# Issues in Higher Education

## Why in news?

As per Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), the unemployment rate among graduates is higher than in many other developing countries as it may be out of touch with the skill requirement in India.

## What are the issues with employment in India?

- **Intense lockdown**- Students who enrolled in college during the pandemic have now graduated and there are concerns over their employability and the ***quality of online education***.
- **Learning loss**- The students faced challenges in online learning to concentrate for long hours on screen.
- There were ***learning deficiencies*** and that has affected the abilities of these students to become more employable.
- **Structural issues**- The rapid ***expansion of private*** higher education institutions has led to decline in quality and regulation.
- **Lack of regulation**- State governments, the Central government and the University Grants Commission did not have the capacity to regulate the growing private institutions.
- **Traditional agriculture**- In India, agriculture is still not mechanised and it does not use advanced technologies which makes it unattractive for graduates who have higher education degrees.
- **Lack of opportunities**- Low skill jobs are taken by some graduates in service sector due to limited opportunities in the economy.
- **Low R&D expenditure-** India spends only ***0.7% of its GDP*** on research and development, compared to ***4% in Korea*** which hampers the creation of new knowledge and innovation.
- **Public-private imbalance-** R&D expenditure from private sector is comparatively less than the public sector, thus limiting the growth of private sector jobs in research and collaboration between industry and academia.
- **Limited scope for research**- Universities doesn't have research facility as it is done mostly in public research institutions, thus reducing the quality and relevance of research.
- **Lack of industrial policy**- India does ***not have a clear industrial policy or a manufacturing strategy*** to guide its economic development, this leads to loss of value from research.
- **Low female labour force participation**- India has achieved gender parity in higher education but it couldn't get converted into job due to unemployment.

## What are the concerns with the examination system in India?

- **Rote learning-** The students are tested on memory and high pass percentage are the key objectives of the education administration.
- **Decentralised assessment**- India has diversified modes of assessment which are guided by secrecy and standardisation, this leads to scandals and other issues.
- **Inconsistency**- Question papers have errors, irrelevance and low standards. The evaluation is also unfair and inaccurate and does not reflect the students learning outcomes.
- **Mismatch between skills and certification**- The examination boards do not test or certify the students on the higher order skills that are required for employability.
- **Alternative assessment**- The employers disregard institutional certification and have their own methods of assessing the candidates leading to a demand for coaching for preparing competitive exams.
- **New Education Policy 2020**- The policy recommended common admission basis for students but was contradicted by the introduction of the Central University Entrance Test and the idea of 'one nation, one examination'.
- **Poor fiscal support**- India has set the gross enrolment ratio to ***50% from 27% by 2035*** but the fund is not allocated to achieve this target.

## What lies ahead?

- The universities have to be funded more and the industry should collaborate with them to boost research and innovation.
- Class 10 and Class 12 students can be diverted towards vocational training thus promoting inclusiveness and equity.
- India should have dedicated industrial policy and manufacturing strategy to guide the economic development.
- The professional bodies can be involved in curriculum design and technology should be used to standardise and enhance assessment.
- The external audit of assessment systems in universities and school boards is essential and a credible examination system is one of the key ways to improve the standard of education.

## References


1. The Hindu- Higher education out of touch with skill requirement
2. The Hindu- Examine the examination system



SHANKAR IAS PARLIAMENT
Information is Empowering