CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1 An Introduction 1
1.2 Overview and growth of higher education in India 1
1.3 Education - A Very Large System 3
1.4 Growth of Higher Education 4
1.5 Objectives of Higher Education 6
1.6 Controlling Authorities in Higher Education 7
1.7 Quality Improvement in Higher Education 11
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1. An Introduction

System of education in India was developed in particular historical context. After independence it had inherited a nature that was mainly designed to strengthen the British Raj in India. Later it got some modifications according to changing requirements.

After independence it was not possible to radically alter the education system. It was felt by political leadership that old system should be strengthened with new changes.

Modern management techniques are having great importance in educational planning and administration. It is essential to find solutions to the problems in educational administration by taking overall view.

1.2 Overview and growth of higher education in India Education:
Education has been defined differently by different philosophers and educationists. Froebel defined education ‘as the unfoldment of what is already enfolded in the germ. For Swami Vivekananda, ‘education is the manifestation of the divine perfection already existing in man’. According to Mahatma Gandhi ‘Education is an all round drawing out
of the best in the child and man - body, mind and spirit’. However, for the purpose of educational statistics, education, according to UNESCO (1), 'is understood to involve, organized and sustained communication designed to bring about learning'. Here, the words organized sustained, communication and learning need to be explained.

- **Organized** means planned in a pattern with specific aims. It involves a providing agency (person or persons or a body) that sets up the learning environment and a method of teaching through which the communication is organized. The method is typically someone who is engaged in communicating or releasing knowledge and skills with a view to bringing about learning.

- **Sustained** means that the learning experience has the elements of duration and continuity. No minimum duration has been stipulated. The appropriate minima differ from course to course and program to program.

- **Communication**: Communication is a relationship between two or more persons involving the transfer of information in the form of messages, ideas, knowledge, strategies, skills etc.
Learning: Learning is any improvement in behaviour, information, knowledge, understanding, attitude, values, skills etc.

1.3 Education - A Very Large System
Despite serious handicaps of means and resources, the country has built up during the last 50 years a very large system of education and has created a vast body of men and women equipped with a high order of scientific and technological capabilities, robust humanist and philosophical thought, and creativity.

Though riddled with explosion in the growth of population, a large illiterate population and problems of economic poverty affecting one-third of the people, modern India is still set to forge a bright future and to contribute significantly to the higher goals of world peace, human unity and universal welfare. Much credit for this goes to the ancient but ever-young spirit of the nation and to what higher education has striven to fashion in terms of determining great objectives and implementing them under very difficult conditions (28).

India has one of the largest 'Higher Education System in the world (1). Following numbers are explanatory enough to support this.

- Teachers: 3.21,000
- colleges: 12, 600
- Students: 6.75 million
1.4 Growth of Higher Education

Prior to independence, the growth of institutions of higher education in India was very slow and diversification in areas of studies was very limited. After independence, the number of institutions has increased significantly. There are today, 214 universities and equivalent institutions including 116 general universities, 12 science and technology universities, 7 open universities, 33 agricultural universities, 5 women's universities, 11 language universities, and 11 medical universities. Besides, there are universities focusing on journalism, law, fine arts, social work, planning and architecture and other specialized studies. In addition, there are 12,600 colleges where 80% of undergraduate and 50% of postgraduate education is imparted. The number of students has reached the level of 6.75 million and there are 3,31,000 teachers in the higher education system. The government expenditure alone was of the order of Rs.42,126 millions in 1996-97, and during the subsequent period this has risen even higher.

This massive development has been guided by a process of planning and recommendations of several national commissions set up by the Government of India. The objectives of higher education have gradually become more and more precise and a system of governance is developing in the direction of increasing autonomy and accountability.

But, in spite of vast efforts over the last 50 years, it is only now that the country is slowly emerging out of the old ideas and rigid
structures, built during the colonial rule. There is at present a demand for radical changes which have the potential to actualize a national system of education that was visualised during the freedom struggle.

Growth in figures:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutions</th>
<th>1950-51</th>
<th>1990-91</th>
<th>1996-97</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Universities</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleges</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>7346</td>
<td>10,555</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolment('000s)</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>4925</td>
<td>6755</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers('000s)</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>272.7</td>
<td>321</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As on 31.3.1997, there were 221 Universities and Deemed Universities in the country, which included – 16 Central Universities, 156 State Universities, 7 Open Universities, 39 deemed Universities and 4 institutions established under State Legislation. There were 12,600 colleges, of which 4815 have been recognized by the UGC under Section 2(f) of the UGC Act (36).

In 1997-98, an estimated 70.78 lakh students were enrolled in the institutions of Higher Education as against 67.55 lakh in the previous year and the faculty strength was 3.31 lakh as compared to 3.21 lakh in the previous year.
1.5 Objectives of Higher Education

Pursuit of integral knowledge and liberation, which has been a constant endeavour of Indian culture, is also the central objective of education. Education is also visualised as an evolutionary force so that each individual is enabled to evolve from purely material consciousness towards superior planes of intellectual and spiritual consciousness. Education is also perceived as a bridge between the past, present, and the future and as a means by which the best of the heritage is transmitted to the new generations for its further progression.

In receiving the modern message of learning to be, our endeavour is to harmonize it with the insight of our ancient Indian wisdom according to which this goal can be achieved only by the realization of our internal and imperishable being. Our educational system also aims at promoting environmental protection, universal peace, and international cooperation; and since harmony and unity in external space can best be realised through internal purification and perfection, our educational system endeavours to promote harmonious relationship between both the inner and outer dimensions of the individual, environment and the cosmos.

Our objective in higher education is not only to promote equality and social justice, but also to provide the right kind of work culture, professional expertise and leadership in all walks of life. Above all, our attempt is to foster among teachers and students and, through
them in society generally, integral development of values inherent in physical, emotional, rational, aesthetic, ethical and spiritual education.

1.6 Controlling Authorities in Higher Education:

*University Grants Commission (UGC)*

In order to determine and maintain standards in universities, the University Grants Commission (UGC) was established (2) in 1952 and was constituted as a statutory body under the Act of Parliament in 1956. In performing its basic functions, the UGC allocates and disburses grants placed at its disposal by the Central Government to the universities, after an assessment of their needs. The Commission provides development and maintenance-grants to universities established by the Central Government and provides development grants to the other universities established by the State Governments.

The major initiatives taken by the UGC in improving the quality and standards of higher education are:

- Improvements in the quality and standards of teaching and research through programmes for setting up Centres of Advanced Study and Research, improvements in college teaching, strengthening research and infrastructure, etc.
- Periodic review and renewal of curricular content of courses in various disciplines, and special schemes for introduction of emerging areas of education and training.
- Establishment of common facilities for research networking of resources for information and documentation.
- Induction of electronic media in higher education.
- Provision of scholarships and fellowships to students.
- Launching of special programs for greater participation of women, disadvantaged groups and the weaker sections in higher education.

**All-India Council of Technical Education (AICTE)**

There is also an All-India Council of Technical education (AICTE), the major function (3) of which is the planned and coordinated development of technical education in the country. The major programs are related to review and renewal of the curriculum for education and training of engineers and technicians, modernization of the laboratories and workshops and removal of obsolescence and establishment of community polytechnics. It supports engineering colleges, management of educational institutions and polytechnics engaged in training of technicians.

**National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE)**

The National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) is designed to ensure planned and coordinated development of teacher education and determination and maintenance of its standards (4). The Council lays down norms for specified categories of courses and guidelines.

**Open University System**

The country has also a developing open University system and the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) set up in 1985 has nation-wide jurisdiction in the field of distance education (5). A
Distance Education Council has been established as a statutory authority under the IGNOU Act, which provides development funds to open universities and distance education institutions from the funds placed at its disposal by the Central Government. The open University network has established common pool of programs consisting of contributions from different open universities, which can be shared by any open University through the process of adoption, adaptation and transmission.

In order to implement these objectives, a complex structure and system of governance has been evolving. The structure of higher education consists of three years of education (after 12 years of school education) leading to a bachelor's degree in arts and science and four years in professional fields like engineering and medicine. This is followed by two years of study for a Master's degree; and three years at least beyond the Master's degree for a Ph.D degree which generally takes longer. There are also postgraduate diploma programs open to graduates, and certain professional programs like those in education and law require a first degree as a pre-condition for admission in most places.

The universities are of various kinds: with a single faculty, or multi-faculties, teaching or affiliating, or teaching-cum-affiliating, single campus or multi-campus.

Most of the universities are "affiliating universities", which prescribe to the affiliated colleges the courses of study, hold examinations and
award degrees, while undergraduate and, to some extent, postgraduate instruction is imparted by the colleges affiliated to them. Universities impart postgraduate education and conduct and promote research in a variety of disciplines.

Colleges in India are established by State Governments and private agencies. In some cases, universities themselves establish colleges. Most of the colleges seek support from the State Governments for their maintenance. Universities have been set up by the Central or State Governments by means of legislation. Most of the colleges mainly impart undergraduate education.

*Autonomous Colleges*

Apart from these initiatives, a number of regulatory measures have been taken to bring about structural reforms and ensure quality in higher education. A scheme of autonomous colleges has been launched under which teachers in the colleges themselves prescribe the curriculum and conduct the evaluation of their students through a system of continuous evaluation. At present, there are 119 autonomous colleges. The UGC constitutes review committees in order to oversee and assess the quality of the University programs.

The UGC and the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research have also set up the National Educational Testing Programs. UGC has also set up a national level institution for quality assessment and accreditation.
University Affiliated Colleges:

A special feature of Indian Education system is "Affiliated Colleges" (6). There are around 7,000 affiliated colleges in the country. In these approximately 88% enrollment is at undergraduate level. Thus undergraduate education constitutes major part of higher education. The problem of quality of services rendered and education offered by Universities are mainly the problems of University affiliated colleges.

Today's age is age of Information Technology and Computerization. The Indian Universities are required to be strong enough to withstand in the competition with Foreign Universities.

1.7 Quality Improvement in Higher Education

A number of measures have been taken for quality improvement. These include the development of infrastructure, curriculum, human resources and research and establishment of centres of excellence and interdisciplinary and inter-institutional centres. The scheme of academic staff colleges was started in 1986-87, under which 45 such colleges have been set up. These colleges conduct orientation programs for training new teachers and also refresher courses in various disciplines for in-service teachers to enable them to update their knowledge.

To enrich the quality of higher education, a country-wide classroom program was launched. Under this scheme, special films on various subjects are prepared and telecast for the benefit of students and
teachers. Twenty one centres have been set up to produce special films, and a large number of video tapes are being produced for transmission on the national TV network.