Identification of Comparative status of administrative authority through fluidity of identity in the Higher Educational institutes of India.

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ABSTRACT

The Higher educational Institutes are main player in human resource development for their country. Well equipped and modern higher educational institutes can do better for their country. Higher educational Institutes are mainly counted by its administrative authority. This paper discusses the status of the administrative authority. Objective of the project is meant for identify the fluidity of identity of professional officers in the higher educational institute. Methodology deals with statistical data collected by visits to institutes. The professional individuals are categorized in ‘bounded’, ‘cross-border’ & ‘un-bounded’ by adopting semi-qualitative approach. The quality of statutory officer enhances the quality of higher educational institute and it fulfills the need of qualitative manpower for survival and development of the nation.

Introduction:

The investment in University education is a critical component of national development effort. The manpower development is the real development of the nation. All nations today depend increasingly on knowledge, ideas and skills which are produced in the universities [1].

In today’s higher education, institution plays an important role in production of qualitative manpower, and knowledge taught in these higher education institutions is becoming universal. These institutions are providers of the qualified work force for international as well as national needs. They must fulfill four purposes of Barnett for higher education

1. The production of qualified manpower.
2. Training for a research career.
3. The efficient management of the teaching provision.
4. Play the role in extending life changes.[2]

The concept autonomy in the higher education institutions is deals with self governing communities with no control from governments or other outside bodies in their internal activities. As Warnock says, “an institution that is self-governing can govern itself well or ill, despotically or democratically. But the principle it adopts, the decisions it makes, are dictated to it by no one from outside.” [3]

University administration lacks the transparency and it is observed that even the role and function of statutory officers in the state university varies from university to university despite common Act. This is because of the fact that university are autonomous body and they have their own statute and ordinances of their own, which are prepared by the university itself taking into consideration the need of the region in particular.

With the autonomy to the schools on the campus there will be a parallel system to the main system in terms of Ad-hoc Board, Academic Board, and Management Board & Finance Board etc. There is big apprehension in the minds of the authorities of the university and teachers about the consequences of autonomy and whether the new system will survive or not. The new form of management in the university should encourage speedy decision making, networking, team effort and collective responsibility to meet the challenges of the new millennium. [4]

It is also a bitter truth that students are reluctant to take admission in the state university because of the fact that these universities are not performing at par with that of Central University, IIT’s, IIM and B-School in India. The fact of the matter for the better performance of Central
University, IIT and B-Schools is in its good administration in general, management in particular and autonomy to the individual departments. The academic flexibility in up-grading the syllabus in the autonomous system lies with the individual teacher of the concerned department.

There is major difference between administration and management. Management enhances working capacity of the employee and there is specific mission for which employee works. In management protocol of heir chary is properly maintained and followed in its strict sense while in administration there is total mismanagement of this protocol. In management higher authority is accountable for its decision, and once the decision is taken by the higher authority, lower authority follows it in its true sense, while in administration most of the time the decision taken by the highest authority are reversed by the lower authority. In management each and every employee sticks to its work and does not cross its boundary, while in administration even most of the employee cross their domain of work. In management power and function of each and every individual staff is well defined. And therefore most of the time the functions and powers of all the sections in the university, as mentioned above, does not match with that of the other section in the same university and if further varies from university to university and there is total mismatch. The total impact of this ill management of the academic administration in the university set up is seen in the form of no work or less work and more money culture.

It is to be noted that even the revision of ‘Maharashtra University Act – 1994 [5] is also under consideration to improve the standard of the higher education in the state. Now, the draft of the new Maharashtra Public University Act-2011[6] is ready. It could be implemented anytime in the coming academic year. The Act suggests many good reforms. Hopefully, this will raise the standard of the higher education in the state. Central university act 2009[7] is come in effect. The institute of technology act 1961[8] also going to modify. As Well as IIM act is also going to modify. To face the new challenges of the higher educational development every nations are very serious and wants to upgrade the quality of higher education institute to facilitate our new generation. Same is happening with higher educational institute in India.

The category of ‘new and alternative providers’ includes a diversity of private and public organizations, networks and institutions delivering education programs and courses in foreign countries. These new types of cross-border providers can be brick and mortar institutions or virtual universities. They are usually commercial in nature and for-profit in purpose. The description and classification of new cross-border providers is rather challenging. The tendency is to use the factors inherent to traditional Higher Education Institutes and apply them to new providers. This orientation will probably change over time. Especially if the “new or alternate providers” begin to receive subsidies from government or undergo the same accreditation processes that traditional universities undergo [9].This is the major challenge in front of the institute rune by the fund of government. The professionals working in such institute must have to resolve this problem with upgrading the quality of self and institute frame work also. In the new educational frame work the higher educational institutions are the face of nation. It must have international face as well as national face also. The standard of higher educational institute must be at international level.

The comparative study between some of the selected IIT, IIM, Central University and state universities Maharashtra in India is carried out with the following objectives in the mind.

Objectives:–
1. Identify the awareness about reforms in higher education in India.
2. Educational audit of administrative officer by National knowledge Commission.
3. Find the boundary of knowledge worker in higher educational institutes.
4. Calculate the sustainability of traditional University with Institute of National importance.

Methodology:–
1. Actual visits to non agriculture university / IIT / IIM / Central University / B School were carried out in 5-6 phases. In all 30 different higher education institutes across the entire India were visited to generate the data
2. 77 officers of 18 different cadres were interviewed and Statistical data is collected.
3. Study of University ordinances, stature and Maharashtra University Act, central University Act & guidelines of UGC, NAAC & National Knowledge Commission is carried out.

4. We collected 25 different types of ordinances, statutes and reports are referred while interpreting the data.

Comparative status of administrative authorities through fluidity of identity

Cultural-frame institutionalism has tended to emphasize the role of professional logics in shaping the role identity of actors but has glossed over the sources of variation in professional logics and role identities [10]. The study of identity movements in professions can enable us to understand how social movement’s foster cultural change in the professions by reshaping logics and redefining the role identities of individuals [11]. This concept is more related to social aspects but the concept of fluidity of identity is well used by Ceila Whitechurch [12]. The same concept is used as a literature review in this paper.

The idea about the “fluidity of identity” is used to theories the observed data, and in turn to develop a theoretical framework in higher education system that describes identities by means of three categories of bounded, cross-boundary, and unbounded professionals. Working and identity of bounded, cross-boundary, and unbounded professionals shows the category of institute where they works.

The study has given emphasis on categorizing the individuals based on their work into three categories namely ‘bounded’, ‘cross-border’ & ‘un-bounded’ by adopting semi-qualitative approach. It is observed that only some of the individuals have identified & interpreted their role actively. They are fully involved in their work and use the total skill what they possess. It observed that the profile of such professionals is very strong but they are away from the actual execution of the work. Such type of professional must be involved in decision making and work activity.

The study is built on a literature review that was published by Center for Studies in Higher Education, UC Berkeley Shifting Identities, Blurring Boundaries: The Changing Roles of Professional Managers in Higher Education Celia Whitchurch, May 2008, University of London—Institute of Education.

From the investigation of the question set of interviews, it became apparent that respondents could be distinguished by their approach to the structures and boundaries that they encountered. These initial accounts were placed, therefore, into three broad categories as re-defined by Celia Whitchurch, 2008:

1. Individuals who identify themselves within the boundaries of a routine functions that was already constructed by acts of their institutes. These people are characterized by their concern for carrying out the roles already prescribed by the act. It is observed that many of the respondents are not ready to cross this domain. They are categorized as bounded professionals.

2. Individuals who recognized, and actively used their boundaries to build academic relations beyond the regular domain identified in the first category. These persons have shown their interest to interact with external academic environment. They are categorized as cross-boundary professionals.

3. Individuals who displayed a disregard for boundaries, focusing on broadly based projects across the institute such as widening participation, and on the development of their institute for the future. These people undertook work that might be described as institute research and development, drawing on external experience and contacts, and were as likely to see their futures outside higher education as within the sector. They are categorized as unbounded professionals.

The higher education scenario in India, based on recommendations of NKC, is changing fast. Recommendations of National Knowledge Commission [13] focus on Expansion, Excellence and Inclusion in the Higher Education System. Most of the recommendations of NKC, like, access to knowledge, education network, Global Competitive Challenge, Ensure Accreditation for Quality, Up
gradation of Infrastructure in terms of Library, Laboratories, Teachers Training, Evolving new models of Learning, Continuous Internal Assessment, Continuous Assessment of Syllabi, University as Research hub, University-Industry Interface, Integrated Courses including doctoral programme, are the part and parcel of the developmental activities to be supposed to be implemented by the “Statutory Officers” / “Professional Administrative Officers” hence such activities carried out by “Statutory Officers” are included under the domain of “Un-bounded” category.

In the coming few years many more state universities, Central universities, Private universities, foreign Universities, IITs and IIMs will be established all over India. All these higher educational institutes will be directly under the control of NCHER (National Council for Higher Education & Research). Hence, there will be growing need of the ‘Professional Administrative Officers’/’Statutory Officers’ with better vision and better qualification that are well aware of these changes in the higher education. Such professionals will only be then categorized as “un-bounded Professionals”. The professional have eminent capability to lead such type of institutions. In the era of information technology and modern science one cannot achieve each type of knowledge therefore “knowledge hub” and “hub of knowledgeable professional” should be established. They must be permitted fully for use their skill and knowledge for the generation of new manpower to achieve the national needs.

The respondents were interviewed keeping this fact of “changing policy of higher education” in India, in mind. The results are plotted in a graphical manner. The graph given below gives the classification of the Professional (Statutory Officers).

Based on the graph shown above it is observed that about 51% of the statutory officers in state university of Maharashtra, 60% in central university, 64% in IIT and 61% in IIM belong to either “Cross-border” and “Un-bounded” category. In some of the cases the Professionals (Statutory Officers) are not aware of the “Higher Education Reforms” being implemented by the Central Govt. i.e. they are not aware of “National Knowledge Commission”, “Yashpal Committee” [14] and the recommendations made by these committees and the Apex body of education in the making i.e. National Council for Higher Education and Research (NCHER). The cross-boundary and unbounded professionals (Statutory Officers) are dynamic, active and carry out more developmental work. These professionals also extend their roles beyond their given duties and they operate across the academic boundaries.
### Table 1 Categories of professional identity

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<th>Category of identity</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
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<tr>
<td>Bounded</td>
<td>Function within the domain of ‘Structural Boundary’ mostly routine work defined by the Act</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cross-border</td>
<td>Work across the boundaries, particularly with respect to crossing academic borders of the university and entering into the domain of other higher education institutes and research organizations; students feedback; student-industry interaction;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Un-bounded</td>
<td>Work for the developmental cause and innovative practices; introduction of new programmes, new proposals, research publications by students, national research lab.; vision document</td>
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Mostly the lower rank professional is working under the boundary framed as by acts and they are engaged in routine work of the institute. They are not permitted for go beyond the limit. Most of them are not interested to go beyond limit hence they are fall in bounded category.

Second order professionals are found interested to upgrade the institutions but the filling of them are emotional they are not strong by self profiles. If they are well trained they can grow to first order professional.

Credibility of Professional like Vice-Chancellor, Directors is likely to be facilitated by

1. Gaining the support from a key person like ‘officer on special duty’.
2. Having higher qualification like Doctoral degree with Research Publication at national & international level, guiding experience and patent to their credits.
3. Being comfortable with organizational “messiness” [15], and projects that may be unfinished and un-finishable.

The following figure shows percentage of Better Higher Educational Administrative Officer present in higher educational institute. It is calculated based on their research paper publication, research students guided, books published and patent to their credits.

![Classification of Better Higher Education Administrative Officer](image-url)
Some eminent respondents showed professional profile of their own with making an innovative contribution to the development of their institution. One of them is interested to make Indian institution as a best institute of world. Some interested to follow the guideline of rich country of the world. One of them is wants to link each higher educational institute with each other. This indicates that the Professionals Administrative Officers (Statutory Officers) who are categorized under “Unbounded” group are more concerned about the development of the higher education institution than their personal growth; obviously such professionals are picked up at higher level in the education system.

Higher-level qualifications were seen as an increasingly significant element in career development, tended to be favored over formal programmes that did not lead to a qualification. This very fact is also reflected in the Professional Administrative Officer’s role and functions.

This framework demonstrates that professional staff (Statutory Officers), who have better higher education qualification, are not only interpreting their given roles more actively, but that they are also moving laterally across functional and higher education institutional boundaries to create new professional higher education spaces, higher education knowledge, higher education relationships and better academic development than the officers who do not have any background of higher education.

Conclusion

The study carried out describes the changing & evolving roles and identities of existing professional administrative staff (Statutory Officer) in Maharashtra, central university, IIT, IIM in higher education of India. The study exemplifies that identity movements of professional administrative staff in higher education cannot be captured exclusively in terms of a shift from 'administration' to 'management' in the system of higher education i.e. a process of professionalization of higher education system.

The idea about the ‘fluidity of identity’ is used to theories the observed data, and in turn to develop a theoretical framework in higher education system that describes identities by means of three categories of bounded, cross-boundary, and unbounded professionals. This framework demonstrates that professional staff, who have better higher education qualification, are not only interpreting their given roles more actively, but that they are also moving laterally across functional and higher education institutional boundaries to create new professional higher education spaces, higher education knowledge, higher education relationships and better academic development than the officers who do not have any background of higher education.

The roles or functions of the ‘Statutory Officers’ in different higher educational institute in India, though governed by their respective acts’, varies from state university, central university, IIT and IIM to their limit. The roles (functions) and identities of professional administrative staff (Statutory Officers) are more complex and dynamic than higher education charts or work descriptions in the higher educational set-up might suggest. It is suggested, therefore, that the roles or functions of all the ‘Statutory Officers’, who can now be called as ‘professional management staff’ than ‘statutory officers’, from the higher educational institute be well defined and that due weightage must be given to the ‘higher education qualification’ than any other factor for the better development of Higher Education in this part of the world.

The preliminary interpretation done on this data reveals that the VC of State Universities, Central Universities, Directors of IIT and IIM are almost are of the same level. However, it is observed that the other ‘Statutory Officers’ do not show the similarity with regards to ‘Education reforms’, etc.

The category of ‘new and alternative providers’ includes a diversity of private and public organizations and institutions delivering education programs and courses in foreign countries. These new types of cross-border providers can be brick and mortar institutions or virtual universities. They are usually commercial in nature and for-profit in purpose. The description and classification of new cross-border providers is rather challenging.

Most of the higher educational institutes of national importance are located in well developed and linked with well transport facilities area and in metropolitan cities. With presence of high qualified
personality in the area of institute located were well developed and mass also benefitted. The development is directly related with presence of high quality professionals and institutes in which they work. We suggest that some institute of national importance should be opened in remote area by which the mass of such area will turn toward new ideas of the world.

“Quantity gives Quality” to achieve the more quality attraction of student towards higher educational institution should be increased.

References


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