

Review of: "Creating Sustainable and Outstanding Institutional Culture in Engineering Education in India to Develop High-Performing Institutions"

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The paper deals with one of the burning issues in India. As the country is thriving to be the third largest economy in the world, it needs rapid growth of human capital, particularly a highly skilled workforce, and fast pace technical innovations. It is well known that a majority of engineering institutions are lacking in terms of both making technical innovations as well as producing skilled engineers for the rapidly growing sectors. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has underlined the necessity of institutions to be able to impart skill-based knowledge and produce graduates to lead India to become a modern industrial hub. More generally, the education and knowledge sectors would not only attract the youth for the acquisition of skills but also create an ecosystem for excellence and innovative solutions.

The author has rightly observed that in India many existing affiliated tier II and tier III institutes have not updated their institutional culture which is essential for achieving the main objectives of the NEP 2020 and therefore recommends guidelines like "a belief in faculty responsibility, autonomy, and scaffolding the high-performing faculty teams, a culture of continual training, interdisciplinary and industry-relevant courses, and programs, a challenging research and development environment, mentoring the faculty members to bring excellence in human resource development, open communication, cooperation and collaboration, and superb leadership to change the obstructive culture to high enabling culture of the engineering institutions which will facilitate the growth of institutions through interdisciplinary and high-performing faculty teams." The author further added that "The leaders, administrators, and members of the governing council have to establish the desired outstanding academic culture". But the vision of the existing leadership in the typical institutions is too short-sighted to bring about the desired institutional changes.

The author has focussed on bringing cultural change among institutional administrators/leaders. But it is easy said than done as a culture is something that is sticky, and cannot be changed so easily. He then made specific recommendations, namely, (i) Developing and following the 'Service and Recruitment Rules', (ii) Providing needed exposures to institutional development for the chairpersons, members of the governing council, (iii) Organizing needed purposeful training and development programs for the directors/deans/principals/ registrars, (iv) Exposing leaders to excellence in 'Institutional Change and Development Processes'. It is commonly observed that the institutional head/VC/Director/management often enjoys enough discretionary power to overrule or bypass the rules/norms set by the Govt/autonomous institutions and quite often those discretionary powers are used, together with manipulation, for example in recruiting faculty, granting study leave, foreign visit for paper presentation, promotion of faculty, admitting students, for personal benefits. The

resulting inefficiencies have long term degenerative effects on the institutions. Basic parameters/ benchmarks of the institutional cultures have to be defined.

The recommendations made by the author to bring about institutional change are no doubt important but the author should come out with more concrete suggestions fixing the responsibilities of the management which has to create the required conditions for the long term progress of the institution.