



Centre for University Society Interface (CUSI)

UNIVERSITY OF KASHMIR

(“NAAC Accredited Grade “A”)

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<http://kashmiruniversity.net/>

NATIONAL SEMINAR

ON

Role of Universities in Social Transformation

(September 12 - 13, 2017)

Concept Note

Universities have frequently been regarded as key institutions in processes of social change and development. The most explicit role they have been allocated is the production of highly skilled labour and research output to meet perceived socioeconomic needs. But to this role may be added, especially during periods of more radical change, roles in the building of new institutions of civil society, in encouraging and facilitating new cultural values, and in training and socialising members of new social elites. The four major functions of universities posited by Manuel Castells (2001) as applicable to all societies to a greater or lesser extent provide a suitable starting point for the analysis that follows. First, Castells notes that universities have historically played a major role as ideological apparatuses, expressing

the ideological struggles present in all societies. Second, they have always been mechanisms of selection and socialisation of dominant elites. Third, the generation of knowledge, often seen as their most important function, is actually - according to Castells – a relatively minor one, with functions of scientific research often assumed by specialised national institutes (in Europe and many developing countries) or within in-house laboratories of private firms (for example, Japan). Fourth, the most traditional - and today the most frequently emphasised – function of universities is the training of a skilled labour force (what Castells calls the “professional university”).

The overarching aim of the seminar is to increase understanding of the various ways in which universities and other higher education institutions generate, contribute or inhibit social, economic and political change.

In the modern world, there are calls for universities to adapt and to respond to the changing character and needs of other social and economic institutions are frequently heard. But what is the role of universities *in bringing about* wider changes in society? This is the question that the seminar sought to address and to do so in an empirical rather than a normative fashion.

The policy implications of the seminar are immense. Higher education consumes vast resources and affects the lives of many. In societies where its contribution can be described by expert commentators as ‘stagnation’, the implications for those societies may be considerable. The reciprocal relationship between change in society and change in universities needs to be better understood in order that it may be better managed, to the benefit of both society and university.

Social transformation lies at the radical end of conceptions of social change. It implies at the very least some fundamental changes in society’s core institutions; the society, the polity and the economy, with major implications for relationships between social groups or classes, and for the means of the creation and distribution of wealth, power and status. Within these broad features of social transformation,

The roles played by universities in modernisation projects are varied. It is important to distinguish between examples where the role of the university is largely autonomous and examples where the role is set firmly within state plans and control mechanisms. It is

important to distinguish between universities that ‘ignite’ change, those that ‘accelerate’ existing change and those that ‘block’ change. It is important to distinguish between examples of planned and intended changes and examples of the unintended consequences which arise out of university-based activities. And, as we noted above, it is important to be aware of the implications of the role(s) played by the university prior to the period of transformation. .

Much of the recent literature on the roles of universities in processes of transformation and modernisation has tended to be normative: focusing on what universities *ought* to be doing and what is *planned* for them to be doing. The hopes and aspirations of politicians and policy strategies are assumed to be achievable realities. Where the focus of debate is not normative – and is based on empirical study of the workings of higher education institutions – greater emphasis has been placed upon the internal changes within institutions that have been brought about by broader social changes.

Consideration of the role of universities in social change and transformation raises questions of who, what and where. *Who* gets higher education? (the access question). *What* do they get (the curriculum question). And *where* does it lead them? (which is frequently seen as a labour market question but is also a political and status question – more generally, a placement question). To these three questions should be added the question of research and the balance to be struck between intrinsic and extrinsic drivers of its development.

The dynamics of contemporary globalization, nonetheless, involve several of the core forces of social life: rationalist knowledge, capitalist production, automated technology, and bureaucratic governance. Universities, in current periods of social transformation, generally become both progenitors of (usually) and resisters to these forces. Both universities and globalization are sustained by rationalist knowledge, and by encouraging the view that knowledge is more widely gained by seeing the world as a whole. Consequently, both the academy and the global are ‘supra-territorial’ entities and encourage the rationalities associated with the spread of capitalist production, modern technologies, bureaucratic organization, and the law.

Sub-Themes

The sub-themes of the seminar are as follows:

- Universities and social change
- Universities as ideological apparatuses
- Generation of knowledge
- Creation of new cultural values
- Role in the building of new institutions of civil society
- Role of university in policy making
- Production of skilled labour force
- University and women empowerment
- University, issues and challenges
- Any other relevant theme

Call for Abstracts/Papers

Abstracts are invited on identified themes of seminar (not exceeding 300 words) in MS word font 12 (Times New Horizon) single spacing and should be sent to Seminar Convenor through:

Email: cusi2016@yahoo.com

Last date for submission of abstracts is 05 August, 2017 and acceptance/rejection of abstracts will be notified by 15 August, 2017. Last date for registration is 25 August, 2017.

Submission of Full Paper

Last date for submission of full papers (3000-4000 words) is 1st September, 2017.

Registration Fee: The registration fee for the participants will be as follows:

Faculty Member (Outstation)	With Accommodation	Rs 4000/-
	Without Accommodation	Rs 2500/-
Research Scholar (Outstation)	With Accommodation	Rs 2500/-
	Without Accommodation	Rs 1500/-
Faculty Member (Local)	Rs 2000/-	
Research Scholar (Local)	Rs 1000/-	

The registration fee includes a lunch/tea for two days. The selected out station participants will be provided accommodation on need basis and should write in advance.

Registration Requests

The registration fee should be sent through demand draft in favour of **Convenor - National Seminar on 'Role of Universities in Social Transformation'** payable at Srinagar. The request for registration may please be filled in the prescribed registration form and addressed in the enclosed form and sent to:

Prof. Aneesa Shafi - Convenor of the Seminar

National Seminar on 'Role of Universities in Social Transformation'

University of Kashmir, Hazratbal, Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir, India-190006

Participants are requested to arrange for their own TA/DA for attending the conference.

Organizing Committee:

Prof. (Dr.) Khurshid Iqbal Andrabi, Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, University of Kashmir	<i>Patron</i>
Prof. Aneesa Shafi	<i>Convenor of the National Seminar</i>
Dr Manzoor Hussain and Dr Saleem Jehangir	<i>Organizers of the National Seminar</i>
Ms Farah Qayoom	<i>Member</i>

The registration form is enclosed here:



**NATIONAL SEMINAR
ON**

National Seminar on 'Role of Universities in Social Transformation'

(September 12-13, 2017)

Name: _____

Designation: _____

Address: _____

Cell Phone: _____

E Mail: _____

Category (Faculty/Scientist/Research Scholar): _____

Title of Paper: _____

Accommodation required (For self): Yes/No _____

Sex _____ **Age** _____

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Signature of the Applicant