

Planning and Management of Higher Education

Introduction

Although India has had a long tradition of institutions of higher learning, exemplified, amongst others, by the universities of Nalanda, Vikramshila, Vallabhi and Takshashila (now in Pakistan), the system of higher education in vogue today, essentially dates back to the middle of the nineteenth century. In a way the establishment of the three universities, in the three Presidency towns of Bombay, Calcutta and Madras, following the Wood's despatch of 1854, laid the foundation of the present-day university education in India. The period of decolonisation in Asia, Africa and Latin America also coincided with the period of high optimism about the role of education in the socio-economic transformation of economies. It was in this context that the reforms in education were accorded a very high priority in Independent India. Realizing the crucial role of human resources in development processes, and their interface with education, a number of specific provisions and directives relating to the development of human capital have been included in the Constitution of India.

It goes without saying that during the last four decades of development planning, higher education has witnessed significant changes. A quick perusal of developments in higher education indicates that, in spite of other various inadequacies and limitations, institutions of higher learning in India have helped in the accumulation of a stock of scientific and technical manpower which is the third largest in the world. The present system of higher education in India is perhaps the largest and the oldest in the world. Given a wide range of accomplishments, it is somewhat surprising that there is much to be done before the objectives of equity, quality and relevance are achieved. In such a scenario, the task of policy formulation is not going to be an easy one. In the following discussion, a critical appraisal of the present position, and of the needs has been attempted with a view to unraveling some of the complexities of the system of higher education in India. In the light of this analysis, the role of higher education in meeting future challenges has also been discussed.

Learning outcomes

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- state the goals and objectives of process of higher education;
- identify the significant trends and developments in higher education;
- analyse various issues involved in the planning and management of higher education in India; and

- explain in the light of the emerging challenges, the major strategies and the thrust areas for development planning in higher education

Retrospective and overview of higher education

The major functions of institutions of higher education commonly designated as 'core functions' are teaching, research and extension through the **acquisition**, preservation and transmission of knowledge. In spite of these three broad objectives, a modern university, in a developing country like India, has other functions to **perform**, like the inculcation of values. An academic institution should inculcate in students the **sense** of nationhood and promote the basic human values. It should also promote a rational outlook and scientific temper, and a commitment to the pursuit of knowledge. One **needs** to examine the role and objectives of higher education institutions in the broader context. However, before focusing discussion on these roles and objectives, it is necessary to have an overview of the higher education system in India.

Development during British rule

The roots of higher education in India lie deep in antiquity. However, the modern system of higher education in India began with the legislation of Indian Universities Act of 1857, and thereby the setting up of three Presidency universities in the port towns of Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. Higher education in colonial India remained concentrated in and around these port towns instead of spreading over the country. Although the East India Company made much noise about the modernizing role of higher education, these universities were set up essentially to provide legitimacy to the alien rule. Education was one of the potent instruments that was used to consolidate the British rule in India. As the hold of the colonial power spread, it needed personnel to mediate between the rulers and the ruled. A **perusal** of developments during the colonial period indicates that higher education was geared to produce white collared manpower, from among the local people, for performing the tertiary functions for an alien administration. As the alien rule stabilized, the role of universities and colleges became more specific, namely to:

- intellectually familiarize the students with European thought,
- transmit and propagate the cultural values and norms specific to Britain, and
- produce the class of **junior** – level administrative staff required various sectors of colonial administration.

The pattern of development of higher education in **India**, during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, amply shows that **institutions of higher** education were given a formal structure to **achieve** these objectives. It is unfortunate that no efforts were made to encourage the study of scientific and **technical** disciplines. For example, India is one of the few countries in the world where all the high **grade** inputs for the production of **iron** and steel are available in a very compact geographical area. In spite of this, the engineering faculty that was set up was civil engineering and not metallurgical engineering. Civil engineers were needed to maintain the transport network which was necessary to link the food and the cash-crop producing areas to port towns. As a consequence, Independent India not only inherited a system of education **which was** quantitatively small but was also qualitatively not functional to meet the requirements of a growth-oriented self-reliant economy. Education was provided in a medium which only a few could comfortably master, and the use and content of higher education was drawn largely from British and European sources. **Whatever** might have been the intended objectives of the colonial power, the establishment of institutions modelled on the pattern of education in Britain, helped unleash the forces of liberalism and social reform. Those educated in English and familiar with the social and political trends in England, became the vanguards

of the movement for social and political reforms. It must be noted that the progress of the 'alien' system of higher education could not be ensured without the people, those belonging to upper strata, finding it useful.

The post-independence developments

The setting up of the University Education Commission (popularly known as the Radhakrishnan Commission) in 1948 was a major landmark for enunciating the goals and objectives of higher education in Independent India. This was to suggest the nature of restructuring that was needed in university education and the improvements necessary to make it suit the present and future requirements of the country. The Commission made, after extensive deliberations, some very significant recommendations, many of which are pertinent even in the contemporary context. An attempt has been made here to draw our attention on the major recommendations of the University Education Commission (1948-49) on higher education in general, and on management of the system in particular. The recommendations included the following:

- The aim of education must be to awaken and promote the innate ability of a person and to train him / her for development of self and democratic attitudes. Thus, the purpose of education is to acquaint an individual with his / her cultural heritage and to impart to him/ her professional and vocational training.
- The over-crowding at universities and colleges should be prevented and the number, of working days should be increased to a minimum of 180, exclusive of examination days.
- The Commission emphasized the role of post-graduate education, training and research for the advancement of knowledge. It suggested that Ph.D. programmes should emphasise both the breadth and the width of knowledge. They should not lead to narrow specializations.
- The Commission stressed the university's role in studying agriculture in an agrarian economy like India and suggested that special attention should be paid to the development of higher education in rural areas. It further suggested that on the basis of critical studies on the nature and type of manpower requirements, the scientific and technical base of the education system should be strengthened. Mere imitation of the existing institutional arrangement or those available abroad should be avoided.
- Realizing the importance of the medium of instruction, the Commission recommended that English as a medium of instruction in higher education should be replaced as early as possible by an Indian language.
- A university degree should not be required for government administrative services. Special State examination for recruitment to various State services should be organized.
- Realising the deficiencies of the examination system and the magnitude of the wastage, the Commission recommended a thorough study of the scientific methods of educational testing and appraisal.

In subsequent years, several Commissions and Committees were also appointed by the government for educational restructure, and changes in the system of higher education in India. The important documents that have been published are:

- Report of the Education Commission, 1964-66
- National Policy on Education, 1968
- Draft Policy on Education, 1978
- National Commission on Teachers-II, 1983

- Challenge of Education: A Policy Perspective, 1985
- National Policy on Education, 1986
- National Policy on Education: A Programme of Action, 1986
- Towards an Enlightened and Human Society – A Perspective Paper on Education, 1960
- National Policy on Education: A Programme of Action, 1992

In spite of the various recommendations and suggestions of the various Commissions and Committees, university education in India continues to suffer from a number of deficiencies. A variety of complex forces have affected the development of higher education in Independent India. The needs were many and varied and rapid expansion of the system, however inadequate, was nation's requirements so was bringing about changes in the context, organization and control of education, and emphasizing its R & D role. This challenging task had to be articulated in a situation where the 'pulls' and 'pushes' working on the system of higher education in India, are of diverse nature. The present day scenario of higher education, particularly, is the outcome of the following factors:

- The need for import substitution in the field of intellect and building up a self-reliant academic structure.
- The demand for educated manpower requirement to meet the needs of planned economic development.
- The pressure from those who were denied higher education for centuries and, wrongly or rightly, regarded it as a passport for entry into organized a labour market and to acquire a comfortable white collar job.
- The push factors operating due to rapid expansion of school education, particularly, due to attempts towards the universalisation of elementary education.
- The need to upgrade educational qualifications so as to provide an advantage in a situation of job-scarcity.

The factors mentioned above do not operate in isolation from each other but get intertwined in various forms in different situations. The influence of rising expectations / aspirations and the expansion of school education have been so strong that no tangible progress could be achieved in many critical areas like consolidation, quality improvement and external efficiency of higher education.

It must be stated that in the fifty-odd years since independence, the Indian higher education system has undergone a remarkable transformation from an elite system, nurtured by colonial roots, to a mass system attempting to meet the needs of a vibrant democracy.

Self-assessment

I. *What were the specific functions of higher education institutions during British rule?*

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Status of the planning and management of higher education

The organizational and management structures of higher education in India have some unique features. The present system, under which colleges are affiliated to the universities,

was introduced in 1857 with the setting up of three universities in India on the pattern of the University of London, UK. Although the London University abandoned the arrangement in 1858 i.e., one year after it was introduced in India, it continued to grow in India in spite of its many serious inadequacies. One of these is that permits a large number of distant – located colleges of various academic standards to form tenuous links with the university for examination and certification purposes. As far as the affiliated colleges are concerned, the university does not work as a partner in their academic pursuit and search for excellence, but essentially remains a sorting and stamping office.

The system of affiliation introduced in India provided to the administration, a cheap method of expanding higher education to small towns where the establishment of full-fledged universities would have been expensive. In a way the affiliated colleges met the aspirations of the people for higher education; and given the academic and administration leadership, many of the affiliated colleges were able to carve out a niche for themselves.

We now give you three different functions of the university that are related to affiliated colleges. First the university lays down the courses of study; second, it exercises some academic control; and finally it conducts the examination at the end of each academic year and awards degrees to the successful candidates. The interaction between the colleges in terms of academic and other inputs is almost non-existent though its representatives feature on bodies like the Boards of Studies and Academic Council.

Indian universities differ in terms of their size, territorial jurisdiction, material and intellectual resources. In terms of their structure and organization, the universities can be classified into three categories.

Unitary Universities

A unitary university is one wherein teaching work and research is organized on the campus and the bulk of the students reside in hostels or within the prescribed jurisdiction of the university. The Aligarh, Muslim university, Banaras, Hindu University, Varanasi M.S. University, Baroda and Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi are examples of unitary universities in India.

Federal University

A federal university is the one where teaching work is shared by the university with its constituent colleges. The University of Delhi has a federal character.

Affiliating University

Besides its own postgraduate teaching and research departments, an affiliating university has a number of colleges affiliated to it. These colleges are under the academic control of the university (but not administrative and financial control), and are distributed over a large geographical area. Many of these colleges also undertake post-graduate teaching and research. The universities of Mumbai, Utkal, Nagpur, Andhra, Madras, Mysore, Calcutta, and many others fall under this category.

Universities in India are statutory organizations established under an act of the State legislature or by an Act of Parliament. In addition, the Ministry of Human Resource Development, on the advice of University Grants Commission (UGC) has the authority to declare an institution as a deemed-to-be university or (more simply) deemed university.

A number of professional bodies have been established which are responsible for the development of professional education. Among these mention may be made of the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), the Medical Council of India (MCI) and the National Council for Technical Education (NCTE). These bodies perform

functions in respect of professional education which are similar to those performed by the University Grants Commission in respect of universities.

A number of reforms were undertaken to evolve an alternate design in the structure of higher education, and those had **marginal** impact on the organization of **higher** education in India. As far back as 1904, the Indian Universities Act expostulated that the Indian universities should assume more teaching functions, offer research opportunities and exert more control over the **affiliated** colleges. Realising the inadequacies of the system of affiliation, a number of universities which were set up in the first quarter of this century were of unitary nature. Nevertheless, the system of **affiliating** colleges and their examining universities perpetuated and now it has grown to such a large dimension that, any effort to reorganize college and university education looks almost impossible. Moreover a few affiliating (like the **Health** universities) have now been established.

India is now one of the few countries where the system of an examining university and the affiliated colleges has continued even to date and may be expected to continue in future as well. In the past, no college, whether good or bad, was allowed to function independently without the umbrella of a university. In recent years the idea of granting autonomy to colleges which have, over the years, established a reputation for academic excellence, has been gaining ground. **Autonomous colleges** that are independent as regards **curricula** and examination have been established. They, however, work under the supervision of the University which awards the degrees.

University Grants Commission

In the case of higher education, the responsibility for maintenance and coordination of standards rests with the **Central Government**. Among the large number of measures suggested by the University Education Commission (1948-49), to strengthen higher education and improve the standards of teaching and research, was the proposal to establish the University Grants Commission (UGC). The UGC, in its present form, was constituted in 1956 as a **statutory** organization through an Act of **Parliament**. More details on its organizational structure and function are given in the next unit i.e. Unit 2 of the present Block.

The setting up of the UGC was a landmark in the development of higher education in India. Although, the UGC is designated as a grant-giving agency, its main function relates to the maintenance and coordination of standards. And although the coordination and maintenance of standards is one of the major functions of the UGC, there is hardly any evidence to indicate that either the UGC or the universities themselves have attempted to define standards at undergraduate, graduate or post-graduate levels of teaching and examinations, except in terms of course requirements. The concept of **National Qualifications Framework** is not yet well understood in India. Unfortunately, the course requirements are **also** full of ambiguities, and therefore, standards may only be inferred rather than **defined**. Many of the present day problems can be attributed to the lack of clearly **defined** standards of teaching and research in colleges and universities. Due to the **extremely** large size of the system, the variations in academic standards are more **pronounced**.

The UGC also advises State Governments on the setting up of new colleges, initiates programmes for raising standards, provides special assistance for the spread of education among the women and scheduled 'case and scheduled tribes **population**. It issues 'guidelines' on academic and administrative matters which the **States** are expected to implement. The development assistance to the universities is usually related to their **stages of development** and takes into consideration the **proposed** qualitative improvements and **other** reforms.

The UGC has now given high **priority** to the implementation of the programmes flowing from the National Policy on Education, 1986. Some of the major areas on which the

UGC is now concentrating on:

- setting up autonomous colleges;
- redesigning courses;
- setting up State Councils of Higher Education;
- developing/experimenting with alternative models of university management;
- **conducting** national qualifying examination for the **recruitment** of teachers; and
- **training/orientation** of teachers by providing assistance for **setting** up academic staff colleges in the universities.

Financing of higher education

The finances for higher education come from a number of sources. Besides fees, the State governments and the Central government, through various agencies like the UGC, ICAR, etc., and even directly provide funds for the development, maintenance and quality improvement of programmes of the universities. Over the years, universities have become overdependent on Central and State grants. In a situation where they do not have appreciable sources of income other than government grants, it seems the universities have lost much of their autonomy and the opportunity to bring about **changes** in their **academic** and management structures. In the following sub-sections we will discuss the mechanism that are being followed in generating grants in the context of higher education and certain general problems regarding the funding system.

The mechanism for grants

The grants to universities and colleges normally come from the UGC and state governments. These can be broadly classified under two categories:

- a) Maintenance grants: Maintenance grants are basically meant for the day to day functioning of institutions. The norms vary from State to State.
- b) Development grants: Development grants are usually given on a matching basis for various **purposes** to enable institutions to use the assistance from UGC, ICAR, etc.

These grants can be for non-recurring expenditure such as buildings and equipment, or for recurring **items** such as the salaries of staff. While the former are usually one-time grants, the latter can be given on a long-term recurring basis.

Central universities receive funds from the University Grants Commission (UGC) as development (plan) grant and maintenance (non-plan) grant. Institutions of national importance like the Indian Institutes of **Technology**, receive their grants directly from the **Ministry of Human Resource Development** (Department of Education), Government of **India**. State universities are funded by the State Governments in the form of **block/maintenance grant** as well as development grant. State universities also receive development grants from the University Grants Commission provided the State Government, in accordance with a prescribed **formula**, gives a matching component. In addition, **universities** also collect fees from students and a few universities receive some financial support from trusts, philanthropists and industry. Government colleges receive funds from the respective governments in the form of grants-in-aid for maintenance and development purposes. Not surprisingly most of the colleges and universities operate with tight budgets and **often** incur deficits.

In spite of a continuous rise in **expenditure** on education in general, and on higher education in particular, universities have **found it difficult** to be sure about the adequacy of financial inputs to meet their ever-growing needs. The situation is further complicated by the

continuous decline in the value of money especially in the recent past; with the result that, although in monetary terms, the grants given might increase appreciably, the actual purchase of the intended goods and services is much less than it used to be.

As far as funding is concerned, the experience of developed countries may not be of much help for other developing countries. The advanced countries as forerunners had some distinct advantages in terms of educational development. Their relative economic prosperity, at the early stages of development, had permitted them to provide funds, sufficient to build and maintain educational institutions at all levels. The educational development in these countries preceded economic development. The developing countries at the moment are trying to achieve the same type of results under conditions of austerity and that too when the time available for bringing about these reforms is much shorter and the pressure on the system is unbearable. It needs to be mentioned that universities in some advanced countries are able to lay down and enforce criteria for admission which helps to keep their enrolments within the limit of the capacity to provide quality education. In India, on the other hand, universities have generally adopted policies of laissez-faire and admit students even when they might not benefit from university education.

Various studies have shown that the system of state grants suffers from quite a few drawbacks, like its iniquitous distribution, non-specificity of rules and regulations, inadequacy of the quantum of assistance and lack of feedback about the effective utilization of grants. There is no clear cut demarcation between the Central and the State governments regarding the provision of assistance in respect to institutional development.

The grants and funding mechanisms of Central organization suffer from certain inadequacies and incongruities. For example, the bulk of UGC grants are for the building up of physical facilities only. It has been shown that the focus on the operation of many schemes for the funding of research activities are in sharp contrast to one another. The concerned organizations do not have a built-in mechanism to avoid duplication and overlapping of research efforts. There is a significant bias in the allocation processes as a few institutions corner the bulk of funds whereas the majority of collegiate institutions are not touched by these bodies.

Some critics are of the opinion that the problem of university finances is not merely of augmenting the financial inputs but is also of its efficient management. The present system of grant, leads to a lot of uncertainty and consequently, the utilization of resources may not be optimal. A system based, either on a medium – term or a long term perspective of university plans and needs, is hence called for.

The problem of funding

In spite of the fact that the UGC (and to some extent the AICTE) is the main instrument of federal government to coordinate and implement the programmes of higher education and research, there are quite a few structural and administrative limitations which hamper the effectiveness of the institutions. The role of the UGC in relation to State governments has not been clearly defined. Although the recent amendment to the University Grants Commission Act makes it obligatory for the States to consult it before establishing new universities, it has not deterred them from setting up institutions of higher learning on grounds other than economic feasibility and academic viability. A major reason for this ineffectiveness seems to be the paucity of resources which does not allow it to support State-level universities in a substantial manner. The bulk of the financial services put at its disposal are spent on Central universities.

The existing grant-in-aid rules do not allow for innovation and experimentation in university institutions. The procedures and policies of State assistance to institutions of higher education do not always encourage planned institutional development. In a large number of States, the institutions have to wait for a specific period before becoming

eligible for government assistance. The absence of a proper check at the time of the initial setting up of an institution also results in their unplanned growth. The confusion is accentuated by the lack of specificity in the university regulations about the affiliation of institutions. Even specific provisions regarding financial resources, building and equipment and teachers which have been included in the university acts, are not always enforced before granting affiliation to an institution. The pressure from influential political groups is the major reason why universities are unable to enforce the criteria that they themselves have established.

One of the major dilemmas facing policy makers in education is to evolve mechanisms for reducing the pressure of numbers on the university. Notwithstanding, reforms in curricula and / or the diversification of courses, the pressure on higher education to expand facilities is intense, particularly in the so-called Arts courses. Almost anyone is accommodated by the system. The restructuring and diversification of secondary education, for instance, in terms of vocational courses of terminal nature at the +2 stage, has been advocated as a major means of reducing pressure on universities for additional places. The progress in this regard has not been appreciable to make any dent on university enrolment.

Distance education is one way by which the problem of access can be alleviated. Therefore presently 11 Open Universities and 64 Distance Education Institutions in conventional universities providing distance education. They provide education to about 20 per cent of the student population. It is proposed that by the end of the Tenth Five Year Plan 40 per cent of the acquirement of higher education should be covered through the distance mode.

One of the major drawbacks of our educational system is the continuous and pervasive wastefulness. Even after forty years of planning and restructuring of the various programmes of higher education, the extent of wastage is extremely high. It has been observed that nearly half the students who appear in university final examinations fail to qualify, and the majority of those who qualify are often third divisioners. The pass percentage even in some of the professional courses is as low as 70 to 80 percent. The major factor responsible for this state of affairs is that, education is mostly teaching oriented. The university examinations have remained unchanged in their nature and format, although the University Education Commission (1948-49) had singled out examination reform as the most urgent and sufficient task in university education.

Who is interested in the perpetuation of the present system – is the question which is very often posed by all of us. The teachers, students, the community at large and the Government are the major actors involved in the operation of the system. The recent proliferation of colleges has created a vast army of college teachers. Private managements have continued to dominate the scene of higher education in India by virtue of their overwhelming strength. These colleges account for 80 per cent of university level teachers. It is also known that 'degree colleges' constitute about 80 per cent to 90 per cent of the total number of colleges. So is the position with regard to their teaching faculty. In view of their size, they are not in a position to exert influence on the various decision-making bodies of a university.

Another area of serious concern to all of us relates to the priority given to the promotion of research in universities and colleges. Unless teaching is backed by adequate research and experimentation, it would be difficult to raise the quality. At present only a small component of research is related to teaching-learning situations. Many serious grassroot problems of collegiate education have not been studied by researchers systematically. The multiple funding agencies, with lack of mutual consultations among them, lead to overlapping and duplication in research efforts in some areas, whereas some of the other important areas are; not taken up at all.

The dissemination of important innovations and research findings is another area of concern. The findings of a large number of research studies undertaken at a high cost, never reach the concerned policy makers. Consequently, it not only leads to unproductive investment of resources, but also causes a lot of repetition in research priorities.

Self-assessment

2. *What are the three important functions of the affiliating universities in the context of managing its colleges?*

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3. *Discuss the problems of funding of higher education institutes.*

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The examination system

The discussion on the management scenario in the context of higher education will not be complete if one does not focus on the examination system, and this is of concern to many of us. Since most of the employers insist upon a university degree for jobs, passing examination has become the major concern for students. Any means is considerable



Look, that's an unfair allegation! – we are not responsible for these fake question paper. Whatever is leaked from here is all completely genuine!

Courtesy : R.K. Laxman

justifiable, if it enables a student to pass the examination. The use of unfair means on the part of students and unethical practices on the part of teachers has become so common that it causes no concern. Agitations seeking postponement of examinations or change of papers are equally common and lead to disruption of universities and often, of social life.

During the last few years, the examination system has lost much of its credibility. In certain aspects the situation has deteriorated to such an extent that meritorious students find themselves to be at a serious disadvantage. In the recent past, many attempts have been made to reform the examination system. These relate to the introduction of continuous internal evaluation, within the semester system, and evaluation in terms of letter grade and final evaluation in terms of grade point average. In India the universities follow both the annual and the semester systems while most conventional universities follow the annual pattern (at least at the undergraduate level) the professional universities (and professional faculties in conventional universities) have adopted the semester system. In case of universities, following the annual pattern, an **end-of-year** examination is held between March and May and the results are declared about two months later. Supplementary, following the semester-system have examinations in November-December and March-April. Each semester involves 14 weeks of teaching and two weeks for preparation and / or examinations.

The universities conduct most of the examinations. However, with a few to decentralize the examination system, as also to reduce the responsibility of the **university-administration**, some affiliating universities have reduced the number of university examinations for a degree, by handing over responsibility for the preliminary-stage examinations to the colleges. For example, at the Bachelor's level in the liberal arts, the examination at the end of the First Year may be conducted by the college, and the ones at the end of the Second and Third years by the university. However, in the professional subjects, examinations at all levels are conducted by the university. Some universities to ensure timely evaluation of the answer scripts have adopted a centralized evaluation system. Internal assessment of the work done by the student throughout the year carries 10 to 25 per cent of the total marks at the undergraduate level, and 20 to 40 per cent at the postgraduate level in some universities. The engineering, medicine and management institutions have generally adopted a mixed system in which the assessment is based on both continuous internal evaluation and end-of-term examination. These institutions have adopted the credit system and result is based on letter grade and given in terms of grade point average.

A perspective for higher education

In the light of the issues facing the system and the challenges and uncertainties of future, it would be extremely difficult to prepare the perspective with a fair degree of precision. Nevertheless, taking note of the major technological changes and the critical role of human resources, **both** as producers as well as users of technological innovations for raising the quality of life, the National Policy on Education, **1986** has emphasized that investment in the overall development of human resources is non-negotiable. The NPE – **1986** reiterates and suggests new initiatives in the areas of autonomy in universities and colleges, and decentralized planning and management. The Policy has also emphasized on the role of open learning systems in enlarging the **opportunities** for higher education and has fully recognized the significance of implementation and the operations strategies for achieving the stated goals. The considerable developments that have taken place in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in recent years, should facilitate the rapid development of Open and Distance Learning (ODL).

It is undoubtedly true that the new dimensions of education, which make it an integral part of national development, call for a greater responsibility on the part of teachers. Due to the explosion of knowledge and the accompanying technological changes, the

role of teachers has undergone significant changes in the last few decades. The teachers have to be more innovative and trained to exploit the various methodologies and explore all possible sources of knowledge.

An important part of the policy statement is the emphasis on making the system work. If education is to meet the future challenge, then the assertion that all teachers should teach and all students must learn becomes highly important. The strategy in this regard consists of

- better deal to teachers;
- provision of improved student services and insistence on observance of the accepted norms of behaviour;
- provision of better facilities to the institutions ; and
- creating a system of performance appraisal of institutions according to the standards and norms set up at the national level.

Achieving excellence in higher education involves the strengthening of infrastructure, modernization and changes in curricula, raising the quality and performance of teachers enhancing the motivation of students for learning. All these reforms cannot be carried out without adequate provision of resources. The goals and objectives of education can only be realized if sufficient investment in the education of the order commensurates with the nature and dimensions of the task.

The NPE 1986 has specifically highlighted the need for appropriate level of investment on education. Such a percentage can neither be specified, nor yield the desired results. However, the idea is to step up allocations in tune with the needs of specific programmes of educational reconstruction. The policy has also cautioned on the serious consequences of inadequate investments in education. Similarly, the cost of neglecting vocational and technical education and / or research will cause an irreparable damage to the economy. In view of these imperatives, education has to be treated as a crucial area of investment for national development and survival.

The success of any policy depends on its implementation strategies and the programmes initiated for the operation of the policy. It has been alleged many a time, That India is good at formulating ideal policies but when it comes to their implementation, the outcome is disappointing. And if the past performances are any indication, there is some truth in this statement. The experience has shown that the implementation in many cases become very tardy because a comprehensive and a coordinated effort is lacking. The Ministry of Human Resources Development took a bold step recently in preparing a sector-wise detailed plan of implementation. Realizing the significance of policy implementation, actions to avoid various bottlenecks have already been initiated. A preliminary review indicates that the progress in many areas has been quite significant, but there is no scope for complacency.

In spite of the significant progress that has been achieved so far, many reforms have been found to be proceeding at a snail's pace. Despite the various recommendations, many problems in higher education in India continue to persist due to populist pressures, and financial and organizational constraints. Issues like reforms in examinations and restructuring of degree courses, delinking degrees from jobs, forging linkages between education and work, and removal of obsolescence in institutions of technical education, etc., have now become even more complex.

The All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE) was set up in 1945 as a national expert body to advise the central government and the state governments on the development of technical education. Since, the AICTE did not have the statutory powers, its authority relating to the maintenance of standards and coordinated development of technical education could not be fully exercised. During 1987-88, a Bill was passed in Parliament, vesting statutory powers to AICTE to plan and coordinate the development of technical

education throughout the country. Today, the AICTE is playing the very important role of monitoring and coordinating technical (including management education) in the country.

The UGC has established Academic Staff Colleges for the orientation of the newly appointed university and college teachers, and for providing refresher courses to existing teachers. Today Academic Staff Colleges are functioning in **49** universities.

A number of programmes have been initiated for the improvement of the system. However, success of different initiatives is dependent on the overall management strategies of the system.

Self-assessment

4. *State at least three important innovations that were initiated for the upkeep of academic standards in the higher education system in the country.*

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Summary

In this unit, we started with the view point that the higher education system in the country has witnessed significant changes during the post-independence period. And to understand this, we had a quick overview of the development of higher education in the country during British rule and during the post-independence period, with special reference to planning and policy making. While continuing our discussion, we listed the major **recommendations** of the University Education Commission (1948-49) and based on these we tried to analyse the foundations on which the present-day university education has been developed. We have also discussed in the unit, the features related to the organizational and **management** structures of the higher education system in India at the macro level. While discussing this we have identified the role of universities, UGC, and other agencies associated with the higher education system, in a broad perspective. We have also touched upon certain points with regard to the mechanism followed in financing the higher education system in the country at present, and also some of the major problems faced by the system in this regard. To give a perspective for the planning and management of the system, we have discussed the issues relating to the examination system, and on making of the overall system relevant to the present day needs.

When the issues described above are put together in the context of future challenges, one gets an idea about the diverse sources from which the development of education in general, and higher education in particular, is constrained. The **main** task is to strengthen the system in such a manner that it takes the desired shape. There are hardly any signs to imply that the system is likely to either correct itself or that the policy statements will provide any relief. The problems discussed above are only illustrative of the issues which the **socio-economic** planners are **instantly** facing. Hence, for the policy reforms to be successfully implemented, one would require a very decisive and strong leadership in the context.

Points for discussion

1. The grant-in-aid system introduced by both central and state governments has a greater **impact** on the academic and administrative matter of the universities and colleges. Discuss the issue critically in the context of your own state.

Suggested readings

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Structure and Organisation of Higher Education in India

Introduction

The term "Higher Education", in India, refers to post-secondary (post-plus two) or tertiary level education. All institutions imparting instruction leading to a university degree or an equivalent, may be termed as institutions of higher education.

Higher education in India has **expanded** tremendously during the post-independence period. The expansion of the system normally refers to one, or a combination, of the following:

- an increase in the number of institutions;
- a growth in student enrolment;
- an increase in the number of teaching and non-teaching staff;
- the diversified structure in terms of courses, **institutional** structures and management styles; and
- an enhancement of expenditure on the operation and development of the system.

At present, higher education in India is a gigantic enterprise, employing a large number of personnel, incurring an annual expenditure of millions of rupees and teaching a large body of students. As of **November 2003**, there were 330 universities including deemed to be universities, 15 institutions of national importance over 13,000 colleges (excluding Junior Intermediate Colleges, and institutions offering **Diploma/Certificate** courses), and about 9.5 million students studying in these institutions.

The Indian higher education system though vast in absolute terms caters to only **about** 70 percent of the population in the age group of 18-23 years. This is about the **same** as the percentage of 6 per cent **obtained** in low-income countries. In comparison the middle income countries have enrolment of about 21 percent and developed countries of over 50 per cent in higher education (World **Bank** 1994). It is **necessary** to **increase the enrollment** to at least 20 per cent; a percentage that is considered essential for sustained economic development.

The management of such a big system presents a major challenge to education administrators. The pattern and style of management are, in a **major** way, determined by the structure and organisation of higher education in India. In the present an attempt has been made, to give you an overall idea of the structure and organization of **higher education** in India.

Learning outcomes

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- acquaint yourself with the structure and organization of higher education system in India;

- explain the pattern of the financing of higher education in India;
- analyse the roles of functions of the University Grants Commission and other agencies concerned with higher education; and
- assess the effectiveness of the administrative style of higher education, at the state and institutional level.

Higher education structure and institutions

Higher education in India is primarily a public funded activity. However, its structure and organisation are complex and varied. There are different agencies and departments involved in its operation. The agencies are mainly the Ministries at the Federal and State levels, autonomous organisations set up by the Ministries and the private organisations or trusts. There are also Ministries, other than those responsible for education, which are involved in higher education in India. Simply put the Indian higher education system is both vast and complex. The complex arises from the great variety in the mix of the university level institutions and from the multiplicity in nomenclature.

Structure of higher education

In the Indian system, higher education includes the education imparted after the 10+2 stage - ten years of primary and secondary education followed by two years of higher secondary education. The first degree, the Bachelor's degree, is obtained after three years study in the case of liberal arts, and four years in the case of most professional degrees (four and half in case of two years duration. The research degrees (M.Phil and Ph.D) take variable time depending upon the individual student (See Figure). The post graduate degree programme involves two years of study after first degree. The minimum period of an M.Phil degree is one and half year and Ph.D a further two years. However, in most cases a Ph.D degree requires four years. The highest degrees are D.Litt and D.Sc are awarded after the Ph.D degree for original contributions of the highest order.

In addition to the degree courses, a number of diploma and certificate courses are also available in universities. Their range is wide and they cover anything from poetry-writing to computers. Most of the short-term (3 months to 1 year) certificate and diploma courses are meant for undergraduate students and have a vocational bias. Many universities are now offering a variety of short-term courses to enable the students to pick up additional qualifications that would be helpful in obtaining employment. Most universities offer post-graduate diploma courses in professional areas. Their duration is usually one year, but there are also three years programmes, more or less equivalent to Masters Programme, for those who are already employed.

The Universities

The university-level institutions in the Indian higher education system are basically of three types - the conventional universities, usually referred to simply as universities; the deemed-to-be universities, or deemed universities; and the institutions of national importance.

Conventional **Universities** are tertiary-level institutions that are established through Acts of Parliament or State Legislatures. They are almost entirely funded by Governments. The universities that are established by Acts of Parliament are funded by the Central Government and are commonly referred to as Central Universities. The Universities established by Acts of State Legislatures are funded by the respective State Governments and are referred to as State Universities. Examples of central universities are Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh; Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi; University of Delhi,

Delhi and Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi. Examples of state universities are the University of Pune, Pune and Madras University, Chennai.

Deemed Universities are institutions that are deemed-to-be-universities for the purposes of the University Grants Commission Act, 1956. The Deemed University status is conferred by the Central Government, on the advice of the University Grants Commission, work of high quality in specialised academic fields. Examples are the Manipal Academy of Higher Education, Manipal and Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai.

Institutions of National Importance are institutions established, or so designated, by Acts of Parliament that undertake teaching and research in areas that are critical to national development. Examples are the seven Indian Institutes of Technology, and Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology, Trivandrum.

The Universities alone are empowered to grant degrees, and additionally Diplomas and Certificates, depending upon the nature of the programmes. Other institutions can only award Fellowships, Diplomas and Certificates. The Fellowship of the Indian Institutes of Management is generally equated with a Ph.D degree, and the Post-Graduate Diploma with the MBA.

The Universities are also described as being Unitary or Affiliating. In the case of **Unitary Universities** (e.g. Banaras Hindu University) the teaching and research is conducted on a single campus (sometimes with subsidiary campuses) and there is a provision for both undergraduate and postgraduate teaching, as also for research. The best examples are the Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi; University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad; Pondicherry University, Pondicherry that are all Central universities.

Affiliating Universities are those that have central campus on which there are departments or schools that impart postgraduate instruction and conduct research. They have a variable number of colleges affiliated to them and these may be distributed over a number of districts, in accordance with the jurisdiction of the university. The colleges mostly do undergraduate teaching though some of them may be permitted to conduct postgraduate classes in select subjects. Most Indian universities are of the affiliating types with the larger ones like Calcutta, Mumbai, Osmania and Bangalore having more than 300 affiliated colleges.

The majority of Indian Universities are funded by the Governments - Central or State. Some of the deemed universities are sponsored by private trusts. These include Birla Institute of Technology and Science, Pilani and the Thapar Institute of Engineering and Technology, Patiala. Recently, in a few states private universities have been established under Acts of Legislatures, e.g. the Sikkim-Manipal University of Health, Media and Technological Sciences in Sikkim and the Amity University in Chattisgarh.

Colleges

The bulk of undergraduate teaching is done in colleges. These are of two types - the constituent colleges and the affiliated colleges.

Constituent Colleges, also known as Conducted Colleges, are those that are established, managed by the University.

Affiliated Colleges are those that are set-up and managed, outside the university campus, either by the government or by educational trusts.

The power of granting affiliation to a college usually vests with the universities and this power is generally exercised in consultation with the concerned government. Most colleges impart education in the liberal-arts including Arts, Social Sciences, Sciences, and Commerce. However, there are also many professional colleges that impart education in one of the professional disciplines like Law, Medicine, Engineering and Technology and

management. Though quite a few professional colleges are funded **and managed** by the government the majority.

Ministries and agencies in higher education

It is worth mentioning that, higher education in India is not the exclusive responsibility of the Ministry of Education. There are many other ministries and agencies directly involved in higher education. We will briefly discuss the structures at the macro-level.

Ministry of Human Resource Development

The Department of Secondary and Higher Education of the Union Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) is the major agency concerned with higher education. The Ministry operates normally through the UGC. The UGC is a quasi-independent body set up to discharge the responsibility of coordinating and maintaining standards in the fields of higher education. More specifically, the UGC takes charge of the general higher education in Arts, Sciences, Commerce and professional education which are under the multi-faculty universities. It needs to be noted that Regional Engineering Colleges and IITs which have departments of Humanities and Social Sciences, are not under the purview of the UGC. A separate section in this unit, outlines the role and functions of the UGC.

Engineering and Technical education is handled by a separate unit in the MHRD. Important decisions in this area, and on institutions, are taken with the advice and assistance of the All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE).

Ministry of Agriculture

The Ministry of Agriculture has assumed responsibility of the agricultural education in India. All the Agricultural Universities function under this Ministry. In agricultural education, the Ministry **operates** through the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR). The agricultural **universities** are established by the Ministry, in co-operation with the state governments. It needs to be noted that agricultural departments affiliated to various multi-faculty universities come with the purview of the UGC.

Ministry of Health

The Ministry of Health looks after medical education. The Medical Council of India (MCI) and the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) assist the Ministry in the planning and development of medical education. The MCI determines the minimum standards of medical education necessary for granting medical degrees. The ICMR strives to promote research in medicine and provides funds for medical research. Other councils that look **after** specialise areas of medicine are the Central Council for Homeopathy (CCH) and the Central Council of Indian Medicine (CCIM).

Ministry of Law

The legal education is under the Ministry of Law. The Bar Council of India (BCI) is concerned with legal studies in India. Generally BCI is concerned with the first degree in law, while the post-graduate and research studies are under universities, and hence these come under the purview of the UGC.

Specialised agencies for promotion of research

A number of bodies have been set up outside the framework of the university system to direct and support research. The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR),

under the Department of Science and Technology, is a planning and coordinating body operating through a chain of national laboratories and institutions. The Council undertakes and supports pure and applied research, provides junior and senior fellowships, funds research projects and maintains a record of scientific and technical personnel. Similar functions are performed by Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) in the field of Social Science; Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR) in the field of historical studies; Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) in the area of space research, etc. Among the above agencies, the ICSSR has a few branches at the regional level.

To sum up, the organisation of higher education in India is a complex one. The type of universities normally included are - Central universities, State universities and **deemed-to-be** universities. Some of them fall within the purview of the UGC, while the others are looked after by the different agencies working under the respective Ministries. The various Ministries and their specialised agencies are involved with professional higher education in the country. However, there are certain specialised agencies like CSIR, ICMR, ICHR, ICSSR, ISRO, etc. which have the overall responsibility of planning and coordinating high quality research in their respective specialised areas.

Self-assessment

1. What are the *affiliation* criteria that a college has to *fulfill* before it is granted the status of *affiliated* college by a university?

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2. Following are the few statements on the management system of higher education institutions. Examine each statement and *identify* whether it is true or false

- a) The Regional Engineering Colleges and IITs which have departments of Humanities and Social Sciences *function* under the purview of the UGC.
- b) The All India Medical Council determines the minimum standards of medical education that are necessary for granting medical degrees.
- c) The post-graduate and research *studies* in law come under the overall council of the All India Bar Council.

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University programmes and schedule

Academic year

In India the academic year usually begins in June or July and ends in March or April. Institutions located in mountainous areas (about one or two per cent of the total) follow a different schedule, beginning in March and going on to December. In most universities,

which follow an annual examination pattern, the academic year is divided into three **terms**. An increasing number of universities are now converting to the semester system. There is no organised teaching during summer vacations. The accepted norm is that of 180 actual teaching days during the academic year, but it is not always attained.

Medium of instruction

In case of the professional courses, and subjects in the Science, the medium of instruction is almost **exclusively** English. In the Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences and Commerce faculties it is both English and the regional language. At the postgraduate level instructions are usually in English and the regional language.

Educational programmes

The educational programmes generally involve study of a fixed number of courses with little flexibility, at least at Bachelor's level. In the case of liberal education a student usually takes four subjects in the first year, three in the second, and one (**Honours degree**) or three (General or Pass degree) in the third. There may be restrictions on the subjects that can be chosen. For example, subjects of the Science stream cannot be taken with those of Arts and Humanities (exception Mathematics and Geography), and

Within the Science programme it is usually not permissible to take Mathematics and Physics with Botany or Zoology. The professional courses (except Medicine) follow the semester pattern. However, efforts are underway to accord greater flexibility.

Admission

For securing admission to undergraduate programmes in universities a student needs to have passed a senior secondary school examination taken after twelve years of schooling. This includes the Senior School Certificate Examination of the Central Board of Secondary Education, or the Indian School Certificate Examination or a Senior Secondary Certificate Examination conducted by one of the State Boards for Secondary Schools in India. However, adult learners who have not passed these examinations can obtain admission to programmes of open universities after passing an entrance examination.

Admission to non-professional colleges is usually not difficult, except in the case of some selected colleges in metropolitan towns where there is a strong competition. Entry into professional colleges, e.g. in Medicine, Engineering, Pharmacy, Dentistry, Architecture, Management or Agriculture is much more difficult because of the **limited number** of seats available, and is generally based on a separate admission test. Admission tests for the seven Indian **Institutes of Technology**, the six Indian **Institutes of Management**, and the All India Institute of Medical Sciences at Delhi and Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education & Research, Chandigarh are the most competitive.

At the postgraduate level, admission is restricted and only the above-average students can hope to get admission. Certain institutions, because of their reputation, are **more** sought after than others. In a recent development, some universities have started their own tests for admission to postgraduate classes.

Admission to M.Phil courses, which were started in the 70s, as **pre-Ph.D** programme, is competitive. About 50 per cent of universities have instituted this course which until recently was the minimum qualification for appointment as a lecturer. In the M.Phil programme there is an emphasis on course work of advance level, though a dissertation is also required.

Students are admitted to **Ph.D** courses on **satisfying** their supervisors as regards their competence and genuine interest in research. The admission is approved by the board of studies, in some cases on the **recommendation** of a Research Committee, and approved

by the Board of Teaching and Research of the University. During the last decade there has been a spurt in Ph.D minimum qualification for appointment as lecturer or for further promotion for those who are already lecturers. To ensure (Lecturership) and to pursue research, the UGC and the CSIR now conduct a joint selection, the National Eligibility Test (NET), twice a year. At the state-level there are State Eligibility Tests.

Financing higher education in India

The pattern of financing higher education closely follows its organisational structure elaborated in the previous sections. The financial support to a university is provided through different sources and channels. Let us first discuss the sources of university finances in India.

Source of Funding

The income of a university in India, is derived from the following sources:

- i) Grants from the Central Government;
- ii) Grants from the State Governments;
- iii) Contributions from students' fees;
- iv) Endowments, donations, etc; and
- v) Financial support from different specialised agencies

A general trend that seems to have emerged over the years is the decline of income of universities from all sources other than the Government. At present, more than three-fourths of the total income of the universities comes from the governmental Sources. Consequently, the share of contribution to university finances from other sources such as fees and donations, has declined. Donations are, by definition, voluntary contributions, and therefore, the public authorities cannot exercise coercive measures to increase contribution from this source. The student fee on the other hand, is a compulsory payment. The share from this source has come down, primarily because the fee structure and the amount of fees levied on students have remained almost unaltered. As noted earlier, the major share of the expenditure is from the public exchequer. And the funds from this source are given in the form of grants channeled through different agencies. Let us see the nature of grants and the channels through which they flow to universities. A development of recent years is the reluctance of Governments - Central and State - to loosen their purse strings for higher education because of the globalization and privatization trends. This has encouraged private providers to step in.

Channels of funding

The development of university education in India is the joint responsibility of the Central Government and the State Governments. As mentioned above, there are four types of institutional structures within the university system in India i.e. Central universities, State universities, Deemed-to-be universities and Institutes of National Importance. Of these, the central universities, deemed-to-be universities are largely funded by the federal government and the funds are channeled through the UGC. The institutions of national importance and the National Open University are directly funded by the Central government.

The responsibility for maintenance of State universities, lies with the State governments. However, they get grants from the Central government channeled through specialised bodies like the UGC in the area of general higher education, the ICAR in the area of agricultural education, the ICMR in the area of medical education, and so on, which are

set up for this purpose. In fact, the mechanism and pattern of grant allocation reveals the existence of centre-state relations in the field of higher education.

Types of grants

It is always interesting to look into the types of grants received by higher education institutions in the country. The State government grant to the universities can be grouped into three different heads:

- i) **Maintenance/Block Grants:** These grants are basically for the day-to-day functioning of the institutions. Salaries of the teaching and non-teaching staff constitute the bulk of the maintenance grant given to a university. These grants are determined by the State governments for a specified period and in general, are subject to increase on account of rise in costs. The quantum of grants on this account is based on the net deficit of the university, on approved items for the previous year on the one hand, and the increase on account of rise in costs, on the other.
- ii) **Non-recurring Grants:** These grants are normally used for buildings, equipment etc. In general, land for a university is given by the State government.
- iii) **Development Grants:** These are meant for the new schemes sponsored by the federal/state governments and a university generally gets these grants on a matching basis for various activities by the UGC.

The Central government provides grants to universities and colleges for general education, and are for the development purposes, which are channelised through the UGC. Most of these grants are on a matching basis i.e. the UGC provides only part of the total expenditure required for a scheme. The relative shares of federal and state governments vary according to the schemes. The federal share in general education varies between 05% to 100%. For example, for programmes like development of a post-graduate department or a center of advanced studies, the UGC assistance may be on a 100% basis, while, for schemes like the construction of staff quarters and student hostels, the UGC shares come around 50% of the cost. The UGC also make provisions, from time to time, for faculty development programmes like those which enable teachers to participate in refresher courses, summer institutes, academic conferences, etc.

- One major problem regarding the Central funds channeled through the UGC, is that these grants are meant for developmental purposes initiated during a plan period. The continuation of these schemes, after the plan, becomes the responsibility of the State and many a time the State government finds it difficult to continue funding the activities which were initiated with the UGC assistance.

An analysis of expenditure of the universities, over the years, shows that the salaries for teaching and non-teaching staff accounts for nearly two-thirds, of the total recurring expenditure. This share has increased over the years, which implies that share of expenditure on equipment, libraries, sports and games etc., has come down. This trend has serious implications for the quality of higher education in India.

Self-assessment

3. Specify different sources of income of a university in India

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4. **Critically reflect on the scenario likely to emerge in the absence of government finding to Universities.**

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Role and function of the UGC

As we have seen, the UGC plays an important role in the development of higher education in the country. Hence, it is necessary to learn more about this body. In this section, we will discuss in detail, the role and functions of this organization.

What is UGC?

The need for a central level agency to coordinate affairs in higher education was found long ago. The Calcutta University Commission (1917-19), suggested the creation of a body which would disburse funds, collect and disseminate information about universities and maintain liaison with foreign universities. The Sargent Report also echoed these suggestions and recommended setting up of a British-type University. Consequently, in 1945, a University Grants Committee was constituted. It was essentially meant to deal with the then existing central universities. After two years, the committee's scope was expanded to include all the universities. The committee had no funds of its own and hence the allocation of grants was not its primary responsibility. The University Education Commission (1948-49), recommended that the UGC should be empowered to allocate funds rather than remain merely a recommendatory body.

The Union Ministry of Education suggested a Central Council of University Education with all the functions of the UGC, except the financial responsibilities. However, the state ministries and the Vice-Chancellors' Conference of 1953, unanimously recommended the setting up of the University Grants Commission (UGC). Consequently, the UGC started functioning from December 1953. The UGC Act was passed by the Parliament in 1956. According to this Act, the major responsibilities of the Commission are two-fold:

- i) the promotion and coordination of university education; and
- ii) the determination and maintenance of standards of teaching, examination and research in universities throughout the country.

Specifically, the major objective of the Commission is to undertake in consultation with the universities and the concerned statutory council, all such steps as it may think appropriate for the “***promotion and coordination of university education and for the determination and maintenance of standards of teaching, examination and research in university...***”

The Commission is assisted by a Secretariat which is a semi-profession body. The Secretariat consists of one Secretary, Additional Secretaries, Joint Secretaries, Deputy Secretaries. Under Secretaries, Education Officers and Officers dealing with finance and accounts. The UGC has also established Zonal regional offices at Hyderabad, Pune, Ghaziabad and Calcutta to facilitate the allotment of funds to colleges those are headed by an officer of the rank of Joint Secretary.

The UGC plans are basically an aggregation of plans prepared by the Universities. Before the formulation of each five year plan, the UGC sends circulars to universities and its constituent colleges requesting them to propose their development schemes for

the next plan. The circular also indicates some priority programmes which the Commission intends to pursue. Keeping the UGC schemes and the requirements of the universities in view, the **universities/colleges** prepare the plan and submit them to the **UGC**. The UGC examines these plans and, taking into account the resource available, makes suggestions on the development plans of the universities; and the universities are, subsequently, requested to revise **their** plans accordingly. An aggregation of such revised plans become the five-year plan of the UGC. The UGC also sends visiting teams to the universities, and at times to colleges, to assess their developmental requirements.

Functions of the Commission

The union government attempts to fulfill its constitutional obligation for higher education mainly through the UGC. The UGC takes care of the general higher education in Arts, Science, Commerce and **professional** education provided in the faculties of the universities. Its functions in general, are confined to promotion, coordination, determination and maintenance of the standards of higher education. It provides funds for improvement of physical facilities, recruitment of staff, purchase of books and equipment, development of libraries and laboratories and for the varied programmes designed to raise academic standards on all-India basis.

More specifically, the functions of the Commission can be stated briefly as follows:

- to assess the financial needs of the universities;
- to allocate various forms of funds through grants;
- to advise any authority on the establishment of a new university or the expansion of existing one. However, it may be noted in this context that there are instances where the Commission is not consulted while establishing the universities at the State level. A new Act has been framed in this regard. In such a case the UGC is prevented from providing to the university assistance for a specified period;
- to collect and disseminate information on all matters pertaining to university education in India;
- to decide on standards and recommend measures necessary to improve university education in India

The UGC has introduced various faculty improvement programmes which provide opportunities to teachers to keep abreast with modern developments in their fields undertake research and exchange ideas with experts in their subject areas and other related fields. These programmes aim at improving the professional competence of teachers and to make them better equipped so that they can offer higher quality **instructional** programmes, and thus ensure high standards. It organizes summer institutes, seminars, refresher courses, academic staff orientation schemes, academic teachers. At times, it provides travel grants to teachers to travel abroad for conferences or seminars. The UGC has also instituted National Fellowships, scheme for National Lectures, Visiting Professors/Visiting Fellows scheme and Associateships to provide opportunities for teachers engaged in research to visit and work for short periods in various advanced centers or institutions.

Quality assurance

The responsibility of quality assurance in higher education lies with the University Grants Commission and **Statutory Councils** like the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE). The UGC established in 1994 the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) that undertakes institutional evaluation of universities and colleges. For quality assurance in technical and management education the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) set up, also in 1994, a National Board of Accreditation

(NBA) which undertakes programme evaluation. The Distance Education Council, Indira Gandhi National Open University (DEC-IGNOU) has the responsibility of monitoring quality in distance education programme.

The Government of India has set up a number of Councils to monitor professional activity in different professional areas. The Councils also regulate higher education in their respective areas. These statutory Councils are of two types:

Those with both funding and regulatory powers relating to education e.g., All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), Council of Architecture (CA), Pharmacy Council of India (PCI), Indian Nursing Council (INC), Bar Council of India (BCI), Dental Council of India (DCI), Medical Council of India (MCI), the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE), Central Council for Homeopathy (CCH), Central Council of Indian Medicine (CCIM), Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI) and veterinary Council of India (VCI).

Administration of higher education at the State level

Administrative structure at the State Level

There is no uniform pattern of administration of higher education at the State level in India. The administrative structure also varies among States. Usually there are three different structures dealing with educational administration at the State level. They are:

- i) The Secretariat;
- ii) The Directorate;
- iii) The Inspectorate

Among these, the former two structures are important so far as higher education is concerned.

The Secretariat is headed by the Education Secretary. Some States have only one Education Secretary who is responsible for all levels of education. Some States, on the other hand, have two or more Secretaries looking after the different levels/sectors of education. In States where there is only one Education Secretary, there are other functionaries such as Special Secretary/Deputy Secretary, exclusively dealing with higher education.

At the union level, only general and technical education fall under the purview of the Secretary for Secondary and Higher education, Professional education is looked after by the Secretaries of the respective Ministries i.e., agricultural education is under the purview of Secretary to the Ministry of Agriculture, medical education under the responsibility of Department/Ministry of Public Health, etc.

A few States (Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal) have established Higher Education Commissions of which the Chairman is the Education Minister. An eminent educationist serves as the Vice-Chairman. The responsibilities of the Commission are:

- i) improving the organization and promoting higher education in the State; and
- ii) determining and maintaining the standards of teaching, examination and research in the universities of the state.

The functions of the Commission are similar to that of the UGC at the national level.

Generally, all the States have directorates of higher education. There are, normally, two directorates dealing with higher education such as directorates of collegiate education and directorates of technical education. Each of these directorates is headed by a director, who takes care of the administration at the collegiate and technical education level.

Administrative structure at the university level

Universities in India are autonomous institutions. They have their own administrative structures and management styles. The President of India is the Visitor of all Central Universities, except the Vishwa Bharati, where the Prime Minister is the Visitor. In case of State universities, the Governor of the respective State is the Chancellor. Both the Visitor and the Chancellor, normally do not have any administrative role in the day-to-day functioning of the University.

The Vice-Chancellor is the most important functionary who is the chief executive and academic authority of a university. He/she exercises general control and supervision of the overall functioning of the university. He/she has a secretariat - the Registrar of the university supervising its work. In certain universities where academic programmes are diverse and where the student strength is large, one may find posts of Pro-Vice Chancellors. There are also Deans/Directors of Studies/Schools and Heads of Departments/Centres. Normally, in most of the universities the Deanship and Headship are available on a rotation basis. There are certain statutory bodies available in the university structure, for formulating policies and making roads to implement policies. We will discuss this more in detail in the last unit i.e. Unit 4 of this block.

Self-assessment

5. *As per the Act, what are the two major responsibilities that have been vested with the UGC? Give your assessment of the performance of these responsibilities by the UGC.*

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Summary

In recent years, a lot of pressure has been exerted on the higher education system in India at two levels. First, to accommodate the increasing numbers of student population and, secondly, to maintain the quality of education imparted through the system. These two aspects are always linked with the effective and **efficient** management system. In this unit, we **began** our discussion with the types of higher education institutions available in the country. As of September 2003, there were 322 universities including 64 deemed-to-be universities, 13 institutions of national importance and over 12,000 colleges (excluding junior intermediate colleges), both government and private managed, which are responsible for imparting higher education in the country. We have discussed the broad categories of tertiary level institutions available in the country like the central university, the state universities and the institutions of national importance. We have also identified **certain other** institutions which are exclusively meant for imparting higher education in the country. There are **certain ministries** and agencies which are concerned with higher education. These include ministries like - human resource development, agriculture, health, law, etc., and agencies such as - UGC, CSIR, ICSSR, ICHR, ICAR and ICMR.

The above mentioned organizational structure is closely associated with the financing pattern available in higher education. The sources of income for higher education are generally based on the grants by the federal and state governments, student fees,

endowments, donations, etc. Over the years, higher education, other than the government support for higher education has been declined. The Union and state governments are the **major** contributors to the funding of higher education. These funds are channelised to the institution of higher **learning** in the form of grants like **maintenance/block** grants, non-recurring grants, developmental grants, etc. In this context, **the** UGC has an important role to play. Hence, we have discussed in detail, its organizational structure, functions and its responsibilities for the qualitative improvement of the higher education system in the country. Lastly, in this **unit**, we highlighted certain aspects of the administrative structure of the higher education system at the state and university levels. In unit 3 and 4 of this block, we will discuss in detail, the university structure and its importance in the higher education system in the country.

Suggested readings

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Introduction

The Units 1 and 2 of this block have already given you a macro-view of the structure of higher education in India. By describing types of universities in India, the present unit will give you information and analyse the characteristics of university as a community, and deduce from this analysis the basic tenets governing university management.

There are several avenues open to students passing out of higher secondary classes for education at the tertiary level. Only a few among such avenues constitute **higher** education. Even in higher education, there are several types of institutions serving distinct purposes. We will, in this unit, discuss the structure and functions of most of them. We have several notions as to what universities should be like. These notions have evolved out of our exposure to what a modern European University has been like. How far do these **notions** hold good with regard to Indian Universities? We will examine this question. Finally, in this unit, we will try to deduce from the basic characteristics of a university, and a set of principles governing **university** governance.

Learning outcomes

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- describe the structure and functions of various types of universities in India;
- explain the characteristics of a university as a unique social system; and
- identify the basic tenets underlying university governance.

Universities in India

In this section, we will try and see what goes in the name of university education in India. We will first attempt to differentiate university education from other forms of tertiary education. For this purpose, first of all we need to enumerate the whole range of institutions that cater to tertiary education in India.

Tertiary education in India: the spectrum of institutions

First of all, let us clarify to ourselves as to what tertiary education is. As you must be aware, tertiary education refers to post-secondary education. An individual graduating from higher education stage has several alternative paths to choose from. **He/she** can discontinue education, seek admission to a post-secondary level institution, seek a job, and so on. A good deal depends upon the resources that **he/she** has. In the **Indian**

context, only a few are able to enter and are able to complete even higher secondary stage. Bulk of the young persons enter the "world of work", in many cases after remaining unemployed for long stretches of time. Only those few who, because of their social and economic background or scholarships, can postpone this predicament for a few more years and elect to continue with their studies. And the institutions they enroll in and the courses they study are **the one** which constitute what is known as **tertiary education**.

Tertiary education is not another word for higher education. Higher education is a form of tertiary education, although not all tertiary education is higher education. For instance, there are a number of institutions such as polytechnics offering non-degree programmes in the various branches of engineering, motor mechanics, air conditioning, nursery teaching, **commercial art**, garment designing, and so on. There are also similar institutions offering programmes in areas like nursing, pharmacy, hotel management, catering, secretarial practice, interior decoration, printing, and beauty-culture. All these courses are meant to prepare people for middle-level occupations. They are usually not counted as higher education, although they do constitute an important segment of tertiary education. Higher education is the other segment of tertiary education, which usually refers to education being offered in institutions leading to graduate and post-graduate degrees and institutions preparing people with higher-level skills, knowledge and competencies. Institutions in this category range from undergraduate degree colleges, medical, law veterinary, agriculture, engineering, nursing and secondary teacher training colleges to post-graduate departments on university campuses, management institutions, post-graduate institutions in agriculture, engineering and medicine, and centers of advanced study and research.

Models of Universities

Powar (2002) has drawn attention to the fact that in terms of traditions, objectives, organizational structures, disciplines-taught and source of funding the Indian universities vary considerably. They represent different 'models' including:

- a **The Humboldtian Research University Model** in which there is emphasis on graduate teaching and research, and a close interaction between these two functions for their mutual enrichment. Typical examples are the Berlin University in Germany and amongst others, Stanford and John Hopkins in the United States. In India university-level institutions that approach this model include the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore and the University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad.
- a **The British Residential University Model** or the 'Oxbridge' Model that stresses close formal and informal contact between teachers and students through classroom lectures, tutorials, seminars and other forms of personal contacts. The British examples are Oxford and Cambridge Universities. In India these ideals are being sought to be met in the single-campus universities like Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi and the Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi.
- a **The French Grades Ecoles Model** imparting elitist, professional education, mainly science and technology, to the most talented, and intellectually select, students. The Indian counterparts are the Indian Institutes of Technology and the Indian Institutes of Management.
- a **The Chicago Liberal Education Model**, launched by Hutchins at the University of Chicago, which has a strong liberal arts orientation that places emphasis on the development of independent and critical thinking. A few Indian institutions like the Banasthali Vidyapeeth in Rajasthan, and the St. Stephen's College in Delhi, probably replicate this model.
- a **The Affiliating University Model**, based on the University of London of the nineteenth century, wherein there is a central campus for postgraduate studies and research with a number of affiliated colleges spread over the university area. In spite of an

overt central control, the standard of education imparted by the colleges varies considerably. There are about 120 universities in India that are based on this model.

- **The Agricultural University Model**, developed on the lines of the land-grant colleges of the United States, that concentrate on agricultural studies, including forestry, horticulture and veterinary sciences. The utilitarian approach is exemplified by a strong emphasis on extension services. There are presently 35 agricultural universities in India based on this model.
- **The Professional University Model** that provides for higher education is one of the professional areas like engineering, and medicine and health services and law. This is a new trend that seeks to separate education in the professional subjects from the mainstream of higher education. Examples are the Birla Institute of Technology and Science, Pilani, the Maharashtra University of Health Sciences, Nashik and the West Bengal National University of Judicial Sciences, Kolkata.
- **The 'Deemed University' Model** by which institutions noted for their noteworthy contributions in specialized subjects or disciplines, are granted the status of universities. Examples are the Deccan College Post-Graduate and Research Institute, Pune, the Manipal Academy of Higher Education, Manipal.
- **The Open University Model**, that provides education through the distance mode, to those denied access; and promotes the concept of lifelong education for all. Typical examples are the UK Open University, Milton Keynes and the Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi.

Self-assessment

- I. **What do you understand by tertiary education? Give examples to substantiate your answer.**

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2. **Discuss the different models of universities stating your preference of a particular model.**

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University as a unique social system

Universities in India today, as we found in the earlier section, have come into existence as a consequence of a certain set of socio-historical circumstances. They are, by and

large, part of India's colonial legacy. They were meant to serve certain specific functions, structurally linked to the political economy of a colonized society. The circumstances have changed. India gained Independence. The Indian university education has grown into a mammoth system. The universities, however, continue to function sub-optimally. They retain **some** of the structural characteristics which are anachronous in modern times; these structures are mere vestiges of the colonial pattern rather than in tune with the needs and conditions of a modern India. While the basic human and societal ideals that university stands for remain largely unaltered, they may have acquired newer dimensions and meanings, given the India reality which again is in a state of flux. We will, in this section, examine some of the characteristics associated with the university system.

A self-governing community of scholars

One basic notion **that** we have about university is that it is primarily a self-governing community of scholars. This notion has three premises underlying it. One, that university comprises scholars. Two, that university constitutes a community. Three, the community that comprises university is self-governing. We will **try** and articulate these three premises and examine as to what extent they hold good, and what improvisations they have undergone in their rather problematic interaction with the Indian reality.

The contention **of the** first premise is that university is essentially a community of scholars having congregated for a certain basic purpose. Since this community is that of scholars, the purpose of their congregation is scholarship; this is, perhaps, more a truism than a fact. If we **may** explicate this purpose, we will find it is that of generating, acquiring and sharing knowledge. The community comprises teachers, students and administrators. Of these categories the first are essentially scholars, since their basic purpose is scholarship. For the teachers, a university is a place where they generate new knowledge and share it with their professional peers and students. For the students, it is a place where they acquire knowledge. The relationship between these two categories of scholars is symbiotic. Teachers are the primary sources of knowledge for students; students are often the main inspiration of inducing teachers to articulate the knowledge they have generated or acquired through communication with their professional peers.

The second premise is that university is first and foremost a community, in the sense that it has a certain physical manifestation similar to a community. It is, thus, assumed that scholars, here the students and teachers, share a community life; they live on a single physical context, a campus. They are in constant interaction, and that their interaction is organic to the basic fabric of the campus.

The third premise is that the university community is self-governing. Here one must add a qualifying rider. They govern themselves, of course, within the framework which the society or the State determines. Within the broad framework **of the** societal mandate, the university community determines the specific **directions** it takes and the manner in which it should discharge its social responsibilities.

When we juxtapose these three basic premises on the Indian reality, we must bear in mind that there is nothing like one Indian reality. A lot of what these premises imply fit in snugly with a few Indian universities, while there may be a few which only remotely fit in this framework. We must, therefore, **emphasise on** what the majority of the institutions **are like**.

We must realise that bulk of the Indian higher education is transacted through the undergraduate colleges which are affiliated to universities. To what extent are they a community of scholars? To what extent do they constitute a **community**? And, how far do they govern themselves? There are no precise and unequivocal answers to these. All **the** same, we could see that although many teachers on post-graduate campuses do engage in research and actively participate in professional communication, this is perhaps less

true in respect of those in affiliated colleges. Facilities and even a general milieu supportive of scholarship are generally found wanting there. Students also have, so to say, a bread and butter approach to studies.

And how much of a physical reality is the so called university community? Even some of India's better known universities situated in metropolitan cities do not have an ideal campus. Given the housing problems in growing metropolises, students and teachers commute great distance to reach the university every day. With their respective preoccupations concerning a middle class survival in a metropolis, their participation in the campus life becomes minimal. There are a few universities which have vibrant campus lives; but they are exceptions rather than the rule. In a typical affiliated college in a small town, one must expect more scope for greater interaction of a students and teachers. However, in most colleges there is minimum residential facility, and teachers and students stay outside the campus, bringing down considerably the possibility of greater collegiality and of scholarly interactions among teachers and students.

Indian University campuses have never been known for self-governance. There have always been interventions from outside. Moreover, the self-image of Indian university teachers has been that of civil servants rather than professionals, making them less resistant to following governmental dictum. Academic decision-making in unitary universities and on post-graduate campuses of affiliating universities have been more participative than in affiliated colleges. A typical Indian teacher in a higher education institutions, who is an undergraduate college teacher, has very little control over professional decisions.

In spite of these distortions between what we expect notionally about universities and what we see around us, the importance of this notion and the premises underlying it continue to assume importance. They are ideals to be pursued; after all, Indian university, like most social institutions, is still evolving.

A community of equals and unequals

University community is peculiar in its composition. It is a community of equals in one sense, and one of unequals in another sense. The community comprises mostly two categories of scholars, students and teachers. They are equals in the sense that the basic preoccupation of both is scholarship. They are unequals in the sense, that the sharing of scholarship among them is largely unilateral. With the instructional methodology followed, it is always the teachers who are the givers of knowledge, and the students the receivers. Among the teachers themselves, there is this notion of collegiality which renders them equals. All of them are in pursuit of knowledge and discharge their professional responsibilities in a similar fashion. However, hierarchy among teachers, in society like India, is more or less as rigidly observed as it is among civil servants, both in terms of privileges and responsibilities, there are more distinctions than commonalities among teachers of various designations.

Another important dimension of inequality in the academic community is in terms of the social positions. In pre-independence days, higher education in India was more an exclusive privilege of those who belonged to upper caste groups than presumably it is at present. However, even today the backward communities, especially the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes "have not become visible or assumed teachers" (Beteille, 1988:131). There is clearly a hegemony of higher caste groups in Indian campuses even today.

Women on the contrary, have marked their presence rather visibly on Indian campuses, especially in contrast to the discrimination they suffer in other walks of life. However, it must be realized that those women who come for higher education or who join the faculty are predominantly from the middle class. "The way in which marked contrast to the continuing gap between the upper castes and the lower, or between the middle class and other social classes exists, it tells us a great deal about how far the universities can go in the creation of equality, but it also tells us something about the ways in which discrimination

operates in the larger society". So far, we have been discussing the question of equality within academic communities, that is within a university or within a college. Let us now turn to the question of equality between institutions. There are different kinds of institutions of higher learning in India. There are undergraduate affiliated colleges in small "mofussil" towns, there are also the elite colleges in metropolitan cities. There are post-graduate departments in some affiliated colleges, there are also the prestigious ones in some of the unitary universities. There are small teaching shops in name of engineering and medical colleges in some of the States opened by certain enterprising people thriving on 'capitation fees'. There are also Indian Institutes of Technology and the All India Institute of Medical Sciences. The kind of education students get in these institutions vary; the kind of



Of course, the capitation fee for our medical course includes charges for a passport, visa and emigration formalities...

Courtesy : R.K. Laxman

facilities the teachers get for their own professional development also vary. And the way students and teachers distribute themselves among these institutions vary also along class, caste and gender line.

Role of dissent and discipline

Academic community is vested with the responsibility of generating knowledge. Knowledge generation, we must appreciate, is not an uncritical exercise. It will thrive only in such a milieu which allows for a questioning tradition. Dissent in such a milieu is an accepted practice. One has to have the freedom to disagree, and pursue alternative paths to truth. At the same time, much of what we see around us as research is what is known as paradigmatic, in the sense, it bases itself on commonly agreed upon concepts and theories, and follows standard methodologies. This calls for a great deal of rigour and discipline. This interplay of dissent and discipline is not confined to the conduct of research alone; it applies to the way of life in an academic community. It also should apply to the way academic institutions are managed and decisions are made.

Self-assessment

3. ***What are the premises that qualify a university to be called a self-governing community of scholars?***

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4. Discuss your own opinion regarding university being a community of equals and unequals.

Governance of university: some basic tenets

We have, in the earlier section, seen some of the unique notions attributed to a university, and also as to how they improvise themselves in their rather problematic interaction with the Indian reality. In this section, we will try to derive from these notions a set of **tenets** or principles based on which should be devised the governance of university.

Autonomy: The two dimensions

That a university should be autonomous is widely **accepted**. What essentially is the implication of this autonomy is to be examined. There are two dimensions to this concept, one external, and the other internal. The external dimension is more widely recognized, in contrast to the internal. We will discuss in more detail about each of these dimensions in the next unit of this block i.e. unit 4.

Autonomy of university is usually understood as its relative immunity as a corporate entity from interventions from external agencies, such as the State or one of its manifestations, the Government. This is essentially the external dimension. It provides for the entitlement of a university to **formulate** its own policies and make its own decisions, within the framework of the social responsibilities vested on it, by the agency which has created it, viz., the State. If we articulate this principle, it will work out to be mean more freedom to make decisions on the part of those who govern the university. In a narrow sense, it is interpreted, as is often done, to mean that the vice-chancellor should be vested with more powers and **should** be given a free hand. What is usually not considered **sufficiently** in this discourse about university autonomy is the fact that university is not a monolith; it has its own power structures. If a university has to be autonomous as a corporate entity, it is not **sufficient** that its decisions are made well within its own corpus, by say its chief executive, it is also necessary that such decisions are sufficiently participative. Thus, internal democracy constitutes the other side of the same coin. They are integral to the **concept** of autonomy itself. The autonomy vested on the university is in fact the freedom to make professional decisions vested on a community of professionals. It should not be presumed that immunity that top administrators of the university enjoy from the management makes university less vulnerable to external pressures. The reality of Indian university system is often far removed from this picture, thanks mainly to the practice of Vice-Chancellor's appointment directly or indirectly by the Government, larger than necessary representation from among **governmental** agencies in the governing bodies of the university, and nomination as opposed to election of whatever little teacher representation in such bodies.

Internal democracy and participative management

Democratic functioning is integral to the basic nature of any professional group, especially the academicians. The functional unit of an academic institution is individual teachers, and they ought to be making professional decisions about the discharge of their professional functions. **The** very operation of a university is such that each teacher is **more or** less an autonomous unit within the corporate framework; their role is not that of assembly-line workers. To ensure effective academic functioning of a university, it is essential that the professional decisions within the university are taken collectively. This is an essential

component of collegiality, which constitutes the basic dynamics of a university. Delegation of power, decisions through committee-deliberations, elected representation of teachers in important governing bodies, decentralized decision-making, internal debates and discussions on long-term policies - all these are essential features of an ideal model of university governance.

Accountability and public audit

Autonomy and **accountability** are just two sides of the same coin. Accountability always accompanies autonomy in any social institution. It is a package-deal. Like autonomy, accountability also has two dimensions; one external and the other internal. If university as a corporate entity has to enjoy autonomy from external environment, it has to be answerable to the latter about how effectively and efficiently it is operating within the framework of the social mandate with which it has been created. This becomes all the more necessary since university operates out of public funds, and as such public audit becomes imperative. Thus, the functioning of the university has always to be open to public scrutiny. Autonomy does not guarantee immunity from being accountable to public scrutiny; in fact, public audit in no way affects autonomy. It only testifies to the professional legitimacy of the university community. However, public audit is often used by the bureaucracy as a means to encroach upon the corporate space of the university, and it often creates tensions between the university and the government. All the same, the transparency of the university's corporate functioning aids in evolving channels through which members of university community can critically view the functioning of the university, and increasingly provide informed participation in the university's decision-making process.

The second dimension of **accountability** is the **internal** one. It essentially means the accountability of individual member of the university community to the university in general. A teacher being accountable to the university does not necessarily mean that he/she be answerable to his/her superior; it actually means that individual teacher be accountable to the faculty, meaning the group of teachers. This is, in fact, how most professional groups function. The decisions of the collective are paramount in choosing specific directions in discharging professional functions. The head of a department, dean of a faculty or a vice-chancellor merely presides over this 'collective'. The powers vested in such offices are merely the manifestation of the powers and see to their execution on behalf of the collective. Giving account of what an individual teacher does is in no way an infringement of his or her professional autonomy; this act merely reinforces the legitimacy of their professional status. Appraising the professional group, here the faculty as a collective, about one's own professional activities from time to time is a part of the spirit of collegiality. It is an act of assertion of the legitimacy of one's membership in a professional group; it should not be seen as seizing one's professional autonomy. At the same time, this concept of individual teacher's accountability often lends itself to be misinterpreted and used as a tool to perpetuate the oppressive character of the power hierarchy in the university community. This often leads to resistance from teachers' organizations. Just as autonomy does not mean anarchy, accountability does not mean oppression and tyranny.

Academic leadership: being first among equals

As we discussed in the earlier section, the officers of a university, whether they be vice-chancellors, heads of departments, principals of colleges, or deans of faculties, merely preside over a collective of teachers at various levels. The authority that has been vested in these offices is merely the authority of the collective. What is expected from them is academic leadership, and not merely administration. This is, however not properly understood or appreciated by most teachers as well as university administrators. The main reason for the misconception is the predominant self-image of Indian academics as

civil servants. The tendency is, therefore, to view officers of the university not necessarily as leaders of the profession, but as administrators. Providing academic leadership is a more responsible job, much more delicate than merely enforcing law. Power vested in an academic leader is that of persuasion and inspiring excellence. Power, unfortunately, is not understood as capacity to influence people; it is often understood in a narrow perspective as the capacity to issue sanctions. We must make here a distinction between the academic hierarchy and the power hierarchy in a university. Often, this distinction is so distinct, and very good teachers feel reluctant to take up leadership roles; and those who take them up have little time for academic growth.

It is in this context that it is asserted that academic leadership is merely being first among equals. The spirit behind this notion was totally missed especially in the earlier days of Indian university, when a single individual used to remain as head of department or dean of faculty for decades. This had reinforced the feudal nature of the university system. The rotation of these positions have drastically reduced such tendencies. There is also this new trend viewing universities in a corporate perspective, like an industry viewed. Administrative practices have been seen scrutinized in the light of practices in corporate management. The analogy of industry is not really very accurate in this regard, especially because it views the system in a mechanistic fashion, whereas university as an organisation involves a great degree of autonomy and creativity at the level of its functional units, viz., teachers. The merit of this influence of corporate management in university administration is only that there is a chance of the latter becoming a little more participative.

University management as management of creativity

As we discussed earlier, the role played by individual teachers in the academic functioning of the university is not really that of an assembly-line worker of a production unit. There is considerable amount of autonomy in the functioning of each teacher, and an element of creativity is involved in it. Unlike in most corporate organizations where each functional unit faithfully carries out pre-defined and assigned functions, in a university the functional unit, viz., individual teacher, enjoys considerable freedom in interpreting the curriculum, and planning and executing its transaction. The teacher is often given only general guidelines in selecting syllabus. The space enjoyed by the teacher within the academic set-up normally gives scope for creativity.

The role to be played by university leadership, therefore, is to essentially manage the organizational climate in such a manner that this element of creativity is fostered and reflected in the academic functioning of the university. Leadership provided by College Principals, Heads of Departments, etc. should not confine itself to merely enforcing regular attendance of faculty. Teachers ought to be given a little 'elbow space' within the organizational arrangement to enable creative choices. This, needless to say, does not imply anarchy. It only emphasizes individual professional space within the milieu of collective functioning. Academic institutions will do well to foster collective functioning through seminars, and debate and discussions on academic policies of the institutions. This, in fact, is yet another dimension of collegiality. Managing creativity is of course a problematic proposition. Creativity also brings with it certain idiosyncrasies. University management may have to cope with this as well.

Summary

We have accomplished three major things in this unit: one, we have made a distinction between tertiary education as a generic category and higher education as a specific category, and we have discussed the structure and function of various types of universities in India; two, we have articulated the unique characteristics of university as a community, and explicated certain popular notions about it, examining the way they have improvised themselves in their problematic interaction with the Indian reality; and three, we have

tried and deduced from these above notions certain basic tenets or principles of university governance. These are essentially meant to give you a perspective regarding the dynamics underlying university management and the role of teachers in it. Not all that is presented here may be in practice in the university environment you are familiar with. This perspective will nonetheless help you view the situation critically.

Unit end activities

1. Critically examine the 'autonomy' and 'accountability' criteria that are being followed in a university or a college that you are familiar with.
2. In the light of managerial principles that have been discussed in this unit, suggest certain performance criteria, as to what kind of intervention is necessary to improve the overall performance of the institutions.

Points for discussion

1. The problems of management in any higher education institution have always been linked with the degree of participation of teachers in the decision-making process and the implementation of the decisions taken. How far is this true in the context of the higher education institution that you are familiar with? What mechanisms you would like to suggest to improve the participatory management in your own institution.

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4

*University and Its Structure**Introduction*

In the previous unit, we discussed the important role of universities in society. We also discussed the various kinds of existing universities. In a vast system, like the one that we have, there is bound to be diversity. Higher education in India is the joint responsibility of both the federal and state governments. It has often been argued that the growth of the higher education system has been uneven. The structure reflects "patterns of political economic development in the pre-colonial, colonial and, currently **neo-colonial** that are uneven and often contradictory. Each major phase of development called forth an institutional expression in higher education and these disparities have never been resolved" (Chitnis, 1980 : 140). However, without going into details of these disparities, we discuss different statutory bodies, and their functions in academic, non-academic and para-academic responsibilities. We shall also discuss two **important** issues, namely autonomy and accountability, in the university context.

Learning outcomes

After going through this unit, you should be able to:

- identify the structural components of universities in India in relation to their statutory bodies and functions;
- explain the role of the university's functionaries for its smooth management;
- describe the functions of universities as an autonomous system; and
- identify the indicators of accountability in a university system for better managerial strategy.

The organisational structure of universities

The university system as it now operates in India was mostly inherited from the British. It dates back to 1857, when the first three universities were set up in the port towns of Calcutta, Madras and Bombay by the colonial rules as institutions for **European higher** learning in India.

Though the three universities were supposed to be modelled on the University of London, they were not designed to be major centres of research or of advanced post-graduate level education. Rather, they were conceived to be centres of undergraduate studies, and

as peripheral adjuncts to the centres of advanced university education at Oxford, Cambridge, London or elsewhere in Europe (Gilbert, 1972; Basu, 1978).

With the attainment of Independence and also to fulfil the aspiration for higher education of the Indian population, the Government of India under the leadership of **Jawaharlal Nehru** took immediate measures to expand higher education facilities. Initially it served the interests of the elite sections of the Indian society who had the means to **support** their education. Nowhere has it been made evident that university system started by the colonial rulers experienced any discontinuity in the system even after Independence. In the process of its expansion, a few new universities were established, and a considerable number of diversified courses were added, both in the professional fields which included education, law, engineering, management, **social science**, humanities, physical and life sciences, etc. were **included**. No doubt this has made a significant contribution in the area of student enrolment and expansion of the system, but no significant changes were observed in the **organisational** structure of these universities.

As mentioned in the previous unit, except for a few teaching universities, most of the Indian universities were **organised** on the affiliating principle. The main function of **such** universities is to provide able governance for their constituent and affiliated colleges. Hence, the **administrative** bodies, **otherwise** known as statutory bodies, have also been constituted on **similar** principles. In the following sub-sections, we will discuss the constitution and functions of each of these statutory bodies.

Statutory bodies of the universities

Each Indian university is governed by its statutory bodies such as the Court or Senate, the Executive Council/Syndicate/Board of Management, the Academic Council, Board of Studies etc. Nominees of the Central government in the case of Central Universities and those from the State Government in the case of State Universities are represented in the governing bodies of these universities. The following are the important decision-making bodies, which govern the Indian universities:

- Court/Senate
- Executive Council/Syndicate/Board of Management
- Academic Council
- Board of Studies
- Finance Committee
- Boards or Committees

We will now discuss each of these bodies, their constitution and functions, as well as the powers they enjoy for the effective functioning of the university system.

i) The University Court/Senate

The Court/Senate is the supreme governing body of Universities. In the case of Central universities it is known as the Court, while in State universities it is called the Senate. However, in the case of Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) such body does not exist. Generally, each of the Court/Senate of the universities has about 100 members and often more. It has some ex-officio members, and representatives of various professions/industries, principals of the affiliated colleges, students, non-teaching staff alumni and some teachers, nominated members.

This highest statutory body involves itself in all the major decision making process in the university. It controls the budget of a university, considers the annual report and passes resolutions thereon. It reviews the Acts of the university and examines the role of major bodies of the university. It also modifies and repeals statutes, whenever necessary, and passes ordinance in establishing new colleges, and maintaining both new and old ones.

It also supervises the establishment of teaching and administrative posts, and has the responsibility of conferring degrees. The Court/Senate can delegate its power, to the authority or any of the bodies of the university as it deems fit.

ii) Executive Council/Syndicate/Board of Management

In the Central Universities, the principal governing body is known as the Executive Council; in the State universities it is called the Syndicate/Executive Council or Board of Management. All the main functionaries of the university are ex-officio members of this body. It has representatives from both alumni's principals and the faculty, as also government representatives. Few prominent persons from the field of education are also nominated to the council.

The Executive Council/Syndicate/Board of Management manages and regulates finances, accounts, investments, property, business of the university and all other related administrative affairs. It passes ordinance for the constituent colleges, and monitors the effective management of these colleges. It also regulates and maintains the publication department and the university press. It enjoys the power to entertain, adjudicate and redress grievances of the staff of the university. It has also the power to delegate authority in certain matters of the university or to the committee, as it deems to be fit, for the effective and efficient management of the university

iii) Academic Council

All the senior officials of the university including Deans and Heads of departments of studies/schools are ex-officio members of an Academic Council. The representation for the ex-officio membership is normally based on the principle of rotation. Students also get representation on this body in some universities. If a university has its constituent affiliated colleges, the Principals of these colleges are also represented of this body.

The prime responsibility of the Academic Council of a university is to take important decisions on programmes and courses to be offered for students. It has also the responsibility for the maintenance of the standards in instruction, examination, evaluation, etc. The Academic Council works as an adviser to the Executive Council/Syndicate/Board of Management on all academic matters, including the control and management of libraries, laboratories, workshops, etc. It makes proposals to the Executive Council/Syndicate/Board of Management for the establishment of new departments, colleges, special centres, etc.

The Academic Council has the responsibility of considering proposals submitted by the faculty, to promote research activities within and outside the university, to recognise diplomas and degrees of the other universities, and to appoint committees for admission to various courses. It also takes interest in promoting the welfare of students. The Council exercises such other powers and responsibilities as are conferred on or imposed on it by, or under, the provisions of the University Act.

iv) Board of Studies

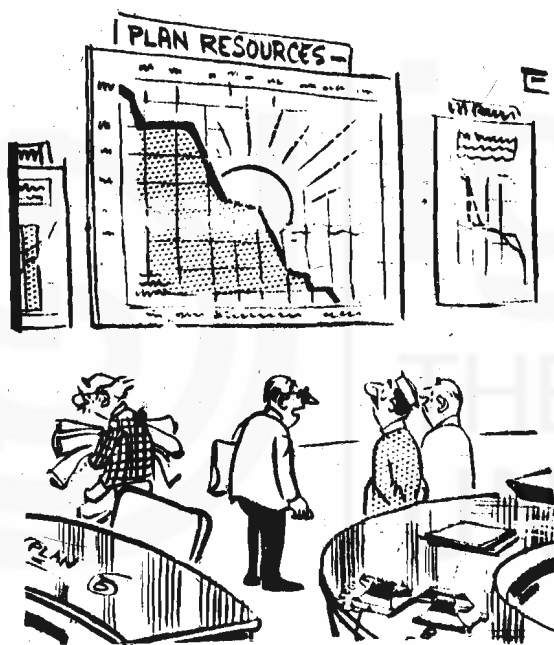
Universities have Boards of Studies in different subject disciplines. It usually consists of the Head of the University Departments, representatives of heads of departments in affiliated colleges and of teachers and co-opted members. In certain universities students are also nominated as members of the Board of Studies of Faculty/Schools.

The Board of Studies coordinates teaching and research work in the departments, appoints committees to organise the teaching and research work in the subjects/areas, approves the courses of studies, and takes active part in the examinations and evaluation process. It promotes research work of the faculty/schools and forwards these reports on research to the Academic Council. It also acts on the matters referred to it by the Vice-Chancellor, Executive Council/Syndicate or the Academic Council from time to time.

v) Finance Committee

The Vice-Chancellor of the university is the 'ex-officio' chairman of this committee. Normally, members include nominees of the Visitor/Chancellor, Government and Executive Council/Syndicate/Boards of Management as members of this Committee. The Finance Officer of the university is normally the member Secretary of the Finance Committee.

In the capacity of the member Secretary of the Finance Committee, the Finance Officer of the university prepares annual accounts and financial estimates of the university and lays it before the Finance Committee for consideration and comments, and thereafter, submits it to the Executive Council/Syndicate/Board of Management for approval. The Finance Officer exercises general control over the funds of the university and advises the Finance Committee and university authorities on its financial policies and performs such other financial functions as may be assigned to him/her by the Executive Council/Syndicate.



I got it done, sir. The idea, I understand, is to give a cheerful new look to the whole place!

Courtesy : R.K. Laxman

Subject to the control of the Executive Council/Syndicate, the Finance Officer holds and manages the property and looks into investments, including trusts and endowed property for furthering any of the objects of the university. The Officer also sees to it that the limits fixed by the Finance Committee on the recurring and non-recurring expenditure for a year are not exceeded and that all the money is spent on the purposes for which they were originally granted or allocated.

vi) Boards or Committees

The above-mentioned statutory bodies of the university can appoint Boards or Committees to deliberate upon certain specific issues. These Boards or Committees can have members from the respective statutory bodies or from outside. The main function of such a

Committee is to deliberate and make recommendations on issue assigned to it, subject to subsequent confirmation by the body, **which** appoints it. From the above discussion it is evident that a broad spectrum of responsibilities are assigned to statutory bodies of the university for its smooth functioning. But there are certain instances, where these bodies cross the limits **of the** authority assigned to them and took action in respect of issues not falling within their purview. However, we do not intend to discuss the issues involved here as it is beyond the context of our present discussion. In the next section, we will confine the discussion to the different functionaries of the university.

Self-assessment

- I. Discuss the functions of the Board of Management **and** Academic Council in the context of a university you are familiar with.

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2. Fill up the blank after selecting the most appropriate **words(s)** given within the brackets. _____

a) In the context of central universities is the supreme governing body.

(Court, Executive Council, Board of Management)

b) is the **ex-officio** Chairman of the Board of Studies of Faculty/School.

(Vice-Chancellor, Dean of the Faculty/School, Senior most Professor of the Faculty/School)

c) In the **capacity of the** members **secretary of the** finance committee prepares the annual accounts and financial estimates of the university.

(the Registrar, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, the Finance Officer)

d) coordinates and monitors the teaching and research work with the **faculty/schools** of the university.

(Board of Studies, Executive Council/Syndicate, Academic Council)

The university functionaries

The responsibility for the smooth functioning of any **institution** rests upon its staff. They are the pivotal links between the public and the **institute's** authorities. In the context of a university, the hierarchy maintained by these functionaries is all the more interesting to observe. In the following sections, we shall briefly describe the functions which constitute the formal pyramid of power structure within a university system.

i) Chancellor

Normally each university in India has a Chancellor. By and large, the State universities incorporated by an Act of the Legislature have Governors as the Chancellors. But in the case of Central universities it is the President of India, who is known as Visitor of the University, appoints the Chancellor of such universities. The Chancellors of the Central universities, whether elected or nominated by the Central Government, are usually men of repute or persons of academic distinction. By and large, the Chancellors of the Central universities have not evoked any controversy so far. On the contrary, the Governors who

are usually Chancellors of State universities have come across severe criticism, when they have tried to act authoritatively or as mouthpieces of the political party in power.

The **functions** of the Chancellors are generally of two types - **statutory** and **non-statutory**. The statutory functions are normally laid down in the Act of the university. Non-statutory functions evolve more or less from custom and convention. One of the statutory functions of the Chancellor is to preside over the **court/senate** meetings of the university. He/she has **been** vested with the power of appointing the Vice-Chancellor of the university, to nominate a few members to the **court/senate**, executive council, and academic council, selection committee of teachers and senior officers of the university. In the form of **non-statutory** functions, the Chancellor has the power to intervene in the matters of general administration of universities and also in academic matters like the priority in offering the courses, assessment procedures, vacations¹ holidays, and other matter related to academic supervision.

ii) Vice-Chancellor

The Vice-Chancellor is the lynch pin of a university. **He/she** is the keeper of the university's conscience, as mentioned in the University Education Commission Report 1948-49. And as stated by the Kothari Commission (1964-68), **he/she** should be committed to the university's pursuit of scholarship and of truth. **He/she** is the key person in the whole university system. On **him** depends, to a great extent, the success with which a university is able to **function** effectively and efficiently to fulfil its objectives. We shall now list the main functions of a Vice-Chancellor of a university.

- a) The Vice-Chancellor is the chairman of important statutory bodies of the university such as the **Senate/Court**, the Executive Council/Syndicate/Board of Management, the Academic Council, the Planning Board, the Finance Committee, the Selection Committee, etc. As Chairman, **he/she** presides over meetings, controls proceedings and keeps constant vigil on the discussions in the meetings.
- b) As the executive head of a university, the Vice-Chancellor is responsible for the implementation of the **decisions** taken by various statutory bodies. In this context, the **Vice-Chancellor's** capacity to run the university efficiently and effectively is truly reflected.
- c) It is the duty of the Vice-Chancellor to see to it that the provisions of the Act, statutes, ordinances, regulations are, and that the decisions taken by university authorities, are implemented.
- d) The Vice-Chancellor **has** to convene meetings of the statutory bodies. He/she can also be present and address any meetings of a university body or committee, without being a member.
- e) As Chairman of the research and **Ph.D. committee**, **he/she** has to ensure standard and the priority areas of the research effort undertaken by the university.
- f) He presides over the committee constituted to select teachers and nominates **the members** of the expert committees for selecting other academic and administration personnel of the university.

The task of a Vice-Chancellor, as one can really imagine, is not an easy one. **He/she** is the principal executive officer and the prime academic head of a university. **He/she**, to perform the role efficiently **he/she** has to take **constant** advice and guidance not only from university authorities but also from teachers, officers of the university, and other relevant agencies outside the university.

The term of office of Vice-Chancellor is normally of five years in the case of Central universities and three years in State universities. In the case of some of the State universities he/she can also have a second term.

iii) Pro-Vice-Chancellor/Rector

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor/Rector is the second executive and administrative officer in a university. In Central universities, the P.V.C./Rector is appointed by the Executive Council on the recommendations of the Vice-Chancellor and is selected from amongst the senior Professors of the University. He exercises such powers and performs such duties as may be prescribed by the statutes of the university. In State universities, the PVC is appointed by the Chancellor from a panel of names recommended by the Vice-Chancellor. The terms of office of the P.V.C./Rector is generally co-terminus with the Vice-Chancellor. It should, however, not exceed five years.

The P.V.C./Rector is expected to share the responsibilities of the Vice-Chancellor in the areas where the latter deems it proper. He/she also officiates for the Vice-Chancellor when the latter is either away from the headquarters on official business nor on leave. Hence, the prime functions of the P.V.C./Rector is a sort of partnership with the Vice-Chancellor to make the whole operation of university system more effective.

iv) Registrar

The next in the hierarchy of the university system is the Registrar, who traditionally has been the permanent administrative head of a university. The very aspect of permanency gives the Registrar an advantage over the Vice-Chancellor who has a fixed tenure. Therefore, the Acts of many universities have been modified and the Registrar's tenure fixed at five years.

The Registrar of a university is the ex-officio secretary of the Court/Senate and Executive Council/Syndicate. He/she is the custodian of records, the university seal and all the other properties of the university that the Executive Council/Syndicate entrusts to his/her care. He/she must sign all contracts and agreements made on behalf of the university. The Registrar is supposed to maintain correspondence with other statutory bodies. He/she convenes the meetings of all the bodies as per advice of the Vice-Chancellor. The Registrar is also responsible for the preparation of the Annual Report on the activities of the university and other sundry matters.

The functions and powers of the Registrar discussed above are by no means exhaustive. It has been observed that the more the Vice-Chancellor and Registrar pull together, the greater the strength of the university system.

v) Dean of Faculty/School

The Dean is the head of the school/faculty of studies. In most of the universities in India, the Dean is appointed by the Vice-Chancellor from amongst the Professors of a faculty/school for two years, on rotation on the basis of seniority.

The Dean is responsible for the conduct and standards of teaching and research in his/her faculty/schools. He/she coordinates and generally supervises these through heads of departments. His/her responsibility is to arrange for the examination of the university in respect of the students of his/her faculty/school in accordance with such directions as may be given by the Academic Council. He/she performs other academic duties as may be assigned to him/her by the Vice-Chancellor, Executive Council/Syndicate or by the Academic Council, from time to time.

vi) Head of the Department

The Head of a Department otherwise known as Chairman of a Department or Centre, is appointed by the Vice-Chancellor, for a period specified in the statutes, on a rotation basis. He/she may be from among Professor or Readers in the department. In some of the State universities, even a Lecturer can become the Head of department.

The Head convenes and presides over the meetings of the department under the general supervision of the Dean. He/she organises teaching and research work in the department, and is in charge of maintaining discipline in the classroom, laboratories, etc. He/she assigns to the teachers of the department, such duties as may be necessary, for the proper functioning of the department. The major activities which he/she undertakes, are to plan, execute and monitor the working of his/her department in the fields of teaching, research and extension activities.

vii) Other functionaries

In this category, we have included all other functionaries of the university who are responsible both for administrative and academic matters. Among such functionaries, the most important ones are the Controller of Examinations, Finance Officer, Deputy Registrars and also Assistant Registrars. As examination is an important and confidential matter connected with university administration, the position of the Controller of Examinations is of immense value to the system. The credibility of the university largely rests on the successful holding of examinations and, therefore, the role of the Controller of Examination is of utmost importance.



I want to avoid trouble. If I catch anyone copying, it always leads to rioting

Courtesy : R.K. Laxman

Another important officer, usually appointed on deputation from the Government, is the Finance Officer of the university. He/she generally has a training in accounts and advises the university authority regarding all financial matters. He/she has the responsibility of preparing annual budget estimates and gives it a final shape. He/she is the custodian of the university's finance.

The Deputy Registrar and the Assistant Registrars contribute immensely to the upkeep of the university system by playing a significant role in implementing major decisions and policies of the university. This decentralisation process helps the university administration to function smoothly and effectively. In this section we attempted to identify certain major roles of the important university functionaries. In the next sections, we shall discuss two important issues i.e. university autonomy for efficient management, and its accountability towards the achievement of broader national goals.

Report of the UGC Committee on University Management

A UGC Committee on Alternate Models of Management with Prof. A. Jnanam as chairman, submitted in January 1990 a report titled "Towards new Educational Management" which made important recommendations on various aspects of university governance. Some of the recommendations regarding Authorities, Bodies and Committees are as follows:

1. The university senate or court should be a deliberative and consultative **body** and not a decision-making authority. It should have representation from various sections of society etc. size should be a maximum of **100** members in affiliating universities and smaller in central universities.
2. The **Syndicate/Executive Council/Board** of Management should be the principal executive body. It should not normally over-rule the decisions in academic matters of the academic council.
3. The Academic Council should be the principal authority as far academic affairs are concerned the membership should predominantly be academic persons.
4. Every academic discipline **should have** a Board of Studies. The membership should comprise **60%** faculty members **20%** external experts and **20%** representative of user agencies.
5. Every university should have a Finance Committee, Manning and Monitoring Board, Board of Research, Board of Evaluation/Examination/Board of Extension work and Grievance Rehearsal Committee.

As regards officers, the Committee has recommended:

1. The President of India should be the Visitor of Control universities the Governor the chancellor of State universities.
2. The Chancellor should be a person eminence in public life or one who has distinguished himself in science, social science, literature or the arts.
3. The Vice-Chancellor should be a senior and distinguished academic possessing the highest level of competence and integrity. He should be the administration and academic head with powers and duties commensurate with these duties.
4. Every university should have one or more posts of the level of the Vice-Chancellor.
5. There should be different Registrars for governance, administration, Finance and **Evaluation/Examination** with terms of 5 years.
6. Automatic or mandatory rotation of headship of departments should be abolished. The head should be appointed for 5 years without any bar on reappointment. The department should be administered with the help of committees.

Self-assessment

3. *What are the non-statutory functions of the Chancellor?*

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4. *What are the functions of the Vice-Chancellor as the ex-officio Chairman of the university statutory bodies?*

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University: an autonomous system

For any organisation or institution, an important factor contributing to its growth, both **internally** and externally, is the extent of autonomy it enjoys. The university as an unique institution of higher learning, cannot be placed beyond this requirement. This is not only a necessary condition for the smooth running of the institute, but it also contributes

to the qualitative development of the university system. A university has to be invested with autonomy basically at three levels, (i) In selection of students, (ii) In the appointment of teachers and adoption of their promotion criteria, and (iii) formulation of courses of study, teaching techniques, research programmes and extension activities.

While ensuring autonomy, it is very important for the university, to accept the idea and practice of accountability. It has to show a commitment to truth in all fields of activities. The ideal of commitment has to be inculcated in all the members of the university community, and this principle must dominate all its sphere. Only in such a situation is there a likelihood of the university getting not only self-respect, but also the respect of society.

The concept of autonomy of universities is based on the acceptance that without it the university cannot discharge its duties effectively. It has been observed that only an autonomous institution, which is free from regimentation of ideas and outside pressures, can transact its activities fearlessly, and thus build creative thinking and a spirit of enquiry among its members. Such institutions stand unaffected by the limitations or prejudices of society and this is obviously very essential for the development of a free society.

The university autonomy functions at two levels, which are as follows:

- i) Autonomy within a university which includes the autonomy of the departments, colleges, teachers and students in relation to the internal **functioning of the** university as a whole.
- ii) Autonomy of the university system as a whole, in relation to outside agencies and influences emanating from outside the system, such as from State or Central governments.

We will discuss briefly, the operational implications of such autonomy at each level.

Autonomy within a University

Autonomy within a university system is normally confined to the following levels:

- i) Universities are institutions meant for teaching and learning, and their main functionaries are the teaching community. The non-academic staff in a university perform the supporting roles. It has been observed that within a university system, it is the administration which plays a bigger role most of the time even in academic matters. A situation sometimes exists, where in the administration tries to acquire a dominating and controlling position in various university bodies. This is contrary to the principles of the university autonomy. Hence, conventions should be built, if they do not already exist, to allow the academic staff to face decisions, particularly in the teaching and research functions. In this respect, it is necessary that the Academic Council of the university be the final authority in all academic matters.
- ii) In academic matters, a democratic approach must be followed. There is always a tendency to give more importance to the ideas and proposals given by an influential individual as, in most of the cases, it has come from persons who hold important positions. This would be an unhealthy practice in an institution. Hence, a healthy atmosphere has to be developed in a university where proposals and ideas are to be **judged on the basis of merit rather than on the importance of the person who makes them.**
- iii) As we know, the most important units for academic functioning in a university are the departments or the centres of study. It is always necessary to delegate administrative and financial powers to each departments of study in relation to their respective academic matters. The department must be the authority while determining its academic programmes and the requirements for its library and laboratory.

- iv) Universities, **if they** have affiliated colleges, must be liberal enough to grant freedom for colleges so that their can **function** effectively. The role of a university in relation to colleges, is to guide them in the implementation of decisions rather than control them at every level.
- v) A university is the community of academics consisting of **both** teachers and students. It is always necessary to keep these **two communities** together in a common bond rather than **polarise** them on different issues. In order to create a sense of confidence between teachers and students, it might be desirable to constitute a joint coordination committee in each department and faculty. This committee could serve as a forum for discussion and evolving solution for common problems.
- vi) In order to encourage students to take part in the management process of a university, and to make them realise their responsibilities in the healthy functioning of the university, students must be given representation in various university bodies, if this has not already been done.

Another important dimension of university autonomy relates to **academic freedom**. There must be a clear distinction between autonomy of a university, and the academic freedom that teachers enjoy. This freedom implies that a teacher must not be pressurised to teach something that is against his conscience. This refers to the freedom to express their views within and outside the classroom. At the same time such freedom should not allow indulgence in propaganda and pressurising students to subscribe to the ideology that a teacher holds as correct.

A teacher must be free to pursue and publish his research studies and speak, write and participate in debates on significant national and international issues. **He/she** should receive all facilities and encouragement in this regard.

Autonomy in relation to outside agencies

Universities in India, being a sub-system of the social system, have certain obligations and responsibilities towards **the** society. While a university is expected to be autonomous in its activities, it is always desirable that it does not allow any outside agency to interfere in its functioning. Sometime, it is obligatory on the part of the university to share its decisions with such agencies outside the system, like the UGC or AIU, which are integral parts of the university system. Some of the important aspects of university autonomy which have led to controversy since their establishment, are discussed below:

- a** One of **the** important areas in which university autonomy always come under attack is its power to select and admit students. Of course, while making decisions in this regard, it is obligatory that universities consider the larger interests of society such as reservation of seats for the backward sections of the population.
- a** The universities have been expected to meet all national requirements for creation of trained manpower. However, in a situation where national needs do not remain static, universities find it **difficult** to fulfil their commitments. It is, therefore, generally felt that higher education system itself has become irrelevant to fulfil the requirements of a developing country like India.
- a** As far as research at the macro-level is concerned, a university always has little to say. The policy is decided often outside **the** purview of the university system, and the responsibility of undertaking such research in which it has no say, is mostly thrust upon the university. The faculty involved in it, may not identify themselves with such research and hence the seriousness in conducting studies is, more often than not, lost.

One must not forget another aspect of university autonomy which is important for its day-to-day functioning. A university can normally enjoy only that much autonomy as the law permits, since it is an institution established in accordance with a law. The real

custodian of university autonomy is, therefore, public opinion arising through its own dedication to the pursuit of knowledge and service of truth.

Self-assessment

5. *Distinguish the internal autonomy of a university from its external autonomy at the conceptual level?*

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Accountability: the management perspective

Institutions of higher learning face the charge that they have failed to discharge their responsibilities. Not only has this allegation come from outside the institutions, but also the demand for greater accountability has been heard within the institutions themselves, particularly with respect to the management of internal affairs and the reform of institutional governance. In the previous unit we discussed some issues related to accountability. In this section we shall discuss the development of accountability for a better management perspective.

In the basic sense, accountability means "***to be answerable legally or morally for the discharge of duties efficiently***". Thus, in any institution or organization, ***accountability*** may be considered as a process which involves the discharge of duties by both individual and various bodies of which they are a part.

As far as universities are concerned, accountability is a necessary and important **pre-condition** of their 'autonomy'. These concepts imply that universities have the power of self-governance and decision-making with regard to academic programmes as well as in respect of administrative and financial matters: so as to enable them to dynamically exercise their options and implement them to achieve the objectives of higher education in the broader framework of national development.

Accountability is therefore, a condition that morally and legally forces various functionaries of a university – including teachers, students and non-academic staff- to work seriously for the effective management of the system in order to achieve the goals set for the institution. From the management point of view, this is not only desirable, but also a necessary condition for overall development of the institution.

A university must be accountable internally to students who are the direct beneficiaries of the system, **and** externally to the society which gets the benefits both directly and indirectly through knowledge, skills and values that are imparted to students. It is said that most of the universities in India, demand greater autonomy, but are not concerned with their ***accountability*** to the society.

As we have seen the process of accountability operates at two levels **i.e.**, the external level and the internal level. The indicators for external accountability of a university are grouped as contents of its courses and the norms of its links to the societal needs; the flexibility and options in courses; the co-curricular and extra-curricular activities and their relation to personality development; **performance** of students; employment pattern

of students passing specific courses; or programmes and the extension programme conducted and teachers' contributions to it; etc.

The indicators included under the internal accountability are the gap between planning and implementation of an activity; time gap in decisions with regard to financial and academic support for various activities; the difference between prescribed and actual teaching days and the average workload of a teacher; professional development of teachers including seminars, conferences, workshops attended, and refresher courses and training received by them; the utilization pattern of the library; the teaching aids used; etc.

If one considers seriously his/her obligations in relation to these norms and applies them to the university system, he/she can assess the level of accountability of the staff of a university. For students, the average attendance, average number of tasks assigned to them and the number completed, and the rate of participation in extra-curricular and co-curricular activities, etc., may be the indicators of accountability.

Teachers have to carry out self-assessment to determine their contribution to teaching, research, extension and other activities. These also include information such as the number of classes taken per week, the number of research papers/articles published, projects undertaken and completed, and their contributions towards the academic and social interests.

If accountability in universities is to be viewed positively, one must consider the following points:

- Efforts must be made to ensure that the requisite conditions of accountability are maintained and, wherever necessary, reinstated.
- Economic conditions are generally such that universities will have to develop more efficient models of management and governance. Efficiency and lack of genuine accountability at this level are an open invitation to those who would tamper with institutional autonomy.
- Universities need to reappraise their mission and role as well as their type and level of programmes, in keeping with the probable levels of funding.

In order to resolve problems of accountability, it is desirable that universities on the one hand, and the Government and its agencies like the UGC on the other, should boldly face each other and discuss the problems that adversely affect accountability. More effective and efficient relationships at this point are, therefore, mandatory.

Self-assessment

6. State at least three indicators each that cover the purview of internal and external accountability.

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Summary

when universities in India were established for the first time during pre-independence period, they were modelled on pattern of the University of London, U.K. Since then,

similar structural patterns have been followed although the University of London has modified its structure significantly. Keeping this background in mind, we have made an attempt to present an overview of the structural systems of the Indian universities. Every Indian university, be it a federal or an affiliated one, has certain statutory bodies and these have occupied important position in its administrative system. These statutory bodies are – the Course/Senate, Executive Council/Syndicate/Board of Management, Academic Council, Board of Studies of Faculty/School, Finance Committee, Boards of Committees, etc. Each of these bodies has a unique role to play in the planning and policy-making of university. The internal management of a university rests with its functionaries organized in a hierarchical way such as—the Chancellor, the Vice-Chancellor, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor/Rector, the Registrar, Dean of Faculty/School, Head of the Department, Finance Office, Deputy Registrar, Assistant Registrar, etc. We have discussed the important roles that each of these officials play in the shaping of the both academic and the administrative matters of the university.

While discussing issues related to autonomy of a university, we have examined the operational behaviour of such autonomy at two levels i.e., autonomy within the university related to teaching-learning situations, and the autonomy of the university in relation to its outside agencies in achieving the broad national goals. Lastly, to focus on a better managerial perspective, we have examined the issues related to accountability and have identified certain indicators for accountability in the larger interest of the institution.

Unit-end activities

1. Prepare a case study of an issue, that you are familiar with, which had required a collective-decision of the staff members of your institution. Examine each of the steps that you and your colleges had undertaken to resolve the issue. Explain the specific role that you have undertaken in resolving the problem.

Points for discussion

1. Critically examine the present administrative structure of the college or university that you are familiar with. Do you find any inadequacies in the style of functioning of any statutory body(ies) and functionary(ies)? If your answer is 'yes' what measures would you like to suggest to improve the style of functioning of such body(ies) and/or functionary(ies)? If 'no' justify your answer giving suitable reasons.

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