

Quality of Education: A thought to ponder

Sharply criticising one of the national prestigious University college for declaring an unbelievable 100 per cent cut-off for a particular course, Union Human Resource Development Minister Kapil Sibal said it was sad that the cut-offs were “irrational” and “exclusionary.”

Many cried for the insensitivity of the system. On the face of it, it certainly looks weird, tragic and ironical but one has to understand the long term implications of such actions. It is true; it is not only irrational but impractical too. The institutions, one who award 100% marks and other who demand 100% marks should be questioned as where they are taking the whole education system to? This is really a high time to look into the policy of implementing the educational plans. We have to answer certain basic questions; Why only cry for a few institutions? Do all the institutions impart same education, if not what makes them inferior? Does our education provide holistic development opportunities to its learners? Does it connect the classrooms to real life? Does it motivate the learners to make learning a fun of life? There cannot be a straightforward answer to any of the question. But sooner or later these questions will need to be answered if we are keen to build quality a prime parameter of identifying good institutions.

Higher education and in particular technical education has crippled its own growth and potential and merely become institutions of awarding degrees which are irrelevant in the world of work because it has never cared to answer the above questions.

Even the best of technical education institutions of the country do not figure in the 100 best technical education institutions in the world map. The quality of passouts coming out of our technical education system is another biggest challenge today. The numbers are enormous as we produce close to 1 million graduate engineers every year but half of them divert to management stream either by joining management graduation programmes or join management fields. Out of remaining 40%, hardly 10% are competent enough to get the job of their choices and class. Rest of the passouts have absolutely no clues as what to do with their lives. Most of them join supervisory positions in the industry which are supposedly occupied by their diploma counterparts. The institutions are not built by the marvelous buildings, infrastructure, equipment or facilities. They are built by the quality teachers. The teachers, who understand the content, who knows the art of treatment of the content and who knows the effective delivery mechanism. They are the motivators, guide and philosophers who make each student important. Learning becomes a fun in their presence. Research becomes part and partial of the learning process when they are there. The institutions at large are suffering from severe shortage of good teachers, leave aside the quality teachers. And those, who are there at the centre stage, most of them are not interested in learning the “art of teaching”. The change, which we envisage can only be brought by providing intensive training to all those who are there and further, manning the institutions with adequately trained teachers. The teachers having clear understanding of psychology of learning, development of usable media, use of appropriate media, techniques of formative and

summative evaluation of learning, etc. It is important to understand students, their basic profile of learning and then create learning opportunities by design so that they can map at least to some extent with the requirements of world of work. This will not only change the learning environment but also institutions will become awake and active towards world of work and life at large. It is important to address life issues at institutional level rather than leaving it to the mercy of someone else. For example; pollution control, road traffic, energy alternatives, transfer of technology, dissemination of correct and worthy information to society are the areas where technical institutions can really work wonders and find respectable place in the society. There is an immense need to relook into the method of delivering technical education in these institutions. The education to be at the helm of affairs, must address life issues and problems. The basic of research element lies here, when the students tend to solve practical problems and apply whatever he has learnt in the class. The students have to demand quality education to become useful entity in the world of work and society.

Dream of the day, when we have teachers in our institutions whose image, work and commitment will fetch a corporate reputation to the institutions. The institutions will be known for their quality of providing purposeful education and not of huge buildings, infrastructure and facilities. Then there will be no hue and cry for cut-off marks. The institutions will wake up for their social contributions and not remain dormant, unconnected and irresponsible anymore. All we need is, teachers who have deep gratitude for this profession and who have devotion to be a quality teacher.

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