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### A Critical Review on the Recommendations and Proposals of the Ministry of Tourism for Twelfth Five Year Plan: Imperatives for Paradigm Shift in Human Resource Development and Capacity Building Initiatives in Hospitality and Tourism Sectors

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#### ABSTRACT

Hospitality and Tourism is one of the largest service sectors in India and accounts for nearly eight percent of total employment in the country (Planning Commission Report, 2011). The Twelfth Plan focus is to achieve significant growth of this sector both in economic development and its potential benefit by facilitating capacity building, training and empowerment. Annual demand of hospitality workforce is likely to touch almost nine lakhs in 2022; but the presently available 337 training institutes in India are able to cater only 63000 students every year. (Market Pulse Report, 2012). Ministry of Tourism has proposed several initiatives to bridge this gap for the Twelfth Plan period. Training & capacity building is the pivotal role of Academics, who are also considered as vital elements of national development effort & higher education (Working Group Report on Higher Education, 2011). As per MHRD, Distance Education is one of the policy initiatives to enhance the relevance of higher education to improve access, equity and excellence (Higher Education, 2011); but MOT is completely silent with respect to harnessing 'Open and Distance Education' facilities at tertiary level. This review paper addresses the twin needs of reinventing the role clarity of academics and also deliberates on the import of the questions raised using 'Report of the Working Group on Tourism' for the Twelfth Five Year Plan (it is operational during the period 2012-2017) by Ministry of Tourism - that too from the perspective of Hospitality and Tourism Education.

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**Keywords:** Hospitality & Tourism Sectors, Twelfth Five Year Plan, Government Reports, Human Resource Development, Capacity Building, Open & Distance Education, India.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Should the Five Year Plan documents, statistical data, budgetary resources and the (administrative report cards in the form of) Annual Reports of the Governments at the centre and the states find their echo in the corridors of curriculum? Do we need to accept that it is part of the professional responsibility of the academic fraternity at the tertiary level to examine critically the state sponsored political and bureaucratic exercises in the arena of higher education against the wide canvass presented by the clauses of our Constitution especially those pertaining to the Fundamental Rights and to the Directive Principles of State Policy? Is it necessary to revisit from time to time the mission and vision statements of our institutions and use them as the educational philosophy guiding curricular processes (or employ them as jewels adorning the silky institutional brochures, prospectus and convocational folders)? Should we provide significant attention to discipline based contemporary societal issues or restrict to dispassionate dissemination of knowledge? These questions may seem to be addressed to divergent fields, but, are inseparably connected to the invisible socioeconomic and cultural web. Efforts to find answer to each of these questions would compel us to understand the objectives of higher education, the importance of the education relevant clauses of our Constitution (framed by the visionaries with a view to providing a strong democratic fabric), the role of educational philosophy at the institution level, the action plan that has to be followed towards identification and fulfillment of the required skills and competences in the learners and, varieties of learning theories we need to make use of. In short, our inquiry will lead to reinvention of the role clarity of academics. We intend to deliberate on the import of the questions raised using 'Report of the Working Group on Tourism' for the Twelfth Five Year Plan by Ministry of Tourism, Government of India; it is operational during the period 2012 – 2017 (Working Group Report on Tourism, 2011) - that too from the perspective of Hospitality and Tourism Education.

## 2. ACADEMICS - ARE THEY DESIGNED ONLY FOR TEACHING?

While we desire to discuss the paradigm shift in the teaching-learning processes, propriety demands that we start our discussion with an analysis of the job requirements of the academics in tertiary educational institutions. Role clarity is a component critical to any discourse on the discharge of duties and responsibilities. Coming straight, should we visualize teaching as an occupation or a profession? No doubt, the question runs the risk of being dubbed a rhetoric for its otherwise possible 'tremor effect' on the 'halo' associated with the traditional 'Guru', the spring and fountain of serene knowledge. The term, occupation, usually signifies a job or a source for earning livelihood and it also implies completion of the assigned job to the satisfaction of superiors in the organisation without being concerned about the critical issues involved. Such a type setting of teaching as a job could be an offensive and a damaging view point for all of us engaged in teaching. On the other hand, to be classified under the prestigious category of 'profession', requirements are quite demanding as listed below by the 'National Commission on Teachers II' by Ministry of Education (National Commission for Teachers, 1983).

- (i) Acquiring knowledge, teaching students and getting involved in research
- (ii) Constantly upgrading knowledge

- (iii) Learning for excellence
- (iv) Adhering to value system
- (v) Focused on the interest of the category served (viz. the students)
- (vi) Willing to take up criticism
- (vii) Having a liberated thought process (not chained by parochial or clan considerations)
- (viii) Orienting knowledge for societal cause and getting involved in community related extension work
- (ix) Ability to provide a critical analysis of institutional, national and international policy documents on sociopolitical, economic and cultural issues and accommodating the same in the curricular framework.

Our concern relates to the last item (ix), since it receives fairly less academic attention; in fact, the criticality of the issues involved are not given much significance. In this context, it is relevant to mention Bertrand Arthur William Russell's views on education. According to him, education should build-in a person the traits of - vitality, courage, sensitivity and intelligence. 'Sensitivity' is needed to examine with empathy both the societal needs and the socioeconomic conditions of the clientele; it enables formulation of an apparatus for need analysis to find the skill requirement in a particular segment. 'Vitality' facilitates a person to analyze the issues objectively; while 'courage' is needed to put forth the views fearlessly before the statutory bodies of the University or autonomous College in order to get approval for the academic programs. 'Intelligence' is required in the whole process of culling out appropriate curriculum planning, implementation and evaluation through judicious exploitation of resources (Russell, 2009).

It needs to be reinforced that curriculum is a whole package unlike the restricted term, syllabus. Curriculum, apart from including the established discipline based content and its implementation, deliberates on related local, national and international policy issues. For testing the suggested hypothesis on the requirements of academic profession [especially (ix)], which requires higher level of pragmatic and evaluative approach, a relevant situation exists in the form of 'Report of the Working Group on Tourism' for Twelfth Five Year Plan by Ministry of Tourism, Government of India; we intend focusing on Human Resource Development & Capacity Development only. Although deliberations could be wider on issues related to human resource development and capacity building in the context of:

1. 'National Knowledge Commission Report to the Nation' (National Knowledge Commission, 2009).
2. 'Report of the Working Group on Higher Education for Twelfth Five Year Plan' (Working Group Report on Higher Education, 2011).

### **3. NEED FOR A CRITIQUE ON THE POLICY DOCUMENTS**

History of the land has quite a few warning signals to the academics in the higher education arena emphasizing the need to perform the 'societal watchdog' function unfailingly. The Philosophy of Education used by the ruling group has a lasting effect for generations, since the Philosophy decides the mould around which the educational content would be shaped. A few instances are worth considering:

- The dogmatic and authoritarian intellectual tendencies of the educated class of the then existing societies of our land and their apathy towards industrial revolution sweeping Europe since fifteenth century had a “fast backward” effect, and cleared the ground for colonial rule. The situation is all the more distressing, considering the stark contrast of pre-eminence enjoyed by the Centres of Learning established in the first millennium in Nalanda (Bihar), Vikramashila (Bihar), Kanchipuram or Conjeevaram (Tamil Nadu), Takshashila (now in Pakistan) etc.
- Again, the passivity of the Academia to the Educational Philosophy propounded by Macaulay and perpetrated by the British Empire strengthened the colonial rule firmly in this soil for more than a century. The well-known “minute” of Macaulay written in 1835 and stated below echoes the intentions behind the British educational policy: *“We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions we govern, a class, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals and intellect”* (PGDHE, 2004). Still today, we find it difficult to decolonize our minds and fail to believe in our capabilities.
- The Academics have a moral responsibility to be critical of the government actions and policies, once socio-economic fabric runs the risk of being affected. Compliance could lead to more severe subjugation and deprivation. An illustration is seen in the following case:

In 1830, India accounted for 17.6% of global industrial production against Britain’s 9.5%; but, by 1900, India’s share was down to 1.7% against Britain’s 18.5% (PGDHE, 2004). The post-independent Indian Philosophy of Education is reflected through the Preamble of our Constitution (in terms of Justice, Liberty, Equality and Fraternity) and its Provisions have a bearing on education under (i) Fundamental Rights [Articles 13, 15, 21 A, 28 and 30] and (ii) Directive Principles of State Policy [37, 38, 39, 43, 45, 46, 47] (The Constitution of India, 2005). The successive Governments, in spite of political differences, have been broadly guided by these provisions in taking steps for facing the challenges before our educational system in terms of access, participation & equity, excellence, quality, relevance, management, and resources; the results are, no doubt, only moderate, in the span of seven decades.

#### 4. THRUST OF TWELFTH FIVE YEAR PLAN

As per the Twelfth Plan, the average growth rate during the Eleventh Plan period (2007-2012), touched 8%, as against 7% during Tenth Plan period (2002 – 2007), which indicates economic development. This aspect needs a critical examination. Indian economy reflects a mixture of strength and weakness.

- Its aspects of strength are – (i) the presence of largest young population (amidst the countries with ageing population) providing scope for the supply of skilled labour to the developed countries which are experiencing labour shortage, (ii) global dispersion of enterprising Indians, who could facilitate national development (iii) Engineering and Management institutions of international repute (iv) international reputation of quite a few Indian companies and (v) acquisition of firms abroad by some of the industrial units, etc. But, the development is skewed. India suffers from acute economic and social disparities of four dimensions - regional, rural-urban, social, and gender. There is a tendency for increase in these disparities over the years (Working Group Report on Higher Education, 2011). Undoubtedly, the maximum advantage has gone to a section of the middle class, especially to those in Information Technology (IT) and Information Technology

Enabled Services (ITES) and a few other service sectors as is indicated by the following data. During 1990-2000, the Services sector grew at an average of 7.9% per annum, far ahead of agriculture (3%) and manufacturing (5.2%). In the period 1950 - 1990, the share of agriculture in GDP declined by about 25 percentage points, while industry and services gained equally (Kurian, 2007). The share of industry has stabilized since 1990 and, consequently, the entire subsequent decline in the share of agriculture in GDP has been picked up by the services sector (Twelfth Five Year Plan Document for Social Sectors, 2013). The situation has resulted in jobless growth, since the faster growing Services sector has less potential for generating mass employment as compared to the agricultural sector, which unfortunately has slower growth, in spite of being the occupation of the majority of the population.

- On the weakness front, it is to be mentioned that nearly a quarter of the population live below the poverty line, which is defined in terms of monthly per capita consumption expenditure of ₹356.35 for rural cases and ₹538.60 for urban areas (Banga, 2006). Nearly 40 percent are illiterate. Twenty five percent of total child population in the elementary age group does not have even primary education and, 53% of children drop out of school before completing the elementary level, or grade VIII. 75% of the poor live in rural areas and are daily wagers, self employed and landless labourers (PGDHE, 2004). Considerable farmer suicide cases area reported. Large scale migration in search of employment is noticed from the backward regions to the developed regions, resulting in tension in the migrated locations (Working Group Report on Higher Education, 2011).

All these considerations have led the Government to formulate the Twelfth Plan motto as “Faster, Sustainable and More Inclusive Growth”. It emphasizes the need for bridging the divides in order to build a more harmonious society with socio-economic justice. In this background, we would like to examine the contents of the ‘Report of the Working Group on Tourism’ for the Twelfth Five Year Plan by Ministry of Tourism, Government of India.

## **5. REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON TOURISM FOR TWELFTH FIVE YEAR PLAN**

The Approach paper to Twelfth Five Year Plan highlights tourism as one of the largest service sectors in India. Tourism facilitates in providing employment to a wide spectrum of job seekers from unskilled to the specialized, even to women. It highlights the potential of tourism in stimulating other economic sectors as well viz. agriculture, horticulture, poultry, handicrafts, transport, construction etc. The tourist expenditure could enable employment opportunities and additional income in all these sectors. The benefits that eventually flow into the economy could help in poverty alleviation and can contribute towards overall socio-economic improvement. The Report deals at length with various aspects like strategies for Tourism Development; publicity and marketing; sustainable tourism; rural tourism; ecotourism; heritage tourism; product development; access; connectivity; infrastructure; destination management etc. The Twelfth Plan strategy on Tourism is to achieve foreign tourist arrivals of 11.24 million and foreign tourist visits of 35.96 million by the end of plan period through diversification of source markets, increase in per capita spending and enhancement in the length of stay of international visitors and by reducing seasonality. The Plan also proposes domestic tourist visits of 1451.46 million by the end of plan period.

According to a study conducted by Ministry of Tourism on Manpower Requirement in Hospitality and Travel Trade Sector (Hotels - classified and unclassified, eating outlets, Tour Operators, Travel Agents and Medical & Wellness units), the demand for manpower in Hotels & Restaurant sector far exceeds the supply. The study highlights the gap of 8.10 lakh manpower in the hospitality sector. The impact of this demand-supply mismatch leads to an unacceptable percentage of untrained manpower in the hospitality sector, which certainly affects the quality of services offered to the tourists (Market Pulse Report, 2012). Therefore to cope up with the demand, a much larger and superior manpower would be needed and the following steps are suggested for Human Resource Development and Capacity Building:

- Craft & hotel management education to be made integral to school system by including 'Hospitality Education' as one of the optional papers at +2 stage of school education.
- Ensuring availability of a pool of teachers, teacher training and in-service training facilities and, including Hospitality Education as one of the teaching options in B.Ed. Course.
- Implementation of roaming faculty concept (to enable optimum availability of teachers).
- Improvement of curriculum for the existing degree/diploma courses and making it relevant to the industry standards.
- Provision of a system of skill assessment and certification of the existing service providers without any formal training or education.
- Service providers without formal training/education enabled to pursue academic course through Open School System.
- The IHMs/FCIs to function in two shifts for optimum utilization of the capacities and to focus on training of trainers.
- Establishing more SIHMs and FCIs for preparing additional diploma / degree holders
- National Council of Hotel Management & Catering Technology to be made a statutorily empowered regulatory body to ensure standards in Hospitality education and to be encouraged to pursue the scheme of affiliation of private sector hotel management or craft institutions.
- IITTM to be made an apex institution of excellence for tourism education with powers to affiliate chapters/institutions in its field.
- The industry to be urged to share the managerial responsibilities and financial burdens of running the educational institutions established in the domain.
- Upgrading the IHMs/ FCIs with facilities comparable to the best institutions world over.

## **6. CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE WORKING GROUP REPORT**

The document needs to be examined in the context of a research study sponsored by the Ministry of Tourism in 2012 which shows that (Market Pulse Report, 2012):

- Only half of the employees in the key operational domains are properly trained in both hotels and the travel sector, while in restaurants and other eating outlets, this percentage is even lesser.

- Hospitality sector requires 36.18 lakh skilled manpower. But the Institutional capacities (including the National Skill Development Corporation) would be able to fulfil only ten per cent of the projected requirement of workforce in hospitality and tourism sector (inclusive of supply from Non-MOT sources).
- Most of the employees in the unorganized sector and nearly 80% of the staff of restaurants consist of untrained manpower.
- Annual demand of hospitality workforce is likely to touch almost nine lakhs in 2022, but the presently available 337 training institutes (including IHMs, FCIs, University affiliated & AICTE approved institutes along with travel & tour institutes) are catering only to 63000 students every year.

These aspects indicate need for augmenting continuing education. One notable aspect about the 'Working Group on Tourism Report' is its silence with respect to harnessing 'Open and Distance Education' facilities at tertiary level, whereas it recommends using Open School System for facilitating Service providers without formal training/education to pursue academic courses. It is worth mentioning that National Council of Hotel Management & Catering Technology is offering Hospitality education in collaboration with Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU).

As a contrast, Chapter 8 on 'Open and Distance Learning' of the Working Group Report on Higher Education opens up with the following remarks:

*"Distance education system is emerging as an important means to cater to the increasing demand for higher education. Open and Distance Learning (ODL) is recognized and accepted as an important mode for achieving enhanced access, developing skills, capacity building, training, employability, life-long education and continuing education. Open and Distance Learning has contributed significantly in development of education structure of India."* (Working Group Report on Higher Education, 2011).

Chapter 21 on 'Education' of Twelfth Five Year Plan Document on Social Sectors states that *"Open and distance learning must be used to widen access in a cost-effective and flexible manner"* (Twelfth Five Year Plan Document, 2013). The importance given to the development of Distance mode is evident from the fund (Rs. 700 crore) allocated for Open and Distance Learning alone by HRD Ministry. The HRD Ministry document also predicts 1 million enrolments in DE mode by the end of Twelfth Plan.

Chapter 6 on 'Enhancing Equity and Inclusion' of UGC Report mentions that *"Distance Education facilities using ICT may be of great help in improving the education scenario of higher education in the rural areas"* (Inclusive and Qualitative Expansion of Higher Education, 2011).

The recommendation regarding National Council of Hotel Management & Catering Technology being made a statutorily empowered regulatory body to ensure standards in Hospitality education needs scrutiny in the light of one of the recommendations of the National Knowledge Commission on Higher Education regarding establishment of Independent Regulatory Authority for Higher Education (IRAHE) through an Act of Parliament (National Knowledge Commission, 2009). IRAHE is suggested to be bestowed with the regulatory powers, which are being performed at present by UGC, AICTE and Medical Council of India; these organizations being made funding bodies/professional associations. The reason suggested is that 'the multiplicity of regulatory bodies with confusing and overlapping mandates makes the system over-regulated and under-governed'.

Specific measures for ‘inclusive growth’ are not indicated in the Working Group on Tourism Reports either through HR oriented measures or in the funds budgeted.

## **7. IMPLICATIONS FOR ACADEMIC ACTION**

Considering the responsibilities of being facilitators of socioeconomic justice, the academics have to act beyond the normal class room situations. Willingness to adapt to technology change and being ready to learn continuously - both new content and teaching methodology are some of the attitudinal dispositions expected by the faculty.

- The Academics need to be proactive in laying sound basis for applying Extension Education methodology in relation to Capacity Building for Service Providers Scheme. Extension education needs to be affordable, relevant and accessible. It has to be designed to facilitate generation of additional income and development of employable skills. Use of vernacular materials supported by visual aids could be an added advantage. In the recent years, IGNOU, through its Centre for Extension Education, has redefined the Extension Education methodology and perceives Extension as a two way interactive process (“IGNOU,” n.d.). The University has been trying to apply innovative procedures building on learners’ experiences and their indigenous knowledge.
- The Academics also are required to apply continuing education possibilities to the vast majority of Hospitality workers, who need better skills and educational opportunities as brought out in the research study sponsored by the Ministry of Tourism in 2012 (Market Pulse Report, 2012).
- In capacity building initiatives, one could start with practical work and then introduce theory. It should be a problem based approach. The curriculum is to be based on the needs and expressed desires of the people. It is advantageous to involve community/industry leaders. Skill reinforcement needs to be made through application to similar situations. One needs to expect a heterogeneous audience. There is ample scope to apply theories of learning (Ord, 2012) to capacity building exercises and a few are mentioned below (“Experiential Learning,” n.d.):
  - Behaviorism (Consisting of positive reinforcement, minimum delay, division into small steps)
  - Constructivism (Learner profile created, needs assessed and learners facilitated to construct knowledge using sensory inputs; a problem solving approach is to be followed)
  - Experiential Learning (Adults make their own concrete experience based on which observations, reflections and generalisation and testing can be made). Experiential Learning is more suitable for vocational training associated with many of the sectors in Hospitality and Tourism. It gives scope for evaluation like written test (for checking comprehension ability) and skill test. Alternate modes to skill test such as evidence method (through statements recorded by authentic witnesses) and submission of items (due to possession of competence) are also used.

## **8. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Capacity Building could be done through community-based organizations (CBOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The CBOs typically possess expert understanding of the needs of local people and



are best placed to create the sense of community ownership and a feedback mechanism so important to development projects. Unfortunately, no amount of this valuable expertise can protect these grassroots CBOs and NGOs due to problems of sustainability. These are dependent on donor project finance which has operational limits with respect to time, beyond which the organizations may find it difficult to continue (“One World,” n.d.).

Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) could be used for capacity building initiatives (“Digital India,” n.d.). Distance learning has also increased its outreach within developing countries through online tools. The provision of local language content in these initiatives becomes a vital component to complete the circle of capacity building. New mobile phone technologies could also be used for providing support for capacity building (“One World,” n.d.). Partnerships among employers, trainers, local governments, NGOs, CBOs, and self-help groups can lead to more effective and efficient use of financial resources and sharing of expertise. There is a need to encourage sustainability through application of relevant management concepts and accountability.

## 9. CONCLUSION

Though Hospitality and Tourism is overwhelmingly an industry of private sector service providers; the public sector has a significant role to play in the provision of capacity building, training and empowerment either directly or through public private partnership. It is appreciable that significant efforts have been taken by Indian Institute of Tourism and Travel Management, Gwalior and its associated institutions, Food Craft Institutes (FCIs) and Institutes of Hotel Management (IHMs) for provision of training to the organized and unorganized service providers (“IITTM,” n.d.). The following are innovatively designed:

Capacity Building for Service Providers (CBSP) Scheme, ‘Earn while you Learn’ Scheme and Entrepreneurship Development Cell (Ministry of Tourism, 2017).

Still, the clientele is quite vast and the Academics have their roles to play towards both formal and non-formal sectors of Hospitality and Tourism education.

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