THE HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM IN INDIA:
A RESIDUE OF COLONIALISM

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The Higher Education System in India:
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Introduction

Society can be viewed as an ecological organic system that tends to interact, adapt and integrate, moving towards culturally determined goals. As social systems expand, become large and complex, subsystems despite their interlinkage become more autonomous and determine their own "action and pattern" of change to a large extent. However, the direction and mode can be significantly different from society to society, as are their histories, socio-economic background and institutions that have developed over the course of time. India, with which we are dealing here, has a very different socio-politico-cultural profile, as against the western world; many of the modern concepts and institutions that emerged, have developed in the context of their historical association with the west. Though the institutions were given an organizational structure similar to the metropolitan model, in the process of transfer these acquired a different complexion and meaning, in view of distinguishing characteristics and preconditions of their new habitat. While in the industrialized societies, the society and its institutions evolved in a natural process of dialectical interaction, the same is not true of the less developed societies with the result that harmonious functioning is lacking.

Thus, the system of Indian higher education, in being discussed within the conceptual framework of Burton Clark (1983) poses obvious difficulties. Clark has mostly dealt with university systems of industrialized societies as his frame of reference and with the exception of U.S. has cited examples largely from those societies which have not undergone colonial rule and have evolved their institutions within their own social settings. The U.S. did experience colonization in the technical sense, but of a different kind. With similar racial origins and cultural heritage, strengthened further by use of
a common language, there was an element of homogeneity between the colonizer and the colonized. Against this, the situation in the Afro-Asian colonies was totally dissimilar and was differentiated on grounds of race, culture and religion, and treated as inferiors. Cultural similarities also facilitated transplantation of institutions which easily got integrated (Clark: 1983) within the American setting.\(^1\)

Among the colonized nations, Indian cultural institutions developed in a most complex historical setting. With two parallel educational systems, Hindu and Muslim, both highly developed at some stage, the society was confronted with a new system, totally alien in character and transplanted from the west. The superficial semblance of organizational structure of higher education to the western model does not permit a realistic appraisal of its actual functioning. This makes it difficult, at times, to develop "general categories" much less attempting generalizations for meaningful comparisons.

In the present study, the system of higher education in India is examined in the historical perspective with focus on the current developments. Effort has also been made to bring out the divergence of the system from Clark's cross-national perspective and highlight missing links in his approach.

**Historical Perspective**

Since the Renaissance, the western world had started moving towards a process of political-economic modernization, with vicissitudes and turmoil no doubt, but similar dynamism was not displayed by the currently less developed countries. In a sense, a reverse process was set in motion when most of these countries lost their independence, were colonized and controlled by today's modern and developed countries, beginning from mid-eighteenth century.

In the case of India, though, considerable measure of political order, socio-cultural integrity and splendor had been achieved in the past, it may not be wrong to conclude
that the earlier creativity and dynamism of the Indian society had started declining, there being no signs of social, political, legal and technological developments that had begun to make the mark in the western societies. The final blow, however, was struck with the colonization by the British.

The East India Company's objective was primarily confined to economic activities. It was naked exploitation and all socio-political activities were pursued in that context. Side by side, through educational and other means, the indigenous elite was being manipulated to strengthen British power (Carnoy: 1974). It is necessary to appreciate the significance of colonial policies as it had its ramifications on all walks of life, particularly on education which was used as an instrument to maintain and strengthen domination over the country. It was like slavery, not of individuals but of the entire society. The indigenous culture of the colonized became dormant and the nation as a whole had become socially, psychologically, and intellectually servile, besides becoming economically backward and underdeveloped. Poverty and dependence thus became not economic states but social, intellectual and cultural traits. Power was exercised by a handful of government officials; there was little or no societal participation in governance or decision-making in any sector--political, economic, administrative or educational. Society lost its soul and individuals their will. As such, many of the concepts developed in the context of institutions in the western world are not fully applicable and even if superficially juxtaposed, do not give an accurate picture of the earlier colonies. Clark unfortunately leaves out many of these subtle features that have influenced the university systems and the way transplanted models have functioned in totally different cultural settings nor has he focused his attention on the problems that emerge from a tenuous relationship between the central and peripheral institutions.
Higher Education: Historical and Ecological Context

India can claim to have one of the earliest university systems in the world, dating back to the period of seventh century B.C. Despite the structural differences from the later medieval universities of Europe, they had the basic ingredients and could have provided a base for the development of a modern university system. The Buddhist University at Nalanda in 456 A.D. had around nine thousand students on its rolls with many foreign scholars; it included three extensive libraries and thirteen monasteries that provided residential accommodations to students, according to the Chinese traveller Huien Tsiang (Dongerkery: 1967). The university was destroyed by Muslim invaders in 1205 A.D. but the extensive ruins are indicative of a tradition of scholarship in the country.

The Mughals themselves were patrons of learning and had established several Madrassas, the content of which was as wide and diversified as could be found in universities of Europe (Keay: 1938). The indigenous system, however, had started declining during the interregnum that followed the downfall of the Mughal empire. It is difficult to assess the strength and capacity of the system, that was barely alive, yet there is no doubt that the spiritual quality and reverence for disinterested scholarship was still there (Ashby: 1966). The colonizers never made any efforts to examine its viability as both the company's officers and Christian missionaries were convinced of the superiority of European learning and institutions.

Beginning of English educational enterprise could be traced to the establishment of Calcutta Madrassa in 1781 and although sporadic developments continued, direct responsibility of education was assumed by the Company only in 1854 with the Wood's Despatch² which spelled out British educational policies. During the early period of colonization, educational matters were attracting attention of three separate groups, i.e., the Christian missionaries, the East India Company, and the British parliament and the enlightened natives. As will be seen, each saw education as a means of accomplishing
its own ends. The missionaries were first in the field and took initiative in setting up educational institutions. But, as expected, missionaries conceived of the educational enterprise with a narrow vision; their singular objective was to spread the "gospel" to save the "debased" Hindu from "moral depravity" (McCully: 1940). The Company, as a trading concern, was somewhat reluctant initially to undertake responsibilities in social and educational matters, but after becoming a political power, it was constrained to take some interest, the motive being education of a class of junior functionaries who could fill up secondary level posts in the administration and act as interpreters for the British raj. The Company, despite the evangelical zeal of many of its officials, was not as yet prepared to interfere directly with religious sensibilities of the native Indians; nonetheless, both the Company and the British parliament favored inculcation of British ideas and cultural norms to "dispel the darkness" and to "Christianize and civilize" the natives (Carnoy: 1974).

Apart from the missionaries and the Company, enlightened Indians were deeply concerned with the educational developments and even managed to set up the first college as early as in 1817, without any help from the government. It was largely through private efforts that colleges started emerging during the colonial period and India was the sole exception among colonies where universities came to be established in the nineteenth century (Kelly and Altbach: 1975). The early development of higher education in India was, in a sense, complete reversal of colonial policies. The colonizers, whether British or French, were generally indifferent towards education of the colonized in the first instance and when they ventured into the educational activity, it was mostly confined to providing sub-standard primary education, or at the most, post-primary education which was not necessarily secondary education. In India, for reasons explained, the situation got altered; universities were established which provided some impetus to the growth of secondary education, but primary education was totally neglected. However, the Indian intelligentsia's interest in English higher education was for different
reasons. While the Indians looked to western education as a liberating force, an instrument to bring about synthesis of eastern values and western science that could initiate a cultural renaissance, the British were more concerned with "mastery of cultural aspects ... a good command of English language and literature and the right manners..." (Rudolph and Rudolph: 1972).

The interesting point in the educational development of the early colonial period is that despite divergence of purposes and some resentment from Indians, English education had the support of all the three groups. By the time universities were launched in 1857, there had already sprung up 27 colleges with an enrollment of 2000 students and the demand for further expansion, according to Altbach (1979), was largely being met through Indian initiative and efforts.

Higher education was, thus, not conceived by the colonizers, in the context of organic socio-economic development of society or for preserving, transmitting and creating knowledge but was more of a political-administrative wing of the colonial rule. The establishment of first three universities in 1857, in the three provincial capitals of Calcutta, Bombay and Madras was merely to organize and coordinate collegiate education. Patterned after the affiliating model of the then London university, "they were bureaucratic devices for controlling the quality of collegiate education" and "were not, nor were they meant to be, communities of scholars, graduate departments, or physical agglomerations containing museums, libraries, laboratories ... normally associated with the continental idea of university" (Rudolph and Rudolph: 1972).

The London model was found suitable for export because of its administrative structure and pattern of religious neutrality. It was cheaper also since the colleges themselves had to bear the entire burden of expenses for the academic staff, library and other facilities. Though the intellectual climate in India were totally different from the metropolitan country and the model totally unsuited, it was exported because implantation was easier than devising something new. The fact that London University
changed its pattern the very next year and became a teaching institution, supports the contention that the weaknesses of the "export model" were apparent to the exporters.

Further, introduction of English as the sole medium after Macauley's Minute of 1835 inevitably led to destruction of indigenous "psychical and cultural realms" replaced and substituted by "a history and philosophy whose roots lie exclusively in the Mediterranean and in Christianity" (Ashby: 1966). The encroachment of English education was gradual; it started with the support of indigenous learning with grafting of western learning in the intermediate stage of finally to complete "displacement of oriental learning" (Ashby: 1966).

Acceptance of the Minute was largely due more to Macauley's persuasive rhetoric than to academic logic, a fact to which Curzon himself conceded (Raleigh: 1906). It is not that Macauley created the desire for English education; it was there and Indians sought it willingly for the material benefits and other advantages that were likely to accrue from it (Nurullah and Naik: 1951). But Macauley's sweeping condemnation of oriental literature, contempt and disparagement for Indian culture, not only betrayed his ignorance and biases, but made it abundantly clear that educational policies conceived were not based on any sound education philosophy, rather they were an outcome of "complex religious, moral, political, administrative and economic motives" (Basu: 1978).

In general, during the entire colonial period socialization of indigenous society was more in the nature of acceptance of colonizer's culture that was being disseminated through education but otherwise there was no assimilation -- rather in the true tradition of British class culture education was used as a tool to create a wedge between the elite and the rest.

The history of founding universities in India demonstrates in abundant measure that educational policies were determined on the basic assumption of metropolitan -- peripheral relationship, where the metropolitan institution maintained their hegemony by being centers of "creative vitality" to which the "provincial" institutions were mere
consumers (Shils: 1972). Center and peripheral relationship was merely an extension of ruler-ruled relationship which subordinated all institutions, political, economic and cultural to the interests of the colonizer. The "forced imposition" of international transfer according to Clark (1983):

... provided a set of beliefs, and a structure of control that defined, with many unspoken assumptions, what higher education should accomplish and how it should be implemented. One or more other countries were deeply involved in laying down "the genetic imprint"\(^3\) of the emerging national system.

The unequal relationship between the center and periphery normally precludes the peripheral institutions from creative participation in the intellectual community. The peripherality of Third World universities is a direct legacy of the colonial heritage but has further been reinforced by emerging neo-colonial policies of industrialized nations. The foreign aid programs, technical assistance, all tend to deepen the inequalities and perpetuate the dependency of "Third World universities which without exception are peripheral institutions in the international context" (Altbach: 1980).

The importance assigned to colonizer's language further exacerbated the peripherality besides becoming the most potent weapon for value transfer. It is common knowledge that use of a language, not rooted in the indigenous culture makes it almost impossible for one to be creative in that language. Thus, while inhibiting intellectual creativity and inquisitiveness, English devalued the Indian languages and literature and with that alienated and isolated the educated from their own cultural norms.

The very concept of knowledge acquired a different meaning. In the Indian tradition, knowledge was conceived basically in the context of spiritual enlightenment; it was valued for its own sake and yet its "base was wide and practical" (DiBona: 1981). Imposition of western learning, however, reduced it to mere cramming of a foreign language and theoretical content. The curriculum prescribed was "most
vulnerable to learning by rote" and was doomed to relegate the universities to intellectual mediocrity. A few scholars who had the resources had started seeking opportunities in Oxford and Cambridge\textsuperscript{4} but understandably such opportunities were limited. Furthermore, the option of studies abroad had the most demoralizing impact on the growth of indigenous universities as it put a premium on foreign degrees which still are revered as superior and confer elite status on the recipient. Curzon as Viceroy (1898-1904), with his expressed interests in higher education was expected to provide the necessary fillip to academic quality, but as it turned out later, his much discussed university reforms were "politically motivated" and limited to tightening of control over university administration. Curzon's viceroyalty coincided with emergence of Indian nationalism and stronger the nationalist movement grew, the stronger was the government reaction in strengthening the controls over universities and intellectuals who were supposed to be the propelling force (Basu: 1974).

Though disparagingly critical of poor quality education and organizational structure of affiliating universities, Curzon was reluctant to establish a teaching-cum-residential university (Ashby: 1966). Such a proposal was mooted by an Indian philanthropist, J. N. Tata, who after collecting information about university systems in Europe, U.S.A. and in some other regions, considered the Johns Hopkins University type model most appropriate, with accent on post-graduate studies and research (Sebaly: 1984) and in order to circumvent the colonial government's resistance to allocation of additional funds, Tata offered his own properties to bear the costs.

"Tata's generosity and public spirit" was acknowledged by Curzon, yet he could not reconcile to the idea of a university system that could initiate a change and bring about self-sustaining intellectual growth and "cultivate a tradition of scientific research in higher education" in India. The significance of the controversy does not lie in its being an indigenous effort that was thwarted, but in the fact that subordination of intellectual activity to bureaucratic machinery, stunted growth and peripherality of
university system in India have been part of the external forces and distorted historical process that goes with colonization.

In essence, the growth of universities was completely exotic and "hybrid" and without purpose. This perhaps was inevitable since British universities in that period themselves were not clear about their purpose nor did they know where their future lay. Clark does not appear to find the relevance of objectives in the changed perspective and raises a legitimate problem by directing attention to the "ambiguity" in stated purposes of higher education. However, his analysis of the expressed purposes further confounds the issue. Clark appears to be in agreement with Cohen and March (1974), that goals of university are "well intentioned exercises in social rhetoric, with little operational content." Further, on the basis of stated purposes of British and German universities, Clark contends that:

Broad statements of purpose and goal, essence and true nature, have served poorly as accounts of reality and are inappropriate when used as possible guides to the present. With the growing complexity of twentieth century systems, efforts to specify in clear and limited terms the purposes of "higher education," and even of "the university" alone, are irrelevant to a true understanding of the situation.

One could perhaps agree with Clark when he states the difficulties encountered in realizing many of the "stated purposes" operationally, particularly those that are value-oriented and relate to social ethos, but to consider them as "meaningless or dubious" simply because they cannot be achieved in concrete terms does not stand to scrutiny. Higher education, as any purposeful activity, has to have some definitive goals, some ideology, that relates individuals to society. In the colonial context, universities functioned in accordance with the needs and purposes of the colonizing society. For obvious reasons, objectives in the changed perspectives need a redefinition as well as a reorientation. It is true that exalted philosophies which often are not
very explicit and mere good intentions do not encourage universities to respond in a positive manner. Nonetheless, with growing complexity in relations between colonial institutions and infrastructure and emerging needs and values of a society in transition, "stated purposes" at the basic minimum can serve the purpose of focusing attention on inherent contradictions within "primary," "whole organization," "state" or "nationally" oriented objectives. Clark's suggestion to start defining goals from the "bottom end" in higher education may be valid for a society which follows a laissez-faire policy in education but are likely to lose their relevance in societies where education draws its sustenance from the top.

After independence, higher education has displayed phenomenal growth in graduate and professional studies and in enrollments of students. In 1947, from 20 universities and 933 colleges with an enrollment of 235,000 students, the number has increased to 120 universities, including thirteen institutions as deemed universities, 4,558 degree colleges and an enrollment nearing four million in the 1980s. The average growth rate of around 14 percent per annum in the decade 1960-70, had become a source of concern for the government as well as for the educators and public as the existing number of institutions were inadequate to accommodate the ever expanding student population. Furthermore, quality was suffering in view of large scale expansions making heavy demands on limited resources. The growth was not particularly high if compared with the industrialized nations of the world; rather the percentage of age cohorts who are in Indian universities is still very low, around 4 percent as compared to 15 percent in U.K., 40-50 percent in the U.S., and 25 percent in U.S.S.R. But due to limited educational facilities, economic resources, rising cost of education and slow growing Indian economy that cannot absorb the graduates, exponential growth in conjunction with growing unemployment was causing serious concern. However, as the initial euphoria started subsiding, the growth rate trend dropped down to a mere 4 percent in 1970-80 (Hindustan Times: April 2, 1983). It has again shown slight improvement and
is around 6.3 percent at present. The pattern of enrollments in various faculties has also changed; in arts group, which includes social sciences and humanities, proportionate enrollment declined from 44.5 percent in 1975-76 to 40.6 percent in 1979-80; for commerce, it has risen from 17.1 percent to 19.5 percent and for sciences, it has increased from 18.2 percent to 19.2 percent in 1979-80 (Hindustan Times: 1983). Changes in percentage of enrollment in the professional courses have been marginal. The fall in growth rate and changing pattern in preferences for certain disciplines can perhaps be attributed to large scale unemployment among graduates in general and in purely academic subjects in particular.

Despite the subtle changes, the colonial imprint on work structure, belief system, authority and other characteristics persists strongly. Since independence, besides the "genetic impact," large numbers of scholars have been exposed to different academic cultures, particularly to the U.S. In technology, the five Institutes of Technology have been established, each in collaboration with U.K., U.S.A., W. Germany, U.S.S.R., and assistance with UNESCO, but majority of the faculty had their training in U.S.A. and that has had considerable impact on the organization of these institutes. Apart from the technical institutes, a large number of agricultural universities have been established on the pattern of U.S. Land-Grant colleges. The Indian Institutes of Management also had considerable influence from U.S. Of late the United States has decisively displaced Britain as the main locus in the educational enterprise and has exerted important influence in shaping of the values and attitudes of the Indian elite.

Organizational Structure

The higher education system in India is comprised of a) universities, b) agricultural universities, and (c) institutes of technology, management, and medicine. Some of the institutions, which came into being as part of the nationalist movement, and which follow the general pattern of the university are designated as "deemed universities."
In general, the university system has remained largely traditional, while the newer institutes have somewhat deviated from the original model.

As described earlier, universities were initially established as examining and degree granting bodies, with colleges providing an undergraduate education of two years after high school. Later, an intermediate college of two-years duration was introduced after high school, to enable students to enter colleges at a more mature age and with adequate academic preparation. The intermediate college all through its history had an anomalous status, since it was neither a part of secondary education nor could it be considered a part of the first degree course. After independence, another experiment was tried out, with the introduction of a three-year degree course, preceded by one year of pre-university or eleven years higher secondary course. This, as evident, was more of a juggling with numbers than any basic change in the system since the total number of years for obtaining the first degree remained fourteen years as against 15 years in U.K. and 16 years in U.S.A. This pattern has further been modified by introducing the 10+2+3 scheme where a general education of ten years and specialized vocational education of two years at the secondary level is to be followed by a three-year first degree course. This pattern is likely to provide uniformity to educational organization in the entire country. Further, a master's course known as a post-graduate degree is of two years duration which provides specialization in a single discipline. In recent years, another post-graduate degree designated as M. Phil. has been added to provide further narrow specialization in the area of research. As is evident, there is a craze for accumulation of degrees, though in content or quality the two post-graduate degrees do not differ significantly. The "diploma disease" (Dore: 1976) seems to have become a global phenomenon but more so in the less developed countries. At no stage is there provision for interdisciplinary courses, and many of the courses given at the master's level are a mere repetition at the M.Phil. level. In a sense, there are no tiers but sequential arrangement.
In view of certain distinguishing characteristics of university systems in India, it is essential to take note of the various organizational patterns prevalent, since these not only affect the administration but the total academic process. The Indian universities from their inception adopted the affiliating character after the then London model. In the initial period, when colleges were limited and research and promotion of scholarship were not considered major functions of the university, the affiliating system functioned relatively smoothly. But with growing expansion and widely scattered colleges with little or no contact with the university, the weaknesses and deficiencies soon became apparent. The quality of affiliating colleges had been subject of discussion of several commission and committees during British period; Curzon was most vocal and spoke in no uncertain terms about the poor quality instruction, but no effort was forthcoming to change it in view of its being less demanding on finances.

After independence, most universities have adopted the teaching-affiliating pattern whereby the university concerned also shares teaching responsibilities, conducts research and this has become the dominant pattern. It has rightly been observed that the system of affiliation is the source of most that is wrong with universities and has done more harm to the future development of Indian higher education than any other aspect (Kaul: 1974, Shils: 1968, Altbach: 1971). The Education Commission (1964-66) also had serious reservations against the affiliating pattern but in view of the high cost involved in making structural changes and establishment of residential universities, it felt that affiliating pattern could not be done away with. Further, increasing demographic pressures and massive growth of colleges in numbers responding "to 'market demands,' political pressures and other external influences since independence" (Altbach: 1974) makes the affiliating system uniquely adjusting and suitable.

Colleges are often dispersed over large geographical areas and universities, as a general practice, exercise little control over their functioning. Until the Act of 1904, universities like their London counterpart of 1857, were not empowered to inspect the
affiliated colleges, but even when they have been authorized to supervise, there has been general apathy. Universities seldom enforce regulations concerning facilities, quality and standards and rarely, if ever, disaffiliate them. Library and laboratories facilities are often inadequate in the privately managed institutions, but there are government institutions as well, particularly in the rural and semi-urban areas, which do not provide the minimum basic amenities of academic life. Inspection by university nominees is, in general, of a perfunctory nature; it is more of a social get together of the college principal and the university representatives. And even serious anomalies like irregular payment of salaries are overlooked to the convenience of all.

The second type, the residential unitary universities which came into existence in the second decade of the twentieth century, conduct the academic work through their own teaching departments or through their constituent colleges, which are to be located within a radius of few miles as prescribed by the university. These have more efficient organizational and administrative control over teachers, course contents and research. In general, these universities have been able to impart better quality education and have, comparatively speaking, higher standards since they are better equipped for both teaching and research activities.

The third type, the federal universities, have the smallest number. Their constituent colleges usually have almost equal standards and are autonomous units that have surrendered few of their powers to the university. All universities, regardless of their mode of organization, have graduate faculties and departments on their main campus now but, as Gaudino (1965) observes, the Indian university has remained an examining and inspecting body first and an academic entity afterwards.

Authority

Universities in India have been established by acts of central legislature or by state legislature. The legislatures, therefore, have the right to discuss and determine
policy matters, structure of universities and their rights and obligations. In that sense, they are institutions of the government. The President of India, in the case of central universities, and the Governors of the states as chancellors of state universities are vested with visitatorial powers. Recently, education has been included in the concurrent list which entitles the central government to play its role in the states also. Seven universities are directly administered by the central government. Some other institutions, designated as "deemed universities" are usually under the purview of the central ministry of education. The professional universities of agriculture, technology and medicine are under direct control of the concerned ministries at the State or central level.

Thus, a multiplicity of authority is to be witnessed, yet there is not much of a difference since final authority rests with the government. Though universities do not have the centralized government control as in France or Italy, all the same, they are not completely self-governing and do not enjoy freedom and independence as has been the case until recently among British institutions. Indian universities are supposedly autonomous bodies but their autonomy is often circumscribed by their dependence on government for funds. Further, according to the Indian Constitution, the state legislatures are sovereign and competent to deal with all problems of university education (UGC: 1971). In a sense, there is no clear separation of powers between government and the university.

The University Grants Commission or the U.G.C., patterned after the British U.G.C., is an independent statutory body, established in 1956 to look into the needs of the universities. Its principal functions consist of allocation and disbursement of funds, maintenance of standards, encouragement of innovations and improvements. The U.G.C. functions through appointment of various committees, that include vice-chancellors and senior university teachers. However, its independence is qualified since all its permanent members are appointed by the central government and of the nine members, two have
to be secretaries of the government as ex-officio members. It is accountable to the Indian parliament and often has to function under political pressures.

As a single body the U.G.C. has serious difficulties in keeping a vigilant eye and in maintaining supervision of the ever-increasing number of colleges and universities effectively. Further, it does not have the enforcing authority, although because of control of funds the U.G.C. policies are mostly accepted by universities. The U.G.C. has often been criticized for its biases in favor of some universities; colleges, by and large, complain of being discriminated and neglected in allocation of grants. In the year 1970-71, less than 30 percent of the total grants were given to affiliated colleges which had an enrollment of 88 percent of students while 70 percent went to universities with a 12 percent student population (Kaul: 1974). Furthermore, it has overlooked expansion of universities and colleges ignoring its own criticism of increasing dilution of educational standards and lack of relevance of courses of study to current needs. The U.G.C., however, has very recently taken stiff action against fourteen universities by declaring them ineligible for receiving financial grants (India Abroad: March, 1984).

The internal administrative organization of the Indian university is more or less uniform. The three principle authorities are the court or the senate, the executive council or the syndicate and the academic council. The court is the largest body, having representation from a cross-section of academic community, government, and other interest groups of the society. By nature of its very composition and large membership, the court is often inactive and does not meet more than once or twice a year. It is the highest decision-making body and has budgetary and appellate powers.

The syndicate or the executive council is the principal executive body and runs the day-to-day administration, administers the funds and makes recommendations to the senate concerning policy matters, hiring of new staff and details of new construction and other matters. It is a smaller body but exercises more powers. It has both elected members from the constituencies and members elected by the senate as well as
representatives of colleges and of the public. The director of public instruction of the state and vice-chancellor of the university are ex-officio members. From among the university faculty, the deans are represented but not the heads or chairpersons of the departments, unless a dean is holding both positions simultaneously. "Elections for both the syndicate and the senate are often marked by political, regional or caste considerations ..." (Altbach: 1971).

The academic council is the principle academic body having representatives of academic community, college principals and teachers. It concerns itself with conduct of examinations, development of research policies and approval of new courses recommended to it by the departmental Board of Studies from various faculties. This is the only decision-making body in which junior faculty are given the opportunity to participate. But as pointed out by Altbach (1971), "decision making on all levels in Indian higher education tends to be hierarchical and is generally vested in senior individuals with high positions in the university structure ..."

It sounds paradoxical that the colleges which have disproportionately large student enrollments and teaching staff -- nearly 85 percent -- should have a feeble voice in matters of academics or governance. The U.G.C. (1971) report strongly felt that constituent units must have a sense of commitment to the ideals of university which is possible if they are participants in planning, decision-making and in implementation of plans. But as things stand, the pyramidal structure of power and administrative machinery gives little recognition to the existence of colleges. The junior faculty, therefore, has little involvement. Further, as Shils (1972) observes, "The intellectual everywhere is concerned with his relations to authority" but more so in underdeveloped countries where he cannot escape from a sense of its presence and dependence on it. The junior faculty, therefore, rarely expresses itself.

In addition, the elected and nominated members on university bodies, who as a general rule represent strong interest groups, often with political affiliations, are able
to direct and exercise control over educational decision. In a way, the administrative structure of university is such that it lends itself to easy intervention by vested interests outside the university.

Much depends on the personalities of the vice-chancellors, who enjoy considerable executive and academic powers, preside over the meetings of the three principle bodies and coordinate their activities. Their role is crucial and complex; they are to be persons of learning, sensitive about the concept and issues of higher education besides being capable administrators. Indeed, in the past many vice-chancellors were academically distinguished and respected persons. But of late, this is an exception. The supreme problem today is of stability and often one is a political protege. Even if not, one has to be discreet and respectful of the state authority for several reasons. For instance, a vice-chancellor has to have the government support when the student trouble arises, which is a yearly phenomena. For personal advantages, like an international agency job, or some other prestigious job, or at least an extension beyond the prescribed tenure, it is advantageous to be in the good books of the government. This applies to senior faculty as well. Everybody knows it, but it is not discreet to question or even discuss these matters. In recent years, persons from the administrative services have been appointed as vice-chancellors and registrars, and the bureaucratic hold has been further strengthened.

In the prevailing atmosphere of intense political-bureaucratic hold, the faculty, in an effort to acquire some sense of achievement, succumbs to finding methods that can establish closer relationship with the authority. Intrigues and wranglings for promotion, prestige and power are rampant. Not that this does not happen in more developed countries, but scarcity of opportunities contributes much to vitiating the work atmosphere.

The work structure at the enterprise level generally follows the British pattern, adopted from the very inception of universities. The broadest differentiation is at the
faculty level and the narrower disciplinary groupings are at the departmental level. The faculties combine several departments; a senior professor of one of the departments by rotation acts as the dean. Deans generally deal with research matters, disbursement of funds to different departments and represents the faculty on selection committees. In the departments, though the Chair pattern has not been adopted, the management has been quite autocratic. Headship of the department, so far, had been based on seniority and often there is only one professor who enjoys absolute baronial powers over the junior faculty. This is a direct legacy of colonial period during which the senior positions of professors, though open to Indians, were monopolized by the British. In recent years, some universities have attempted to rotate headships, but the experiment so far has not been very successful; rather it has made the old "heads" more vindictive and the "internal colonialism" has, in a sense, gained strength. The "professor" has the power over recruitment, promotion and in appointment of examiners and the like. Such personalized and arbitrary rule, leads to abuses and "breeds politics and a caucus system which in turn leads to sacrifice of academic interests and values . . ." (Kaul: 1974). Not only that, professors have their contacts with other university professors in the same discipline and can make or mar the future of a junior colleague outside the institution by "trading of appointments." Junior faculty, therefore, whether in the university department or in the college remains subordinated to those in senior positions.

The academic profession, inheriting the tradition of the "guru" had started losing much of its social prestige and status from the period of colonization. The profession was held in low esteem due to dominance of civil service and bureaucracy (Gilbert: 1972). In addition, any organized body of intellectuals was looked upon with suspicion. Therefore, under colonialism, it was corporate patronage which regulated the profession rather than members of the occupation themselves. In fact, concept of professionalism did not develop, as was true in the metropole, yet
The idealism of professionalism as a form of occupational control was kept alive only through the activities of the metropolitan professional association in support of their overseas membership (Johnson: 1973).

The hierarchical power structure of the social system reinforces academic stratification and restricts upward mobility or participation of teachers at the lowest rung of the ladder in administrative and academic matters at all levels, institutional, faculty and departmental and in various committees in which participation is confined to the elite that wields power. Since academician elites are jealously guarding their prerogatives, the majority of the faculty is kept in junior positions. In 1970-71, of the total of 128,924 teachers in the universities and colleges, 83 percent were in affiliated colleges. Of the university faculty, 9.9 percent were professors, 15.4 percent were readers, and 66.5 percent were lecturers. In the colleges, senior teachers comprised 12.3 percent; lecturers, 75.0 percent; and 12.7 percent were tutors (Kaul: 1974). Professional advancement is normally very slow and hard to come by but when vacancies occur, they are often filled up by internal candidates on basis of seniority rather than for their research or scholarship (Eisemon: 1981).

Recently, a new scheme, known as the Personal Promotion scheme, was initiated to enable lecturers and readers to get promotion to the next level on basis of merit and a specified period of service in the existing capacity. The scheme may have some drawbacks academically, but as evident, this was to counteract against frustration and stagnation among the faculty and also against "caucus breeding." However, except in the centrally administered universities and some others, most universities are using delaying tactics as most professors who wield power behind the scene are opposed to the idea. In essence, promotional methods encourage "inbreeding" and parochialism in both situations, inhibiting the universities in acquiring the best possible brains.

Until recently, the salary scales for colleges and universities were different which put the colleges to serious disadvantage. But despite parity, the college teachers, due
to their lower academic qualifications and limited promotional avenues do not enjoy the same social status as the university teachers. In fact, two different cultures have developed, that of the university and that of the college, the latter often suffering from the stigma of limited resources and intellectual poverty. Hierarchy in a way is a reflection of the social structure and is not confined to university-college differentiation but among colleges or among universities, there are different rankings. Several colleges that were established by the Christian missionaries or through Indian initiative like the St. Stephens College, Delhi, Elphinston College, Bombay, and Presidency College, Calcutta, enjoy higher reputation and prestige than other colleges. These have mostly catered for selected "elite" and have therefore enjoyed higher status.

It must, however, be pointed out that institutions of the calibre of Oxford and Cambridge in England or the Ivy League and some internationally reputed universities in the U.S. that form the "center" in these countries are non-existent in India, yet some institutions which are relatively more selective in their student population and have larger resources do enjoy higher ranking and prestige. Despite these vague hierarchies, existence of center-peripheral institutions within the national systems are not to be found. One reason for the paradoxical situation could be attributed to inability of institutions to get recognition outside or "set the academic tone for the rest." Nonetheless, in the academic hierarchy, the residential universities have a higher status than the affiliating ones, and the affiliating colleges as a general rule remain on the periphery.

In a way, hierarchies in status exist and tend to isolate each other and constraints of regimented relationship do not allow the university itself to be viewed as a partnership. In fact, the Indian university is much more fragmented as an institution. As observed by Guadino (1965):

It is not an association of equals even among teachers. . . . There is solid gap between the teacher and student, between professor and lecturer, between
department head and research worker, between old and young, between post-
graduate university teacher and undergraduate college teacher.

In an atmosphere of sharp distinctions among institutions, teachers and authority,
the concept of autonomy never had any strong roots. The autonomy of the university
implies that community of scholars should run their own affairs, without interference
from outside. This has, "at times been guaranteed by law and in many cases, it has
been confirmed by law and supported by custom" (Shils: 1982). In the case of India,
however, none of these features could take roots due to universities being controlled
by government during colonial period, and as a direct legacy, the legislatures becoming
sovereign in the contemporary system. Autonomy is neither legal nor constitutional, it
is an ethical and academic concept according to U.G.C. (1971), which further elaborates:

... university autonomy does not suggest that universities are a state within
a state, and a law unto themselves. ... The claim for autonomy is made by
the universities not as a matter of privilege, but on grounds that such an
autonomy is a condition precedent if universities are to discharge their duties
and obligations effectively and efficiently. ... 

Thus, Clark's contention that "The British transfer brought and left behind such
features as institutional autonomy ... and a commitment to general, even classical,
education for future public administrators ... in India ..." does not seem tenable.

Like autonomy, academic freedom never had any roots nor has been considered
a meaningful concept in India. The college teacher, since the very inception of
universities, functioned under the authority of the university; "the ethic of subserviance
to higher authority developed early" (Gilbert: 1972). With scarcity of job-opportunities
and tradition of domination by the academic oligarchy, the teacher succumbs easily to
authority in the interest of self-preservation.

Autonomy and academic freedom have further been eroded due to intrusion of
politics and politicians. In a sense, there is no aspect of life in India where the
politician does not enter or meddle. Gaudino (1965) rightly observes that politics is an accumulated instinct in India at every age, through every event, in every encounter. Politicians are finding the educational institutions as convenient and fruitful places to convert "material, human and symbolic educational resources into political resources that can be used in political competition for power" (Rudolph and Rudolph: 1972). It is an irony of fate that universities in independent India are in greater danger of attacks upon their independence than they were ever under a foreign rule (Dongerkery: 1967).

Increasing political activism by teachers is, in a way, an expression of their frustration with their work-conditions and also perhaps an effort by the powerless "guru" to reassert his power and authority. Shils feels that outward submission of the teacher "hides a deeper and unceasing enmity" and through intense politicization, the teachers try to emancipate themselves from the authoritarian rule as well as seek opportunities on grounds of kinship connection and similar grounds. Political activism, therefore, is not without purpose but more often than not, they are related to matters other than academic.

Political activism is not confined to teachers and administrators alone, it has permeated more deeply among the students who are the most vulnerable section of the society. The student elections are fought on basis of party affiliations, with support of "teacher-politicians" and as observed by the Vice-President of India in a convocation address, these are the propelling force behind student agitations (Hindustan Times: Oct. 3, 1976).

In general, an excessively politicized culture helps to demoralize intellectual institutions; it replaces the earlier bureaucratic domination and expands because colonial culture of authority, hierarchy and class interests persist. While there is tremendous sense of urgency to correct the bureaucratised and politicized management impediments of history, dislocation of traditions, exploding population, and the inequalities accumulating over a period of time, all conspire to produce profound difficulties.
Obstacles to Change

Once an educational system takes deep roots and becomes ingrained, a total break from "past patterns of behavior" and established organizational structure becomes very difficult if not an impossibility. Traditions of the past, often tend to develop rigidities and constraints to the point that institutions are unable to respond and accommodate themselves to changing needs and environment. It is a queer logic of history that while "forced importation" of institutions in totally diverse socio-cultural milieu never get fully assimilated and integrated, total rejection is rarely accomplished unless forced by a socio-political revolution. Change, thus, is not an easy process in view of several inherited and acquired features.

The Indian universities at the time of country's independence were a "massive invalid" which were not likely to respond to any simplistic treatment. Further, if generalizations can be made, any reorientation or planned change requires infinite effort, energy and resources which few societies are willing to invest. Rather, maintenance of "status quo" in an inherently class reproducing system serves the needs best of those who hold power and are expected to initiate changes. During colonization, higher education had consciously been geared to creating a peripheral elite; after independence the upper and middle class elite, which had been the main beneficiaries of English education, were most resistant to changes in order to keep higher education their exclusive preserve (Naik: 1982). While the bureaucracy's interest lay in keeping the masses as satellites, the political parties had no commitment to any radical innovation in the educational system, particularly if it clashed with the existing social norms and mores. As Naik (1982) explains:

... while it is comparatively easy to introduce educational reforms that support the existing social structure, it is extremely difficult ... to implement radical educational reforms which threaten the existing social structure or run counter to its imperative.
Apparently, unless fundamental changes are brought about in the infrastructure, i.e., the socio-economic institutions, education continues to reinforce the status quo; it favors stability rather than change. Further, built-in conservatism puts severe constraints to differentiating patterns. Though educational systems all over the world are subjected to similar trends and demands: democratization, increased economic productivity, adjustment to expanding frontiers of knowledge, they have responded differently in view of differing dispositions and adaptive capacity. In the Third World, international transfer of institutions has largely set in motion mutually antagonistic and contradictory forces. Lacking in confidence in their own capabilities, these societies hesitate to act independently and as a matter of habit look to more advanced societies for directions and guidance in responding to new challenges. The notion of "cultural dependence" is revolting yet the pull towards the former "metropoles" is still strong. In the case of India, while the British educational system was universally condemned. The ideological influence is so strong that any innovation in the colonizing country is readily acceptable in the name of modernizing process. Thus, colonialism persists rather a process of recolonization has begun, though in more subtle ways. It is further reinforced by a deliberate policy of western nations to maintain global inequalities for reasons of economic benefits and political power (Fagerlind: 1982; Kelly and Altbach: 1980; Le Thanh Khoi: 1976). And to maintain this hold, education has become the most convenient tool, the "fourth dimension" of foreign policy. In view of superiority of industrialized nations in high technology, sciences and research capability, the universities have become most vulnerable to neo-colonial policies and have further been downgraded. Clark rightly contends that "constraints upon change and imperatives for change are increasingly located in the system."

Following the past traditions, problems of education are still dealt with by the government and not articulated by the academic community directly. This further supports the thesis that patterns and directions of change are largely determined by
the form a system has adopted initially. The indigenous elite, which replaced the colonial bureaucracy and which controls the educational and cultural apparatus, is more concerned about foreign aid programs and international collaborations through which the elite can maintain its monopoly in all areas of profession and power. The inevitable outcome of such relationship is that western "expertise" which normally plays an important role, not only reinforces perpetuation of western models but cultural dependence, which always carries overtones of inferiority.

Educational systems all over are conservative by nature and normally serve to reinforce the existing pattern. Yet it would not be appropriate to consider them as static or to say that changes have not occurred. The fundamental difficulty, however, in the change process is "the belief that one's own quality will be elevated by the assimilation of certain features of metropolitan life" (Shils: 1972). The obsession with prestigious institutions of England and the U.S. as models not only reflect the peripheral nature of society but also explains the weakness of the system in being creative and self-reliant. The Education Commission's (1964-66) recommendation of establishment of "major universities" and "international standards" had similar overtones. India has the third largest university system in the world but its lack of assertion to act independently has contributed much to lower quality education and lack of research orientation. As observed by Clark (1983), British system itself was undergraduate centered; the British never perceived a relationship between teaching and research and stubbornly resisted the idea of research (Gilbert: 1972; Ashby: 1974) and as such, could not have built a research tradition in the colony. "The implicit purpose of British universities was to make men cultivated and not learned" (Ashby: 1974). The fact that in the first quarter after independence, only half-a-percent of students were engaged in research in India could not be a totally unexpected as more than 85 percent were enrolled in undergraduate colleges where no research facilities exist.
Research and management are of paramount importance for academic development, but neglect in this direction can be gauged from the fact that it was not included in the list of priorities as specified in the Resolution on National Policy on Education, 1968 (Kirpal: 1971). Establishment of research institutes and organizations outside the universities in the post-independence period have further crippled the universities in changing the academic climate. Teaching itself has become sterile in the absence of proper environment and incentives.

Inadequacy of research is not simply a matter of statistics but orientations and quality of work produced. As is common knowledge, British universities themselves were not research oriented; the culture of research was "borrowed" initially from Germany and the first Ph.D. was initiated by Oxford University in 1918, more than five hundred years after its birth (Cardwell: 1978). But later, whatever they developed, they developed from inner strength. The colonies on the other hand, have internalized a culture of dependency which often tends towards duplication of what goes on in industrialized nations. The dependency theorists argue that leaders or the elite of the poor countries hold attitudes, values and interests consistent with those of rich countries (Frank: 1972; Galtung: 1972). Understandably, in a subsistence economy much of the research based on western models and areas of investigation has no real purpose; it neither promotes creativity nor does it serve the social needs.

Efforts to improve the quality and make the higher educational system more responsive to social needs were attempted at the national level in the post-independence period. Thus establishment of half-a-dozen "major universities" as centers of excellence with compatible international standards were recommended by the Education Commission (1964-66). These were expected to produce the "critical mass" for giving directions to other universities in research and teaching. The recommendation, however, encountered much opposition because of the general apprehension that the "major universities" would leave others to stagnate. There was also a fear, as argued by a vice-chancellor that
"major universities" would accentuate further stratification and teachers and students from these institutions would turn out to be "snobs" permanently afflicting others with an "inferiority complex."

With western expertise on the Commission and the higher education system of England, the U.S.S.R., and the U.S. as the dominating patterns forming the background, the Commission could not inspire confidence that growth and development of other institutions would not be hampered. There was also the skepticism if "excellence" could be brought about through "heaping of resources and official patronage." The establishment of Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) in 1968 as a center of excellence has, in a way, confirmed such skepticism. John (1976) finds the gestation period of JNU rather long for showing any concrete results, whereas DiBona (1977) considers it "an example of adding a super elite level to the already elite section of higher education."

Since the idea of "major" universities had to be abandoned, the concept of Centers of Advanced Study in certain disciplines in selected universities where comparatively better facilities and research activities existed, found greater favor. However, as is generally observed, innovations and changes in countries where the initial foundations are weak and imposed from outside, tend to get adjusted and adapted with the prevailing pattern in due course and lose sense of direction and purpose for which they were created. Of the thirty departments, 17 in science and 13 in social sciences and humanities, Delhi University, with the largest number of advanced centers, was virtually made a "major university" (Kirpal: 1971). And within a decade, even the idea of "Advanced Centers of Study" lost their prestige (Naik: 1982).

The problems encountered in the change process clearly indicates that despite serious efforts, the social, economic and political forces that dominate the society reinforces the colonial structure of elitism, class-biases and bureaucratic organizational pattern in higher education. Changes have been initiated but differentiation from the
original model is barely perceptible. The colleges, which are the hub of higher education system have remained a drag on the modernization process. As Kirpal (1972) observes:

With a few notable exceptions, most of these institutions are little better than schools providing dull and mechanical teaching. . . . The main defect of the collegiate system was that it held the affiliated colleges in a uniform mould of mediocrity. . . .

Despite the awareness of colleges being the source of major weaknesses of the system, the Education Commission (1964-66) found it difficult to do away with them; instead, it recommended that where there were some academically outstanding colleges doing "good work" they should be granted autonomy in framing their own rules of admissions, prescribing their own curriculum and in conducting their own examinations. But this was stoutly opposed on grounds that such freedom might be "abused by institutions under sectarian and partisan managements to indoctrinate students in illiberal ways of thinking and thus lead to divisiveness in society" (John: 1976). Such apprehensions and skepticism were exaggerated because even after the autonomous status, the colleges were to remain under the general supervision of the affiliating university, which was also to continue as the degree awarding body.

Further, it needs to be emphasized that majority of the affiliated colleges are privately controlled and managed. Many are caste-biased and sectarian in character as such opportunities for indoctrination or "illiberal" ways of thinking already exist. It would not be farther from the truth to say that heterogeneity in ethnic composition of Indian society and cultural diversities, the divisive factors are seldom altogether absent. The idea of strengthening the collegiate system was academically sound; it had the potential of motivating the colleges to work for improvement that could enable them to acquire autonomy. However, any major change tends to arouse suspicions and hurts interests of some which leads to abandoning the best of schemes. The fragmentation
within and concern for retention of power and privileges in the poor societies have been some of the major factors against change.

It is significant that the Education Commission aroused little enthusiasm among the intellectual community in the first instance, and later, there was limited reaction from the universities. In the past, the community of scholars was never encouraged to collectively address themselves to problems of education; they never were an effective force in decision making and that was explicitly reflected in the apathy of universities, when the report was out.

This raises a legitimate question as to why recommendations of government bodies are not implemented, when government itself determines policies and exercises a good deal of control in educational matters. Adisheshiah\(^9\) analyzes the situation thus: Educational decisions in India are political decisions and certainly not the decisions of technical experts in education. . . . The Education Commission presented a model based on sound technical, pedagogical and ethical principles. However, the decisions on the model were made by the political leaders of the country. But that is how ultimately the country's educational system derives its political legitimacy. The author's (Naik) statement: "No political party had really applied its mind to educational problem in depth and formulated well-conceived long-term policies of its own . . . The average politician did not also have an 'education literacy' because there so little of a dialogue between politicians and educationists," is indicative of the reality of educational policy-making in the country.

It can perhaps be argued that societies that have inherited a colonial structure and culture often indulge in realignment or rearrangement of power structure, but basically the predisposition is to retain the locus of authority within similar dimensions. Archer (1979) corroborates the contention by stating that future educational changes are influenced by the existing form. From total government control over educational
structure during colonial period, "the vehicle of change is political and bureaucratic coordination, as opposed to vehicle of professional influences . . ." (Clark: 1983). Surprisingly, Clark finds that bureaucracy is relatively passive and benign in the less developed countries, but that does not apply in the Indian situation where both the bureaucracy and politicians have become more assertive. It is state officialdom and recurrent political meddling which have imbedded the ethics of professionalism in its growth. There have been expansions; universities and colleges have multiplied so have departments and specialized areas, yet neither the higher education system has succeeded in building "an intellectual center of gravity of its own" nor has encouraged experimentation or entrepreneurship. The halting steps in new directions further point to "deep institutionalization" of metropolitan models that resist differentiation.

Belief and Values

"All major entities have a symbolic side, a culture as well as a social structure; some shared accounts and common beliefs" (Clark: 1983) which provide unity of purpose and emotional ties that give meaning to an organization and contribute to their efficient functioning. Thus, while imparting knowledge and skills, the university as a cultural corporation is also concerned with inculcation of values. This, however, has not been the role of universities in colonial societies. Rather, the indigenous culture and traditional values became the primary casualty with the induction of western education. In the traditional form, education in India was not merely acquisition of knowledge but "an expansion of human consciousness and awareness. . . ."

And though with political independence, climate for change is there but as has been observed, educational systems are not always consistent with the demands society makes on them (Ashby: 1974). Furthermore, the impact of technological developments and modernization process has tended to produce forces that are undermining the stability of values in all societies, but more so in the less developed societies where
confusion about new patterns and their appropriateness already exists. Inability to strike a balance between heredity, adherence to traditions, and emerging new tasks is "encouraging behaviors in contradictory directions" (Clark: 1983).

The dislocation of cultural values, coupled with complex relationship of universities with society, has had its worst effect on students who remain most confused about their role in the society. Like the teaching community, students are "demoralized and disgruntled" and lack passion for knowledge. Basically, the interest of Indian students lies in acquiring a degree through which they seek socio-economic mobility. In a way, accelerated expansion of higher education -- which is demanded by demographic pressures to some extent -- has been pursued with a naive belief that it would provide greater equality of opportunity in education and contribute to minimizing inequities and diversities of a pluralistic culture. And though universities have become more socially and culturally representative, elitism still persists. Nearly 80 percent of places are taken up by top 30 percent income groups (Yadav: 1982).

The problem of access has been difficult everywhere but more so in societies where roles and statuses are determined by birth. However, in order to elevate the status of the socially underprivileged and most discriminated sections of society, the government in India in accordance with its socialistic constitution, made reservation of seats in institutions and jobs. But as generally happens with social problems, laws alone do not bring about parity or even social justice. Suma Chitnis' (1972) study in Bombay clearly indicates that an overwhelming majority of scheduled caste students are enrolled in "inferior colleges," have lower level of performance against the non-scheduled caste peers and are educationally backward. In the contextual background of differential achievements, the U.G.C. (1971) observed that selective admissions based on merit or achievement are often opposed by backward sections who consider such criteria to be weighted against them.
The concept of social justice and equality of opportunity demands open door admissions but interest in competence argues for selection (Clark: 1983). Scarcity of resources also favors merit and achievement. Much depends on how "social justice" is to be interpreted but in the Indian situation, these irreconcilables have created serious tensions between different segments of society. Further, demand for uniform standards to provide equality in all fields to all pressurizes for some kind of standardization in content, methodology and organizataional structure all with a view to providing uniformity. As contended by Rudolph and Rudolph (1972):

If bureaucratic uniformity is an important aspect of genetic imprint . . .

democracy has served to reinforce the propensity to uniformity . . .

Differences suggest a possibility of privilege and invite uniformity as a possible cure.

But as expected, "uniformity" neither makes up for wide economic and cultural diversities among student population nor does it eliminate privileges of selected class groups nor can reconcile contradictions between equity and competence. Often, for the first generation literates, adjustment is difficult and academic challenges frustrating. The tensions and resentment, exploited by politicians, often find expression in aggressive behavior which at times have "literally torn academic institutions apart and made university life . . . completely impossible" (Altbach: 1974).

It has been argued that in comparison to American and British cohorts, the average Indian student is younger and immature. That being so, there is no ignoring the fact that an overprotected upbringing does not allow adolescents to develop a sense of responsibility and mature attitudes (Hagen: 1962). Further, the bleak future prospects related to job opportunities engender sense of insecurity and anxiety, which to some extent discourages seriousness about work (Ichman and Dhar: 1971). The problems are genuine and have been recognized but one cannot discount the fact that "strains and dilemmas" are related directly to loss or skepticism towards values. Thus, minor
irritants and grievances trigger off strikes and agitations. Universities are closed for months and academic life totally paralyzed. These have become recurrent phenomenon of the Indian academic life and whatever the cause, they acquire political overtones (DiBona: 1966, Spencer: 1966). Lipset (1966) suggests that since students had been participating in national movements, it has built up a tradition of agitations. Altbach (1971), however, finds them directly linked to organizational problems and contradictions in the broader society. The irony of the situation lies in the fact that agitations rarely make constructive demands for better academic facilities; there are no specific objectives to achieve. Often these are "sporadic, unorganized, and leaderless," and dissipate as easily as they burst out. And in all this turmoil, the teacher remains supremely indifferent.

In a nutshell, the university system in India has developed values and beliefs in cooperation and conflict with the western culture and practices. As Clark observes, modern systems of higher education exhibit "a bewildering mixture of open and closed, the elitist and the democratic, the flexible and the rigid, the traditional and the modern" which, in a way, inhibits evolution of dynamic set of values that could build positive attitudes. In the Indian context, cultural values were deeply embedded in the educational system but with exposure to English education, bereft of indigenous ideas and ideologies, an identity crisis has developed particularly among students. They are subjected to severe contradictory pulls and pressures that perhaps are not to be found elsewhere. On the one hand, they live in the past, glorify it, follow its traditions, and take pride in their heritage; they even suffer from a sense of humiliation that India, instead of being a contributor to knowledge, is on the periphery. But on the other hand, there is servility to the west; there is a positive desire to absorb the cultural ethos of the west, to use English, to associate themselves with western institutions as these give them a sense of superiority over others. The confusion that emanates from such
ambivalence not only acts against introducing changes in the existing system but also inhibits development of an indigenous philosophy and culture.

**Conclusion**

The higher educational system of a country develops in the context of the socio-economic-political environment and interacts with other sub-systems. In the developed countries, the entire social system largely developed from a common base and the components of the subsystems interacted and matured organically. There are, no doubt, differences from country to country yet almost all the countries except Japan have common western cultural background and none have a colonial history. The U.S. is an exception but does not represent those colonies that were subjected to a cultural onslaught through the educational media. The political, cultural-historical and social system have considerable commonality despite differentiation in the western societies.

In the developing countries, which are heterogenous among themselves, colonization retarded history. Economic exploitation and improvisation led to a deep-rooted sense of dependency. Trappings of modernization, institutions and values got introduced, no doubt, but despite similarity, they were fundamentally different, distorted and inefficient. The institutions were implants from colonial administration and not of organic development in a free society. The economic environment was that of increasing poverty and unemployment rather than of increasing affluence. The outcome was that while the metropoles became the center of vitality and creativity, the colony was reduced to mere provinciality, almost completely dependent for its sustenance. The system of higher education in India, therefore, cannot be seen in the proper perspective unless the fundamental differences in heredity and environment are taken note of. It would have been a Herculean task if Clark had tried to take note of many of the special features of different societies in his study of university systems in the cross-national perspectives. However, despite his occasional references to colonial systems, he has
not made an in-depth analysis of colonial impact on the university systems in the Third World. This reduces his analysis to systems in industrialized societies where there are more similarities than divergences.

Universities are the principal instruments of developing the intellectual tradition in a society. Despite fragmentation of knowledge in diverse components, it is necessary that the purpose or idea of a university is debated, articulated and tried to be achieved. In the colonized countries, the university was not conceived of as a dynamic intellectual center; rather it had limited objectives of maintaining the dominant position of expatriate elites. And though complexities of a technological age require constant reformulation of objectives, universities need to develop a sense of ethos to provide with necessary direction to society; they are not totally irrelevant or inappropriate as contended.

The plight of the Indian universities is that they have been drifting. The colonial systems built in a tradition of cramming of a foreign language, foreign history and philosophy without creating an environment for organized conservation, refinement and transmission of knowledge or indigenous values. Thus, the whole concept of knowledge, ideology, and societal involvement in education got distorted. These have persisted in the post-independence period because the basic structure of society, government and bureaucratic control persists in the tradition of the colonial rule. The new rulers who acquired power, had been trained by and imbibed the attitudes and values of the colonial masters are far more "dependent" than national and this dependency is much more complex and less transparent, than what it was when the country became independent (Le Thanh Khoi: 1976). Colonial systems, thus, can be analyzed meaningfully when the superficial veneer of structural and organizational similarities are cast aside.

In normal situation, educational systems draw their sustenance from the social structure. In case of India, the society was hierarchical and fragmented due to its pernicious caste system. Colonial government further enlarged the vertical and horizontal cleavages. Senior positions were reserved for white foreigners while junior
positions were filled by the natives. The English educated became a class and caste by themselves. In the work-structure and decision making, the hierarchical structure has considerable dysfunctional implications. Thus, the colleges and universities have their own hierarchies; within colleges, missionary supported, government and privately managed have different statuses; the head of the department holds a different status than the rest of the faculty. In a sense, "structure and culture" have abetted and strengthened the hierarchical norms. Power in such a make up is controlled by the "elite," which neither encourages free dialogue nor does it allow dissent; the silent rumblings of some do not lead to any action.

In the colonial-bureaucratic culture decision making was never participatory but it has become more autocratic. Everything stemmed from the government, there being little or no scope for individual initiative; the same tradition continues and all changes mooted in the university system are left to the government which finds it easier to appoint commissions than taking action. Implementation of recommendations is generally a difficult proposition since decisions on these are largely that of the bureaucracy and the polity. Participation of the faculty is limited to those selected by government machinery. The different interest groups, generally pick out those ideas favorable to them and oppose which are against their interests (Naik: 1982). Thus, individuals, as part of some power or "elite" group may have a say in academic matters but as an "enterprise," the Indian universities are mostly passive.

In a sense, the historical-cultural legacies have largely determined the higher educational systems in the colonies of yesteryears. In the past, it was the bureaucracy which wielded authority; in the post-independence era, politician has assumed a similar role for himself. Political ideologies have deeply influenced the culture of educational systems in all societies, democratic or totalitarian, but individual politicians normally do not meddle in the academics. In India, though the politicians as a power group are mostly from outside the academic institutions, yet these "actors" play a major role in
faculty appointments, promotions, examination results and other policy matters through manipulations, by arousing caste, regional and linguistic affiliations for achieving their goals. Clark does not seem to be concerned the way power structure has been strengthened by the bureaucracy and politicians and the way their hold on university systems have relegated "knowledge and intellectual excellence to secondary roles."

Finally, the intellectual dependency has never allowed the universities in India to develop an "independent sector," much less creating a "sectoral hegemony." The organizational perspective of higher educational systems of various countries provides a structural-functional frame in Clark's approach but it has to be invested with socio-economic-political realities when studying the currently developing societies in view of considerable differences in their heritage and traditions, and dilemmas of the future.
Endnotes

1. The commonalities and close links with the metropole made the Americans consider themselves as equal partners of the British society to the point of demanding representation in British Parliament—something inconceivable in Afro-Asian colonies. In view of diverse nature of colonialism, it would be inappropriate to assign U.S.A. the status of a colony while analyzing the impact of colonial policies in an Asian society and impact of "forced imposition" of language and institutions.

2. Wood's Educational Despatch of 1854, probably written at the insistence of Sir Charles Wood, President of the Board of Control, is considered a document of great historical importance as the Company assumed direct responsibility for the education of the natives. As part of its recommendations, an Education Department was established in each province of British India, to provide impetus to secondary education and to some extent to primary education. It was also responsible for the establishment of the first three universities in India in 1858. Nurullah and Naik, A History of Education in India, pp. 203-216.

3. "The origins of educational institutions impress upon them certain forms and traditions that function rather like a genetic imprint, which dictates the further evolution of their institutional arrangement, not with the exactitude it exercises in a biological organism, but with certain dependability. Rudolph and Rudolph, Education and Politics in India, p. 13.

4. Schoolers from India had started going to Oxford and Cambridge as early as 1870. By 1921, there were 1,450 Indian students in universities and technical colleges of Britain according to Hennessy (1969).
5. Jamsetji N. Tata (1839-1904) was a pioneer in many areas of developmental process and established the first Iron and Steel Plant and hydro-electric power plant in India. His interest in education, which he developed through his frequent tours abroad, was primarily to initiate social and economic transformation of the country and though his efforts to establish a research oriented university did not materialize, a number of organizations and research institutes came up, prominent being Indian Institute of Sciences (1909), which produced the first Indian Nobel Laureate in sciences in 1980. Though most of the institutions were established after Tata's death, the inspiration was largely his.

6. "Internal Colonialism" has been defined as the "domination of a 'nation' (geographically, linguistically, or culturally) within the national borders of another nation state by another group or groups." According to this definition of Kelly and Altbach in Education and Colonialism, American Indian tribes constitute a "nation" and are colonized (pp. 21-22). DiBona uses the term to express educational exploitation of the rural sector by the urban elite (The Development of Educational Underdevelopment in India, p. 617). The term in the text refers to exploitation by a powerful group of the weaker.

7. Selections to faculty positions in universities and colleges are often not based on merit alone. Altbach in University Reform (1974) contends that academic appointments on many levels are open to political scrutiny. But often the "professors" on the selection committees with some kind of a family kinship and reciprocity in personal relationships themselves ignore merit and try to accommodate each other and get those candidates appointed that have good "personal equation" with the professor of the department concerned.
8. Personal Promotion scheme is sometimes considered to discourage scholarship since length of service is becoming the major criteria. Though, regular vacancies are also largely being filled by internal candidates on the basis of seniority and in both cases, research and scholarship is ignored.

9. Malcolm Adiseshiah, formerly vice-chancellor of Madras University, also served the UNESCO as its Deputy Director General (1963-70) and has published widely in the fields of education and economics. His analysis of failure of Education Commission's recommendation are part of J. P. Naik's book on the Education Commission and After (1982). Mr. Naik initially was the member-secretary of the Education Commission, 1964-66.

10. The term "scheduled castes" appeared for the first time in the Government of India Act of 1935 as a recognition of an underprivileged segment in society. Traditionally, the scheduled castes were treated as untouchables for "ritual and socioreligious purposes" but were emancipated after independence of India in 1947. The new Constitution (1950) guarantees them protection from social injustice and all forms of exploitation (Article 17) and has made discrimination in any form as a cognizable offence.
References


