Chapter III

Analysing the Core Ideals of Higher Education Policies in India

Constants, Changes and Contradictions

Introduction

This Chapter examines the key policy shifts in higher education in India. The core argument of the Chapter is to substantiate the fact that the polices or policy recommendations on higher education emphasize on three core ideals – expansion, equity and excellence. To this end, the Chapter provides an overview of higher education during the colonial period, followed by a detailed discussion on key policies or policy recommendations categorised into two temporalities, i.e., 1947-1989 and 1990-2016. To conclude, the Chapter in addition to illustrating the core ideals of the policies/policy recommendations provides a critical framework to situate the insights from the field – public-state (University-I) and private-deemed-to-be-university (University-II) as the case-in-point. The core argument of the thesis is to examine the core ideals of expansion, equity and excellence as to how they have been the foundation of Indian higher education system. The profile of ideals and the governance and practices of universities are deeply intertwined. However, the linkages between the policy ideals and the university governance mechanisms are complex, given the diversity of universities and their internal as well as external governance mechanisms.

The impact of British Empire or the Raj on education in India was enormous (Altbach and Selvaratnam, 2012). Such an impact, particularly in the sphere of higher education, really began with the establishment of the Hindu College in Calcutta in 1817, the first “Europeanised” institution of higher learning in the country (Chaudhary, 2010). Subsequently, Macaulay, in his “minute” of 1835 stated that the objective of the colonial system was to promote European
literature in India (Chitnis, 1993). Macaulay reflects the view that English education was necessary for the Indian Higher education system (Powar, 1995).

The idea of establishing universities in India on the model of the London University (i.e. universities of the affiliating type), was first promoted by Sir Charles Wood’s Despatch of 1854 which has been described as the ‘Magna Carta’ of English education in India (Power, 1995: 38). The transition from the British rule to Independence is marked by change as well as continuity (Chitnis, 1993). Independence did not mark a total break from the past; universities in Independent India hitherto reminiscence the model of the University of London, at least the public-state universities.

Higher education in India (HEI), in the last six decades, has undergone substantial expansion at the macro and micro level. The former indicating expansion in the sector and the latter advancing institutional capacities. At present, the higher education sector constitutes of 35.7 million students enrolled in 864 universities and 40026 colleges (AISHE, 2017) as compared to 369,000 students studying in 27 universities and 695 colleges at the time of independence (Agarwal 2009). Substantiating this, Tilak (2012) points out that, “post-independence period, an educational explosion took place, and higher education has a major share in it”. Scholarship on higher education in India (Beteille, 2010; Kapur & Mehta, 2008; Duraisamy, 2002; Powar, 2002; Chanana, 2000; Chitnis & Altbach, 1993; Tilak, 1993; Tilak & Varghese, 1991), attribute following reasons for such unprecedented growth:

- Facility of educational services in the past was limited. Post-independence, the rise in demand for higher education as result of access to secondary education.
Demand for higher education was aligned with higher demand for human resources with a range of qualifications and skills. Hence, expansion of higher education was inevitable.

Series of equity driven policies enhanced accessibility to higher education as result of limited but dedicated public expenditure in higher leading to the democratization of education. The policy of providing equality of opportunity in higher education has been the most important attribute towards the expansion of the system, horizontally.

India, now claims to be the third largest system in the world after China and USA in terms of enrolment (Venkatesh, 2012) and largest in the world in terms of a number of higher education institutions (UGC, 2011). According to J.N. Kaul (1988), the higher education in India has witnessed a phenomenon of ‘planned drift’ in implementing the reforms suggested over several decades. Expansion has been the hallmark of higher education, and systemic reforms have largely failed (Agarwal, 2012). However, these changes have taken place, in the broader context of uncontrolled expansion and a broad deterioration of standards in higher education (Naik, 2001). As result of this, higher education in India, expanded in the years of independence and more rapidly later but made few structural changes, resulting in universities being less than effective in meeting the needs of Indian society (Altbach, 2009) has been a major conundrum at the micro level. Philip Altbach (1972), analysing the status of higher education and universities succinctly, remarked, that:

The nature of the ‘university crisis’ in India is clear from even a cursory reading of the newspapers-disruption of academic life is endemic, there is dissatisfaction with deteriorating standards of instruction, the examination system is in shambles, overexpansion of facilities has led to substantial unemployment of educated manpower, and the universities have become involved in factional and ideological
politics. In addition, official commissions and others have tried to change the universities in the past without much success (Altbach, 1972: 251)

In his analysis, he argues that these institutions are in crisis. In addition to deteriorating standards within the higher education system, the government has failed to ‘act’ upon the recommendations of education commission since Independence. Given this context, it is imperative to explore and examine the policy framework of higher education in India.

In the initial phase, reports of the committees and policies on expansion with equity but had limited interventions in assuring excellence across the sector and within the institutions of the higher learning. To this end, the Chapter illustrates the trajectory of policy ideals – expansion, equity and excellence – in higher education. Lacking a comprehensive framework and evidence-driven policy making process, India has witnessed growth as well as crisis, demanding reforms at various junctures. Long ago, Phillip Coombs (1985) referred to ‘Educational Crisis’ in the world and identified quite a few dimensions of the crisis in education. In India, J.P. Naik (1982) referred to this as a ‘contingent education crisis’ manifested with highly inadequate numbers in terms of students and higher education institutions (Expansion) followed by glaring inequalities reflected in policies and practices symptomatic of existing and extending social and economic disparities (Equity) and falling standards and low quality – Teaching and Research (Excellence). The elusive triangle of - expansion, equity and excellence - is the most effective characterisation of growth, crisis and reforms in higher education, as discussed above. Further, JBG Tilak (2005:4029) characterizes the ‘contingent crisis’ of higher education in India as a ‘trishanku’ – a situation in which the sector is challenged with the need for reforms to overcome an indeterminate state-of-affairs. Today, what we have is a ‘perpetual crisis,’ which is all-pervasive, and counting for every dimension of the educational crisis. There was a crisis in the in the last few decades, but
currently, the nature of the crisis is altogether different. There exists crisis in the institution’s, crisis in policy making and the crisis in governing and regulating bodies (Tilak, 2013). Higher education hitherto is blemished by misguided policies; hence a new direction is the need of the hour (Roy, 2015). Reforms in the existing policies of higher education are inevitable. Initiatives in policy reforms mark a transition in the history of higher education in independent India (Tilak, 2012). Currently, the country is taking stock of the of two erstwhile National Education policies – the National Policy of Education (1968) and National Policy of Education (1986 and 1992). The Ministry of Human Resource Development has assumed much anticipated venture of introducing the ‘New National Education Policy-2017’. Currently the Ministry of Human Resources Development (MHRD), Government of India (GoI) has constituted three committees to draft the new National Policy on Education – the TSR Subramanian Committee on Education Reform (2015); MHRD document on Some inputs to the Draft National Education Policy-2016 and the Committee to Draft the National Education Policy-2017/18.

Mapping Policy Perspectives: Expansion, Equity and Excellence

The policy framework for higher education policies and policy recommendations since independence could be divided into two temporal dimensions: firstly, the period between 1947 to 1989 and secondly, from 1990-2016 (listed in table 1, below). The key insights derived from the content of policies and policy reports on higher education are analysed to seek insights on the trajectory and main policy perspectives. Following section, lists the key policies and policy recommendations listed across the two phases, as mentioned above12.

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**Table 1: The Landscape of Higher Education Committee Reports and Policies and Recommendations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1947-1989 (n=15)</th>
<th>1990-Present (n=13)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The University Education Commission of 1949/ Dr Radhakrishna Commission (1949)</td>
<td>• Gnanam Commission on 'Alternate Models of Management' / 'New Education Management' in Higher Education (1990)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The National Committee on Women's Education (1958)</td>
<td>• Justice Punnaiah Committee report on UGC Funding of Institutions of Higher Education (1992-1993)</td>
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<td>• Review Committee on Education/ Saiyidin Commission (1960)</td>
<td>• Ramlal Parik Committee for reforms in the appointment of Vice-Chancellors' in Indian Universities (1993)</td>
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<td>• Kothari Committee on Model Act for Universities (1961)</td>
<td>• UGC Commonwealth Secretariat Workshop on Women and Management in Higher Education (1997)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Education Commission or D S Kothari Commission (1964)</td>
<td>• Report on Curb the Menace of Ragging in Universities (1999)</td>
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<td>• Committee on Governance of Universities and Colleges (1969)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Report/Committee/Panel</td>
<td>Year(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gajendragadkar Committee on Governance of Universities/Colleges</td>
<td>1971</td>
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<tr>
<td>Towards A Socially Relevant Legal Education (UGC)</td>
<td>1975-77</td>
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<tr>
<td>Report of The Committee to Enquire into The Working of Central Universities</td>
<td>1984</td>
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<td>National Policy on Education</td>
<td>1986</td>
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<tr>
<td>Report of the Expert Committee on the Minimum Qualifications and Workload Etc. For Librarians and Directors of Physical Education in Universities &amp; Colleges</td>
<td>1987</td>
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<tr>
<td>Report of The Taskforce on Code of Professional Ethics for University &amp; College Teachers</td>
<td>1989</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Yashpal Committee Report/Committee to Advise on Renovation and Rejuvenation of Higher Education</td>
<td>2008</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) Review Committee, MHRD, GoI</td>
<td>2008</td>
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<tr>
<td>Action Plan for Academic and Administrative Reforms</td>
<td>2009</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guidelines for Programmes and Schemes under Scheduled Castes Sub Plan (SCSP) and Tribal Sub Plan (TSP) in the Ministry of Human Resource Development</td>
<td>2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rashtriya Uchathar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA)</td>
<td>2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>TSR Subramanian Committee report of the committee for the evolution of the New Education Policy</td>
<td>2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MHRD document on Some inputs to the Draft National Education Policy</td>
<td>2016</td>
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</tbody>
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Source: Ramaprasad, Singai, Hasan, Syn & Thirumalai (2016:12)

The core policy ideals perpetuated in most of the policies and policy reports by the several landmark committees indicate an emphasis on enhancing expansion with equity. However, few of the reports suggested the need for excellence through internationalisation and national best practices. In this section, a descriptive-analysis of some of the landmark policies and the recommendations are provided. Subsequent to this, content analysis across the temporal dimensions will be illustrated.

The period between 1947-1989 is marked by the spirit of reforms in higher education aligned to the vestiges of colonial system and aspiration of a ‘new’ India. Policies and policy recommendations suggest robust linkages between higher education in particular and the project of national development for an independent India. Some of the landmark policy recommendations in higher education have evolved from the Dr Radhakrishna Committee-1949, Dr Kothari Committee-1964, National Policy on Education-1968, Committee on Governance of the Universities and Colleges-1969, Gajendragadkar Committee-1971 and National Policy on Education-1986. However, there have been several other committee reports substantiating the recommendations of these committee reports and policies.

Dr S. Radhakrishnan Committee or the University Education Commission (1949), was constituted by the Government of India in 1949. The core function of the committee was to report on the Indian University Education aligned to the contemporary needs of the country (Ayyar, 2017). The Commission envisaged the need for universities to radically reform to harness the need and potential for development in the country.

The Commission, whilst highlighting the contributions of the universities provided their potential contribution for creating knowledge and prepare aspiring minds for the project of national development. The ideal of expanding the scope and reach of higher education has been
the main emphasis of the Commission. To this end, the Commission has given the following recommendations (Ghosh, 2000:178-179):

“Covering all aspects of university education in India, they emphasized the 10+2 structure at the pre-university stage...they also emphasized the importance of student’s welfare by means of scholarships and stipends, hostel, library and medical facilities and suggested that they should be familiar with three languages--regional, federal and English at the university stage and that English be replaced as early as possible by an Indian language. The Commission was also in favour of the idea of setting up rural universities to meet the need of rural reconstruction in industry, agriculture and various walks of life. The universities should be constituted as autonomous bodies to meet the new responsibilities, (Central) University Grants Commission to be established for allocating grants, and finally, university education is placed in the concurrent list”.

The University Education Commission (1949) has been the landmark intervention in many ways. In addition to identifying expansion as the main emphasis, the Commission recommends expansion with equity. In other words, the Commission suggests such an expansion in terms of ensuring equal opportunity for all by providing student scholarships, hostels; education in regional/vernacular languages and more importantly promoting rural universities – to reach the unreached. These recommendations were further reiterated by Dr Shrimali Committee (1954); National Committee on Women’s Education (1958); Kothari Commission (1964) and several other committees. Structurally, the Commission envisages a central coordinating body (the UGC), with universities constituted as ‘autonomous’ bodies. Thus, the University Education Commission (1949), encapsulates the challenges and opportunities of higher education for an independent nation, chalking out the overall project of national development post-independence.
Three erstwhile universities established in the Presidencies (1857) during the colonial era and the need for new and robust universities for the nation suggested by the University Education Commission (1948), demanded a dedicated and comprehensive policy for universities and its system. The then Government recommended a need to revisit the university system modelled on the University of London. Hence, a Committee was constituted to suggest a Model Act for Universities was constituted in 1961 the Government of India (GoI). The main object of the committee was to study the organizational prepare the ‘Model Act' suited to their role and functions in the present context of our fast-developing society. According to this committee, historically the development of university education in different States has not been uniform. While the London University model had been taken as the model for many of the Universities before 1947, the recommendations made in the University Education (Radhakrishnan) Commission's Report, 1949, influenced to some extent the constitution of universities established after 1950. There were various other circumstances, both educational and social, which led to certain distinct features in the constitution of some of the new universities. Also, some of the older universities modified their Acts to cope with new requirements.

The Committee on Model Act for Universities acknowledging the need for rapid expansion and development of university education recommended the following:

“The rapid expansion of knowledge in recent years, especially in science and technology, necessitates frequent regrouping of subjects of study, and changes in syllabuses and fresh adaptations and adjustments in laboratory and library become necessary. Large numbers affect not only the quality and standard of teaching but also put an undue strain on the organizational and administrative machinery of universities and colleges. Also, new techniques of teaching and examination should be adopted from time to time. This call for a modification of the somewhat rigid structure prevailing in many of our universities”.
The Committee suggests a certain amount of variety in the pattern and organization of universities in higher education given the large and diverse country like India. Arguably, while expansion is critical for making certain structural reforms, the committee highlights the fact that such reforms must take in to account the socio-cultural-economic diversity of the country. Hence, it is evident that the need for modification in our universities structures is a necessity but not at the cost of equity.

With several committee reports and their recommendations for developing the higher education system, a comprehensive and national policy on education was the need of the hour. The Ministry of Education constituted the Commission under the Chairmanship of Dr D.S. Kothari – a landmark commission in setting the stage for modern education system for a robust project on national development and integration since Independence. The Kothari Commission is ‘monumental report’ in the Indian education scenario (Naik, 1982). The main terms of the commission were to advice the Government “on the national pattern of education and on the general principles and policies for the development of education at all stages and in all aspects” (Ayyar, 2017). Chapters XI-XIII of the Kothari Commission deal with problems of higher education which include, amongst others, the establishment of major universities, programmes of qualitative improvement, enrolment and university governance. Some of the key recommendations of the commission are discussed below.

The Commission visualised education as an instrument for the nation’s progress, security and welfare. It advocated far-reaching reforms, in revolutionising the Indian education system. In fact, the commission in its report, states, that there is ‘a direct link between education, national development and prosperity which we have emphasized and in which we deeply believe, exists only when the national system of education is properly organized, both qualitatively and quantitatively’. The Commission while highlighting the need for higher education to promote
national development suggested that there is a need for a qualitative shift as well. The Commission emphasized on accessibility but with equal emphasis on quality and standards in higher education. For instance, for the first time, India envisaged a system of ‘selective admission’ for the undergraduate programme to curtail unemployment because of mass enrolment in higher education. Further, research was considered as an important function of the universities and many other reforms harnessing the quantity and quality in the pursuit of knowledge. It, therefore, suggested a large expansion at this stage side by side with an intensive effort at improving standards. In other words, the Kothari Commission recommended that “no reform is more important or more urgent than to transform education…programmes of qualitative improvement should rank next in priority, and the programmes of expansion would come last” (Naik, 1982:28).

The commission also pointed about other causes of existing inequalities of educational opportunities. According to Dr Kothari, another cause of inequality in educational opportunity is the poverty of a large section of the population and the relative affluence of a small minority. The chance of getting education varies based on the individuals economic-social status. Further, according to the commission gross inequalities arise from ‘differences in home environments’. The Commission also highlighted two other forms of educational ‘inequalities’ which are peculiar to the Indian situation, need attention. Firstly, the disparity between boys and girls at all stages and in all sectors of education. Secondly, is the equally wide, or sometimes wider disparity of educational development between the advanced classes and the Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST). The Commission argued, that, on the grounds of social justice and democracy, it is essential to make special efforts to equalise educational opportunities between these groups.
From the perspective of the core ideals of the policy, the Kothari commission rationalised expansion in higher education with equity and excellence. For instance, the Commission expressed concerns with unemployed graduates, whilst lamenting on the fact that most of the aspiring minds have limited accessibility to higher education. Such complex and comprehensive policy perspective encapsulated the higher education conundrum while demanding a need for the national policy on education.

In sum, the report emphasized that there had to be:

- expansion of higher education to meet manpower requirements of the Nation and the rising social ambitions and expectations of the people,
- improvement of university organization and administration, and
- a radical improvement in the quality and standards of higher education and research.

The Commission concluded with an overarching advisory note: ‘we must either build a sound, balanced, effective and imaginative educational system to meet our development needs and respond to challenging aspirations or be content to be swept aside by the strong currents of history’ (Powar, 2002).

However, the ideals set-forth by the Kothari Commission though appropriate, had limitations in terms of implementation. The Committee of Members of Parliament on Education of 1967, established by the Government evaluating the recommendations of the Kothari Commission, rejected some of its recommendations. The Committee (first of its kinds – members of all party) agreed with the larger objective of the Kothari Commission, i.e., creating the much-needed national system of education. However, it differed on following grounds (Association of Indian Universities, 1995):
(1) It totally rejected the recommendation of the Education Commission regarding prioritizing quality over expansion. The committee placed greater emphasis on the expansion of facilities. In fact, it practically voted for the continuance of the existing policies which put expansion above everything else.

(2) It turned down several recommendations of the commission to create new administrative structures or to change existing ones.

The Committee of 1967, in addition to highlighting the need for reforms across the system of higher education, laid down few important recommendations for the units within the system – universities. The committee recommended, that the universities in the country ‘should develop themselves into autonomous communities of teachers and students who are untiringly and devotedly engaged in the pursuit of learning and excellence’. By indicating the universities as ‘autonomous communities’, the committee suggests freedom in selecting students, appointment and promotion of teachers and determining the curriculum. The Committee recommended that the ‘most important aspect of university administration and autonomy is to appoint the ‘right’ persons as vice-chancellors who should be distinguished educationists or eminent scholars in any of the disciplines. Hence, the committee recommended, to amend and modernize most University Acts in India. Adequate provision should also be made for the financial needs of universities and to devise a suitable system of grant-in-aid, preferably a rolling system of block-grants to be revised every three to five years.

Hence, recommendations aligned to expanding the scope of higher education aligned to enhancing accessibility were considered while rejecting those emphasizing quality in higher education. Arguably, the Committee’s evaluation valued expansion with equity than quality, considering the necessary challenges in higher education. Achieving mass enrolment accommodating the many first-generation learners was a priority for the nation as such.
However, the country after two decades of independence demanded a robust quantitative as well as a qualitative shift in the overall system of higher education, to enable a comprehensive and appropriate project for national development.

In 1968, with aforementioned interventions by eminent educationists, it was evident that the country is dire need of a comprehensive policy framework. Most of the committees were constituted to review specific situation or a challenge in higher education. Review of the entire system of higher education which was exposed many opportunities and challenges mandated the constitution of the committee to evolve the National Policy on Education. However, considering the growth, crisis and need for reforms in the Indian education sector were such that the constitution of the committee for national policy framework was much delayed. Ideally, such an initiative was appropriate for the country emerging out of the colonial system while crafting the project of national development.

The National Policy on Education of 1968 (NPE (1968)) taking cognizance of the challenges and opportunities, per recommendations of the erstwhile committees, enlisted a set of recommendations for education. As mentioned above, the recommendations of the Kothari Commission were progressively diluted at every stage of the discussions (Naik, 1982), yet the policy that was born out of them remained the basic framework for all governmental action. Consequent to sifting the list of recommendations of the Kothari Commission (1964) by the Committee of Members of Parliament on Education (1967), the first National Policy of Education in 1968 (NPE-1968), was drafted by the then Ministry of Education, Government of India (GoI). Following the Education Commission’s recommendation, the government has made a firm commitment in the NPE-1968, to allocate 6 per cent of public expenditure on

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13 Since independence (i.e., 1948 to 1985), the Ministry of Education was responsible for Education governance in India. Following the National Policy on Education of 1986, the Ministry of Education was replaced with the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD).
education (Tilak, 2013) – the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) recommended (2005) that a quarter of the 6 per cent, i.e., 1.5 per cent, be allocated to higher education. The core recommendation of the NPE (1968) on higher education is to ensure “all-round improvement in the institutions, it is proposed that, in the near future, the main emphasis will be on the consolidation of, and expansion of facilities in, the existing institutions” (AIU, 1995).

Taking into account some of the core recommendations of the NPE-1968 and the gaps there-in, the Ministry of Education constituted the Committee on Governance of Universities and Colleges in 1969 and the Gajendragadkar Committee on Governance of Colleges and Universities in 1971. Both committees addressed on issues related autonomy, accountability, selection of Vice-Chancellors and so on. Universities have expanded over the years were exposed to the crisis in the internal governance mechanisms. Hence the recommendations of both the committees were appropriate but limited in providing a robust implementation framework as such.

The core objective of the committee on Governance of universities (1969) was to “consider the structure of universities; functions, responsibilities and powers of the statutory bodies; conditions of service of staff, student participation and related matters” (Powar, 2002:34). Some of the key recommendations of the committee in this regard, were as follows:

- The scales of pay of university teachers should not be inferior to the scales of pay available to the members of all-India services so that reasonably good proportion of the most talented students are attracted to the teaching profession.

- During the early part of a teacher’s career, s/he should be exposed to some training in methods of teaching, human psychology, the problem of students, organization and management of higher education and its role in contemporary society.
For the appointment of teachers in the universities, the selection should be on merit to inspire confidence. There should be three tiers of posts in the universities – lectures, readers and professors. The improvement of salary scales should be linked to the improvement of qualifications. The workload of all university and college teachers should be the same and not less than 40 hours a week. This will include preparation for teaching, actual-classroom teaching, correction and examination work (including invigilation), research, tutorial and guidance to students, extra-curricular activities, and administrative and professional work.

In response to unprecedented expansion in the higher education, Gajendragadkar Committee on Governance of Universities and Colleges (1971) highlighted the fact that most of the colleges and universities are suffering from ineffective governance systems. The committee believed in a flexible pattern of organization which is responsible for the changing needs of society as well as knowledge, can be a powerful factor in accelerating progress (Singh, 2014). The term of reference of the committee was to consider the structure of Universities, functions responsibilities and powers of the statutory bodies, the condition of service of staff, student participation, and related matter (AIU, 1995).

After a gap of almost three decades since Independence and more than a century of the first University established in India, the Gajendaragadkar committee provided a detailed evaluation of university governance. The committee makes cohesive recommendations on autonomy in the university and the role of the University Grants Commission (UGC). According to the committee, “The concept of university autonomy is often misunderstood. It is not a ‘legal concept’, not even a ‘constitutional concept’. It is an ethical concept and an academic concept. This concept does not question that, in a democratic society like ours, legislatures are ultimately sovereign, and have a right to discuss and determine the question of policy relating to
education, including higher education. The concept of university autonomy, however, means that it would be appropriate on the part of the democratic legislatures not to interfere with the administration of university life, both academic and non-academic. The universities make a claim for autonomy not as a matter of privilege, but because such autonomy is a condition precedent if the universities are to discharge their duties and obligations effectively and efficiently”. (AIU, 1995)

The committee clearly distinguishes between the internal and external aspect of autonomy. The committee states that the autonomy within the University entails that bossism of ‘senior members’ must be eradicated, and effective participation of all the members concerned is an essential ingredient of the concept of University Autonomy (AIU, 1995). The committee recommends a participatory form of governance within the university. According to the committee, teachers and students should jointly pursue the search of knowledge without fear of public disapproval. Students participation in university is a necessary concomitant of University Autonomy.

Further, regarding external autonomy, the committee considers universities must be free from redundant interventions from the UGC and respective State or federal governments. The committee highlights the fact that the ‘finances of a University are almost provided from public funds and this being so, the Universities and the Governments (State and Central) must and should work in collaboration’ (AIU, 1995). Further, the committee states that the “the UGC must act as a guide, philosopher and friend of the University system. “A convention should be established to necessitate the consultation and advice of the UGC by the State Government in all matters pertaining to the Universities in their respective regions” (Government of India, 1971).
Given the series of policy interventions across the macro and the micro levels of the higher education system and its constituent units, respectively, the county after almost two-decades constituted the committee on National Policy of Education, 1986 (NPE-1986). The NPE-1986 is an essential phase for the country, considering four decades of Independence and a period of growth and stability, higher education constitutes the key component of further growth and sustainability.

At the time when the country witnessed the post-Mandal commission revolution, the higher education sector transformed into a battlefield for demanding socio-economic representations. At this juncture, the National Policy on Education, 1986 came with many hopes and aspirations amidst such representations. The NPE, 1986 explicitly states that “the doors of academic institutions should be open to all and also provides for special provisions for the weaker sections of the society” (GoI, 1986). The 1986 policy aimed at providing special access to colleges and universities for large sections of society through protective discrimination like reservation of seats in higher education, scholarship and special incentives. The policy indicates specific objectives for higher education (Mukhopadhyay, 1999:54) incorporating: expansion of higher education; improvement of the quality of higher education, and increased relevance and job orientation in higher education. It is interesting to note that, the Central government with the NPE (1986) gradually increased its contribution to the funding of elementary education, and this trend continued in the 1990s. The total expenditure on education, the share of higher education spending declined from 12.2 percent during 1982-92 to 11.4 percent for the states, and more dramatically, from 36.2 to 23.3 percent for the centre (Kapur and Mehta, 2007).

The NPE, 1986 called for “special emphasis on the removal of disparities and to equalize educational opportunity,” especially for Indian women, Scheduled Tribes (ST) and the
Scheduled Caste (SC) communities. The policy expanded the Open University system with the Indira Gandhi National Open University, which had been created in 1985. Need for creating rural universities suggested by the committee.

Mapping Higher Education Policies between 1947 to 1989: Policy Constants, Changes and Contradictions

As discussed above, Post-independence the higher education system has undergone substantial expansion. Expanding higher education was inevitable considering the need for mass enrolment. Further, the country following its Independence laid emphasis on social emaciation and economic development. Availability of trained and educated human resource and social harmony was the need of the hour. Access to higher education is a robust instrument for the project of national development and social emancipation in phase-1 of the policy mapping. Policies on higher education taking such a situation into cognizance have envisioned set of recommendations emphasising on achieve expansion with equity.

Figure 3 below maps the bright, light and blind spots in the policies and their recommendations between 1947 to 1989. This phase is characterised by the socialist and welfare state agenda. To identify the bright, light and blind spots, content analysis of key elements of policies, their objectives, several levels of higher education, disciplinary focus, emphasis on types of institutions (entity) and their overall outcomes have been mapped in the framework illustrated below. The key committee reports and the policies have been identified by pursuing content analysis of these documents. Each of the key elements listed in the framework (Fig. 3) constitute a glossary (see Annexure-III) that have been collectively\textsuperscript{14} coded. The coding is binary – whether a policy recommendation covers an element or not. It is not scaled.

The Level of Higher Education that is the focus of a policy may be Baccalaureate, Masters, Doctoral, Post-doctoral, Diploma, Continuing, or a combination of these. Similarly, the focus of a Higher Education policy may be the Sciences, Professions (Technical, Medical, Legal), Vocations, Fine Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences, or a combination of these. The entities delivering Higher Education, and hence the object of policy, may be Institutes (National, Regional), Universities (State, Deemed, Private), Colleges (Autonomous, Affiliated), or a combination of these.

Thus, a Higher Education policy may focus on a few or many of the 336 (6*8*7) possible combinations of Level x Focus x Entity. It may focus on: (a) baccalaureate education in the sciences by national institutes, (b) continuing education in the vocations by autonomous colleges, and (c) any of the 334 other possible combinations. Some of these logically constructed combinations may be instantiated frequently in practice, some infrequently, and others not at all. For example, only recently national institutes like the Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru have introduced baccalaureate education in the sciences. On the other hand, given the present economics of higher education, continuous education in the vocations by autonomous colleges may not be feasible and hence unrealized.

The focus of the policy on higher education may be Funding, Personnel, Infrastructure, Information, Time, Location, Governance, Regulation, or a combination of all of these. The Objectives of these policies may be to improve Accessibility, Equity, and Excellence of higher education. These have been the dominant objectives of the policies on higher education historically and now. At the second level of detail: Accessibility may be Geographical, Physical, and Online; Equity may be based on Region, Social class, Economic background, Gender, and Ability; Excellence may be in Research, Teaching, and Service. There are thus 88 (8*11) possible combinations of Policy focus and Objectives. Some of the 88 are (a)
governance for excellence-research, (b) funding for accessibility-online, and (c) regulation for equity-gender. The Outcomes of higher education for the country are broadly classified as Scientific, Technical, Economic, Social, and Cultural development. All of them are important for the development of the nation and are part of the common development goals of a knowledge society (Ramaprasad & Sridhar, 2011).

Figure 3: Framework for Mapping the policies on Higher Education (1947-1989)

Source: Ramaprasad, Singai, Hasan, Syn & Thirumalai (2016:15)

According to the mapping in the framework (Fig. 3) the dominant emphasis of the recommendations of the reports and policies on higher education post-Independence is on social development via state universities, affiliated colleges, national institutes, and autonomous colleges. The other forms of development [scientific, technical, economic, and cultural] are emphasized but are secondary to social development. Similarly, the emphasis on non-State universities [deemed, private] and regional institutes is secondary. Further, the emphasis is on the masters, baccalaureate, and doctoral levels and not as much on the post-doctoral, continuing, and diploma levels. The heavy emphasis on the technical professions, social sciences, and sciences perhaps reveals a belief that these disciplines will advance social development strongly. The corresponding lack of emphasis on vocations and diplomas may
also reflect a belief in the value of higher education for its own sake, and not as an instrument of employment. The limited emphasis on fine arts is puzzling since cultural development ranks on par with all, but social development, governance and personnel policies are seen as the primary instruments of achieving the various objectives and the final outcomes; regulation, funding, and infrastructure are seen as the secondary instruments. Informational and temporal policies seem to play a relatively small – that may be the Achilles heel of higher education policies. Their effectiveness may be hindered by the lack of good information and timebound targets. Amongst the objectives, concerns for excellence and equity appear to be on par with each other, with accessibility next in order. The virtually equal concern for equity and excellence is likely a source of tension in the policies – perhaps with the dominant emphasis on social development equity may trump excellence. In other words, excellence does seek an emphasis but has a limited interface in terms of implementation. For instance, as mentioned above, the Kothari Commission (1964) emphasized on excellence in research and university teaching. However, the committees and policies subsequent the Commission either rejected or lacked a robust implementation framework to this end.

Having mapped the key policies and their core ideals in phase-1 (1947-1989), the following section provides a similar illustration for phase-II, i.e., the period between 1989-2016 of the higher education committees and policies. The situation changed after the 1990s wherein the nation considered it appropriate to strengthen its higher education by addressing changes in the patterns in enrolment and the overall public expenditure.

Aligned to this the government has constituted several committees and a Programme for Action (1992) to address the requirements of the rapid changes in the sector of higher education. In fact, the Programme of Action envisioned an educational policy that must integrate the past, the present and the future into a new harmonization which could be uniquely Indian (Goel,
The shift from the socialist ideals of the policies to a more liberalised one can be evidence from the reports and policies evolving in the post-1990s. For instance, the Gnanam Committee (Towards New Education Management) 1990 and the Programme of Action, 1992 and few others have been illustrated the prioritization and reprioritization of the core ideals of the policies. The Gnanam committee’s report identified the need to revisit the linkages between the universities and their roles. The committee also examined the recommendations of the NPE-1986 suggesting an implementation framework in reforming the university system. The main emphasis has been to provide a sound scientific framework for governance of Universities, which will make them efficient, result-oriented and averse to politicization. According to the committee, universities are the centers of excellence and hence have a robust role in national and regional development. It is in this context, the objective of the Universities and their modes of funding should be reviewed and redefined accordingly. The committee provided insights on the roles of the actors within the university, suggesting a participatory mode of governance. Further, the committee emphasized the need for ensuring an appropriate balance between autonomy and accountability in universities. The committee had categorically recommended that the ministers or members of Legislature or Office bearers of political parties should not hold any office in the University System. As a matter of fact, currently, universities are marred by such representations especially in the Syndicate – highest decision-making body in the public-state universities (substantiated by the data from field especially in University-I – the public-state university).

This is not the first-time an emphasis on universities, and their governance was envisaged. The Ganjendragadkar Committee (1971) had highlighted similar reforms within the university set-up. However, after almost two decades of such policy interventions, the need for such a mode of governance was reiterated by the Gnanam committee in 1990. Hence, evidencing one such
policy constant in the era of change and limitations in implementing the policy ideals, at the micro level.

Subsequent to the aforementioned interventions, other major policy-level positions were recommended by the Justice Punnaiah Committee report on UGC Funding of Institutions of Higher Education (1993); Ramlal Parik Committee for reforms in appointment of Vice-Chancellors' in Indian Universities (1993); The National Knowledge Commission (NKC) recommendations on Higher Education (2006); The Yashpal Committee Report/ Committee to Advise on Renovation and Rejuvenation of Higher Education (2008); Rashtriya Uchathar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) (2013); TSR Subramanian Committee report education reform (2015) and MHRD document on Some inputs to the Draft National Education Policy (2016).

Justice Punnaiah Committee (1993) provided significant insights on the financial health of the universities and higher education in general. Such an intervention, especially in the post-liberalization context was appropriate considering the deterioration in public expenditure to higher education. The Committee has also made insightful recommendations on issues related Centre-State relations on financing higher education. In consonance with the overarching the expectations of liberalization, the committee for the first time suggested implementing a monitoring system based on performance in the university system. In addition to this, the committee recommended a student to teacher ratio at 12:1. Nevertheless, most of these recommendations had limited scope for implementation even though they captured the state-of-the-practice and state-of-the-aspiration in and from higher education, respectively. Similarly, the Ramlal Parik Committee for reforms in the appointment of Vice-Chancellors‘ in Indian Universities (1993) shared certain recommendations to reform the governance processes in the universities. The Parikh Committee was not in favour of appointing government officials as VC’s (Singh, 2014). According to the committee, the universities need distinguished and dignified persons as VCs, and it is necessary to ensure that they are treated with dignity and
regard, which the office merits. This recommendation was in consonance with the Kothari Commission (1964), which had inadequate emphasis towards implementation. Considering the fact that after three decades of such a recommendation being reiterated by the Ramlal Parikh committee (1993) the reform suggested in the appointment of the Vice-Chancellor remains to be one of the constants in the post-1990s situation, as well.

Following this, after a gap of almost one decade and select interventions for reforming the higher education, a major shift in higher education was the Central Advisory Board of Education, Government of India report on higher education. The CABE took stock of the policies and practices while enlisting series of reforms across the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD); the UGC and the respective State governments. For instance, the CABE recommended that the MHRD should develop central legislation in consultation with UGC, AICTE and other Professional Councils to streamline establishment and governance of Private Universities, Deemed-to-be-Universities, Self-Financing Institutions and establishment of Foreign Universities in India. Further, the UGC may consider setting up norms of accreditation, which could be profitably employed by the non-governmental agencies. The Board recommended the state governments to promote and facilitate self-financing courses in public-state universities to generate resources internally. Arguably, these reforms indicate a shift towards a liberal and a private sector driven higher education ecosystem. The post-1990s the demand for higher education increased while public expenditure on higher education further diminished. As an alternative, the Board considered it appropriate to harness the role of private sector in higher education to address the increasing demand by the stakeholders. However, the government didn’t consider it appropriate to complete liberalize or privatize higher education and hence regulation was further strengthened through accreditation processes and the UGC. While the recommendations of the Board reflect the changes in the policy ideals, considering the shift in the emphasis on privatization, self-financing courses in
Having initiated a policy discourse aligned to the objective of a post-liberalisation era, the government constituted the National Knowledge Commission (NKC), the Commission submitted the report on 2006. The Commission’s most important recommendation was to expand the higher education system given the lack of accessibility. Specifically, the Commission envisaged a need for massive expansion by establishing 1500 universities across the nation enabling an increase in the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) by 15 percent by 2015. Aligned to this the commission made recommendations for major reforms in the regulatory structure by establishing an Independent Regulatory Authority for Higher Education (IRAHE). The need for expansion to increase the enrolment substantiates the need for expansion with equity obliging the core ideal envisaged in the first phase of policy reforms. To promote excellence in higher education, the Commission recommended immediate reform in governance of universities to promote autonomy and accountability. The most critical aspect being specific reforms in the appointment of the Vice-Chancellors and composition and roles of other authorities and bodies within the universities. Thereby, suggesting a comprehensive intervention in reforming the issues related need for expansion, equity and excellence in higher education. However, most of these reforms were envisaged by former committees and policies in the first phase as well in the earlier period of phase-2 of the higher education policies. To this end, the NKC made few novel recommendations but by and large reiterating some of the erstwhile policy reforms suggesting certain constants and changes as such.

Emphasising the spirit of great transformations with some reiterations in reforming the higher education system, the Yashpal Committee to Advise on Renovation and Rejuvenation of
Higher Education was constituted in 2008. According to the committee, higher education since independence was the primary responsibility of the state, and it continues to be so. To this end, there is a need to establish a robust regulatory framework to address the issue of privatization and its impact on ensuring accessibility for all. Most importantly, the Committee recommended an increased focus on research vis-à-vis teaching and extension across higher education institutions by creating a comprehensive body – the National Council for Higher Education and Research (NCHER) governing higher education in the country. The Committee has made detailed recommendations in ensuring quality in higher education while addressing the aspect of equity. Whilst there has been nation-wide deliberations and debates on the recommendations of the Committee, the implementation of the report has been a challenge and hence side lined. Subsequent to the Yashpal Committee-2008, the Government initiated RUSA in 2013. The most critical of the issues underscored by RUSA are: need to increase availability of funding for state-institutions; reforming the affiliation system; enhancing equity in higher education for the marginalised communities; address issues related to regional imbalance in availability and access to higher education institutions; revisit the role and effectiveness of institutional structures and pressures and so on. However, the scheme didn’t bring out any novel issues to be addressed vis-à-vis the erstwhile policy recommendations as such. In other words, RUSA re-emphasized on the core ideals of higher education policies hitherto, i.e., expansion, equity and excellence.

After a gap of more than three decades of recommendations by several committees and commissions reminiscing the challenges and opportunities in higher education, the MHRD constituted the TSR Subramanian Committee report of the committee for the evolution of the New Education Policy and MHRD document on Some inputs to the Draft National Education Policy (2016). The TSR Committee report provided few novel insights in addition to suggesting a similar policy framework per aforementioned priorities. The committee
emphasized on the aspect of internationalisation in higher education; reforms in the professional education system; creation of a centralised national fund and Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) in Education. These policy perspectives outlined in the report are aligned to the country’s global outlook through higher education. To substantiate and revisit the key dimensions of the TSR Committee report, the government came out with a document on Some inputs to the Draft National Education Policy (2016) under the aegis of the MHRD. Currently, the country is awaiting the National Education Policy-2018, a drafting Committee constituted by the MHRD under the Chairmanship of Dr K. Kasturirangan.

Having mapped the core elements of the policies across two temporal dimensions, i.e., 1947-1989 and 1990-2016, the following section will provide insight into the content analysis of the policies. The illustration brings out the emphasis on the core ideals of the policies – expansion, equity and excellence in higher education.

Analysis of Higher Education Policies between 1990-2016: Constants, Changes and Contradictions

In this section, the study deconstructs the core ideals envisaged by committee reports and policies between 1990-2016.

*Figure 4: Framework for Mapping the policies on Higher Education (1947-1989)*

Source: Ramaprasad, Singai, Hasan, Syn & Thirumalai (2016:15)
As result of this, there was a significant shift in the priorities of higher education due to political and economic changes. Although the overall profiles for the two periods are similar, there are many noticeable differences. These differences likely reflect the shift in thinking about the core ideals of the policies. In terms of policy focus, there appears to be an increased emphasis on funding, infrastructure, information, and temporality; but the decreased emphasis on location. However, the dominant focus in both periods is on governance, personnel, and regulation. In policy objectives, there appears to be an increased emphasis on online accessibility, regional equity, and gender equity. However, in terms of excellence, the emphasis continues to be on research, teaching, and then service – in that order. In the level of higher education, there appears to be an increased emphasis on doctoral and post-doctoral education. There is not a diminution of the emphasis on masters and baccalaureate levels. Diploma and continuing education continue to have low emphasis.

Among higher education entities there appears to be an increased emphasis on National Institutes, Regional Institutes, Deemed and Private Universities, and Autonomous Colleges; and decreased emphasis on State Universities. The shift in the profile is likely due to the emergence of these new entities. In higher education focus there appears to be a decreased emphasis on humanities and the social sciences. The rest of the profile continues to be similar.

Lastly, among the outcomes of reports and policy recommendations, there appears to be an increased emphasis on economic development; and decreased emphasis on scientific, technical, social, and cultural development. The profile appears to have shifted significantly. Thus, the core thrusts of the policies for the two periods may be compared at three levels of granularity as shown in Table 2. Below, table 2 highlights the constants and changes in the most significant elements. The study has underlined the common elements of the two periods at each level for ease of comparison.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>1947-1989</th>
<th>1990-Present</th>
</tr>
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Apart from identifying the levels by their frequency table 2 illustrates the fact that many elements have remained constant in policy in comparison to the changes expected as result of a change in the context. The ideals of expansion, equity and excellence have been the foundation of Indian higher education system. However, the interpretation and priorities of these ideals have been evolving. Some of the evolutionary changes are a natural response to the changing environment, and some are due to the changing governance structure and practices of higher education institutions. The latter has been further compounded by the emergence of new types of higher education institutions.

Conclusion

At the time when the nation is revisiting the erstwhile policies and policy reports by envisioning a New Policy on Education-2018, analysing the landscape of the policies and the prioritization or re-prioritization of the core ideals is of utmost relevance. The Chapter unpacks limitations in the prioritization of the core policy ideals exposing several constants (prioritization of expansion), changes (re-prioritization of expansion with equity) and contradictions (continuation of prioritizing expansion with equity, rather than excellence). As a result of this, there are gaps between the state-of-the-need, state-of-the-practice and state-of-the-aspiration for [social/economic/scientific/technical] development.
in the larger system of higher education in India. The following chapters (Chapter IV and V) illustrate some of the gaps between the policy discourses and practice at the micro level, at least in two dominant and popular types of universities as the case-in-point.

Post-independence (1947-1990), the immediate challenge in higher education was to address increasing demand for access to higher education, and hence expansion with equity has been the core policy ideal. The country following its Independence there was a huge rise in the social demand for higher education, and the democratic government had to respond appropriately. Hence, a policy that promotes equality of opportunity in higher education led to rapid expansion ensuring equity. A policy perspective aligned to the socialist ideological set-up. Post-1990s, the country has made rapid strides towards liberalisation, privatization and globalisation. Scholars have drawn attention to the fact the in the post-1990s the higher education sector in India in undergoing a transformation from a public-financed, welfare system to a system financed by both the government and private sectors often with a market-based commercial approach (Desai, 1995; Tilak, 1999; Sharma, 1996 and Powar, 2002). Given such a transition, the higher education sector has been experiencing several points of pressures and influences to make a shift towards an emphasis on improving quality and excellence in services provided by the sector, juxtaposed to the erstwhile ideals of socialist government. Kapur and Mehta (2004) have aptly characterised such a phenomenon in the Indian higher education system as ‘half-baked socialism to half-baked capitalism’, and J.B.G. Tilak manifests the situation as ‘Higher Education in 'Trishanku': Hanging between State and Market’ (Tilak, 2005). As a result of shifts at the global and national level, reforms in higher education policies had the humongous task of addressing equity with excellence. The reforms therein reflect the limited understanding of the complexity of the relationship between equity and excellence. The reforms in the post-liberalisation era have continued to prioritize expansion with equity with
limited emphasis on excellence or quality in higher education, and hence revealing several contradictions at the policy level.

The recommendations of the key committee reports and national education policies examined in here are spread over an extended period. They were formulated independently by different individuals and committees. They were not designed to be incremental, to build upon one another systematically; they were more ad hoc, designed to address an issue or a set of issues at a particular point in time. The policy analysis presented in this chapter necessitates a need for evidence-driven policy making for the country. An evidence-driven, bottom-up policy driven research where the methodology highlights the gaps between practice and policy appears to be the need of the hour. Addressing these gaps enables a comprehensive and realistic perspective on challenges and opportunities espoused by and in the complex structure of India’s higher education system.

The shifts (arguably) in the profile of these ideals could be attributed to changes in the meaning and practice of governance across distinct types of higher education institutions and vice-versa. The profile of ideals and the governance and practices of higher education institutions are deeply intertwined. It is a challenge to succinctly summarize all the constants and changes, as shown in Figure 3 and 4 and Table 2. In the next section, the thesis will examine the policy ideals across two dominant and popular type of universities – public-state and private deemed-to-be-universities as the case-in-point. These case-studies provide insights into the interface of the core ideals promoted through these policies and the changing governance structures and processes across the public and private university systems. Hence, analysing the relationship between macro (policies) and the micro (institutional practices) provides critical insights on the efficacy of higher education and university governance in the Indian context.
Following chapters – the case of the public-state university (University-I) and the private deemed-to-be-university (University-II) – describe the interface of the core ideals of the policies – expansion, equity and excellence in higher education – at the macro level and the meaning(s) and practice(s) constituting the ‘inner’ world or the micro level governance mechanisms within universities.