Chapter 10

Feature Films as Pedagogy in Higher Education:
A Case Study of Christ University, Bengaluru

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ABSTRACT

Contemporary education system in India was initiated by the British for the maintenance of their imperial administration. After India became an independent country, conscious efforts were made to overhaul the educational system to produce proper administrators and contributors for Indian polity, economy and culture. To assess dynamics of Indian education, various committees and commissions were formed. It also meant change in education programs, curricula and syllabi to meet national needs and global challenges. Most universities in India have limited infrastructure, thus the role of private or deemed to be university becomes crucial. Christ University attending to the social structure, internationalization and employability demands, offers a number of quality educational programs to ensure employable graduates. This has led the way in devising pedagogy and curricula to align with the global higher education practices. Here we discuss the use of commercial feature film as a pedagogical tool in the classrooms within the Deanery of Humanities and Social Sciences and its implication.

BRIEF HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF INDIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM

Education is not a static phenomena, it is an organic entity that recognizes the changes in the environment, responds to new demands and keeps developing with the society of which it is a part. Modern Education system in India was initially deliberated by the British to maintain imperial administration in India. Although formal education system in India spreads over three millennia, the current system of higher

education was introduced by the British. Thomas Babington Macaulay one of the early education reformers in India in his essay 'Minute on Education' (1935), investigated the then existing education system of India and suggested that though English is a European language, it is more acceptable in commerce and therefore should be used to promote European literature and science among the natives of India.

After independence, conscious efforts were made by Indian leaders to overhaul the educational system implemented by the British and to produce suitable administrators and contributors for Indian polity, culture and economy. The reason for this shift was also the fact that then existing education system did not meet the historical, cultural or employable need of the country and thus it only added to the wide gap between the educated English elites and large illiterate population.

To assess the dynamics of Indian education situation, various committees and commissions were formed post-independence. The experts of these committees strongly recommended the need for local constitution and growth in higher education. They also focused on the fact that there was a need for more number of educational institutions to accommodate large population and intensive restructuring of the formal education system to make it meet various requirements. The first education commission in free India during 1964-66 examined various facts and reported that national reconstruction whose principal objective is to raise the standard of living of Indians will depend on the quality and number of persons coming out of the colleges and schools (Aggarwal, 2005). To modernize the education and make it more relevant to the needs of free India, Kothari Commission was established in 1964 based on which the Government of India declared National Policy on Higher Education with a specific focus on providing autonomy to the affiliated colleges in India. The subsequent policy on higher education emphasized on the ways in which technology could be used to make education accessible to all.

International agencies like United Nations and UNESCO emphasized that the priority of any developing nation should be higher education. This put the universities in the country in the centre of the locus. It also shifted the expectation from the universities of just producing graduates to inculcating research temper among students and to offering highly specialized training programmes which would meet the social and economic requirement of the individuals. This meant that to meet the challenges and needs of changing Indian scenario it was important to incorporate scientific temper in the content and use teaching method which would reflect the concern and imperative of the new demand or requirement.

NEED FOR INNOVATION IN FORMAL EDUCATION

After independence, country gained momentum in terms of industrial development and overall economy. According to the Ministry of Human Resource Development there has been an increase of 18 times from 27 in 1950 to 504 in 2009 in the number of institutions providing higher education (Department of Higher Education, 2012). Still there exists a gap between the availability and accessibility to higher education by a large segment of population.

It was in the year 1967 that The Committee on Audio Visual Aid in Higher Education was formed which looked at pedagogy as an important aspect and also within which how visual aid could enhance classroom learning. Liberalization policy in India caused tremendous growth in various sectors and educational institutions have been no exception. There has been steady rise in the number of Indian students going abroad for higher education and foreign students coming to India. According to All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE), the online portal of the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) Government of India, the number of foreign students in Indian campuses during the year

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