



Challenges and Issues in Modern Higher Education

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ABSTRACT

Densities and viscosities of the binary mixtures of propionaldehyde with methanol, ethanol n-propanol and n-butanol at 298.15, 308. been determined by using experimental data. Viscosity deviations, excess molar volumes and excess free energies of activation of viscous flow have been calculated and correlated with Redlich-Kister polynomial equation.

Keywords: Density, Viscosity, Viscosity deviation, Excess molar volume, Binary system, propionaldehyde.

I. INTRODUCTION

Education in India is seen as one of the ways to upward social mobility. Good education is seen as a stepping stone to a high flying career. India possesses a highly developed higher education system which offers facility of education and training in almost all aspects of human creative and intellectual endeavors. Indian higher education system has undergone massive expansion in post-independent India with a national resolve to establish several universities, technical institutes, research institutions and professional / non-professional colleges all over the country to generate and disseminate knowledge. The rapid growth in the sector, both in terms of enrolment and number of institutions has thrown up new challenges of maintaining quality of higher education. Various new initiatives are being taken by state and central government to increase the gross enrolment ratio (GER) in higher education. India educates approximately 20 per cent of its young people between the age group of 17 -23 enrolled in higher education as compared to 30 percent in China and 91 percent to South Korea. At present, the world-class institutions are mainly limited to the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) and perhaps a few others such as the All India Institute of Medical Sciences and the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research. There are a small number of high quality institutions, departments, and centres that can form the basis of quality sector in higher education. None of its universities occupies a solid position at the top. A few of the best universities have some excellent departments and centres, and these colleges are countable. These institutions have only one percent enrolment of the student population.

II. CURRENT STATUS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA

Indian higher education is managed by the University Grants Commission (UGC) and the various councils. The UGC, set up under UGC Act 1956, has been empowered to promote and coordinate university education in

India and also approve grants to them. The UGC is responsible for coordination, determination, and maintenance of standards and release of grants to universities and research organizations. Various professional councils are responsible for recognition of courses, promotion of professional institutions and provision of grants to undergraduate programmes. In the last six decades, the higher education sector in India has witnessed exponential growth, both in terms of the number of institutions and the rate of enrolment. While talking about the growth in student enrolment, the recent UGC report states that in 1950-51, when there were only 3, 97,000 students enrolled in all disciplines in 750 colleges affiliated to 30 universities. Now, the growth of higher education in India has been phenomenal. As of 6 September 2016, India had 784 universities (47 central universities, 353 state universities, 123 deemed universities, 246 private universities etc.), around 100 institutes of national importance, over 45,000 colleges and about 13,000 stand alone institutions. The state with the most universities is Rajasthan with 73 universities and it has the most private universities India has one of the largest higher education systems in the world comprising numerous stand-alone technical/professional institutions with annual enrolment in excess of 25 million students. Education System in India currently represents a great contradiction. On the one hand we have IIMs & IITs that rank among the best institutes in the world and on the other hand there are number of schools & colleges in the country that do not even have the basic infrastructure. Even more than 66 years after independence we are far away from the goal of universal literacy. But on a positive note, Indian professionals are considered among the best in the world are in great demand. With about 50% of the Indian population below the age of 25 years, and an estimated 150 million people in the age group of 18-23 years. The structure of degree-granting institutions is cumbersome primarily due to affiliation and funding sources. More than 85% of students are enrolled in bachelor's degree programs with majority enrolling in three-year B.A., B.Com. or B.Sc. degrees. One-sixth of all Indian students are enrolled in Engineering/Technology degrees. The world has fast shrunk to a common platform of education and learning. Today, Indian higher education institutes offer a wide array of courses in various streams and some of the courses have gained global recognition. The IITs and IIMs are recognized among the world's best institutes. India has also gained a footing in the field of research. It is then heartening to know that some Indian universities like Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Indian Institute of Management (IIM) and Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) have been listed in the world's top two hundred universities. In the field of finance, Indian School of Business, Hyderabad has been ranked number 12 in the global MBA ranking by Financial Times, London. The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education in India is still about 20%. The National Knowledge Commission, a high-level advisory body to the Prime Minister, has projected a requirement of 1500 universities and 45000 colleges to achieve this target. Higher education has given ample proof of its viability over the centuries and of its ability to change and to induce change and progress in society. Despite the recent growth, we have not yet touched upon the idea of dismal global impact of our institutions pertaining to research and enrolments from across the globe. The Times Higher Education (THE) Magazine, UK, world reputation rankings list shows the world's top 100 universities based purely on their academic prestige. According to the London Times Higher Education World University Rankings powered by Thomson Reuters (2015-16), no Indian university features among the first 100. But universities in East Asia have been included in the first hundred. Hong Kong has three, ranked at 45, 71 and 80; Singapore two ranked at 26 and 86 and South Korea two ranked at 45 and 90th position. According to The India Reputation Rankings, Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore, is in the first position, followed by IIT Bombay, All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), IIT Kanpur and IIT Delhi respectively. The University of Delhi takes the sixth place — the first full-fledged university on the list.

III. PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA

The aim of higher education is to prepare a person to play his part well, as an enlightened member of society. Rabindranath Tagore rightly said, "The higher education is that which does not merely give us information, but makes life in harmony with all existence". India has a large higher education sector — the third largest in the world in student numbers, after China and the United States. This in itself is a remarkable achievement. It has significant advantages in the 21st century knowledge race. But the severity of challenges that the system faces is exceedingly high, daunting, and at times looks insurmountable. The challenges confronting the Indian higher education system are also challenging, complex and have different hues. One of the fundamental weaknesses of the system are lack of transparency and recommendations has been made to mandate high standards of data disclosures by institutions on performance. About 62% of universities and 90% of colleges were average or below average in 2010, on the basis of their NAAC accreditation. In this scenario, a conflicting picture arises with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's words (2007), "Our university system is, in many parts, in a state of disrepair. In almost half the districts higher education enrollment are abysmally low. Almost two third of our universities and 90% of colleges are rated below average in quality parameters...". Unattractive compensation packages, lengthy recruitment procedure, and working environment not conducive to retention are some other problems faced by higher educational institutes. As a result, a substantial proportion of high-ranking students who could fill up such assignments prefer to work elsewhere or go abroad. Most institutions offer outdated programmes with inflexible structures and content. The GER and quality education are always related to increase in nation's wealth, GDP and prosperity. At present, India has a gross enrolment ratio of close to 20%, which is much below the world average of 27%. There is also a big challenge before Indian government to increase the gross enrolment ratio, or GER, in higher education to 30% by 2020 from the current level of around 20% and this would require an additional capacity of about 10 million to be created over rate that is common in developed countries. With the explosive growth of knowledge in the past century and with the development of handy tools of information and communication technologies as well as of other scientific innovations, competition has become a hallmark of growth all over the World. India's main competitors especially and South Korea are investing in large and differentiated higher education systems. They are providing access to large numbers of students at the bottom of the academic system while at the same time building some research-based universities that are able to compete with the world's best institutions. Infrastructure facilities range from inadequate to dismal. Classrooms are often unattractive and laboratories inadequately stocked, leading to poor teaching. It is estimated that barely 20 per cent of the institutions have the basic minimum laboratory equipment. Steady electric power supply is not available in many universities and computerization, where it exists is generally dependent on poor communication lines. Unfortunately, we are lacking hugely in terms of quality output from our higher education institutes. This can be confirmed from the fact that barring exception of few institutes mentioned above very little world class research gets published from other institutes, very few new innovations comes from Indian soil. In India, number of research parks is in single digit and patent application from Indian researchers received very little in comparison to China and Japan in 2013. There is 40% and 35% shortage of faculty in state and central universities, respectively. India's relative citation impact is half the world average. Many private colleges levy charges midway through the course of study by when the student has no choice but to pay up; they advertise achievements of the college which are false; they promise to

offer courses without any intention to actually do so. This need to be severely punished has also a big challenge in higher education.

Suggestions for Improving the System of Higher Education:

1. Gap between the Supply and demand: In higher education, India has a low rate of enrolment i.e. gross enrolment ratio (GER), at only 19%. If we compared to china and brazil GER is 26% and 36% respectively.
2. Lack of Quality Research work: There is no shortage of funding for the top Indian Institutions such as IITs, IIMs and other institutes of national importance. However, budget for the Research is not under spent due to the insufficient good quality research work. Due to the limited focus on Research and Internationalization, very few Indian higher educational institutes are globally recognized.
3. Number of Research papers published in India has increased continuously for the past few decades but reflected in low citation impact if compared with other countries like Germany, United States, France and China.
4. Indian higher education is facing with the problem of poor quality of curriculum. In most of the higher educational institutes curriculum is out-dated and irrelevant.
5. Shortage of Faculty and High Student-Faculty Ratio: In most of the state and central universities more than 30% of faculty positions are lying vacant. While the student enrolment in higher education is growing with faster rate in the last few years.
6. Inadequate Infrastructure and Facilities: Apart from the highly recognized higher educational institutes in India most of the colleges and universities lack in the basic and high-end research facilities. Many institutes are running without proper infrastructure and basic facilities like library, hostels, transport, sports facility etc. which is desirable to rank the quality institution.
7. Presently there is a very less collaboration of higher educational institutes with industries.
8. Low employability of graduates is one of the major problem in India. Only a small proportion of Indian graduates are considered employable. Placement outcome also drop significantly as we move away from the top institutes. Initiatives taken by the government in the area of human resource development:
9. A project has been taken up to made a national digital library of eBooks on various subjects and topics and another set up through which highly qualified faculty of centrally sponsored institutions like IITs, IIMs and central universities would offer online courses free of cost.
10. Another special scheme called "Udaan" for girl students has launched by the Central government. Under this scheme mentoring and scholarship will be provided to enable meritorious girl students to transit from schools to technical education without any difficulty and also to promote teaching and learning of mathematics and science at senior secondary school level by providing free resources.
11. The focus of the project is to overcome the low enrolment ratio of girl students in prestigious technical institutions and enable them to receive special incentives and support so that they can join these institutions and go on to take leadership roles in the future.
12. Another interesting step is the launching of a mission named after freedom fighter and educationist Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya to build a strong professional cadre of teachers by addressing all the issues related to teachers, teaching, teacher preparation, professional development, curriculum design, design and development of more effective pedagogy and better assessment and evaluation methodologies.

13. The Central Government has also launched a scheme called Unnat Bharat Abhiyan for the promotion of technologies from the laboratory to the ground. Under the scheme, higher educational institutes would connect with villages in their neighbourhood and address the various problems faced by them. The scheme would particularly looking for the solutions for water management, organic farming, renewable energy, infrastructure and livelihood. IIT, Delhi is the coordinating institute of this scheme. About 130 villages have so far been adopted by IITs, NITs across the country under the scheme..
14. Rashtriya Avishkar Abhiyan has launched to revive interest in the technology among youth through support for innovative learning based on observations and experimentation. The focus would be on learning outside the classroom through direct interaction with the environment around the educational institutions.
15. Under the Global Initiative of Academic Networks (GIAN) programme, India's ministry of human resource development and department of science and technology will "create a channel for US professors in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics to teach in Indian academic and research institutions on short-term exchanges", as per the website of the US Department of State. Suggestions for Improving the System of Higher Education:
16. There is a need to implement innovative and transformational approach from primary to higher education level to make Indian educational system globally more relevant and competitive.
17. In higher educational institutes Industrial co-operation must be their for the development of curriculum, organizing expert lectures, internships, live projects, career counseling and placements. Higher educational institutes need to improve quality, reputation and establish credibility through student exchange, faculty exchange programs, and other collaborations with high- quality national and international higher educational institutes.
18. Government must promote collaboration between Indian higher education institutes and top International institutes and also generates linkage between national research laboratories and research centers of top institutions for better quality and collaborative research.
19. There is a need to focus on the graduate students by providing them such courses in which they can achieve excellence, gain deeper knowledge of subject so that they will get jobs after recruitment in the companies which would reduce unnecessary rush to the higher education.

IV. CONCLUSION

Higher education is of vital importance for the country, as it is a powerful tool to build knowledge-based society of the 21st Century. It is widely recognized that the existing data base on higher education is inadequate, out-of-date. Higher education can play an instrumental role in the achievement of these outcomes through the creation of knowledge networks, research and innovation centers, corporate-backed institutions, and support for faculty development. Society as a whole must support education at all levels, including higher education, given its role in promoting sustainable economic, social and cultural development. UPA-II wanted to change the face of higher education through a slew of legislations but all fell through in Parliament. The BJP manifesto has promised a revamp of regulator UGC, which BJP-led government should be able to implement them. Research and extension activities so as to balance both the need and the demand. Creative solutions- like online courses and foreign university partnerships put India in a position to grow its higher education sector dramatically in the coming years. In conclusion, it may be said, the Higher Education System in India while

critical for the development of the economy is afflicted with some serious concerns. It is a long way from a transformational change which is envisaged by various committees. Finally, this is the time to consider steps to make India into the world's major hub for higher education in the 21st century.

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