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CONTENTS

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Abstract

Education for civic learning prepares students to acquire the knowledge, values and skills needed to participate in citizen action which, in turn, allows them to follow the ideals laid down in the Constitution. It equips students with the ability to respect different perspectives, resolve conflicts and deal with differences of opinion in a non-violent manner. Research indicates that student diversity in higher education campuses can be channelled for civic learning and for promoting democratic norms of behaviour. Education for civic learning is particularly relevant in the sphere of higher education in India given the high degree of student diversity in terms of social, ethnic, racial, religious and regional affiliations and characteristics. Empirical evidence points to the formation of peer groups based on social identities, divisions in student–faculty academic relations, prejudices and stereotypes stemming from the class, caste, ethnic, regional, and religious backgrounds of the students. Exclusionary behaviours also lead to discrimination, harassment, segregation and physical violence against women and students from the disadvantaged groups like the Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs). This paper argues that higher education institutions in India need to respond and adapt to the changing nature of the social diversity of student population.

Introduction

The higher education sector in India has experienced an unprecedented expansion in the recent decades. India is currently going through the stage of massification of higher education with a Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of around 23.0 percent (MHRD, 2015). This expansion has been accompanied by diversification of the sector in terms of the types of institutions, sources of financing, the nature of programmes of study offered, and the social composition of the students. Higher education institutions are becoming increasingly diverse in terms of the socio-cultural backgrounds of their student populations. This implies that a higher number of non-elite and non-traditional social and income group learners are entering into the higher education system in the country.

Today, students belonging to different religions and lower castes, as also those from poor families and rural areas, and those speaking minority languages co-exist with students belonging to high-caste, urban backgrounds and to rich families. While diversity provides an opportunity to experience richness and variety among the students, it also poses challenges before them of learning and living in a socially inclusive way. Diversity tends to lead to the creation of social and peer groups around identities and to develop a divide in student–teacher academic relations, prejudices and stereotypes based on class, caste, ethnic, regional and religious lines. For example, the university environment in India reinforces the divide between Dalits and non–Dalits, between those belonging to varying faiths and different sexes. Exclusionary behaviour also leads to discrimination and the perpetration of physical violence against marginalised sections including women and those belonging to the disadvantaged social groups.

The concerned authorities have issued clear directives for the creation of Equal Opportunity Cells (EOCs) in institutions of higher education with the objective of institutionalizing equality and protecting students from discrimination. Legal methods have also been implemented in higher education spaces to safeguard students belonging to the discriminated groups such as women, the Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) from possible discrimination (UGC, 2012). Although such legal measures and guidelines exist, the question that is still unanswered is how higher education institutions that are rooted in tradition respond to periods of transition. The fact that the government felt the need for bringing in such a regulation points to the widespread prevalence of discrimination and exclusion on the campuses of higher education institutions. However, though legal methods can certainly act as a deterrent, on their own, they may not be sufficient to achieve the desired democratic

behaviour. Discriminatory behaviours are the outcome of socialisation of children, where the law can hardly influence the behaviour of the family and the society.

It is well recognised that in modern society, education as a social process is expected to inculcate democratic values and foster peaceful interactions among members of diverse groups. These are features of civic learning. There is a shared belief that higher education has a great potential to become a social laboratory for civic learning. Education for civic learning implies an active engagement with the values of liberty, equality and humanity. Civic learning entails the acquisition of new knowledge, values, skills and habits of the mind that are necessary for an individual to interact respectfully with people representing diverse cultures and perspectives.

This paper attempts to understand how student diversity in the higher education sector in India can be addressed institutionally and how it can be channelised for civic learning. The paper is divided into eight sections. After the introductory section, the second section discusses the social purpose of higher education and the key developments that have made higher education around the globe more representative of the larger society. Student diversity as a value and its benefits with respect to civic learning are highlighted in the third section. Section four elucidates the diversity initiatives undertaken in college campuses at the international level for improving inter-group relations and promoting civic learning. The empirical findings of the impact of such diversity initiatives on civic learning and democratic outcomes are discussed in section five. The sixth section details the diversity initiatives being undertaken in India for civic learning and for ensuring that the under-represented students have access to higher education and are able to complete their studies. The section seven highlights the emerging concerns on strained inter-group relations and discrimination in higher education campuses in India. The final section summarises major observations and put forward rationale and strategies for implementing civic learning in higher education institutions in India.

Social Purpose of Higher Education, Expansion and Equity

It has been widely recognised that the attainment of higher education has been decisive in determining the future socio-economic prospects of countries and their populations. Higher education is now recognised as the single largest contributor to economic growth in developed countries with the knowledge segment of the economy benefiting the most from it (UIS and OECD, 2002). In view of the growing economic importance of higher education, concerns pertaining to equity and social justice in access to higher education have been propelled centre-stage. This equity in

access can be achieved if the higher education system expands and is transformed from an elite stage to massification and universalisation by providing access to greater number of people rather than a privileged few.

The belief that higher education in the era of massification and universalisation has to perform a broader social function along with its other economic functions has led to a new discourse on the social purpose of higher education and the social accountability of higher education institutions. Cutting across national boundaries, it has led to the questioning of higher education with respect to its access to what, why and for whom. These questions and approaches in higher education aimed at achieving equity are discussed in this section. We first delineate how the idea of the social purpose of higher education and the social accountability of higher education institutions are perceived and approached in both the global and various national contexts.

The Social Purpose of Higher Education

The foundations of higher education performing a social function by preparing knowledgeable, public-spirited, democratically engaged individuals rests on the purpose of education as conceived by the educational philosopher John Dewey (1915), who extensively deliberated on the role of education in developing the social spirit and in strengthening democracy. According to Dewey, "democracy is more than a form of government; it is primarily a mode of associative living, of conjoint communicated experience" (p.93). Dewey thus elaborated on two important traits of a democratic society- one, shared values; and, two, interaction and cooperative association with other groups.

In order to make democracy a practicing institution in diverse societies, it is imperative for citizens to agree with, embrace and commit to a set of shared values (equality, human rights and social justice) while also believing in and practising these values. Banks (2007) elaborates that when citizens unify around a set of democratic values such as equality, human rights and social justice, only then can the liberties to experience equality, justice and peace be secured for social, ethnic and religious groups. Education is thus a means for developing the social spirit amongst students with habits and dispositions that will help create a better society.

The role of higher education in preparing democratic citizenship was highlighted in the UNESCO's World Declaration on Higher Education for the 21st Century in 1998. UNESCO affirmed that the mission of Higher Education is a commitment to "help protect and enhance societal values by training young people in the values which form

the basis of democratic citizenship and by providing critical and detached perspectives to assist in the discussion of strategic options and the reinforcement of humanistic perspectives" (UNESCO, 1998). Political consensus developed through the Bologna process during the 1990s involving European countries, has also been pivotal in upholding the social purpose of higher education, though this process had a broader political economic agenda of Europeanisation. The UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education, held in Paris in 2009, maintained that "Higher Education must not only give solid skills for the present and future world but must also contribute to the education of ethical citizens committed to the construction of peace, the defence of human rights and the values of democracy"(UNESCO, 2009, p. 2–3). The 2009 Communique from the UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education declaring higher education to be a public good as well as a contributor to it, is also one of the examples of the international consensus on the social responsiveness and role of higher education. These declarations acknowledged the potential of higher education to prepare young minds for becoming effective citizens by enhancing students' knowledge regarding issues pertaining to inequalities, poverty, discrimination and injustices.

The transformative expectation from education is also reflected in the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Target 4.7 draws our attention to the role of education for sustainable development. This inspirational target states that "by 2030 all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development" (UN, 2015). The life-long learning model promoted by international bodies like UNESCO, the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the European Union (EU), in essence, supports the role of higher education institutions in fostering the capacity of students to learn, work and live in diverse societies.

Figure 1 provides a snapshot of the aspirations from institutions of higher learning to cultivate democratic values and to empower students to use education as a tool whereby they can see their own roles in social transformation. Human capital discourse and the changing nature of the production system also acknowledge the economic significance of higher education systems. The role of higher education in economic development is projected in Box A in Figure 1. Unlike economic purpose, the social purpose of higher education has started receiving wider attention very recently,

as shown in Box B in Figure 1. Higher education is expected to equip students with the values of equality, fraternity, justice and care that will empower them to perform skilful actions in a collective manner for addressing public problems. Thus, the focus here is on the role of higher education in the construction of a stable society and a just society by preparing responsible citizens. Higher education can promote the agenda of stability and social justice by:

a) Being sensitive to the indicator of social equity in access to opportunities to higher learning and upward social mobility, and

b) Educating students in a manner that education becomes a defence against the rise of sexual violence, caste-ism, class-ism, discrimination and intolerance.

There are many benefits in upholding social transformative purpose of higher education. These benefits include the creation of knowledgeable citizens with critical perspectives; promotion of civic learning and civic vitality with commitment to pluralism; and the creation of political consciousness that helps students understand political situations, democratic skills to enable them to negotiate differences in society, and a shared democracy which leads to economic vitality. According to the Council of Europe, a shared democracy is based on mutual respect for each other. It is believed that a focus on the social transformative role of higher education has benefits for the economy at both the local and global levels. Since higher education entails educating and training decision makers, a focus on developing capacities among students to work and live in diverse democracies spurs local and global economic vitality.

Figure 1: Purpose of Higher Education
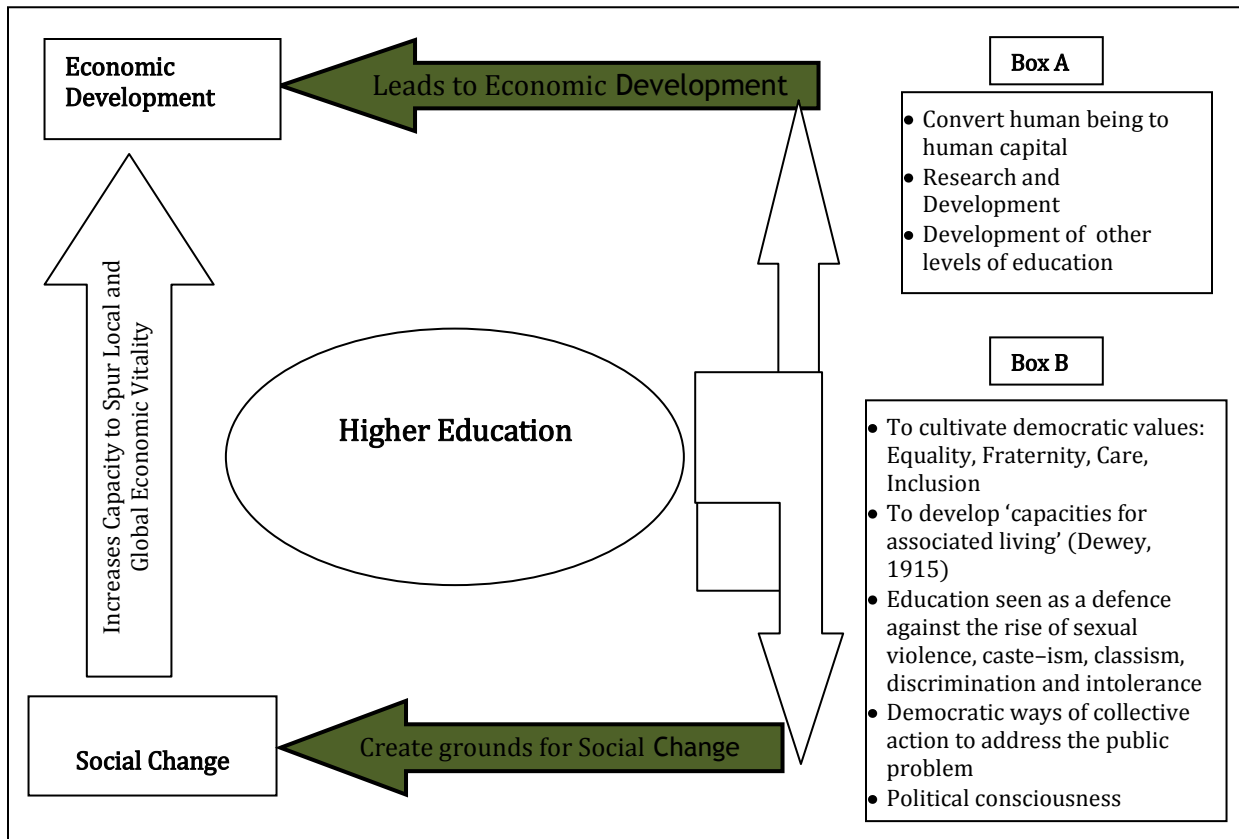
(Source: Prepared by the authors.)

Diverse Ways of Approaching the Social Purpose of Higher Education

The social purpose of higher education has been approached and implemented in various countries differently. Given the socio-political and economic history of countries, one can observe fundamental differences in the ways in which those countries have initiated programmes and policies.

The education reforms in Cuba and China implemented during the communist regime opened up a new debate on the social purpose of education. Reforms had taken place in these countries in both the schooling and higher education spheres. In both the countries, students and teachers were sent to factories and farms; curricula were formulated on the basis of immediate agricultural and industrial needs; classroom-centred schooling was replaced by work-study programmes; workers and farmers were dispatched to take up teaching and school-management positions; and full-time and institutional facilities were increasingly replaced by part-time and non-institutional programmes (Cheng and Manning, 2003). In China, universities were

closed down during the 1960s and students and faculty were sent to farms and factories to gain hands-on expertise in education. The objective of this education policy was to create practically minded and pragmatically trained labourers. All these policies were based on the strong morality of social equity, which aimed to eliminate distinction between the rural and urban areas, between the elite and commoners. The ultimate goal of these education reforms was to break the barrier between the society and educational institutions.

While some countries considered education as a tool for inculcating proletarian ideologies, many advanced capitalist countries promoted secular ideology in the form of civic education initiatives. Civic capacities were viewed as a pre-requisite for inclusive democracy, which was defined as an "ideal that all human beings have equal value, deserve equal respect, and should be given equal opportunity to fully participate in the life and direction of the society"(AAC&U, 2011, p.10). In 1992, the US higher education system embarked on a path of building the civic capacities of students going to college for achieving inclusive democracy. The ability to respectfully engage with cultures and perspectives that were different from one's own was at the heart of civic education. It was envisioned that such abilities would be constructed through an engagement with student diversity on college campuses.

Parallel to the emergence of the social purpose of higher education, the social justice rationale for the expansion of higher education has emerged as a global agenda in the last few decades. Let us now discuss the developments that have resulted in the expansion of access of the disadvantaged groups to higher education and the methods adopted for achieving equity and social justice in higher education.

Equity, Social Justice and Expansion of Higher Education

The socio-political climate emanating from the social movements of the late twentieth century, such as student unrest in universities (Boren, 2001; Oberschall, 1993; Westby, 1976), and feminist, subaltern and environment movements (Rootes and Brulle, 2013), challenged deep-rooted structural inequalities, and put equity and social justice upfront of the developmental debate. In the current phase of development, it is well recognized that human capital is the single most important factor promoting economic growth and influencing the distribution of income. Equity in higher education means that personal economic and social conditions do not inhibit access to higher education opportunities for realising one's potential. It is important to ensure that the opportunities to acquire human capital through education and skill formation are also distributed equitably.

The external and internal pressures created by globalisation have impacted the nature and expansion of higher education in various nation states. External pressure is reflected in the form of the competitive nature of the world economy that puts pressure on the State and its industry to be globally competitive. The expansion of higher education is viewed as the key to becoming globally competitive. In the transition economies, knowledge/information intensiveness in all economic activities became the dominant factor fuelling economic growth. As stated by Trow (1973), "Mass higher education differs from elite higher education not just quantitatively but qualitatively" (p.6).

The qualitative changes included the movement of higher education from shaping the mind and character of the privileged few for performing elite roles, to, providing choices for a greater number in the types of learning including imparting professional/vocational skills for the performance of broader technical and economic roles. It was also recognised that unlike the medieval period, institutionalised education in the modern society no longer narrowly defines education as a mere process of socialisation. It soon became evident that higher and tertiary education plays an important role in determining intra- and inter-generational mobility in all domains of economic life, and that education has the capacity to function as an allocator of social positions (Meyer, 1977). As Miklavic (2010, p.8) stated, "The romantic era of the university as an autonomous venue for the education of a gentleman (UK) and a broadly cultivated man (continent) to contribute to the intellectual elite of society came to an end". Higher and technical education achieved a new meaning in the era of higher economic returns of investments in the knowledge sectors of the economy. As a result, specialised education and codified knowledge became a basic determinant of economic progress. The emergence of the knowledge economy thus necessitated the expansion of higher education in order to prepare students with the requisite capabilities and skills to produce and use knowledge for economic progress.

The internal pressure of globalisation, on the other hand, denotes raising of aspiration levels of the population for college education. Consequently, countries have marked exponential growth reflected in rising enrolment levels and entry into mass higher education. Thus, the expansion of higher education systems in both the national and sub-national contexts has been accompanied by the diversification of the system in terms of the types of institutions, programmes, and sources of finance, on one hand, and increasing the diversity of the student population in terms of socio-demographic characteristics, on the other hand.

The expansion of higher education is expected to reduce inequalities in access. However, the market-driven nature of the expansion of higher education, and, a large number of college going age groups from the advantaged sections of society, can have a negative impact on the reduction in inequalities in access. The market-driven logic of neo-liberalism led to the re-imagination of higher education as a private good and undermined the broader goals of higher education in achieving a democratic culture (Giroux, 2002). As Altbach (2004, p.3) put it, "All of the contemporary pressure on higher education, from the pressure of massification to the growth of private sector, are the result of globalisation".

The expansion of higher education was mainly fuelled by the private sector in most of the developing countries. The expansion of the private sector was also the result of the economic crisis and the initiation of Structural Adjustment Programmes in the 1980s, which negatively impacted the public sector to provide continued and adequate funding support for an expanding higher education sector. Many countries opened up the higher education sector for private investments for expansion (Varghese, 2013). It has been empirically shown that expansion does not reduce class inequalities unless "all sons and daughters of advantaged origins attain the educational level under consideration" (Arum et al., 2007, p.3).

In order to address equity concerns in access to higher education, many countries have adopted affirmative action and protective discrimination as strategies to increase enrolment among the deprived groups who earlier did not have access to higher education. The fact that "equal inputs need not always lead to equal outcomes in education" (Varghese, 2011) has been the guiding principle of affirmative action or protective discrimination against the socially, economically and historically marginalised social groups.

Policies and programmes of affirmative action based on the principles of 'preferential treatment' or 'protective discrimination' (Alexandrowicz, 1957 as cited in Galenter, 1962) were introduced to enhance the enrolment of the under-represented groups (Weisskopf, 2004). For instance, India had reservation policies since the early twentieth century (we will discuss this in detail later in the paper). In India and Brazil, affirmative action measures were implemented in the form of a 'quota' system (which set a fixed share of slots that can only be held by members of the target group), while, in the United States (US) and South Africa, affirmative action took the shape of 'preferential boosts', which gave such candidates additional points to boost their scores to help compete for positions.

The United States and many developed countries were compelled to open up their higher learning institutions to the non-traditional social groups (Smith et al., 2002). For example in the US, as a consequence of the broader political mobilisation of the civil rights movement which began in 1950, the Civil Rights Act was passed in 1964. Diversity in the student composition was viewed as a resource for excellence and the means to strengthen democracy. Indicators of excellence in education included learning outcomes such as 'a respectful engagement with cultures and perspectives very different from one's own', and, 'civic-problem solving skills'. Overtime hundreds of colleges, universities, and community colleges started working together to bring the diverse narratives of communities into the curriculum, to make campus life constructively inter-cultural, and to engage in partnerships with the wider community.

The next few sections will provide insights on the types of initiatives to improve diversity amongst students in the higher education campuses in the US and findings from empirical studies on the impact of such initiatives on learning outcomes among students. The rationale for focusing on the US case is as follows. First, like India, the US is one of the largest and most diverse democracies in the world. Second, the nature of the transition that the higher education system in the US has undergone in terms of increasing student diversity since the mid-1960s resembles what India too has been witnessing in the last two decades. Third, the well-established affirmative action policies in favour of the socially and economically disadvantaged sections being implemented in both the US and India qualify the two countries for a better comparison.

Student Diversity as a Resource for Civic Learning

As a consequence of the transition from the elite to massification and universalisation, student diversity in higher education campuses in advanced capitalist countries, such as the US, started increasing rapidly. Expansion meant the higher participation of non-traditional social and economic groups in the higher education systems. Student diversity in college campuses in the US was also the result of desegregation policies. Since the establishment of Harvard University in 1636, the US remained a highly elite system of higher education till the 1960s. The belief or myth of intellectual inferiority of people of colour was translated into policies and institutional practices, and remained a barrier for students of colour (Smith et al., 2002). Consequently, people of colour were literally absent in higher education institutions till the 1960s. Before the 1960s, historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) were the only resort for pursuit of higher education among the African–Americans, and

nearly 90 per cent of the African–Americans who graduated during that period were from HBCUs (Kim and Conrad, 2006).

The scenario changed when the US began to open its higher education institutions to people of colour. The Supreme Court's decision in Brown vs. Board of Education (1954) overturned the doctrine of separate but equal public education that had been the law since the Court's ruling in *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896). For the first time racial minorities started entering elite and predominantly White colleges and universities. The passage of the Civil Rights Act in 1964 and the *Brown* decision, led to a drastic increase in the presence of racial minorities in institutions of higher learning (Smith et al., 2002).

One of the implications of this situation was that campuses became more heterogeneous in terms of the socio-economic, racial and gender background of students. In other words, campuses were characterised by statistical or 'stage-one diversity' or "a student body that is racially and ethnically diverse on a statistical basis" (Bensimon, 2004, p. 48). The Supreme Court supported student diversity in higher education as a compelling State interest, acknowledging that "diversity promotes learning outcomes, provides skills for a global market place, creates a diverse officer corps vital to national security, and serves as a path to diverse leadership" (Grutter vs. Bollinger et al., 2003 as cited in Hurtado, 2003). The Supreme Court further asserted that a diverse student body promotes an atmosphere essential for quality higher education and results in a more affirmative campus environment by creating conditions under which the majority (that is, White) students can interact with and learn about people who are different from themselves.

Empirical Insights on the Impact of Student Diversity on Democratic Outcomes

The theoretical foundations for valuing student diversity as a resource for civic learning came from theories of cognitive development and social psychology, such as those of the psychologist Erikson's (1946; 1956) theory of social identity formation in the late adolescence/early adulthood (first year of college) and Allport's (1954) theory of interpersonal contact with diverse peers. Allport's theory maintained that interaction with diverse peers was beneficial for cognitive development and critical for bringing about a reduction in prejudice and other negative behaviour towards the out-groups. It is on college campuses that young people (entering early adulthood) come together from different backgrounds and experience classroom and social relationships that are in variance from the students' home environments.

Gurin et al. (2002) provided empirical results on the positive impact of social diversity in the cognitive growth of young adults who enter colleges and its effect on their learning outcomes as well as democratic outcomes. They tested their theory by using two longitudinal databases—the University of Michigan and from Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) data. The Michigan Student Survey (MSS) was initiated to monitor students' responses to the diversity focus of the University of Michigan. The MSS was a single-institution survey of students who entered the University of Michigan in 1990, and a follow-up survey was conducted four years later. The CIRP database was a multi-institutional analysis, which included 11,383 students from 184 institutions. These students were surveyed upon entering college in 1985 and again four years later. Both databases had racially diverse student bodies. The authors controlled for student demographic characteristics and institutional characteristics (private–public, a university or a four-year college) that could influence involvement in diversity experiences and learning and democracy outcomes. The results of their study indicated that diversity experiences have a positive effect on students' learning and democratic outcomes.

The learning outcome included self-rated aspirations for post-graduate education, the drive to achieve, intellectual self-confidence, importance placed on original writing, creating artistic work, self-rated academic ability, writing ability, analytic and problem-solving skills, the motivation to understand human behaviour, preference for complex rather than simple explanations, and the tendency to think about underlying processes involved in causal analysis. The democratic outcomes included civic engagement, racial and cultural understanding, perspective-taking and understanding about the compatibility of difference and democracy. Civic engagement was a measure of the students' motivation to participate in activities that affect society and the importance given to influencing the political structure. Perspective-taking referred to the importance of considering other people's points of view; racial and cultural engagement was measured by asking students how much they had learned during college about the contributions of various racial/ethnic groups to American society; understanding on compatibility about difference and democracy included students' belief that diversity is non-divisive and commonality in the values in life between their own racial/ethnic group and other groups.

The positive effect of structural diversity on the campus environment and interactions among diverse groups was also highlighted by the study undertaken by Pike and Kuh (2006). This study used large-scale data from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), conducted in Spring 2001, involving a sample of 305

nationally represented institutions, College Student Reports and Integrated Post-Secondary Education Data Systems (IPEDS), in Fall 2000-01. The study used statistical techniques such as the standardised root mean square residual (SRMR) and the comparative fit index (CFI) to test models of the relationships among institutional characteristics (such as the type of institution, the courses offered, and public–private control), structural diversity, informal interactional diversity, and the perceived campus environment. Pike and Kuh found that students attending liberal arts colleges had a higher scope of informal interaction because of higher student diversity.

It was also found that in these colleges, the curriculum was set up in such a manner that students had a greater scope to interact with diverse groups. However, the results also indicated that the effect of structural diversity on the campus environment depended on the nature and quality of the interactions rather than on the quantity of such interactions. Their study concluded that "attracting diverse students should be seen as a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for positive diversity outcomes….learning to function effectively in a diverse society also depends on the types of diversity experiences a student has and the commitment of institutional leaders to creating conditions needed for positive and productive interactions among diverse groups of students, faculty and staff" (Pike and Kuh, 2006, p.444).

The presence of a racially and ethnically diverse student body also posed many challenges to the higher education system. The co-existence of diverse student bodies was characterised by increasing racial/ethnic campus violence in predominantly White institutions (Smith et al., 2002). The societal division on race and its associated assumptions, prejudices and beliefs got replicated in campuses. Increasing diversity was accompanied by violent racial tensions across the campuses. Starting from volatile racial violence in the 1960s to symbolic attacks against minorities through new media in the 1990s, racial relations in higher education campuses continued to remain as racial crisis (Altbach et al., 2002). Gradually, when student diversity was altered and campus racial relations became violent, it led to a debate on civic education in higher education institutions. Therefore, the component of civic education in higher education must be understood against these broader socio-political implications of massification and social diversity of the student population in higher education.

Diversity Initiatives to Improve Race Relations and Promote Civic Learning

The US developed a new education policy in 1992 to deal with diversity, improve race relations and increase civic responsibilities by bringing about reforms in the

curriculum and pedagogy for civic learning in colleges and universities. In what followed, civic education came to be seen as a medium for enhancing the campus climate for racial/ethnic diversity. Meanwhile, social diversity in the demographic composition of students, faculty and staff representation in the physical presence of previously under-represented groups on the higher education campus, created conditions of inter-group interactions and learning about diverse peers. College campuses were viewed as a laboratory for such interactions and structural (numerical) diversity was regarded as a resource for promoting a positive campus climate, inter-group relations, learning outcomes and democracy outcomes (Allport, 1954; Antonio, 2001; Chang 2002; Hurtado et al., 1999; Milem and Hakuta, 2000; Orfield, 2001; Smith, 1997; Kurlaender and Orfield, 2006; Tropp and Pettigrew, 2005).

Scholars and educators in the US located the problem of inter-group tensions in stereotypes and misinformation about groups, particularly minority groups, and identified various approaches to address the issue. In this context, three major approaches were identified: enlightenment programmes that provided knowledge about other groups to increase inter-group understanding; contact programmes that provided opportunities for members of different groups to interact with each other in controlled settings; and skill programmes to manage differences in a peaceful manner and collectively solve public problems. A large number of educational programmes were thus created to improve race relations on college campuses.

Diversity initiatives were then classified into two major categories (Figure 2). They are: initiatives ensuring statistical diversity—this is stage one diversity, and, stage two diversity wherein diversity as a value in both social and academic life is espoused and enacted. Statistical diversity or stage one diversity indicated that members of the student community belong to diverse social groups. Affirmative action policies were implemented to make the campuses statistically diverse in terms of student composition, as discussed earlier.

Stage two diversity is a situation wherein diversity serves as a value in the academic and socio-cultural life of campus. Social diversity, in turn, was seen to be linked with academic excellence, as mentioned earlier. The purpose of such reforms was to shift away from simply viewing the representation of minorities in numbers to identifying transformational elements that would lead to their retention and graduation (Smith, 1997). The transformational elements were curriculum reforms, a campus culture that affirmed diversity, and an institutional vision that defined what diversity meant to a particular institutions. Curricular reforms incorporating diverse

perspectives and experience in classrooms and the offering of ethnic studies/diversity courses helped in upholding diversity as a value in the academic domain.

Figure 2: Stages in Campus Diversity Initiatives
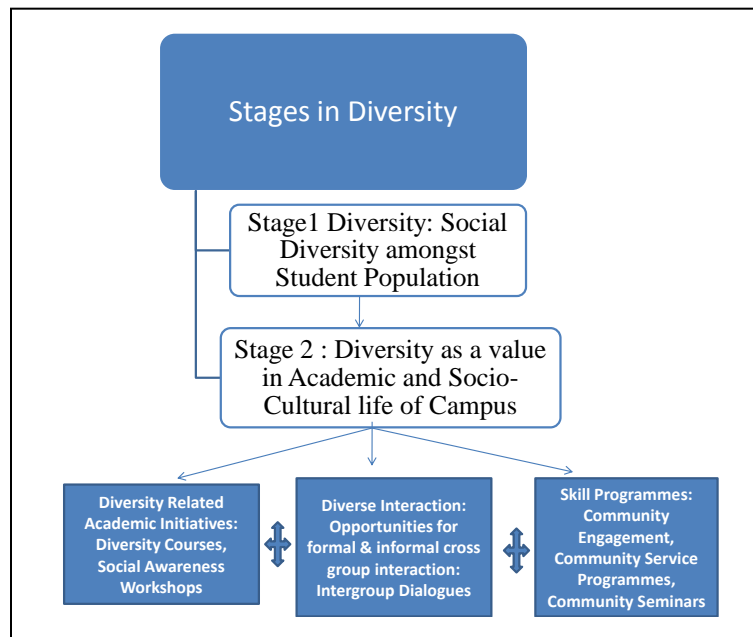
Source: Prepared by the authors.

Enlightenment Programmes

The new curricula were introduced in the form of diversity courses, social justice education and education for civic learning. They explored the "dynamics of privilege and disadvantage rooted in racism, sexism, class-ism, and other forms of systemic oppression; noted their historical roots, intergenerational legacies and inter-group differences" (Adams et al., 2013, p.xxvi). Intellectual tradition and its assumptions based on Euro-centric epistemology were also challenged by subaltern epistemologies, which put subaltern concerns at the heart of the developmental discourse (see Carson, 1981; Smith et al., 2002). For example, courses such as 'Western Civilization' or 'Western Heritage', which covered knowledge on institutions, ideas, principles and contestations that underpinned Western democracies, offered as a part of the US higher education curriculum during the first half of the twentieth century, were found to be too exclusionary in the voices and texts that they explored (Gilbert, 1982). Initiated by legal scholars of colour, critical race theory emerged as a strong intellectual critique to the then dominant neutral policies and programmes (Scheurich and Young, 2002). Subaltern epistemologies and the subjective experiences of the

marginalised sections needed to be valid and to offer a legitimate account of knowledge for the first time.

Contact Programmes and Skill Programmes

At the same time, inter-group dialogues, cross-racial interactions, cultural and social awareness workshops and community seminars became an integral component of pedagogy wherein students from diverse groups interacted and learned to respect their mutual differences. Institutions of higher learning also aimed to promote both a democratic ethos and a civic ethos on campuses through pedagogical methods of 'service learning' and 'community engagement'. The pedagogical methods included community service projects, internships or assignments such as engagement with deprived groups, and invitations by the universities to the communities to make use of their resources and personnel. Civic engagement activities also involved faculty–community partnerships for research and leadership development in the economic, social and civil spheres.

Teachers

The reform also included changes in the orientation of teachers and their sensitisation towards the new education reforms (AAC&U, 1995). Teachers play an important role in preparing students with knowledge and skills needed for democratic engagements. Such teachers have attributes of reflexivity, with an empathetic understanding on diverse cultures in order to function effectively in diverse classrooms and to help students from different cultures and groups to construct clarified identifications. Reflective teachers were expected to help students to understand how implicit cultural assumptions, frames of reference, perspectives and biases within a discipline influence the way in which knowledge is constructed.

With this understanding in knowledge construction, students get equipped to challenge the mainstream academic meta-narrative and construct liberating and transformative ways of conceptualising the knowledge (Banks, 2007). Therefore, the attributes of reflective teachers were those that: a) critically analyse and rethink their notions of race, culture and ethnicity; b) view themselves as cultural and racial beings; c) reconstruct race, culture and ethnicity in ways that are inclusive; d) are better able to reveal the ways in which these concepts are related to the social, economic and political structures, and e) less likely to be victimised by knowledge that protects hegemony and inequality (Nieto, 1999; Ommiand Winant, 1994 as cited in Banks, 2007).

Through new knowledge and skills, students were expected to unlearn many things that they had imbibed from family and society, and also to develop skills and

capacities to deal with diversity and differences in a democratic way. It was envisioned that these diversity initiatives would help to provide a diverse socio-cultural experience to students both inside and outside the classroom; to encourage students to participate constructively with diverse others; and to work collectively for addressing common problems. Colleges were expected to prepare empowered learners, informed learners, and intellectual learners through a variety of opportunities, that is, diversity courses, inter-group contact experiences, and community engagement programmes, to meet the diverse needs of students.

Empowered Learners are characterised by the capacity to understand complex social systems and to work within these complex systems, and with diverse groups, by using non-violent communication skills, while demonstrating their intellectual ability and the ability to manage change, as also to transform information into knowledge, and knowledge into judgement and action. Informed Learners have the attributes of imagination, creativity and understanding of diverse cultures. Intellectual Learners are those who demonstrated intellectual honesty, and a deep understanding of oneself as well as respect for the complex identities of others, their histories, and their cultures (AAC&U, 2002).

Both teachers and students were expected to practice democratic engagement based on the values of care, human dignity, equality and justice informed by morality, logic and rationality. For making prudent choices, students were expected to have clarified and thoughtfully derived values through the process of identification of the sources of their values, to determine how they conflict with each other, and to identify value alternatives and choose freely from among them (Banks and Clegg, 1990).

Empirical Findings on the Impact of Diversity Initiatives

This section provides a systematic coverage of empirical findings of the impact of diversity initiatives on students' civic learning and democratic outcomes. As mentioned earlier, diversity initiatives followed a three-fold approach for developing democratic relationships amongst diverse student bodies for promoting an improved campus climate in terms of attitude and behaviour. This approach includes enlightenment programmes that transmitted knowledge; contact programmes that provided opportunities of inter-group interaction; and skill programmes that encourage students to work collectively for a public purpose. We will start with the knowledge component first.

Transformative Knowledge to function in Diverse Campuses

In order to prepare students to function in the multi-cultural campus environment and the society, higher education institutions introduced students to higher levels of knowledge about tolerance, inclusion and structural inequities based on race, gender, and class as well as concepts, paradigms, themes and examples that challenged the meta-narratives and mainstream academic knowledge which dominated the nations' curriculum (Banks, 1996).The content of these diversity courses was prepared with inputs from a variety of cultures and groups to illustrate key concepts, principles, generalisations and theories in various disciplines.

The aim of these courses was to develop critical thinking among students by challenging them to think more deeply about their assumptions concerning race, ethnicity, gender, class, sexual orientation or physical disabilities. Empirical studies found that the level of prejudice was lower in students who completed a diversity course, while specifically addressing race and gender issues (Cacioppo and Petty, 1982; Chang, 2002; Bowman, 2010). Diversity courses in higher education were found to be effective in the promotion of racial understanding and in improving students' inter-group tolerance.

Using the Modern Racism Scale, Chang (2002) examined the racial attitudes of under-graduate students who had just started a diversity course and those who were about to complete it. The study found that irrespective of the content of the diversity course, (that is, some of the courses did not specifically focus on Black issues but examined other types of inequities and differences based on class and gender), that the students who had nearly completed their course requirements made significantly more favourable judgements of Blacks than those who had just started their course requirements. The study of CIRP data by Gurin et al. (2002) shows that enrolment in an ethnic study significantly influenced racial attitudes.

Similarly, Hogan and Mallot (2005) used the Modern Racism Scale (McConahay, 1986) to assess the impact of education and personality variables on 315 college students' prejudicial attitudes toward African–Americans. This research demonstrated that while the completion of a course on race and gender issues increased students' awareness about racism, it did not help in tackling the problem as racism continued to be a social problem. Further, the completion of such courses had only a transient effect on reducing antipathy toward government programmes designed to help African–Americans achieve social and economic equity and had no effect on their feelings of resentment over those achievements. The results underscored the

importance of implementing pedagogical practices in diversity courses that produce durable changes in all facets of modern racial prejudice.

Pedagogies to Develop Democratic Skills

The three most important forms of pedagogical methods that helped develop capacity for unprejudiced interaction and promoted a long lasting inter-cultural consciousness were inter-group dialogues (interaction with diverse peers), diversity awareness workshops, and informal peer interactions. Such methods foster openness to diversity challenges and own beliefs and prejudices, and, promote academic and social growth among students (Antonio, 2001; Gurin et al., 2002; Chang, 2002; Denson, 2009; King and Magolda, 2005).

In their influential work based on single- and multi-institutional data from the University of Michigan, the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP), and the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) (which collects data from 305 institutes), Gurin et al. (2002) examined the effects of classroom diversity and informal interaction among African–American, Asian–American, Latino-American, and White students on learning and democracy outcomes. The racial/ethnic, gender, social class, and religious diversity among students' were found to be positive but had diverse outcomes. Frequent inter-racial interaction among students was found to be more important in developing cultural knowledge than involvement in formal activities such as cultural awareness workshops. The study reported that informal interactions promoted inter-cultural consciousness and affected both majority and minority student communities as these experiences determined the students' attitudes and feelings towards other groups. These initiatives made students more culturally aware, provided them new perspectives, and helped them in examining own experiences.

Similarly, the findings of a meta-analysis of 27 studies (Denson, 2009) demonstrated that curricular and co-curricular diversity initiatives do reduce racial bias in college students. The results from the meta-analysis of these studies indicated that content based knowledge to reduce college students' racial bias is even more effective when accompanied by a cross-racial interaction component. These studies indicated that such pedagogies support cognitive growth, develop a commitment to personal, social and civic action, and develop multi-cultural competence/skills, which imply "the ability to identify and openly discuss cultural differences and issues," to "differentiate between individual differences, cultural differences, and universal similarities," and "to use cultural knowledge and sensitivity to make more culturally sensitive and appropriate interventions" (Pope and Reynolds, 2005, as cited in Banks, 2007).

Community Engagement to Encourage Collective Action

The other pedagogical way included community engagement activities to motivate students to engage in community and collective action for public good. The new pedagogical ways included community service projects, and internships or assignments such as engagement with deprived groups and minorities. Community engagement activities also involved faculty–community partnerships for research and leadership development in the economic, social and civil spheres. Conceptually, such type of collective action leads to cultural knowledge, awareness, and intergroup empathy; pluralistic orientation, that is, perspective-taking skills, acceptance and tolerance of diverse others; and the development of leadership skills. Bowman and Seifert (2011) explored the relationship between college diversity experiences and civic engagement by conducting a meta-analysis of 27 studies with a total of 175,950 undergraduate students. The technique of Hierarchical Linear Modelling (HLM) was used to perform the meta-analysis. The results showed that diversity experiences were associated with increases in civic attitudes, behavioural intentions, and behaviours, and that the magnitude of this effect is greater for interpersonal interactions with racial diversity than for curricular and co-curricular diversity experiences.

Figure 3: Framework of Student Outcomes from Survey-Based Climate Assessments

Cognitive	*Socio–Cognitive*	*Citizenship in Multi-cultural Societies*	*Values and Attitudes*
• Critical thinking • Openness to diversity and challenge • Attributional complexity • Socio-historical thinking • Knowledge about different racial/ethnic groups	• Leadership skills • Cultural awareness • Social identity awareness • Self-efficacy for social change • Perspective-taking skills • Reduction of inter-group anxiety • Social awareness • Intellectual and social self-confidence	• Pluralistic orientation • Civic contributions • Interest in equity and social justice issues • Voting behaviour • Political involvement/interests • Social action engagement • Conceptions of a democracy	• Civic values • Commonality of values with different groups • Tolerance of differences • Attitudes towards different identity groups

Source: Adapted from Hurtado et al., 2008, p.214.

Hurtado et al. (2008) provide us with a framework of learning outcomes associated with the preparation of existing in a diverse and global society. This required the reconceptualisation and reconstruction of learning outcomes to include skills, competencies and knowledge for being able to function in a diverse and a multi-cultural society. For example, cognitive outcomes, that is, thinking skills, not only

included analytical problem-solving skills but also the ability to be open to diversity challenges and knowledge about different racial groups. Socio-cognitive skills included perspective-taking skills, leadership skills, and cultural awareness. The ability to interact with a variety of social identity groups and tolerance about diversity issues and topics (values and attitudes) were inter-connected with cognitive development. Hurtado et al. developed this framework after studying the concept maps of several surveys and literature linking diversity with a wide variety of outcomes in studies of college students. Figure 3 presents a variety of outcomes captured in this new framework of Essential Learning Outcomes introduced by the Association of American Colleges and Universities in 2007 (Hurtado et al., 2008).

One dimension that we would like to report is the variation in the inter-racial effects of diversity initiatives. The meta-analysis by Denson (2009), and Bowman and Seifert (2011) points out that White students appear to benefit even more from these diversity-related interventions as compared to students of colour with regard to racial bias reduction (Gurin et al., 2002). Another study by Zuniga et al. (2005) found that students of colour are not likely to have higher values of motivation than their White peers towards reducing prejudices or promoting social inclusion because coloured students remain minorities and still feel secluded. More recently, Burns and Darity (Forthcoming), have presented a critique of the diversity rationale for desegregating the academy, primarily because they believe that the stronger rationale is justice and equity. They argue that the strongest rationale for affirmative action should include addressing ongoing discrimination and strategies to correct present barriers to inclusion. They maintain that the "legal validity of affirmative action policy has been anchored on judgements of social acceptability, or social good, rather than a legitimate claim to inclusiveness based upon principles of justice and equity" (Burns and Darity).

To sum up, the main finding of empirical studies is that diversity experiences promote inter-cultural consciousness. These diversity initiatives affect both majority and minority student communities. For both communities, it determines the students' attitudes and feelings towards other groups; provides them with a new perspective and cultural awareness as also awareness of their own privilege; inculcates in them a pride in their own identity; and helps them in examining their own experiences. A shared outcome can be seen in the form of the development of critical thinking, multi-cultural friendship, and participation in voting and other electoral processes. Activities like participation in ethnic clubs, cultural affairs and social events promote harmony and help in eliminating prejudice and superstition.

As evident from the review of literature, diversity initiatives implemented in the higher education system in the US have had a significant impact. They have created a conducive academic environment for racial minority students. The nurturing of democratic skills and a critical faculty among diverse student bodies through collective learning and the sharing of experiences produces quality educational experience. In the following section, we discuss the diversity initiative in higher education in India. The evolution of a higher education system in each country has its own history and is strongly linked to the socio-political context in which it has evolved. While racial diversity has been an important feature of higher education in the US, social diversity of students along lines of caste, religion, ethnicity and linguistic backgrounds has been a major feature of higher education in India. Therefore, the meaning of and approach to diversity are different in the Indian context as compared to that in the US.

Diversity Initiatives in Higher Education in India

With the expansion and democratisation of higher education across countries, the higher education system has become more representative of the larger society all over the world. In India too, the higher education sector has seen an unprecedented expansion in the recent decades. The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education in India stands at around 23 percent (MHRD, 2015). The expansion of the sector in India has been the result of increasing social demand and expanding supply conditions. The social demand has increased due to higher rates of growth of the economy, growing employment opportunities, especially in the knowledge sectors in the context of globalisation and pressure from a larger cohort of secondary school graduates to pursue higher studies. Efforts made in the school education up to the higher secondary level in India have been crucial in bringing about an increase in the share of the eligible population for higher education, which in turn, has created more demand for higher education.

Equity has been one of the major concerns in the expansion of the higher education systems. Equity initiatives at the federal and state levels undertaken to provide greater opportunities for access to quality education at all levels range from legislative measures; increased public investment to expand institutional capacity; enhancement of infrastructure and faculty; implementation of academic reforms; improvement in governance; and institutional restructuring. The expansion of higher education has, therefore, been accompanied by social diversity in the student population. Consequently, today students belonging to different religions, lower castes, poor families, rural areas, and the minority language-speaking communities co-exist with students from the high caste, urban and rich families.

Diversity and equity initiatives undertaken by the State can be broadly classified into three types: initiatives to improve access to higher education; initiatives for success in higher education; and initiatives to promote civic learning (Figure 4). While access initiatives attempt to attract hitherto under-privileged and non-traditional social groups to enter into higher education institutions, initiatives to improve success focus on retaining those who have entered the higher education system, with adequate support, and incentive systems and provisions. Initiatives to promote civic learning focus on institutional level structures and mechanisms to inculcate the values of liberty, justice and democracy.

Figure 4: Equity and Civic Learning Initiatives in India

Ensuring Access

•Reservation Policies

•Scholarships/Fellowships

•Post-Matric Hostel Scheme

• Establishing Colleges in low GER locations

• Special Funding to Support Colleges

Facilitating Success

•Remedial Coaching

•NET/SET Coaching

•Coaching for Entry into Services

•Book Bank Facility

•Legal Methods and Mechanisms to Safeguards Students from Discrimination

Promoting Civic Learning

•Centre for Fostering Social Responsibility and Community Engagement (CFSRCE) in Universities

•National Service Scheme (NSS)

•National Cadet Corps (NCC)

•Academic Centres focused on Generating New Knowledge on Inequalities and Discrimination

•National Resource Centres for Valued Education in Engineering

Source: Prepared by the authors.

Diversity Initiatives for Civic Learning

The Indian State views higher education as a long-term social investment for the promotion of economic growth, cultural development, social cohesion, equity and justice. Policies on education continue to uphold the spirit of democracy, equality, fraternity and associative living. This section provides details of the visions on the role of higher education for unity and harmony in various education committees and how these visions have been translated into practice. It examines how committees and commissions on education have perceived the role of education in visualising a just and democratic society. Various schemes and programmes introduced in higher education institutions to inculcate values have also been outlined here. Further, institutional innovations to promote research and academic engagement with the

issues of diversity and discrimination, and, engagement initiatives between university and society are delineated.

Committees and commissions on education and national policies on education acknowledge the role of education in a secular and democratic polity and society. Education is seen as a means of furthering the goals of democracy, secularism and socialism upheld by the Constitution of India. As seen earlier, education, in general, and higher education, in particular, reflect the socio-political and economic agenda of the State, which is why education in a democratic society is fundamentally different from education in an autocracy or party state. It can be seen that education in India has always been viewed as a means of social transformation and social change. The Radhakrishnan Commission (1948–49), which was the first university education commission in independent India, states (MoE, 1962, p.31):

"We shall consider under 'Democracy' education as the development of body, mind, and spirit of each individual with his specific nature, the relation of the different studies to the growth of the individual, the nature of human freedom and the need for social changes. There can be no democratic freedom without social justice which demands the freeing of the individual from poverty, unemployment, malnutrition and ignorance...We must cultivate the art of human relationships, the ability to live and work together overcoming the dividing forces of the time".

The first University Education Commission of post-independent India further stated that "Education is the great instrument of social emancipation by which a democracy establishes, maintains and protects the spirit of equality among its members" (MoE, 1962, p.43). Cultivating values for work and promoting co-existence in a diverse society have been the critical purposes of higher education. The dividing forces mentioned in the said report, however, continue to exist in contemporary times with varying degrees and forms. Therefore, the objective of education for all was further propagated by the national policy on education, promulgated in 1968 (MoE, 1968).

The policy suggestion for the fulfilment of Directive Principles under Article 45 of Constitution, which ensure free and compulsory education for all children under the age of 14 years has to be seen in this context and against the background discussed above. The values of social cohesion and national integration conceived through the common school system further uphold the spirit of democratisation of education. The National Policy on Education 1968 (NPE) (p.2) states that "the educational system must produce young men and women of character and ability committed to national

service and development. Only then will education be able to play its vital role in promoting national progress, creating a sense of common citizenship and culture, and strengthening national integration". While laying an emphasis on equity, the NPE 1986 further states:

"To promote equality, it will be necessary to provide for equal opportunity to all not only in access, but also in the conditions for success. Besides, awareness of the inherent equality of all will be created through the core curriculum. The purpose is to remove prejudices and complexes transmitted through the social environment and the accident of birth" (GOI, 1986, p.4)

A close reading of the policies on higher education indicates that there is a larger agreement on the transformative potential of education and educational institutions. Inculcating constitutional values such as equality, secularism, tolerance, and liberty, to list a few, has been a fundamental goal of the policies on education. The establishment of a new centre for fostering these values under the University Grants Commission (UGC) has been one of the actions taken in this regard. However, even though the policies on education agree with the goal of fostering positive values among people, the means and strategies through which higher education can foster these values remain vague and inconclusive.

Programme on Community Engagement and Social Responsibility

It is in this context that a sub-committee was set up to 'Strengthen Community Engagement of Higher Education Institutions'. It was felt that enhanced community engagement (CE) would foster the values of citizenship and social responsibility. The committee made several significant recommendations, including the promotion of an organisational structure of bodies to coordinate CE activities at various levels, induce flexibility in the curricula, and create community engagement in higher education institutions. In 2014, the UGC introduced a scheme for the establishment of a Centre for Fostering Social Responsibility and Community Engagement (CFSRCE) in universities.

The main objectives of the scheme include promotion of community–university partnerships to develop knowledge for improving the lives of the people and for encouraging participatory research, and building of an alliance with community-based organisations in the planning and execution of projects. It seeks to amalgamate the integration of service, service learning and experiential learning into curricular/co-curricular programmes. In addition, it aims to create neighbourhood networks of educational institutions, including schools and providing policy suggestions and

technical assistance to help foster community engagement and social responsibility in the higher education system.

Apart from the above, many of the initiatives launched by the government implicitly and explicitly address the issues of diversity in society, in general, and in higher education, in particular. As regards the diversity in higher education, we discuss schemes and programmes to inculcate values implemented at the institute level but which is broadly coordinated by common guideline. Initiatives such as the National Service Scheme (NSS), National Cadet Corps (NCC) and The National Resource Centre for Value Education in Engineering (NRCVEE) envisage the inculcation of values through civic engagement.

National Service Scheme (NSS)

The main objective of the National Service Scheme (NSS), which was established in 1969, is the promotion of social services. Its activities are coordinated by the NSS programme officer, a faculty member in charge of the NSS. Under the guidance of the programme officer, students get involved in a wide variety of services such as blood donation camps, construction of roads for the rural community, conduction of health surveys and health awareness programme, campus cleaning initiatives, and so on. Apart from weekly service activities, the NSS also conducts ten-day rural camps for its volunteers. These camps provide members an opportunity to live with the community and to engage in service for them. All these programmes are arranged without affecting the curricular activities of the students. The NSS thus offers students an opportunity to develop social networks with diverse student groups. A drawback of the NSS, however, is that though it is being implemented in all the colleges, its reach among the entire student community is limited. There is no linkage between the service activities of the NSS and the curricular activities of students. Satisfactory service rendered by the volunteers in terms of the stipulated hours of service makes them eligible for grace marks that facilitate their admission to higher studies.

National Cadet Corps (NCC)

The National Cadet Corps (NCC) aims to groom youngsters into disciplined and patriotic citizens. "Unity and Discipline" has been the motto of the NCC. The NCC's core values include "respect for diversities, national unity and social cohesion, commitment to the Indian Constitution, participation in community development, living healthy lifestyles, sensitivity to poor and socially disadvantaged, and commitment to values of honesty, truthfulness, self-sacrifice, perseverance and hard work". The NCC imparts a sense of patriotic commitment and also motivates students

to take up a career in the armed forces of the country. The NCC has three wings including the navy wing, air force wing, and military wing. Apart from campus level programmes, student cadets rendering satisfactory performance under the NCC get an opportunity to participate in various types of camps/events such as national integration camps, trekking camps and the Republic Day parade. They also get involved in social service activities both inside and outside the campus.

National Resource Centre for Value Education in Engineering

The National Resource Centre for Value Education in Engineering (NRCVEE) at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Delhi, is another initiative that seeks to foster value education. The NRCVEE was set up in IIT Delhi in 2001 with the active involvement of the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD). It was set up as a national centre for imparting value education in engineering colleges. The complementarily of technical skills and human values and professional ethics has been the central focus of learning under the NRCVEE. The Centre is envisaged to "identify, develop and disseminate techniques by which engineering students and practising engineers can be motivated to imbibe human values and appreciate their impact on technology development, professional ethics and human welfare". The Centre independently, and in association with other departments, offers courses on value education. Some of the titles of the courses it offers are: Human Values and Technology, Traditional Knowledge System and Values, Science and Humanism, and Technology and Community Development. Apart from offering these courses, the Centre also liaises with organisations to conduct programmes/events such as seminars, workshops, and lecture series both for the engineering students and the faculty members.

Academic Centres Focused on Generating New Knowledge on Inequalities and Discrimination

Another set of initiatives focuses more on establishing academic structures based on an inter-disciplinary approach to foster wider societal implications. Many policy interventions have been conceived and implemented in this regard. Two of the institutional responses to the issue of discrimination and inequalities, such as the setting up of Women's Study Centres (WSCs) and the Centre for Studies of Social Exclusion and Inclusive Policies (CSSEIP), need further elaboration. The setting up of academic centres at universities, focusing on issues of discrimination, exclusion and inclusion based on gender, caste, ethnicity and religion, can be seen as a broader social

and political response to increasing diversity and discrimination within and outside educational systems.

Inter-disciplinary approaches in theory and methods, and collaborations with a variety of social actors and institutions have been the hallmark of these two centres. Most importantly, the implementation of strategies for intervention and the evolution of new institutional practices has been the broader objective of the Centre along with the generation of knowledge. Although the scope of functioning of these centres is limited, the very fact that they have been set up in the first place is an important milestone in the history of education in India for the realisation of the values of secularism, equity and democracy.

In 1974, the report of the National Committee on the Status of Women in India (GOI, 1974), titled "Towards Equality", highlighted the situation of women in India while suggesting urgent interventions in many spheres, including education, health and employment. The NPE 1986 placed greater emphasis on women's education and the need for incorporating women's studies in the national system of education. From 1987 onwards, the UGC began to set up Women Study Centres (WSCs) in universities. Currently, 67 WSCs are operational under the UGC. Nearly half of them were set up during the Eleventh Five Year Plan (FYP). Women's studies was conceptualised as more than an academic discipline. They represent an institutional strategy to address the issues of discrimination against women. Many women's study research institutes have also been set up outside the university system through the active funding and support of the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR).

The conviction that higher education is the space, where the impact of social divisions could be studied and transcended, led the UGC to propose the establishment of the Centre for the Study of Social Exclusion and Inclusive Policies (CSSEIP) in universities. The CSSEIP was launched during the Eleventh Plan period. It also coincided with the period of the exponential growth of enrolment in Indian higher education. The CSSEIP has also been conceived as an institutional strategy for addressing the issues of exclusion and inclusion and as a mechanism for evolving socially inclusive practices in higher education and the broader society. The research carried out by the Centre could bring forth fresh insights into the magnitude of exclusion in diverse social, economic and political contexts.

We also find initiatives started as far back as in 1963 to promote knowledge and understanding about the various regions and people of India and of the world. Hence, Area Study Centres (ASCs) were set up in Universities with this objective. Thereafter

the focus again shifted in tune with the post-Cold War phase by facilitating research to develop an alternative paradigm on regional and international relations. Likewise, the scheme of 'Epoch Making Social Thinkers of India (Special Studies)' initiated by the UGC in 1983 also aims to introduce to students and teachers the ideas and works of great thinkers and social leaders/reformers. A total of 376 Special Studies Centres have been established in various universities/colleges/institutions for conducting programmes on the thoughts of social leaders and reformers.

Sources of Diversity in Student Social Composition: State Initiatives to Improve Access of the Excluded Groups

India has been formulating and implementing caste and ethnicity-based affirmative policies and actions to promote equity. The diversity in student population in terms of their social composition in higher learning institutions has mainly been the outcome of affirmative action policies in admissions. The implementation of legally sanctioned admission policies to improve the representation of under-represented groups in institutions of higher learning pre-dates independent India.

Pre-Independence

Diversity initiatives to improve access to higher education through admission policies have a long history in India. Caste and ethnicity are important sources of disadvantage and discrimination in India. The non-Brahman movements of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries culminated in positive discrimination by offering benefits to the non-Brahman communities in public jobs and educational institutions. In the 1920s, the Mysore province introduced reservation for non-Brahmans in colonial India. It was followed by the Bombay province in 1925 and the Madras province in 1926. In 1930, reservation policies were enacted in all provinces falling under British rule. It needs to be noted that except the Mysore princely state, Bombay and Madras provinces were under the direct control of British rule.

As a first move, a 15-point roster system was introduced. Following was the distribution of seats according to the roster system: Brahmans—2, Backward Hindus—2, Other Hindus—7, Depressed Classes—2, Anglo Indians—2, Christians and Muslims -1 (Weisskopf, 2004). It is to be noted that the British government included the untouchable castes and tribal population under the Depressed Classes. Later, after the enactment of the Government of India Act 1935, the Depressed Classes were labelled as Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) as they were included in the state list of castes and tribes which needed special support from the State.

One of the political developments that led to the inclusion of the clause on reservation for SCs and STs as per the Government of India Act 1935 was the passage of the Poona Pact. While the social reformer Dr. B.R. Ambedkar demanded a separate electorate for the Depressed Classes, there was a strong opposition from Mr. Gandhi to this demand as he believed that such a move would further divide the society. Gandhi went on hunger strike to seek an endorsement of his view. Finally a compromise was reached. Instead of a separate electorate for the Depressed Classes, it was decided to reserve seats for the Depressed Classes. This compromise was incorporated in the Government of India Act 1935. During the framing of the Constitution for independent India, Dr B.R. Ambedkar played an important role to include the Constitutional guarantee of reservation for the SCs and STs. Thus, reservation for SCs and STs was made as a Constitutional provision.

Post-Independence

The Constitutional provisions guaranteeing "equality before the law," overturned the customary rules of the caste system (GOI, 1950, Article 14). Article 46 of the Directive Principles of the State Policy enjoins the State to promote, with special care, the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and, in particular, of the SCs/STs. To achieve equality with many facets, special provisions have been incorporated in the Constitution of India. Articles 15 (4), 15 (5), 16(4), 16 (4 A), 16 (4 B), 164(1) proviso, 275 (1) first proviso, 243 D, 243, 330, 332, 335, 338 to 342 and the entire Fifth and Sixth Schedules of the Constitution deal with special provisions for implementation of the objectives set forth in Article 46. The Constitution of India guarantees reservation to the tune of 15 per cent for the SCs and 7.5 per cent for the STs in education and employment, and 27 percent for the OBCs (while recently, 3 per cent reservation was announced for people with disabilities).

In post-Independence India, some landmark legal challenges to the reservation policy further resulted in amendments in the Constitution of India that impacted changes in the reservation policy for admissions. Champakam Dorairajan, a graduate of Madras University, brought a case in 1951 challenging reservation in admission to medical college as a violation of her rights enshrined in the Article 15 (1) and Article 29 (2). The Supreme Court ruled in her favour and against the reservation policy. In response, Dr. Ambedkar urged the Parliament to amend the Constitution resulting in the Constitution (First Amendment) Act 1951 (Thorat and Kumar, 2009, p. 351–53). This Act added to Article 15 a new clause (4), which read: *Nothing in this article or in clause (2) of article 29 shall prevent the State from making any special provision for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizens or for the*

Scheduled Castes or the Scheduled Tribes. The legal challenge by *TMA Pai Foundation and Others* (2003) which challenged quotas in private unaided institutions resulted in the 93rd Amendment to the Constitution in 2006. In Article 15 of the Constitution, after clause (4), the following clause was inserted:-

(5) Nothing in this article or in sub-clause (g) of clause (1) of article 19 shall prevent the State from making any special provision, by law, for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizens or for the Scheduled Castes or the Scheduled Tribes in so far as such special provisions relate to their admission to educational institutions including private educational institutions, whether aided or unaided by the State, other than the minority educational institutions referred to in clause (1) of article 30.

The demand for reservation for the Other Backward Classes (OBCs) was initiated in post-Independence India. During 1978, the Union Ministry appointed the Mandal Commission to study and recommend extension of reservation to the OBCs. The Mandal Commission recommended reservation for the OBCs as they constitute 52 per cent of the total population. The Commission's recommendation was strongly opposed. After several rounds of legal and political battles, however, it was allowed to be implemented in such a way that the total reservation would not cross 50 per cent. It was thus decided to implement 27 per cent reservation for OBCs belonging to the non-creamy layer in Central educational institutions, after which the total reservation today stands at 49.5 per cent, with the remaining 50.5 per cent being open to merit.

The diversity of the student population in higher learning institutions is, therefore, a result of the continuous efforts of the Union and federal states since Independence. We find that it has had a positive impact on the enrolment of the socially excluded groups in higher education. The 71st National Sample Survey (NSS) Round on education shows that the GER at the all India level in 2014 stands at 30.07 percent.[1] From Table 1, one can see that social groups in India are currently in varying stages of higher education development. The 'other' category of social group, that is, the non-excluded group (non-SCs/STs/OBCs) is at the higher stage of massification and close to the stage of universalisation (42 percent) whereas the socially excluded groups such as the STs (17.1 percent), SCs (22.3 percent) and OBCs (30 percent) have reached a stage of massification. While group disparities persist, the GER for the socially excluded groups has increased overtime. There has been an almost three times percentage point increase in the GER for the ST group and a two times increase for the

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[1]The variation in the GER from the earlier parts is because of the different sources of the data.

SCs and the OBC group. This implies that there is substantial improvement in equity in access, though disparity still persists (Figure 5).

Table 1: Gross Enrolment Ratio by Social Groups, 2014

Social Groups	GER (2007)	GER (2014)	CAGR of Absolute Number of Enrolment(2007–2014)
STs	7.22	17.19	15.99
SCs	11.35	22.31	10.02
OBCs	14.57	29.36	10.80
Others	26.22	41.65	5.90
Total	16.83	30.07	8.82

Source: NSSO, 2014. The GER in this table is based on the National Sample Survey.

Figure 5: GER by Social Groups
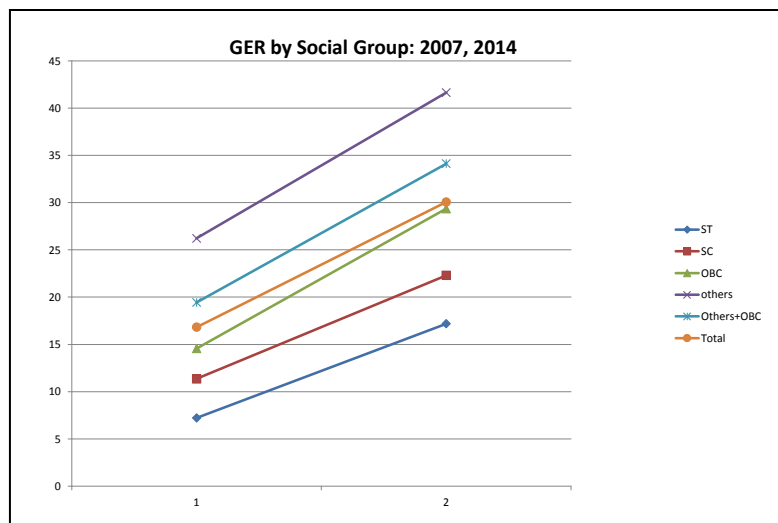
Source: NSSO 2007 and 2014

We also find that the rate of increase in enrolment varies across social groups. It is higher for the socially excluded groups than for the non-SCs/STs group. The highest rate of annual increase (16 percent) in enrolment has been recorded by the ST group followed by the OBCs (11 percent), SCs (10 percent) and 6 percent for the non-SCs/STs/OBCs. While disparities in the GER exist, the social gap in the enrolment in higher education is steadily being bridged (Table 1). Thus, nobody lost after the advent of reservation but the gains from it were differentially distributed and the rate of

increase was in favour of the backward classes. This can be attributed to the affirmative action policies at the time of admission that is being implemented in India.

Further, we find that the share of students belonging to the socially excluded groups has increased, as seen in Table 2. For example the share of STs among students improved from 3.43 percent in 2007 to close to 6 percent in 2014. For the OBCs too, there has been a substantial increase—from 36 percent to 42 percent. For the SCs, this increase was the least amongst the excluded group—from 14 percent in 2007 to 15 percent in 2014. Thus, we find that the relative position in the enrolment rate of the excluded group such as the other backward classes have considerably improved overtime (Figure 5).

Table 2: Share of Students enrolled by Social Groups: 2007, 2014

Social Groups	2007	2014
ST	3.43	5.72
SC	13.60	14.85
OBC	36.18	41.80
others	46.79	37.63
Total	100.00	100.00

Source: NSSO, 2014.

Reservation *Policy at the Central and State level Higher Education Institutions:* At the Central and State level institution, the Government of India has been implementing an affirmative action policy in the form of quotas in admissions as well as the relaxation of the admissions criteria for the socially excluded groups. Reservation at the Centrally funded institutions is in accordance with the Central Educational Institutions (Reservation in Admission) Act, 2006. Reservation at the State level institutions and jobs is, however, defined in accordance with population share of each social group in the respective State. Thus, diversity in admission policies is reflected at the Central, State and institutional Level. We will discuss these below.

Reservation in Centrally Funded Institutions

The Central Educational Institutions (Reservation in Admission) Act, 2006, was enacted for the Central Educational Institutions to provide reservation in admission of the students belonging to the SCs, STs and OBCs. The reservation of seats in admission and its extent in a Central Educational Institutions is provided under the following

manner: 15 percent of the annual strength in each branch of study or faculty is to be reserved for the SCs; 7.5 percent for STs; twenty-seven percent for the OBCs. In 2006, the University Grants Commission had also issued guidelines for strict implementation of reservation policy for SCs/STs in Universities, Deemed to be Universities, Colleges and other Institutions and Centres receiving grants-in-aid from the public fund. These guidelines are reiterated from time to time by the UGC at the level of its Secretary and Chairman.

The following table (3) shows representation of SCs/STs during 2010-11 in Centrally Funded Higher Educational Institutions (CFHEI). This table indicates that the representation of SCs and STs in CFHEI is continuously improving over the years. For example in Central Universities, in 2010 -11, the proportion of SC students to the annual strength were 4.64% which improved to 10.52% in 2012-13. Apart from reservation, there is also relaxation in the minimum qualifying marks for admission for SC/ST candidates.

Table-3: Percentage Share of SC/ST Students in CFHEI

CFHEI	2010–11		2011–12		2012–13	
	SCs	STs	SCs	STs	SCs	STs
Central University	4.64	3.36	9.30	3.46	10.52	3.75
IGNOU	7.09	5.72	6.49	7.28	8.95	8.33
IIT	12.87	4.95	13.15	5.45	13.10	5.33
NIT	13.08	6.12	12.69	6.19	13.30	6.64
IIM	7.83	3.46	8.21	3.32	9.44	3.97
IISER, IIIT	11.07	3.56	11.02	4.48	10.92	4.00

Source: All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE).

However, we also find an under-representation of faculty members from the disadvantaged groups especially from the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes in higher education despite the Constitutional provisions of reservation in faculty positions for the group. The analysis of existing status shows that there are low percent of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes teachers. For example, in the year 2012-13, the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes accounted around 7 percent and 2.01 percent respectively of the total faculty in higher education in India (Table 4). Further we also find that the share of faculty from the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes is far lower as compared to the faculty from the general category (60.8 percent) and Other Backward Classes (23 percent).

Table 4: Share of Faculty members in Higher Education by Social Group: 2012-2013

Social Group	% to the Total
General Category ('Higher' Castes)	60.83
Other Backward Classes	23.46
Scheduled Caste	6.93
Scheduled Tribes	2.01
PWD	0.47
Muslims	3.12
Other Religious Minorities	3.18
Total	1,367,535

Source: MHRD, AISHE, 2012-13.

Reservation in State level Institutions

In institutions run by the State Governments, the reservation percentage varies as per the State Government's policy. Many of the states provide reservation to socially and economically backward classes (SEBC) and minorities. SEBC includes many backward castes as defined by respective states. This ratio varies across the states. Total percentage of reservation in Kerala, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra are 40%, 49%, 69% and 73% respectively. As we can see, reservation policies vary across the states. Even though constitution has guaranteed 22.5% reservation to SCs and STs, premier science and technology institution started admitting SCs and STs only after three decades of independence. The first IIT was established in 1950s. But reservation policies were implemented in IIT system only in 1973 (Kirpal et al., 1985).

National Institute of Technology (NIT) follows different set of criterion for reservation. Since it was established as regional engineering colleges, 50% of seats are reserved as home state quota and remaining 50% from all India levels. Home state quota is filled according to the reservation policies of the state. The national quota is filled according to reservation policies of central governments. That is why NIT has most diverse student population not only in terms of social groups but also regional and linguistic backgrounds. On the other hand, premier management institutes (Indian Institute of Managements) follow different strategies to improve gender diversity. As an autonomous institutions, various IIMs follows different criterion for selection procedure. IIMs which give less weightage to common admission tests (CAT) and more to marks obtained in 10th and 12th favours women students. IIM Lucknow awards extra two marks to women candidates which also contribute to improve gender diversity.

Reservation at the Institutional Level

Jawaharlal Nehru University of Delhi follows unique policy of considering deprivation points for admission. Once the rank lists are prepared according to the reservation policies of government of India, extra points are awarded to female, people belong to backward districts, defence category and Kashmir migrants. This enhances the likelihood of admission of hitherto excluded groups and improves socio-cultural diversity of campus. In 2013, about half the numbers of students were women; about 41 per cent of students were from a rural background and 59 per cent from cities and towns. The caste/ethnic composition is 8 per cent STs, 15 per cent SCs, 32 per cent OBCs and 42 per cent others. About 26 per cent were from low-income groups, 19 per cent from the medium-income level, and 54 per cent from the high-income bracket. About 21 per cent are from public schools, and the rest from other schools. Besides, they come from 26 States and 235 universities/colleges, representing different language and cultural backgrounds (Thorat and Sabharwal, 2013).

Above mentioned policies are mainly for state/centre owned institutions. As one could see, 87% of higher education enrolment is in affiliated colleges (Malagi, 2012). Ratio of government and aided colleges varies across the state. For instance, while share of enrolment in private aided colleges stands at 5.6% in state of Rajasthan, it is 43% for Maharashtra (Varghese, 2015). In the case of private colleges, most of them are owned and operated by socio-religious groups. They comprise various caste associations, religious minorities and public trusts. The type of ownership also determines the admission policies. The criterion of reservation of seats in aided colleges is also on the basis of affiliation to the community which owns the college. Thus, we also find community quota for the community which owns the college. This is in addition to the state prescribed quota for various social groups. Hence, student diversity is largely influenced by socio-religious groups which own the college. Some colleges also admit students through sports and cultural quotas.

Therefore, we find that there are many factors which determine the characteristics of student intake in higher education institutions. It can be seen that legally sanctioned admission policies are the major promoters of student diversity in institutions of higher learning and representation of under-represented groups.

Further, many schemes and programmes have been introduced to enhance the higher education access of the under-represented groups such as the SCs and STs. While constitutionally guaranteed reservation or positive discrimination ensures proportionate seats in higher educational institutions and public employment, specific

schemes and programmes provide a basic support system, both academic and non-academic, to the historically marginalised sections, providing them access to complete higher education. The schemes/programmes in this regard can be broadly classified into two—schemes to improve enrolment, and incentive schemes to facilitate successful completion. We will first discuss the schemes that have been implemented to improve enrolment.

Scholarships to Improve Enrolment

Begun during British rule in 1944, the post-matric scholarship was one of the major schemes for the educational development of the SCs. It has led to a substantial enhancement in higher education enrolment among the SCs. Similarly, the post-matric hostel scheme provides free lodging and boarding facilities to needy students who take admission in colleges. Since most of the colleges are located in urban locations, which are usually far away from the places where the SC/ST students are residing, post-matric hostel schemes are instrumental in enhancing access to higher education. The Twelfth Five Year Plan proposals to open more community colleges and new polytechnics in the districts with low GERs, where the minority and marginalised populations are concentrated, is another measure aimed at improving access to higher education among the disadvantaged.

In addition, there is a scheme called the Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship Scheme which provides a fellowship equivalent to the UGC-Junior Research Fellow (JRF) programme. Those who have joined PhD courses can avail of this fellowship. The scholarship scheme provides financial support to those who are otherwise unable to meet the education expenditure. Under these schemes, students are eligible to receive the stipulated amount as a monthly stipend towards education expenditure and pocket money. This fund is in addition to the concession given to these students in admission and tuition fees. Further, in order to improve access to technical education, there is an exemption in tuition fees for the SC/ST students.

Incentive Schemes to Facilitate Success in Higher Education Institutions

The fact that access initiatives alone may not produce quality outcomes and facilitate the mobility of marginalised students led to the introduction of various incentive schemes in higher education. Along with ensuring academic success, their social mobility has been an important concern. Incentive schemes intend to provide such that support mechanisms. There are three major coaching schemes funded by the UGC that allow for successful completion of the academic courses and mobility of

students. They are remedial coaching, coaching for National Eligibility Tests (NET)-State Eligibility Tests (SET) and coaching classes for entry into services.

Remedial coaching schemes enable SC/ST/OBC students to catch up with open merit students. Special tutorial classes beyond the normal class hours equip students with the necessary knowledge, attitude and skills. Special training for NET-SLET examination aims to significantly improve the level of competitiveness among SCs and STs in order to prepare them for jobs in academia and doctoral research. There is a relaxation in the cut-off marks for SCs and STs in the UGC NET and JRF examinations. This helps in increasing pool of potential candidates from SCs and STs for faculty positions.

Coaching classes under entry into services prepare students for Central/state government level competitive examinations for jobs. For each of the coaching schemes, UGC provides a one-time financial assistance for purchasing equipments and study materials as non-recurring expenditure and recurring expenditure for the payment of honorarium for teachers and practical expenses for a plan period. Further, under the "Central sector scholarship of top class education for SC/ST students", free laptop computers are given to those who have secured admission in premier institutions in India. Higher Education for Persons with Special Needs (HEPSN) is another initiative aimed at addressing the special needs of differently-abled persons in higher education institutions.

Special Funds to Support the Educational Development of SC and ST Students

The funds for the operation of reservation policies and for the general development of programmes for SCs/STs come through an annual budget of the government and are earmarked for their development. The government has created a special financial mechanism in the form of a Special Component Plan for SCs and a Tribal Sub-Plan for STs as part of the Five Year Plan. The Special Component Plan and tribal sub-plans are designed to channelise the flow of funds (and hence the benefits) from the general sectors in the plans of the State and Central Ministries for the development of SCs and STs.

The funds for the annual plans in the case of divisible schemes/programmes have to be allocated in proportion to their population share. The Government has also created separate financial institutions to provide funds for the targeted programmes for SCs and STs. These include the National SC&ST Finance and Development Corporation (NSFDC), the Scheduled Caste and Tribes Development Corporation (SCDCs), and the National Safai Karamachari Finance and Development Corporation. In

order to monitor the effective implementation of reservation policies, UGC introduced special SC/ST cells in colleges and universities in 1983, which collect and process data on the marginalised sections. Since many ministries and organisations are involved in various schemes for SC/ST students, the Twelfth Plan envisages an umbrella initiative called "Equal Opportunity for Higher Education Initiatives", coordinated by the Planning Commission (now NITI Aayog).

The schemes and programmes discussed above have been instrumental in improving the access to and success of the marginalised sections in higher education. In addition to the constitutionally guaranteed reservation policies which mandate the provision of proportionate seats in higher education institutions for SCs/STs and other marginalised communities, various other incentives schemes such as remedial, free coaching for NET-SET, scholarships and the distribution of free laptops, to list a few, play a crucial role in ensuring success in higher education for the under-privileged sections.

Legal Methods and Mechanisms to Safeguards Students from Discrimination

To protect students from discrimination and support higher education institutions in becoming democratic institutions, the State has recently also implemented legal methods in higher education to safeguard students belonging to the discriminated groups such as women, SCs and STs. These regulations are: UGC 'Promotion of Equity in Higher Educational Institutions Regulation', 2012; UGC, Grievance Redressal Regulations, 2012; and All India Council for Technical Education, Establishment of Mechanism for Grievance Redressal Regulations, 2012. Since many cells/committees are functioning for the welfare of the SCs/STs and other backward and minority communities, the Eleventh Plan recommended the setting up of an 'Equal Opportunity Office' (EOO) in all universities to bring all schemes relating to this group under one umbrella for their effective implementation. The EOO takes care of all academic and non-academic matters pertaining to students belonging to the marginalised communities.

As seen earlier, educational policies in India always favour the inculcation of values of democracy, citizenry, national integration and associative learning, all of which have been incorporated as the inherent goals and objectives of education in India. However, when we move from the 'textual mode' to the 'action mode' (Olssen et al., 2004) of policy, centrality, instrumentality and mechanisms for the implementation of initiatives appear to be inadequate. Education for democracy

remains at the periphery of students' learning at college and has failed to become a core component of teaching.

Despite the State's initiatives to inculcate democratic values, issues of discrimination, unequal treatment, isolation and differential educational outcomes for various disadvantaged groups in higher education have recently come to light. Although systematic large level studies on this issue are long overdue, the available evidence points to the persistence of inequalities and discrimination against various non-traditional social groups in higher education institutions. The findings of these studies have been shared in the next section along with legal methods recently implemented by the State to protect students belonging to the discriminated groups such as women, SCs and STs from discrimination.

Discrimination Associated with Student Diversity in Higher Education Institutions in India

As observed earlier, the expansion in higher education has resulted in diversity in student composition. Higher education in India is now characterised by a high degree of student diversity in terms of their social, ethnic, racial, religious and regional backgrounds and affiliations. There are two dimensions related to increasing the diversity of the student population. One dimension concerns the nature of interaction amongst students on the campuses, which is determined by differing ideologies and values that they learn from where they live, from their family, village and society. The second dimension is related to the attitude and behaviour of the faculty and administrators, which is usually saddled with stereotypes and prejudices based on class, caste, ethnicity, region and religion. In the expanding system, students entering the higher education system are diverse in terms of their characteristics while the teachers in the campuses may have limited knowledge about the different cultural backgrounds of the students or an understanding of the prevalent discrimination based on group identities inside or outside the campus. This section provides some empirical evidence on both these dimensions.

Basis of Peer Group Formation and Social Interaction

Empirical studies indicate that there is a social divide in higher education spaces as well as among students based on caste, religion, ethnic and regional identities (EPW, 2008; Thornton et al., 2012; Ovichegan, 2013; Rao, 2013; Sukumar, 2008; Malish, 2013; Sabharwal and Thorat, 2014). These studies report the formation of social and peer groups around 'identities' for activities performed both inside and outside the classroom, on campus and in the halls of residence, and exclusionary behaviours

demonstrated by students from the dominant group which lead to discrimination, and the perpetration of psychological and physical violence against women and students from the disadvantaged groups such as the SCs and STs.

Ovichegan in 2013 observed "this university is yet another arena in which the practice of caste division continues to exist. The university environment reinforces and maintains a divide between Dalits and non-Dalits. Dalit students do, indeed, experience overt and covert discrimination based on caste at this premier university". In premier institutes, Dalit students have to carry the SC/ST tag throughout their academic career, which results in open hostility towards students of the general category. Social interaction with the non-Dalit students is limited and issues of poverty, attire, English language, make Dalit life difficult (Sukumar, 2008). Attire, language skills, and general 'etiquette' influence the relationship between genders. Dalit students are at a disadvantage with respect to such markers of social status, and find it difficult to interact with the opposite sex. The attitude of the upper caste boys and girls towards the Dalit students is non-supportive, with there being very little sharing of study materials. Apart from routine interactions, all social and academic gatherings are very exclusive (Sukumar, 2008).

The practice of ragging of Dalit students can also assume a particularly humiliating form, such as ridicule based on caste, colour or complexion, habits, and culture, among other things (EPW, 2008). Each of the 25 students interviewed during the preparation of the Thorat Committee report said that despite a ban on ragging, they were humiliated by the seniors when they had taken admission. "They would call us to their rooms and order us…tell us 10 reasons why you should get reservation…if you don't, we'll beat you," one of them said. "These incidents happen every year. Whenever a new batch joins they are treated like this," a general category student confirmed (The Telegraph, 2007).

The ongoing study conducted by the authors across six states found that the students form their friendship groups (best friends with whom they interact with the most often) largely on the basis of their caste, ethnicity and regional backgrounds (Table 5). The single largest group with which each social category of students struck friendships was one which comprised other members of their own caste and ethnicity. For instance, OBC students reported having best friends from the same group or from the general category—the two castes that are 'higher' than the SCs and STs in the caste hierarchy. Similarly, the students from the general category also reported having best friends from their own group or from among the OBCs. This points to the following realities on educational campuses:

a)   Students select their friends primarily on the basis of identity;

b)   Friendship groups are being determined by the position of friends in the caste hierarchy with the 'higher castes' (or the general category and OBCs) mostly interacting with each other and not with the students from the marginalised groups. For example, only 9 percent of the general category students reported having best friends from the SC group and only 1.5 percent reported having best friends from the ST group.

Table 5: Friend 1 by Social Category (percentage)

Social Group	Friend 1 Social Group					Total
	SCs	STs	OBCs	GENERAL	Don't Know	
SCs	37.2	2.6	21.5	24.8	10.5	100.0
STs	20.9	36.5	16.9	18.2	4.1	100.0
OBCs	12.6	2.8	42.4	27.4	13.3	100.0
GENERAL	9.2	1.5	15.1	58.0	13.0	100.0
Total	15.2	3.9	28.8	37.3	12.4	100.0

Source: Survey of 3200 students across six states carried out in 2015.

An analysis of the data pertaining to the social background of the friends for SC students indicates that while SCs also form friendships with members of their own caste (37 percent), close to 25 percent also claimed to have friends from the general category. On the other hand, as reported above, only 9 percent of the general category students mentioned having best friends were from the SC group. This implies that the students from the general category are perhaps not willing to accept students from the SC group as their friends, though SC students consider having close friends from the general category. A possible reason for this pattern is shared by a faculty from the SC group as follows:

"Students belonging to the SC category sometimes look out for possibilities of selecting a friend from the general category. This could be to get benefits such as language skills, reading notes, entry into other popular circles, etc. Privileges carried by the upper caste elite students do attract students from the marginalised communities and many want to be in such 'privilege-popular circles'. On the other hand, general category students easily find an entry into the existing privilege-popular groups, so for them it is needless to make friends from the SC community."

Additionally, during the pilot study in one of the colleges in Delhi, the students from the North-East states highlighted specific challenges faced by them. The students reported that their informal interactions are confined with the peers from their own

group. The formation of peer groups on the basis of caste and class identities is a consequence of the various forms of exclusion and discrimination faced by the students. Observations based on a focus group discussion with 15 students from the North-eastern states such as Manipur, Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, and Mizoram provide us with insights into these social behaviours and attitudes among the student community. In the absence of an institutional mechanism to address the challenges faced by them, the students in the discussion pointed out that they indulged in self-exclusion and it was their own decision to remain within their group. In the group discussion, the students elaborated the reasons for this self-exclusion, which included the major issues and problems stemming from their ethnic identities that they face within and outside the campus.

Firstly, there was unanimous agreement among the students that they felt humiliated when subject to blanket labelling such as 'North-east students' when in fact, they belonged to different states in the North-East such as Manipur, Assam, Nagaland, and Mizoram, each of which has its distinct features and unique identities and cultures. They also complained that this label and discriminatory identification, that is, as 'North-East students' was dehumanising. As one respondent stated, "We don't like somebody call us North-east people, we also want to be known by our names". The students elaborated that their categorisation as 'North-East student" indicates people's lack of sensitivity towards the social and cultural diversity of the individual states. Another element of the divide between various groups was observed during the group discussion when students from the North-East addressed the others as the 'mainland' people. They shared that many of their friends studying in other colleges also experienced such forms of labelling and discrimination at their places of residence and the respective colleges. This clearly shows that people are not aware of the cultural characteristics and specificities of the North-eastern states, which leads to discriminatory attitudes against students coming from these states.

Secondly, the students from other parts of the country averred that since the lingua franca of the campus is largely Hindi, they find it difficult to communicate with their peers as they do not know Hindi. Most of the classroom sessions are also held in Hindi. Thus, the language barrier becomes a major obstacle in the forming of friendships. Third, the lack of a "common interest" is another hurdle in the formation of friendships among students belonging to different caste and class backgrounds, especially if such friendships are related to sports. For instance, a student shared that when "we talk football and they talk cricket", meaning that even in the arena of sports they could not find common ground with students belonging to different

communities. These students also alleged that their jokes are misunderstood or misinterpreted. Fourth, students from the marginalised communities complained that most of the festivals celebrated in the campus are alien to them and that their own festivals are not celebrated in college.

Fifth, the students shared the difficulties that they face outside the campus. Since the college does not have a hostel facility inside the campus, they are compelled to stay outside the campus, which also entails issues of safety and security for them. Some of the students also lamented that they are addressed as "*Nepalees*". One participant strongly voiced his perception that "they think that we are from outside India". The ultimate outcome of these situations is the lack of any positive interaction among the students from different castes and communities on the campus, and the resultant groupism wherein only students belonging to the same backgrounds interact with and befriend each other.

It may be summarised that the formation of peer groups along similar identities is the consequence of a lack of a concrete institutional response or mechanism to tackle the issues of exclusion and isolation of the socially and marginalised groups. Therefore, students from the socially and regionally marginalised communities have no alternative but to form peer groups with students from their own communities. Everyday behaviour manifested in verbal interaction, body language, college fun gestures, hanging out at canteens and other activities thus knowingly or unknowingly reflects the identities of the students both inside and outside the classroom.

Basis of Seating and Nature of College Classroom Environment

Within the classroom, we find that close to 46 percent of the students in the pilot study reported that the students generally sit near others belonging to their own communities (Pilot Study, 2015).

Table 6: Item Loadings for Principal Component Analyses
(Explains 58.26 per cent of the Variance)

Classroom Environment	*Loadings*
I am labelled as reserved category in the class.	0.491
It is common to hear remarks in the classroom based on caste, and regional identity.	0.885
My teacher makes caste-based jokes.	0.209
My teacher makes derogatory jokes that hurt regional sentiments.	0.292
My teachers attribute under-performance among some students to their lower social and regional backgrounds.	0.396

Source: Pilot Study, 2015.

We also carried out a Principal Component Analysis (PCA) with varimax rotations to analyse the students' responses to understand the classroom environment (for details on the technical aspect of PCA, see Annexure 1). A total of 69 students completed all the Likert-scale items. An examination of the scree plot from an initial exploratory PCA suggested that the component, classroom environment, consisted of five items while two were left out. As seen from Table 7, the items included the students' experience of being labelled as reserved category in the class; remarks in the classroom based on caste, region identity; teacher makes caste-based jokes; teacher makes derogatory jokes that hurt regional sentiments; derogatory remarks based on lower social and regional background of the students and their under-performance being attributed to their background. The items in this component fit these data best explaining 58.26 per cent of the variance in the items. This implies that these experiences move together and are correlated for students who confirmed these 5 items.

Table 7: Perception on the Classroom Climate

Social Group	Mean
SC	1.0170
ST	1.5725
OBC	.1726
General	.1254

Source: Pilot Study, 2015.

Table 7 presents the mean scores by social group on the items that explain the maximum variation in the students' responses towards their experiences in classroom transactions. The SC and ST students had a higher mean score as compared to those of their counterparts from the OBC and general categories. The higher mean scores of the SCs and STs vis-à-vis those of the OBCs and general category students implies that the SCs and STs experienced some form of derogatory remarks more often than their peers from the 'higher' castes. Thus, SC and ST students perceived their classroom environment to be socially and ethnically insensitive.

Teachers' Views on Students Social Diversity on the Campus

Empirical evidence on the nature of interaction between the SC students and their teachers indicates that teachers hold stereotype beliefs about such students (based on the field visits by the authors). The preliminary analysis of the ongoing study across six states derived from interviews with faculty members also highlights the negative approaches and attitudes of faculty members with regard to the notions of

diversity and equity. Here we discuss how faculty members viewed the changing nature of student characteristics and the academic abilities of the students belonging to the marginalised communities. Teachers view the changing nature of students from a particular prism of beliefs and prejudices that are based on the students' social identities. A majority of the faculty members interviewed asserted that the socio-economic and cultural backgrounds of the students have changed over a period of time. The faculty reported that now their campus has become 'too' diverse in terms of caste, religion, economic class and region. This changing diversity was viewed differently by different faculty members.

One view propagated was that since the minimum marks required for securing admission have gone up, this has had a positive influence on 'academic standards', IQs and 'merit of the students'. Those holding this view argued that all these three qualities amongst students have improved. However, there was a contrasting view as well. Some faculty members perceived deterioration in the quality of students and attributed this to the regional and social affiliations of the students. Some faculty members claimed that the entry of students in the campus from certain regional locations is considered as the main reason a decline in academic standards. Following is one of the comments indicating this regional bias: "Previously students were mainly from Delhi….now they come from neighbouring states and this has led to a degradation in academic standards".

Similarly, some faculty members observed that student characteristics had changed as the SC/ST/OBC students increasingly take admission due to a relaxation in the criterion of minimum marks required for admission, which again impacts academic quality. There were two dominating views regarding the academic ability of the students belonging to the marginalised groups. One view was that the marginalised students are also competent and often perform better than the others; the other view, however, indicated scepticism towards the competiveness of and efforts made by the marginalised. The faculty members who believed that students belonging to the marginalised communities can do well in studies reiterated that "caste and community does not come into picture between student and teacher". The proponents on this view agreed that these students can do well in studies if they are provided with "financial and moral support", 'good guidance' and 'motivation'.

The other group, that is, the sceptics, was of the opinion that students from the marginalised communities find it difficult to compete with their counterparts from the higher castes in subjects of 'high difficulty' like economics. This was attributed to the *way* in which they had been selected for admission to the college. As regards the

selection of the marginalised students, a senior faculty member pointed out, "They are basically brought to that position rather than through the earning (merit) that position as compared to the general category students". Since admission is not *earned* by them through their competency, they lack motivation to work hard. As a result of the perception that SCs/STs are 'brought into the system' rather than entering on the strength of their competency or merit, faculty members believe that very few of them work hard and put in any effort. This approach to higher education, they believe is leading to a deterioration in academic performance. Pointing to evidence on the lack of motivation and competitiveness among students from the SC and ST group, one faculty member stated, "Generally SC-ST students think that they can manage to pass without working hard. Parents also inform them that way. Some students think that even if they score 50 per cent (marks), they will get a job".

These statements and views reflect biases and insensitivities towards the idea of social diversity. The observation that SC-ST students are not hard working and attempting to secure only pass marks as they believe that they would get jobs through reservation clearly highlights the negative attitudes towards very idea of inclusion and equity in higher education. The question here is to what extent faculty perception about academic ability gets translated into academic and non-academic student engagement inside and outside the classroom.

These findings indicate that institutions of higher education are ill equipped to address the issues of student diversity and equity in education. However, both societal and institutional factors play an important role in this sphere. Among the societal factors, the social context and the stage of democratisation reached by the State is important in influencing the nature and extent of discrimination in higher education campuses. Other studies have also reported demoralisation and de-motivation of Dalit students due to the prevalence of such attitudes, and the consequences of such demoralisation, which can be manifested in low grades, poor laboratory facilities for the under-privileged students, the latter securing poor marks in practical examinations, and facing sarcastic remarks, and, in general, being subjected to discriminatory treatment (Singh, 2013; Rao, 2013).

Rao (2013) also cites many instances of how SC-ST students were discriminated against in IITs by the teachers. He describes how the selection of teachers and pairing of students by teachers and students also excludes the disadvantaged groups, which affects the latter's academic performance. He opines that it would not be appropriate to attribute the academic under-performance of these groups to social adjustment, pre-schooling, financial constraints, or an inferiority complex; but that it would be of

the utmost importance and relevance to understand the process of exclusion, the contestants, situations, and rituals which spawn helplessness, inferiority complexes, segregation, self-exclusion, and a feeling of humiliation among the SC and ST students.

Institutional Response to Address Diversity and Discrimination

In order to institutionalise equality, there are clear directives to create Equal Opportunity Cells in higher educational institutions that aim to promote equality among all sections of the students without prejudice towards any social group. According to the guidelines, anti-discrimination officers and ombudsmen have to be appointed for the redressal of students' grievances. The preliminary findings of the pilot and the ongoing study by the authors indicate that most institutions are ill equipped to address the diversity and equity. Although all types of cells such as equal opportunity, anti-ragging and women's cells exist, a majority of the students (63 percent) are unaware of the existence of these cells, or their roles and the duties of the faculty members responsible for these cells (Table 8).

Table 8: I Am Aware of the Equal Opportunity Cell and Its Role

Social Groups	Yes	No	Total
SCs	33.0%	66.8%	100.0%
STs	18.7%	81.3%	100.0%
OBCs	35.3%	64.4%	100.0%
GENERAL	43.6%	56.4%	100.0%
Total	37.1%	62.7%	100.0%

Source: Survey of 3200 students across six states carried out in 2015.

Table 9: I Know the Faculty Involved in the Equal Opportunity Cell (percentage)

Social Groups	Yes	No	Total
SCs	18.5	81.3	100.0
STs	9.7	90.3	100.0
OBCs	15.9	83.7	100.0
GENERAL	22.6	77.4	100.0
Total	18.4	81.4	100.0

Source: Survey of 3200 students across six states carried out in 2015.

As regards the problems faced by the students from the North-eastern states, the college did not have an institutionalised mechanism to address the concerns of these students. Students in the group discussion shared that as per their knowledge,

there was no cell/committee to deal with this issue. Since they are in a minority, their representation in the college union and student representative bodies is also negligible. Student elections also take place on the basis of caste. The students claimed that once the election is over the student unions do not show any interest in their welfare. One student stated: "They were very helpful before and during campaigning, they would do everything. But after the results are declared, they become different persons—it is as if they don't even know us". One of the primary suggestions made by the group was that there should be reservation of seats for the North-eastern students in campus elections.

However, the students unanimously said that it was the Principal of the College who made them feel safe and secure in the campus. Students had a direct contact with the Principal and it seemed that students felt free to approach him at any time if they faced any problems in the campus. The students shared that the "The Principal is friendly, sensitive, helpful, and his proactive interventions improve the climate of the campus". The proactive nature of the principal was reflected in regular meetings with the students in his chamber to enquire about their well-being, and his encouraging them to raise any issues and report any undemocratic practices.

At the faculty level, we found that some of the faculty members took pro-active steps to encourage inter-group interaction in the classrooms. They were of the view that diversity in terms of the students' social, economic and regional identities in the classroom spaces provides an opportunity for cohesive learning for both students and teachers. For teachers and students, classrooms offer a space to learn from the ideas that the students arrive with and where interaction of a multiple thought process offers a scope for collaborative learning. Diversity in identities makes the formation of peer groups easier within and outside the class, as they tend to associate with the same group. In the positive sense, identities do provide space to come together on a similar platform.

Some teachers were sensitive and had taken up the responsibility of minimising the boundaries created around identities and to offer a space/avenue for the students to interact among themselves. They include strategies of interaction, debate and discourses that help the students come together and combat the ignorance based on identities. During the classroom activities such as participation in classroom discussions, group presentations and preparing other interactive sessions, as teachers, they divide the class into different groups and make sure that students from different identities are absorbed in a single group. They reported that this is initially difficult as the students want to retain their peer groups and they do not want to mingle with

others. However, mixed group formation for various activities has been welcomed by the students as they acknowledge the significance of knowing each other towards the end of each academic session. Along with the mixed peer group some of the faculty members in this college are pro-active in their teaching to create sensitivity and appreciation of cultures of different social groups in the society. This sends out a message in the classroom that everyone (every identity) is important.

However, these are isolated examples and a lack of inter-group interactions has not attracted the attention of institutional leaders. This, in fact, undermines the very idea of college campus being a democratic social space. Although the college principal is usually seen as being very sensitive and helpful to the students, there is no institutionalised mechanism in campuses to address welfare of students from the North-eastern states. There is no doubt that ensuring the safety and security of the students is imperative, but that alone does not foster a feeling of belonging and being integrated into the campus. The socio-cultural space of the campus must be receptive to students from diverse backgrounds and campuses must cultivate a culture of respecting diversity and sharing. There is presently no mechanism or structure to deal with diverse student bodies. There are limited planned activities and programmes formulated to sensitise the student community as a whole on democratic values and practices. The office of the NSS in the Delhi University, for example, (which is not in the College Campus), designs the programme of activities which the colleges have to follow. It was argued that these activities, for example, on the 'cleanliness drive', do help in conditioning civic values. However, these activities are not sufficient to cultivate democratic values and social harmony. Some of the faculty members suggested the need for long duration orientation programmes involving experts from various fields such as sociology for conducting orientation programmes among the newly admitted students. Similarly, it was suggested that subjects sensitising knowledge about the regional diversity in the country and gender justice need to be introduced in the curriculum. There is need to promote inclusiveness and evidence-based policy on higher education institutions, and to deal with the popular but problematic perceptions about urban and rural locations that lead to social divisions and socio-cultural practices.

Therefore, we find that nation's long-standing legacies of caste, race, gender, and class antagonism are replicated on campuses as well. Unlike Western universities, which took centuries to become inclusive social spaces, Indian colleges and universities, in principle, were open and secular institutions in the beginning (Betteille, 2010). With all their limitations, universities "served as exemplar and model of a new

kind of social existence" (Betteille, 2010, p. 13) where boundaries of caste and class, in principle, became irrelevant in the public domain for the first time. The empirical evidences on discrimination in higher education institutions remind us that, along with the existing laws and regulations to address discrimination in higher education institutions, much more need to be done to make our institutions of higher learning secular and democratic spaces.

It is against this background that the concepts of education and civic learning need to be understood at the national and international levels. That is why in addition to pedagogic interventions that mainly engage with citizenship values and critical thinking, it is important to promote an 'diversity oriented campus culture' (Museus and Jayakumar, 2012), which enacts and espouses the values of diversity and equity. This necessitates a change in beliefs, values, assumptions and actions of the major stakeholders in higher education institutions and the ways in which these institutions are governed and managed. Both the academic and non-academic spheres of social existence of students have to be democratic. As noted by Tawney (1964, pp. 102–03), "equality of opportunity depends not simply on the removal of disabilities but also creation of abilities". Initiatives such as college–community partnerships and intergroup dialogues aim to encourage the student populations to engage with the diverse social world. This is, in fact, the entire rationale behind the concepts of diversity and non-discrimination as well as institution-based reforms for civic learning.

How to improve Civic Learning amongst Students?

As a multi-cultural and diverse democracy, the social transformative role of education has also been debated by various commissions and committees set up in post-independent India. The foundation for higher education in India to be a carrier of democratic values and ideals was highlighted in the first University Education Commission, 1948-49, under the leadership of Dr. S. Radhakrishnan. The Commission fore grounded principles of democracy—social justice, equality, liberty and fraternity—as the force for driving India higher education's transformation. It stated that higher education must "cultivate the art of human relationship, the ability to live and work together overcoming the dividing force of the time" (MoE, 1962, p. 31). The third Five Year Plan document (1961–66) of the Indian Planning Commission also described education as "the most important single factor in achieving rapid economic development and technological progress and in creating a social order founded on the values of freedom, social justice and equal opportunity".

Recognising and promoting the role of higher education in achieving social change was one of the major recommendations of the Kothari Commission, which advocated an education system that would promote national consciousness as a complement to international understanding. Being national citizens, students are expected to develop the traits of global citizenship that go beyond the socio-political boundaries of national states. The report recommends the inculcation of social, moral and spiritual values among the students and encouraging students to engage in social service and community development activities. It is to be noted that a clear demarcation was made between religious education and education about religion. While the former is considered to be religious instruction based on the tenets of sacred texts, the latter is a critical study of religions, which enables one to acquire secular values.

There is a renewed call for using higher education in India to narrow the gap between the ideals of the Constitution and the reality of people's daily lives (Ambedkar, 1956; Thorat, 2013). Thorat (2013) goes on to state that higher education in India needs to deal with the issues of diversity, discrimination, and sexism. It is necessary to cultivate the value of democracy by bringing civic learning to the core of college learning. According to the review of the literature, education for civic learning and democratic engagement includes three main components, namely knowledge, skill, and, action.

Knowledge

As regards the knowledge component of civic learning, the reform in knowledge includes designing a curriculum that makes students aware about the positive constitutional principles and values which form the basis of good citizenship, and sensitises them to the problems of society. Knowledge conveys that citizenship is a broad concept along with its minimal and maximal interpretations. While the minimal interpretation of citizenship deals with law-abiding citizens and constitutional rights and duties, its maximal interpretation discusses "consciousness of the self as a member of shared democratic culture" (Essomba et al., 2008, p.2). The new curriculum thus includes themes that deal with diversity, inequalities, poverty, discrimination associated with caste, ethnicity, gender, race and colour; the use of examples to incorporate the experiences and perspectives of a wide range of groups belonging to a variety of cultures and groups within a pluralistic society. This knowledge could be imparted through special courses to all students, irrespective of the discipline they choose to study, be it science or social sciences or humanities, and also by incorporating it in each of the courses. Hence, building the knowledge base of

students in higher education institutions is the first important component of civic learning.

Skills

The second component of civic learning is to develop individual capabilities and skills among students to enable them to deal with diversities and disparities. However, while the curricular content on civic education plays an important role in imparting knowledge about citizenship, it may not lead to the development of a consciousness for engaging in democratic culture. Developing such a consciousness instead requires an exposure to everyday practices rooted in the constitutional ideals of equality, equity and respect to diverse social sects. Therefore, in order to train and prepare democratic citizens, higher education institutions must help students to develop skills and engage in critical thinking while making reflective choices for democratic actions. Such skills are expected to help one tackle prejudicial thoughts about likely discriminatory behaviour against stigmatised groups, induce fraternal feelings and the desire for care, nurture develop a commitment to personal, social and civic action, and develop multi-cultural competences/skills.

New pedagogical methods include inter-group dialogues and mixed peer groups for various activities, where students from diverse groups come together to learn discussion skills and interact with different peers while respecting their mutual differences. Such practices aim to refine the skills of analysing multiple viewpoints without vilifying the speaker; promoting multi-cultural friendships; and promoting inter-group communication and social justice. The dialogue programmes may include the following topics:

- Critical thinking exercises which may include conversations wherein students explore the intersections of identity and privilege, articulate value positions, and indulge in critical debates and activities where multiple choices are provided and options are available;

- Discussions on democratic principles, activities involving voting and determining the consequences of their actions by groups of individuals;

- Deliberations on power and authority, tensions between opposing viewpoints, oppressions due to unequal power relations, the dynamics of privileges and disadvantages rooted in group identities such as caste, gender, ethnicity, race, and religion;

- Debates on sustainable development, global issues, civil and human rights, environmental issues, situations presenting a moral dilemma based on universal

principles as distinct from personal gain or good, and development of a sense of the consequences of one's action through role play and discussion.

Action

The third component of civic learning is to motivate students for civic action and democratic engagement beyond the campus while interacting with a broader public. Elements of knowledge, the value of care and the skills of critical thinking are expected to inform students' actions and induce them to participate in community engagement activities. These include university–community partnerships, which may include project assignments that require students to engage with deprived groups, for example, by volunteering their time at the local *anganwadi* centres and mentoring students in neighbourhood government schools who are preparing for college. Initiatives such as college–community partnerships aim to nurture the abilities to engage with a diverse social world among the student population. It signifies the entire rationale behind the concepts of diversity and non-discrimination as well as the implementation of institution-based reforms for civic learning and democratic engagement. All these have a great potential for bringing about social change and creating a more democratic, egalitarian and just society.

In terms of the implementation of civic education in India, a national policy applicable to all education institutions would be necessary while ensuring that the autonomy of the institution is maintained (Thorat and Sabharwal, 2015). The US, perhaps the first non-Communist country that implemented courses in civic learning in its universities and colleges, followed this route. Civic learning and citizenship education in the US were conceived as part of a national policy to be adopted by the universities, while leaving the latter to devise and practice the most appropriate way of doing so. We find a considerable variation in the practice of civic education by individual universities. In this way, the autonomy of the university with respect to the curriculum, course content and the methods of implementation can be maintained.

Teachers have an important role to play in inculcating democratic values. Classrooms do not merely symbolise a space for learning the curriculum or the syllabi but also help in spreading information for creating a collective identity. As mentioned above, the formation of groups, pedagogy used by the teachers, and the provision of equal and adequate time and space to each student irrespective of their identities is important. The teacher has to liberate the minds of the students and to nurture the values of equal respect, equal opportunity, and equal appreciation in order to build a non-discriminatory environment within and outside the classroom.

Empirical evidences of the impact of such initiatives affirm that they do not only have an immediate academic outcome or lead to the creation of a new civic culture, but also have a long-lasting effect on students even after they have completed completing several years of college education. Further, the history of educational reforms in various countries convinces us of the fact that disconnections between education and society had been and continue to be one of the major concerns of governments. As a result of wider national level political mobilisation such as the civil rights movements in the US and the role played by transnational agencies such as UN bodies, community engagement and civic learning have become part of an important agenda of higher education in democratic countries. With the advent of the requirement for new skills in the modern labour market and the growing internationalisation of higher education, community engagement has acquired new meaning and legitimacy in policy.

The belief that higher education in the era of massification to universalisation has to perform a broader social function along with its other economic functions has initiated a new discourse on the social purpose of higher education (democracy *from* higher education) and the social accountability of HEI. Growing violence and constant threats to peace help sustain that discourse. Racially diverse Western society like the US enacted new policies and programmes to address the issue of racial campus relations. Diversity as a value has been incorporated as a part and parcel of higher education. It has impacted not only students and faculty members but also the very structure of higher education campuses. Some of the steps in this direction include the launch of an ethnic studies programme, facilitating inter-group dialogue, and promoting community engagement, all of which function as new resources for students, enabling them to develop the capacity to live and work in a multi-cultural society.

The task of addressing diversity in the US and other racially diverse societies is totally different from doing so in countries like India for two major reasons. Firstly, race has strong element of physicality, which is fundamentally different from the caste systems that exist in India. The notion of a pure and a polluted body in the caste system is different from the racial ideology of a dominating and a subordinated body. Hence, diversity concerns in immigrant countries are, to some extent, non-comparable with those in countries like India. Secondly, the long history of civil rights movements and its political energy was one of the driving forces of higher education reforms in US. Without the aggressive role played by the National Association for Advancement of Coloured People (NAACP), racial concerns in the higher education system in the US would not have been either adequately addressed or successful.

In India, the diversity in student composition in higher education has drastically changed in the last few decades. This diversity is reflected in terms of their caste, ethnic, class, linguistic, regional, and religious backgrounds. Insights on the experiences of the students from the marginalised groups indicate that societal divisions existing in India are getting reproduced inside the campus though the nature and form of such divisions varies from state to state as well as across institutions. There is a relationship between the nature of social divisions in the campus with the democratisation stage of the State and the eliteness of the institution. However, there are some common forms of social divisions that emerge across states, including exclusionary behaviour and derogatory remarks; peer group interaction divided on caste lines and under-representation of the faculty in the excluded groups. A lack of perspective and insensitivity from the institutional leaders creates a vacuum in the discourse on diversity and equity in higher education. This clearly shows that the values of the Constitution and its reflection as written words in policies are not being translated into practice in higher education. There is a disconnect between the Constitution and the culture of higher education institutions.

It is a crucial moment for India to evolve a national dialogue on the viewing of higher education as a strategic tool for civic learning and the promotion of a democratic culture. It is crucial because firstly, there is evidence of undemocratic behaviour on our college campuses in the form of divides among groups on the basis of identity and exclusion. Secondly, being the largest democracy, India should necessarily take steps to educate citizens for promoting and sustaining democracy—only thoughtful and tolerant people can survive in and maintain a democratic society. Ambedkar (1956) emphasised that education is an instrument that cultivates democracy in the society by providing skills for associated living and strengthens the roots of democracy to bring about social transformation. Third, India is now a globally situated economy with a modern and internationally diverse workforce. It is thus imperative for higher education to prepare a workforce that acquires not only technical skills to pursue a productive career but also democratic skills that teach workers to respect mutual differences and engage in different points of view. Skills for democratic engagement constitute an essential component of learning that would enhance employability in the diverse global workplace of the twenty-first century. Workforce training and civic learning, therefore, need to become the complementary visions of higher education. Hence, in order to actualise the ideals in the Constitution and to contribute to the democratisation of society, higher education institutions in India must help students acquire and internalise knowledge, values and the skills of democracy.

Principal component analysis (PCA) is a statistical procedure that uses an orthogonal transformation to convert a set of observations of possibly correlated variables into a set of values of linearly uncorrelated variables called principal components. The number of principal components is less than or equal to the number of original variables. This transformation is defined in such a way that the first principal component has the largest possible variance (that is, it accounts for as much of the variability in the data as possible), and each succeeding component, in turn, has the highest variance possible under the constraint that it is orthogonal to the preceding components. The resulting vectors constitute an uncorrelated orthogonal basis set. The principal components are orthogonal because they are the eigenvectors of the covariance matrix, which is symmetric. PCA is sensitive to the relative scaling of the original variables.

PCA is mostly used as a tool in exploratory data analysis and for making predictive models. PCA can be done by the eigenvalue decomposition of a data covariance (or correlation) matrix or singular value decomposition of a data matrix, usually after mean centering (and normalising or using Z-scores) the data matrix for each attribute. The results of a PCA are usually discussed in terms of component scores, sometimes called factor scores (the transformed variable values corresponding to a particular data point), and loadings (the weight by which each standardised original variable should be multiplied to get the component score)

$$S*_{ij} = \frac{(S_{ij} - min_j)}{(max_j - min_j)} \quad \ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots \text{equation No. 1}$$

$$(0 \leq S*_{ij} \leq 1)$$

S_{ij} is the factor score for locality 'i' on principal component j, max_j and min_j are the highest and lowest factor scores on component j.

This equation produced rescaled factor scores in the range of zero to one and allowed the following equation to be used to develop a *GDI (General Deprivation Index)*

$$GDI_i = \frac{S_{ik} * (1 + \sum S*_{ij})}{Tot\_comp} \quad \ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots \text{equation No. 2}$$

$$(0 \leq GDI_i \leq 1)$$

Sik is the rescaled factor score of locality 'i' on component k, which plays the primary role in deprivation, S*ij is the rescaled factor score of one of the components.

Tot_comp is the total number of components. This produces a simple weighted index that accounts for the factors derived from the initial component analysis.

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About the paper

The higher education sector in India has experienced unprecedented expansion in the recent decades, which has been accompanied by diversity of the student population. This student diversity is a result of affirmative action followed in the admission process and in post-admission support programmes. Increasing student diversity in campuses leads to both opportunities as well as challenges. The challenges include the need to draft strategies for overcoming prejudices and stereotypes pertaining to class, caste, ethnic, regional and religious issues. Significantly, the student-faculty academic interactions on the campus are lower and peer group formation based on social identities is becoming common. Drawing from national and international experiences, this paper provides insights into student diversity in higher education campuses in India and their implications for civic learning and for the promotion of democratic norms of behaviour.

About the authors

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