Higher Education in India in Context of Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhaya Philosophy: Emerging Issues, Challenges and Suggestions

Dr. Manoj Kumar Trivedi and Dr. Deepti Agarwal
Government Degree College, Unnao (UP)

A university stands for humanism, for tolerance, for reason, for the adventure of the ideas and for the search of truth. It stands for onward march of human race towards even higher objectives. If the universities discharge their duties adequately, then it well with the nation and the people. - Pandit Deendayal Upadhaya

Our university system is, in many parts, in a state of disrepair...In almost half the districts in the country, higher education enrollments are abysmally low, almost two-third of our universities and 90 per cent of our colleges are rated as below average on quality parameters... I am concerned that in many states university appointments, including that of V.C. been politicized and have become subject to caste and communal Considerations, there are complaints of favouritism and corruption. - Prime Minister Mr. Atal Bihari Bajpai

India, even after 69 years of its independence, is far away from the goal of universal literacy. There are number of schools in the country, but they do not have proper basic infrastructure. However on a positive note, India is engaged in the use of higher education as a powerful tool to build a knowledge-based information society of the 21st Century. There has been considerable improvement in the ‘Higher Education’ scenario in both quantitative and qualitative terms. Indian professionals are considered among the best in the world and are in great demand. This signifies the inherent strength of Indian education system. The present paper is an attempt, to identify and discuss a number of critical issues, of quantity and quality of Higher Education in India and identify emerging issues and challenges in the field of Higher Education in India(1).

Objectives

1. To analyze the current scenario of higher education system in India
2. To study the critical issues in Higher Education
3. To identify the Emerging issues of higher education in India
4. To identify the Emerging Challenges of higher education in India
5. Suggestions for improving quality of higher education and Conclusion
Methodology of the study

The paper is an outcome of a review of a substantial number of secondary sources and personal experiences and observations on the current scenario and challenges of higher education in India.

History of Higher Education in India

In the long past the institution of higher education has been given an important position in the Indian society. There were perhaps three streams of tradition- i. Ancient and medieval Sanskrit and Buddhist tradition. ii. The medieval Arabic and Persian tradition. iii. East and South Indian such as Tamil tradition. It has been found from the writings of Chinese travellers like Fi-Hien, Hiuen-Tsang that there existed ancient seats of learning at Takshashila (5th-6th Century B.C), Kanchipur, Nalanda (5th-6th Century A.D), Odantapuri, Sri Dharryakataka, Kashmira, Vikramashila (800A.D). Among the subjects studied here were grammar, metaphysics, logic etc. (2)

In both Sanskrit and Arabic higher learning much secular and scientific learning in law, medicine, mathematics, astronomy etc. was cultivated besides literature, philosophy with the help of books, discussion and memorization. Indian Higher Education in its present form began to appear from the time when British parliament renewed the Charter Act (1813) for educational development in India. College to disseminate English education was established in 1818 at Serampore, Calcutta. McCauley's minute (1835) to promote English education, Charls Woods Dispatch (1854) to establish the universities of Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras in 1857 and the introduction of grants-in-aid for these universities were the major events. Indian Education Commission or Hunter Commission's (1882-83) recommendation to finance University Education in India provided a major impetus to higher Educational development in India. Calcutta University Commission (1917) called as Saddler Commission also recommended for autonomy of universities. The Hartog Committee (1929) report suggested for improvement of quality and standards at the University level education In India. The Abbot-Wood Report (1937) recommendation suggested that English should be the medium of Instruction and encourages the establishment of Polytechnics Colleges, Central Technical Board and Vocational Teacher Training Colleges. Finally Sargent Report (1944) recommendation for the establishment of U.G.C and formulation of blue print for Indian Higher Education structure was the major landmark. At the time of independence there were almost 20 universities and 500 affiliated colleges with the students of near about 0.1million in India. After independence India made various efforts to improve higher education.
system. The first education commission in independent India, Radhakrishnan Commission (1948-49) also recommended for the establishment of UGC. Secondary Education Commission (1952) pioneered a system of 3 year secondary and 4 year higher education. Indian Education Commission (1964) recommended for the introduction of 3 year Degree course and 4 year Honours Degree course. The National Policy on Education (1968) demanded for qualitative improvement at higher education level. The National Policy on Education (1986) recommended 10+2+3 pattern of educational system. The effects of the recommendation of such commissions can be observed from the present status of higher education in India. (3)

Table 1: Growth of Higher Education Institutions And Their Intake Capacity In India

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of universities</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>574</td>
<td>677</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of colleges</td>
<td>578</td>
<td>1816</td>
<td>3223</td>
<td>4738</td>
<td>7346</td>
<td>11146</td>
<td>35539</td>
<td>38000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of teachers (in thousands)</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>395</td>
<td>733</td>
<td>817</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. students enrolled (in thousands)</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>577</td>
<td>1956</td>
<td>2752</td>
<td>4925</td>
<td>8399</td>
<td>22373</td>
<td>28000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: total no of Universities in India As on 25-05-2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of University</th>
<th>No. of Universities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State Universities</td>
<td>347</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deemed to be Universities</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Universities</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Universities</td>
<td>237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>754</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: http://www.ugc.ac.in/oldpdf/alluniversity.pdf

Figure shows the spectrum of higher educational institutions in India. Higher education in India is provided by five groups of institutions: Central, state, private, deemed universities and Institutions of National Importance There
are 52 such institutions. They predominantly consist of the Indian Institutes of Technology, National Institutes of Technology and prominent medical colleges, including the All India Institute of Medical Science. There are 43 central universities, 312 state universities, 183 private universities and 115 deemed universities in India as listed by the University Grants Commission (UGC), the apex regulatory body for higher education. All the above university groups are legally entitled to grant degrees. State universities are the only institutions that are allowed to affiliate private as well as public colleges under them. However, these colleges are allowed to operate only within the individual federal state borders. Private colleges offering professional courses, which match specific needs of a sector or industry, are often affiliated to state universities. It is difficult to estimate the total number of colleges in various federal states. However, affiliated colleges which are provided grants by the UGC are listed on its website. These colleges are called 2f and 12 b colleges. According to the latest figures, there are approximately 9,195 such affiliated colleges in India supported by the UGC. The federal states of Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra have the maximum number of affiliated colleges numbering 1,677 and 1,185 respectively. Karnataka (766), Chattisgarh (488), Gujarat (486), Tamil Nadu (468), and West Bengal (433) too have large number of affiliated colleges under their federal state universities. While private universities do not have affiliated colleges, these universities also offer professional as well as regular courses in it. (4)

Critical issues in Indian higher education.

As India strives to compete in a globalised economy in areas that require highly trained professionals, the quality of higher education becomes increasingly important. So far, India's large, educated population base and its reservoir of at least moderately well trained university graduates have aided the country in moving ahead, but the competition is fierce; from China in particular. Other countries are also upgrading higher education with the aim of building world class universities. Even the small top tier of higher education faces serious problems. Many IIT graduates, well trained in technology, have chosen not to contribute their skills to the burgeoning technology sector in India; perhaps half leave the country immediately upon graduation to pursue advanced studies abroad, and most do not return. A stunning 86 per cent of Indian students in the fields of science and technology who obtain degrees in the United States do not return home immediately following their graduation. A body of dedicated and able teachers work at the IITS and IIMs, but the lure of jobs abroad and in the
private sector makes it increasingly difficult to lure the best and brightest to the academic profession. (5)

The present system of higher education does not serve the purpose for which it has been started. In general education itself has become so profitable a business that quality is lost in the increase of quantity of professional institutions with quota system and politicization adding fuel to the fire of spoil system, thereby increasing unemployment of graduates without quick relief to mitigate their sufferings in the job market of the country. So, the drawbacks of the higher education system underscore the need for reforms to make it worthwhile and beneficial to all concerned.

Most observers agree that Indian higher education, the significant and impressive developments of the past few decades notwithstanding, faces major challenges in both quantitative and qualitative terms. Perhaps the clearest and boldest statement of this issue can be found in the “Report to the Nation 2006” of the National Knowledge Commission which concludes that there is ‘a quiet crisis in higher education in India that runs deep’, and that it has to do with both the quantity and the quality of higher education in India. Recognizing this dual challenge, the former Indian Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh, severely criticized in a recent speech the serious qualitative deficiencies in Indian higher education while at the same time announcing plans for a major expansion of the system. Reflecting on the findings of a confidential report by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council, which is affiliated to the University Grants Commission (UGC), he expressed his concern over the fact that two thirds (68%) of the country's universities and 90 percent of its colleges are “of middling or poor quality” and that well over half of the faculty in India's colleges do not have the appropriate degree qualifications. Knowledge is the base for overall growth and if the nation has to be competitive and to be at par with the globalization pace, we will have to respond to the market forces(3-6).

According to a study only 25% of engineering graduates are directly employable (Infosys, an IT giant, last year sorted through 1.3 million applicants only to find that around two percent were qualified for jobs.) Quality of education delivered in most institutions is very poor. While India has some institutions of global repute delivering quality education, such as (Indian Institute of Management) IIMs and (Indian Institute of Technology) IITs, we do not have enough of them. It has very narrow range of course options that are offered and education is a seller's market, where is no scope of incentive to provide quality education. There is clearly a lack of educated
educators and teaching is not an attractive profession. It's a last choice in terms of career (5,7).

Number of Ph.D.s produced each year is very low and those required by academia is far higher. In fact, at many institutions fresh graduates are employed to teach, leading to poor quality of classroom instruction. Most of the education institutions esp. in states such as Maharashtra and states in South India are owned by politicians. This Education system which is highly regulated by the government has been set up to benefit politicians. The growth of higher education in India has been largely guided by the serviceable prerequisite of the economy. After independence, the role of the state in planning out a development path and also in building higher education institutions was guided by mutuality of purpose. Most observers of higher education comes to the conclusion that performance of higher education institutions has been less than satisfactory in terms of access, equity and quality. Now there is an urgent need to work for the development of the educational sector to meet the need of the emerging opportunities, increasing younger generation population and challenges of the 21st century.

**Challenges of Present Higher Educational System in India**

Since we have got independence we are facing challenges to establish a great and strong education system. Various governments have came and gone. Of course they tried to establish new education policies in the system but this is sad dictate that they were not sufficient for our country. Still we are facing lot of problems and challenges in our Education System. India recognizes that the new global scenario poses unprecedented challenges for the higher education system. The University Grants Commission has appropriately stated that a whole range of skills will be demanded from the graduates of humanities, social sciences, natural sciences and commerce, as well as from the various professional disciplines such as agriculture, law, management, medicine and engineering. India can no longer continue the model of general education as it has been persisting in for the large bulk of the student population (8).

Rather, it requires a major investment to make human resource productive by coupling the older general disciplines of humanities, social sciences, natural sciences and commerce to their applications in the new economy and having adequate field based experience to enhance knowledge with skills and develop appropriate attitudes. Responding to these emerging needs, the UGC stated: "The University has a crucial role to play in promoting social change. It must make an impact on the community if it is to retain its legitimacy and
gain public support". It seeks to do so by a new emphasis on community based programmes and work on social issues. Concepts of access, equity, relevance and quality can be operationalised only if the system is both effective and efficient. Hence, the management of higher education and the total networking of the system has become an important issue for effective management. The shift can occur only through a systemic approach to change as also the development of its human resource, and networking the system through information and communication technology(9).

There are many basic problems facing higher education in India today. These include inadequate infrastructure and facilities, large vacancies in faculty positions and poor faculty thereof, low student enrolment rate, outdated teaching methods, declining research standards, unmotivated students, overcrowded classrooms and widespread geographic, income, gender, and ethnic imbalances. Apart from concerns relating to deteriorating standards, there is reported exploitation of students by many private education providers. Ensuring equitable access to quality higher education for students coming from poor families is a major challenge. Students from poor background are put to further disadvantage since they are not academically prepared to crack highly competitive entrance examinations that have bias towards urban elite and rich students having access to private tuitions and coaching(8).

Education in basic sciences and subjects that are not market friendly has suffered. Research in higher education institutions is at its lowest ebb. There is an inadequate and diminishing financial support for higher education from the government and from society. Many colleges established in rural areas are non-viable, are under-enrolled and have extremely poor infrastructure and facilities with just a few teachers. A series of judicial interventions over the last two decades and knee-jerk reaction of the government – both at the centre and state level and the regulatory bodies without proper understanding of the emerging market structure of higher education in India has further added confusion to the higher education landscape in the country. There is an absence of a well-informed reform agenda for higher education in the country. A few efforts made now and then are not rooted in the new global realities based on competition and increased mobility of students and workforce(6-8).

Time to time system influenced with new challenges and government taken a major role to build the system. But there are many challenges always faced by the government. Some of the leading challenges before the higher education system are continuous upgradation of curriculum to keep in pace
with rapid growth of science and technology; globalization and the resultant challenges from the international universities; grooming of many private institutions without any method of ensuring maintenance of quality and standard; need for adequate funding to meet the demands of various novel innovative programmes; developing a meaningful and purposeful inter-face between the universities, National Research Laboratories, industries, government and society, etc. ICT in higher education policy may not be able to completely overcome all these challenges though it may play a role in information and resource sharing. There are so many people in various parts of country which are still out of reach. This is when we have emphasized more on our education programs and made our system reachable to all areas. Government has to rethink on these policies. Money plays a vital role for the education in accordance with the globally recognized syllabus and curricula. Our constitution which says that it is the responsibility of the central and the state government to build good education system. For that we need to have funds and ensure proper utilization of the funds(3-5).

The Central government prepares policies and plan while responsibility of The State government is to implement those policies on ground. The standard education facilities are higher in the states which are more reasonable. There is a need to purge our education system which requires sufficient funding and better facilities to students. Good policies require earnest implementation and honest monitoring of funds allocated for the purposes. Infact they are necessary preconditions of a successful policy.

The time now is to modernize our education system so that our country can get much more technically graduated people which can help our country to become a developed state having all the facilities and prospects which lure our youth. Higher education is extremely diverse and the challenges and issues faced by higher education institutions are just as diverse. The process of education is not merely digesting books. It is also about doing several co-curricular and extra-curricular activities that give a broader meaning to life in general and education in particular. I believe that opportunities for such holistic development are not enough in India. Facilities for the same are lacking or not easily accessible in India. Even where facilities exist, there is a lack of information about the same(10).

**Suggestions for improving quality of higher education**

There are some suggestions and Expectations from Government, Industry, Educational Institutions, Parents and students for improving quality of higher education
Towards a Learning Society

As we move towards a learning society, every human activity will require contributions from experts, and this will place the entire sector of higher education in sharp focus. Although the priorities, which are being assigned today to the task of Education for All, will continue to be preponderant, the country will have to prepare itself to invest more and more on higher education and, simultaneously, measures will have to be taken to refine, diversify and upgrade higher education and research programmes.

Industry and Academia Connection

Industry and Academia connect is necessary to ensure curriculum and skills in line with requirements. Skill building is really very crucial to ensure employability of academia to understand and make sure good jobs (keeping in view knowledge + skills+ global professional skills = good jobs).

Incentives to Teachers and Researchers

Industry and students are expecting specialized courses to be offered so that they get the latest and best in education and they are also industry ready and employable. Vocational and Diploma courses need to be made more attractive to facilitate specialized programs being offered to students. Incentives should be provided to teachers and researchers to make these professions more attractive for the younger generation.

Innovative Practices –

The new technologies offer vast opportunities for progress in all walks of life. It offers opportunities for economic growth, improved health, better service delivery, improved learning and socio-cultural advances. Though efforts are required to improve the country's innovative capacity, yet the efforts should be to build on the existing strengths in light of new understanding of the research-innovation-growth linkage.

Student-Centered Education and Dynamic Methods

Methods of higher education also have to be appropriate to the needs of learning to learn, learning to do, learning to be and learning to become. Student-centred education and employment of dynamic methods of education will require from teachers new attitudes and new skills. Methods of teaching through lectures will have to subordinate to the methods that will lay stress on self-study, personal consultation between teachers and pupils,
and dynamic sessions of seminars and workshops. Methods of distance education will have to be employed on a vast scale.

Public Private Partnership (2)

PPP is most essential to bring in quality in the higher education system. Governments can ensure PPP through an appropriate policy. University Grants Commission and Ministry of HRD should play a major role in developing a purposeful interface between the Universities, Industries and National Research Laboratories (NRLS) as a step towards PPP. Funding to NRLs by the government should ensure the involvement of institutions of higher education engaged in research activities to facilitate availability of latest sophisticated equipment. There has been some effort both by the government and the private education institutions to develop the teaching staff at various levels.

However, this needs to be intensified with appropriate attention to all the aspects related in order to prepare quality and sufficient number of educational staff. Such efforts need a very serious structuring for the research base institutions. We have to be optimistic that private-public partnership and the Industry interface will take place in the field of education at all levels, and particularly in the backward regions, which is the need of the hour. To achieve excellence, we thus need to create a real partnership between government, educators and industry- Partnerships that can provide our high-tech industries with skilled workers who meet the standards of their industry.

To Provide Need Based Job-Oriented Courses

All round development of personality is the purpose of education. But the present day education is neither imparting true knowledge of life and nor improving the talent of a student by which one can achieve laurels for himself in the field one is interested in and be an asset to the society and nation.

Action Plan for Improving Quality

Academic and administrative audit should be conducted once in three years in colleges by external experts for ensuring quality in all aspects of academic activities. The self-finance colleges should come forward for accreditation and fulfill the requirements of accreditation. Universities and colleges should realize the need for quality education and come forward with action plan for improving quality in higher educational institutions.
Quality Development (1-4)

Quality depends on its all functions and activities: teaching and academic programs, research and scholarship, staffing, students, building, facilities, equipments, services to the community and the academic environment. It also requires that higher education should be characterized by its international dimensions: exchange of knowledge, interactive networking, mobility of teachers and students and international research projects, while taking into account the national cultural values and circumstances. The level of education and knowledge being imparted by many colleges...is not up to the mark. Instead of concentrating on quantity, these institutions should concentrate on quality. The approach of doctoral research in social sciences needs to be more analytical and comparative and be related to society, policy and economy. A study conducted on Social Science Research Capacity in South Asia (2002) showed that the share of the Indian universities in the special articles published in the Economic and Political Weekly was only about a 25 percent. This too was dominated by only three universities, namely- Jawaharlal Nehru University, University of Mumbai & University of Delhi.

International Cooperation

Universities in India have been a primary conduit for the advancement and transmission of knowledge through traditional functions such as research, innovation, teaching, human resource development, and continuing education. International cooperation is gaining importance as yet another function. With the increased development of transport and communication, the global village is witnessing a growing emphasis on international cooperation and action to find satisfactory solutions to problems that have global dimensions and higher education is one of them.

Status of Academic Research Studies

If we see the number of researchers engaged in Research and Development activities as compared to other countries we find that we have merely 119 researchers, whereas Japan has 5287 and US has 4484 researchers per million of population. Even in absolute terms, number of researchers in India is much smaller compared to US, China, Japan, Russia, and Germany. Numbers of doctoral degrees awarded in all subjects are 16, 602 out of which 6774 are in Arts and 5408 in science and rest in others (professional subjects). India has a little over 6000 doctorates in Science and engineering, compared to 9000 in China and 25000 in US. It increased rapidly from a
little over 1000 in 1990 to over 9000 in recent years in China. In comparison, there has been a modest increase in India.

National Science Foundation (NSF) - Science and Engineering Indicators (2002) shows that in the US, about 4% of the science and engineering graduates finish their doctorates. This figure is about 7% for Europe. In India this is not even 0.4%. Data on doctorates particularly in science, engineering and medicine suggests that only a few institutions have real research focus. In engineering there were merely 650 doctorates awarded in 2001-02. Of these 80 percent were from just 20-top universities. In science, 65 percent of the doctorates awarded were from the top-30 universities.

**Stipends to Research Fellows:** (7)

The number of Ph.Ds from Indian Universities should increase with proper standards. This should be seen in the context of extremely low fraction of Ph.Ds in India in relation to M.Sc./B.Tech., as compared to what it is in USA, UK, Germany, Japan etc. Meritorious doctoral students should be recognized through teaching assistantships with stipends over and above the research fellowships Identifying talented, meritorious students and encouraging them through recognition is very important to attract students into research and teaching.

**Fair Quality Assurance System:**

Colleges and Private institutes should set up Internal Quality Assurance Cell and must follow a minimum standard to give degrees. The quality assurance system must be independent of political and institutional interaction and it must have a basis in the legislation. There should be operational, financial and academic autonomy coupled with accountability. There should be an independent accreditation agency with a conglomerate of government, industry, academia, society etc. it is expected to function in such a way so as education to ensure that the stakeholders particularly the students are not taken for a ride. They should be able to know whether a particular institution delivers value or not, then things can be under control to some extent. It is also important that all institute of higher learning must make public the acceptability of their courses and degrees. (i.e. the status, recognition and acceptability of their courses by other institutions).

**To increase Quantity of Universities**

We need more universities because we are more in number and present number of universities is too less. On 13th June, 2005 Government of India
constituted a high level advisory body known as National Knowledge Commission (NKC) to advise the PM about the state of education in India and measures needed to reform this sector. It was headed by Sam Pitroda and submitted its report in November 2007. NKC has recommended setting up of 1500 universities by 2015 so that gross enrollment ratio increases to 15 percent. It has also called for establishing an Independent Regulatory Authority for Higher Education (IRAHE) to monitor the quality of overall higher education in India.

Deendayal Upadhyaya's Prescription for Education in India (Dharma-Rajya: Not Hindutva) (8)

The proposition around which Deendayal Upadhyaya's thoughts revolve, like those of Golwalkar, is that the existence of a nation lies in its distinctive consciousness. It rises or falls in the same degree as that consciousness comes into light or is obscured. But, unlike Golwalkar, who perceives India's consciousness as 'Hindu consciousness', Upadhyaya perceives it as centred in dharma, about which, however, there are numerous misconceptions.

Golwalkar's concern is to make Hindu society united and strong, and since in his view Hindu society is the Indian nation, to make the Hindu nation the chief object of every Hindu’s devotion. Deendayal’s concern is to bring to light the real nature of Indian consciousness, its Chiti, as he calls it; for it is only then that one can obtain a satisfactory answer to the question, 'what direction shall India take?’

But what is dharma which gives to Indian society its distinctive consciousness, and should give to the Indian nation its direction? He clears the ground by first saying what dharma, It is not ritualism. It is not a system of rites and ceremonies. It is not to be found necessarily in temple or mosque or church. They are not dharma any more than a school is knowledge. They are a medium, but they are that only-a medium. Dharma is not a sect, nor a philosophical opinion, nor any one spiritual path. In short, dharma is not ‘religion’.

Wrongly translated as ‘religion', in the next step all the social disorders which religion in the West produced are quickly attached to dharma as well. 'Of the very many damages done to us by English translations, this is one of the greatest'.

The fundamental cause of the numerous problems that modern India is faced with lies, according to Deendayal Upadhyaya, in the indiscriminate application of the Western forms of thought to Indian political life, obscuring
thereby the true nature of Indian consciousness. The policies that have been advanced after independence reflect, not that consciousness, but one Western ‘ism’ or another. Far from achieving coherence and harmony of social purpose, the national life of India has been turned into a battle-ground of conflicting economic and political philosophies.

There are, he says, those who regard the means of production alone as the determining social factor; it is in their given ownership and distribution that they see the cause of all disorder, and in their transfer from private to social domain the cure of all social evils. They believe that, as elsewhere in the world, Indian political life must be grounded in purely economic realities, culture and religion being secondary. Socialists and communists constitute this group. (10)

Deendayal Upadhyaya clears the ground further by taking up the question of ‘nation' and ‘nationalism’. Nation is not just a political concept, a changing construct of the mind, much less just a territorial concept. Nation is not a collection of the people that have historically lived together; nor is the people, jana, simply a collection of human beings living in a geographical space. Nor is nation just a geographical space. It is not born out of social contract, nor would it die should that contract be abrogated. Nation arises out of a deeper life-force; it is selfcreated, swayambhuha. It has a historical growth, of course, but history alone cannot explain it. Language, culture, literature, are undoubtedly the basic elements of a nation's unity, but they are basic because they reflect something even more fundamental that gives life to a nation—its Chiti, or consciousness. They are attributes of nation, not its cause. Confusing attributes with cause, the Western thinkers, then, believe that a nation can be created by somehow putting together those attributes. That cannot be done, for the common elements of a national life are only expressions of an inherent consciousness at work, which cannot be created artificially by political means. Each nation has its own unique consciousness. That is what distinguishes it from others. So long as that consciousness, the Chiti, lives, that nation lives; when it dies, the nation dies. A nation dies, not by the loss of territory, or by decrease in its population; a nation dies when its consciousness ceases to exist.

Deendayal Upadhyaya advances the thesis that the traditional Indian perspective on nation and nationality is born out of a worldview in which, giving primacy to creative harmony, everything is seen as connected with everything else. The individual, having his distinct existence, his legitimate self-interest, and desires and pursuit of happiness, fulfills himself in the larger life of society: society derives the meaning of its existence from the
still larger life of the nation: the nation finds its ultimate fulfilment in serving the universal interests of mankind. All these units of life are interconnected, not in a hierarchy, but in a natural, innate, inviolable simultaneity of reverence for life.

These, according to Upadhyaya, constitute the ideals of traditional Indian national life. They form the Indian consciousness, its underlying life-force, the purpose of its existence – its Chiti. That consciousness finds its clearest expression in dharma, which is the sustaining force of all civilised life, indeed of all life. Dharma is the vital impulse, the life-breath, of Indian civilisation. The one ideal that India has kept before itself, through the numerous vicissitudes of its existence through centuries is respectful acceptance of the diverse forms in which life expresses itself.

**No dharma without free education, free healthcare (8)**

In Deendayal’s dharma-rajya there will have to be, besides, free education for everybody. It is inconceivable, education of the people being in the greatest interest of society, that anybody should have to pay to get himself or herself educated; or, if unable to pay, remain uneducated. Education in traditional India was always free. That was the case, until 1947, in Indian states as well. Primary and higher education shall be a charge on the nation. It is equally inconceivable, he says, that people should have to pay for medical treatment, which, like education, will have to be made available, free, to everybody. Health and education will be, in dharma-rajya, the two primary concerns of society.

If two words are required to indicate the direction in which Indian polity should move, they are, he says: de-centralisation, and self reliance. Diversity, he says, is an inestimable gift of nature: Indian life, like nature, has been immensely diverse, where life has expressed itself in different colours, sounds, textures. This excessive veneration for centralising every social and economic function in one authority can produce only disorder, for it will be against life itself. Authority must be dispersed, so long as the different centres of authority, and initiative, are all held together by dharma. Similarly, self-reliance must take the place of this pathetic dependence on what is foreign, in practically every field, in thinking, social arrangements, methods, capital, the ways of production, technology, and standards of consumption. This dependence on the others cannot be the way of progress. But neither does it mean that India blindly follows only that which is ancient. Many old institutions will change and the new ones take their place.
Finally, Deendayal advocates the thesis that dharma does not lie either in the rule of the majority or even in the people. Dharma is eternal. It is not sufficient, therefore, that democracy be understood only as the rule, of the people; it must also be a rule for the good of the people. What the good of the people consists in can be determined only by dharma. Hence democracy will have to be also dharma-rajya, the rule of dharma. True democracy is only that where both freedom and dharma combine.

Conclusion

After independence, there has been tremendous increase in institutions of higher learning in all disciplines. But with the quantitative growth has it been able to attend to the core issue of quality. India is today one of the fastest developing countries of the world with the annual growth rate going above 9%. In order to sustain that rate of growth, there is need to increase the number of institutes and also the quality of higher education in India. To reach and achieve the future requirements there is an urgent need to relook at the Financial Resources, Access and Equity, Quality Standards, Relevance and at the end the Responsiveness.

To attain and sustain national, regional or international quality, certain components are particularly relevant, notably careful selection of staff and continuous staff development, in particular through the promotion of appropriate programs for academic development, including teaching/learning methodology and mobility between countries, between higher education institutions and the world of work, as well as student mobility within and between countries. Internal self-evaluation and external review must be conducted openly by independent specialists, if possible with international experts. Report of the National Knowledge Commission if implemented can help boost education sector in India. We are moving towards an era which would be defined by the parameters of knowledge and wisdom. India is heading towards becoming a developed nation by 2020 and knowledge power by 2017. The decisions that are going to be taken on these are likely to hold the key to India’s future as a center of knowledge production. We need higher educated people who are skilled and who can drive our economy forward. When India can provide skilled people to the outside world then we can transfer our country from a developing nation to a developed nation very easily and quickly.

According to former Prime Minister of India Dr. Manmohan Singh 'The time has come to create a second wave of institution building and of excellence in the fields of education, research and capability building'. We need an
educational system that is modern, liberal and can adapt to the changing needs of a changing society, a changing economy and a changing world. The thrust of public policy for higher education in India has to be to address these challenges. However, one university cannot make much difference. If the government welcomes more such initiatives, the future will be ours. We will be able to match and compete with other countries and the dream to be the world's greatest economy won't be difficult to achieve.

References