

The Current Scenario of Higher Education in India

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Abstract:

Higher education have greater role on the socio economic development of India. India is having ample natural resources such as younger manpower, cultivable land, sunshine hours, suitable climate for agriculture and many more. Even though India is considered as developing nations and facing severe problems like poverty, ministrations, lack of basic amenities etc. It is mainly because of in India resources are not being properly utilized for development. Therefore India needs competent people who can effectively use the resources for development and addressing the problems. Higher education produces human resources in the country. The quality of human resources mostly depends on the higher education system in the country. Hence there is need to focus our efforts on strengthening higher education system in India. India possesses a highly developed higher education system which offers the facility of education and training in almost all aspects of human's creative and intellectual endeavors. An attempt is made in the present paper to present the current scenario of higher education in India, the growth of higher education in India since independence, major challenges before higher education and suggestion for strengthening higher education system.

Keywords: higher education, human resources, socio economic development, ample natural resources, problems in the country, effective utilization of resources, current scenario of higher education, growth challenges.

Introduction

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” Nelson Mandela

This quote by the world leader explain how important education is for shaping the globe with harmony, peace and bringing sustained development. ‘Education constitutes the pedestal of all multidimensional socio-economic development of the country. In the present era, every country needs skilled human capital for enhancing growth and development of the country’.¹ The higher education system in the country consisting universities and colleges which are engaged in developing skilled human capital in the country.

India is having ample natural resources. ‘In India, 52% of total land is cultivable as against 11% in the world. All 15 major climates of the world, snow bound Himalayas to hot humid southern peninsula; Desert to heavy rain areas all exist in India. There are 20 agro-climatic regions and nearly 46 out of 60 soil types in the country. Sunshine hours and day length are ideally suited for round the year cultivation of crops. India is the center for biodiversity in plants, animals, insects, micro-organism and accounts for 17% animal, 12% plants and 10% fish genetic resources of the globe. In the livestock sector, India has 16% of cattle, 57% of buffalo, 17% of goats and 5 % of sheep population of the world’². Even though most of these resources, most of the part of India especially underdeveloped and facing severe problems like poverty, unemployment, health problems etc. The sheer reason for these problems are that we are not utilizing our resources for development. It is

human resources in the country which utilizes the resources in the country for development. Therefore in order to attain desired growth and to address the problems we need to focus on development of our human resources. It is higher education in the country, which has responsibility to create and develop human resources. Therefore there is need to focus our efforts to strengthen the higher education system. An attempt is made in the present paper to present the current scenario of higher education in India, the growth of higher education in India since independence, major challenges before higher education and suggestion for strengthening higher education system.

Objectives

The objectives of the present paper are

1. To explain the current scenario of higher education in India
2. To overview the growth of higher education in India
3. To discuss the major challenges before higher education in India.
4. To discuss remedies and give suggestions for strengthening in India

Research Methodology

The present research paper is based on the secondary data. The data have been collected from various books, journals, research articles and web-sites form internet. The inferences are based on the analysis of the secondary data.

1 Structure of Higher Education In India

1.1 Academic Qualification Framework

India possesses a highly developed higher education system which offers the facility of education and training in almost all aspects of human's creative and intellectual endeavors such as arts and humanities, natural, mathematical and social sciences, engineering, medicine, dentistry, agriculture, education, law, commerce and management, music and performing arts, national and foreign languages, culture, communications etc. Higher education is offered after completion of 12 years school education. It is given in the form of Bachelors Degree, Masters Degree, Degree at Pre-doctorate level and doctorate level and diploma courses.

1.2 Higher Educational Institutes

Higher educational institutes consists of Universities established by an Act of Parliament (Central Universities) or of a State Legislature (State Universities), Deemed Universities (institutions which have been accorded the status of a university with authority to award their own degrees through central government notification), Institutes of National Importance (prestigious institutions awarded the said status by Parliament), Institutions established State Legislative Act and colleges affiliated to the University (both government-aided and –unaided)

1.3 Regulatory Bodies

Indian higher education system is headed by the ministry of Human Resource Development (HRDC), Department of Higher Education, at Centre which is responsible for synchronization and formation of policies and regulated by various autonomous bodies are under:

- University Grants Commission (UGC)
- All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE)
- Medical Council of India (MCI)
- Indian Council for Agricultural Research (ICAR)
- National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE)
- Dentists Council of India (DCI)

- Pharmacy Council of India (PCI)
- Indian Nursing Council (INC)
- Bar Council of India (BCI)
- Central Council of Homeopathy (CCH)
- Central Council for Indian Medicine (CCIM)
- Council of Architecture (COA)
- Distance Education Council (DEC)
- Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI)
- National Council for Rural Institutes (NCRI)
- State Councils of Higher Education (SCHE)
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1.4 Assessment And Accreditation

Higher educational institutes are assessed and accredited by following two autonomous bodies:

1.4.1 The National Assessment And Accreditation Council (NAAC):

It is an autonomous body established by the University Grants Commission (UGC) of India to assess and accredit institutions of higher education in the country.

1.4.2 The National Board of Accreditation (NBA) :

It was initially established by AICTE (All India Council of Technical Education) under section 10(u) of AICTE act, in the year 1994, for periodic evaluations of technical institutions & programmes basis according to specified norms and standards as recommended by AICTE council. At present NBA is an autonomous body undertake evaluation and accreditation of institutes engages in professional and technical disciplines, i.e., Engineering and Technology, Management, Architecture, Pharmacy and Hospitality, through the mechanism of accreditation of programs offered by technical institutions.

2 Growth And Current Scenario of Higher Education In India

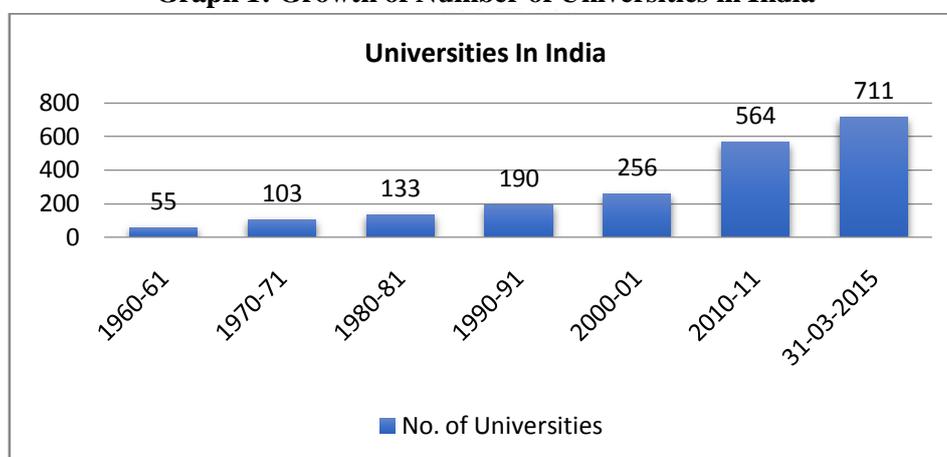
In size and diversity, India has the third largest higher education system in the world, next to China and the United States. At the time of Independence of India, there were only 20 Universities and 500 Colleges in the country with 2.1 lakhs students in higher education. As on 31.03.2015, the number of Universities had gone up to 711 – (46 Central, 329 State, 205 State Private, 128 Deemed to be Universities, three Institutions established under State Legislation) and 40760 colleges as per Annual Report 2014-2015 Higher Education sector. During the academic year 2014-15, there had been 265.85 lakhs students enrolled in various courses at all levels in universities/colleges and other institutions of higher education. In the academic year 2014-2015, the total number of teachers in universities and colleges was 12.61 lakhs. Out of 12.61 lakh teachers, 84.66% teachers were in colleges and the remaining 15.34% in universities. The growth in higher education is been summarized in the Table no.1.

Table No. 1: Growth of Higher Education in India

Sr. No.	Particulars	1960-61	1970-71	1980-81	1990-91	2000-01	2010-11	31-3-2015
1	No. of Universities	55	103	133	190	256	564	711
2	No. of Colleges	1542	3604	4722	7346	12806	33023	40760
3	No. of Teachers ('000')	59	128	193	263	411	816	1261
4	Students Enrolment ('000)	1050	1954	2752	4925	8399	16975	26585

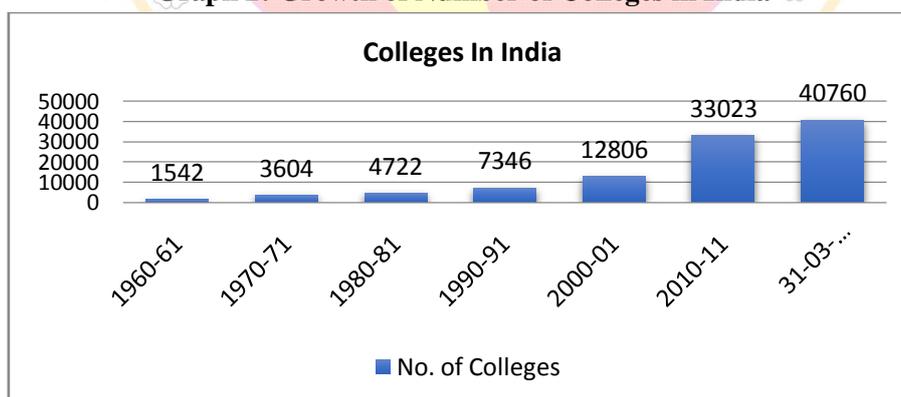
Source: Compiled From University Grant Commission, Annual Report 2014-15 & Report on Higher Education at Glance Feb.2012, & http://www.ugc.ac.in/ugcpdf/208844_HEglance2012.pdf³⁰⁻³¹

Graph 1: Growth of Number of Universities in India



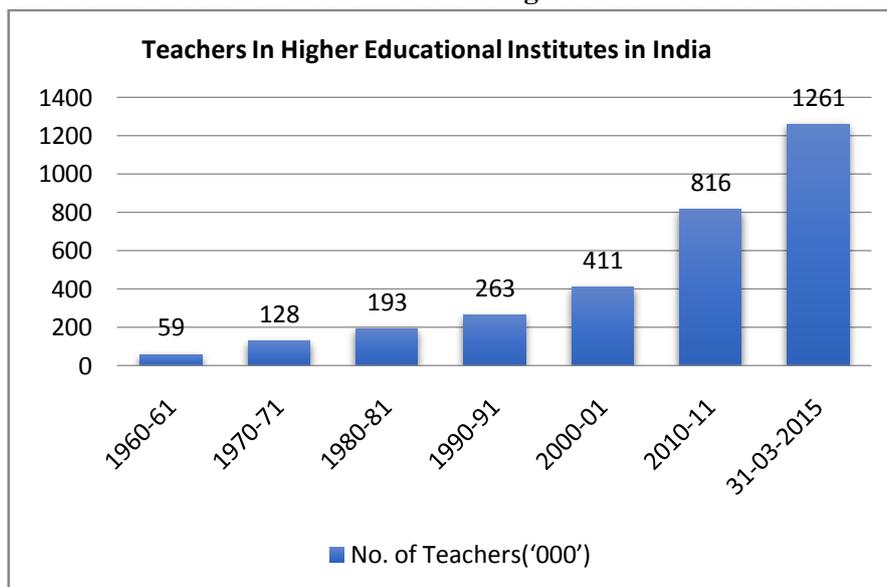
As shown in the above table no.1 and graph no. the number of universities in India shown increasing trend since the beginning. In 1960 there were only 55 universities in India which went up to 711 universities up to march 2015.

Graph 2: Growth of Number of Colleges in India



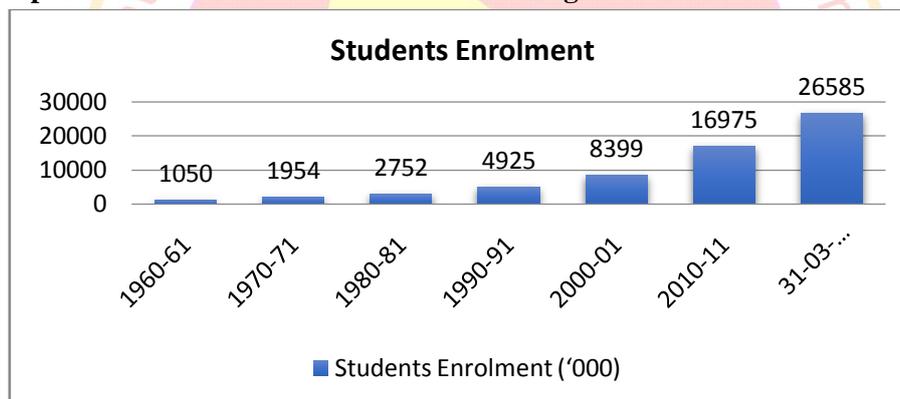
As shown in the above table no.1 and graph no. 2 the number of colleges in India shown increasing trend since the beginning. In 1960 there were only 1542 universities in India which went up to 40760 colleges up to march 2015.

Graph 3: Growth of Number of Teachers in Higher Educational Institutes in India



As shown in the above table no.1 and graph no.3 the number of teachers in higher educational institutes in India shown increasing trend since the beginning. In 1960 there were only 59000 teachers in various higher educational institutes India which went up to 1261000 teachers up to march 2015.

Graph 4: Growth of Students Enrolment in Higher Educational Institutions in India



As shown in the above table no.1 and graph no.4 the number of teachers in higher educational institutes in India shown increasing trend since the beginning. In 1960 there were only 1050000 teachers in various higher educational institutes India which went up to 26585000 teachers up to march 2015.

It can be inferred from this data that there is remarkable quantitative growth in terms of number of universities, number of colleges, number of teachers and number of students' enrolments in higher education in India.

● **Challenges Before Higher Education in India**

The challenges before commerce and management education are discussed below:

❖ **Providing Employable Education:** To provide employable education to the students is the biggest challenge before higher education. India is youth Rich County. We have most number of younger population. It is our strength only when we channelize the youth energy into desirable way leading to development and happiness. Higher education should provide such an education which gives employment to the students.

❖ **Response to Changing Environment:** The socio-economic environment in the county is changing every now and then. The speed of change is at optimum level in the present days. There is change in almost every field of the society field be it social, political, international relations, tendency of the people, laws etc. Educational system in the country has to and change themselves and react to every change positively. The higher educational institutes need to make necessary change in their curriculum and methodology. And this is the biggest challenges before higher education in India.

❖ **Providing Adequate Infrastructure and Facilities:** To impart quality education to the students and to equip them necessary skills higher educational institutes needs basic infrastructure and facilities like commerce lab with computer and internet facility, software, incentives to teachers and students for undertaking research and training etc. This is the problem in today's educational system and it is challenge to make it available.

❖ **Developing Competent Teachers:** To create competent students we need competent teachers. We need such a teachers who have practical experience in the industries along with the strong theoretical base so that they can pass their knowledge, talent to the students and equip them necessary skills. In the present system of higher education, the focus is only on the educational qualification. The practical experience in the industry having negligible value and weightage in recruiting the teachers. More ever there is no provision of field work training to the teachers. This system neither recruit competent teachers nor create competent teachers. Further to make curriculum, to develop educational policies, to devise the evaluation system is the responsibility of such teachers. All it make incompetent curriculum, evaluation system and it have direct impact on the students.

❖ **Evaluation System:** There is need to change evaluation system of commerce and management education according to change in the business environment. Evaluation should be more and more competitive as increase in the competition. It should be skills oriented. However there is no change in the evaluation system in the commerce and management education. It is not accessing the required skills. The students are required to appear in the exam and write the answer paper. It only evaluate the memorizing and writing skills of the students. Actually in the days of internet and computer technology, the skill of memorizing and writing is losing its importance. As if any data is available with one click and if computer and write what you speak or you can type and edit make photocopy much faster that writing with pen, no need to memories any stats or figures or you should became the expert in writing. The decision making skills, skills to handle multiple task as a time, the skill of browsing data on internet and findings the one which you want, skills of learning new things, skills of coping up with the changing situation, marketing and selling skills, presentation skills, leadership skills etc. are the examples of some skills required in the present days. However there is no provision in the present evolution system to access these skills of the students.

❖ **Scarcity of Funds:** Most of the higher educational institutes are dependent on government subsidiary, tuition fees collected from the student and donations. This funding is not enough for running the educational institutes. The government has also its limitations to funds the educational institutes. Due to lack of funds these institutes cannot make give good infrastructure or facilities or pay their teachers. All it deteriorate the quality of higher education. Hence to raise the required funds is one of serious challenge before educational institutes.

❖ **Quality of Entry Level Students:** The quality of entry level students in the field of higher education is not up to the mark. It creates so many limitation developing the curriculum and system of evolution. In order to frame competent syllabus subject to change from time to time so as to develop skills among students, you need able students who can grasp, understand and responds. The quality of

entry level students is mainly depends on the primary, secondary and higher secondary education. Hence there is need to develop these primary educational system.

● **Suggestions for Strengthening Commerce and Management Education**

Following suggestions may be useful for addressing the challenges and developing the commerce and management education stronger

❖ **Improving Quality of Teachers:**In order to strengthen the higher education system, there is need to strengthen the teachers. The quality of the higher education is mostly depends on the quality of teachers. In order to improve quality of teachers, there is need to make recruitment system more competent and giving training for improvement of teaching skills to the entry level teachers so as they can teach confidently and effectively.

❖ **Quality of Work Life:** Many research studies on quality of work life shows there is positive relation between quality of work life and motivation, productivity and performance. In order to give motivation to the teachers and improving their productivity and performance, it is suggested that to improve quality of work life of teachers.

❖ **Research-Consultancy-Employability:** Research is an important tool of development. However the finding of the research study should be tasted and implemented at ground level and for that there is need to make linkages between research-constancy-and employability in higher education.

❖ **Skill Development:**More weightage should be given on the skill development in the higher education.

❖ **Improvement in Evaluation System:**There is need to improve evaluation system in the present higher education. There should be more weightage for assessment of various skills of the students.

❖ **Updating of Syllabus:**There is need to update syllabus form time to time. Further there is need to develop the syllabus and courses for developing managerial and entrepreneurial skills among rural masses.

❖ **Other Sources of Finance:**Apart from government grants, tuition fees from students and donations the educational institutes should seek for other sources of fund raising like undertaking consultancy, small business, getting funds as a social responsibility from big business entities etc.

❖ **Professional Management:**There is need to professionalize the management of higher educational institutes by adopting modern management techniques.

❖ **Minimize Political Interference:**An efforts should be made to minimize the political interference in higher education.

Conclusion:

From the above discussion it can be concluded that higher education is must for effective and efficient utilization of resources for development and addressing most of the socio-economic problems in India.India possesses a highly developed higher education system which offers the facility of education and training in almost all aspects of human's creative and intellectual endeavors. There is remarkable and consistent quantitative growth in terms of number of universities, number of colleges, number of teachers and number of students' enrolments in higher education in India since it

beginning. However some researchers questions on the qualitative growth in higher education according. The major challenges before higher education are providing employable education, response to the changing environment, providing adequate infrastructure, developing competent teachers, evaluation system, scarcity of funds, and quality of entry level students. Improving quality of teachers, improving quality of work life of teachers, making linkage between research-consultancy and employability, skill development, improvement in evaluation system, updating syllabus, developing other sources of finance professionalize the management of higher education and minimize political interference can be an effective measures to address the challenges and strengthening the higher education system in India.

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