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## Academic Excellence In Higher Education In India In 21<sup>st</sup> Century

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### Abstract

A Teacher has three major roles to play in Higher education in India-Teaching –Learning Functions involving dissemination of knowledge, Research guidance involving creation of knowledge and Academic administration and management. To be successful in his teaching career, one has to have a strong proactive personality, always believe in oneself and have self discipline and self control. Other attributes include a sensible hard work, becoming extraordinary with patience and laborious work with strong will power. With the incoming of National Education Policy 2020, to achieve excellence in Higher education has become more convenient and easier because it gives scope to think beyond boundaries like in promoting interdisciplinary research, it encourages the need to embrace technology and integrate it with Higher education followed by transforming the culture of evaluation and assessment. It also helps in revising the Indian Education System by making it more participatory, interrogative in nature and challenges the fundamental flaw in NEP 2020.

**KeyWords-** Teacher, role, knowledge, Teaching, Learning, Academic, Higher Education, National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

### introduction

Everyone wants to excel in their profession. But merely wishing or desiring won't help. A strategic effort in the right direction is a must. In our path to excel, prudence lies in learning from the mistakes committed by self and from others also. A teacher is expected to excel in three major roles that he plays. These are dissemination of knowledge that is the Teaching Learning Process, Creating knowledge through Research or guidance in research and followed by Academic Administration and Management. An Outstanding Teacher or Researcher has Sound and deep knowledge of the Subject, clarity of concepts and has done lots of thinking on the subject. Similarly, an outstanding Researcher is an out of the box thinker, is innovative and creative and has the courage and commitment and curiosity for the research problem. On the other hand, an excellent or outstanding teacher has excellent communication skills and effective presentation skills both of which can do wonders and captivate the

audience. A good teacher has full command over the subject and has done a lot of thinking on the subject. Before going to the class, he should have thought of all possible questions which can arise in the class in a student's mind. He should be able to come down to the level of the weakest student and take them along. He should have the ability to deliver lecture in a very systematic and organized manner. He should have effective communication skills. He should be willing to improve on the basis of feedback of the students. Finally, he should be a good student himself.

To excel in Higher Education, one needs to manage his career. Career management involves two sections-Career Growth and Career Development. While Career growth means one strives for a higher position than current position. One focuses on set goals and is strategic in nature. e.g. Becoming Associate Professor from Assistant Professor (2018,UGC regulations). Career development deals with improvisation of skills and talent within the current role and position. Here, the focus is on how to achieve these goals of betterment and is transformative in nature. e.g. A professor trying to improvise on himself in teaching and research staying or remaining at the post of Professor. Thus one can become the CEO of his own Career.

Success is also the output of Personality traits. A strong proactive personality sets a positive background for promotion. Self belief is a major driving factor for achieving goals. Self discipline ensures self control and self control though difficult to achieve helps in restraint on behavior and is the key to excellence. One has to work hard sensibly in right direction to get promotion. One has to be extraordinary to become extraordinary. One has to work with strong will power and determination to achieve promotion. India has the third largest System of Education in the world with Education sector having a considerable Growth (TOI,2018). Our Ranking in the World Ranking Scale is very poor. The various criteria used for International Ranking scale includes Academic reputation of the Institution, Employer's Reputation, Faculty student ratio, Citations per faculty, International faculty and students and Industrial Outcomes. The main reason for the poor world ranking of Indian Institutions include poor quality of Research Programmes. Though India has the third largest Scientific manpower in the world and it is Publication wise third in world after China and USA (Digital Divide, 2020), yet it's Research Citation is very low and quality as part of research is missing. Lack in quality of research is due to crisis in creativity in the Indian Education System which leads to dearth of Creative minds and consequently, as a result India has received no Nobel Prize after 1930. In 1930, the last Nobel Prize to be won was for Raman Effect by CV Raman.( Bakshi, 2015). To excel in research, one needs perseverance with resilience, enormous amount of creativity and open mindedness and the need to collaborate and the willingness to collaborate.

The Fundamental Flaw in the Indian Education System is that it is not inquisitive. We are not allowed to question. Instead of asking questions, we give answers and we do not allow the students to think on their own. Education is not the Learning of the facts but it is the training of the mind to think. Education's goal is 'Understanding' while the goal of Training is 'Performance'. NEP 2020 speaks of Innovation and creativity. It is an effort to create an environment for curiosity and to encourage Creativity and Novelty through Research and Innovation. It talks of Interdisciplinary Research, Future reliance on Human Ingenuity and has endorsed the establishment of National Research Foundation which shall be the apex body for Funding Research, especially those in Indigenous knowledge, Inherited Cultures and Traditions pertaining to India across all disciplines like Medicine, Art, Culture, History, Literature, etc. and other disciplines that have remained untapped and neglected for many years. NEP 2020 encourages globally competent and locally relevant Research. The Focus of NEP 2020 (HRD, 2020) is also to shift from the role of Learning (rote learning) to the role of Creativity (thinking, problem solving, developing skills for lifelong learning, discussion based knowledge creation, digital literacy). It emphasizes on the building and development of creative potential of each Individual. But the drawback is that there is no specific roadmap for the same. The prime focus of NEP 2020 is professional development and change in the mindset of the people to orient themselves to research is very important. It is an effort to transform students that form 25% of our population (Census of India, 2011) into capital and real resources.

In keeping with the objectives of the NEP 2020, the challenges a teacher shall face in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century shall include growth of knowledge, Challenge in Research, and other challenges in Education such as the Revival of the Assessment and Evaluation Process, reforms in Education System, and the need to embrace Technology and digital knowledge. The role of teachers has to change significantly in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. In Research, the teacher has to judiciously and wisely choose from the vast array and pool of data and literature. He needs to incorporate the knowledge of new research into his teachings for future generation. He needs to make the syllabi more modern yet light. He needs to make assessment more scientific, and try to make assessment test multiple skills of students. The new, revised role of teachers in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century includes teachers to become tech-savvy to exhibit their ICT skills. Teachers have to manage virtual classrooms and discussion forums. Teachers have to be proficient in development of e- content and MOOCs. For this, teachers may be provided with the training for the upgradation of their knowledge.

Education 4.0 is a phase that India shall witness in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. It shall be an era of totally technology based or mediated Education. Future Educational technologies will include Artificial

Intelligence (AI), Robotics, Virtual Reality and Internet of Things (IOT). Personalised Learning or customized Learning (as per the requirements and need of the Learners) through the use of AI will be the in thing. AI's can also help in digital attendance, adaptive assessment, Algorithms, exams, Digital invigilation, etc. Technology in Education shall be a journey and not a destination. Technology will not replace teachers but teachers who are tech savvy shall replace the teachers who aren't. For this, an introduction to Digital Curriculum is a must for all teachers. This shall inculcate digital practices, digital skills and competencies and fluencies in all aspects of Education in India (supported by robust technology and Infrastructure). To become successful, other qualities that teachers would need to inculcate would include leadership qualities to run an educational institution (to be able to grow along with others) e.g LEAP programme of Government of India (HRD,2018); Managerial skills to maintain the success level.; developed life skills and behavioural skills to carry out a contended, happy life filled with satisfaction and hope for improvement and a continuous effort and endeavour for Lifelong Learning that shall help a professor to improve upon his art of teaching.

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