Trends In Growth And Development Of Higher Education System In India: An Overview

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Abstract

The present study reveals the higher education system and it is relates that the trends in growth and development of higher education sector with various measures to improve the quality of higher education system of the country. Higher education has witnessed various folds increase in its institutional capacity since independence in India. This paper revealed that the progress of higher education system and it has included, India had 1043 universities, 42343 colleges and 11779 stand-alone institutions listed on AISHE and out of them 1019 universities, 39955 colleges and 9599 stand-alone institutions have responded during the survey. About 307 universities are affiliating i.e. having colleges. About 385 universities are privately managed and 394 universities are located in rural area. A total of 396 universities are privately managed and 420 universities are located in rural area. The total enrolment in higher education has increased to nearly 4.14 crore in 2020-21 from 3.85 crore in 2019-20. The percentage of female enrolment to total enrolment has increased from 45 percent in 2014-15 to around 49 percent in 2020-21. The present study also observed that the several measures to improve the quality of higher education such as encouraging individuality, tech-savvy methods of teaching, creation the curriculum dynamic, and high-tech libraries. These are all impact of the quality higher education system in the country as well as states.

Keywords: Historical Background, Higher Education, Institutions, Enrolments, GER, and Measures.

Introduction

Education improves the quality of life and develops manpower for different sections of the economy. It empowers the poor masses to become self-reliant and enables them to participate in the process of national development. India's higher education sector has supplied some of the world's well-developed and best talent. India's higher education system is third largest in terms of students in the world, after China and the United States. Indian Higher Education has perceived an incredible increase in the number of universities/ university level institutions and colleges in the period of independence. In the prestigious Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University Rankings 2020, only three Indian Universities- IIT-Bombay, IIT-Delhi and IISc (Bangalore) - have been included in the top 200 institutes. This is a five-year vision plan to improve the quality and accessibility of higher education in the year of 2019-2024. Improved the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education and resolve the geographically and socially skewed access to higher education institutions in India. Position at least 50 Indian institutions among the top-1000 global universities. Qualitatively upgrade the research and academic infrastructure in India to global best standards by 2022. Make India into an education hub by making available high-quality research infrastructure in Indian higher educational institutions.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the current trends in growth and development of higher education system in India.
2. To know the important measures to improve the quality of higher education system in the country.

Research Methodology

This study is mainly based on secondary sources of data. The secondary data has been collected from annual reports published by the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government India. Published material like Economic Survey, Indian Public Finance Statistics, AISHE Portal (2021), UGC, Educational Statistics at a Glance, some published journals and articles. The research study relates only up to the development of institutions and student enrollment after independence. The mathematical and statistical tools like average, Annual Growth Rate (AGR), and Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) was used for the study.

Historical Background of Higher Education System in India

India is suggested to have had an operational system of higher education as early as 1000 B.C. Nowadays universities; these ancient learning centers were primarily concerned with dispersing Vedic education. The modern Indian education system finds its roots in colonial legacy. The British Government used the university system as a tool of cultural colonization. Colonial efforts in higher education were carried out initially through the East India Company, followed by the British parliament and later under direct British rule. The first institution of higher education existence of British East India Company was the Calcutta Madrasa in 1781; this is followed by the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1784, Benaras Sanskrit College in 1791, and Fort William College in 1800. With the Charter Act of 1813, the British Parliament officially

declared Indian education as one of the duties of the state. The same act also removed restrictions on missionary work in British India, thus leading to the establishment of the evangelist Serampore College in 1818. Thomas Babbington Macaulay's famously controversial Minute on Education (1835) reflected the growing support of a Western approach to knowledge over an Oriental one. Soon after, in 1857, the first three official universities were started in Bombay (Mumbai), Calcutta (Kolkata) and Madras (Chennai). Followed by the University of Allahabad in 1887.

In independence period of India in 1947, a total number of 241,369 students registered across 20 universities and 496 colleges. In 1948, the Indian Government established the University Education Commission to oversee the growth and improvement of higher education. In the 1960s and 1970s, the government increased its efforts to support higher education by not only setting up state-funded universities and colleges, but also providing financial assistance to private institutions, resulting in the creation of private aided/ grant-in-aid institutions. Despite the departure of the British, Indian higher education continued to give importance to the languages and humanities until the 1980s. Institutes of professional education like the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), Regional Engineering Colleges (REC) and Indian Institutes of Management (IIM) were some of the more prominent exceptions to this trend. These institutions drew inspiration from reputed universities in the United States and also received foreign funding. Post 1980s, the changing needs of the economy, a growing middle class and an increased strain on government financial resources, slowed the growth of state-funded higher educational institutions. This led to an increased role of the private sector in the education system.

Trends in Growth and Development of Higher Education System in India

India's higher education has rapidly expanded over the past 20 years, but too few graduates are coming out of Indian higher education institutions with employable skills. Postgraduate opportunities in India are very limited, driving huge numbers of Indians abroad for study at this level. A vast and fragmented system is a barrier to the sweeping reforms the country needs, and a new report recommends more clustering of smaller universities as well as more government investment in public universities.

Growth of Institutions

All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE-2020), there are 1043 universities, 42343 colleges and 11779 standalone institutions and out of them 1019 universities, 39955 colleges and 9599 stand-alone institutions have responded during the survey. About 307 universities are affiliating i.e., having colleges. About 385 universities are privately managed and 394 universities are located in rural area.

Table-1 Progress of Higher Education Institutions in India (2011-12 to 2018-19)

Year	No of Universities	Growth Rate (%)	No of Colleges	Growth Rate (%)
2011-12	642	-	34852	-
2012-13	667	3.89	35525	1.93
2013-14	723	8.40	36634	3.12
2014-15	760	5.12	38498	5.09
2015-16	799	5.13	39071	1.49
2016-17	864	8.14	40026	2.44
2017-18	903	4.51	39050	-2.44
2018-19	993	9.97	39931	2.26
2019-20	1043	5.04	42343	6.04
CAGR	**6.37**		**2.18**	

Source: Government of India (2021), Ministry of Human Resource Development, Department of Higher Education, All India Survey on Higher Education (2021-22), New Delhi.

The above Table-1 shows that the progress of higher education in India likes universities and colleges. The total number of universities increased from 642 in 2011-12 to 1043 universities in 2019-20. And also the total number of colleges increased from 34852 in 2011-12 to 42343 colleges in 2019-20. The CAGR value for the number of universities is about 6.33 per cent and 2.05 per cent of number of college's positive growth rate.

Growth of Enrolment

Total enrolment in higher education has been estimated to be 37.4 million with 19.2 million male and 18.2 million female. Female constitute 48.6 per cent of the total enrolment. Distance enrolment constitutes about 10.62 per cent of the total enrolment in higher education, of which 44.15% are female students. About 79.8 per cent of the students are enrolled in Undergraduate level programme. Ph.D. students are enrolled is 1,69,170. That is less than 0.5 per cent of the total student enrolment. The maximum numbers of students are enrolled in B.A. programme followed by B.Sc. and B.Com programmes. About 10 Programmes out of 187 cover 80.3 per cent of the total students enrolled in higher education. At Undergraduate level the highest number (35.9%) of students are enrolled in Arts/ Humanities/Social Sciences courses followed by Science (16.5%), Engineering and Technology (13.5%) and Commerce (14.1%). At Ph.D., level, maximum numbers of students are enrolled in Science stream followed by engineering and technology. On the other hand, at post-graduate level, maximum students are enrolled in social science stream and management comes at number two.

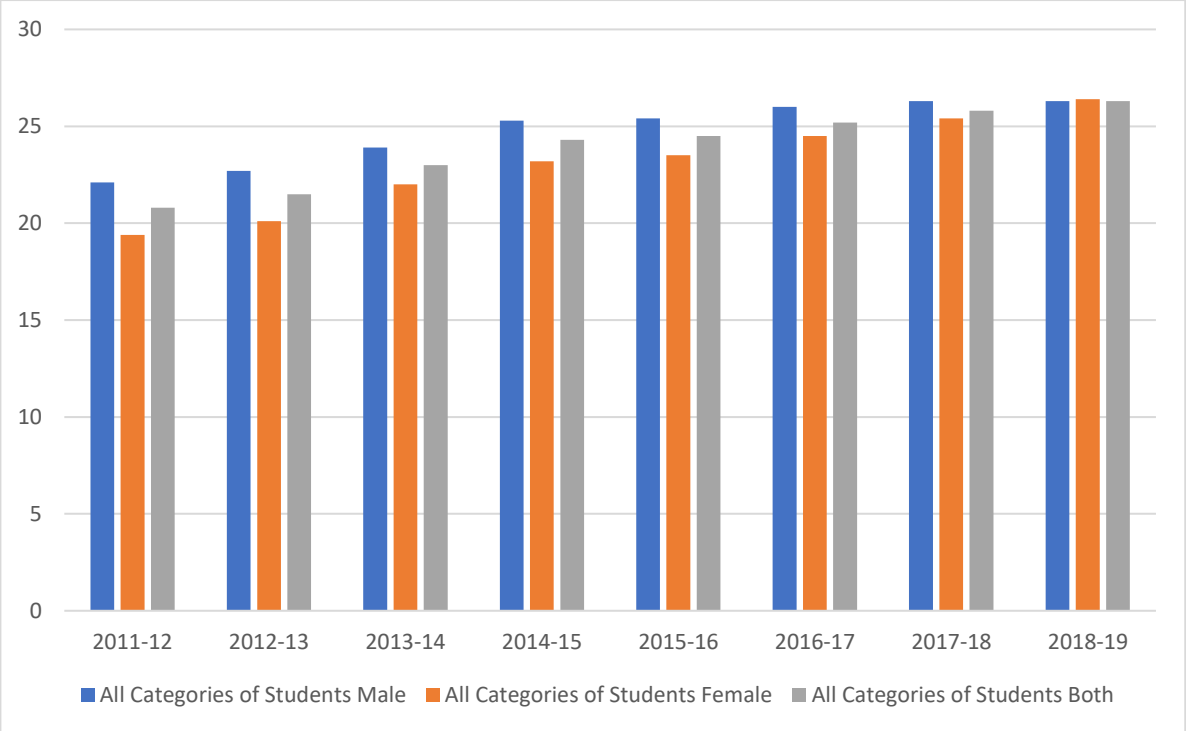
The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in Higher education in India is 26.3 per cent, which is calculated for 18-23 years of age group. GER for male population is 26.3% and for females, it is 26.4 per cent. For Scheduled Castes, it is 23 per cent and for Scheduled Tribes, it is 17.2 per cent as compared to the national GER of 26.3 per cent. Similarly, GER for female population at all India level is 26.4 per cent whereas for SC female, it is 23.3 per cent and for ST female, it is 16.5 per cent. The GER for female in all categories is highest in Chandigarh with 63.9 per cent. Sikkim, Puducherry, Delhi, Tamil Nadu, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Uttarakhand, Telangana, Goa, Punjab, Manipur, Haryana, Jammu & Kashmir, and Maharashtra and also have GER of more than 30 per cent for female.

Table-2 GER of Higher Education in India (Period: 2011-12 to 2018-19)

Year	All Categories of Students			Scheduled Caste			Scheduled Tribe		
	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female	Both
2011-12	22.1	19.4	20.8	15.8	13.9	14.9	12.4	9.7	11.0
2012-13	22.7	20.1	21.5	16.9	15.0	16.0	12.4	9.8	11.1
2013-14	23.9	22.0	23.0	17.7	16.4	17.1	12.5	10.2	11.3
2014-15	25.3	23.2	24.3	20.0	18.2	19.1	15.2	12.3	13.7
2015-16	25.4	23.5	24.5	20.8	19.0	19.9	15.6	12.9	14.2
2016-17	26.0	24.5	25.2	21.8	20.2	21.1	16.7	14.2	15.4
2017-18	26.3	25.4	25.8	22.2	21.4	21.8	17.0	14.9	15.9
2018-19	26.3	26.4	26.3	22.7	23.3	23.0	17.9	16.5	17.2
Average	**24.8**	**23.1**	**23.9**	**19.7**	**18.4**	**19.1**	**15.0**	**12.6**	**13.7**
CAGR	**2.67**	**4.46**	**3.43**	**5.58**	**7.48**	**6.46**	**6.19**	**8.50**	**7.26**

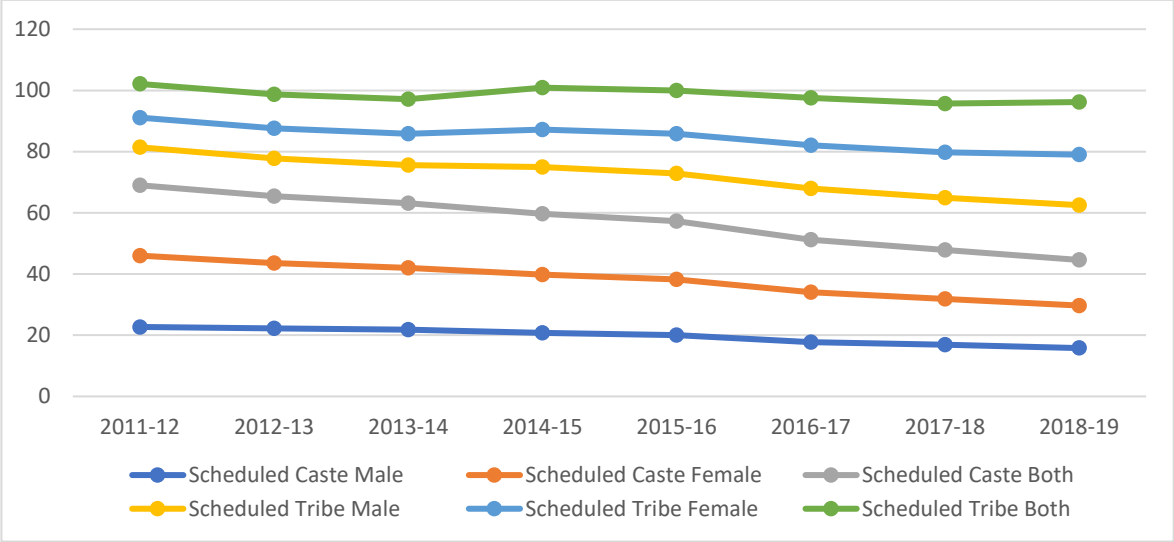
Source: Government of India (2020), Ministry of Human Resource Development Department of School Education Literacy Educational Statistics at a Glance, Annual Report 2018.

Graph-1 GER for All Categories of Students of Higher Education in India



As given in Table-3 and Graph-1, the GER in higher education in India has improved to 26.3 per cent in 2018-19 from to 25.2 per cent in 2016-17 with 14.3 million students enrolled in 2005-06 as compared to total enrolment in higher education has been estimated to be 34.2 million in 2014-15 with 18.5 million boys and 15.7 million girls. Girls constitute 45.5 per cent of the total enrolment. The Government has set a target of increasing the GER from the level of about 12 per cent to 15 per cent by the end of Eleventh Five Year Plan and to a target about 30 per cent GER in the Twelfth Plan.

Graph-2 GER for SC and ST Students of Higher Education in India



The above Table-2 and Graph-2 reveals the growth of GER for SC and ST categories in higher education of the country during the last 8 years. GER has increased during the period from 2011-12 to 2019-20, from 20.8 in 2011-12 to 26.3 in 2018-19. The increase is more under SC category, which has increased from 14.9 in 2011-12 to 23.0 in 2018-19. In case of ST category, the GER has increased from 11.0 to 17.2 during this period. In comparison to male, the increase in GER is higher for female. The average for the GER for all category students accounting of 23.9, Scheduled Caste is 19.1 and Schedule Tribe is 13.7. It is above table clear that the CAGR for the GER for SC and ST students in higher education is 3.43 per cent of all categories students, 6.46 per cent of SC students and 7.26 per cent of ST students in the country.

Measures to Improve the Quality of Higher Education

Measures to improve the quality of higher education are one of the most efficient ways of tackling the problem of poor educational quality. It is vital to remember that the quality of higher education is directly linked to the resources available and it is important for the Government to improve the resource allocation to bring about qualitative changes in the field of higher education. The Union Government should undertake the following measures to improve the quality of higher education as given below:

- **Encouraging Individuality:** Higher education is one of the encouraging for individuality in the society of weaker section. With the difference in ability, aptitude and interest of a student and the societal demands of expertise and specialization, the standardized testing and curriculum does not give much scope for the students to relate to the world of work and wages. Creativity that has nurtured our influences in almost all of life's passions and interests drops dead at standardized tests. The present higher educational system expects conformity and rewards predictable behaviors, both intellectually and emotionally.
- **Tech-Savvy Methods of Teaching:** This is another measure of quality higher education tool. The new technologies offer vast opportunities for progress in all lifestyles. The focus should not be on installing hardware but creating new, high-quality content such as intelligent teaching systems and tools that will help students to hone basic skills like reading and mathematics, and developing content in multiple Indian languages.
- **Creation the Curriculum Dynamic:** Presently, the curriculum in higher education is outdated in most cases. It is stale, dogmatic and teaches things that the world has moved on with. To infuse dynamism, the curriculum needs to be progressive in nature. Students need to be given the option of doing multiple courses. The spirit of curriculum should be projects-driven and not exams-driven.
- **Improve the High-Tech Libraries in Higher Education Sector:** This is also very important measure to improve the higher education system in the country. The university libraries have a well-known good collection of books, but they are all in disorder. A library must be online and helpful for serious study. Indian universities should focus more on providing quality education that is equivalent to that of the global standards. Instituting this notion in the education system will be of great help as anyone will be able to access the books and required study materials from anywhere with amazing effortlessness. Moreover, the E-libraries can be updated swiftly with new material and books.

Summary and Conclusion

India is the second-most populous Country in the World, with a population of around 1.3 billion, and it is home to a variety of states and cultures. Higher education in India has seen impressive growth in the past, with an increasing number of institutions and a rise in the higher education level's GER. However, such as the quality of education, the availability of resources, and the need for reform are still to be addressed. Several states in India are currently working on improving the state of higher education. For example, Tamil Nadu has a robust higher education system with several well-established institutions.

In this research study concluded, this paper presented the trends in growth and present scenario of higher education sector in India by analyzing the various secondary data and identify the some measures to improve the quality of higher education

like Encouraging Individuality, Tech-Savvy Methods of Teaching, Creation the Curriculum Dynamic, and High-Tech Libraries. These are all impact of the quality higher education system in the country as well as states. The GER in India's higher education level has increased over the years. According to the latest data from the AISHE-2021, the GER at the higher education level in India stood at 27.1 percent in 2020-21, an increase from 25.8 percent in 2019-20. The GER increase is more under SC category, which has increased from 14.9 in 2011-12 to 23.0 in 2018-19. In case of ST category, the GER has increased from 11.0 to 17.2 during this period. In comparison to male, the increase in GER is higher for female. Higher education has witnessed various folds increase in its institutional capacity since independence in India. The present study has observed to the present scenario of the trends in growth and development of higher education sector in India. In the context, this paper includes that the institutions, enrolments, GER and measures to improve the quality of higher education system are analyzed. The present study also observed that the several measures to improve the quality of higher education such as

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