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COMPARATIVE STUDY OF CHALLENGES REGARDING HIGHER EDUCATION AMONGST URBAN AND RURAL COLLEGES

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: *In the 21st century, institutions of higher education hold one of the most important roles in shaping the future of our society. Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are pivotal in building a comprehensive, healthy, and happy social framework. HEIs and human capital index developed by them are significant contributors to India's ability to compete in the global marketplace and is critical to our nation's social well-being, economic strength, and establishment as 'Vishwa Guru' and a world leader. Colleges and universities are complex organizations facing difficult and multifaceted challenges. The divide becomes wider with the rural landscape. Even though Higher Education System is facing varied, complex, and multidimensional problems in India, there are solutions and opportunities to get over these difficulties to make the higher education system more inclusive, quality driven, innovative, and engaging.*

Objective of the study: *The objective of this study is to determine the problems or challenges in higher education in urban and rural areas' colleges.*

Research Methodology: *The Design of this research is descriptive. The information has been collected from secondary and primary sources. A sample of 440 respondents has been chosen for the study. Out of 440 respondents, 15 are principals, 135 are heads of the departments and 290 are students.*

Data Analysis: *The data has been analysed through the percentage method and the hypothesis of the study has been tested through the chi-square test at a 0.5% level of significance.*

Conclusion: *We can conclude that there are a lot of challenges in Higher education, but the main challenge is low quality/poor input in higher education institutes in the rural area as compared to urban area institutions.*

Keywords: *Higher education, challenges, Education, Urban, Rural, principal, head of the department, students.*

1. INRODUCTION

Education plays a vital role in the economic development of any nation. During the last decade, despite the fact that there has been significant improvement in the Indian higher education system, there are issues plaguing the system and one of the prominent issues is that of inequalities, more specifically between urban and rural institutions of higher education. Since independence, there has been a remarkable rise in institutions of higher learning in all the disciplines. Higher education is truly essential for a vast and densely populated country like India, and it is instrumental in human capital development. The country has produced top managers, teachers, engineers, technocrats, doctors, and scientists who are in great demand not only in India but even in the world. At this stage, it is among the top ten nations in the global industrial and technological capabilities due to sizable contribution of manpower provided by higher education. India has already entered the era of know-how explosion. It has proved its massive potential in nuclear and space domains. The coming years will be heralded by more space explorations and emerging technologies such as AI, ML, Robotics, ARVR, IoT, AVGC and internet offshoots of scientific enquires. In addition to scientific investigations, higher education provides opportunities for people to reflect on the crucial social, cultural, moral, economic, and spiritual issues facing humanity.

1.1 Higher Education

The role of higher education as a major driver of economic development is well established, and this role will increase as further changes in technology, globalization, and demographics impact the nation. To remain relevant in such a competitive and disruptive world, HEIs will need to improve productivity and adopt an innovative spirit. HE system must be reengineered to promote interactive, collaborative, and active learning. Re-engineering is required as the country is facing many challenges, such as financing and academic management, access, equity, relevance and reorientation of policies and programs for laying emphasis on quality of higher education, values and ethics. Higher education has the capacity, knowledge, and research necessary to help achieve these goals. Advancement of technology, cost of education, global competition, indutry and society expectations are the major factors demanding HES transformation.

The primary objective of universal access needs to take in to account that students not only come from diverse socio-economic groups but also from varied terrains, developed as well as underdeveloped, difficult access, hilly, islands, far flung geographical areas. However, it is the availability of academic infrastructure, teaching-learning process, digital access, and other

opportunities which will build a healthy academic atmosphere in the institutions of higher learning. Undoubtedly, today India faces a selection of issues such as poverty, unemployment, widening of economic & social divide, and the decline of spiritual and moral values. Consequently, academia is also not unaffected and nationwide problems/challenges have emerged in the Higher Education system in India. Though higher education has grown considerably in the past 7 decades, but this expansion continues to be mostly unaffected by the numerous structured plans as well as proposals to guide it. Contrarily, mushrooming colleges are suffering from fund crunch, poor academic infrastructure, lack of competent and motivated faculty members, redundant pedagogy & assessment methods and poor, inadequate research facilities.

There is a necessity for substantial expansion of institutions in continually increasing need of India for higher education to achieve an inspiring enrolment ratio of fifty percent by 2035. At present, there are large number of colleges as well as universities in India. There are 993 Universities, 39931 Colleges and 10725 Stand Alone Institutions listed on AISHE web portal. 298 Universities are affiliating i.e. having Colleges. 385 Universities are privately managed. 394 Universities are located in rural area.

16 Universities are exclusively for women, 3 in Rajasthan, 2 in Tamil Nadu & 1 each in Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Delhi, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Odisha, Uttarakhand and West Bengal. In addition to 1 Central Open University, 14 State Open Universities and 1 State Private Open University, there are 110 Dual mode Universities, which offer education through distance mode also. There are 548 General, 142 Technical, 63 Agriculture & Allied, 58 Medical, 23 Law, 13 Sanskrit and 9 Language Universities and rest 106 Universities are of other categories. The top 8 States in terms of highest number of colleges in India are Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Haryana, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh. Bangalore Urban district tops in terms of number of colleges with 880 colleges followed by Jaipur with 566 colleges.

Top 50 districts have about 32.2% of colleges. College density, i.e. the number of colleges per lakh eligible population (population in the age-group 18-23 years) varies from 7 in Bihar to 53 in Karnataka as compared to All India average of 28.6.

53% Colleges are located in Rural Area. 11.04% Colleges are exclusively for Female. Only 2.5% Colleges run Ph.D. programme and 34.9% Colleges run Post Graduate Level programmes. There are 34.8% Colleges, which run only single programme, out of which 83.1% are privately managed. Among these privately managed colleges, 38.1% colleges run B.Ed. Courses only. 77.8% Colleges are privately managed: 64.3% Private-unaided and 13.5% Private-aided. Andhra Pradesh & Uttar Pradesh have about 88% Private-unaided colleges and Tamil Nadu has 87% Private-unaided colleges, whereas, Assam has 16%. 16.3% of the Colleges are having enrolment less than 100 and only 4% Colleges have enrolment more than 3000.

1.2 Opportunities and Growth

The Indian education sector has been recognized as a "Sunrise Sector" for enormous opportunities and growth in the recent past. This recognition stems from the fact that the sector offers a huge untapped market in regulated and non-regulated segments due to low literacy rate, high concentration in urban areas and growing per capita income. The Government has also been proactively playing the role of facilitator in this sector. The quasi-private institutions are good at collecting & using components for themselves, nevertheless, a major portion of their materials can be found out of the state (Varghese, 2006). [1] Privatization of public institutions has experienced different styles to be used in several segments of the faculty business. This includes the withdrawal of subsidies in addition to cost sharing with pupils. When pupils begin adding to their own training monetarily, the reduction in demand for advanced schooling monetary backing may perhaps wind up in a far better proportion of substances presently being employed in primary and secondary education. The increase in private contributions would be the cause of the funding for primary and secondary schooling (Psacharopoulos & Patrinos, 2004). [2]

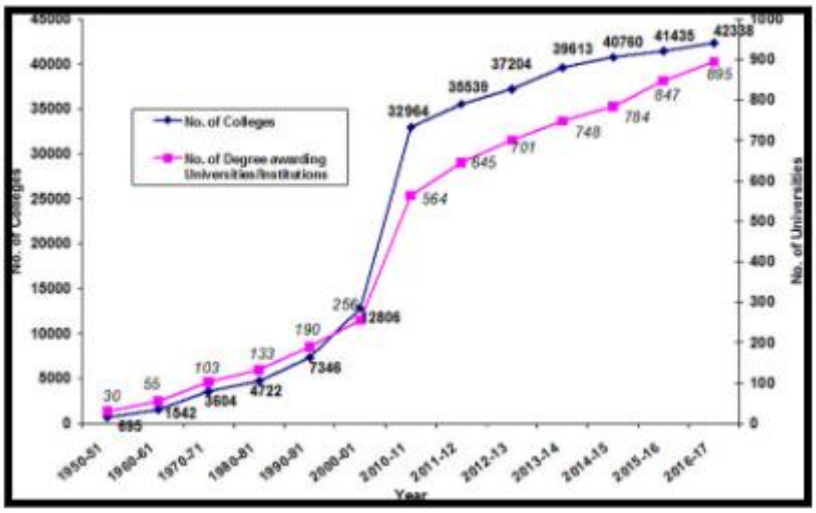

Figure 1: Growth in Higher education

1.3 Challenges of Higher Education in India

India is celebrating 73rd year of our freedom however our education system has yet not evolved completely. Not even a single Indian HEI/university makes it to the list of the best hundred universities in the world. Many governments and academic policies over the last seven decades endeavoured to increase the quality of higher education programs though they weren't adequate to bring in desired changes in access, equity, affordability, and quality. The University Grants Commission is continually regulating and designing framework for higher education but effective implementation of these policies at grass root level remains a challenge due to

numerous reasons. Some of the significant challenges in the higher education system in India are investigated below:

I. **Enrolment:** The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of India in higher education is only 26.3% and that is very low in comparison to other developed as well as developing nations. With the development of enrolments at the school level, the number of higher education institutions needed to accommodate these school pass outs is highly inadequate. Therefore, substantial expansion is required in higher education institutions (HEIs) to ensure access to all.

II. **Equity:** There is huge disparity in GER among different sections, regions, genders, and groups of the society. Studies on the subject indicate poor GER among Socio-economically backward groups, Divyaang, women & transgenders, Northeastern regions, and other aspirational districts. There are regional differences too as few states have higher GER while some are behind the national average GER which reflects considerable disparity within the HE system.

III. **Quality:** Quality in higher education remains the most serious challenge. Higher education discipline operates in silos without recognizing crucial need for multi disciplinarity/inter/trans disciplinarity. The academia-industry linkage and dissemination of information from academia to industry and vice versa is very low. Consequently, students have theoretical knowledge and lack practical applications, thereby employability. There are not many innovations in pedagogical approaches, assessment patterns and higher education is largely memory & its retrieval based rather than project/case studies/research articles studies based. Large number of colleges and universities in India are unable to meet the minimum requirements laid down by the UGC, AICTE and other statutory councils.

IV. **Infrastructure:** Inadequate physical, digital and academic infrastructure are other problems being faced by the higher education. Availability of proper, safe and hygienic physical infrastructure, connectivity through digital infrastructure and quality research through laboratory, library, and other academic facilities are the foundational requirement for higher education in addition to sports and games facilities.

V. **Faculty:** Competent and committed faculty is the essence of a University/HEI. Non availability of competent, capable, and energized faculty members and the inability of the higher education system to attract, retain and train well qualified teachers are the most threatening challenges in the HE system hampering quality. Though there are vacancies, large numbers of NET/PhD candidates are unemployed, and some are even working at much lower remuneration than specified by the UGC/AICTE and statutory councils. Also, faculty members need comprehensive, continuous and rigorous training

to keep pace with ever changing domains, technology, pedagogy and evaluation patterns.

VI. **Framework of Higher education**: Management of higher education faces issues of over regulation, deviance of autonomy, bureaucratic structures, lack of funding, over-centralization of power and often poor academic leadership. Large number of affiliated colleges also convert universities into admission & examination bodies rather than academic, innovative entities.

VII. **Accreditation:** As per NAAC, as of June 2019, only a marginal number of higher education institutions are accredited. Among those accredited, only a fraction of universities and colleges have been found to be of 'A' and above accreditation grades.

VIII. **Research and Innovation:** There are serious challenges impacting research and innovations in higher education system in India. Inadequate research laboratory facilities, insufficient resources, lack of adequate funding, absence of strong innovative research culture and communities, deficiency of innovative research design, lack of innovative research aptitude among education practitioner and unavailability of experienced, qualified research guide are prominent roadblocks for research and innovation. Seamless connectivity among Indian Higher education institutions, research facilities and researcher communities is also missing.

Despite these difficulties, the higher education system of India has enormous growth potential. This sector, owing to its huge prospective, holds very promising prospects. With an estimated 150 mn people in the age group of 18-23 years, the sector offers one of the most attractive yet highly complex growth opportunities. Despite some inherent concerns as detailed in preceding paragraphs, the HE system can be transformed and can create an identity at the international level. It requires governance, academic autonomy & accountability, uniform and transparent regulatory reforms, committed and capable teachers, industry-academia linkages, and conducive research ecosystem.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

I. **Sintu Ganai (2019) [3] -** The earth has recognized that the economic results of the states are exclusively influenced by their education systems of theirs. Education is a Nation's Strength. An evolved nation is unavoidably an educated nation. Since freedom, India as a developing country is constantly creating in the education field. Even though we have seen a lot of problems so as to higher education arrangement of India however in like manner have a large number of opportunities to get over these difficulties as well as to make the higher education system better. India needs well-capable and profoundly taught people who could drive the economy of our own forward. The present investigation is designed to spotlight the difficulties as well as to point out the

opportunities as well as challenges in online programs in the higher education system in India. Internet education modifications all parts of learning as well as coaching in higher education. 3 main groups of results were identified: problems related to internet learners, teachers, and content development. In order to handle these difficulties in internet education, higher education institutions have to offer expert development for instructors, training for learners, and technical assistance for content development. Right here we are going to discuss a few suggestions to enhance the Higher Education system.

II. **R. N. Nadar (2018) [4] -** Education is the backbone of every nation. The land won't have the ability to endure in the competitive world, in case the education system of its isn't effective at contributing to its development of its. Indian education framework is usually censured in multi measurements for its disappointment to deliver required employability in its understudies' dependent on the business needs as well as the failure of its to help comprehensive development of the country as a whole. This specific paper attempts to highlight the problems as well as offer a few answers for resolving them. The examination uses auxiliary data from various common sources. The specialist presumes that the issues in the present education process which are overwhelming the development of this specific country could be handled productively if positive and devoted advances are taken method for the Government to determine them.

III. **CB and Kadamudimatha [5] (2017) -** India's Higher Education framework is quite the biggest on the earth in expressions of choice of organizations. Higher education in India has experienced quick improvement following post freedom period. Each general public offers some incentive to education since it's a panacea for those indecencies. It's the response to determine the various issues of living. Education has been alluded to as a methodology of awakening to life as well. This specific article attempts to take a gander at the situation of cutting-edge tutoring in India. Besides the workforce departments of education and the associated colleges of theirs, administration and government-helped organizations; private and open colleges and self-financing colleges can also be interested in education. This particular newspaper discussed the problems of advanced schooling as well as guidance to enhance higher education in India.

IV. **Younis Ahmad Sheikh (2017) [6] -** The earth has recognized that the economic results of the states are exclusively influenced by their education systems of theirs. Education is a Nation's Strength. An evolved country is unavoidably an informed country. Indian higher education framework is the third biggest on the earth, by the United States just as China. Since freedom, India as a developing country is disagreeably creating in the education field. Even though we have seen part of difficulties so as to higher education arrangement of India however likewise have a large number of opportunities to get over these challenges as well as to make the higher education system better It requires

accountability and transparency greater, the job of universities and colleges in the new thousand years and developing logical research on precisely how people learn is really of most extreme significance. India needs well-skilled and exceptionally instructed people who could drive the economy of our own forward. India offers highly trained individuals to various other countries; therefore, it's super easy for India to transmit the state of ours from a growing nation to an evolved nation. The present study is designed to spotlight the challenges as well as to point out the opportunities.

V. **Mushemeza , E. (2016) [7] -** This specific paper examines the open doors just as difficulties of scholarly staff in higher education in Africa. The paper contends that recruitment, advancement as well as the appointment of academic staff ought to count extremely on their efficiency of theirs (positive generation in every specific HR). The staff profile alongside capabilities must be distributed on the faculty site to be able to market social networking and publicity among researchers. The paper watches numerous difficulties that experience African Universities now, including financial support (improvement of the financial base just as maintainability), infrastructural requests, poor staff compensation, high understudy enlistment with lower staff understudy proportion, and also administration/the executives' shortfalls. Despite the difficulties, it's conceivable to recognize as well as actualize key mediations to recognize quality understudies/optimum level of understudy utilization, choose just as hold quality academic staff on the off chance that we're constructing a well working Faculty for both institutional and social development in Africa.

VI. **Sahil Sharma and Purnendu Sharma** (2015**) [8] -** Higher education framework assumes a pivotal job in the nation's general development including mechanical, social, monetary, and so on. Indian higher education framework is in reality third biggest on earth. The activity of Indian higher academic organizations like colleges and colleges in the ebb and flow time is really giving quality utilized education in the region of education, look into and so forth to enable youth for individual maintainability. This specific paper comprises the pivotal difficulties that India is currently looking for cutting-edge tutoring and likewise contains a few activities taken by method for the administration to satisfy those difficulties.

VII. **K. Kamar Jahan, and D. Christy Selvarani (2015) [9] -** The point of view of higher education in India is really understanding the nation's HR conceivable to its fullest with incorporation just as valuable. The higher education part, as of late, has seen a huge development in many perspectives including the institutional ability of its, enrolment, educator understudy proportion, and so forth. The snappy development of the higher education process at exactly the same time has brought a number of relevant problems related to equity, efficiency, access as well as excellence to higher education in the nation. The existing papers hold a quick criticalness of making awareness of endless issues of worry to be taken care of by the partners in the national and furthermore the

overall ph levels. The investigation is moreover extraordinary as in it realizes better comprehension of the current circumstance in the higher education framework in the nation, as well as the pattern of its growth, provided the opportunities as well as difficulties to the gadget viable. The present examination tosses profitable mindfulness on financing systems as well as enrolment factors of higher education in India.

VIII. **JD Singh (2011) [10] -** Even though we have seen difficulties in higher education before, these most current calls for change may incite a basic change in higher education. This specific change may not actually show up as a quick reaction to calls for higher straightforwardness and responsibility, yet because of the opportunity to think about the objective of higher education, the activity of colleges and colleges in the new thousand years, and developing logical research on precisely how people learn. These divergent literary works haven't been integrated in a manner that would take a gander at the impact of the basic change from the approach that add up to the institutional wellness level just as to the day-by-day life of the workforce and college executives, understudies, and personnel. Today the minute has come to deliver a second influx of organization building and of the greatness of the zones of education, explore as well as ability development. We want higher educated individuals that are competent and that could drive our economy of ours forward. When India can offer people that are proficient customers to the external world then we are able to shift the state of ours from a growing nation to an evolved nation quite easily & quickly.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

I. To deliberate on various challenges being faced by the Indian higher education system.
II. To evaluate the challenges/problems of higher education framework with comparative analysis among urban and rural colleges.
III. To evaluate the structure of higher education institutions with reference to Gross Enrolment Ratio.
IV. To study the significant impact of poor input challenges in rural and urban areas higher education institutions.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology of this research is dependent on the particular region of research i.e. if the analysis is experimental, descriptive, theoretical, or analytical. Right after having clearly stated the analysis, the investigator will express the research methodology, with the assistance of which the additional study will be conducted.

4.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design of this study is descriptive, and the researcher has attempted quantitative and qualitative techniques to evaluate the data. The investigator has used qualitative and

quantitative techniques to refer to as well as significantly explain the improvement of the higher education system with reference to urban and rural colleges.

4.2 SAMPLE SIZE

A sample of 500 respondents was taken including principals of colleges, heads of different departments in the colleges, departmental representatives as well as category representatives from each division of the university. These colleges are degree colleges addressing the faculties of science, social sciences, humanities, commerce, and business as well as computer science. Out of the entire sample of 500, 440 respondents provided answers to the question. Out of the responses received, fifteen are principals, 135 are Heads of Departments, and 290 are students who participated in the survey.

4.3 DATA COLLECTION

There are mainly 2 techniques used for data collection

I. **Primary Data:** For a descriptive kind of review, "**primary data"** is collected through a number of techniques from people who are Critical to the research: (i) observation technique, (ii) Interview technique, (iii) questionnaires, (iv) schedules etc.

II. **Secondary data -** On the other hand, the secondary data has been gathered by someone else and has gone through the statistical procedure. It has been collected through books, e-books, journals (print as well as online both), periodicals, government accounts as well as documents, diaries, conference proceedings, websites, newspaper articles, encyclopedias and various related sources.

4.4 TOOLS USED FOR DATA COLLECTION

In the current study, the questionnaire continues to be utilized as a tool for data collection as it proves valuable in situations dealing with large samples. Yet another device for the goal of data collection in the current study is an interview schedule. It's a set of organized questions to which answers are captured by the interviewer herself known as a job interview fifty-two schedule.

The questionnaire was administered to the 500 people. It incorporated principals of different colleges, heads of the different departments of colleges, and students (departmental representatives as well as category representatives) from different departments of the colleges. The questionnaire even intended to collect information from the principals of the colleges was handed over to the principal by the investigator throughout the visit of her trip to the university. Before administering the questionnaire to the HODs of different departments, permission was sought from the principal of a college or the VC of the university.

Permission from the principal was sought before distributing the questionnaire to the students from the college of his individual investigator. The questionnaire was administered to a total of 320 last season graduate students (urban as well as rural both), belonging to different streams. In post-graduate colleges, students from postgraduate programs have been preferred for the study. It's to be mentioned that students selected for the current study belonged to those colleges where a number of streams such as sciences, humanities and arts, economics and commerce, computer science etc are taught.

4.5 STATISTICAL TOOLS USED IN THIS STUDY

Portion analysis was carried out to discover the views of principals, teachers (heads of departments) as well as students on various aspects/issues of higher education. Graphic representation of the data was provided through graphs. A number of tables had been prepared based on requirement and the problem type to be examined. The chi-Square examination is used just for discrete data (discrete variables are the ones expressed in frequency counts). Examples are actually yes/no data types or maybe Likert scale data. "The chi-square test is helpful technique while comparing experimentally received outcomes with those to be expected theoretically on several hypotheses"

4.6 HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

H1: There is a significant challenge of poor input in higher education institutes in rural areas than in urban areas.

H0: There is no significant challenge of poor input in higher education institutes in the rural area than in urban areas.

5. DATA ANALYSIS

5.1 Demographic profile

Demographic information provides data concerning research participants and it is needed the determination if the people in a specific analysis are a representative sample of the target population for generalization purposes.

5.1.1 Respondents

Table 1: Profile of Respondents

Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
Principal	15	3%

Heads Of Departments	135	31%
Students	290	66%
Total	440	100%

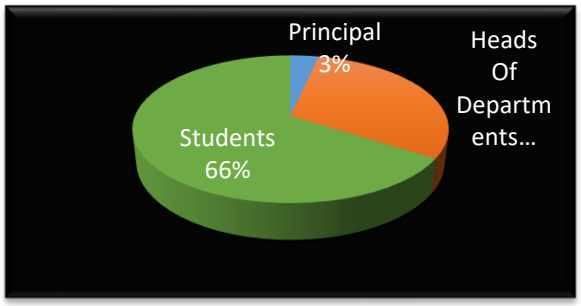

Figure 2: Profile of Respondents

It is stated from the above table and figure that out of the total 440 respondents 3% are principals, 31% are HOD and 66% are students.

5.1.2 Gender

Table 2: Gender of Respondents

Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
Male	250	57%
Female	190	43%
Total	440	100%

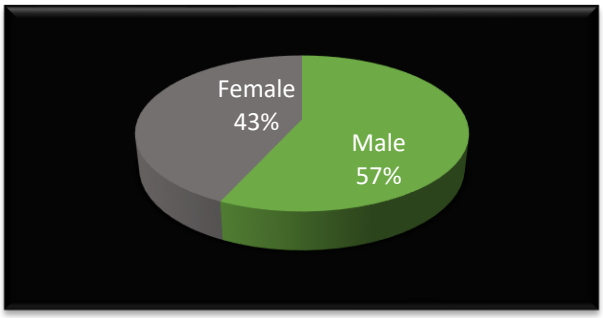

Figure 3: Gender of Respondents

It is concluded from the table and figures that out of the total respondents 43% are females and the remaining majority of 57% of respondents are male.

5.1.3 Location

Table 3: Location of Respondents

Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
Urban	217	49%
Rural	223	51%
Total	440	100%

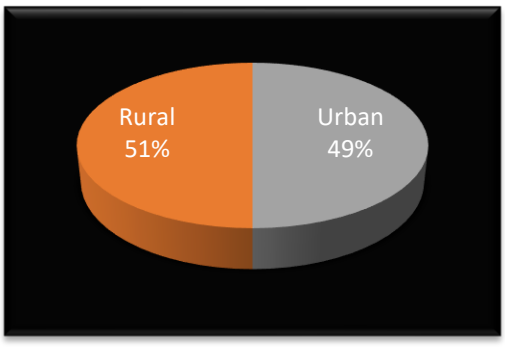

Figure 4: Location of Respondents

We can conclude from the above table and figure that 49% of respondents belong to Urban area and 51% of the respondents belong to the rural area.

5.2 Status of Higher Education

Higher education is the foundation of present as well as futuristic society. It enables learning of subjects, attitude, skill sets and knowledge and thereby forming a progressive and developed nation. The urban-driven nature of our education framework can be seen in the accompanying table.

Table 4. Gross Enrolment Ratio

	Male	Female	Total
Rural	9.24	5.62	7.70
Urban	24.79	22.58	23.85

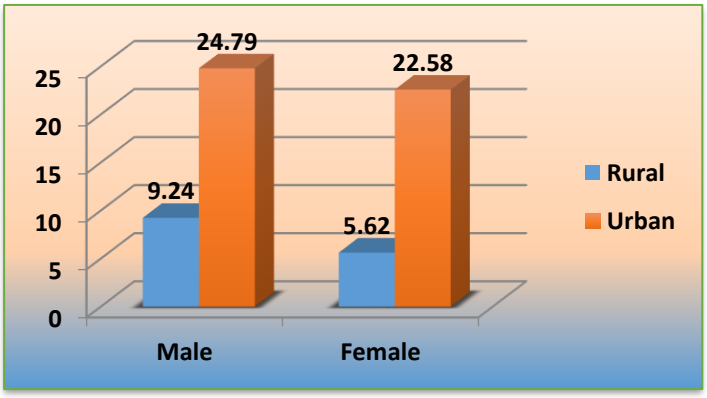

Figure 5: Gross Enrolment Ratio

The chart depicts disparity among rural and urban GER. The Gross Enrolment Ratio in the rural regions is poor 7.70. In case of males, GER is 9.24; whereas for female students, it is 5.62. The urban academic landscape has improved GER i.e. 23.85, 24.79 for males and 22.58 for females. The image depicts the inequality that exists between the urban and rural regions with respect to higher education.

5.3 Challenges of higher education

Table 5: challenges the higher education suffer from

Challenges	Principal	HOD	Student
Financing	4	15	55

Teaching Quality	3	33	45
Moral Issues	1	10	10
No Project-Based Learning	2	15	25
Enrollment	1	20	35
Equity	0	10	30
Infrastructure	1	12	40
Structure of Higher education	1	20	50
Total	15	135	290

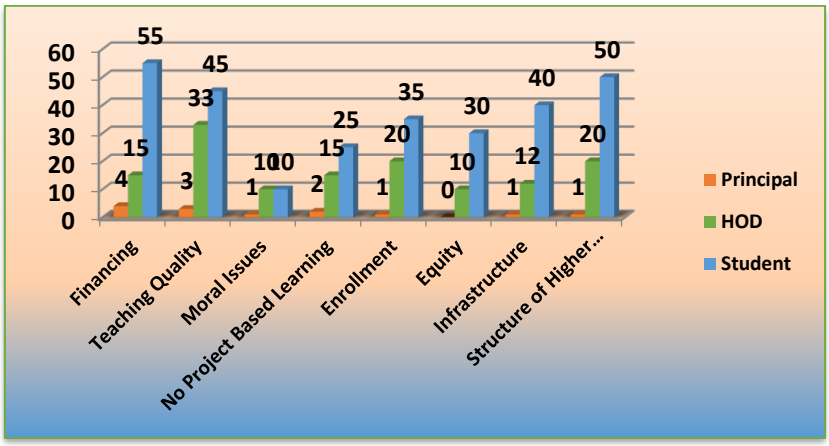

Figure 6: Type of challenges in the higher education

It is concluded from the table that 4 principals, 15 HOD, and 55 students chose finance as a major challenge for higher education, 3 principals, 33 HOD and 45 students chose teaching quality as a challenge due to decrease in the number of teachers, lack awareness or knowledge, skills, motivation etc. 1Principal, 10 HOD, and 10 students chose moral issues as a challenge in higher education. 2 principals, 15 HOD and 25 students chose 'No project-based learning'/theoretical learning as a challenge in higher education. 1 principal, 20 HOD and 35 students chose enrollment as a challenge or issue in the higher education system, 10 HODs,

30students, and no principal chose equity as a challenge. 1 principal, 12 HODs and 40 students chose physical and academic infrastructure as a challenge and 1 principal, 20 HODs and 50 students chose the structure of higher education as a challenge in the higher education system.

5.4 Hypothesis Testing

H1: There is a significant challenge of poor input in higher education institutes in rural areas than in urban areas.

Table 6: Poor input in higher education institutes in the rural area than urban areas

Principals						
Location of the college	**Strongly agree**	**Agree**	**Undecided**	**Disagree**	**Strongly Disagree**	**Total**
Rural	1 (17%)	5 (83%)	0 (0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	6
Urban	1 (11%)	6 (67%)	1 (11%)	1(11%)	0(0%)	9
Total	2 (13%)	11 (73%)	1 (7%)	1 (7%)	0(0%)	15
Heads of Departments						
Rural	11 (16%)	46 (66%)	6 (8%)	5 (7%)	2 (3%)	70
Urban	25 (39%)	27 (42%)	8 (12%)	4 (6%)	1 (1%)	65
Total	36 (27%)	73 (54%)	14 (10%)	9 (7%)	3 (2%)	135
Chi-square	***8.69***			***p-value***	***0.037****	
Students						
Rural	37 (25%)	81 (55%)	16 (11%)	11 (8%)	2 (1%)	147

Urban	29 (20%)	80 (56%)	30 (21%)	3 (2%)	1 (1%)	143
Total	66 (23%)	161 (56%)	46 (15%)	14 (5%)	3 (1%)	290
Chi-square	***14.52***			***p-value***	***0.006****	

Principals: Eighty-three % agreed saying that there was a challenge of poor input in higher education institutes in rural areas concerning Higher education. From urban colleges, responses from as well as seventeen % strongly agree with this statement. A big bulk of them i.e.67 % agreed and a number of them equal % i.e. eleven % undecided and strongly agreed.

Heads of Departments: From rural colleges, responses from seventy heads of departments had been sought on the question. The majority of them i.e. sixty-six % agreed and a few of them i.e. eleven % strongly agreed. Microscopic society i.e. eight % remained undecided and a meager seven % disagreed as well as staying three % are strongly disagreeing. From urban colleges, responses from sixty-five heads of departments had been sought on the question. The majority of them i.e. forty-two % agreed and several of them i.e. thirty-nine % strongly agreed. A meagre twelve % remained microscopic and undecided society of six % disagreed as well as staying one % strongly disagreed.

Students: From rural colleges, responses from 147 students had been sought on the question. A clear majority of them i.e. fifty-five % agreed and several of them i.e. twenty-five % strongly agreed. A meagre fraction of eleven % remained undecided on this particular problem. Microscopic society of eight % disagreed and a nearly negligible one % strongly disagreed. From urban colleges, responses from 143 students had been sought on the question. The majority of them i.e. fifty-six % agreed and a small proportion of twenty % strongly agreed. Not many of them i.e. twenty-one % remained undecided also nearly negligible twenty-seven % disagreed and fifteen strongly disagreed.

When we look at the complete responses it's very clear that a vast majority of principals, students as well as HODs (rural-urban both) agreed to say that there was a challenge of poor input in higher education institutes in the rural areas as compared to urban areas concerning Higher education. There was a statistically significant deviation between the views of urban and rural heads of departments ($p < 0.05$) Hence, the alternative hypothesis ***H1: There is a significant challenge of poor input in higher education institutes in rural areas than in urban areas is accepted and the null hypothesis is rejected.***

6. CONCLUSION

Out of the foregoing conversation, it's apparent that higher education is now quite demanding in an era of privatization and globalization. In the worldwide emerging market scenario; society in general and students and teachers in particular expect governments to create an academic ecosystem that can offer a platform to enhance their learning abilities to meet the requirements of the market as well as the society. Undoubtedly, challenges for higher education are numerous but much more serious, is poor funding and lack of academic leadership. There's an immediate need to limit the quality gap which is present between rural & urban higher education institutions. Also, there is an urgent need to have a good monitoring mechanism as well as a feedback process in place to ensure time-bound implementation of higher education policies, plans with concerted efforts in rural areas.

7. Suggestion for the study

- There is a need to implement innovative and transformational approach form primary to higher education level to make an integrated higher educational system globally relevant and competitive.
- Higher education institutes need to improve access, equity, quality, and affordability.
- Availability of good physical, digital and academic infrastructure in universities and colleges must be ensured.
- Government must promote collaboration among Indian higher education institutes, reputed international institutes and national research laboratories/research centers for better quality and collaborative research.
- Availability of competent, motivated, and energized faculty members with comprehensive, continuous, rigorous need-based training and growth opportunities for personal & professional progression.
- Enhancement of students' practical, hands-on knowledge, critical thinking, problem solving skills, soft skills & employability enhancement.
- Continuous updation of curriculum, pedagogy, assessment patterns and technological tools.
- Autonomy with accountability in the Universities and colleges away from the political affiliations.
- Multidisciplinary/inter/trans disciplinary approach in higher education with teaching -learning, research and evaluation.
- Concerted efforts for equitable academic opportunities among diverse socio-economic groups, terrains, difficult access areas, hilly, islands, far flung geographical areas, aspirational districts and marginalized/tribal communities.

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