

A Comparative Study of Information Technology Facility of Two Select Central Universities in India

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Abstract

Education is not only the instrument of enhancing knowledge, efficiency, and accuracy but also a tool of augmenting and widening democratic participation and upgrading the overall individual and society, Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), Government of India, Annual Report (2009-2010). The study focuses on the information technology facility of two selected central universities of India viz., Delhi University located in central India and Manipur University located North East India. An analytical study is carried out on the information technology facility of the two select University made available to the students and non-teaching staffs. It is found that there is a need to take care regarding information technology in Manipur University especially the internet facility. Literacy is an essential quality but not a sufficient quality, to bring peace in the society we need the diffusion level so that it can bring integration, broader outlook, patriotism, self-respect, dignity, social outlook, rational and responsible, well cultured, respect for generation, a holistic development in the mankind.

Key words - Higher education, Northeast India, Quality education, Information Technology

Introduction

Till 1986, education was a state subject thereafter a concurrent subject by constitution amendment of 1976, which was a far reaching step. The National Policy of Education 1986 and Programme of Action 1986, updated in 1992 was one of the most notable policy of the government in formulating education policies. The main objective of the National Policy of Education of 1986 and Programme of Action, 1992 was to establish a national system of education which implies that all students irrespective of caste; creed, sex, and religion have access to education of a comparable quality. In India, there are has 44

central universities, 286 State Universities, 111 State Private Universities and 129 Deemed Universities. University Grants Commission (India) governs the India's higher education system and it is the third largest higher education system in the world after China and the United States (UGC report, 2011-2012).

Nowadays the primary focus for many commentators in universities is reshaping teaching, learning and administration and how new technologies are prompting the managerial and commercial reshaping of the global 'business' of higher education (Robins and Webster 2002, Dutton and Loader 2001, Selwyn 2004). Educators, for generations, have created an environment where students become passive learners rather than participants in the learning process. However, Total Quality Management (TQM), as understood by Cornesky (1994), creates an environment where all students become active-partners in their education. TQM is a procedure wherein everyone in the class knows the objectives of the class and adopts a quality philosophy to continuously improve the work done to meet the objectives. There are huge benefits of using total quality management in the classrooms. Deming encourages looking at quality in a positive way. He says that the product or service does possess quality if it is of value to the customer. Quality, a non-faulty system, should be directed at present and future needs of the customer too (Deming, 1982; Corrigan, 1995). Consistency is necessary in high-reliability schools and so as to do so, they, as stressed by Renolds (2002), conduct open discussion and agreement of the actions to be taken; resources and technology are kept as high quality and up-to-date as possible; identify all their major networks and ensure that they are in harmony with one another to improve high standards of education and achievement consistently. In such schools, information is centrally held and there is clear leadership from the senior management; appointment and recruitment practices are done in such a way that most appropriate staff is appointed. Monitoring, evaluation, performance indicators, data bases and appraisal systems are used constantly and demonstrate a high fitness for purpose. Standards are made clear and operational.

Need of the study:

Northeast with a pluralistic, multi-ethnic society, to remove the social imbalance, inequality in all forms, education has to play the vital role by enhancing qualitative as well as quantitative measures. There is a need to capture the vast demographic dividend and convert it into useful resource to build a peaceful and harmonizing society in the northeast. Manipur is one of the Border States in the northeastern part of the country having an international boundary of about 352 kms long stretch of land with Myanmar in the Southeast. It is bounded by Nagaland in the North, Assam in the west and Mizoram in the south. There are 9 districts in Manipur (valley -4, hills-

5) with a population of 2721756 (census 2011). There are 33 schedule tribes and 7 schedule caste in the state. The state language is Manipuri with a literacy rate of 79.21 % (male literacy- 86.06%, female literacy- 71.73%). Due to lack in the systematic planning in Manipur, there is poor quality in the higher education even though the numbers of higher education institutions were rising in numbers (Kashung Zingram Kengoo, 2012).

Endless number of problem does occur with political unrest in the state. The main causes of civil strife can be summarized as : clash of interests among diverse ethnic groups, unemployment, social inequity, uneven development and unequal distribution of resources, widespread corruption, weak governance at the grass root level, no respect for law among citizens, legal pluralism, coexistence of customary law and constitutional laws leading to conflict between these laws. The problems can be solved if the youth are given an opportunity pursue quality education. The transformation of a student from being a passive receiver of content to a more active participant and partner in the learning process can be achieved by integrating technology into the teaching-learning process. It has also been found that there is also a transformation in the teacher's role from the traditional "sage on the stage" to a "guide on the side" when the teaching- learning transaction is integrated with technology (Alley, 1996, Repp, 1996, Roblyer, Edwards, & Havriluk, 1997).

Review of literature:

According to Reich (1992), the role of the university in producing the required level of human capital for countries to succeed the globalised 'information economy' is expressed in terms of higher education's ability to provide the labour market with information-aware and information-adept graduates. The growth of the 'post-modern university', the longevity and survival of higher education can be achieved by giving emphasis on developing 'information-literate' graduates (Webster & Smith 1997). Another study by Shaw (1994) reveals the importance of instructional technology in higher education where the use of internet and the increasing number in the access made a positive contribution to the teaching and learning process. IT is also used effectively to access information and delivery in libraries, research in development and as a communication medium in higher education. Daniel (1997), however have focused on the importance of IT which will be an important strategy to attract and increase the number of students in very diverse locations. Some studies reveal that the creativity level of an individual, learning and social self-image and locus of control all significantly correlate their computer-related attitudes (Offir *et al* 1993, Woodrow 1990, Katz 1994). Findings of Clegg, S., Hudson, A. and Steel, J. (2003) shows that, ICTs are both presented as cause and a consequent driver for change within Higher Education. In connection with classical neo-liberal economics which go with the idea that market cannot be

challenged, Higher Education must change to meet the challenge. A change in the Higher Education can provide the skilled labour that gives the national economy a competitive edge in the global market. When the need for new forms of labour power arises ICTs are presented as co-terminus with the mechanisms of globalization.

Objectives:

The study lays down the following objectives:

- (a) To study the response of students and non-teaching staff on the information technology facilities of two central universities
- (b) To give suggestions in the light of the above objective.

Methodology:

An empirical study is conducted to study the information technology facilities available in two central universities where one is centrally located in Delhi and another remotely located in Manipur. The variables used are both quantitative and qualitative in nature which is based on both primary and secondary data. The secondary data has been collected from the annual reports of the universities, journals and related websites. The primary data is collected from the post-graduate students and non-teaching staffs of the selected universities through self-administered questionnaires in order to study the quality higher education made available to both the Central Universities. Sampling of the students and non-teaching staffs were carried out from each department of one school/faculty and non-teaching staffs from the administrative section were considered on the principle of random sampling method. In order to meet the fast challenging global world, an institution requires to be updated with latest technology. The faculty should provide the students with information about the latest technology and should encourage them to use it. The possibilities are endless, when it comes to how the internet, computers, and other forms of modern technology can benefit the classroom instruction. The students and non-teaching staffs of both the university were asked to give opinion on the infrastructure facilities through the self-administered questionnaire made differently for the above two selected groups. The opinions were marked on a five point Likert scale. The scale used was: Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Undecided (3), Agree (4), Strongly Agree (5)

Findings:

The findings of the study in response to the students and non-teaching staff regarding the information technology facilities of their universities in presented in the following table 1 and table 2.

Table No. 1: Students response on Information Technology facility of Manipur University and Delhi University

Variables	University	N	Mean	t-value	Sig.
Use of computers	Manipur	340	3.48	-4.577	0.000
	Delhi	247	3.89		
Computer facility	Manipur	339	2.70	-2.291	0.023
	Delhi	245	2.97		
Internet facility	Manipur	339	2.75	-9.545	0.000
	Delhi	247	3.71		

Source: Primary data

From table no.1, according to the students, it is found that there is a statistically significant difference in the satisfaction of information technology in all the three variables ($p < 0.05$). The mean score of usage of computers in Delhi University is 3.89, while that of Manipur University is 3.48 with a t-value of -4.577. The score of departmental computer facilities available in Delhi University is 2.97, while that of Manipur University is 2.70 with a t-value of -2.291. Lastly the score of internet facilities available in Delhi University is 3.71, while that of Manipur University is 2.75 with a t-value of -9.545.

Table No. 2: Non-teaching staff's response on Information Technology facility of Manipur University and Delhi University

Variables	University	N	Mean	t-value	Sig.
Computer knowledge	Manipur	60	3.70	-0.973	0.335
	Delhi	60	3.80		
Use of computer	Manipur	60	3.70	-0.869	0.389
	Delhi	60	3.78		
Computer facility	Manipur	60	3.33	-2.871	0.006
	Delhi	60	3.75		

Source: Primary data

From table no.2, according to the non-teaching staffs, it is found that there is a statistically significant difference in the satisfaction of computer facility available in the departments of the two university ($p < 0.05$). The score of computer facility in Delhi University is 3.75, while that of Manipur University is 3.33 with a t-value of -2.871. The score of computer knowledge of the non-teaching staffs in Delhi University is 3.80, while that of Manipur University is 3.70 with a t-value of -0.973. Lastly the score of usage of computers available

at Delhi University is 3.78, while that of Manipur University is 3.70, with a t-value of -0.869.

Discussion of findings:

On the perceptual experience of the students and non-teaching members of the two select central universities, it is found that Delhi University has the favorable perception in information technology facility than that of Manipur University.

On analyzing the response of the students and non-teaching staffs of Delhi University and Manipur University, it is found that it is found that Delhi University has the favorable response in information technology facility than that of Manipur University. According to the study in regard to the perception of students in the information technology facility, it is found that there is a significant difference in all the three variables. With a t-value of -9.545, the students of Delhi University are more satisfied with the internet facilities made available to them as compared to the students of Manipur University. In the other two facilities also the students of Delhi University gave a more satisfactory response. The reason may be due the underlying fact that Delhi University is located centrally in a more advantageous area and Manipur University is located in the extreme corner in the north eastern region of India. While studying the perceptions of the non-teaching staffs regarding information technology facility, it is found that there is a significant difference in the computer facilities available, which shows that the staffs of Delhi University are more satisfied with this facility made available to them. Studying the response of the non-teaching members towards computer knowledge and usage of computers of the universities, it is found that the mean scores of the mentioned variables are almost the same, but the satisfactory level is marginally in favour of Delhi University. Apart from the reason that Delhi University is located in an advantageous location, it is set up quite earlier than Manipur University, so the facility automatically favours Delhi University.

Conclusion

The study examines the perception of information technology facilities in two central universities, one located primarily in central India and another located in the far north-east part of India. The study finds that great care should be taken regarding information technology in Manipur University especially the internet facility. Apart from the physical infrastructure facilities, such as buildings, lighting, transport etc., information technology should be considered with utmost importance. Yet Manipur University is a newly established Central University as compared to Delhi University, some of the facility in information technology are as par with Delhi University. In

this world of globalisation and advanced technology, the world is in our hands with the help of computers. A nation progresses with the advancement of its technology, so the government should make sure that in all the corners of our country the youths are given equal facilities regarding the information technology.

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