2.1 Introduction

Thinkers all over the world, right from the ancient to the modern times have considered education as one of the most important factor in shaping the human personality and the society. Though there is almost a consensus on the fact that family is the first and one of the most important educational institutes in the life of a child, the formal or informal education that child gets at various levels can have significant long-term impact. Socio-cultural and economic diversities at family level may create various inequalities. These inequalities can be addressed through formal education system. Formal education system of a country is a very important tool through which principle of equality of opportunities can be implemented. This literature review mainly aims to explore important issues related to Indian Education System. A brief review of theoretical aspects of education is also done.

2.2 Etymology of Education

The word education is derived from the Latin word ‘educare’ meaning ‘to raise’ and ‘to bring up’. According to few others, the word ‘education’ has originated from another Latin term ‘Educere’ which means ‘to lead forth’ or ‘to come out’. Some other educationists believe that the word ‘education’ has been derived from the Latin term ‘Educatum’, which means the act of teaching or training. All these derivations indicate that education is meant for enabling an individual to use his/her potentials to the fullest.(NCERT,2014) The Dictionary of Education (quoted in NCERT, 2014), defines education as “the aggregate of all the processes by which a person develops abilities, attitudes and other forms of behaviour of practical values in the society in which s/he lives; the social process by which people are subjected to the influence of selected and controlled environment (especially that of the school), so that they may obtain social competence and optimum individual development”. As human civilisation progressed,
the concept of education has been evolved and it has acquired several meanings. There is no universally acceptable definition of education. The definition changes as the goals or the context of education change.

2.3 Narrow and Broader Meanings of Education

2.3.1 Narrow Meaning of Education

In a narrow sense education includes planned activities aimed to mould individual in a particular way. This type of education can be imparted by the family, the religious body or any other educational body. “Education in the narrow sense does not include self-culture and the general influences of one’s surroundings, but only those special influences which are consciously and designedly brought to bear upon the youngster by the adult persons of the community whether through the family, the church or the state.” Raymont (1906)

2.3.2 Broader Meaning of Education

In a broader sense education is a lifelong process that includes formal education plus everything that individual learns through experience all through the life. This education enables individual to assimilate himself/herself to the physical, social, cultural environment. “It is really life that educates us.” Reymont (1906)

2.3.3 Education as Process and Product

Education can be both- process as well as product. When education is outcome of teaching or experience it becomes product. “Education can also be referred to as a process. In this sense, education is referred to the act of developing the intellect, critical thinking abilities, social and cultural understanding, and understanding of one’s own self.” (NCERT,2014) In this case education becomes a dynamic concept, a process that is lifelong.

2.4 Philosophy of Education

Philosophy of education is philosophical reflections on the nature, aims and problems of education. Though issues related to contemporary education are not exactly same as those
prevailed in ancient or medieval times, it is interesting to study philosophy of education of some the great thinkers of bygone era. Ancient thinkers whether Eastern or Western take a holistic view towards education. Their thought on education cannot be properly understood without understanding their overall philosophy of life. Some of the ancient thinkers’ (like Socrates, Plato, Chanakya) thoughts are passed on to us as “quotable quotes” without any authentic mention of the source. Fortunately, many modern-day scholars have studied ancient philosophers with appropriate academic rigour. Reading these modern commentaries and translations of ancient thoughts on education is very enlightening experience. Common thread that passes through the thoughts of most of the great thinkers, ancient as well as modern is inculcation of fundamental human values directly or indirectly is the basic purpose of education. In short, Education should inspire a student to make this world a better place to live in. (Durant1961) ‘The story of Philosophy’ a well-known book by Will Durant has beautifully explained the evolution of western philosophical thought. In the process the book also narrates philosophy of education of these philosophers. It starts with Socrates and ends with 19th and 20th century European and American philosophers. Encyclopaedia Britannica is also a rich source that gives concise information on all the prominent thinkers of the world. Besides these two major sources, enormous amount of literature is available on Indian and Western philosophers. The wisdom of these thinkers cannot be used as it is to draw the blue print of modern education system but it provides us the bench marks and guides us in defining goal of the education in human life.

2.5 Western Thought on Education

2.5.1 Socrates (470BC-399 BC)

The importance of ‘reason’ in education gets highlighted in ‘Socratic method’ of questioning. For Socrates searching answers of fundamental questions, ‘What is man?’, ‘What can he
become?’ ‘What is the meaning of virtue?’ and ‘What is the best state?’ was the real worthy subject matter of education. (Durant1961). The actual subject matter of education in modern systems is drastically different than what it was in the times of Socrates but even today a good teacher encourages students to ask questions and also asks them stimulating and thought-provoking questions.

2.5.2 Plato (428/27BC- 348/47BC)

Socrates’ student Plato, followed the footsteps of his master in endorsing importance of reasoning and search for reasons in education. He also believed in student specific education depending on his abilities, aptitude and social context. He is considered as precursor of educational ‘sorting’. John Dewey used this concept (excluding the hierarchical structure) when he said education should be tailor made as per the needs of the students. Plato dreamt of building a utopia where “philosophers are kings, or the kings and princes of this world have the spirit and power of philosophy, and wisdom and political leadership meet in the same man, cities will never cease from ill, nor the human race”. He strongly recommended equality of educational opportunity and universal education. For this he suggested all the children above 10 years of age should be compulsorily sent away from their parents to the residential educational institutes run by the state. This is necessary to protect children from the corrupt influence or the habits of the elders in the family so they can start on a clean slate. Plato believed in holistic education that nurtures body and mind equally. He also suggested levels or degrees of education that increase in difficulty as the student progresses. He wrote about importance of the independent, impartial, impersonal examination system that will grade the students at different levels of education and at every level of examination, ‘ruthless weeding out’ will take place. Ultimately those who can endure the rigour and pressure of competition almost endlessly will emerge out as, ‘fit to rule’ the society. (Durant1961)
2.5.3 **Aristotle (384 BC-322BC)**

Plato’s student Aristotle was also in favour of the state controlled education. He also considered education as tool for what is called in modern language man power planning. Though Aristotle never used these terms but what was implied was an allocative efficiency in the economy. He also emphasised virtue and character building. According to him a virtue less man is “the most unholy and savage of animals, full of gluttony and lust”. (Durant,1961)

2.5.4 **Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1780)**

Rousseau was not in favour of formal education. He thought it will reflect all the corrupting elements prevalent in the society. He argued education should bring in natural development of children. Movement known as “open education” was influenced by his thought. Even 20th century “progressivism” movement incorporated some of his ideas. Rousseau was not for same education for girls and boys. In this context he discussed many gender issues which are of relevance even today. (Durant,1961)

2.5.5 **John Dewey (1859-1952)**

John Dewey is considered as supporter of child centric education. Aptitude and interests of the student should be given due consideration in deciding type of his education; only then education will bring true growth according to him. But he also considered knowledge of traditional subjects necessary. Dewey considered education as ‘a foundation of democracy and as a key process for social reforms.’(Behar2016). He thought, real education starts once individual completes formal education and should continue all through his life. (Durant1961) According to John Dewey, “Education is reconstruction or reorganisation of experience which adds to the meaning of experience and which increases the ability to direct the course of subsequent experiences.” (Dewey,1916)

2.5.6 **Bertrand Russell (1872-1970)**
Russell wanted to inculcate scientific temperament through education. So, he suggested larger use of science and scientific method in education. He thought through appropriate education ideal society can be built in which individual’s potentials can be used to the fullest ‘with as little as possible at the expense of another.’ (Durant 1961) Russell began his book, Education and the Social Order, by asking a fundamental question: Should schooling train good individuals or good citizens? At the end of this volume Russell restates his opening question: "Can the fullest individual development be combined with the necessary minimum of social coherence?" Russell feels that this can only occur when the state identifies its own interests with that of the school child. For it to take place several things must happen. First, large scale wars must be eliminated. Second, superstition must not exist. Third, the love of uniformity must be abolished. Finally, schools must be administered by scholars rather than by bureaucrats. Can these changes take place? Russell sounds a pessimistic note. He claims, “the world of 1932 is an insane one which lacks international cooperation and which is divided into hostile camps”. (Rockler, 1993). Unfortunately, the same situation prevails even today.

2.5.7 Feminist, Multiculturalist and Postmodern Criticisms

Feminist philosophers of education consider conventional goals of education incomplete. Many of them feel contemporary education prepares the student for public life by inculcating values such as reason, impartiality, objectivity etc. In the process requirements of private life (home and family) get neglected. Abilities such as emotional connection, compassion, sensitivity are equally needed for the true wellbeing of the society. Multiculturalist emphasis significance of cultural diversity in education. According to them education should not be dominated by any single culture but it should foster respect for all cultures. Postmodern philosophers of education question fundamentals of traditional thought. According to them neutrality of reason or objectivity are not possible as all thought processes are outcomes of historical factors and are influenced by the vested interests of powerful groups. (Harvey, 2007)
2.5.8 Paulo Freire (1921-1997)

Paulo Freire’s ideas of education were shaped by his first-hand experience of abject poverty and his observations of the oppressed class in his country, Brazil. His views on education can be traced in his famous book- “Pedagogy of the Oppressed”. He said education must help students to analyse the world around. He emphasised the role of ‘consctentizado’ in a truly liberating education. It means “learning to perceive social, political and economic contradictions, and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality” (Freire,2000). Such type of education empowers the oppressed class and motivates it to struggle for the change. He criticised the one way ‘banking’ pattern of education in which teachers are depositors of knowledge and students are ‘depositories’. He advocated ‘libertarian problem posing education’ that can be delivered through dialogue between students and educators. In this type of education both, students and teachers enlighten each other. Person’s ability to understand the reality around and his relative position in the society must be enhanced through education. Education should bring in mental freedom. For this student must become self-conscious. The real job of an educator is to help students in the process of becoming self-conscious and also facilitate their ability to develop critical perception of the reality around. (Freire,2000)

2.5.9 Ivan Illich (1926-2002)

Ivan Illich is associated with the innovative concept of ‘Deschooling’ that aims to ensure universal education. He vehemently criticised the prevailing education systems in the contemporary word. He preferred informal, flexible and continuous pattern of education. According to him rigid, institutionalised education results into rigid social systems. Institutionalised education gets monopolised by the upper strata in the society and pushes down the economically weaker section. His concept of ‘specific diseconomy’ aptly describes this
situation. It measures the ‘degree of institutional counterproductivity’. This defeats the very purpose of institution’s existence. For example-medical industry induces illness, educational institutions increase ignorance etc. He was against the officially approved certification for any educational achievements. According to Illich human relationships should get primacy in education. He considered school, church as institutions that orient students to life that is consumerist, rigid and impoverished. He advocated ‘learning webs’ to put his idea of education in practice. He suggested three types of learning methods or ‘exchange mechanisms- “between a skills teacher and a student, between people themselves engaging in critical discourse, and between a ‘master’ (a master practitioner) and a student” Illich also advocated the de-institutionalisation financial resources and recommended system of vouchers and community spending as two major sources to finance education. (Illich,1971)

2.5.10 Michel Foucault (1926-1984)

Michel Foucault, philosopher and historian, was one of the most influential and controversial scholars of the post- World War II era. There are many references to education in his books but none of his work is exclusively on education. His thoughts on education have profound implications. He said, “The power to punish is not essentially different from that of curing or educating” He considered educational institutions as apart of controlling mechanisms (‘moral orthopaedics’) meant for disciplining the individuals in their formative stage. According to him various disciplining controls, including education, produce ‘docile bodies’ that act and think as per the commands. While criticising the features of contemporary disciplinary mechanism he discussed three means of control. 1. hierarchical order 2. normalising judgement e.g. not only children must learn to read but they also must be in the 50th percentile of their reading group. Those who do not fall in this category are socially unacceptable/abnormal.3. The examination - it combines the hierarchical order and normalising judgement. Examination sets the norms that control the behaviour of examinees. (Gutting,2005) Foucault considered educational
institutions as ‘blocks of capacity-communication-power’ (Deacon2006). He predicted politicisation of universities because education is a short cut that modern states use to subjugate the citizens. But he also differentiated students from other subjugated groups (insane and the sick). According to him the university system can be questioned by the students and students can become their own ‘archivists’. (Simon1971)

2.5.11 Jacques Derrida (1030-2004)

Jacques Derrida, one of the most prominent philosopher of the modern times, developed a form of analysis known as ‘deconstruction’. It challenged the ideas of structuralism and stable centres implied in it. The problem with centres is that they attempt to exclude. In doing so they ignore, repress or marginalise ‘the Other’. Deconstruction is not demolition but it implies unmasking and searching the hidden layers of meaning that are not obvious. Derrida used this term at Johns Hopkins University that cast the entire history of Western philosophy into doubt. (Powell, 2000) Deconstruction aims at showing the differences in concepts. It can be compared with cracking open the nutshell, to go beyond the boundary, to disrupt the presence and allow ‘the Other’ as the difference to come about. (Higgs, 2002). It is essentially an openness towards ‘the other’. In this sense deconstruction can be considered as affirmative and just. Educationist all the world over showed keen interest in Derrida’s concept of deconstruction. Initially the idea was adopted in the study of languages. Derrida has not given any ready sets of principles that can be used to reform education. Applying Derrida’s ideas in the realm education would mean looking at all education practices in a style of deconstruction especially with reference to language, justice, ‘the other’ and responsibility. The affirmative aspect of deconstruction implies the inevitability of its use in the field of education. “…in raising the question of how we can educate ‘the other as other’, how we can let other be, deconstruction moves the whole cluster of questions about education, about teaching, from the plane of techniques and methods to a level which is deeply concerned with the ethical, the political and ultimately, with the
destination of life, history and humanity.”- D. Cahen quoted in Higgs, 2002. This implies that education discourse should re-think itself. It would require redeveloping of education right from the stage of its foundation. Education should be freed from the dominant thought processes and social practices and, “should be allowed to think for itself, expose itself, teach itself. (Higgs, 2002)

2.6. Indian Thought on Education

2.6.1 Education in Ancient and Medieval India

Education in ancient India was considered as one of the most valuable assets. “Swadeshe Pujyate Raja, Vidwan sarvatra pujyate” (स्वदेशे पूज्यते राजा, विद्वान सर्वत्र पूज्यते) - a well-known Sanskrit subhashit, means king is worshiped only within his own kingdom but learned man is worshipped everywhere. Gurukuls (Residential Schools) and guru shishya parampara (teacher-disciple relationship where the teacher was given the position equivalent to God) were two prominent features of formal ancient Indian education. Sanskrit was medium of instruction. (Basham, 1967) Two prominent words in Sanskrit stand out as equivalents of the term ‘education’. These words are Shiksha and Vidya. The former has been derived from the root word Shas meaning ‘to discipline’ or ‘to control’, the latter, Vidya, is derived from the verbal root word ‘Wd’ meaning ‘to know’ (NCERT, 2014). In ancient India education was a means for achieving the ultimate goal of life i.e., salvation. Ancient Indian Universities like Takshshila, Nalanda, Vikramshila, Vallabhi were world renowned and attracted students from all over the world. The quality aspect of education was given the prime most importance but its access was deliberately restricted through caste system and gender discrimination. Women and lower castes were denied education. One finds references of learned women in Sanskrit literature like Gargi and Maitreyi but these were exceptional cases. The education, though received at times patronage of kings, was not under the control of the state and educators enjoyed full autonomy.
in their functioning. (Basham,1967). India remained more or less in the same situation till the advent of the British rule. In between period, Islamic Rule did influence the curriculum in some parts of India but it did not help to change the elitist bias of education.

2.6.2 Modern Indian Thought on Education

The British Rule introduced the western education system in India. The Indian intelligentsia was exposed to the western liberal thought and started introspecting. This caused the wave of social reformers and the Period of Indian Renaissance began. Most of the social reformers of this period viewed education as a powerful instrument that will enable India to progress socially as well as economically.

2.6.3 Mahatma Jotiba Phule (1827-1890)

Educational Philosophy of Mahatma Jotiba Phule can be summed up very precisely in his own words- "विद्येविना मती गेली | मती विना नीति गेली | नीती विना गती गेली | गती विना वित्त गेले |वित्त विना शुद्ध खचले | इतके अनर्व एका अविद्येने केले!" (Lack of education leads to lack of wisdom, which leads to lack of morals, which leads to lack of progress, which leads to lack of money, which leads to the oppression of the lower classes. What havoc lack of education can cause!) Mahatma Jyotiba Phule considered education as a powerful tool for social revolution. He believed socio-economic upliftment of downtrodden can be brought about through education. Emancipation of women and depressed classes was the ultimate goal of his life. He was beneficiary of western education and took keen interest in promotion of western education in India especially among women and Dalits (the term he coined for historically disadvantaged classes in India). He considered lack of education as the most important reason for miserable plight of Dalits and women in India. He advocated education for all without any discrimination done on the basis of religion, race, caste and gender. He rejected the Downwards Filtration Theory of Lord Macaulay. He thought it as philosophically unsound and unjust to socio
economically weaker class. He was for universal education and compulsory basic education. According to him education policy of the government should give top priority to female education and quality primary education. He suggested, primary teachers must be properly trained and well paid. He also emphasised the applied aspect of curriculum that will help a student to be financially self-sufficient as well as satisfy the needs of the society. (Bala, 2011)

2.6.4 Mahatma Gandhi (Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi) (1869-1948)

According to Mahatma Gandhi, education not only moulds the new generation, but reflects society’s fundamental assumptions about itself and the individuals who comprise it. His aims of education emphasised on character formation and all-round development (physical, mental, social, moral, aesthetic, and religious). He said, education should make children ideal members of the democratic society. He wanted a school to be a ‘doing and thinking school’, rather than ‘a listening school’. Mahatma Gandhi was a strong advocate of providing education to the girl child. (Srivastava, 2003). Mahatma Gandhi did not approve the British model of education that according to him was the offshoot of the Industrial Revolution. He developed his own model of education that is popularly known as ‘Nai Taleem’ (New education) or sometimes also referred as ‘buniyadi talim (Basic education)’. He said- “The principal idea is to impart the whole education of the body, mind and soul through the handicraft that is taught to the children.” (Gandhi, 1968) ‘Nai Taleem’ is a set of ideas Gandhi wrote/spoke about on various occasions. His idea of education is result of two facts - one, his dissatisfaction with hypocritical practices of the orthodox Indian society and his dislike for the prevailing model of the western education and western lifestyle. He took holistic approach towards education. According to him education should not only provide economic self-sufficiency to individual, to a country as a whole, but it should also help in the spiritual wellbeing. Dignity of labour is the cornerstone of his philosophy of education. For this he advocated inclusion of handicrafts in the educational curriculum. Education should lead to small scale self-sufficient societies wherein man will not
be slave of machines as has happened in the western industrialised economies. Though Gandhian model of education is not commonly practiced in India today, there are still some committed schools that follow his philosophy of education. Dr. Abhay Bang, a well-known medical practitioner and a social worker in the Naxal affected Gadchiroli district in Maharashtra, has very fondly written about his own experience as a student in Gandhian school at Wardha district in Maharashtra. (Bang, undated)

2.6.5 Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941)

Rabindranath Tagore was one of the early educationists of India whose ideas get reflected through his various writings and educational experiments at ‘Shanti Niketan’. As an alternative to the existing forms of education, he started a small school at Shanti Niketan in 1901 that developed into a university and a rural reconstruction centre, where he tried to develop an alternative model of education that stemmed from his own learning experiences. To Tagore, “the highest education is that which does not merely give us information but makes our life in harmony with all existence. But we find that this type of education is not only systematically ignored in schools, but it is severely repressed. From our very childhood habits are formed and knowledge is imparted in such a manner that our life is weaned away from nature and our mind and the world are set in opposition from the beginning of our days”. Tagore’s philosophy of education is a fine blend of Indian and western philosophy. He believed in ‘naturalism’ in education. Freedom was key word of his philosophy of education. He believed freedom given to teachers as well as to students helps to bring out the best in them. He also emphasised importance of various fine and performing arts in education. Proximity to nature enhances teaching learning experience according to him. For economic upliftment of rural India, he promoted education of traditional crafts that can be used as a source of livelihood. (NCERT, 2014)

2.6.6 Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902)
Swami Vivekananda, a great thinker and reformer of India, provides an insight into what education ought to be. According to him, “Education is the manifestation of the divine perfection, already existing in man”. He felt that education should be man-making, life-giving and character-building. The aim of education, according to him, is to manifest in our lives the perfection, which is the very nature of our inner-self, which resides in everything and everywhere, which is known as ‘satchitananda’ (existence, consciousness and bliss). Hence, education, in Vivekananda’s sense, enables one to comprehend one’s self within as the self everywhere. (Swami Yatiswarananda, 1995)

2.6.7 Sri Aurobindo (1872-1950) (Aurobindo Ghose)

Sri Aurobindo, a great philosopher and a nationalist, contributed to education immensely. According to Sri Aurobindo, education is meant to bring out the best in man, to develop his potentialities to the maximum, to integrate him with himself, his surroundings, his society, his country and humanity to make him the ‘complete man’, the ‘integral man’. In short, Sri Aurobindo says that education should be integral, so that it develops the physical, mental, vital, psychic and spiritual aspects of the human personality. (Singh, 2012)

2.6.8 Jiddu Krishnamurti (1895-1986)

Jiddu Krishnamurti, a philosopher and one of the 20th century’s most influential teacher, devoted his life to the awakening of ‘intelligence’ and transformation of society. Krishnamurti’s interest in education was long standing and always passionate. He addressed the nature of education in majority of his books as well as in his speeches to the public and students in India as well as abroad. Krishnamurti’s ideas on education, though radical, attempt to meet the challenges of living at a profound level, and they do so at a time when such insights are desperately needed. According to him, modern education is unable to prepare students for the fundamental challenges of living. In his book, titled Education and the Significance of Life, we see his concern for education and his views on right kind of education. He stated that the,
“function of education is not different from the purpose of human life itself”. In his own words-
“The function of education is to bring out a release of energy in the pursuit of goodness, truth
or God, which in turn makes the individual a true human being and therefore a right kind of
citizen...” (Krishnamurti ,2007) While criticising existing education system he compared it
with prison. He was for holistic education that helps student to develop intellectually as well
as spiritually. At present, eight Krishnamurti schools, practicing his philosophy of education
are functioning in different parts of the world. (Kulkarni,2015)

2.6.9 Dr. B.R. Ambedkar (Babasaheb Ambedkar) (1891-1956)

“The object of primary education is to see that every child that enters the portals of a primary
school does leave it only at a stage when it becomes literate and continues to be literate
throughout the rest of his life.” (Ambedkar ,1982). Like Mahatma Phule Dr. Ambedkar also
considered education as a very important instrument to fight against social oppression. So, all
through his life he fought to make education more accessible and affordable especially to the
historically disadvantaged groups. He was not for equality that perpetuates social injustice. He
thought, if society is already having social inequalities which also result into economic
inequalities then in such a society favourable treatment to the weaker sections of the society
can bring in social justice. Even in pre-independence period he pleaded for reservation policy
for the depressed classes. 'Educate, Agitate and Organize' was the moto he gave to his
followers. Dr. Ambedkar was student of the famous American philosopher and educationist
Prof John Dewey. Anurag Behar has beautifully written about these two eminent thinkers -
“Babasaheb Ambedkar is believed to have said in 1952, “I owe my whole intellectual life to
Prof. John Dewey” Dewey was a philosopher, and Ambedkar the leader of a nation and its
people. The teacher witnessed his most famous student converting their ideas into real
institutional arrangements, for what was then and remains now, the worlds’ biggest democracy.
No wonder that the Constitution of India is liberating, equalizing and humanizing. So is the
curriculum of our schools. There is a deep resonance between our Constitution and education as we have envisioned it. So, in a sense, in education we are all Ambedkarites as much as being Deweyites” (Behar, 2016)

Most of the tinkers, western as well as Indian have emphasised multiple objectives of education. For them, education is expected to bring positive change in human life. Education increases intellectual capabilities that can be used to better one’s own life as well as the life of those who surround us. Education for them is not a time bound process but a way of life. Though what they said sounds very idealistic at times and not very practicable, these thoughts, at least partially, have impressed the policy makers in different parts of the world. Indian education policy, especially the provisions for affirmative action, has a direct link with DR. Ambedkar’s thought. Dr. Ambedkar was influenced by Mahatma Phule and Dewey. These philosophers possibly have not given the elaborate blue prints of building an education system brick by brick but they have given us rough sketches of desirable education system that needs modification as time and place change.

2.7 Education and Human development

The ‘capabilities approach’ of Amartya Sen is a water shade in development economics. The approach aims to assure equity in the process of economic development and it is one of the major factors that have shaped the concept of human development in the post 1990’s. Amartya Sen considers, ‘capability to function’ as the most important measure of economic development. It is not just the possession of commodities that increase the wellbeing of the household/individual but ability to put to use these commodities in the best possible way is the decisive factor in this case. He says, the commodities are means to an end and not an end in itself. Sen defines capabilities as, “the freedom that a person has in terms of the choice of functioning, given his personal features (conversion of characteristics into functioning) and his
command over commodities.” In this context health and education become prime most important variables in the development process. According to Sen quality education and health facilities, at least at basic level must be available to all. In absence of these two, increase in per capita GDP will result into ‘growth without development’. Sen’s views and analysis influenced the construction of United Nations’ Human Development Index that gives due importance to health and education along with income while measuring development. List of Millennium development goals of United Nations Development Programme had also included ‘Universal Primary Education’ as one of the important goal to be achieved by 2015. (Todaro, 2012) In India too, development policy in general and the Education Policy in particular got influenced by Sen’s views to some extent, especially in the first decade of the new millennium. Empowerment and redistributive effects of basic education in case if India have been analysed by Jean Dreze and Amartya Sen in their paper, ‘Basic Education as a Political issue’. Literacy according to them is a survival skill in modern economy and so uneducated and illiterate person is at a great disadvantage in the socio-political and economic hierarchy. They considered basic education as ‘a catalyst’ for social change and a tool of empowerment. Comparison between Kerala and Uttar Pradesh in India was done to prove this point. Improving accessibility to quality education in case of disadvantaged groups is a prerequisite for social equity in India according them. Dreze and Sen have discussed two myths that prevail about why many children remain out of formal school system in India. 1. Indian parents are not interested in sending child to the school and 2. Families require child labour for economic survival. According to them, true reason for children remaining out of school is – education is expensive in terms of time and energy and money. Even government schools require many incidental expenditures. For low quality education, that is doled out to poor, parents are reluctant to put in necessary efforts as economic returns from such substandard education are almost nil. “The PROBE survey found that there was no teaching activity whatsoever in half of the sample schools at the time
of the investigators’ (unannounced) visit.” So even if parents have interest in their children’s education both, parents and children loose interest in education due to its poor quality. Sen and Dreze called it, ‘discouragement effect’. So, it is not just the availability of free/subsidised schools, but its quality also must be improved to ensure equity in education. According them, “The main task is to strengthen the base of the pyramid…equally, it is important to ensure that those at the top of the pyramid are among the best in the world. Our cultural well springs had taken good care of both ends in the past; the skew set in with domination and influence. It should now be possible to further intensify the nation -wide effort in human resource development, with education playing its multi -faceted role.” (Dreze, Sen,2002)

2.8 Higher Education

2.8.1 Higher Education as a Merit Good

In an economy, commodities are classified as public goods, merit goods and non-merit goods. A good or service is a public good when principle of exclusion cannot be made applicable to it. The principle of exclusion means, one who does not pay for the commodity cannot be excluded from the enjoyment of the commodity. For example, defence service. If this definition of public good is accepted, then education cannot be considered as public good as principle of exclusion can be applied to education. But still some of the economist like Jandhyala B G Tilak insist that education at all levels should be considered as public good/quasi-public rather than ‘global public good’. Education creates huge social benefits that cannot be accounted for in a market economy. (Tilak,2005) His views on this issue are discussed later in this section. Merit goods are those consumptions of which needs to be encouraged or discouraged in the larger interest of the society. Education, health can be considered as merit goods. New Economic
Policy of 1991 initiated structural reconstruction of the Indian economy. Reduction in fiscal deficit is one of the most important economic objective of the New Economic Policy. So, all the government subsidies came under scanner and commodities that were subsidised got classified as public goods, merit goods and non-merit goods with obvious intension to phase out/reduce subsidies to non-merit goods. Education up to the primary level is considered as merit good and secondary and higher education is classified as non-merit good. Jandhyala B.G. Tilak strongly criticised this policy of the government. Education should be treated like a public good as it produces huge and variety of positive externalities. The points he put forth in support of his argument are- First, Education is a public good in a sense consumer of education create social benefits for those who do not consume education. These social benefits include “…improvement in health, reduction in population growth, reduction in poverty, improvement in income distribution, reduction in crime, rapid adoption of new technologies, strengthening of democracy…etc.…in economic literature basic education has been considered as pure public good and higher education as a quasi-or semi-public good.”(Tilak,2005) His second argument was, education should also be treated as merit good in country like India because due to poverty and various socio-economic disadvantages private demand for consumption cannot be considered as well-informed choice. So, government must intervene to boost the demand for education at all levels by subsidising it and for this subsidised education is basic requirement that also assures equality of opportunity. While strongly advocating government monopoly of higher education, Tilak argues that benefits of economies of scale can be enjoyed optimally only if there is single supplier of higher education. According to him, education outcomes in terms of future income flow are uncertain. So, in imperfect capital markets students/parents would be reluctant to borrow to finance their education in absence of subsidy. Similarly, there is no efficient mechanism available which can enable financial institutions to evaluate human capital of a student as a collateral. This will lead to under investment in education. (Tilak,2005)
Daniel Checchi while studying inequalities in education in the USA, Germany and Italy also discussed market imperfections regarding education. “The human capital approach derives from the assumption that perfect financial markets exist. When we remove this assumption, first family, then family income distribution, become limiting factors, and income inequality persistence arises as an equilibrium outcome.” (Checchi, 2008). Most of the private unaided institutes of higher education are criticised as, “education shops” in Report of the committee for Evolution of the New Education Policy (Government of India, 2016). The World Development Report 1998 had cautioned us, “Education is the key to creating, adapting and spreading knowledge…But the gains in access to education have been unevenly distributed, with the poor seldom getting their fair share. “Similarly, Mahbub Ul Huq asks (1999), “Are free markets open to all people?... To establish the supremacy of people in the process of development- as the classical writers always did –is not to denigrate economic growth but to rediscover its real purpose.” Prof. Vibhuti Patel (2009) has analysed this issue from different angle. While concluding her paper “Private Higher Education in India – Changing Scenario”, she wrote, “while dealing with privatisation of higher education, we need to address some crucial mind-boggling issues regarding the role of higher education per se. Is it to create a concerned and informed citizenry? Or to meet the expected future needs of economic and social development in the country? Or simply to meet the labour requirements of international capitalism? Can a balance be achieved between these aims? This is important because the current emphasis on producing technical skills also ignores one of the most important functions of education, which is its critical role in encouraging creativity and construction of knowledge leading to intellectual self-sufficiency to face the challenges of contemporary complex knowledge-driven economy. Then there is the issue of gender bias in education, in addition to the communal biases which have received much attention in recent times. These biases reflect themselves not only in access to education, but also in terms of orientation.” (Patel, 2009) Dr.
Amartya Kumar Sen has also opposed privatisation of education as that goes against his ideology of human development. He says in a knowledge driven society education is a major contributing factor and a necessity for the intellectual self-sufficiency. (Sen, 2000)

2.8.2 Privatisation of Higher Education - Higher education as a non-merit good

J.B.G. Tilak has critically analysed eight myths about privatisation of higher education in his paper, “Privatisation of higher Education”. These eight myths are: 1. Private higher education is demanded due to its better quality. 2. Graduates from private universities get higher pay package and are more employable. 3. Private education reduces financial burden of the government. 4. Private education is more responsive to the needs of the market and the society. 5. Non-profit private sector education is motivated by philanthropic considerations. 6. Private education is normally demanded by the rich so the high tuition fees should not be a problem. 7. Private education is not affected by the politics whereas public sector education is more politicised. 8. Public funding of higher education is supposed to be more regressive so privatisation of education will improve income distribution. Tilak explained with facts and figures how these eight myths about privatisation of higher education are misleading. He is not fully against privatisation but wants privatisation in a desirable form. He recommends private provision of education with fair price. The cost of education may only be partially recovered from the students in this case on the basis of their ability to pay and the other part of the cost of education can be funded by the government or some other source. Tilak also discussed the case for treating higher education as non-merit good. He stated-social rate of return on higher education is much lower than private rate of return. Public subsidisation of higher education is like regressive taxation so increases economic inequalities as beneficiaries are mostly upper/middle income groups. So, if subsidy is given to higher education then it should be targeted. Similarly, heavy subsidisation results into government control of the education and in turn erodes autonomy in the education field. It also results into inefficiency in allocation of
resources and wastages of funds received as subsidy as it is not hard-earned money that educational institutes are spending. Besides, students may not understand the true value of education.

In the developed world too, excessive market orientation of education is getting questioned. Martha Nussbaum, a philosopher and education analyst has expressed her worries as, “We are in the midst of a crisis of massive proportions and grave global significance. No, I do not mean the global economic crisis...I mean a crisis that goes largely unnoticed, like a cancer; a crisis that is likely to be, in the long run, far more damaging to the future of democratic self-government: a world-wide crisis in education” (Nussbaum, 2011). According to Nussbaum we are living in an era of education crisis. The crisis is result of focusing on education that is useful for economic growth and gives the cutting edge to the economy in the global competition. So, the applied education in every field is promoted at the cost of (not so profitable) basic sciences and humanities. This may result into crisis in citizenship. The high growth rate of the economy not necessarily brings wellbeing of the majority of the citizens. She stated, “Given the nature of the information economy, nations can increase their GNP without worrying too much about the distribution of education, so long as they create a competent tech and business elite” Purpose of education according to Nussbaum is to promote human development of students. Education should also facilitate “understanding of the goals of human development for all”. So students in their post-education life choose right political options and help others to get empowered and develop similar capabilities. (Nussbaum, 2008)

Pawan Agrawal thinks, it is high time policy makers in India take cognisance of the role of private sector in higher education. “Private higher education has now moved from the periphery to centre stage. In almost all professional courses about 80 per cent enrolment is in private institutions. While this structural shift was going on in the Indian higher education, public policy has continued to be engaged in the rhetoric of autonomy of institutions,
commercialisation of higher education and wild-goose chase to achieve some arbitrary set targets related to enrolment and public investment in higher education. While, there is a case for enhancing the public funding for higher education, in the face of competing demands on public resources, the scope for such enhancement is limited. The fact that India’s relative effort (measured by the amount spent per student as a percentage of GDP per capita) at 57 per cent is much higher than 26 per cent in the US, 31 per cent in the UK, 17 per cent in Japan and merely 5 per cent in Korea and even China at 41 per cent is often missed out. This suggests that at India’s stage of development, the country is already spending disproportionately large sum of public money on higher education.” (Agrawal, 2007).

The World Bank Document ‘Higher Education: The Lessons of Experience’ (1994) is one of the prominent documents that influenced the education policies in late 1990s and thereafter. The message of the document was loud and clear- “In era of widespread fiscal constraints…expenditure per students are compressed…the crisis is more acute in the developing world…indeed higher education should not have the highest priority claim on incremental public resources available for education in many developing countries.” (World Bank, 1994). The document also suggested strategies to reform higher education. Some of these are- promotion of variety in education, encouragement to development of private institutions, tapping of alternative sources of funding (including increase in fees) in case of public institutions, linking of government funding to performance, priority to equity and quality in policy making and role of government in case of higher education to be redefined. The document stated that benefits of government funded higher education are cornered by the most affluent households who are also politically influential. Higher education investments have lower social rates of return than investment in primary and secondary education. So, the higher education should get low priority and government should concentrate more on primary and secondary education. In this regard a very interesting policy suggestion is given by Daniele Checchi who researched intensively to study connection
between Human capital, family background and inequality. Though his study is primarily related to pre-university education, the implications of his study can be linked to the higher education. He states, “…when a country wants to raise the educational level of its population, rather than spending additional resources on building schools and hiring teachers (which at best, have indirect effect on secondary school enrollments) it should implement redistributive policies (via taxes and/or subsidies).” As far as supply of education is concerned he advocates the approach of “voting with your feet” which according to him increases private allocative efficiency. He also discusses trade-off between efficiency and equity. He has discussed elaborately the issues such as education financing, under or over investment in education, using data from Italy, Germany and the USA (Checchi, 2008)

2.9 ‘Equality, Quality and Quantity: The Elusive Triangle in Indian Education’- J. P. Naik

2.9.1 Education Before Independence

“Educational planners in India have, since the attainment of independence in 1947, tried to pursue programmes oriented to securing equality of educational opportunity, improvement of standards and expansion of educational facilities in spite of scarcity of resources. The simultaneous pursuit of these goals is not easy, partly because no country, however rich, can provide all the resources these programmes will need and partly because the pursuit of these goals needs many inputs besides the financial.” (Naik, 1979) Equality and especially equality of educational opportunity are relatively modern values to the five-thousand-year-old Indian society. Major part of Indian society prior to British rule was stratified based on caste, class and gender. Education was almost the monopoly of the upper caste men in the traditional Hindu society and Hindu religious practices supported this discrimination. Though access to Quran was open for all under Islamic rule, the formal education remained restricted to few due to the
class barriers. British introduced new education as they needed native labour force that can work at lower administrative positions. This exposure to modern western education not only helped British in getting suitably trained labour force but it also brought in tremendous social upheaval in the Indian society. A wave of social reformers emerged in the 18th and 19th century India, who criticised vehemently the inhuman and hypocritical religious practices prevalent in the Indian society. Knowledge of western democratic practices and values resulted in serious introspection. British rule promised equality before law but as a political strategy British preferred to remain aloof from the socio-religious practices of the Indian society. Indian social reformers like Raja Rammohan Roy, Mahatma Phule put pressures on the British rulers to pass necessary laws to prevent inhuman social practices. In Maharashtra, Mahatma Phule advocated equality of opportunity in education and also explained how education can be a potent weapon to fight against socio-economic injustice. To some extent British rule helped to increase equality of opportunity in education. It also brought about secularisation of curriculum. British gave new concept of quality in case of education. “…the modern education they introduced inculcated the idea that education implied a pursuit of all knowledge, and especially that of science, and was to be pursued for utilitarian ends (like getting a job under government) and for improving life on earth. As stated earlier, this gave a new dimension to "quality" (Naik1979). But the British also created another type of inequality by starting “class based public schools”. This created a tradition of divided school system that continues even today - good quality expensive private schools for the upper income groups and government schools for the others. (Naik1979) British also advocated “Downward Filtration Theory” that confirmed the class bias in the education system. So ‘education for all’ - was one of the dream to be fulfilled in the independent India. The constitution of independent India especially the Directive Principles of State Policy and the Chapter on the Rights of the Citizens have made it very clear that education for all is one of the most cherished objective of Independent India.
2.9.2 Education after 1947

The political freedom of 1947 was a great achievement for the Indian society. But it also increased the expectations from the Indian government. During freedom struggle people of India were made to believe that British Rule is the root cause of all the economic miseries of the Indian society. So, political freedom will automatically result into freedom from all the economic evils as the country now is ruled by its own people. Very soon, after independence, there was a realisation that road to economic development is not automatically paved by the political freedom. Putting economy on the path of development is a mammoth task and in democracy it cannot be fast tracked. So, to concede popular demands government started taking short cuts. Education sector was not an exception to this. In the process education system expanded enormously but at the cost of its quality. Well known educationist, J.P. Nike aspired to have equilateral triangle of quantity, equality and quality. But what we have today is a scalene- a triangle having three sides of different length. The quantity side is the longest followed by the equality side. Shortest length is of the quality side. What J.P. Naik wrote in 1979 is equally true even today- “Equality, Quality and Quantity: The Elusive Triangle in Indian Education” (Naik,1979) The recent writings on Indian education discuss mostly the quality aspect of education. Though there is also a kind of consensus that issue of equality is not yet fully dealt with.

Anita Rampal asked a pertinent question about the prioritisation process in case of the public sector education in her paper, “Unpacking the ‘quality’ of schools”. She questions why quality of schools is not considered as a fundamental problem and only access to education is given the priority? Quality of education and access to education should not be treated as distinct goals but they need to be given equal importance and should be achieved simultaneously. She argues, “The world-over, universal elementary education has been achieved principally through state provision of compulsory schooling, where quality was not differentially reserved to be doled
out either ‘later’ or ‘only to some’. She also criticised the ‘vested interests’ that recommend ever increasing financial provisions for the higher education that according to her benefits more to the socio -economically privileged class and such allocation happens mostly at the cost of public sector primary education. (Rampal,2004)

Anil Sadgopal, a crusader for, right to education, has recommended a new type of education system to ensure equity in education in his paper, “Right to Education vs. Right to Education Act” He believes that entire history of Indian education right from the British period till today is nothing but a ‘denial’ of equality of opportunities to the disadvantaged class in India. He blames it on lack of political will and wrong prioritisation on the part of successive governments. Sadgopal has given an alternative vision of school education. This is needed to put right to education in practice as a fundamental right in a true sense of the term. The right kind of change in school system will automatically develop the system of higher learning as a next stage in a manner of organic development. He recommended “fully publicly funded Common School System based on Neighbourhood Schools (CSS-NS)” Such a system has been successfully implemented in some of the developed countries. But he does not want Indian system to be the replica of the systems of the developed countries. The design of the Indian system should be suitable to the socio-cultural diversity and economic realities. CSS-NS would bring in diversity as well as disparity in the class room that exists in the neighbouring areas of the school. This will automatically create a pressure from the economically advantaged parents to improve the school. Such a school according to him is a, “a pre-condition in a society like ours for forging a sense of common citizenship” The struggle to bring in CSS-NS system is “also a part of the growing movement in the country against appropriation of our natural resources and sources of livelihoods under imperialist globalization and for redeeming India’s democracy, sovereignty and role of productive labour and knowledge in creating an egalitarian and just society.” (Sadgopal,2010)
Prof. Pranab Bhardhan criticised current higher education system in his keynote address, given on 18, Jan, 2017 at, Presidency University, Kolkata on the occasion of the 200th Anniversary of Hindoo College. He also made some suggestions to bring in radical change in the system. He said, “higher education in India is failing. Overhauling the system can salvage it…Let me start with a blunt statement: India’s higher education is in general a decrepit, dilapidated system, it’s afflicted by a deep malaise… Three widely acknowledged criteria for judging an education system: Access, Equity, and Quality. We have failed our young people by all three criteria.”

Some of the problems Prof. Bardhan discussed—tuition class dependence made education expensive and increased the dropout rate, serious faculty shortage, unholy nexus between education and politics, very low employability of the graduates and miserable global competency. Bardhan said, reforms in education system will require ‘quantum leap’— He strongly recommended academic and financial autonomy to universities and colleges and is for healthy competition among institutions of higher learning. But he also warned that enough vigilance is required to prevent— ‘Culture of constant competition among universities to assure their autonomy does not degenerate into ‘cocoon of comfortable cronyism’ and mediocrity “The vested interests in the current stagnation are quite powerful—politicians, bureaucrats, mediocre faculty, etc.” As Machiavelli had observed five centuries back: “The reformer has enemies in all those who profit by the old order, and only lukewarm defenders in all those who would profit by the new”. He concluded his speech with an ultra-optimistic note— “In India the default redistributive option for politicians has been caste reservations in admissions to higher education institutions for the disadvantaged. But when these institutions keep on churning out graduates who are mostly unemployable, I believe the consciousness will rise among our poor and middle classes and castes that the way forward is to fight the vested interests and move in the direction of improving education quality, along with access and equity.” (Bardhan, 2017)
Recently, Satyam Vishwanathan, a consumer researcher and part of the founding team at Junoon Theatre, in his article, ‘Redefine Education’ made a very interesting observation on how Indian society thinks about education. He wrote that, in Indian media starting salaries and examination, especially entrance examination results are excessively glorified. At times it gets coverage on the front pages of newspapers. This has become, “almost a singular definition of success.” He added, “Multiple studies have shown that personality attributes such as grit, curiosity, and self-control are stronger predictors of achievement than IQ. Writer Paul Tough in his book, How Children Succeed, challenged what he called “the cognitive hypothesis” or the belief “that success today depends primarily on cognitive skills — the kind of intelligence that gets measured on IQ tests, including the abilities to recognise letters and words, to calculate, to detect patterns”. Instead, Tough offered a character-hypothesis or the idea that non-cognitive skills, like persistence, curiosity, conscientiousness, optimism, and self-control, are more crucial than raw brainpower to achieving success. Tough believes that character is created by encountering and overcoming failure. A culture that allows children to explore, take academic risks and learn from failure is a culture that creates curious, passionate, confident, and empathetic adults. As Einstein famously noted, “Imagination is more important than knowledge”. “Harvard psychologist Howard Gardner introduced the theory of multiple intelligences in 1983, and posited that IQ was an inadequate measure of human ability. Beyond the linguistic and logical-mathematical skills that IQ tests entail, Gardner proposed musical intelligence, spatial intelligence, bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence, interpersonal intelligence, intrapersonal intelligence and naturalist intelligence as key expressions of human ability that find relevance in a wide variety of professions. Gardner’s research expanded the idea of intelligence. We could do with such an expansion in India.” (Vishwnathan, 2017)

2.10 Major Policy Initiatives in Higher Education after 1947
In this section, some of the major policies related to higher education in India are reviewed. The education policies/reports of the commissions on education usually got reflected in the Five Years Plans. So, a brief review of higher education in the Five-Year Plans is also presented. Similarly views of contemporary economist/activist on the government education policy and the state of education in India are also included in this section.

2.10.1 University Education Commission 1948

The first Education Commission was appointed under the chairmanship of Dr. S. Radhakrishna, to report on the Indian University Education and suggest improvements and extensions that would be desirable to suit the present and future requirements of the country. The issue primarily addressed by the commission was use of political independence to bring in economic independence and establish the values that need for successful functioning of democracy. The commission also dealt with certain age-old problems like inequality of opportunity that existed in the education system and at the same time accelerating the growth rate of the economy was another major task to which the education policy was geared to. The report of the commission mentioned the urgent need of skilled labour that economy will require soon. Education was expected to create opportunities for skill formation and facilitate employment generation. The commission expressed need for the large-scale training institutions that will increase employability of the youth. Some important recommendations of the Commission were - the universities should promote formation of leadership skills required in politics, administration, industry and commerce, the universities should encourage independent thinking and openness to modern thinking, the universities should assume major responsibility in inculcating the values required to make democracy successful and should provide an opportunity to develop innate potentials of the students. While endorsing the importance of teachers in education, the commission laid down following points: quality of teachers decides quality of education. The teacher should stimulate spirit of inquiry and encourage critical thinking. The teacher should
also give due importance to instilling the basic values in the students. The commission also
recommended improvement in the service conditions of the teachers and suggested suitable
recruitment policy for the teachers.

The commission also gave recommendations on the issues such as research, professional
education, education of women, education in rural area, medium of instruction, methods of
evaluation etc. (Government of India, 1950)

2.10.2 The Education Commission, 1964-66 (The Kothari Commission)

In inaugural address of the commission, Justice M.C. Chagla, the education Minister of India,
said, “…there are two broad approaches to education prevalent in the world today. The
first…holds that every individual is unique and he must be permitted and assisted to develop
best that is possible for him. If this is done, it is claimed the national good and the national
system of education will take care of themselves. In the other approach, a greater emphasis is
laid on the society into which individual will have to live and work and it is claimed that, if
education helps to create new social order the good of each individual member will be
automatically looked after. We in India, will have to choose a path which lies between these
two extreme approaches to education.” (Chagla, 1977) He was for dynamic and flexible
education policy that will take review of the system after every five years and change as per
the needs of the time so that the changing global scenario and demands of the evolving
economy, polity and society should get reflected in the education system. The National Policy
on Education 1968 was based on the Kothari Commission's report. The policy had tremendous
economic and political repercussions for many more years to come. The policy highlighted the
importance of free and compulsory education up to the age of 14. It endorsed the view of the
Radhakrishna Commission and recognised the central role of the teacher in deciding the quality
of education. It further mentioned that the teachers must be accorded honoured place in the
society. Academic freedom of the teachers should be protected so that they can express /publish
their work fearlessly. Teacher education especially in-service education was emphasised. The policy was for promotion of regional languages at all levels of education as medium of instruction and introduced three language formula. Equalisation of educational opportunity was also emphasised by the policy. For this, correction of the regional imbalance in provision of education facilities was suggested. It said there was need for intensive efforts that must be taken to promote education among all the disadvantaged groups. The policy was for identification of talent at the earliest age and nurturing of talent by creating atmosphere that promotes excellence. To promote social commitment, it recommended launching of National Social Service (NSS). Work experience, science education and research especially that helps agriculture and industry were other priority areas. Along with reforms in the evaluation methods, the policy introduced the 10+2+3 pattern with intention that at the 10+2 level majority will opt for vocational education. The Kothari Commission recognized the imperatives of university autonomy and cautioned that, “only an autonomous institution, free from regimentation of ideas and pressure of party or power politics, can pursue truth fearlessly and build up in its teachers and students, habits of independent thinking and a spirit of enquiry unfettered by the limitations and prejudices of the near and the immediate which is so essential for the development of a free society” (Government of India, 1966)

2.10.3 The National Policy on Education 1986/1992

The NPE of 1986 was adopted by the Parliament in May, 1986. This was reviewed and revised by the Rammurti Committee and the revised document ‘National Policy on education, 1986-Revised Policy Formulations’ was tabled in the Parliament in 1992. The policy highlighted the importance of education in nation building and economic development. While explaining why revision of the NPE 1986 is needed, Rammurti quoted from the resolution of the government-
"Despite efforts at social and economic development since attainment of independence, a majority of our people continue to remain deprived of education. It is also a matter of grave concern that our people comprise 50 per cent of the world's illiterate, and large sections of children have to go without acceptable level of primary education. Government accords the highest priority to education both as a human right and as the means for bringing about a transformation towards a more humane and enlightened society.” The NPE1986/92 came out with the concept of a National Education System assuring quality education up to certain level to every one without any discrimination. The other recommendations were - flexible curriculum having link with the employment requirements, life-long education, equality in educational opportunity, child centred approach, no detention policy at primary stage and no corporal punishment, encouragement to talent from every corner of the society, vocational education as a distinct stream of education to prepare student for employment market at the post-secondary stage. It emphasised the need to increase government expenditure on education and suggested it should be 6% of GDP and also recommended autonomy to colleges. The NPE1986/1992 was followed up by a ‘Programme of Action’ by HRD Ministry.

Some of the important Initiatives that followed the NPE: The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan started in 2000-01 with the goal of universalisation of elementary education. The Right to Education Act, 2009 (RTE Act) was passed. It has imposed legal obligation on the Central and State Governments to provide every child between ages 6-14 access to full time elementary education in a formal school that satisfies stipulated quality norms. The Rashtriya Madhyamik Shikhsha Abhiyan was launched in 2009. It aims at increasing access to and the quality of secondary education. Ministry of Human resource development (MHRD) introduced six bills in the parliament on - i) The Foreign Educational Institutions (Regulations of Entry & Operations) Bills, 2010 ii) The Prohibition of Unfair Practices in Technical Educational Institutions iii) The Educational Tribunal Bill2010 iv) The National Accreditation Regulatory

The *Rashtriya Uchatar Shiksha abhiyan* (RUSA) was launched in 2013. This is a centrally sponsored flagship scheme to promote higher education at the state level institutions. The central government will fund the state universities or educational institutes affiliated to the state universities. The funding will be norm based and will be linked to the outcome. The thrust areas of RUSA are: 1. promotion of new universities 2. upgradation of existing autonomous colleges to universities 3. Conversion of colleges into autonomous cluster colleges 4. Infrastructure grants to universities 5. New Model Colleges in the backward districts of the country 6. Upgradation of the existing degree colleges to the Model Colleges 7. New Colleges (professional) 8. Infrastructure grants to colleges 9. Research innovation and quality improvement 10. Equity initiatives 11. Faculty recruitment support 12. Faculty improvement 13. Promotion of Research universities 14. Encouragement to vocational courses 15. Leadership development programmes for the administrators in the educational institutes 16. Institutional restructuring and reforms 17. Capacity building and data collection and planning 18. Management information system

The RUSA has received mixed reactions. The major point of criticism is, it may result into reduction of the role of the State Governments in the higher education and may create conflict between the State and the Central relationships. Besides preconditions for receiving grants under the RUSA are very stringent and so many state level institutions will not be eligible to receive the grants. Encouragement to vocational education may take place at the cost of basic sciences and social sciences. Many reforms suggested to improve quality of higher education are like building castles in the air e.g. formation of cluster of colleges that are in the proximity, choice based credit system. Though these reforms sound good on paper, to put those in practice is a very difficult task. (Mukhopadhyay, 2014).
2.10.4 UGC Funding of Institutions of Higher Learning (1992-93): Punnaya Committee

The committee stated that the State funding must continue to higher education as the quality of primary and secondary education depends upon the quality of higher education. At the same time the committee recommended that the Universities should raise their own resources, that should constitute at least 15% of the total recurring expenditure at the end of the first five years and at least 25% at the end of ten years. It further recommended that the universities may rent out their facilities such as play grounds, auditoria, class rooms etc. The other mechanism of raising resources suggested by the committee was, raising tuition fees, starting short-term courses etc. The fee structure should be regularly revised to keep up with the rate of inflation. Similarly, fees should also be linked with the employment opportunities offered by the course. (UGC,1993)

2.10.5 Report on a Policy Frame Work for Reforms in Education (Ambani -Birla Report)

The report was submitted to the Prime Minister's Council on Trade and Industry Government of India. The report stated - a vision for education in India must inspire creation of a knowledge-based society, induce competitiveness, yet foster a sense of co-operation. Thus, the vision for education in India would be, “To Create a Competitive Yet Co-Operative Knowledge Based Society" The report was criticised by all those who consider education at all levels should be provided by the government at affordable price. The report was in favour of speeding up the process of privatisation of higher education. Some of the prominent recommendations of the report are-Compulsory and free Primary education up to the age14,continuous teacher training and quality upgradation, increased use of ICT, emphasis on vocational education, Common Admission Test like GRE, CAT, market oriented education, the government support to higher education through part funding, provide financial
guarantee for student loans, financial and operational autonomy to educational institutions, encouragement to establishment of private universities, permission to foreign direct investment in education, marketing Indian education abroad, banning of political activities on the campus. This report said to have influenced the recommendations of the National Knowledge Commission that was set up in 2005. (Government of India, 2000)

2.10.6 National Knowledge Commission (2005-08)

Constitution of the National Knowledge Commission in India signalled changing perspective towards education in India. It was in a way reflection of LPG in the field of education. The Commission focused on five key aspects of knowledge-enhancing access to knowledge, reinvigorating institutions where knowledge concepts are imparted, creating a world class environment for creation of knowledge, promoting application of knowledge for sustained and inclusive growth, using knowledge applications in efficient delivery of public services. The Knowledge Commission strongly recommended autonomy of universities and colleges. It states that, “the autonomy of universities is eroded by interventions from government and intrusions from political processes.” (Government of India, 2008)

2.10.7 National Policy on Education 2016: Report of the committee for Evolution of the New Education Policy

“Educate Encourage Enlighten…”

The draft of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2016 was released by the Ministry for Human Resource Development (MHRD) and suggestions were invited on the same from the public domain. The focus of the policy is to address gender discrimination, the creation of educational tribunals, and a common curriculum for science, mathematics and English. “The main objective of the New National Policy on Education is to harness the full potential of a young,
vibrant population and equip it to contribute meaningfully to India’s development”. Like all earlier policies this policy also emphasises inculcation of values as education should enable students to become responsible Indian citizens. The policy has also lamented about some of the serious problems of the Indian education system. The focus of the Policy is on improving the quality of teaching learning and evaluation. It aims at restoring the credibility of the education system and bringing in transparency in the education management. The policy recognizes teacher as a ‘key driver’ of change in the education system. This will necessitate improvement in quality of teacher education, training and attracting talented persons to teaching.

The NPE 2016 has listed some of the formidable challenges the education system in India faces today. These challenges are-lack of professionalism in education planning and management, acute shortage of quality teachers, corruption and politicisation of education, neglect of vocational education and skill formation, very low quality of educational intuitions at all levels because of the problems mentioned. The NPE2016 has addressed all these issues in its recommendations.

To improve governance in the education, the policy recommends- use of ICT at all levels, constitution of a permanent Education Commission that will function as a think tank, restriction of political activities on the campus, creation of an All India Education Service (also suggested by NPE 86/92). The policy also suggested special schemes for economically and socially disadvantaged groups, increase in public expenditure on education from about 3.5% at present to 6%, consolidation of existing schools so that better infrastructure can be provided to all the schools. The policy recommendations related to the Higher Education are - Improvement in the quality should be given the highest priority. For this recruitment of the quality teachers should be given urgent attention. “There is need to ensure that competent and motivated teachers enter the profession”. A five-year integrated course at the 12th standard plus level was
suggested for every discipline that will emphasize developing teaching and research skills. Immediate filing of vacant teaching position as dependence on ad hoc and guest teachers deteriorates quality of teaching. For undergraduate teacher Ph.D. should not be considered as an essential qualification. Selection of the vice chancellors should be purely based on merit and these appointments should be ‘depoliticized’ No University should have more than 100 affiliated colleges. Compulsory assessment and accreditation through credible system. Weeding out of poor quality privately run ‘teaching shops and so called non-profit institutions’. Autonomy to colleges and universities recommended in 1986/92 policy should be speeded up. Setting up regulatory framework to bring in transparency in the functioning of private universities. To promote research 100 new centers of excellence, need to be established both in the public and in the private sector. For this a Council for Excellence in Higher Education(CEHE) should be established. Creation of National Higher Education Fund to help needy and deserving students by way of fellowships and scholarships. The Academic Performance Index(API) must be replaced by more scientific procedures of assessing the qualitative progress of teachers’. National Higher Education Promotion and Management Act should be enacted. It will provide necessary legal framework to stimulate and promote higher education sector. A unified entrance exam at national level for each type of professional course should be introduced. This will save time, energy and money of aspiring students. Credible examination and Certification at class 10th and 12th level for the following category of students-school dropouts, vocational students who wish to move to main academic stream. Such examinations are also required to establish minimum eligibility for10 lakh new fellowships recommended by the report and to facilitate certification of acceptable quality achievements by foreign universities.

The recommendations of NPE are very comprehensive and definitely a welcome step but most of these recommendations were covered by the earlier documents like the NPE1986/92 or
National Knowledge Commission Report (2007). The policy needs to be given credit for openly discussing politicization and corruption and blaming it as one of the most important cause of deterioration in the quality of education. Similarly, like its predecessors, it emphasized teacher’s role at all levels in maintaining quality. But there are certain contradictions in the recommendations. The policy on one hand says that entrance exams at the 12th level for various professional courses should be reduced but on the other hand it also recommends introduction of optional All India level Examination to bring uniformity in standards at the 10th/12th level reasons for which are mentioned above. School dropouts can appear state level Board Examinations. Similarly, foreign universities have their own entrance examinations. Scholarships and fellowships can be distributed based on the basis of 10th/12th standard marks by following percentile formula. (MHRD,2016)

2.10.8 Reflections of Higher Education Policies in the Five-Year Plans

If the governments at all levels would have taken seriously the recommendations for education expressed in the First Five Year Plan document (chapter 33) and made sincere efforts to implement the suggested blue print, possibly India would have emerged not just as the biggest democracy but also as one of the most prosperous country having very high value of Human Development Index. Unfortunately, the aspirations of the planners could not materialize despite the very high level of political will. The challenges of education sector have almost remained the same all through the planned period. In a parliamentary democracy education became a low key political variable and so got grossly neglected. In case of the higher education, increasing accessibility and availability at the cost of quality became the common practice. Fortunately, lately, human resource development and its connection with overall economic development is getting emphasized once again. It is realized that, progress on HRD front is the prerequisite for getting the ‘demographic dividend’. In this context, it is interesting to study the evolution of the higher education policy as it appears in the Five-Year Plans.
The First Plan (1951-56) discussed the role of education in the economic development and in overall nation building. It also mentioned the importance of education in making of responsible citizens. The plan dealt with almost all the issue related to education in detail. It suggested complete remodeling of the education system. Compare to this, all the subsequent plans up to the Seventh Plan, discussed almost the same issues with little variations. The most frequently discussed issue in most of the Plans is - a weak link between education and productive employment. This became the key issue once the New Economic Policy (NEP) of 1991 came into the picture. After the NEP1991, HRD in general and education in particular became the issues of national importance in true sense of the term. Increase in productive efficiency is the buzz word in the post NEP era. All these years, the sociology and the politics of higher education played important role in shaping the education system. But now the economics of higher education, which was grossly neglected earlier, got its due consideration.

Some of the recommendations of the First Plan are relevant even today. The plan emphasized rapid increase in educational facilities. In 1950 seducation facilities were provided for only 40 per cent of the children of the age-group 6-11 and 10 per cent of the persons of the age-group 11-17 and 0.9 per cent to those of the age-group 17-23. The literacy percentage at the time was only 17.2. Though the present data shows a substantial increase in the educational facilities compared to what they were in 1950, the progress done in this regard is not adequate. The plan aspired to correct the defective, ‘top-heavy’ education system (largest proportion of education expenditure was allocated to higher education) and recommended the largest share of expenditure for primary education. The Plan also discussed the challenges posed by various types of disparities. The problem of wastages due to the dropouts was also discussed by the plan. This wastage according the plan was largely due to the poor quality of teaching as well as faulty methods of education. Another form of wastage mentioned was- the unplanned growth of educational institutions. The plan was for improving teachers’ Remunerations. The plan
found the scales of pay and conditions of service of teachers very unsatisfactory and considered it as a major cause of the low standards of teaching. Though now teachers’ salaries in government aided institutions are satisfactory, still teachers in self-financing institutions are not paid well. In case of examinations the planners felt that, “undue stress on examinations and memory work in the system of education is not conducive to the development of originality or spirit of research…Rather than creating elite sitting in the ivory tower, the system of education should help in building up the cultural and political identity of the nation. Graded text books for building up civic loyalties and creating understanding of democratic citizenship should be prepared.” Another interesting suggestion was—education should create awareness of major economic issues and institutions. No other policy document has implicitly or explicitly mentioned the importance of economic literacy. The architects of the First Plan did not lay down any targets for the university education as they thought, “problem here is mostly one of consolidation rather than expansion. It is, moreover, not possible to determine quantitatively the progress in higher education with the same ease as in the case of earlier stages.” The University Education Commission (1949) had suggested comprehensive and far-reaching reforms. The recommendations of the plan were based on these reforms, “framed in the light of available resources and the over-all needs of the country.” To avoid overcrowding in the colleges, admission by proper selection was recommended. Delinking degrees from routine jobs, opportunities for distance learning were other suggested measures in this regard. Planners suggested “A New System-Rural Universities…to cater to the special requirements of rural India”. Planners gave a lot of importance to technical, commerce and management education as it was considered to have a very strong link with the employment market. Labour and social service by students was suggested as part of training for becoming responsible citizen. The plan also mentioned the need for maintaining the physical and mental health of students. The plan
emphasised role of the governments at all levels as well as private agencies in implementation of education plans. (Planning Commission, 1951)

The Second Plan (1956-61) to the Seventh Plan (1985-90): Education policies included the Second Plan to the Seventh Plan (1985-90), kept the central theme of the First Plan almost intact. The higher education policy reflected in these Plans changed mostly in rhetoric and rarely got reflected in action.

Ramchandra Guha has commented on the Second Plan Model - “The Neharu-Mahalanobis model emphasised heavy industrialisation, state control, and ultimately, a subsidiary role for the private sector… the state must occupy the ‘commanding heights’ was a belief then shared by governments and ideologues all over the world.” (USA, UK Keynesian Economics, Soviet Russia example of positive role of state in economic development) This model was criticised by Chicago economist Milton Friedman visiting India in 1955. He thought it too mathematical, obsessed by capital out-output ratios, rather than by the development of human capital. The model also neglected education especially primary and secondary as the sums allotted for this in the second plan were ‘absurdly low’. Marxist criticised the model as it was not socialistic enough. Gandhians criticised the model for neglecting agriculture.” (Guha 2007)

The National Policy on Education, adopted in 1968 (based on the Kothari commission report) did get highlighted in the subsequent plans. The Fourth Plan (1969-74) emphasised on vocational education and encouragement to self-employment as the priority areas. The plan also took note of mismanagement in the manpower planning and emphasised its link with the education. The Fifth Plan (1974-79) wound up discussion on education in few paragraphs! In fact, with subsequent Plans, consideration for the quality of education became more of a lip service and the achievements were measured in terms of increase in the ‘availability’ and the enrolment ratios. Ever increasing demand for the subsidised higher education resulted in
exponential growth of universities and colleges of almost all disciplines. The huge problem of educated employment was the obvious outcome of this irrational expansion. This problem was singularly blamed on the low growth rate of industry/economy and the utopian labour laws. To some extent this was true. But it also indicated failure of the higher education system in establishing a strong link with the productive sectors of the economy. The Sixth Plan (1980-85) introduced the idea of education as a lifelong learning procedure. It also recognised the importance of new education technology and quality research. The Seventh Plan (1985-90) spoke about “how to make higher education more relevant to national needs and to forge forward and backward linkages of higher education with employment and economic development.” It also mentioned serious need of the examination reforms.

The deep introspection regarding higher education in India began with the New Economic Policy (NEP), 1991. This also influenced the subsequent plans. In the post 1991 period, HRD in general and education in particular became important growth variables. Along with availability and accessibility, the quality of education became major consideration in ‘the knowledge society’. Dismantling of licence, permit, and quota raj had its reflections in the education policy also.

The post NEP1991 era plans reflected the major shift in the education policy. These plans highlighted- autonomy, standardisation of admission procedures and assessment, encouragement to use ICT and modern technology, promotion of quality research, innovation, emphasis on applied aspects of various disciplines, interdisciplinary approach, education for all-Triple A Policy (Anyone, Anywhere, Anytime), open universities, distance learning, online courses, Lifelong Learning-Triple L Policy, education fostering global competency, inculcation of human values, contribution to national development, quest for excellence and women empowerment.
The Ninth Plan (1997-2002) considered education as the most crucial investment in the human development. The Prime Minister’s Special Action Plan (SAP) had identified the expansion and improvement of social infrastructure in education as a critical area. It suggested credit-based cafeteria system with core, optional and extra developmental courses at the undergraduate and post-graduate levels. The plan also recommended fee restructuring and industry funding as the additional sources of finance.

The Tenth Plan (2002-07) emphasised increase in enrolment, liberation of educational institutions, adoption of the state specific policies, encouragement to vocational education, use of technology to promote Indian languages, promotion of global networking in the field of education and all the other reforms that were introduced in the post 1991 era.

The Eleventh Plan (2007-12) suggested private sector participation in the field of higher education. Reforms in the field of admissions, curriculum and assessment were also emphasised. Autonomy and accountability was discussed at length. Reforms in the apex regulatory institutions like UGC, AICTE were suggested. While commenting on the Eleventh Plan Pawan Agarwal wrote- “…There are many good ideas in the plan document (the Eleventh Five Year Plan). All these efforts, however, appear to be somewhat disconnected…. several suggestions appear to be merely impressionistic views of individuals, rather than supported by data and research. Overall, efforts do not give a sense of an integrated reform agenda for Indian Higher Education”. Similar views are expressed by Prof. Sukhadev Thorat. In his edited book, Emerging Issues in Higher Education – Approach and Strategy in 11th Plan, he wrote,

“It may be recalled that the India’s Policy and Action plan for higher education as mentioned in the 1986 Education Policy Document and subsequent policy announcements including the 1992 Action Plan have been governed by five broad goals, which include enhancement of the enrolment rate in higher education, provision for equal access to all, particularly to
educationally backward classes, quality education and promotion of relevant education. It was therefore necessary to take a stock of the achievements, if not during the last fifty years, at least during the 10th plan. It was realized that while information on some aspects was available, this was not the case with respect to many other important aspects of higher education at all India and at the level of the State and districts. It was felt in the UGC that in the absence of proper information on the relevant aspects of higher education, attempt to develop an approach and strategy will be incomplete.” (Thorat, 2008)

The Twelfth Plan (2012-17) reflects the recommendations of the National Knowledge Commission. Major thrust areas of the Twelfth plan are- increase in Gross Enrolment Ratios, quality, accessibility, affordability, faculty improvement, modernisation of infrastructure, three Es-expansion, equity, excellence and development of world class research universities. (Government of India, Five Year Plan Documents, 1951 to 2012)

2.10.9 The Committee to Advise on Renovation and Rejuvenation of Higher Education (2008) (Yash Pal Committee)

The UGC appointed this committee to study extensively various challenges of the Indian Higher education. The report of the committee begins with the description of an ideal university “A university is a place where new ideas germinate, strike roots and grow tall and sturdy. It is a unique space, which covers the entire universe of knowledge. It is a place where creative minds converge, interact with each other and construct visions of new realities. Established notions of truth are challenged in the pursuit of knowledge” This is somewhat a classical description of centres of learning. The committee also describes the current situation as, “Loss of primacy of the universities in the scheme of the higher education sector in India, erosion of their autonomy, undermining of undergraduate education, the growing distance between knowledge areas and the isolation of universities from the real world outside and crass
commercialization are some of the problems that characterise the growth of the Indian higher education system. It is important that we develop an understanding of these issues before suggesting strategies to renovate and rejuvenate higher education in India”. According to the committee, with ‘Democratisation of higher education’ students from the socio-economically disadvantaged groups have joined higher education. For them higher education is a ladder to climb socio economic hierarchy. Gainful employment that suits their educational efforts is the most important objective of the higher education for them. The socio economic and intellectual aspirations of students decide their concept of ‘ideal education’. In this situation shaping the education system is a very challenging job. Some of the prominent challenges of higher education sector are discussed by the committee. The committee also gave recommendations to meet these challenges. According to the committee, challenges of the higher education sector are –

1. “Distances and Disconnects -Invisible walls”: The committee criticised the rigid compartmentalisation of knowledge and recommended interdisciplinary approach that is the need of an hour. Division of knowledge leads to confusion that our system of higher education is suffering from. Knowledge should be treated ‘in a holistic manner’. The ‘walls of discipline’ should become ‘porous enough’.

2. “Divide between Research Bodies and Universities”: Ideally teaching and research should go hand in hand. But in India specialised research institutions are not involved in teaching. Some researchers in fact consider teaching inferior to research. At the same time, full time teachers do not consider research as a necessary input in the teaching learning experience. The committee is of the view that such extreme approach is detrimental to the progress of both - teaching as well as research.
3. IITs and IIMs should function as full-fledged universities: At present the IITs and IIMs are the role models of what is excellence in the higher education. But these are essentially functioning only as engineering and management institutions. The committee suggested that these institutions should come out of academic ‘isolation’ and should become part of the mainstream university system and also maintain their uniqueness and autonomy. Some of the IITs have already taken the steps this direction.

4. ‘Erosion of democratic space’: The committee mentioned the failure of the education system in inculcating the democratic values among the students. In the days of globalisation when geographical boundaries are merging, psychological boundaries among the different sections of the society are increasing. The committee says, “…it is important that we learn to acknowledge and appreciate differences and not try to homogenise everything”

5. Curriculum design: Syllabi should include components that make students apply the knowledge he has acquired. Study of local problems should be encouraged. Syllabi should aim at creating ‘participating citizens’. For giving hands on training to the students, summer jobs/internships should be encouraged. A complementary change in the evaluation pattern should also be introduced.

6. “Learning across disciplines” should be encouraged: This multidisciplinary learning especially at the undergraduate level will help to increase students’ exposure.

7. Teacher education: Quality of teachers at any level depends upon the quality of education system where they study. So, preparing the teachers for all levels of education should be the responsibility of institutions of higher education.

8. Professional education an isolated island: The committee did not approve separation of professional education especially engineering and medicine from each other. This has resulted
into substantial social and cultural cost. The professional education should include the ‘holistic curriculum including other relevant branches of knowledge.

9. Underdeveloped vocational education: The committee mentioned about social stigmatisation of vocational education as it gets branded as education meant for poor. The committee suggested promotion of good quality vocational education on large scale. It also suggested to remove barriers to entry in case of vocational students wishing to enter university education.

10. Involvement of university faculty in undergraduate education: The committee feels the undergraduate students must get an opportunity to interact with the senior faculty of the university. This is mutually enriching experience and all the renowned universities follow this practice. For this the committee suggested that while appointing teachers to the universities their affiliation to a college should be specified.

11. Accountability: Three parameters to measure performance of the university were suggested. These are: socio-cultural aims of higher education, academic excellence; and institutional self-reform.

12. Structures, Expansion and Access: Central government should not discriminate between the state universities and the central universities while conferring various benefits. At the same time the state governments should also increase their support to the state universities. The committee emphasised the need to strengthen colleges as a foundation of higher education. Similarly, the committee mentioned, “…optimum size of a university has not only a quantitative but also a qualitative dimension.”

13. Growth of private-commercial providers: While criticising unscrupulous methods of private investors in higher education the committee did not recommend doing away with their participation in the field of education. The private sector is needed if access of education is to be increased rapidly. At the same time government, should not “…abandon the responsibility
for further augmentation of the existing capacity. In fact, we must recognize the need for different layers of institutions in the field of higher education, including state-run, private and those established through public-private partnerships... It is also important that private initiatives in the field of higher education are not driven by the sole motive of profit.” They should not confine themselves only to ‘commercially viable’ sectors of education, such as management, accountancy and medicine etc. but should also encompass areas of social and natural sciences by establishing comprehensive universities. Similarly, to make education affordable soft loans and scholarship schemes should be initiated. Even in case of foreign universities only the best should be welcomed and should be subject to all rules and regulations that would apply to any Indian university.

14. Resource Management and Financing, Admission: Major responsibility of financing the higher education rests with the government. But with changing times educational institutions should also explore alternative sources of finance that will increase their resource base. The committee is of the view that, “No student should be turned away from an institution for want of funds for education” Soft loans, free ships can be given for this purpose. But at the same time the students who can afford to pay the fees need not be given subsidy. For the university admission, the National level test like GRE should be organised round the year.

15. “Quality of teaching”: Quality of teachers is the best indicator of the quality of educational institutions. Urgent measures are needed to bring back to the university, people who enjoy teaching and research. Any reform of higher education, therefore, must give the highest priority to attracting “good teachers and giving them a positive and motivating environment” Resources in terms of laboratories, libraries, research assistance etc. as well as competitive remuneration would be needed to attract as well as retain good people to our universities.

16. Governance and Autonomy: The committee criticised poor governance of universities and suggested more professionalism in the management of universities. For this separation of
academic administration and overall management is required. Civil servants should be appointed as the university administrators and more autonomy should be given to the universities. The committee appealed to the academia to do ‘deep introspection’ on ‘the origins and extent of crisis’ in higher education and on its role in exacerbating this crisis. The committee feels, “This introspection would reveal that there has been a willing abdication on part of the academic community, of the autonomy which was available to it. Education was made subservient to ideological compulsions which led to its loss of respect”. Autonomy also should be given to students and they should be allowed to choose courses from different universities and collect necessary credits for the degree.

17. Multiplicity of Regulatory Systems and New Regulatory Framework: The committee criticised multiplicity of regulatory systems. Such a system creates confusion and cannot “propel the growth in the right direction”. The committee recommended well -designed regulatory system to “promote a high degree of professionalism in managing higher education institutions …(it)would, therefore be necessary to have a single apex body in the field of higher education which treats all knowledge areas in an integrated manner and works towards convergences with overarching regulatory powers. Only such a body would ensure that there is a live and close interaction among co-thinkers and co-workers and there is no dilution of any idea, which it has to suffer if made to traverse a bureaucratic maze” The Committee proposed establishment of, “an apex body for Higher Education, to be called The National Commission for Higher Education and Research (NCHER). The National Commission for Higher Education and Research (NCHER) would perform its regulatory function without interfering with academic freedom and institutional autonomy. It would not take recourse to inspection-based approval method. From the current inspection-approval method, it would move to a verification and authentication system.” (UGC,2008)
2.11 Conclusions

The review of literature covered theoretical aspects of education as well as various policy documents suggesting action plan. In this review initially, effort was made to develop overall understanding of the education at all levels and of all types. At a later stage focus was more on higher education. Section on philosophy of education explained the role of education in human life. Since ancient times philosophers/thinkers all the world over have given prime importance to the education as a tool to mould the thought process of student in the right direction though there is no unanimity on how to achieve this. Education can change the mindset of a student. The western education introduced by the British caused the social revolution and propelled the freedom struggle in India.

Education as a tool for economic development was well understood by political leaders in the independent India. Importance of education in nation’s progress was highlighted by the Radhakrishna Commission in 1948. Later the First Plan Document endorsed the recommendations of the commission. The Kothari Commission, The NPE1986/92, The NPE 2016 are the prominent policy documents that shaped/will shape Indian education system. All the policy documents are very well drafted. There is a overlap to some extent that is unavoidable. All the documents have taken detailed review of the problems faced by the education system. Many recommendations are common. Everybody seems to know what needs to be done. Major problem is how to do what needs to be done. Initially policy documents talk more about increasing accessibility to education. But lately the thrust is on how to improve quality of education. Globalisation, Privatisation and Liberalisation, three components of the New Economic Policy of 1991 had their reflection in the subsequent education policies/reports on education. Ambani Birla Report, Report of the National Knowledge Commission, Yash Pal Committee Report, The Draft NPE 2016 are to a great extent influenced by the World Bank Document on Education (1994). Is higher education a merit good or non-merit good? There is
no consensus on the issue. Who corners the benefits of the subsidised higher education? The world bank says it is the politically dominant affluent class. Whereas Economist like J.B.G. Tilak are more interested in positive externalities or in social benefits of higher education. Educationist J.P.Naik discussed the elusive triangle of quality, equality and quantity in higher education in India. The elusiveness of the triangle seems to be more permanent. Recently Indian newspapers have started covering education in detail. Two articles published in Jan 2017, are reviewed. In one of these articles, Prof. Bardhan has severely criticised Indian higher education. He has made very valid points while pointing the problems of Indian higher education. But his suggestions to improve the higher education system in India are too theoretical and dreamy.

To sum up in the words of J.P. Naik- “Education cannot be transformed in a vacuum. It is a sub-system of society and a largely dependent sub-system at that. Consequently, one must make a simultaneous effort to change society and the educational system in a complementary fashion to get the best results. To put it a little differently, there are three essential forms of power: political power, economic power and knowledge power. All these forms of power are obviously inter-related; and if we desire to have an equitable distribution of knowledge power, we can achieve our objective only if we take simultaneous steps to have an equitable distribution of political and economic powers as well. This, by and large, has not yet happened in the Indian society.” (Naik1979).

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