

Chapter 1 Introduction

Higher Education is an important sector for the growth and development of individuals that contributes to the development of a society. Providing equal opportunities for quality higher education to all aspirants for correcting sectoral and social imbalances, reinvigorating institutions, achieving international benchmarks of excellence and extending the frontiers of knowledge remain the main challenges of the Higher Education sector.

The Strategic Framework of the 12th Five Year Plan (FYP) of the Government of India, while recognising the above challenges, identifies three main outcomes for the Higher Education sector *i.e.*, expanded availability, narrowing of group inequalities and improved teaching and research.

At the global level, the development agenda aims to ensure inclusive, equitable and quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all by 2030 as defined in the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 4).

1.1 Odisha vs. All-India Picture

Higher education in India registered significant scale of expansion in terms of increase in number of higher educational institutions at all levels, rise in enrolment as well as public funding. However, a comparative analysis made between Odisha and the country as a whole, is available in the All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) Reports during 2014-19 published by the Ministry of Human Resources Development (MHRD), which shows that Odisha ranks towards the lower end of the table. The parameters cover number of higher educational institutions, college density¹, and Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER)².

Table 1.1: Comparison of Odisha with All-India average

Year	Number of universities (both Government and Non-Government)		Number of colleges (both Government and Non-Government)		College Density		GER of		Rank of Odisha among all states in terms of GER
	Odisha	All India	Odisha ³	All India	Odisha	All India	Odisha	All India	
2014-15	21	760	705	38,498	23	27	17.70	24.30	26
2018-19	28	993	883	39,931	23	28	22.10	26.30	24
Percentage of Increase/ (Decrease)	33	31	25	4	-	4	25	8	8

(Source: All India Survey on Higher Education Report 2018-19 and Student Academic Management System database)

The above table shows that between the years 2014-15 and 2018-19, while number of universities in Odisha registered a 33 *per cent* increase compared to

¹ College Density = Number of colleges per lakh population of age group of 18-23 years

² Gross Enrolment Ratio in Higher education in India is calculated as a percentage of the total enrolment in higher education, regardless of age to the eligible official population (18-23 years) in a given academic year

³ Number of colleges of Odisha has been taken from Student Academic Management System (SAMS), a web based Students Information and Admission system from 2012-13

31 *per cent* at the national level, the college density in the State remained stagnant as compared to a four *per cent* improvement at the All India level.

GER of Odisha which was 17.7 in 2014-15 increased to 22.1 in 2018-19 registering an increase of 25 *per cent*. However, it still remained significantly below the All India GER of 26.30 during this period. At the same time, there was a marginal improvement of two ranks (from 26 to 24) for Odisha among States during 2014-19.

As per the National Institute Ranking Framework (NIRF) in 2018-19, no public higher educational institution (university or college) was in the top 100 institutions in the country. However, two private deemed universities in the State *viz.*, Siksha 'O' Anusandhan, (SOA) and Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT) ranked at 24 and 31 positions respectively in 2019.

Keeping in view the above, and to assess and evaluate outcomes of Higher Education in Odisha, a Performance Audit of Outcomes in Higher Education in Odisha, was taken up.

1.2 Organisational set-up

The Department of Higher Education (DHE), Government of Odisha is headed by Commissioner-*cum*-Secretary who deals with affairs of Universities and colleges providing higher education in general stream. The Commissioner-*cum*-Secretary is assisted by Additional Secretaries, Joint Secretaries and Director of Higher Education and the Regional Directors across the State to carry out work relating to development and expansion of higher education and control administrative, educational and financial functions of the colleges and universities.

At the University level, Vice Chancellor (VC) who is the *ex-officio* Chairman of the Senate, Syndicate and the Academic Council, is the Principal Executive and Academic Officer of the University. The VC is assisted by the Registrar, Comptroller of Finance (CoF), Controller of Examination (CoE), Chairperson of Post Graduate Council, Heads of Departments (HoDs), *etc.*

The Senate is the highest governing body of a University and is responsible for making Statutes and passing resolutions on the various governance issues of the University. The Syndicate is the Chief Executive Body of the University, responsible for framing, amending and cancelling ordinances and appointment of teaching as well as non-teaching staff. The Universities further affiliate Government and non-Government colleges under them headed by Principals.

1.3 Identifying outcome parameters for Higher Education

Students, Society and the Government, all have different expectations from higher education. After extensive interactions with various stakeholders in the higher education sector, namely, students, experts like policy makers, accreditation agencies, regulatory bodies, universities, government education departments, *etc.*, it emerged that

- Students desire 'employability and higher studies' as the primary outcome of higher education.

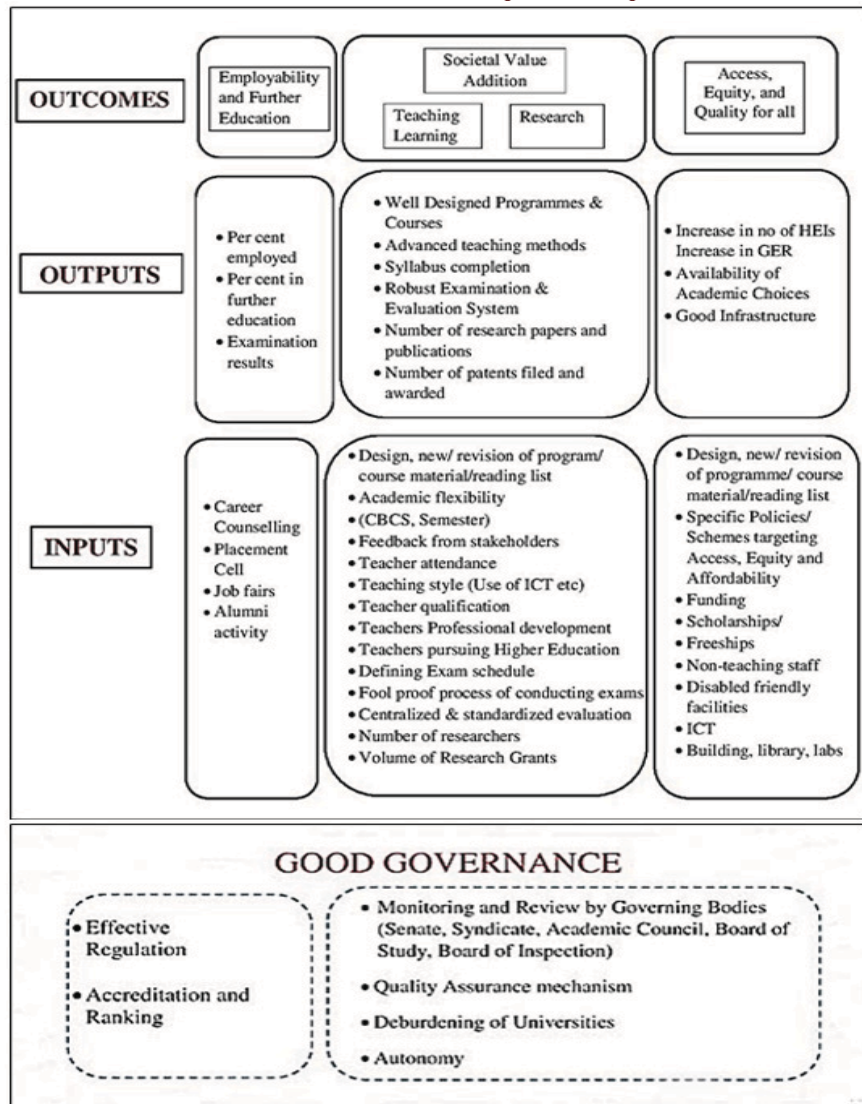
- Society wants higher education to contribute towards ‘creation of new knowledge through research’ and ‘diffusion of knowledge through effective teaching/learning processes’.
- Government aims to ‘create a high-quality higher education system which is easily accessible to all sections of society’.

These broad outcomes of higher education were linked with various inputs and outputs required in setting up and managing an effective higher education system.

It also emerged that a robust and strong governance structure was paramount in achieving these outcomes. Hence, our audit also identified and evaluated the various ‘parameters required for good governance’.

All the three major identified outcomes as well as input and output factors with their linkages have been depicted in the chart below:

Chart 1: Diagrammatic representation of the relation between outcomes of Higher Education and their related inputs and outputs



1.4 Audit Objectives

The objectives of Audit of Outcomes in Higher Education were to assess whether:

1. *The Higher Education system led to increased employability and progress to higher studies for students of higher educational institutions;*
2. *The Higher Education system led to betterment of society through effective teaching/learning processes and high quality research;*
3. *Equitable Access to Quality Higher Education was ensured for all; and*
4. *Governance and Management of the Higher Education system was adequate and effective.*

1.5 Audit Criteria

We conducted the Performance Audit against criteria derived from the following documents:

- Inclusive & Qualitative expansion of Higher Education-12th Five Year Plan (2012-17);
- Guidelines/Manuals/ Regulations issued by University Grants Commission (UGC);
- Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) guidelines;
- The National Institution for Transforming India (NITI) Aayog's three-year action plan (2017-18 to 2019-20);
- Guidelines and Manual issued by National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC);
- National Institutional Ranking Framework manual issued by MHRD;
- Circulars/orders issued by the Department of Higher Education;
- Self-Study Report, Accreditation/ Re-Accreditation Report, Information Bulletin, circulars and guidelines issued by the selected Universities; and
- Minutes of the meeting of the Senate, Syndicate, Academic Council, Board of Studies, Finance Committee *etc.*, of the selected Universities.

1.6 Audit Scope and Methodology

1.6.1 Audit Scope

The Performance Audit was conducted during October 2019 to January 2020 covering the period from 2014-15 to 2018-19. Out of the nine State Universities providing education in general streams (Science/ Arts/ Commerce), two Universities (22 *per cent*) *viz.*, Utkal University and North

Odisha University were selected⁴ for audit scrutiny. Out of a total universe of 299 colleges under these Universities, 32 were selected for test check, as detailed below:

- There were 227 general degree colleges affiliated to Utkal University, out of which 23 colleges (10 *per cent*) were selected using simple random sampling. Out of the eight Model degree colleges⁵ in Odisha, the only one affiliated to Utkal University, was also selected. Thus, a total of 24 colleges affiliated to Utkal University were selected as sample.
- There were 71 general degree colleges affiliated to North Odisha University, out of which 8 (10 *per cent*) colleges were selected using simple random sampling.

The selected sample mentioned above includes both Government⁶ and Non-Government colleges⁷. University-wise and Government/Non-Government-wise break-up of sampled colleges are shown in the table below:

Table 1.2: Table showing number of colleges selected for test check in Audit.

Name of the University	Number of colleges selected for test check		
	Number of Government colleges	Number of Non-Government colleges	Total number of selected colleges
Utkal University	3 (Out of 8)	21 (Out of 219)	24 (including Model degree)
North Odisha University	1 (Out of 4)	7 (Out of 67)	8
Total	4	28	32

(Source: Audit sampling)

1.6.2 Audit Methodology

The aim of this audit was to assess and evaluate the State's performance in achieving outcomes of higher education. Since neither Government of India (GoI) nor Government of Odisha has defined specific outcomes and criteria for the measurement of these outcomes in detail, Audit developed its own criteria, based on policy documents, processes of accreditation and ranking of higher educational institutions (HEIs) and inputs from experts of the Higher Education domain.

⁴ There are 28 universities in Odisha, of which 11 are general universities. From the general universities, Utkal University of Culture and Sri Jagannath Sanskrit University were excluded as these do not have Science/Arts/Commerce streams. Further, three more universities (Khallikote, Rama Devi and Gangadhar Meher) were excluded as they were established in 2015-16. From the remaining six universities, Utkal University being the oldest and largest was selected. From remaining five universities, one university (North Odisha University) was selected using Simple Random Sampling without Replacement (SRSWOR) method

⁵ Model Degree College is established under Central Government assisted scheme, in which Government colleges are opened in educationally backward districts having GER lower than the National GER

⁶ Established and managed by State Government

⁷ Colleges set up by non-government entities but receive recurring financial assistance from Government in shape of Grant-in-Aid towards salary cost of teaching and non-teaching staff

In order to assess the performance of higher education system in relation to the outcomes, key outcome indicators (*Appendix 1*) as well as input-output indicators (*Appendix 2*) were formulated. These indicators help in evaluating the outcomes as well as the steps taken to achieve these outcomes.

The achievement of these Outcomes is dependent on how adequately and effectively interventions of the Government are planned and implemented. Many inputs such as funding, human resources, *etc.*, and outputs such as research, capital expenditure, *etc.*, were identified which directly influenced these outcomes. These have been discussed separately in relevant chapters of this report.

On the basis of these outcome indicators and criteria thereon, Audit developed data Annexure, student survey and audit questionnaires. Further, Audit has developed quantitative proxy criteria, based on the scores obtained by 22 Universities graded A++, A+, A, B++, B+, B, C under the NAAC grading system during 2017-18.

Audit was conducted through physical inspections of sites; evidence was collected through copies of relevant documents, discussion papers and photographs of sites. Feedback through a student's survey was also obtained for evaluating quality of education.

An Entry Conference was held (October 2019) with Commissioner-cum-Secretary, Higher Education Department, Government of Odisha in which Audit objectives, scope of Audit and Audit methodology were discussed. Replies received from the Government (September 2020) have also been suitably incorporated.

1.7 Acknowledgement

Audit acknowledges the co-operation extended by the Higher Education Department, Director of Higher Education, Vice-Chancellors and officers of Utkal University and North Odisha University and Principals and officers of Government and non-Government colleges for the conduct of the Performance Audit.