

Sri C.T.Ravi

Hon'ble Minister for Higher Education

Government of Karnataka

Bangalore

Dear Sir,

Please recall our brief interaction at D.C's Office Mangalore on 21-7-12 along with AMUCT Office bearers. I am attaching a document concerning the issues of Higher education in Karnataka. My stint as a leader of University and College teachers for more than 30 years and also my interactive experiences in different capacities including as a member of official committees and insights through participative experiences have helped in preparing this document.

I am aware that you already had interactions with Knowledge Commission, Higher Education Council, Vice Chancellors and Department of Higher Education & Collegiate Education. I hope you will find time to go through objectively and provide us an opportunity to interact with you. Our primary concern is qualitative higher education to larger number of students.

I hope you will reply.

Best Wishes

Regards

Yours sincerely

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ISSUES OF HIGHER EDUCATION: General & Technical Education (focus in this document is General Education)

At the Macro Level:

- ❖ Authentic knowledge about the higher education in Karnataka with a data base
- ❖ Jurisdiction, performance, recommendations, action taken with regard to Karnataka Knowledge commission
- ❖ Karnataka Knowledge Commission-its functioning and performance
- ❖ Karnataka State Universities Act, 2000- amendments-Dr.NR Shetty Committee recommendations (I was also a member of the committee) for a comprehensive review of the said Act
- ❖ Karnataka State Education Act
- ❖ Universities: Functioning-issues-new universities- private universities-deemed universities
- ❖ Distance Education-Karnataka State Open University-Correspondence courses offered by universities
- ❖ Department of Higher Education-its functioning
- ❖ Department of Collegiate Education- functioning-Officers-Policy concerning Director, additional director, joint directors-regional offices- new regional offices
- ❖ Colleges:
 1. Government colleges-new colleges-infrastructure-teacher recruitment-appointment of principals-administrative staff- work culture-quality improvement-opening new government colleges-postgraduate courses-research-transfer policy

2. Aided colleges- reviewing Grant-in-aid (GIA) - recruitment-both teaching & non-teaching, posts of principals-issue of tuition fees (retaining one part in the college)- regulations

3. Unaided colleges-data base- regulations

- ❖ Students- social justice- facilities- quality improvement-problems of students: lack of infrastructure, teachers, transportation, scholarship, hostels, uniform in campuses, loan facilities, etc.
- ❖ Affiliation system- autonomous colleges-postgraduate courses in undergraduate colleges including government colleges
- ❖ CET- Admission to Professional courses-CBSC –Common entrance examination at the national level and the issues associated with it.

AT THE MICRO LEVEL

CENTRAL GOVERNMENT: There are many Bills pending before the Parliament. Some of the Bills have far reaching consequences on the State policies- for example- the Bill called **NCHER Bill 2011** (National Commission for Higher Education and Research) gives overriding powers to National Commission-some powers of state government in terms of opening new universities and appointment of vice chancellors will be affected. State government should be alert and should give its responses at the right time. Mr. Oscar Fernandes is the Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee of HRD. There are other similar issues which need immediate attention.

ADMINISTRATION: Officers- their functioning- it is desirable to have officers who cooperate with the Minister on policy issues- Best way is to have regular meetings –insist on action taken report- at least one structured meeting once a month- Corruption is very rampant-both acceptor & giver are responsible and the only way to tackle is to introduce transparent system-regular Adalats is one solution

UNIVERSITIES:

1. Appointment of Vice Chancellors, Registrars and other Officers
2. Nomination to Syndicate and Academic Council
3. filling up of vacancies
4. Affiliation system

ISSUES RAISED BY COLLEGE TEACHERS:

College teachers at the State level have one Federation called Federation of University and College Teachers Association in Karnataka (FUCTAK). Under every University there is an association and 8 such associations are there. Government college teachers have an association called Karnataka State Government College Teachers Association (KGCTA). Even KGCTA is affiliated to FUCTAK. Apart from these there associations concerning non-teaching staff, librarians, physical directors, principals, SC, ST employees, etc.

Important Common Issues:

1. **Release of UGC arrears:** now that Government of India has decided to release the arrears in 2-3 installments by linking the age of retirement, State can take steps for releasing the same. The arrears are pending from 2006 and the total amount involved is about Rs.700 crs.
2. **UGC anomalies:**
 - a. Appointment of Principals- time has come to have a definite policy- UGC norms may be the basis for the appointment- colleges should not be allowed to run on the basis of in charge principals or persons appointed on arbitrary basis-leadership is important-ad-hocism must be brought to an end
 - b. Posts of Professors in colleges- GO provides for this. But no definite action has been taken
 - c. Ph.D increments- Confusions will have to be cleared

- d. Placements: Academic Performance Indicator (API) guidelines should be finalized- placements should not be kept pending for a long time- should happen from time to time
 - e. Placement from the due date should be given for stop-gap lecturers
 - f. Issues of part-time teachers, librarians and physical directors
 - g. Stepping up increment
 - h. Resolve the problems of pensioners
 - i. Solve the issue of pay fixation at Rs.14940 in the 1996 pay scales
3. **Amendment to C&R rules:** Federation has clearly stated that the posts of the director, additional director and the joint director in the department must be reserved for teachers. In fact, this has been the policy all these years. Lower ranked officers are not acceptable as executive officers. No other department such a thing can happen. Therefore any amendment already made without taking teachers in to confidence should be rectified.
4. **Transfer Policy:** There must be a definite policy regarding the transfer of staff. Transfers must be effected within a time frame based on transparent guidelines. Transfers can be done through Counselling.
5. **Recruitment Policy:** No recruitment is happening in aided colleges. Even the clear vacancies are not filled up in the name of Economy Order. No recruitment of non-teaching staff has been done for the last many years. The concept of Grant-in-aid has been weakened due to such a policy. It should be reviewed. Lot of exploitation is going on if the managements are made to appoint the staff on self-financing basis. Education becomes more and more commercialized.
6. **Quality improvement measures:** Teachers are to be encouraged for improving their qualifications. A systematic training programme for new recruits should be introduced both for Government and Private colleges. Attempts should also be made to offer quality education to rural students.
7. **Postgraduate courses & Research:** More and more students want to pursue their studies beyond graduation. A large number of women students fall under this category.

Universities alone cannot manage. Eligible colleges should be encouraged. Similarly teachers of undergraduate colleges should be encouraged to teach postgraduate courses and to undertake research.

8. **Teachers' participation in policy formulations:** Teachers can always contribute for innovativeness and effectiveness of policy initiatives of the Government. At present, there is no clear mechanism to involve teachers in such a process. Government, The Knowledge Commission, Higher Education Council, Universities, etc. should think of a mechanism of consulting the teachers before policy decisions are taken. At least such a consultation process can be started at the department level.
9. **Structured meetings and adalats:** If adalats are held at the regional level in the presence of Officers from time to time most of the issues can be resolved. The issues specific to regions get focused. Officers in Bangalore attending to grievances at the individual level will not be able to do justice to issues.
10. **College Shikshak Bhavan in Bangalore:** It is pathetic that the Department of collegiate education does not have its building in a centrally located place. The earlier building has been given to election commission for reasons best known to the government. Shikshak bhavan has been constructed for High school & Primary teachers. College teachers are prepared to contribute if the government takes the initiative.
11. **Issues of unorganized teachers**

Immediate Tasks in the next few months on a priority basis:

1. **Status report on higher education:** Quality and Gross enrollment ratio (GER) are the immediate concerns. There must be a clear idea about the status of higher education on a realistic basis to understand the level at which we are operating. We have no database of unaided private colleges. There may be nearly 1500 such colleges and the number is increasing. We also do not have a clear idea about the distance education mode.

2. **Government Colleges:** improvement in infrastructure, providing right kind of teachers, guest lecturers, starting new government colleges supporting the quality improvement programmes, appointment of Principals, transfer policy etc.
3. **Amending the C & R rules** regarding the appointment of Joint Directors and other Officers. Regular Joint Directors are to be appointed.
4. **Lifting of economy order** to fill up clear vacancies in aided colleges- filling up of at least 1/3 of existing non-teaching vacancies.
5. **Releasing UGC arrears** and issues associated with UGC anomalies
6. **Holding Student Adalat: Mangalore can be the starting point. All departments like transportation, social welfare, police, collegiate education, university, managements, etc. can be involved to identify the issues and solutions for problems.**
7. **Issues related to Technical education-Polytechnics**
8. **Common CET**
9. **Starting a consultation process** by involving all stakeholders-managements, principals, teachers, parents, universities and students
10. **Work culture, accountability issues. Teachers will definitely cooperate**
11. **Issues connected with Higher Education Council, Knowledge Commission, policy on new universities**

I am aware that Finance is the most important limiting factor in policy making. Everybody knows that convincing the finance department is a difficult task. But there are priorities for any government. Today everyone agrees that higher education is the need of the hour. Socio-economic process can be facilitated only through higher education. Populist policies are temporary and political. The Chief Minister should be convinced with right kind of data and justification for making higher allocations within the limited resources.
