

Vital Stats

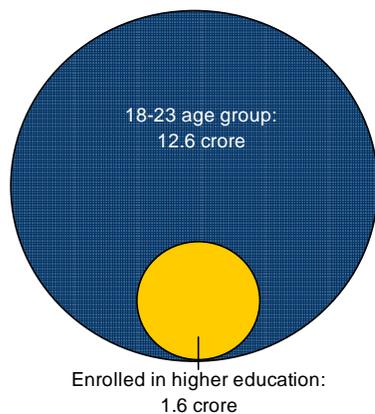
Higher Education in India

The 18 to 23 age segment forms the core of India’s future manpower. In 2004-05, about one-eighth of the population in this age group had enrolled themselves for courses in higher education. This figure was a fraction of the average enrolment recorded in developed economies.

The Ministry of Human Resource Development has recently introduced four Bills for bringing in changes to this sector. The Bills address a wide range of issues in regulation, from supervision to accreditation and dispute settlement. In this context, we present here a snapshot of the higher education scenario in India.

In 2004-05, India’s Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) for higher education was 12.6%¹

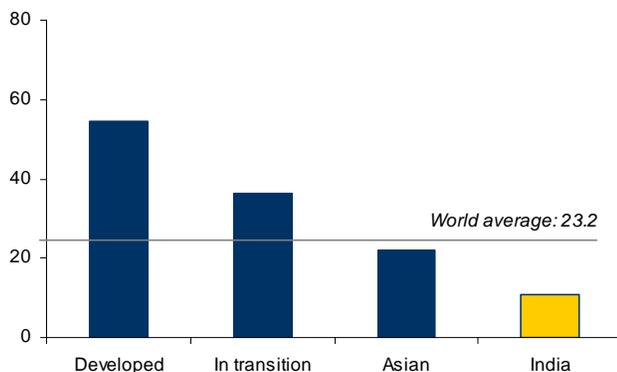
Enrollment in Higher Education (2004-05)



- Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) is a statistical measure used in the education sector. It is an indicator of the level of education among residents.
- GER is calculated by expressing the total enrolment in an age group as a percentage of the corresponding age group population.
- The National Sample Survey (NSS) for 2004-05 had estimated that out of 12.6 crore youngsters in the 18-23 age bracket, 12.6% had enrolled in courses in higher education (10.8% for graduate and 1.8% for diploma).²

Comparison shows that GER in India is significantly lower than in many other countries

GER: Cross-Country comparison (2000)

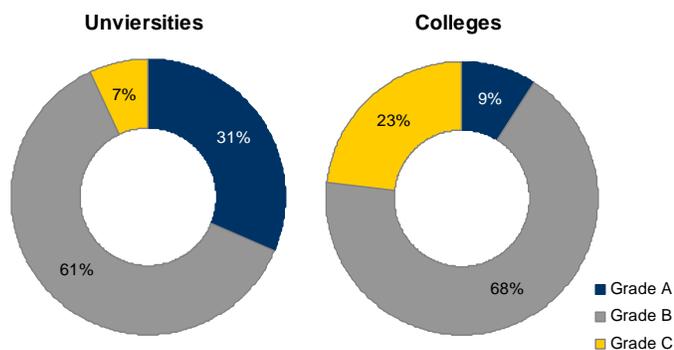


Source: Planning Commission, Eleventh Plan

- In 2000, while the enrolment figure for US was over 80%, it was 54% for UK and 49% for Japan.³
- Several other developing countries also recorded a GER higher than 25%. Philippines at 31% and Malaysia at 27% are two such examples.³
- In a report presented in 2005, the CABE Committee on Financing of Higher and Technical Education had remarked, ‘Country-wise evidence shows that no country could become an economically advanced country, if the enrolment ratio in higher education was less than 20%’.
- The National Knowledge Commission (NKC) has also called for an increase in GER to at least 15% by 2015. As an enabler to this, NKC has suggested the creation of at least 1,500 universities by 2015, partly by restructuring the existing ones.
- On 31st December 2009, the number of universities and university-level institutions in India was 504.⁴

In addition to quantity and access, quality is another aspect that needs attention

Institutions accredited by NAAC²



- On 31st December, 2009 India had 504 universities and university-level institutions, and 25,951 colleges⁴.
- In 1994, UGC established the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) with the mandate to assess the quality of universities and colleges in the country.
- At present, assessment and accreditation by NAAC is done on a voluntary basis and is valid for a period of five years.
- NAAC has identified seven criteria including curriculum, teaching and infrastructure as the basis for its assessment procedure.⁶
- Institutions assessed are graded as⁶:
 - A : high level of academic accomplishment
 - B : accomplishment above the minimum level expected
 - C : satisfactory minimum level
 - D : unsatisfactory, not accredited
- By the beginning of 2008, NAAC had accredited 140 universities and 3,492 colleges. 31% universities and 9% colleges were graded 'A', but the majority of the accredited institutions were graded 'B'.

Notes:

1. GER is estimated based on one of these three sources: 1) Data collected by UGC from educational institutions and published as the Selected Education Statistics (SES); 2) Data from the National Sample Survey (NSS); and 3) Population Census data. There are differences in the figures obtained from each of these sources. National GER according to SES (2006-07) is 10.8%. In comparison, NSS (2004-05) estimates a GER of 12.6%. According to the UGC report, 'Higher Education in India' published in 2008, 'The NSS being a household survey covers all public and private institutions as well as distance education, and also includes certificate and diploma holders. The SES has generally remained confined to graduate and above in public institutions and private aided institutions. Besides, it suffers from under reporting by the states and universities.' For the purpose of consistency, all data used in this document is based on the NSS (2004-05) survey.
2. UGC, 'Higher Education in India - Issues Related to Expansion, Inclusiveness, Quality and Finance', November 2008.
3. National Knowledge Commission, 'Report to the Nation', March 2009.
4. Ministry of Human Resource Development, Annual Report, 2009-10.
5. Poor and non-poor classification is based on the poverty line as defined by the Planning Commission.
6. National Assessment and Accreditation Council, 'New Methodology of Assessment and Accreditation', retrieved September 2010 (<http://www.naac.gov.in/grading.asp>).

Bills Related to Higher Education

- **The Foreign Educational Institutions (Regulation of Entry and Operations) Bill, 2010:** The Bill seeks to regulate the entry and operation of foreign educational institutions seeking to impart higher education.
- **The National Accreditation Regulatory Authority for Higher Educational Institutions Bill, 2010:** The Bill makes it mandatory for every higher educational institution (other than agricultural institutions) and every programme conducted by it to get accredited by an accreditation agency in order to certify academic quality.
- **The Prohibition of Unfair Practices in Technical Educational Institutions, Medical Educational Institutions and Universities Bill, 2010:** The Bill seeks to prohibit specified unfair practices in technical and medical institutions and universities to protect the interest of students.
- **The Educational Tribunals Bill, 2010:** The Bill seeks to set up Educational Tribunals at the national and state level to adjudicate disputes involving teachers of higher educational institutions and other stakeholders such as students, universities and statutory regulatory authorities.

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