



## A Qualitative Study on Challenges of Higher Education in India

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### ABSTRACT

The world has learned that a state's educational system has a direct impact on its economic prosperity. A nation's strength is education. A developed country is almost always a well-educated country. After the United States and China, India's higher education system is the world's third largest. India, as a developing country, has struggled to make headway in the field of education since independence. While India's higher education system has faced numerous challenges, it also faces numerous chances to overcome these obstacles and improve the system. The function of colleges and universities in the new millennium, as well as rising scientific knowledge on how individuals learn, all require more transparency and responsibility. India requires highly qualified and educated individuals who can propel our economy forward. As a result of India's ability to provide highly skilled individuals to other countries, it is very simple for India to transition from a developing to a developed country. The purpose of this research is to illustrate the issues that India's higher education system faces.

**Keywords:** Colleges, Universities, Education, Institutions, and Challenges

### Introduction

One of them is the Indian Higher Education industry, which faces an unclear future. India is a developing country with the majority of its citizens living in poverty. Poverty causes a slew of problems, including unemployment, disease, and so on, but education is positioned as a way to sever the roots of these problems. The government must change the dynamics of education, particularly higher education, in order to improve the country holistically and socially.

In terms of students, India has the world's third-largest higher education system, trailing only China and the United States. India has a high youth and workforce potential, and by 2030, it is predicted to be the world's largest. Previous examples have shown that the CEOs of certain large corporations are Indians who are graduates of Indian universities. It is conceivable to change emerging India into developed India provided we can overcome some of the major obstacles. Students are encouraged to take greater responsibility for their learning outcomes in the learner-centered paradigm of education.

Students actively participate in the discovery of knowledge, rather than the professor being the wellspring of knowledge filling the empty receptacles of students' minds. They are taught to be reflective and conscientious learners, learning as much from themselves, their peers, and their immediate surroundings as from their teachers. As a result, the teaching-learning style includes fewer lectures and rote note-taking and more hands-on activities, allowing for more experiential and engaged learning (Jadhao, 2018).

Quality in higher education has become a top priority for governments around the world. In a time when higher education is expanding and more people are going to college, Education has been impacted by the globalisation of economic activities. In developing countries, it has become a national issue. with a worldwide perspective to deal with it, In a changing environment, emerging countries have under pressure to achieve and maintain a higher level of quality schooling that is comparable across the country a standard that is accepted globally Consequently, Many developing countries, such as India and China, are seeing economic growth. national quality assurance measures were established, and There are many more in the process of developing a viable solution. strategy. However, where there are a lot of people, it won't be easy. constraint of resources (Jadhao, 2018).

India's education sector is expected to grow significantly in the coming years, as the country will have the world's largest tertiary-age population and the second largest graduate talent pipeline by the end of 2020.

In India, the higher education system is rapidly expanding. India's higher education system is currently the world's largest, with over 70 million students enrolled, and India has added capacity for over 40 million students in less than two decades. Over Rs 46,200 crore (US\$ 6.93 billion) was spent on it. Raising talents is the key to bettering one's living conditions and well-being. The key to developing high-

wage jobs and increasing productivity growth is to invest in knowledge production and dissemination.

**Major challenges faced by the Indian higher education at various level**

1. **Health:** Providers of mental health services on college campuses should update their training and understanding. College students are prone to mental health issues. Academic pressure, combined with the difficulties that come with starting and attending college, can lead to the emergence or worsening of mental health and drug use problems.

*Impact of Health in Higher Education:* There is a statistically significant link between academic achievement and health. Children who are healthy have a lower likelihood of having academic troubles than pupils who are unwell, according to research. Students who are in good health perform better in school than those who are not. Poor health can lead to issues such as increased chances of failing in school, poor concentration, grade retention, and dropout. Health, on the other hand, is a nebulous and enigmatic word whose definition is frequently clouded by preconceptions and constraints. As a result, the link between student achievement and health is frequently complicated.

2. **Early marriage** (before the age of 18) is linked to girls dropping out of school. Key psychological assets boosting school retention were a girl's capacity and desire for education, as well as her self-efficacy to demand it. Social support from parents and professors, as well as in-laws and husbands, was crucial in allowing women to continue their education after marriage. Despite this, post-marriage schooling was regarded as difficult, particularly after motherhood. Unfortunately, girls who are less academically inclined, as well as those who marry young, receive less support from their families and existing programmes to stay in school. Programmatic efforts should be expanded to include educational support for married and childbearing girls, as well as options for women and girls beyond marriage (Raj et al., 2019).
3. **Poor Infrastructure and Facilities:** Poor infrastructure is another issue confronting India's higher education system; in particular, public-sector institutes have inadequate physical facilities and infrastructure. For many years, faculty shortages and the state educational system's incapacity to attract and retain well-qualified teachers have posed hurdles to excellent education. Despite the fact that there are many opportunities in higher education, a large proportion of NET/PhD candidates are unemployed. (Drishti IAS, 2020)
4. **Privatization of the educational sector:** Private schools and universities charge a premium for education and rely on contributions. Many parents are forced to withdraw their children from higher education because they are unable to make financial arrangements.
5. **Lack of employable skills:** Students receive theoretical information, but there is a skills gap in several industries. Recruiters report that Indian graduates lack employable skills. This problem should be solved by implementing paradigm shifts in the classroom.
6. **Quota System's Prevalence:** India has a large number of talented kids, but due to the quota system's effect, a large percentage of these individuals are denied access to educational opportunities. The quota system is still a contentious issue, with many experts believing that it is detrimental to India's higher education. Intelligence and merit are thought to be significantly superior to the group to which you belong.
7. **Students' Moral Issues:** Students are taught from a young age to prepare for professions with high pay packages. This focuses students' attention on money from the start of their careers, whereas a student's approach should be to absorb as many skills and knowledge as possible. They are told to study in order to obtain a high-paying job, which is tantamount to taking our country's future into our own hands.
8. **Lack of research possibilities:** We've all forgotten that the curriculum and course materials that we're currently teaching Generation Z were produced after substantial research in the late 1800s. Increased research opportunities to inspire inventions is a serious concern. Although India's research publications have increased over the last decade, it still lags behind other countries in terms of percentages.
9. **Faculty vacancies remain high:** The University Grant Commission (UGC), which oversees higher education, has reported that numerous teaching positions are unfilled, affecting the teacher-to-student ratio and restricting authorities' ability to admit additional students.

10. **Low GER:** The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) indicates how many students are enrolled in various levels of education. In the higher education sector, India's GER is around 15%, which is far too low. This figure sums together the number of students applying for higher education admissions. It could be due to budgetary constraints or other restraints that the percentage is so low.
11. **Political interference:** Political leaders own the majority of educational institutions and play crucial roles in the governing bodies of universities. They are taking advantage of the helpless students. What it means to be selfish. Students plan campaigns, forget about their own goals, and begin to develop their own politics as a career.
12. **Faculty:** For many years, faculty shortages and the state educational system's incapacity to attract and retain well qualified teachers have posed problems to excellent education. A large number of people Candidates for the NET and PhD programmes are unemployed. Despite the fact that there are several openings in higher education, these as a result, talented candidates are applying to other departments, which is a major setback for higher education.
13. **Accreditation:** According to NAAC data, "not quite 25% of the total higher education institutions in the country were accredited as of June 2010." Only 30% of universities and 45 percent of institutions were judged to be of sufficient quality to be ranked at the 'A' level among those accredited."
14. **Research and Innovation:** In our country, there are a few minor scholars whose work is cited by well-known western authors. The emphasis on research in higher education institutions is insufficient. There are a lack of resources and facilities, as well as a shortage of qualified instructors to counsel pupils. The majority of research scholars do not have fellowships or do not receive them on time, which has a direct or indirect impact on their research. Furthermore, research centres in India are poorly connected to higher education institutions in India. As a result, this is another area in which India's higher education faces challenges.
15. **Higher education structure:** Overcentralisation, bureaucratic frameworks, and a lack of accountability, openness, and professionalism face Indian education management. The administrative burden of universities has expanded dramatically as a result of the rising number of connected colleges and students, and the fundamental focus on academics and research has been reduced.

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### Educational training sector in India

India is a huge country, with a population of young people aged 18 to 23 years estimated to be in the 150 million range. The sheer magnitude of the market presents enormous chances for India's higher education sector to grow. India presently has over 33,000 colleges and 659 universities, which represents a phenomenal expansion over the last six decades. India has the world's third largest educational system, with 21.4 million students enrolled in 2012. Unfortunately, India's educational infrastructure is incapable of handling such massive loads. Despite all of the government's educational spending, it is just insufficient to fulfil the expanding demands.

As of 2015, the educational industry in India provided enormous growth opportunities, with around 28.1 percent of India's population in the age period of 0-14 years. There are approximately 1.5 million schools in the country, with over 260 million pupils enrolled. In 2015, 34.2 million students were enrolled in 48,116 colleges and universities to pursue higher education. India's higher education sector is the world's largest. To spur investment, the government has set a target of 30% Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) for higher education by 2020. India's education business is expected to grow to US\$ 144 billion by 2020, up from US\$ 97 billion in 2016.

Despite significant hurdles, India's higher education system is rapidly expanding, and there is no reason to believe that these obstacles will not be surmounted. It is simple for a country to study with new-age learning tools such as India to overcome these challenges and bring about a paradigm transformation in the country's higher education industry. With the possibilities are infinite in such a lively country with a large educated populace. If information is power, then society is made aware of where we are through the use of innovative digital teaching and learning resources. Our country, which is currently falling behind, has the potential to become one of the world's most developed.

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## Suggestions

To make India's educational system more globally relevant and competitive, new and transformative approaches must be implemented from primary to higher education levels. The quality and prestige of higher education institutions must be improved. Colleges and universities should have a good infrastructure in order to attract students. For better quality and collaborative research, the government should encourage collaboration between Indian higher education colleges and top international institutes, as well as create links between national research laboratories and research centres of top institutions.

There is a need to focus on graduate students by offering courses in which they can achieve excellence and develop a deeper understanding of the subject so that they can get jobs after being hired by corporations, reducing the need for unneeded rush to higher education. Universities and colleges, whether public and private, must be free of political affiliations, favouritism, and money-making processes, among other things. Higher education should take an interdisciplinary approach so that students' knowledge is not limited to their particular subjects.

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## Conclusion

Education is the process of forming and strengthening a person's body, mind, and character. It is the bringing together of the head, heart, and mind, allowing a person to develop an all-around personality that recognises the best in him or her. Although higher education in India has grown significantly in the six decades since independence, it is not equally accessible to all. India is now one of the world's fastest developing countries, with an annual growth rate of more than 9%. A huge portion of the population is still illiterate, and many children do not receive even primary education. Education is critical to tackling the problems that lie ahead in a future marked by extraordinary societal shifts. Today's higher education systems are soon becoming incompatible with the future we seek, as employment markets become more automated, digitised, and flexible. Despite the fact that we are already two decades into the twenty-first century, higher education is still primarily focused on achieving success in the twentieth. Indeed, universities have expressed reservations about their ability to adjust to changing circumstances. While most discussions on the future of education centre on the skills needed for the future and the importance of reskilling, it is also critical to structure higher education reforms.

Higher education now operates in a rapidly changing society, making it increasingly difficult for "education incumbents" to keep up. Almost everything designed for the workforce of the twentieth century is being disassembled and rebuilt, and higher education is no exception. Universities must rethink their current responsibilities and what they might become in the future. Alternative, creative models will be required to realise that future educational systems and routes will be better served by alternative, innovative models. In order to maintain that rate of growth, the number of colleges as well as the quality of higher education in India must both increase. Financial Resources, Access and Equity, Quality Standards, Relevance, Infrastructure, and, finally, Responsiveness must all be reconsidered in order to meet and exceed future standards.

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