

# An Analysis of the Approaches of 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan towards the Development of Higher Education in India

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## Abstract

*Higher education is critical for developing a modern society. It equips young people with skills relevant for the labor market and the opportunity for social mobility. It prepares all to be responsible citizens who value a democratic and pluralistic society. Thus, the nation creates an intellectual heap of human capital to meet the country's needs. Indeed, higher education is the principal site at which our national goals, developmental priorities and civic values can be examined and refined. It is estimated that developed economies and even China will face a shortage of about 40 million highly skilled workers by 2020, while, based on current projections of higher education, India is likely to see some surplus of graduates in 2020. Thus, India could capture a higher share of global knowledge based work, for example by increasing its exports of knowledge-intensive goods and services. This paper critically highlights the different aspects of higher education in India as identified by the 12th five year plan. It is essential to review the major strategies and challenges identified by the 12th five year plan for the fullest growth of higher education sector in India. During the Twelfth Plan, the States have been encouraged to draw up strategic plans for development of higher education in their states keeping in mind the broad objectives of the Government of quality improvement and skill development. Such plans should be comprehensive and take a holistic view of increased demand pressure with improvements in the school system and greater need for more qualified people from the economy and the specific, trained, skilled labour-intensive market.*

**Key words : Higher education, Five year plan.**

## 1. Introduction :

Higher education is critical for developing a modern society. It equips

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young people with skills relevant for the labor market and the opportunity for social mobility. It prepares all to be responsible citizens who value a democratic and pluralistic society. Thus, the nation creates an intellectual heap of human capital to meet the country's needs. Indeed, higher education is the principal site at which our national goals, developmental priorities and civic values can be examined and refined. It is estimated that developed economies and even China will face a shortage of about 40 million highly skilled workers by 2020, while, based on current projections of higher education, India is likely to see some surplus of graduates in 2020. Thus, India could capture a higher share of global knowledge based work, for example by increasing its exports of knowledge-intensive goods and services. Despite considerable progress during the Eleventh Plan, less than one-fifth of the estimated 120 million potential students are enrolled in HEIs in India, well below the world average of 26 percent. Wide disparities exist in enrolment percentages among the States and between urban and rural areas while disadvantaged sections of society and women have significantly lower enrolments than the national average. The twelve five year plan document highly emphasized on the enrolment in HEIs by saying that the pressure to increase access to affordable education is steadily increasing with the number of eligible students set to double by 2020. At the same time, significant problems exist in the quality of education provided. It is seen that the sector is plagued by a shortage of well-trained faculty, poor infrastructure and outdated and irrelevant curricula. The use of technology in higher education remains limited and standards of research and teaching at Indian universities are far below international standards with no Indian university featured in any of the rankings of the top 200 institutions globally. So, the planning commission has thought about overcoming the challenges of higher education to find a path to achieve the divergent goals for the growth of higher education in India. Combining access with affordability and ensuring high-quality undergraduate and postgraduate education are vital for realising the potential of the country's 'demographic dividend'. Future expansion should be carefully planned so as to correct regional and social imbalances, reinvigorate institutions to improve standards and reach international benchmarks of excellence, match demand with supply by improving employability, and extend

the frontiers of knowledge.

Higher Education is considered as a key factor in accumulating and developing the human resources of a country. Higher Education is the crucial stage of educational system as it reflects the actual development of human resources in the country. In India only 12% of the total children enrolled in school reaches to higher education. The remaining 88% are considered as missing at different stages of school education. This rate of enrollment in higher education is much lower as compare the other developed countries like USA, UK etc where the rate is around 70%. Again in India, the more than 50% of enrollment of higher education is under private sector. No doubt the expansion rate of higher education in India is accelerated during the recent decade. But the question is whether the Govt. or Govt. agencies are playing their role as required?

## **2. Significance of the paper :**

This paper critically highlights the different aspects of higher education in India as identify by the 12<sup>th</sup> five year plan which covers the duration from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017. It is essential to review the major strategies and challenges identified by the 12<sup>th</sup> five year plan for the fullest growth of higher education sector in India.

## **3. Title of the paper :**

The title of the paper is "An analysis of the approaches of 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan towards the development of higher education in India."

## **4. Objective of the paper :**

The objective of the paper is to analyze the strategies and challenges identified by 12<sup>th</sup> five year plan for the development of higher education in India.

## **5. Methodology :**

The Researchers had used secondary data sources like plan document of 12<sup>th</sup> five year plan, Reports of govt. of India etc. The data had been analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively.

## **6. Analysis :**

### **6.1. Enrolment Target :**

The target of 12<sup>th</sup> five year plan for enhancing enrolment in higher education is additional enrolment capacity of 10 million students including 1 million in open and distance learning would be created by the end of the Twelfth Plan. This would enable roughly 3 million more students in each age cohort to enter higher education and raise the country's GER of Higher Education from 17.9 per cent (estimated for 2011-12) to 25.2 per cent by 2017-18 and reach the target of 30 per cent GER by 2020-21 which would be broadly in line with world average. Though it is a positive gesture, it is not an easy task for the planning commission as well as the Govt. of India to fulfill the dream of higher education.

### **6.2. Aims of Higher Education :**

The main aims of 12<sup>th</sup> FYP for higher education are identified as-

- The Twelfth Plan will focus on the 'Three Es' of higher education, i.e. expansion, equity and excellence. Besides these, aims of Higher Education will be guided by three principles. First, emphasis will be given to quality, second, to diversify higher education opportunities, to offer a wide range of paths to success for the youth of the country. Third, governance reforms, to enable institutions to have the autonomy to develop distinctive strengths.
- The Twelfth Plan adopts a holistic approach to the issues of expansion, equity and excellence. so that expansion is not just about accommodating ever larger number of students, but is also about providing diverse choices of subjects, levels and institutions while ensuring a minimum standard of academic quality and providing the opportunity to pursue higher education to all sections of society, particularly the disadvantaged.
- The objectives must guide the development of all three segments of higher education: Central institutions, which account for 2.6 per cent of the total enrolment; State institutions which account for 38.5 per cent of enrolment; and private institutions that cater to the remaining students. All three segments have to be expanded to achieve enrolment target.
- Creating additional capacity and ensuring equal access opportunities is another important aim of 12th five year plan for higher education.

**6.3. Framework of the Twelfth Plan for Higher Education :**

The framework for the Twelfth Plan for higher education identifies 5 major critical areas related to expansion, equity, excellence, governance and financing of Higher Education.

**6.3.1. Strategy for Expansion of Higher education :**

Expand access by increasing the capacity in existing institutions rather than increasing the number of institutions, with the exception of new institutions needed to address critical regional and social gaps is identified as a major strategic framework for expansion of higher education. Create a system of institutional differentiation and distinctiveness to cater to a diverse body of students and the varied needs of employers. The new technologies will be used to improve quality, reduce costs, improve processes and efficiency, reaching a larger body of students, promoting transparent governance and raising the quality of teaching and research.

**6.3.2. Strategy for Equity of Higher education :**

The 12<sup>th</sup> plan emphasizes on to provide significant increase in budgetary support for equity-related measures through targeted equity-related schemes, which will replace the existing maze of multiple and diffused small outlay schemes.

**6.3.3. Strategy for Excellence of Higher education :**

Foster a shift from an input-centric and credential-based pedagogical approach to a learner-centric and learning-outcome based approach to improve the quality of teaching and research is the main strategy identified for achieving the excellence in higher education. Ensure availability, recruitment and retention of qualified people to meet the growing need for quality faculty; upgrade the skills of existing faculty; and, build synergies between teaching and research to promote excellence in both. Facilitate translation of academic research into innovations for practical use in society and economy and foster entrepreneurship that creates wealth and public goods. Promote internationalization by encouraging and supporting institutions and their faculty to engage more deeply with institutions and faculty around the world in areas ranging from teaching- learning to research and outreach. Create and facilitate alliances, networks, clusters of academic institutions amongst themselves and with research institutions and

industry to accelerate the process of knowledge development by better resource utilization.

#### **6.3.4. Strategy for Governance of Higher education :**

More emphasis is given on institutional autonomy, by transforming the role of government from command and control to a steering and evaluative role. Enhance the capacity of the higher education system to govern itself by widespread and coordinated regulatory reform. Increase transparency in both public and private institutions by requiring them to disclose important information related to admissions, fees, faculty, programs, placements, governance, finance, business tie-ups and ownership. Besides this the institution has to support a transparent system in its governance.

#### **6.3.5. Strategy for Financing of Higher education :**

Implement a quantum leap in both public and private sector investment in higher education to achieve the various goals set out for the Twelfth Plan. Implement a significant increase in Central plan funds for higher education and strategically deploy these funds to improve the entire system of higher education, including State systems. Directly connect funding streams to specific outcomes and desired impacts related to the Plan objectives through reforms in governance arrangements at the national, State and institutional levels with suitable implementation and monitoring mechanisms.

### **6.4. Some suggestive approaches of 12<sup>th</sup> five year plan for development of higher education :**

The 12<sup>th</sup> five year plan has proposed some very effective strategies for the rapid expansion and growth of higher education sector in the country. These major strategies are-

#### **6.4.1. Develop Central Institutions as Quality :**

Leading Institutions: According to the strategy of 12<sup>th</sup> FYP, enrolment in Central institutions will be increased from 6 lakh to 12 lakh students mainly within existing Central institutions. Only research and innovation based institutions or exemplar institutions would be established in the Central sector or supported by the Central Government Older Central institutions will be financially

supported to redevelop campuses to achieve scale and build state-of-the-art facilities. Central institutions should become catalytic role models for other institutions in all aspects including governance, infrastructure, faculty and curricula. It is realized in the plan that central funding for State higher education is small; its reach is limited, and its impact insignificant. It is poorly coordinated and plagued by excessive bureaucracy, inefficiencies, low levels of monitoring and poor quality of outcomes.

#### **6.4.2. Shifting in Central Funding for State Higher Education :**

The 12<sup>th</sup> FYP states that we must enable a State system-wide planning perspective and benefit from the synergy in spending by the Central and State Government. It is also said that states to develop comprehensive State higher education plans that utilize an interconnected strategy to address issues of expansion, equity and excellence together. Central funding to be linked to academic, administrative and financial reforms of State higher education. The centre will fund to the state higher education institutions through a flagship programme called Rashtriya Uchcha Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA).

#### **6.4.3. Quality Private Growth :**

The Private sector has contributed significantly to higher education expansion during the Eleventh Plan and private higher education now accounts for 58.5 per cent of enrolments. In 12<sup>th</sup> FYP the private sector will be encouraged to establish larger and higher quality institutions. The 12<sup>th</sup> FYP stresses more on searching of innovative ways have to be found to encourage the infusion of more private capital in the traditional not-for-profit higher education. Some proposals that require serious consideration include: (i) enabling liberal financing options for the sector, like allowing private institutions to raise funds through public offerings of bonds or shares; (ii) changing the legal status of the sector to attract more investors, like allowing all types of institutions to be established under Section 25 of the companies Act and allowing existing trusts and societies to convert to institution under Section 25 of the companies Act; (iii) giving priority recognition to the sector, like providing it 'infrastructure' status with similar, financial and tax treatment. As per the strategy of 12<sup>th</sup> FYP the government could support non-profit private institutions in three ways-(i) access to public student

financial aid would be extended to accredited private institutions; (ii) access to research funding will be on an equal footing with public institutions with suitable protection for intellectual property derived from such research; and (iii) private institutions would benefit from various long-term quality enhancement efforts like enhanced use of technology and faculty development initiatives. New models of Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) in higher education will be encouraged in the Twelfth Plan, particularly in the establishment of research and innovation institutions. Though the PPP model of education is a innovative concept it requires a technical and careful attention from government side for its grand success in Indian scenario.

#### **6.4.4. Equity in Higher Education :**

Creation of a Comprehensive Student Financial Aid Programme is one of the aspects to be taken care for equity in Higher Education. Public spending on student financial aid would be enhanced considerably so as to increase the number and amount of scholarships. As per 12<sup>th</sup> FYP an Empowered Committee would decide on guidelines for each of the scholarships keeping in mind the need for avoiding overlap and enhancing impact. Hence the result of such innovative practice is yet to be seen in Indian Higher education.

#### **6.4.5. Expansion Strategy for Enrolment :**

The four key principles that will drive the strategy for higher education expansion as depicted in the Twelfth Plan are as follows:

- Expansion must focus on locations, States, subject areas/ disciplines, and types of institutions where current capacity is low, instead of creating additional capacity across the board.
- Expansion must be aligned to the country's economy. Specific emphasis must be given to the expansion of skill-based programmes in higher education.
- The relative strengths of different types of institutions must be harnessed to serve different needs. Central institutions must be assisted to become quality-leading institutions. State institutions must be supported to expand further and simultaneously address equity issues and improve quality. New models of Public-Private Partnership (PPP) in higher education must be encouraged not only for technology intensive education but also for multidisciplinary



and research-based education. Open and distance learning must be used to widen access in a cost-effective and flexible manner.

- Overall, expansion will be carefully planned to provide better access to the poor and disadvantaged social groups and first generation learners from backward areas.

#### **6.4.6. Deepening Academic Reforms :**

The institutional framework to deepen academic reforms would include introduction of choice based credit system, CCE, and regular revision of curricula for making them up-to-date and relevant to contemporary and future needs.

#### **6.4.7. Re-Crafting Undergraduate Education :**

Reforming undergraduate curriculum through funding and institutional support will be emphasized in the Twelfth Plan. Focus on Teachers and Teaching.

#### **6.4.8. National Mission on Use of ICT in Higher Education :**

During the Twelfth Plan the initiative of the Eleventh Plan i.e. the ICT in higher education would be carried forward with an objective to make the programmes more effective, efficient and sustainable.

#### **6.4.9. Research and Innovation :**

In the Twelfth Plan, it is emphasized that research efforts need to be more directly linked to the national development agenda and better connected to the needs of industry and society. Public R&D institutions should be permanently and closely coupled including in governance structures to local institutions of higher education. This needs an effort to make it realistic in actual situation.

### **7. The researcher's observation with some suggestions:**

- The strategies identified by the 12<sup>th</sup> five year plan needs proper attention and care of the highest level authorities.
- It must focus on the elimination of gender gap as well as the women empowerment through proper implementation of the higher education schemes identified by 12<sup>th</sup> FYP.
- The most waited centrally sponsored scheme for higher education i.e. Rastriya Uchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) need to be implemented for proper flow of fund to the state managed higher education institutions.

- The 12<sup>th</sup> FYP must focus on elimination of the regional gap of higher education. It should focus more on the regions like North East, J & K, etc which are lagging behind in Higher as well as technical education.
- Management of Fund is the more crucial area to be looked after by the authority. The phrase "money is honey" is highly usable in the institutions of higher education. So, governance and maintenance of accounts with proper utilization of fund is another important area to be taken care.

#### **8. Conclusion :**

The 12<sup>th</sup> five year plan makes the higher education more ambitious as reflected in plan documents. It needs right execution and implementation for its success. The Central government should have a soft corner even for the state universities and colleges, especially in the light of the fact, that these institutions have a dearth of funds. To maintain the equity and access in Higher education, the Central government needs to emphasize on the overall development of State universities too. The focus on the 'Three Es' - expansion, equity and excellence, of Higher education can only be achieved if the State universities too are strengthened with all amenities to be able to compete with the best in the globalized world.

Higher education requires significantly larger investments to deliver on the multiple objectives stated in the educational vision statements of the ambitious programmes of development of this sector. The role of Central Plan funds for higher education is critical not only to revamp Central institutions so that they can play national leadership roles in delivering the three Es, but also to leverage desired changes in the entire system of higher education.

As stated in 12<sup>th</sup> FYP document, funding for both the Central and the State Governments has to be significantly increased and efficiency of its utilization improved during the Twelfth Plan. The Plan should target public spending on higher education to reach 1.5 per cent of the GDP from the current 1.22 per cent. For this, the Central Government has to use its Plan funds strategically to encourage greater State funding and promote efficiency in expenditure.

During the Twelfth Plan, the States have been encouraged to draw up

strategic plans for development of higher education in their states keeping in mind the broad objectives of the Government of quality improvement and skill development. Such plans should be comprehensive and take a holistic view of increased demand pressure with improvements in the school system and greater need for more qualified people from the economy and the specific, trained, skilled labour-intensive market. An institutional mechanism for joint funding of State plans by the Central and the State Governments should be evolved and only then, the vision of the Twelfth Five Year Plan, as a joint review mechanism, would be successful.

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