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Picture of the Affiliating State Universities in Maharashtra in the Wake of National Education Policy—2020

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The National Education Policy 2020 (Committee headed by Padma Vibhushan approved by Prof. K Kasturirangan) approved by the Union Cabinet and set to be implemented points to the fact that needs of the 21st century India are far different from those in the 1960s and in 1980s. The mandate of the changed times have brought a major shift in the priorities. The proliferation and structuring of higher education were the prime challenges of the Kothari Commission, whereas the Acharya Ramamoorthi Commission was set to vocationalize the higher education in the country. Of many, focus on the technology equipped education, relaxing the regulatory norms leading to autonomy and revisiting the indigenous Indian education system have been the key principles of the NEP-2020 in addition to regular objectives of focus on research and developing a conducive environment for realizing the capacities of the learners at the school and higher education. The NEP-2020 envisions India as an equitable and vibrant knowledge society rooted in the Indian ethos having respect to the fundamental duties and the constitutional values with high quality technology enabled education.

The NEP-2020 aims at ending the fragmentation of the higher education by transforming higher education institutes into large multidisciplinary universities by modelling the existing universities and colleges on the ancient universities of Takshashila, Nalanda, Vallabhi and Vikramshila which had multidisciplinary approach to learning in contrast with the faculty bound fragmentation introduced by the British colonizers and religiously followed by the native rulers in the free India.

The NEP 2020 aims at developing and classifying universities into Research Intensive Universities and Teaching Intensive Universities. It also plans to develop a stage-wise mechanism in which the best performing colleges and institutes of higher education, both state run and privately run, in accreditation will be gradually converted into either

Autonomous Degree Granting Colleges or Constituent Colleges and which, in the course of time, will be encouraged to attain the status of Research Intensive Universities and Teaching Intensive Universities (NEP-2020, P. 34-35).

The NEP 2020 proposes to replace the present nomenclatures of the institutes of higher education deemed to be universities, affiliating universities, affiliating technical universities, unitary universities with simple universities (NEP-2020, P. 36). It further says that agricultural universities, law universities, health science universities and stand alone institutes in all fields shall aim to become multi-disciplinary institutes offering holistic and multidisciplinary education. It mentions that the preparations of professionals in agricultural and veterinary sciences through programs integrated with general education will be increased sharply (P.50). About the technical education, the NEP-2020 specifies that it aims to be offered within multidisciplinary education and program (NEP-2020, P. 51).

Regarding the language based universities, the NEP-2020 says, "in consonance with the rest of this policy, Sanskrit universities too will move towards becoming large multidisciplinary institutions of higher learning (and) the classical language institutes will aim to be merged with the universities, while maintaining their autonomy" (NEP-2020, P.55).

Despite these proposed changes in the nature of universities, it has to be seen in the light of the fact that major portion of higher education is operated and covered by the states and state universities therein. The state universities, at least so early, cannot get rid of their affiliating related works. In other words, the affiliation system is going to stay there. The proposed changes in the university nature can be used for reducing the load of affiliated colleges on the present non-technical universities.

If the newly renamed Ministry of Education decides to continue its much ambitious scheme of Rashtriya Uchchar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA), its concept of cluster universities may be implemented to encourage the state run and private run institutes to go for the cluster university status to offer them

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academic autonomy and reduce the load of the affiliating universities.

In the light of the above recommendations and provisions made in the NEP-2020 and viewing the role of the provincial states and its university education system (the state affiliating universities, its affiliated colleges and learner enrolment) play in higher education, it is mandatorily to be acknowledged that the states are the major stake holders and play the significant roles in implementing the NEP-2020 brought by the Union Government. Seeing the number of colleges in the state like Maharashtra, it goes without saying that despite the NEP's proposal to reduce affiliating system gradually, the affiliating system has come to stay for a longer time than expected.

The National Knowledge Commission (NKC) also recommends for more universities in its report submitted in 2006: The higher education system needs a massive expansion of opportunities, to around 1500 universities nationwide, that would enable India to attain a gross enrolment ratio of at least 15 per cent by 2015. The focus would have to be on new universities, but some clusters of affiliated colleges could also become universities. Such expansion would require major changes in the structure of regulation (NKC-2020, p.62). The need is for smaller universities which are responsive to change and easier to manage, and these should be created (NKC-2020, P.64).

The *Rashtriya Uchchar Shiksha Abhiyan* (RUSA) in its report (2013) prepared with Tata Institute of Social Sciences gives primary focus for university reforms along with many more recommendations. The following are the primary components of RUSA that capture the key action and funding areas that must be pursued for the fulfilment of the targets:

1. New Universities
2. Upgradation of existing autonomous colleges to Universities
3. Conversion of colleges to Cluster Universities (RUSA 2013, P.89).

The present article attempts at visualizing the setup of the university education in Maharashtra state in the wake of the recommendations made in the NEP-2020 under the head of Institutional Restructuring and Consolidation.

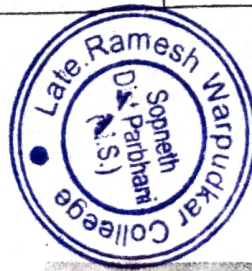
In the light of the National Knowledge Commission's recommendation for more universities, the concept of Cluster Universities provisioned in the RUSA and the recommendations of NEP-2020, the present article envisions the university education picture in Maharashtra in terms of affiliating system.

Table-1 presents the status of state universities in the state of Maharashtra along with number of colleges affiliated to them. These numbers include some of the non-functioning colleges under the gradual closure process (particularly colleges of education, computer application and engineering). The list does not include autonomous colleges, B. Voc, Community Colleges, research institutes (outside its catchment area) and schools/institutes offering diplomas at school level. Tables 2.A to 2.C depict the districts-wise distributions of colleges in Maharashtra. Some universities are having colleges more than four hundred and some are left with less than two hundred. In view of skewed distributions of colleges the author recommended re-organization of state affiliating universities and catchment area with colleges. The recommended re-organization of state affiliating universities and catchment area with colleges is present in Table-3. The author recommends that the sub-centre of Dr BAMU, Aurangabad located at Osmanabad to be turned into full fledged university.

After reorganization, delimitation of the existing districts needs to be done to bring expected uniformity in the number of the affiliating colleges. The distance of the affiliating colleges from the HQ of universities should also be taken into consideration as one of the factors. Keeping these issues in mind, the author proposes the reorganization of some districts as well. The way to reorganize districts is presented in Table-4.

Table-1: University-wise Distribution of Colleges/ Institutes in Maharashtra

Sr. No.	Name of University	Catchment Area/ Districts	No. of Colleges	Total
1	Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada University, Nanded	Nanded	118	342
		Parbhani	72	
		Latur	115	
		Hingoli	37	



2	Rashtrasant Tukdoji Maharaj Nagpur University, Nagpur	Nagpur	291
		Wardha	82
		Bhandara	71
		Gondiya	59
3	Gondwana University, Gadchiroli	Gadchiroli	79
		Chandrapur	131
4	Kavyatri Bahinabai Chondhari North Maharashtra University, Jalgaon	Jalgaon	111
		Dhule	63
5	Sant Gadgebaba Amravati University, Amravati	Nandurbar	41
		Amravati	118
		Akola	61
		Buldhana	84
		Yavatmal	82
		Washim	36
		Kolhapur	134
		Satara	86
6	Shivaji University, Kolhapur	Sangali	86
		Solapur	114
7	Punyashlok Ahilyabai Holkar Solapur University, Solapur		
8	Savitribai Phule Pune University, Pune	Pune	583
		Nasik	173
9	University of Mumbai	Ahmadnagar	130
		Mumbai	295
		Thane	214
		Palghar	54
		Raigad	101
		Sindhudurg	40
		Ratnagiri	56
		Dadara, Nagar and Haveli	02
		Aurangabad	264
10	Dr BAMU, Aurangabad	Beed	187
		Osmanabad	99
11	SNDTW University, Mumbai	Jalna	183
		Mumbai	18
		Thane	09
		Nasik	09
		Jalgaon	09
		Solapur	12
		Aurangabad	16
		Ahmadnagar	09
		Dhule	04
		Sangali	05
		Ratnagiri	04
		Satara	04
		Beed	07





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		Pune	05	
		Nandurbar	07	
		Kolhapur	09	
		Nagpur	06	
		Parbhani	04	
		Sindhudurg	04	
		Buldhana	02	
		Latur	03	
		Yavatmal	03	
		Wardha	03	
		Amravati	02	
		Raigad	02	
		Jalna	03	
		Chandrapur	01	
		Palghar	01	
		Akola	01	
		Washim	01	
12	Kavi Kulaguru Kalidas Sanskrit Vidyapith, Ramtek (Nagpur)	Nagpur	17	47
		Bhandara	4	
		Amravati	4	
		Buldhana	3	
		Akola	3	
		Pune	3	
		Aurangabad	3	
		Wardha	2	
		Gondia	2	
		Yavatmal	2	
		Beed	1	
		Washim	1	
		Nasik	1	
		Chandrapur	1	
13	Vasantrao Naik Marathwada Krushi Vidyapeeth, Parbhani	Parbhani	10	55
		Aurangabad	13	
		Jalna	03	
		Hingoli	03	
		Osmanabad	02	
		Latur	08	
		Beed	09	
		Nanded	07	
14	Mahatma Phule Krushi Vidyapeeth, Ahmadnagar	Ahmadnagar	18	74
		Pune	10	
		Nashik	10	
		Solapur	09	
		Kolhapur	05	
		Sangli	03	
		Satara	08	



15	Dr Panjabrao Deshmukh Krushi Vidyapeeth, Akola	Jalgaon			
		Dhule	06		
		Nandurbar	03		
		Akola	02		
		Nagpur	07		
		Amravati	02		
		Buldhana	09		
		Wardha	07		
		Bhandara	01		
		Gondia	01		
		Chandrapur	02		
		Gadchiroli	02		
		Yavatmal	02		
		Washim	06		
16	Dr Balasaheb Sawant Konkan Krushi Vidyapeeth, Dapoli, Ratnagiri	Ratnagiri	02		
		Sindhudurg	10		
		Raigad	07		
		Thane	05		
17	Maharashtra University of Health Sciences, Nashik	Mumbai	03		
		Thane	41		
		Nasik	06		
		Jalgaon	20		
		Solpaur	08		
		Aurangabad	09		
		Ahmadnagar	19		
		Dhule	20		
		Sangali	09		
		Ratnagiri	10		
		Satara	07		
		Beed	05		
		Pune	08		
		Nandurbar	36		
		Kolhapur	03		
		Nagpur	15		
		Parbhani	24		
		Sindhudurg	04		
		Buldhana	06		
		Latur	05		
		Nanded	11		
		Yavatmal	06		
		Wardha	04		
		Amravati	02		
		Raigad	07		
		Jalna	02		
				Jalna	03



16	Punyashlok Ahilyabai Holkar Solapur University, Solapur	Solapur	161	273
17	Dr BAMU, Aurangabad	Sangali	112	
18	Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada University, Nanded	Aurangabad	336	532*
19	Vasantrao Naik Marathwada (Krushni) Vidyapeeth, Parbhani	Jalna	196	134*
		Nanded	134	
		Kinwat (proposed)	Not Available	135*
		Parbhani	95	
		Hingoli	41	
20	Osmanabad**	Ambajogai (proposed)	Not Available	474*
		Osmanabad	109	
		Beed	217	
		Latur	148	

**Sub-centre of Dr BAMU, Aurangabad located at Osmanabad need to be turned into full fledged university.

These universities will be having colleges more than four hundred and some will be left with less than two hundred after

Reorganisation.

Table-4: Re-organization of Districts

Sr. No.	New District Head Quarter	Tahesils and their parent districts	University to be attached to
1	Ambajogai	Ambajogai, Dharur, Kaij, Parli and Majalgaon (Beed)	VNMKV, Parbhani
2	Shrigonda	Ashti (Beed) Jamkhed, Karjat and Shrigonda (Ahmadnagar)	MPKV, Ahmadnagar
3	Sangamner	Sangamner, Akole, Koparagon, Shirdi (Ahmadnagar) and Sinner and Igatpuri (Nasik)	MPKV, Ahmadnagar
4	Poladpur	Bhor, (Pune) Khandala (Satara), Mandagad, (Ratnagiri) and Poladpur (Raigad)	DBATU, Lonere
5	Loha	Loha and Kandhar (Nanded) Ahmadpur (Latur) Palam (Parbhani)	SRTMU, Nanded
6	Kinwat	Kinwat, Hadgaon, Himayatnagar and Mahur (Nanded) and Umerkhed and Kelapur (Yavatmal)	SRTMU, Nanded

Amendments required in the Maharashtra State Public Universities Act, 2016 as the existing universities are going to be multi-disciplinary as per the NEP-2020 is to be implemented in its existing form. The faculties in the conventional universities will not be able to accommodate and do justice with the type of courses and colleges they are going to have and non-conventional universities too (technical, health, veterinary and fisheries and agricultural universities) also need to be brought in the same type of amendment to accommodate the colleges and courses of general education.

Some private managements like Rayat Shikshan Sanstha, (Satara), Vivekanand Shikshan Sanstha, (Kolhapur), Shivaji Shikshan Sanstha, (Akola), and

Marathwada Shikshan Prasarak Mandal, (Aurangabad) need to be encouraged for private university status.

Some private managements having some campuses in the same districts or cities for example Dayanand Shikshan Sanstha (Latur), Sharda Bhawan Shikshan Sanstha (Nanded) may be considered for Autonomous Degree Granting Colleges or private university status as these are the best performing colleges in terms of accreditation.

In addition to these, the government run institutes need to be awarded cluster university status and existing advanced institutes and Maharashtra Law Universities need to be considered for this purpose in those regions like Western Maharashtra, Vidarbha, North Maharashtra and Marathwada.



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(contd. from pg. 15)

remained very slow, starting from 1982 as on date we are having only one national open university and 15 state open universities. Ideally speaking all states should have an Open University which should work in collaboration with higher education institutions. At present we are having about 40,000 colleges in India even if 20,000 colleges are provided with appropriate infrastructure to accommodate 500 students in collaboration with OUs, they would be able to enrol one crore learners giving huge impetus to GER. Synergy with industry is another area in which OUs may be allowed to have collaboration and this will in a big way dispel the notion of employable skills. Last but not most important is that OUs have the capacity to generate its financial resources which is most important for sustained growth. Flexibility, multidisciplinary approach, use of technology, skill enhancement, aptitude of independent learning and critical thinking, etc., well defined goals of NEP are very much integral part of ODL. Therefore, we need to make serious interventions in national policy framework to suggest the futuristic role of OU, not merely as a passing reference and an appendage to conventional education but to make OU ready with appropriate strategy to contribute in nation building on equal footing.

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