarkable. In the year 1950-51, there were only 30 universities, 695 colleges and 3.97 lakhs students in higher education. There has been a huge quantitative expansion of higher education in India in the post-independence period. In 2016-17, there were 864 universities, about 40 thousands colleges, 3.57 crores of students and 13.65 lakhs teachers in higher education in India (Government of India, 2018). India has a third-largest system of higher education in the world, followed by USA and China with a gross enrolment ratio 25.8 per cent (Government of India, 2018).

In spite of huge expansion of higher education system in India, there is a big question on the access of quality higher education. Higher education expenditure in India increased significantly after Independence; budgetary allocations to higher education were squeezed off in the post economic reforms period and this sector also suffered significantly (Jana and Maiti, 2019). There is not only the shortage of teachers in Indian higher education but also the lack of ability of traditional teaching – learning methodologies to nurture innovation and creativity (Agarwal, 2006). This aspect has further gained momentum due to swift advancements in Information and Communication Technology (ICT). ICT infrastructure is one way of stimulating growth in national innovation and economic productivity. It is clear from International evidence that there is a virtuous nexus and a clear link between ICT and productivity. At the firm level, research shows that use of ICT brings forth higher productivity and profitability. Of late, Government of India has taken various long-term initiatives like Digital India, Make in India, Smart Cities, e-Governance, push for digital talent through Skill India, drive towards a cashless economy and efforts to kindle innovation through Start-up India for making India a digitally empowered society and a knowledge hub (Karmakar and Jana, 2015). To transform India into a digitally empowered society and a knowledge hub is not an easy task. For this to happen, there must be vision for connecting and empowering 125 Crore citizens, creating unprecedented level of transparency and accountability

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