



## Higher Education in India: Emerging Issues, Challenges and Suggestions

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### Abstract

*Education is one of the significant factors instrumental to the development of a country. It should be transformed to the needs of the time and changing scenario of the world. It provides an opportunity to critically reflect upon the social, economic, cultural, moral and spiritual issues facing humanity. India needs more efficient and educated people to drive our economy forward. There are many Indian around the corner who known for their capabilities and skills. To develop India as an education hub or to become a prosperous partner in global economy, India has to qualitatively strengthen education in general and higher education with research and development in particular. This paper is mainly focused on the overall performance of higher education system in India. We try to find out the initiatives taken by the government to raise level of education system.*

*This paper aims to identify emerging issues and challenges in the field of Higher Education in India. Finally the paper concludes here is need of plans requires solutions that combine, employers and youth need of Expectations of from various stakeholders Students, Industry, Educational Institutions, Parents and Government.*

**KEY WORDS:** *Higher Education, Financing, Issues, challenges*

### Introduction

Higher education is very important for a developing country like India and it is encouraging to increasing human development. Higher education in India has experienced phenomenal expansion since independence. India has produced scientists, engineers, technologists, doctors, teachers and managers who are in great demand all over the world. Now it is one of the top ten countries in our industrial and technological capacity, because of the significant contribution of manpower and tools provided by higher education, especially, technical education. India has already entered into the era of knowledge explosion. It has proved its tremendous potential by its performance in nuclear and space domains. In the coming few decades will be heralded by space craft, satellites, internets and others offshoots of scientific enquires. Higher Education provides opportunities to the people to reflect on the critical social, cultural, moral, economic and spiritual issues facing humanity. Higher education provides specialized knowledge and skilled persons for national development. In next few decades, India will have world's largest set of young people. While the correlation between people and higher education is not up to the mark. The increasing youth population can be a



great asset if potential employability is brought to fruition. Conversely, if we fail to provide education and employment then it will open a downside gate for Indian economy. Education is an essential tool for achieving sustainability. The Education Commission 1964-66 described the role of education in social and economic transformation through a statement- the density of a nation is shaped in its class rooms. Education creates human capital which is the core of economic progress and assumes that the externalities generated by human capital are the source of self sustaining economic process.

This paper aims to identify emerging issues and challenges in the field of Higher Education. In India.

### **Objectives**

1. To analyze the current scenario of higher education system in India
2. To study the of total student and girls enrolment (000) in Higher Education
3. To identify on the Emerging issues of higher education in India
4. To identify on the Emerging Challenges of higher education in India
5. Suggestions for improving quality of higher education and Conclusion

### **Higher Education Scenario in India**

The table 1 reveals that there has been appreciable growth of higher education since 1951. Number of university level institutions and colleges has grown up from 28 to 677 and 578 to 3800 respectively from 1951 to 2014. As a result, the number of teachers as well as students has also increased significantly. The growth of students' enrolment is more than the growth of number of teachers over the period of time, may be due to the massive investment by government at school level in form of primary as well as secondary education. Rise in enrolments and institutions at school level, there is mushrooming growth in higher education institutions At the end of 2014 there were 677 Universities and 38000 colleges in India. But still we need more than 1500 universities to cater the demand. The table 1 shows that our education system is improving not only in number of colleges and universities but also in enrolment. Most of these universities have affiliated colleges where undergraduate courses are approved and taught. But still, if we compare this improving stat with increasing population, then we have to rethink, is it still improving



TABLE 1

Growth of Higher Education Institutions and Their Intake Capacity In India

Year →	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001	2012	2014
Institutions & Enrolment ↓								
No. of University	28	45	93	123	177	266	574	677
Number of colleges	578	1816	3227	4738	7346	11146	35539	38000
No. of teachers (in 000 <sup>o</sup> )	24	62	190	244	272	395	733	817
No. of students enrolled (in 000 <sup>o</sup> )	174	557	1956	2752	4925	8399	22373	28000

Source: UGC Reports

Growth of higher education level wise student enrolment boys and girls 2010-2011 has revealed in table -2. The study explores the fact that the women enrolments ratio is less when compare to male. The data evidently speaks the truth that the enrolment difference has found with 19 percent in research and next come with 17 percent in under graduation and next come with 13 percent in post graduate.

TABLE -2

Growth of higher education level wise student enrolment boys and girls 2010-2011

Serial number	Level wise students enrolment(0000)	Boys	Girls	Total
1	Graduate	8580(58)	6037(41)	14637
2	Post Graduate	1167(56)	882(43)	2049
3	Research	81(59)	56(40)	137
4	Diploma/Certificate	98(57)	73(47)	171



\* Figures in parenthesis depict their percentage to total

### Budget Analysis 2013-14

The budget of 2013-14 proposes a fund outflow of Rs 65,867 crore for education, in opposition to Rs. 61,427 crore in 2012-13. If we compare then there is only 17% raise from the current fiscal's estimate against 18% hike in the budget spending that be last year and 24 % in the year 2011-12.

The Department of Higher Education have been allocated Rs. 16,210 crore against Rs. 13,479 last year with increase of 20.26%. This amount is too includes provision for various higher and technical institutions.

- UGC has been allocated Rs 5,769.00 crore, which is inclusive of allocation for Central Universities and Deemed Universities.
- For the "National Mission for Education through ICT", has been provided Rs. 400.00 Crore has been made.
- □IGNOU, which has been in the forefront of distance education mode, has made a Provision of Rs.125.00 crore

For technical education, there is a provision of Rs. 7,299 crore. It includes assistance to IITs, NITs, IIMs, etc. Out of this, Rs. 1,300.00 crore for NITs, Rs. 2,400.00 crore for IITs and 350.00 Crore for IIMs – this allocation be including new ones. Indian Institutes of Science Education and Research (including IIS, Bangalore) have been provided Rs. 859.50 crore. Apart from the provisions for various ongoing schemes in the Technical Education sector, a provision of Rs. 700 crore has been provided for Polytechnics in the States.

### Emerging Issues

The role of higher education in the emerging scenario of knowledge economy is very crucial and multifaceted for any country in general and India in particular. There are many basic problems faced by higher education system in India. These include Lower level of teaching quality, Financing of higher education, More concentrated on theories and rather than practical knowledge, Traditional methods of teaching, Privatization, Inadequate facilities and infrastructure Quota system.

**Lower level of teaching quality:** Our education system is torture by issues of quality in many of its institutions and universities. Many of the issues like lack of faculty, poor quality teaching, Traditional teaching methods, outdated and rigid curricula and pedagogy, lack of accountability and quality assurance and separation of research and teaching are raise questions on Indian education system.

**Financing of higher education:** One of the most important things that have to be noticed is the issue of financial constraints regarding higher education before the government. Expenditure on education in common and on higher education in particular by the government, is one of the parameters to judge the quality in education for at all nation. The State Government have already been spending 20-30 per cent of its revenue budget on education. It cannot afford to spend more. In India, higher education has received less attention in terms of public spending than other levels. It is not feasible for India to make



massive state investments in research and development that produced research led universities in the west such as MIT, University of California, Berkeley in the US or University of Cambridge in Britain. More concentrated on theories and rather than practical knowledge: Indian education system is more focused on theoretical knowledge rather than practical knowledge. In many jobs there is also a minimum requirement of percentage which is high.

**Traditional methods of teaching:** Professors still stick to those older methods of teaching like board, marker. They don't like to make use of audio visual aids in teaching. Also they are not up to date with the information available and what global industry demands.

**Privatization:** In the present scenario, privatization of higher education is apparently a fledgling but welcome trend and is essential to maintain creativity, adaptability and quality. The economic trail of liberalization and globalization demands it. In India both public and private institutions operate simultaneously. Approximately 50 per cent of the higher education in India is imparted through private institutions, mainly unaided involving high cost. However, the situation is not so simple. Private providers, in the interest of maximizing profit, have every incentive to 'minimize costs' by compromising on the quality of education provided in their institutions. Last but not least, quality of teaching staff is one of the considerable issues for higher education sector to sustain in the future. Earlier, they were committed to their students to their subjects and to their profession. Today, high salaries are available but the commitment is less. Thus, it is the need of the hour to free the higher education system from unnecessary constraints and political interference.

**Inadequate facilities and infrastructure:** In India, many of the universities don't have adequate infrastructure or facilities to teach students. Even many private universities are running courses without classrooms. Internet and Wi-Fi facility is still out of reach of many students.

**Quota system:** Bringing the reservation and quota system for different categories in education lost its quality. Even deserving candidates of general categories are ignored and on quota we have to select other person from reserved category even though he is not suitable.

### Emerging Challenges

The system of Indian Higher education is the second largest in the world which fulfills the educational requirements of millions of students who come from different sections of the society since it is the student community that can help to generate healthy academic atmosphere in institutions of higher learning. No doubt that India faces today a number of problems pertaining to poverty unemployment disappearance of moral and spiritual values. But in the last few decades a countrywide problems/challenges have emerged in Higher Education system in India they are discussed as under.

**Our heterogeneous education system,** based on geographical, rural-urban, rich-poor set up have posed in great challenge for the educational institutions. Varieties of colleges, universities, technical institutions have produced and different types and quality of



Education. Some of them are really imparting qualitative education although a few others are doing the dirtiest job. Thanks to UGC, for publishing the list of such a fake Universities and Institutions indulging in educational malpractices.

**Interference of political factors:** Most of the Institutions, imparting education (Aided-non-aided) are owned by the dominant political leaders, now playing key role in governing bodies of the Universities. They have established their own youth cells and encourage students' organization on political basis. They exploit the students' energy for their political purposes. The students forget their own objectives and begin to develop their career in politics.

**Economic Difficulties:** Is one of the most troublesome changes that the present higher education system has imposed on the communities? The numbers of students are coming from the ordinary classes; many of them are unable to provide the minimum necessities of life for themselves. Economic miseries have grown due to the increasing prizes, habits of wasting money on luxuries, increasing population, scarcity of food supply, corruption, selfish etc. students hold part time jobs in order to pay for the their educational expenses and should divide their attention between a job and College/University education. Near about seventy five percent of the total students community today, have been facing the financial problems. Earn while learn scheme cannot adequately support student to face economic challenges.

**Lack of Moral values:** Rapid growth of science and technology and subsequent industrialization has caused a great and danger to our old moral and values. The younger generation's dissatisfaction and revolt is the outcome of a decaying system of values.

### **Suggestions for improving quality of higher education**

There are some suggestions and Expectations from Government, Industry, Educational Institutions, Parents and Students for improving quality of higher education.

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

**Examination Reforms-** Examination reforms, gradually shifting from the terminal, annual and semester examinations to regular and continuous assessment of student's performance in learning must be implemented.

**International Cooperation-** Universities in India have been a primary conduit for the advancement and transmission of knowledge through traditional functions such as research, innovation, teaching, human resource development, and continuing education. International cooperation is gaining importance as yet another function. With the increased development of transport and communication, the global village is witnessing a growing emphasis on



international cooperation and action to find satisfactory solutions to problems that have global dimensions and higher education is one of them.

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

***Cross Culture Programmes-*** After education, tour to every the places in India and world as far as possible with the cooperation of government is necessary so that one can understand about people, culture, arts, literature, religions, technological developments and progress of human society in the world.

***Action Plan for Improving Quality-*** Academic and administrative audit must be conducted once in three years in colleges by external experts for ensuring quality in all aspects of academic activities. The self-finance colleges must come forward for accreditation and fulfil the requirements of accreditation. Universities and colleges should realise the need for quality education and come forward with action plan for improving quality in higher educational institutions.

***World Class Education-*** Indian government is not giving priority to the development of Standard in education. India must aspire for the international standard in education. Many national universities like in the USA, UK, Australia, etc. allow studies in higher education for foreign students in their countries and through correspondence courses as well. In the same way India Universities of world class education can also offer courses of studies to foreign students taking advantage of the globalization process. To achieve that goal it must adopt uniform international syllabus in its educational institutions.

***Personality Development-*** Finally, education must be for the flowering of personality but not for the suppression of creativity or natural skill. In the globalized world opportunity for the educated people are naturally ample in scope. As a result business process outsourcing (BPO) activities have increased competition in the world trade leading towards the production of quality goods and their easy availability everywhere in the world market. That is the way the world can be developed for peace, prosperity and progress by able and skilful men.

***High-tech Libraries-*** Our university libraries have a very good collection of books, but they are all in mess. A library must be online and conducive for serious study. Indian universities should concentrate more on providing quality education which is comparable to that of international standards.



### Conclusion

- (1) In concluding words, we can say that over the period of time, growth have been take place in higher education in terms of institutions, enrolments etc. but it is not sufficient. Indian economy is facing various challenges regarding higher education, which need to overcome through appropriate policy formation and their effective implementation.
- (2) Higher education in India plays many roles. It is of extraordinary importance to many and reforms are often seen as significant threats to specific, social arrangements that provide benefits to powerful groups.
- (3) The politics is the result and most often the changes are not implemented language has been a similar issues in which government attempted to solve in difficult social and political problem through policy relating to higher education.
- (4) To conclude, Higher education in India is an extraordinarily important part of modern Indian society and it is intertwined in the political and social systems of the society. It is in need of change, development and important. In order to effectively plan for reforms and improvement, it is necessary to have in realistic perceptions of what is possible and what is not.

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