



Effectiveness of Strategies in Quality Enhancement of Higher Education System

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Abstract

Higher Education System is undergoing sea changes in the recent past. The phenomenal growth in the knowledge world is forcing higher education Institutions to reinvigorate at every successive point of time. The dynamism is introduced in true spirit in the education domain. Global educational institutions are emerging. In this era, strategizing the development plans for sustenance of growth is essential for every Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). HEIs are suggested to have strategic development plan and strategic perspective plan to reach higher goals. There shall be identifiable thrust areas in these plans and concrete action are needed to be carried out as per the plan.

Key words: *Competition, Development plans, Perspective plans, Strategies, Sustained growth*

Introduction

Higher Education System is witnessing steady fast growth in the new millennium. The demand for Higher Education and supply of the same in terms of number of seats are constantly increasing. However, there is a mismatch between demand for qualitative Higher Education and supply of the same. The policy makers at the helm are thrusting on enhancement of Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) and they are increasing the number of seats in the existing HEIs on one hand and opening the new HEIs with insufficient infrastructure. The pedagogical inputs given in many HEIs are qualitatively not commensurate with the expectation of stakeholders. The management and teachers, who are supposed to be the carriers of high quality education with values, are failing to give the justice. Lack of leadership quality in the management and teachers is attributable as the main reason for this mismatch. Those education institutions which have strong management and well motivated teachers are able to toe the lines. Of late they are adopting the modern management concept of strategy development and effective implementation. Strategic planning precludes environmental analysis and customizing the medium term and long term plans to achieve sustained growth. According to P. S. Aithal (2015)¹ to ensure up scaling in quality and effectiveness of services at higher educational institutions strategic development is very essential. Evangelos Psomas Jiju Antony, (2017)² have clearly endorsed this view in stating that Concomitantly few HEIs are emerging with success and making good social impact through effective implementation of well crafted strategies

Quality Assurance Policy

The Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are committed to assure quality in syllabus, teaching methods and evaluation in UG, PG, Ph.D and Value added programmes along with thrust on quality in extracurricular and co-curricular activities. In the era of ever changing social and economic environment, the survival and growth depends on the Quality Assurance of the services offered and its impact on the learner's performance in real life situations. The management is responsible for the generally accepted quality assurance standards and strategies adopted and practiced in the institution. The Strategic Development Goals (SDG) of UNO are quintessential for HEIs which can be mapped with their own strategies.

Strategic Development Plan

Every HEIs need to have long term strategic development plan for a ranging between forth coming 20 to 30 years. Specific areas for further improvement need to be identified and speltout objectives need to be accomplished through well developed strategic plan in the said period. Broadly following five priorities are suggested to be identified as areas of focus over the plan period:

1. Social and Academic development of the student community.
2. Enhancement of physical facilities and enrichment of environment.
3. Elevation of visibility and reputation.
4. Resources augmentation to enable progress.
5. Strengthening of departments/schools and the HEIs.

All these focal points are linked to specific goals with measurable milestones. This planned document addresses not only the priorities but also the implementation process required to attain the goals.

1. Social and Academic development of the student community

- **Transnational Academic Excellence:** The HEIs shall plan to collaborate with institutions of eminence across the globe. Through collaborations they shall plan for twining programme, faculty and student exchange, dual degree and action research on topics of socio-economic relevance.
- **Establishment of Smart Campus:** The HEIs have to prepare Detailed Project Report (DPR) on development of Smart Campus, involving sufficient capital outlay. Accordingly the HEIs could get state - of - the - art building infrastructure and other support facilities.
- **Digitization of office records and library:** The digital library in its true sense with necessary infrastructure shall be planned and such facility shall be operational throughout the period round the clock.
- **Developing Wi-Fi Campus:** The campus of the HEIs shall be Wi-Fi enabled and same facility made available to all staff and students.
- **On-line admissions:** The e-governance cell of the HEIs shall be working in tandem with Governments for implementing online admissions besides digitizing the data about students' performances in academics.
- **Smart Class:** All the classrooms shall be converted into modern smart class with smart boards, lecture capturing facilities and other amenities.
- **E-attendance:** The electronic attendance of staff and students has to be made operational.

- **Professional and Academic Skills:** The HEIs shall strategize the moves with reference to enhancement of professional and academic skills of not only staff but also students. Establishment of Human Resource Centre in the HEIs besides deputing teachers for faculty development programmes embellishes teacher personalities where as engagement of students in right perspectives through seminars, symposia, workshops, conferences besides harnessing their skills inside the classrooms shall also be on the anvil.
- **Competitive National and International Higher Education:** The HEIs which have national prominence aim at catapulting on to the higher levels through leveraging on their strategic competitive advantages – strong management, motivated teachers, better stakeholder relationships, convenient location, superior quality services and better public perception. Hence, they are suggested to globalize their education system in a systematized manner.
- **Preparedness to train the students for Competitive Examinations:** The HEIs with their vibrant competitive examination cell have to have strategies that make them well established competitive examination training centres of national eminence.
- **High Ethics and Leadership Quality:** The HEIs need to be purveyors of high ethical values being steered ahead by dynamic leadership. Staff and students shall be moulded with the noble doctrine of “Work is Worship”. Further, the leaders at different levels shall be always poised towards attainment and manifestation of high qualities in leadership as mapped.
- **Thrust on student research:** The HEIs are supposed to be centres for nourishing young researchers at the budding stage of formal learning. Therefore, the curricula in the UG level and PG level shall contain the courses on Research Methodology project work and internships.

2. Enhancement of physical facilities and enrichment of environment: The HEIs shall have concrete plans to enhance physical facilities and enrichment of environment by constructing new buildings, roads, sports facilities and other physical infrastructure besides thrusting on environmental protection and sustainable development. The following specific physical infrastructural needs to be thoroughly assessed and need based strategy development plan shall be made.

- Buildings - that can accommodate class rooms, laboratories, sports facilities, library office room, staff room and all other support facilities.
- Waste management – there shall be proper solid and liquid waste management facilities made operational.
- Green initiatives – planting of samplings, maintenance of gardens, rain water harvesting, harnessing solar power for lighting and heating, green chemistry practices, avoidance of fossil fueled vehicles inside the campus, minimizing use of papers through digitization, creating awareness on environment and sustained development need to be common agenda of everyday life in the campus of HEIs.

3. Elevation of visibility and reputation: The HEIs with their better visibility and reputation shall vow to reach higher echelons through concerted efforts on the matters laid down below:

- International Linkages
- Twinning Programs
- Students Exchange Programmes
- Faculty Exchange Programmes
- Social Media Activism
- Participation in International-National Fairs and Exhibitions

- Publicity
- Recognition, Awards and Accreditations
- Alumni Engagement
- Better Stake holder Relationship
- Enhancement of Physical and Academic Ambiance of the HEIs
- Ensuring Multicultural and Multi-National Student Profile
- Thrust on research and transfer of knowledge to the ultimate beneficiaries

4. Resources augmentation to enable progress: Resource mobilization is the prime requirement in achieving the growth trajectory. In this regard the HEIs shall strategize to leverage the following sources of income.

- Fee Income
- Grants from Government -State and Central
- MHRD – RUSA, UGC, VGST, DST, ICAR, ICSSR
- Science Academies and grants from other agencies
- Management grants
- Alumni association
- Donors-Individuals, NGOs, and other Agencies
- Consultancy Fees
- Rental Income
- Sale of Vermi Compost and other products
- Sponsors
- Endowments – for scholarship, research, lectures, merit recognition and freeships

5. Strengthening of departments/schools and the HEIs: The HEIs shall strategize to strengthen the departments/schools and achieve the holistic growth of the institution with respect to the following areas.

- Establishment of School of Business
- Establishment of School of Science
- Establishment of School of Social sciences
- Development of Centre for Excellence
- Organizing International Programmes
- Establishment of Incubation centre
- Establishment of Human Resource Development Centre (HRDC)
- Ensuring Academic Furtherance
- Establishment of Career promotion Centre

Strategic Perspective Plan (For five years): Every HEI is suggested to have a strategic perspective plan. The following thrust areas are identifiable

Thrust areas

Seven areas are identified for thrusting over the next five years:

1. Ensuring Academic flexibility.
2. Green initiatives.

3. Social and Academic development of the student community
4. Enhancement of physical facilities and enriching environment
5. Elevation of visibility and reputation
6. Resources Augmentation.
7. Strengthening of departments/schools and the HEIs

All these focal points are linked to specific goals with measurable five-year milestones. While ambitious, the goals are achievable and essential for the HEIs to realize their vision.

1. Ensuring Academic flexibility: The HEIs shall envisage following plan to ensure more academic flexibility for the students.

- Introduction to CBCS and CAGP in degree programs under NEP 2020.
- Introduction of credit system in career-oriented program-certificate/diploma/advance diploma.
- Offering multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary courses
- Introducing Academic Bank of Credit effectively
- Introduction of additional programs that are in current demand and discontinuation of the programmes least patronized by student community.
- Introduction of additional one adds on program in each department/school at UG and PG at least ones in two years.

2. Green Initiatives: The HEIs shall follow the green initiatives listed below

- Reduction in carbon emission through minimum use of chloro fluoro carbons, avoidance of burning dried leaves.
- Thrust on use of non-conventional energy-installation of solar roof top panels for lighting and heating generation of solar energy for captive consumption.
- Setting up of bio-gas plant.
- Construction of compost pits.
- Installation of solar street lights.
- Planting tree samplings inside campus and outside the campus.
- Development of lawns.
- Conducting Environmental awareness program on and off the campus.
- Documentation of Spatial distribution of plants in the campus.
- Bar coding of plants.
- Creation of awareness about herbal/medicinal plants.
- Green audit and follow up
- Energy audit and follow up
- Environmental audit and follow up
- Constant monitoring of ambient air quality and maintenance of clean air

3. Social and Academic development of the student community: Human Development primarily presupposes social development. The present day knowledge world makes academia inseparable from all social manifestations. The academic excellence assures social development. The HEIs have to chalk out

perspective plan for the Social and Academic development of the student community in the following manner.

- Transnational Academic Excellence
- Establishment of Smart Campus
- Digitization of office records and library
- Developing Wi-Fi Campus
- On-line admissions
- Smart Class
- E-attendance
- Professional and Academic Skills
- Competitive National and International Higher Education
- Preparedness to Competitive Examinations
- High Ethics and Leadership Quality

4. Enhancement of Physical facilities and enrichment of environment: Growing demand for Higher Education warrants enhancement of Physical facilities and enrichment of environment. In this direction the HEIs shall have following plan.

- Development of building that could suffice the current and future demand.
- Keeping in place effectively operated solid and liquid waste management system.
- Enriching the environment - physical and mental, through best practices and innovations that influence the academic aura.

5. Elevation of visibility and reputation: Present day marketing world makes it inevitable for every marketer carving out niche in the eyes of prospective clients. The clear visibility of the qualitative services of educational institution, to a large section of population, automatically enhances the reputation. The HEIs shall have following thrust areas of plan to increase the Elevation of visibility and reputation.

- Linkages – National and International
- Twinning Programs
- Student and faculty exchange Programmes
- Social Media Activism
- Participation in International-National Fairs and Exhibitions
- Alumni Engagement
- Better Stakeholder Relationship
- Enhancement of Physical and Academic Ambiance of the HEIs
- Ensuring Multicultural and Multi-National Student Profile

6. Resources Augmentation: The ever growing demand with no commensurate supply creates void in the market. The supply side shall always look forward for augmenting the resources to catch up with the demand side. The HEIs shall primarily aim at mobilizing the resources from internal mechanism and thereafter aim at mobilizing funds from external agencies. Following are the thrust areas of perspective plan in this regard:

- Fee Income
- Grants from Government -State and Central
- MHRD – RUSA, UGC, VGST, DST, ICAR, ICSSR

- Science Academies and grants from other agencies
- Management grants
- Alumni association
- Donors-Individuals, NGOs, and other Agencies
- Consultancy Fees
- Rental Income
- Sale of Vermi Compost and other products
- Sponsors

7. Strengthening of departments/schools and the HEI: The HEIs shall strategize the strengthening of departments/schools and achieve the holistic growth of the institution in the following areas:

- Strategies for Development of Centre for Excellence
- Research and Publications
- Organizing International Programmes
- Establishment of Incubation centre
- Establishment of Human Resource Development Centre (HRDC)
- Ensuring Academic Furtherance
- Establishment of Career Promotion Centre
- Competitive Examination Training Cell

Discussion:

Quality in Higher Education, as measured in terms of increase in student enrolment, increase in academic programmes, additions to the infrastructure, placements and progression to higher education, visibility and reputation, recognitions and awards by external agencies are all in the positive side with reference to any HEI. To achieve the above stated positive strides every HEI need to have a farsighted strategic development plan and a strategic perspective plan as subset of strategic development plan. In this regard, the HEIs stand as a model for other institutions to follow. The main reason for significant growth of the HEIs is strategy deployment. The leadership and governance with high quality standard shall hold the entire servicing group well motivated along with effective implementation of strategic plans.

Conclusion:

Development of strategy and their effective implementation is need of the hour in all walks of economic life. The present day marketing world needs strategies to forestall the competition. In the education sector also the competition is becoming very stiff. The explosion of knowledge world is going to cause revolution in the electronic industry which is making way for quality improvements in a speedy manner. Therefore, every education provider need to update the service mechanism and stands stout amidst competitors. Further, long range strategies also needed to sustain the growth.

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