Challenges in Future of Indian Education

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INTRODUCTION:

The technical education of India is not prepared to accept, face and overcome challenges of future such as preparing the graduates for accepting the challenges of world of work, becoming responsive to changing and dynamic needs of world of work, focusing on lifelong learning of managers and professionals, cutting down the cost of education, developing different types of competencies according to aspirations of the potential students, facing the competition with institutes operating in the country and outside country, sustaining the quality of graduates according to changing demands of the world of work, crossing the boundaries of educational programmes and entering in human resources growth, practice and continuing education, contributing for social development and the like. There are local as well as global challenges. Most of the technical institutes are operating in reactive mode without professional approach. They need to be governed and managed by professionals having experiences of recent education management models.

APPREHENSION:

Looking to the challenges one thing is clear that most of the institutes cannot survive for more than five years because the whole system is operating traditionally managed by traditional professionals who are not exposed to global requirements and expectations, the job market is shrinking, quality is not well defined and up to the mark, financial problems, strict rules and ordinances inflicted by regulatory authority, lack of autonomy and accountability, paucity of professional faculty and staff members, content based curriculum in contrast to outcome and competency based curriculum, low use of information communication technology, lack of professional training of faculty and staff members, poor pay package, incentives and rewards, lack of opportunity for self-development and advancement, lack of succession and carrier planning, deployment and redeployment of faculty and staff members is missing, faculty and staff members are not exposed to challenges of world of work, high rate of turnover of faculty members among institutes and from institutes to industry, the reverse turnover is almost negligible, lack of provision for hands on training of students, lack of culture on conducting fundamental research studies in almost all disciplines, almost no efforts on the part of the institutes to develop research culture, mismatch between faculty competency and job requirement struggle for infrastructure and minimum facility, non-availability of models to imitate, etc.

AMBITIONS:

The government, regulatory body, society, industry potential students and trainees, and other significant stakeholders have following expectations from technical institutes:

- Produce graduates who can market themselves to take employment of their choice in the world of work.
- Act as a centre for lifelong learning for professionals and manager working at distinct levels in the world of work.
- Design and implement curricular, co-curricular and take employment of their choice in world of work and managers working at different levels in world of work extra-curricular activities in such a manner that technical, professional, managerial, social, multi-cultural and soft competences are developed along with core competences.

- Professional competencies can only be developed when students get an opportunity to learn in an environment which is very close to organizations where they are expected to take employment.
- Function as an enterprise. In other words, the institutes should design, implement and assess systems which are demand driven and capable of conforming to the requirements of world of work quantitatively and qualitatively with sanely good effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, and without any waste.
- Undertake fundamental research work in their respective disciplines in order to lead the world of work.
- Provide solution to complex problems considering technological and social aspects.
- Act as a centre for human resources development in their respective disciplines.
- Create awareness; education and involvement of masses in use of technology
- Do not cheat the students and other stakeholders.
- Observe the government rules and regulations. Provide timely information to statutory and regulatory institutes.
- Fulfil social responsibility.
- Show presence on international forums.

MECHANISM TO PROVIDE AMBITIONS:

It is quite difficult for government, statutory and regulative body to control the quality of education at national and state level using objective criteria and parameter. It is not advisable also because different institutes are expected to grow and develop in different areas of operation to satisfy variety of expectations. Technical institutes cannot function in isolation. They need to gear up to adopt the management doctrines contemporary to world of work. They are expected to be a feeder system for economic, technical, social, and political sector with right kind of manpower possessing professional attitudes. The technical institutes need to satisfy the characteristics of excellence stated below:

1. Self-renewal: It is related to tuning the functioning of the institute and resources according to needs, demands and expectations of the world of work and stakeholders. It is more related to satisfying the changing needs of the students and society Self-renewal should be promoted through formative and summative performance appraisal and evaluation.

2. Self-innovation: It is related to practicing processes and methods of functioning of institutes which foster creative ideas and implementation of the same. The innovations are conceived and implemented in the institute according to needs.

3. Self-initiation for change: It is related to initiating the changes in the programmes of the institutes according to needs of the students and environment. It is a feeling in corporate sector that technical institutes are very slow in introducing the changes in the programmes and services.

4. Self-learning: It is related to creating the learning environment in the institute to improve its performance on core areas of functioning. The selflearning concept is promoted for faculty members as well students. In fact self-learning is an initiation of learning to learn skills.

5. Proactive: It is related to identifying and predicting the changes in the environment in which the institute is functioning and preparing the institute to cope up with the changes. It is a process of helping individuals and teams to develop their full potential to achieve vision using collective, collaborative and cooperative learning methods. It is a process of creating learning environment in which students learn with joy, gain energy

for learning from the learning process and experience thrill of learning. They learn to preclude and manage emotions, anxiety, tension and stress. Students are empowered to manage their learning. It automatically prevents the behavioural and discipline problems in the institute. The institute takes appropriate actions to identify and satisfy the needs of the students other than the curricular needs but related to their development. It also develops the mechanism to identify and satisfy the needs of the stakeholders. If is autonomous institute, it refines the curriculum to satisfy the changing needs of the students and employers Self-guiding: It is related to development of capacity and capability of the institute to plan, implement and evaluate the performance. The staffs are empowered over the years in a way to think about themselves and business of the institute and prepare policies, rules, regulations and norms for functioning of the institute. The institute takes appropriate decisions at right time to meet the changing requirements.

6. Visionary: It is related to vision of the institute. The institute has a vision and strategic plan to pursue. It is also related to share visionary leadership in teaching and non-teaching staff to take the institute in right direction and enduring future.

7. Autonomous: It is related to freedom to function professionally for developing competencies in the students. Teaching and non-teaching staff enjoy powers to perform their roles in innovative manner. It is also related to accountability for decisions taken. It means the autonomy prevails at every level under the vision and policies of the institute.

8. Self-generating: It is related to developing all types of resources such as money, men, machine, material, methods and information to perform all significant activities effectively and efficiently. The institute grapples up and keeps up innovation on its own.

9. Self-reflective: It is related to learning of teaching and non-teaching staff of the institute about the core academic business of the institution. They collectively learn about the business of the institute using variety of approaches such as performance assessment, problem solving, creativity, discussions, action learning, meetings, interactions and the like.

10. Self-adaptive: It is related to modifying the collective behaviour of the faculty and staff members to perform effectively and efficiently on new and challenging goals and missions. It is also related to adopting the developments taking place in external environment. For example use of student centered learning methods, use of multimedia packages based on latest technology use of collaborative methods of learning, learning supported by digital library and learning resources utilization centre etc. The institute owns the new things as early as possible

11. Creative: It is related to collectively generating new and different ideas for continuously improving the processes of the institute. The institutional members collectively use creativity methods such as brainstorming, nominal group technique, action learning, Delphi, cognitive mapping and the like.

12. Cooperative: It is related to working on joint projects or inter-disciplinary projects within the institute to bring synergic effect in the performance of the institute as a whole. It is also related to collaborative working on projects of mutual benefit other centre of excellences such as research organizations, institutes of higher learning, industry and resource organizations. The technical institutes promote learning in world of work using collaborative methods of instructions The students learn in real life situation using variety of modes such as on the job training, excursion, problem solving, experimenting seminars, undertaking assignments, projects and research work and the like.

13. Networking: It is related to working with sister institutes having high performance record, low performance record and similar performance record. The benefit of networking is to learn from the better performing institutes, transfer the learning to other

institutes that are equally performing well and performing low so that they can also improve their performance. It means contributing for the betterment of quality of technical education system at all levels.

14. Analytic: It is related to analysis of the decisions and actions for improving the efficiency of the processes. The analysis is also related to understanding the external environment on the basis of limited information and preparing the institution to take effective decisions at right time for competitive advantage.

15. Cooperative: It is related to mutual help within the institute and among the institutes for creating win-win situation. In fact, it is based on foundation of trust. Trust is promoted at every level and everyone should feel that there is no likelihood of cheating and deceiving.

16. Experimenting: It is related to promoting the concept of standard, continuous improvement and value addition in the procedures and products of the institute. The above three concepts cannot be promoted without experimentation. The institute should undertake various experiments in core areas of functioning and implement the results of the experiments for improving the performance.

17. Self-evaluation: It is related to assessing the performance of the institute to ensure the quality in performance. It is also used for generating the information for learning about business and joint taking further decisions. The institute undertakes formative as well as summative evaluation. It is a kind of collective introspection about the performance of the institution.

STRATEGIES:

The technical institutes need to design and implement following strategies considering their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats and other significant external as well as internal factors.

✓ Craft shared vision to convert innovative ideas into educational products and services for the students and other stakeholders. Different institutes should have different vision.

✓ Continuous thrust on institutional renewal in academic, financial, managerial and administrative areas of functioning.

✓ Exercise ongoing evaluation of educational goals and objectives which are essential for acquiring and retaining educational leadership.

✓ Show sensitivity to demands and changes in the world of work and external environment and adopting coping strategies.

✓ Design and develop educational programmes involving stakeholders to satisfy the needs of labour market and deploy the resources of the stakeholders.

✓ Foster close relationship with stakeholders in general and students and employers in particular.

✓ Build academic culture and climate promoting educational, professional and managerial values, beliefs and positive attitude.

✓ Promote team approach in the institute for creativity, innovation and change. Provide an opportunity to excel best to teams and individuals.

✓ Identify and strengthen the core competency of the institute i.e. teaching learning, instructional material development, human resource development, community development, research etc.

✓ The goals and objectives must be spelt out at institute level, department level, team level and individual level. This should be continuously monitored. This can be done through joint planning and performance appraisal.

✓ Use scientific methods to do need assessment of students and employers and other customers of the institute to become responsive, result oriented and quality conscious. Snap study, action research, impact study experimental research and tracer study should be integral part of operating the institute.

✓ Objectively and openly share the success generating experiences and celebrating the success.

✓ Network, collaborate, cooperate and undertake projects of mutual benefits with various types of institutes, organizations, field agencies, international institutes and industries.

✓ Promote researches for the improvement of the technology, techniques and education system.

✓ Work on SWOT of competitors and design strategies accordingly to meet the competition in legal manner.

✓ Periodical SWOT analysis will enable institutes to develop confidence to face competition and challenges

✓ Expand core business to cover different geographic areas, students, clients and areas of working.

✓ Invest in educational product and services design, which fulfils the changing needs of the employers and students.

✓ Deploy and redeploy all types of resources to improve effectiveness and efficiency in functioning of the institution.

✓ Reduce excessive and inefficient faculty members and staff members. Have balance between permanent faculty members and resource persons to provide good blend of academics and world of work.

✓ Introduce academic audit system which is formal as well as informal, product as well as process oriented and quantitative as well as qualitative.

✓ Creativity, innovation, research and experimentation must be the part of the institutional functioning. This will add value to the educational products and services.

✓ Develop management information system and use it for taking all significant decisions

✓ Attract professional faculty members from outside and develop existing faculty members as professionals.

✓ Increase access of women physically challenged and deprived people for the programmes of the institute.

✓ Operate guidance, counselling, mentoring and coaching cell for the benefit of the faculty members and students.

✓ Promote use of information communication technology for learning activities.

✓ Design and implement outcome based, problem based, competency based, and ability based curriculum in contrast to content based curriculum.

✓ Get the certificate of quality from international and national level certifying agencies to confirm and reconfirm the quality of educational programmes and products.

✓ Reengineer processes to minimize duplication of work, information and efforts at every level.

CONCLUSION:

Technical institutes should be considered as a unit for assuring and improving quality of education. Technical institutes need to be managed professionally because they satisfy the requirements of world of work in terms of providing managers and professionals to accept the challenges of changing expectations. There are numbers of apprehensions for technical institutes in changing context of world of work at the same time there are ambitions to be satisfied. Technical institutes can satisfy the expectations of students, employers and stakeholders becoming a center of excellence. They can face the challenges and competition at local and global level, if they professionally operate on their core business of academics. There are strategies and body of knowledge which can be used by institutes to achieve their vision with effectiveness, efficiency, relevance and quality in their functioning. The strategies discussed in this paper are indicative and much more comprehensive strategies can be designed and implemented by the institutes considering their specific needs.

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