



**SOME OBSERVATIONS ON HUMAN AND NON-HUMAN RESOURCE
WASTE IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

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Abstract:

Starting from Hartog Committee (1929), Wastage and stagnation have been extensively surveyed and studied in case of Primary education in India and also by others, world over. However, in higher education these and other conditions creating wastage have to be discussed deeply. Apart from wastage in terms of drop-outs and stagnation in terms of repetition of academic year of a program or course, there are other aspects that indicate wastage of human and /or non-human resources in higher education system. The reasons for such wastage may be Social, Economic, Educational or others. Understanding wastages other than stagnation and drop-outs and monitoring them to the minimal level based on self-experiences have been the focus of this article. This article discusses human and non-human resource wastages at higher level of education separately and integrally. Based on self-experiences, the authors also put forward their reflective thoughts in the form of some suggestions or ways to reduce such wastages at higher level, especially at university level of education.

Keywords: *wastage, Human resources, non-human resources*

Introduction:

After independence, investment in education has been one of the important factors in nation's social, cultural and economic development. Since Sixties in the last century, there is growing awareness, particularly in developing countries. Although financial pressures emerging at times have been demonstrated by many researches, limited financial resources are made available to education in most of the countries. This leads to a wider disparity in between educational efforts on one hand and out-puts on the other. It is for sure that the country would need the educated citizens for its future betterment. If proper action plan is not prepared and followed to prevent mal-practices in education, the future of the country may not be as





bright as we imagine. Hence investing properly for education without any wastage of human and non-human resources becomes priority of the day. Hartog committee has emphasized on wastage and stagnation in primary education. Other levels of education also have been suffering from wastage and stagnation. Apart from stagnation and drop-outs, the higher Education system indicates wastage of other human and non-human resources. Wastage here refers to improper or inadequate use of resources also. In view of this, the authors have tried to put their observations to attract the focus of attention of readers and stake holders.

Definitions:

Wastage: Improper or inefficient use of materials and resources

Human resources: In terms of Management, Human Resources refer to the people and their skills that are used for education. Every person who works at a company is part of that company's human resources.

Non-Human Resources: These are the inanimate objects or abstract objects (like time or money) that help satisfy the company's goals. They are the things that satisfy man's needs and can be harnessed to create wealth and are easily recognized.

Some Observations:

It has been observed by the authors that there is much wastage in managing available human resources. Area-wise they have been discussed as following-

Human Resource Wastage:

- **In Teaching**

It is known to all that for employment at college level to teach the class at graduate or degree level, one has to pass degree in the subject and national level NET or state level SLET examination after Master's degree as per UGC norms. This competitive examination does not give sufficient theoretical as well as practical knowledge to the candidates who enter the teaching profession, although it is expected that these should be teaching well, but how? No one tries to find out. After employment the main focus is to pass safely the period of probation





for further continuity in job. No one tries to figure out students' educational problems, nor try to find out solutions for these problems. Is it because of the philosophical saying that, "No one can teach anybody, one has to learn on its own" or because of lethargy or lack of sense of responsibility?

- **In Examinations**

After employment, no person is engaged in university examination work. For probation period, no one is allowed to work for paper setting or valuing or moderating students' written work. In fact, according to the principles of Instructional Design, the one who teaches, has to prepare students for examination and for this one has to pose questions based on the topic to be taught, beforehand. In fact this becomes one of the objectives of teaching-How will my students answer this? It remains un-attended or even ignored. So teachers' services are not best utilized in probation period, in relation to examination work by not allowing them or involving them in the task. In that case, is two years' experience during probation period is sufficient to cater for the task of paper setting, evaluation or moderation? Are such probationers trained from this point of view in any university or academic staff college? Unfortunately the answer is NO.

In case of experienced teachers, who work as paper setters, evaluators or moderators most of the mal-practices going at the valuation center have been experienced by the authors. There are setters who set the questions in the examination that are irrelevant or out of syllabus. Most of the times the questions are to check lower objectives such as knowledge or understanding. Application-based, analytical, synthetic questions are a rare commodity. Evaluation as an objective is rarely achieved through question paper. This is because the hierarchy of objectives is considered neither for teaching nor for examination or evaluation.

The university examinations are no way a preparatory stage for





further, future competitive examinations where these objectives like application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation have adequate representation in examination papers. At that time the students feel frustrated as they are unable to answer the questions.

Also the university education or higher education and examinations implied, do not prepare students to earn employment and even bread if not bread and butter for future. The students either have to rely on chance or learn extra to win an employment.

- **In Teacher Preparations**

If Senior Secondary or junior college level is considered as part of higher education, there the disparity is astonishing. The teachers who have masters' degree in subject and have B.Ed or M.Ed are selected for job. In spite of them being trained for teaching, they are also not offered the job of paper setting, evaluation or moderation for two years that is a probation period. All the same, their counter parts teaching vocational subject such as Electrical / Mechanical Maintenance, Fisheries or Electronics do not have professional training, yet they are offered examination work as paper setter, evaluator or moderator.

- **In Appointments**

The government has emphasized many a times on teacher-student ratio and has advised for 1:30 as an ideal one; however, in some institutions there is a mad rush of students and the ratio is even up to 1: 60 or more, whereas in some, there are a few students making the teachers surplus. The government or aided institutions have a provision of adjusting surplus staff, but private institutions have no other alternative but to remove or terminate surplus staff. Because of such an uncertainty, no intellectuals are attracted towards teaching profession.

- **In admissions**

There are many factors that contribute to wastage at higher level of education. Prime amongst them is the admission procedure.





The students seeking admission under Management quota, do not stand to the mark, their percentages are low, they cannot compete with the tough syllabus and do not get spoon feeding at higher level. They have to do studies on their own and are not able to apply analytical thought process during studies or projects and thus become failures and discontinue. By this it is a loss to that failed student as well as a loss to the disserving student who could not, “Buy” the seat for him/herself under Management quota.

The student, “Buying” such seats for themselves do not show commitment and remain absent from classes as if it has been their privilege they got through Management Quota admission.

- **In absenteeism**

It has become habitual phenomenon for students as well as teachers to remain absent. Absenteeism is wastage of time, energy and resources. No one feels that he / she is answerable for absenteeism. Genuine reasons could be understood, but trivial excuses lead to loss or wastage in the long run.

Thus the wastage in these areas leads to hampering of quality of education also. As stated by Mann, G., “Quality of education strengthens personal qualities such as integrity and shapes up societies in which we live.” (University News: p10). We all know and agree that quality of education impacts on quality of research and quality education and quality research both influence the development of the nation.

Non-human Resource Wastage

- **In infrastructure**

The recognized colleges or institutes have the infrastructure as per NCTE or AICTE norms. Huge space and construction material is invested in buildings either by government or by private agencies, however, other than teaching hours, which are limited to 6-7 hours a day; this infrastructure remains idle for rest of the times. So this is also wastage.





- **In facilities**

The syllabus for various courses keeps on changing as per the need of the society and update of knowledge. But the institutions have already procured or developed facilities for students. Any change in syllabus does not suggest about the utilization of existing facilities as per old syllabus. That is how facilities become a waste. One good example would be of Biology laboratories, which in earlier days had to cater for space sufficient to perform dissections of animals. Now because of environmental awareness in terms of life endangered and ecological imbalances, dissections have been removed from syllabus. How these big dissection halls to be utilized by the college have not been suggested by changed syllabus. Do they have to stand idle for no purpose?

- **In mis-appropriation of funds**

The central government allocates funds to states for educational purposes. But the state government does not properly monitor whether the funds are being utilized for proper causes or what. Reports to be submitted to the government are managed. They are never audited in times. Now the RTE Act has brought some compulsions on the school managing bodies to avoid mis-appropriation of funds and proper utilization of money.

Conclusion:

From the above observations, it could be concluded that the wastage in higher education in all human and non-human forms needs to be stopped if quality in education is to be enhanced. This could be done by following some simple, some stringent practices in admissions, administration, examination and assessment.

Reflections:

The authors have provided a brief of their personal experiences which were not to pin-point mistakes or flaws but to create awareness of our responsibilities. In this view the authors would like to make some concrete, useful suggestions to avoid or minimize the wastage as indicated below-





For Avoiding Human Wastages:

- The College or university through academic staff college should arrange for training-cum-workshop in order to provide training related to teaching profession such as Test Blue print/ Table of specification, setting of questions as per objectives, panel-beating of some questions to make them suitable to objectives, storing of questions as data-base for future use since framing of proper questions is a difficult and time-consuming activity. They should be trained to mould questions as per objectives. They should be trained to evaluate long answers written by somebody else in an objective and unbiased way with their views, with appreciative positive comments/ complements and with flaws that need to be corrected in future along with distribution of marks instead of block marking.
- In examination work, the teachers should be immediately involved even though they are on probation for two years.
- The teachers should not discriminate students whether from Management Quota or regular Quota. They should treat all students equally and should try to instill good habits in all students through the curricula they handle.
- The teachers should be asked or warned if they remain absent for trivial reasons. The genuine reasons of absenteeism could be communicated to the Heads to avoid wastage of time and non-human resources, at least.
- While offering them employment, the teachers should be given to understand that they are on duty for twenty four hours and they have to serve any sector of the society either in rural or in urban area.
- The teachers should be always involved in research process.

For Avoiding Non-Human Wastages:

- ✓ For avoiding wastage of non-human resources, the buildings or infrastructure and facilities should be let out to other educational or professional purposes.





- ✓ The students utilizing them should be made aware that the facilities such as water, electricity are to be judiciously used.
- ✓ The money or finances that are made available to colleges should be properly utilized and also audited regularly.
- ✓ The syllabus that is taught is also to be audited.
- ✓ The teachers should be able to assess their own performance from time to time by using self-assessment.
- ✓ The teachers as well as students should Keep comparing theory to practice and exploring the relationship between the two so as to make teaching-learning more effective and efficient.

To achieve something, we have to lose something. They should master the competencies in teaching and try to understand the psychology of students so as to assist them in the best way. As stated by Kasinath, H.M, "The teachers who are high in personal teaching efficacy, believe that they can help students to learn regardless of students' prior knowledge or other factors (University News: p.6).

Finally it could be concluded saying that a motivated teacher can motivate a student just as one lamp lights another lamp.

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