

**Theme Paper**  
**On**  
**“Enhancing Gross Enrolment Ratio to 70 percent by 2025 and 90 percent by 2035 in Higher Education and to improve Women Enrolment in Andhra Pradesh”**

Low Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) is one of the major concerns higher education system of Andhra Pradesh. It is observed that the youngsters are not showing interest in pursuing higher education despite the accessibility mainly due to the following reasons:

1. Poor employability after degree
2. Absence of good quality study material in vernacular languages
3. The limited availability of Grade 12 pass out students
4. Absence of career guidance

India enjoys an unprecedented demographic dividend, with 65% of the total population below the age of 35 years. The state of Andhra Pradesh is also having youth as the majority of the population. This young population will contribute to the economy actively at least for the next three decades. It is the responsibility of the state to see that the young population is educated and skilled. Therefore, the higher education sector of the state should develop appropriate strategies to achieve higher GER.

**Present Status:**

The present status of Gross Enrolment Ratio in the state as compared to national GER is presented in the following table.

SI. No	Year	India			Andhra Pradesh		
		Both	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female
1.	2014-15	24.3	25.3	23.2	31.2	35.2	27.3
2.	2015-16	24.5	25.4	23.5	30.8	34.7	26.9
3.	2016-17	25.2	26.0	24.5	32.4	36.5	28.4
4.	2017-18	25.8	26.3	25.4	30.9	34.7	27.1
5.	2018-19	26.3	26.3	26.4	32.4	35.8	29.0

*Source: AISHE Report 2018-19*

The GER of India has increased marginally from 24.3 in 2014-15 to 26.3 in 2018-19. The GER in Andhra Pradesh is relatively higher than national GER. The GER in AP is 32.4 in 2018-19. GER in males is 35.8 whereas GER in females is 29.0. Though there is a significant gap between male and female GER, in both the categories the GER is higher compared to national GER. However, the National Educational Policy has set a target of doubling GER in a span of 5 years. Therefore, as per the NEP the target for GER of the state

stands at around 64.8%. The State government has set a target of achieving 60 percent GER by 2024 and 90 percent GER by 2035. The following are the strategies for achieving the targets.

### **Strategies to achieve 60 percent GER in higher education in Andhra Pradesh**

1. Vocational higher education
2. ODL programs in all State and private Universities and MOOCs in vernacular languages
3. Establishment of Remote Learning Centers (RLCs)
4. Permission to new colleges only in the regions of non-representation
5. Maximum utilization of existing colleges and academic infrastructure
6. Sanction of new courses only in emerging areas with employability
7. Establishment of finishing schools
8. Establishment of residential Girls colleges

### **Strategies**

1. **Vocational Education:**All higher education institutions shall be permitted to offer vocational courses. As per the local or regional needs, the institutions should offer certificate or diploma programs. The APSSDC may offer online certificate programs using Remote Learning Centers. The proposed Skill Development University with 30 Skill Development Centers may offer certificate and diploma programs as per the local or regional needs.
2. **Earn while learn programs:**Economic problems are considered to be the reason for many students from disadvantaged sections for not pursuing higher education though they are intended to do so. Finances are required not only to support for higher education expenses but also to support their families as a responsibility of a grown up child. Therefore, to attract students from such economic background to higher education, HEIs shall be encouraged and supported to introduce Earn while learn programs. The students who need financial support shall be offered part time jobs atleast two days per week and permitting them to follow classes online during the period. The two days allotted shall be considered as present taking the attendance at the work place. Some of the jobs in which presently out-sourcing employees are engaged may be converted as student part time jobs. The HEIs can also be used as extension centers for technical and vocational services. For example, using science college laboratories for soil testing with the help of students. Whenever the institution needs extra workforce for activities such as librarian, lab attendant, maintenance staff,

etc., the institutions should allow students to perform such jobs on payment.

3. **ODL and Online Programs:** All universities should offer courses in dual mode, i.e., regular and open and distance learning. The eligible universities such as Andhra University, Sri Venkateswara University, Acharya Nagarjuna University and Sri Padmavati Mahila Viswavidyalayam should offer online courses across the state. The examination for both distance and conventional regular mode candidate should be the same in a dual-mode university.
4. **Establishment of Remote Learning Centers (RLCs):** There are many organizations offering open learning courses and making them accessible to all either at free of cost or at a nominal charge. There are two problems standing in the way for semi-urban, rural and tribal population to access online courses. Firstly, the absence of e-infrastructure and secondly, the non-availability of course material in vernacular language. Though a large number of people are willing to pursue courses and learn and upgrade their skills, they are unable to do so due to the above-stated problems. The establishment of **Remote Learning Centers (RLC)** is a step in the right direction. The management of RLCs can be entrusted to Village secretariat or highly performing DWAKRA groups. The State University of the region will recognize the centers, monitor their performance, conduct examinations and award Diplomas or Certificates as the case may be. The Government should bear the expenditure for the establishment of RLCs. Each RLC shall be equipped with 10 systems with Internet connectivity or an alternative XiFi mode. The maintenance of the RLCs will be taken care of by the respective Village secretariats or DWAKRA groups by way of charging nominal user charge.
5. **E- Content in vernacular languages and audio content development:** The AP State Council of Higher Education shall be given responsibility to take up a project of E- Content in vernacular languages and audio content development. The projects of voice dubbing for the existing e-content and/or production of new e-course materials in promising areas need to be taken up. Online learning with an emphasis on blended - MOOCs is one of the solutions for achieving higher level of access to higher education. It is found that exposure and awareness of the effective use of IT for education are relatively poor among students and teachers. Further, most institutions in these streams do not have a strong IT infrastructure and trained staff. Therefore, efforts should be made to promote MOOCs and specifically in vernacular languages.
6. **Permission to new colleges only in the regions of non-representation:** It is

observed that majority of the HEIs are unable to attract students and the admissions are less than 50%. Under such circumstance, granting permission for new colleges in the locations already crowded with the existing colleges may not be a rational option. Therefore, the sanction of new colleges shall be limited to only those regions where HEIs are not established. Further, the survey reports clearly stated that some colleges are not even able to get admissions for 25% of its sanctioned capacity for several years. It is necessary to cancel the recognition of such colleges mercilessly to provide space for new entrants into the system. The colleges with 25% to 50% admissions shall be given a chance to improve by granting a period of 2 years to reach 75% plus admissions. In case of failure, such institutes also shall be cancelled recognition.

7. **Sanction of new courses only in emerging areas:** A new college policy to permit the establishment of new colleges needs to be developed. At present, there is excess capacity and there is a skewed distribution of colleges. It is necessary to encourage performing colleges and cancel the permission for non-performing colleges. A five-year database shall be examined to categorize colleges based on KPIs. Regional distribution and density shall be the criteria to identify the need for the establishment of a new college. The successful colleges may be given permissions liberally to maximize the utilization of their existing infrastructure. Review of the functioning of virtual/digital classrooms shall be done periodically. While granting permission for starting new courses by the colleges the sanctioning authority should assess the new course in terms of employability, creativity, and contemporariness. Therefore, a clearly outlined policy with a transparent process to permit the establishment of new colleges, as well as the sanction of new courses, is required.
8. **Establishment of finishing schools:** The Universities and other HEIs should establish finishing schools on the lines of JKC. The Universities should recognize the finishing schools established in various colleges of their jurisdiction and issue certificates for the training given by finishing schools.
9. **Establishment of Residential Girls colleges:** Establishment of fully residential colleges for girls is necessary in every district to ensure Gender equity and also to increase gender parity index (GPI).