



CONCERN FOR GROSS ENROLMENT RATIO IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA: A REVIEW

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Abstract

Education is the most important part of today's life. As per Human Development Index (HDI), Life expectancy, Per Capita Income and Education are important indicators of development. Thus, education plays an important role in every sphere of life. Among different levels of education, Higher education is most important one as it gives out employment and identity. In Indian context, higher education is not equally available to all the students due to many factors. The result is reflected in the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER). As per the report of AISHE, MHRD (2020) the GER in Higher education in India for the year 2011-12 was 20.8 % whereas it increases to 27.1 in 2019-20. This report also points out the regional disparities in GER across the country. In order to eradicate major problems of GER and increase there are many solutions such as: Education to be provided in SEZs, quality of education, job oriented course, affordable education, proper infrastructure, trained teacher, community awareness, education in PPP mode, use of modern technologies, education without burden, proper monitoring and feedback techniques to be devised etc.

Keywords: Human Development Index, Gross Enrolment Ratio, SEZs, AISHE, MHRD, PPP mode

Introduction:

India has a large and diverse system of higher education that includes many different universities, colleges, and other institutions that provide undergraduate, graduate, and doctorate programmes. The higher education system in India has grown in a remarkable way after independence, to become one of the largest systems of its kind in the world.

The rapid growth in the sector, both in terms of enrolment and number of institutions has thrown up new challenges of maintaining quality of higher education. Various new initiatives are being taken by state and central government to increase the gross enrolment ratio (GER) in higher education.

Salient Features of Indian Higher Education: The following are some salient features of Indian higher education:

1. Availability of Diverse Courses: Indian Education has sheltered a number of subject areas, such as engineering, medicine, science, the arts, commerce, law, and more. These subjects are available for Undergraduate, Post-graduate and Doctorate (Ph.D.) degree etc.

2. Diversity in Admissions Process: In India, taking admission in an institution is a process which differs from institution to institution. A student may be admitted to an institute based on their achievement in board examinations or through entrance or both. Some institutes, such as the IITs and IIMs, have extremely tough entrance examinations.

3. Quality and Accreditation: Indian Institutions are assessed accredited time to time on the basis of set standards. Institutions are being accredited and their quality is evaluated by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) and other apex bodies.

4. Reservation System: Our country offers socially and economically disadvantaged communities a system of reservations in higher education. Reservations for Other Backward Classes (OBC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), Scheduled Castes (SC), and economically weaker sections (EWS) are included in this. The goals of these reservations are to advance educational access and social fairness.

5. Research and Innovation: With an emphasis on advancing scientific research and development across a range of disciplines, India is working to strengthen its ecosystem for research and innovation.

Objectives of the study: The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To find out the present status of GER in Higher Education in India.
2. To suggest measures for improving GER in Higher Education in India.

Methodology of the study: The study is basically a secondary survey study which has been done on the basis of secondary data and review of literature. The required data were collected from secondary sources such as reports of various government ministries and agencies, journals, reviews, chapter books, and websites, etc.

Challenges in Higher Education: Higher Education in India faces many challenges in general quality and accessibility of higher education in India. Among the principal difficulties are:

1. Quality of Education: Quality Education results from quality inputs. India is facing issues like lack of skilled faculty, outdated curricula, and high academic requirements, lack of resources etc. This has an impact on the quality of education.

2. Equity and Access: There are still gaps in the availability of higher education, with urban regions offering more educational options and facilities than rural ones. Access for marginalized people is frequently restricted by socioeconomic and regional differences. Under this, Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) is a major issue which is a concern for the entire education system.

3. Over-crowding and Limited Resources: Oversubscription at some of India's most esteemed universities, such as the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs), causes overcrowding in classrooms and puts a strain on available resources.

4. Employability: Despite an increase in graduates, there is frequently a disconnection between the educational attainment of graduates and the skills required by employers. Employability for graduates is impacted by this disparity.

5. Infrastructure and Facilities: Libraries, labs, and state-of-the-art teaching facilities are only a few examples of the inadequate infrastructure that many Indian colleges and universities lack. This may make learning more difficult.

6. Financial constraints: In Countries like India, people are unable to meet their basic necessities. At this point, they face it difficult to afford Education of their children.

7. Problems of Technological Support: We are living in 21st Century and till today many people are unaware about technology. The digital divide, and the need for faculty to be trained in online teaching techniques are some of the gaps which needs to be improved.

8. Lack of Proper Supervision: Every planning is to be supervised properly in order to meet the objectives. But, this is not properly carried out in real life situations. Proper planning is to be done to supervise the implementation of policies and programs.

9. Policy Reforms: To meet the changing needs of the education sector, rules and regulations pertaining to higher education must be updated on a regular basis. Implementing improvements can be slowed down by bureaucratic obstacles.

Findings of the study:

Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in Higher Education:

The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) measures the number of students enrolled in higher education as a percentage of the eligible population aged 18 to 23 years. The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of males has increased from 22.1 in 2011-12 to 27.1 in 2020-21. Overall, the GER of females for higher education has increased from 19.4 percent in 2011-12 to 27.5 percent in 2020-21. It shows the positive trend or increasing number of students enrolling in higher education among males and females. The data also shows there is a little gap between males and females regarding Gross Enrollment Ratio, It is found that females were having lower GER than males during the study period.

NEP 2020 on GER in Higher Education: NEP 2020 is a comprehensive Policy on Education after a long 34 years. As per the target set by the NEP 2020, the aim will be to increase the Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher education including vocational education from 26.3% (2018) to 50% by 2035.

Study Reports:

1. The All-India Survey of Higher Education (AISHE), 2020-21 was conducted with reference date as 31.12.2020. For the first time, the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) of India have filled their data using an entirely online data collection platform through the Web Data Capture Format (Web DCF) developed by the Department of Higher Education and the National Informatics Centre (NIC).

2. A total of 1,113 Universities, 43,796 Colleges and 11,296 Stand Alone Institutions were registered in AISHE 2020-21. Of them, 1,099 Universities, 41,600 colleges and 10,307 Stand Alone Institutions have filled and verified their responses.

3. Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in Higher Education, estimated using population projections based on 2011 Census for the 18-23 age group is 27.3. For male it is 26.7 and for female it is 27.9. For Scheduled Castes it is 23.1 and for Scheduled Tribes it is 18.9.

Higher Education in India:

Year	Central Universities	State Universities	Deemed to be Universities	Institutions of National Importance	Private Universities	Total	Colleges	Enrolment (in millions)	GER (%)
1950-51	3	24	-	-	-	27	578	0.2	-
1960-61	4	41	2	2	-	49	1819	0.6	1.5
1970-71	5	79	9	9	-	102	3277	2.0	4.2
1980-81	7	105	11	9	-	132	4577	2.8	4.7
1990-91	10	137	29	9	-	185	6627	4.9	5.9
2001-02	18	178	52	12	-	260	11146	8.3	8.1
2011-12	42	299	40	59	178	621	34908	28.5	19.4
2015-16	44	342	122	75	198	799	39071	34.6	24.5
2018-19	47	385	124	127	305	993	39931	37.4	26.3
2019-20	49	400	126	135	328	1038	42343	38.5	27.1
2020-21	52	414	126	149	-	1113	43796	41.38	27.3

*Fig.1 Source: MHRD- AISHE and UGC Report, 2020-21***Enrolment of students in Higher Education:**

Year	Enrolment of Students	Percentage of Women
1950-51	1,73,696	10.09
1960-61	5,56,559	16.2
1970-71	19,53,640	21.9
1980-81	28,31,563	27.2
1990-91	49,24,868	32.0
2000-01	83,99,443	39.4
2010-11	1,86,70,050	41.5
2020-21	4,13,80,713	48.2

Fig.2 Source: MHRD- AISHE and UGC Report, 2020-21

GER in Higher Education in percentage (%):

Year	GER
2011-12	20.8
2012-13	21.5
2013-14	23.0
2014-15	24.3
2015-16	24.5
2016-17	25.2
2017-18	25.8
2018-19	26.3
2019-20	27.1
2020-21	27.3

*Fig.3 Source: MHRD- AISHE and UGC Report, 2020-21***Challenges in improving GER in Higher Education:**

- a) Teacher-student ratio
- b) Inadequate facilities in educational institutions
- c) Lack of employment
- d) Lack of awareness
- e) Lack of Interest
- f) Family Pressure
- g) Early marriage
- h) Socio-economic background.
- i) Lack of modern relevance Curriculum
- j) Lack of collaboration with the industries
- k) Equity

Measures for improving GER:

- i. The Indian government ought to take action to increase the number of students who can attend college. The present objective is to increase by more than half the percentage of 18 to 23-year-olds who enrol in higher education, from the projected 20 to 30 % that they currently make up. The HRD Ministry estimates that in the next ten years, India would need to open more than 45,000 new colleges and universities in order to meet this goal.
- ii. At the moment, e-learning seems to be a rapidly expanding way of worldwide penetration. Universities and other postsecondary educational institutions can create websites that facilitate global online learning.
- iii. There should be regular and proper recruitment of qualified and trained teachers in the higher educational institutions. Pupil-Teacher Ratio is to be made as per the norms in order to provide proper guidance.
- iv. Transparency, consistency, and trust in the higher education system both domestically and internationally should be restored by Indian institutions and regulators.
- v. Regular updates to laboratories and the removal of out-dated equipment and facilities are important. Novel approaches to exam improvements ought to be institutionalised and subjected to empirical testing. Every exam procedure should be computerised, and new developments in ICT should be taken advantage of to make the process effective and automated. It is important to prioritise creating centres of excellence in addition to expanding the number of higher education institutions.
- vi. A strong emphasis needs to be placed on amenities and infrastructure. Success in any field should be duly rewarded. Complete collections of the newest books, journals, and periodicals ought to be kept in libraries.
- vii. An online library that is suitable for serious study must exist which provides authentic learners with free access to high-quality e-textbooks, e-reference books, e-research papers, and e-content in several languages.

Conclusion: In fact, GER is a major concern in Higher Education in India. It is to be seen as a drawback and both central and state govt. should make proper strategies to improve the GER. The aim of 50% GER by 2035 is only possible when all the above discussed points are truly fulfilled.

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