

Developing Research Capacity in Institutions of Higher Education

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Research and Information System for Developing
Countries

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Why no Prediction of Global Crisis

- Queen Elizabeth's question to LSE
- Director of Research Prof. Garicano said "Everyone tried to be right by quoting others"
- Lehman's & American housing market collapse led not just to global crisis but questioned the fundamentals of Economic teaching & research
- Role and responsibilities of the head does not include "overviewing" research?

Challenges for Academic Leader

- Governance, implementation of rules and regulations, maintaining law & order and discipline
- Resource allocation governance
- Planning for future growth of the Institution; mobilisation of resources

Create a system for designing academic Prog and research incorporating new Developments

Gravitational wave discovery changed physics;
Global crises of 1930 and 2008 transformed economic theory: research methodology

Questioning the Fundamentals of Social Sciences after the global crisis in 2008

- British Academy convened a workshop in June 2009 to discuss relevance of Economic Theory
- Conferences, seminars & meetings in Europe and US to probe into premises of social science teaching, research and their applications
- Report of Paul Anand on Survey of British Government Economic Service
- Employer's Survey by in 2013 in UK
- Survey by Society of Business Economists
- Working Group set up by UK government

Failure in Prediction in several other Spheres

- Keynes predicted in 1930 that people by 2010 would work only 14 hours a week.
- Nobel Laureates responded why it failed
- Asian Drama predicted perennial low growth for Asian Countries
- Prediction of Nehru that over time people will become modern and social and communal tensions will disappear in Independent India
- Prediction that Muslim population overtake that of Hindus in over 7 or 10 decades
- More recently, several predictions of the Election Results

Proposed directions of change in content & perspective of Academic Institutions

- Greater awareness of economic history
- Develop capacity to communicate with people of other disciplines, administrators, for policy impact. Quit excessive dependence on quantitative models and application of simple models with transparent and verifiable assumptions
- Awareness of the real world, social context in developing hypotheses

Ground testing of the hypotheses/ assumptions of the theories of Social Science



Overloading the model with tasks & assumptions, and loads of data



Lessons Learnt

- Sophisticated modeling and heavy data are easy options but does not help policy research
- Tinkering with the framework which does not anticipate or incorporate any structural change is no remedy; simply changing a few parameters does not change the model
- Modesty about applicability of results, predictions required, sensitivity analysis
- Ethical code; Accountability & making a case like lawyers; not a sage; expect counter evidence

Overview of Research in India

- Not much of policy research in universities and state sponsored institutes. No motivation as impact on policy is marginal. Policies are research neutral. Policy formed by lobbying, political mobilisation, agitation, money power, muscle power. Example Land acquisition Act of 1913
- Researcher in univ/institutes have no performance evaluation; no rating of journals to give credit to researchers for recognition. no challenge; research means hassles, bureaucratic formalities. Kaushik Basu argues administrative formalities kill research

Trends in Research

- Certain universities have advantage in access to funds due to geographical proximity, easy information flow, institutional and personal connections. Government funds do not get evenly distributed
- Massive research funds outside the university system. Government departments, bilateral and multilateral agencies. Private foundations and corporate sector. Less formalities and larger funds.
- Evaluation, monitoring research. No questioning of the political economy of the programme.

Impact of Outside Agencies on Research Agenda

- Government departments can determine the priorities framework and perspective of research (cite IDPAD project). Evaluative work. The question asked is not why but how
- A larger of bilateral multilateral agencies representing global capital interest impact on research
- Religious Missionaries can influence
- Indian researchers do data collection and tabulation while analysis done at a higher level in international cooperative projects

Mushrooming of Research Institutions

- In response to time bound delivery of output in a format, growth of private research agencies
- Promotion of a definite perspective by these agencies
- Often research results are not verifiable; may not have adequate sample size but huge impact. Minhas wanted rating of research agencies
- Different Methodology for Policy Research? (case of SSRC workshop)

Universities and Research Institutions to promote the Right Research Eco system

- Reduce research bureaucracy and establish a system of dissemination of findings
- Institutionalize systems to assess trends and pattern of social change
- Take the interest of people whose are left out in dominant research paradigm
- Operationalise systems of data & methodology validation through workshop and training



The End