CHAPTER II
HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

During the British period, there was no National System of Education in the country. The British administrators had taken it for granted that the English model, after a good deal of dilution, was all that India required. Indian education had all along been tied to the apron strings of the educational system in England. The Charter Act of 1813 may be regarded as a turning point in the history of Indian education. It was for the first time that the British Parliament recognised the importance of education.¹

In nineteenth century India, the focus of corporate academic life - a life of interaction between students and teachers - was not the university but the college. Hindu college (which later became Presidency College) was established in Calcutta in 1817. Elphinstone College in Bombay in 1834 and Presidency College in Madras in 1840.² Throughout the nineteenth century, it was to colleges such as these, that students came for higher education.

Higher education in India which is essentially founded by Lord Macaulay, a member of the British Parliament, father of the modern system of higher education in India. He was a supporter of the ideas
of Elphinstone and the "downward filtration theory". This theory is based on the assumption that if upper classes obtain an education of a better quality, the impact of such education will filter down to masses in general. The purposes of British education in India was not the socio-economic or cultural advancement of the people of India, rather to create a lowcost man-power to run British factories and to help the Government in administration.3

Modern University Education in India began in 1857 on the recommendation of the Sir Charles Wood's Despatch of 1854. It is called the Magna Carta of English education in India. It shaped the educational structure in India, which remained substantially the same till 1947. Universities came into existence in Calcutta, Bombay and Madras in 1857.4 These universities were to be modelled on the pattern of London University which was then only an examining body. The universities were there to maintain uniformity of standards by regulating courses of study and conducting examinations.

The Governor General of Bengal did little to control or direct the educational policies of the provinces in India till 1834. Between 1834 to 1870, there was active centralisation. The State Governments were only to act as agents for the Government of India. They were not authorised to incur any expenditure without getting prior sanction of the Central Government. After 1870, there was a reduction in the
central control. Though the provinces were concerned with the
day-to-day administration of education, the control vested in the
Centre. The Hunter Commission of 1882 recommended that the
Government of India should bring out quinquennial reviews on the
progress of education. The first quinquennial review of education was
published in 1886-87. In 1902, the Indian University Commission
inquired into the conditions and prospects of Universities. The
Commission stressed the need for re-organisation of Universities and
rejected the idea of setting up new Universities. In 1910, a separate
Department of education was created in the Centre with the Director
General of Education as its Head. In 1917, Government appointed the
Calcutta University Commission to study the problems of University
Education. This is also known as the ‘Sadler Commission’ from the
name of its President, Dr M.E. Sadler, the Vice Chancellor of the
University of Leeds. The report of the Commission was a document of
inter-provincial importance. Although it dealt with the Calcutta
University only, the problems that it studied were, more or less,
common to other Indian Universities. It suggested that there should be
co-ordination and co-operation between Indian Universities.\(^5\)

A point of special interest in connection with the relationship
between the Government of India and the Provinces was that the
Government of India was slowly but surely taking on the responsibilities
regarding education. It was increasingly recognised that the
Government of India should undertake the function of co-ordination, provide funds for education and collect and disseminate information. In fact, clearing house function was contemplated even by the Indian Education Commission of 1902. By 1915, when a Central Bureau of Education was established, this clearing house function became a continuous activity.6

The single most important function that the Government of India came to perform was, what Mr. J.P. Naik has described as policy making in the field of education. It was Lord Curzon (1902) who advocated interventionist state activity by the Government of India in the form of co-ordination and active policy making in the field of education. Lord Curzon is remembered for his yeoman service in the cause of education in general, and higher education in particular. He worked towards the reconstruction and reform of the system that bore fruit in the years to come. It was he who chalked out for the Centre a more pronounced role in co-ordination, policy-making and dissemination of information. An indication of the serious attention being paid by the British to higher education is to be found in the recommendations of the Indian University Commission of 1902, and the subsequent University Act of 1904. Moreover, the post of Director General of Education created in as early as 1901 was the forerunner of the Central Ministry of Education. Thus, the period from 1870 to 1918 could be broadly
described as one of essential Central control coupled with a large dose of decentralisation.\(^7\)

The Act of 1919 introduced dyarchy at the provincial level. All subjects were divided into two Lists, Central and Provincial. The Provincial List was further divided into Reserved and Transferred. The Reserved subjects were administered by the Governor along with his Executive Councillors and the Transferred subjects were the responsibility of the Indian Ministers who were elected members of the Provincial Legislature and responsible to it. Since there was considerable opposition to the placement of education in the Provincial List, certain reservations were made. Institutions which were of an all India character, like the Banaras Hindu University, colleges for Indian Chiefs and educational institutions for the benefit of the British in India continued to be under the Centre itself. The education of Anglo-Indians and Europeans, though on the Provincial List, was a Reserved subject. Thus, to arrive at a workable compromise, education found itself in an unenviable position, figuring in both the Central and Provincial Lists as well as in the Reserved and Transferred Lists. The educational arrangements in the Government of India Act of 1919, led to two broad results. Firstly, education became a highly fragmented subject of administration. It was partly all-India, partly reserved, partly transferred with limitations and partly transferred without limitations. The
Education of Indian citizens was by and large transferred subject in Indian hands.\textsuperscript{8}

With the transfer of Education Department to Indian Ministers, great hopes were aroused in the Indian people for the diffusion of education at a faster speed. The dyarchical form of Government created difficulties in the way of educational expansion and improvement, since Education was a transferred subject and Finance was a Reserved subject. The first difficulty was created by the sudden cessation of financial assistance from the Central Government. Another difficulty was faced due to the fact that Central Government lost its interest in educational matters. Without the financial assistance and interest of the Central Government, it was not possible for provincial Education Departments to function properly and efficiently. Hence, dyarchy failed in operation.\textsuperscript{9}

As per the Act of 1919, the Government of India had no control over transferred subjects. Hence, it ceased to take interest in educational matters or even perform those functions that accrued to it over the years. However, its annual and quinquennial reviews of education continued to be published. The Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) was set up in 1920 to provide provincial governments with expert advice, but CABE was abolished in 1923. Even the Department of Education in the Government of India no
longer continued as an independent unit, but was amalgamated with the other Departments. The Hartog Committee of 1929 regretted this development and opined that "the divorce of the Government of India from education has been unfortunate." It is suggested that the Government of India should serve as a centre of educational information for the whole of India and as a means of co-ordinating the educational experience of the different provinces and that to the extent necessary it should provide funds to make good financial deficiencies in the provinces in the interests of entire Indians. As a result of this recommendation, the CABE was revived in 1935.10

In spite of these developments, university education registered progress from 1921 onwards. The Calcutta University Commission (1917-19), though it dealt with only the Calcutta University, examined problems of secondary education as well as those of university teaching. For this reason, its report had far reaching consequences on university education as a whole. Its recommendation that the work of Indian universities needed to be co-ordinated was later endorsed by the Indian delegates to the Congress of the Universities of the Empire in 1921. The Lytton Committee of Indian students in England also proposed the establishment of an Inter-University Board (IUB). As a result of these recommendations, the first All-India Conference of Indian Universities was held in Shimla in 1924 and the IUB was set up as a body to represent all Universities.
The Government of India Act of 1935 which put an end to the defective dyarchical system of administration, abolished the distinction between reserved and transferred subjects and placed the entire field of provincial administration under ministry responsible to a legislature constituted by popularly elected members. The Act also marked a further step in the onward march of India to complete political independence. This Act virtually came into operation in 1937 when Provincial Autonomy was introduced in eleven Provinces of British India and full control over education was given to Indian Ministers.11

The Act of 1935 provided for three Lists of subjects. They were the Federal, State and Concurrent Lists. Education figured in the first two Lists. All matters regarding education, barring those that had been placed in the Federal List, were to be covered by the Provinces.

List I - The Federal List:12

Entry 11:

The Imperial Library, the Indian Museum, the Imperial War Museum, the Victoria Memorial and any similar Institution controlled or financed by the Federation.
Entry 12:

Federal Agencies and Institutions for the following purposes, that is to say, for research, for professional or technical training, or for promotion of special studies.

Entry 13:

The Banaras Hindu University and the Aligarh Muslim University.

List II - The Provincial List:

Entry 10:

Libraries, Museums and other similar Institutions controlled or financed by the Province.

Entry 17:

Education.

With the passing of the Act of 1935, there was a revival of Central interest in education in the last decade of British Rule in India. The CABE and the IUB were engaged in their respective tasks and addressed themselves to a wide range of educational issues. The CABE had been critically examining one aspect or another of Indian
Education ever since 1935. By 1945, it was in a position to consolidate its findings and prepare a comprehensive plan of educational reconstruction in India. The CABE was called upon by the Government of India to prepare such a plan and submit it to the Viceroy’s Executive Council for consideration. This was the famous plan of Post-War Educational Development in India, commonly known as the Sargent Report of 1944. The Plan provided the blue-print for educational development in India spread over forty years aiming at the attainment of educational standards akin to those in England. However, even before the first steps in implementation were taken, India became independent.

The Constituent Assembly, which was the Constitution-making body of India, got down to the task of working out the mechanisms of a full-fledged democracy in India. With the Act of 1935 having the right combination of unitary and federal features, the Constituent Assembly opted to adopt the 1935 Act model, which had the added advantage of being in operation at that time.

The placement of subjects in the three Lists of the Indian Constitution is similar to that of the Act of 1935. So, while education was generally conceded as being a state subject, the question arose as to which entries related to education should be included in the Federal
List. After all, the Centre had been accustomed to tasks of co-ordination and policy making. These functions had to continue.

In a letter dated 28th April 1948, Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad, First Education Minister of Independent India, informed the Drafting Committee that education should be under "Central guidance if not Central control" so that the intelligentsia of the country would think on similar lines. He believed that educational planning and maintenance of standards in higher education should be a Union subject. This ultimately found a place in the Constitution as Entry 66 in List I even though there was no such entry in the Act of 1935. Later in 1949, the Central Ministry of Education proposed for incorporation in the Union List the following entries:14

(1) Banaras, Aligarh and Delhi Universities;

(2) Institutions of scientific and technical education which were maintained with Union Funds;

(3) Supervisory control for purposes of co-ordination and maintenance of standards.

Finally, the subject of education found a place in all the three Lists.
List I - Union List:

Entry 63:

The Institutions known at the commencement of this Constitution as the Banaras Hindu University, the Aligarh Muslim University and Delhi University, and any other Institution declared by Parliament by law to be an Institution of national importance.

Entry 64:

Institutions for scientific or technical education financed by the Government of India, wholly or in part, and declared by Parliament by law to be institutions of national importance.

Entry 65:

Union Agencies and Institutions for:

(a) Professional, vocational or technical training, including the training of police officers;

(b) the promotion of special studies or research; or

(c) scientific or technical assistance in the investigation or detection of crime.
Entry 66:

Co-ordination and determination of standards in Institutions for higher education or research and scientific and technical institutions.

List II - State List:

Entry 11:

Education, including Universities, subject to the provisions of Entries 63, 64, 65 and 66 of List I and Entry 25 of List III.

List III - Concurrent List:

Entry 25:

Vocational and technical training of labour.

Thus, education became the complete responsibility of the States, since education was included in the State List of the Indian Constitution.

After Independence, the Government of India appointed a Commission in November 1948 under the Chairmanship of Dr. S. Radhakrishnan. The Commission is known as University Education Commission. It is also known as Radhakrishnan Commission. The Commission was required to report on Indian University Education
and suggest improvement. It submitted its report in 1949. The Commission has recommended in the areas of standards of teaching, discipline, courses of study, P.G. Training and research, Examinations, Medium of instruction and Rural Universities.

The Government of India on the advice of CABE appointed a Commission in 1952 under the Chairmanship of Dr. A. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar to enquire into the position of secondary education in India in all its aspects and to suggest measures for improvement. It is known as Secondary Education Commission or Mudaliar Commission. The Commission submitted its report in 1953. The Commission recommended that the first degree course in the university should be of three years duration.\textsuperscript{16}

In July 1964, Government of India appointed a Commission under the Chairmanship of Prof. D.S. Kothari to advise the Government on the national pattern of education. The Commission is known as Indian Education Commission. It is popularly known as Kothari Commission. It submitted its report in 1966. The report is entitled "Education and National Development". The Commission wanted to restrict the growth of unplanned colleges in India, emphasised improvement in the quality of educational research. On the basis of the recommendations of Kothari Commission, Government of India proposed Education Policy in 1968.\textsuperscript{17}
The National Policy of 1968 marked a significant step in the history of education in post-Independent India. It aimed to promote national progress, a sense of common citizenship and culture, and to strengthen national integration. It laid stress on the need for a radical reconstruction of the education system, to improve its quality at all stages, and gave much greater attention to science and technology, the cultivation of moral values and a closer relation between education and the life of the people. Since the adoption of the 1968 policy, there has been considerable expansion in educational facilities all over the country at all levels. The most notable development has been the acceptance of a common structure of education throughout the country and the introduction of the 10+2+3 system by most States. A beginning was also made in restructuring of courses at the undergraduate level. Centres of Advanced Studies were set up for postgraduate education and research. While these achievements are impressive by themselves, the general formulations incorporated in the 1968 policy did not, however, get translated into a detailed strategy of implementation, accompanied by the assignment of specific responsibilities and financial and organisational support. As a result, problems of access, quality, quantity, utility and financial outlay, accumulated over the years.18

In 1976, Forty-Second Amendment was passed by the Congress Government. In 1979, Janata Government formulated its own
educational policy which may be termed as Second Policy of Education in Independent India. The policy stated that

(a) though priority must be given to elementary and adult education and the improvement of secondary education, the importance of the role and contribution of higher education in national development must be fully recognised;

(b) Efforts will be made to raise the quality of post-graduate education:

(c) Courses of excellence whose standards should be comparable to the best in the world are essential and every effort will be made to promote them.

Based on the Draft National Policy of Education 1979, Prof. J.P. Naik prepared a white paper entitled "Education for our people". The white paper prepared by Prof. Naik is popularly known as Document of Janata Government Policy of education which could not materialise due to the fall of Janata Government.19

In January 1985, Government of India expressed its will to improve educational system. In August 1985, a draft entitled "Challenges of Education" was circulated for public opinion which was
discussed all over India in conferences and seminars. In May 1986, the Government of India declared its policy and published the document entitled "National Policy on Education (NPE) - 1986. It is also known as New Educational Policy (NEP). Some of its features include the main emphasis on the consolidation of and expansion of facilities in the existing institutions. State level planning and co-ordination of higher education will be done through council of higher education. Autonomous colleges will be helped to develop in large numbers.20

Some distinguished personalities like Justice V.R.Krishna Iyer, Prof. R.V.Ranade did not like NPE-1986 and they regarded it as a defective policy. They thought that the policy was adopted by Parliament because of absolute majority of Congress Party and it was not in the interest of the nation. They launched a movement to save education and promised to publish a document which would be an Alternative Policy of Education. They prepared a draft and released it in a seminar but could not finalise the same. The Draft Alternative Policy on Education stressed the need for making education policy as propeople and for emphasizing man-making and character building, instead of money-making and career-building. The All India Save Education Convention held in Madras in 1989 called on the Union Government to institute a national Commission for evolving an acceptable policy.21
On the 7th May, 1990, the Government of India announced the appointment of a Committee to review the NPE-1986 under the Chairmanship of Acharya Ramamurthi. On the 26th December, 1990, Acharya Ramamurthi Committee submitted its final report. In July 1991, the Government of India appointed Mr. Janardhana Reddy, Chief Minister of Andhara Pradesh, to go into the Acharya Ramamurthi Committee’s recommendations. The Committee submitted its report on 22nd July 1992 suggesting the enhancement in the outlay for education, setting up of educational tribunals at the national and state levels. The report is to be considered by the CABE. On receipt of CABE’s recommendations, the Government of India will finalise its views on modifications to be made in the Policy.22

Throughout the post-1947 period, there has been almost unceasing efforts to deliberate on the problems of education and to propose measures for its expansion and improvement, and even its total transformation.

During the course of working of the Indian Constitution, it was found that the Centre controlled the purse-strings and it had the final say in the overall determination of policies, priorities and programmes. From this point of view, education not only became a joint responsibility but a partnership in which the Government of India played the role of the "Big Brother". The Kothari Commission (1966)
was of the view that instead of making education a State or Centre subject, an effective machinery of co-ordination should be devised. The co-ordination should be established between the Centre, the State, the local community and private enterprise. It was of the opinion that the Centre has to perform two important functions without which a radical change cannot take place. The Centre should provide the needed initiative, leadership and financial support to the States. If either the Centre or the State Governments alone are permitted to manage and control education, red tapism is likely to be developed. All initiative and innovations in education will be curbed. If the Centre, the State and private enterprise are allowed their fair share, more avenues for educational experimentation will be opened.

Prior to the Forty Second Amendment Act (1976), the recommendations of the various Commissions to improve education could not be implemented because the Centre could not pass any Act on education as education remained a State subject. It is, therefore, argued that if education is placed in the Concurrent List and thereby the Centre gets the power to enforce national policies through legislation, the progress of educational development would be at a much faster rate. The Constitution Forty-Second Amendment Act, (1976), during the tenure of Mrs. Indira Gandhi, brought about drastic changes in the Indian Constitution. It placed education, hitherto a State subject, under the Concurrent List. The main aims and objectives of
this transfer to the Concurrent List were to use education as an instrument to ensure unity and integrity of the nation and also to bring about socio-economic changes as a part of the overall developmental process in India. This Amendment makes the Centre and State Governments equal partners in framing educational policies. The executive power is given to the Union to give directions to the States. Thus, the Union became supreme over the States in enacting laws regarding education. The power of the States is limited to the extent that they do not impede or prejudice the exercise of the executive power of the Union.

There are both advantages and disadvantages in placing education in the Concurrent List. The advantages are, education for women, and education for weaker sections of community may be more effectively discharged. Education and planning can be co-ordinated and progress in education can be ensured. The Centre can extend liberal funds to the State Governments for educational development - both in respect of quantity and quality. Encouragement and inspiration at the State level are possible with the effective leadership of the Centre. Education Commissions have been appointed from time to time by the Central Government to suggest reforms in education. The Commission’s recommendations can be easily implemented. There can be uniformity of educational objectives, strategy and standards. The policy decisions on the structural design of education, curriculum patterns and standards
can be implemented without delay if there is a mandate from the Centre. Equalisation of resources and opportunities can be ensured. The Centre can integrate and pool all types of human and material resources and give more help to those in need and thus be an active participant in the development of backward States. The Centre can keep vigilance over the educational activities of the State, in respect of admissions, recruitment and promotions. The Centre can conduct experiment and research in education to suit the changing needs of society. So it is believed that education as a Concurrent subject enjoys the advantage of both the Central direction and State initiative.24

The disadvantages of placing education in the Concurrent List are:25 It will lead to undesirable centralisation and greater rigidity in a situation where the greatest need is for elasticity and freedom to experiment. Central bodies like UGC will have increased control over educational administration in the States. Decisions will filter down from the top. Planning from the bottom will cease and delay will take place in the implementation of important decisions made for the improvement of education. So, the self-confidence, initiative, resourcefulness and competence of State Governments will be affected and encourage dictatorial tendencies which are harmful to the development of education.
There should be a judicious mixture of Centralisation and de-centralisation in higher education to promote co-ordination and co-operation between the Centre and the States to achieve the desired goals in education.
REFERENCES


17. Ibid. pp 49-53.


20. Ibid. p 92.

21. Ibid. p 110.


25. Idem