

1 Introduction

Brief snapshot of the Chapter:

- Higher Education Department spent 0.16 *per cent* of the State's Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) on higher education in 2019-20.
- Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) of the State during 2019-20 was lower (25.30 *per cent*) than that of all India average (27.10 *per cent*). However, it increased from 25 *per cent* in 2014-15 to 25.30 *per cent* in 2019-20.

1.1 Introduction

Higher education significantly contributes towards sustainable livelihoods and economic development of the nation. Good quality education is the foundation of new discoveries, new knowledge, innovation and entrepreneurship that trigger growth and prosperity of the individual as well as that of nation. The purpose of quality higher education is, therefore, more than the creation of greater opportunities for individual employment.

As of March 2020, under the administrative control of Higher Education Department of Uttar Pradesh, there were 18 State Public Universities¹ in the State. One hundred seventy government degree colleges², 331 non-government aided colleges and 6,682 self-financed private colleges in the State were affiliated to these Universities. Twenty-seven Private Universities were also in the State. During 2019-20, 90.61 lakh students were enrolled in these Colleges. Higher Education Department spent 0.16 *per cent* of the State's Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) on higher education in 2019-20.

Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER)³ of the State during 2019-20 was lower (25.30 *per cent*) than that of all India average (27.10 *per cent*). However, it increased from 25 *per cent* in 2014-15 to 25.30 *per cent* in 2019-20. None of the State University/College was in the top 100 Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) of India. Only 8.47 *per cent* (498 HEIs) of HEIs graded in the State with NAAC grading in 2018-19 were further reduced to 2.60 *per cent* (183 HEIs) in 2019-20. Of these, only 29 HEIs (0.40 *per cent*) were accredited with 'A' grading.

To examine the above concerns, it was decided to conduct a performance audit of outcomes in higher education in the State. This audit covered State funded universities/colleges with detailed scrutiny of general subjects of Arts, Commerce and Science streams only.

¹ A University means a multidisciplinary institution of higher learning that offers undergraduate and graduate programs, with high quality teaching, research and community engagement.

² A degree-granting College is referred to a multidisciplinary institution of higher learning that grants undergraduate and graduate degrees and is primarily focused on undergraduate teaching though it need not be restricted to that and it would generally be smaller than a typical university.

³ $GER = \frac{\text{Number of students enrolled in a given level of education regardless of age}}{\text{Population of the age group which officially corresponds to the given level of education}} \times 100$

1.2 Organisational set-up for HEIs

At the State Government level, Additional Chief Secretary, Department of Higher Education is responsible for policy decision-making. Planning and coordination is assigned to Chairman, U.P. State Council of Higher Education. The Director, Higher Education Department is responsible for implementation of schemes for higher education, management of government degree colleges and controlling administration of non-government aided degree colleges through Regional Higher Education Officers (RHEO) who conduct inspections and monitor implementation of schemes for higher education.

The Universities in the State are set up under the Uttar Pradesh University Act, 1973. The State Government enacted Uttar Pradesh Private Universities Act, 2019 for establishing new Private Universities and to regulate all the existing Private Universities in the State. All Universities need to adhere to the rules and regulations of University Grant Commission (UGC) for their operation.

At the University level, Vice Chancellor (VC) is the principal executive and administrative officer. VC is assisted by Pro-Vice Chancellor, Registrar, Finance Officer, Controller of Examination and Head of Departments, *etc.* The Executive Council is the principal executive body of the University and is responsible for making statutes and passing resolutions on the annual accounts and also plays vital role in administration of the University. The Academic Council is the principal academic body of the University which finalises the academic matters. Matters related to finance are looked after by Finance Committee. Apart from these permanent bodies, the University constitutes committees for specified works, *viz.*, Admission Committee, Examination Committee, Selection Committee, *etc.*, to advise the VC.

At the College level, Principal is responsible for general administration, supervision and guidance of teaching staff, student welfare, *etc.*

1.3 Outcome parameters

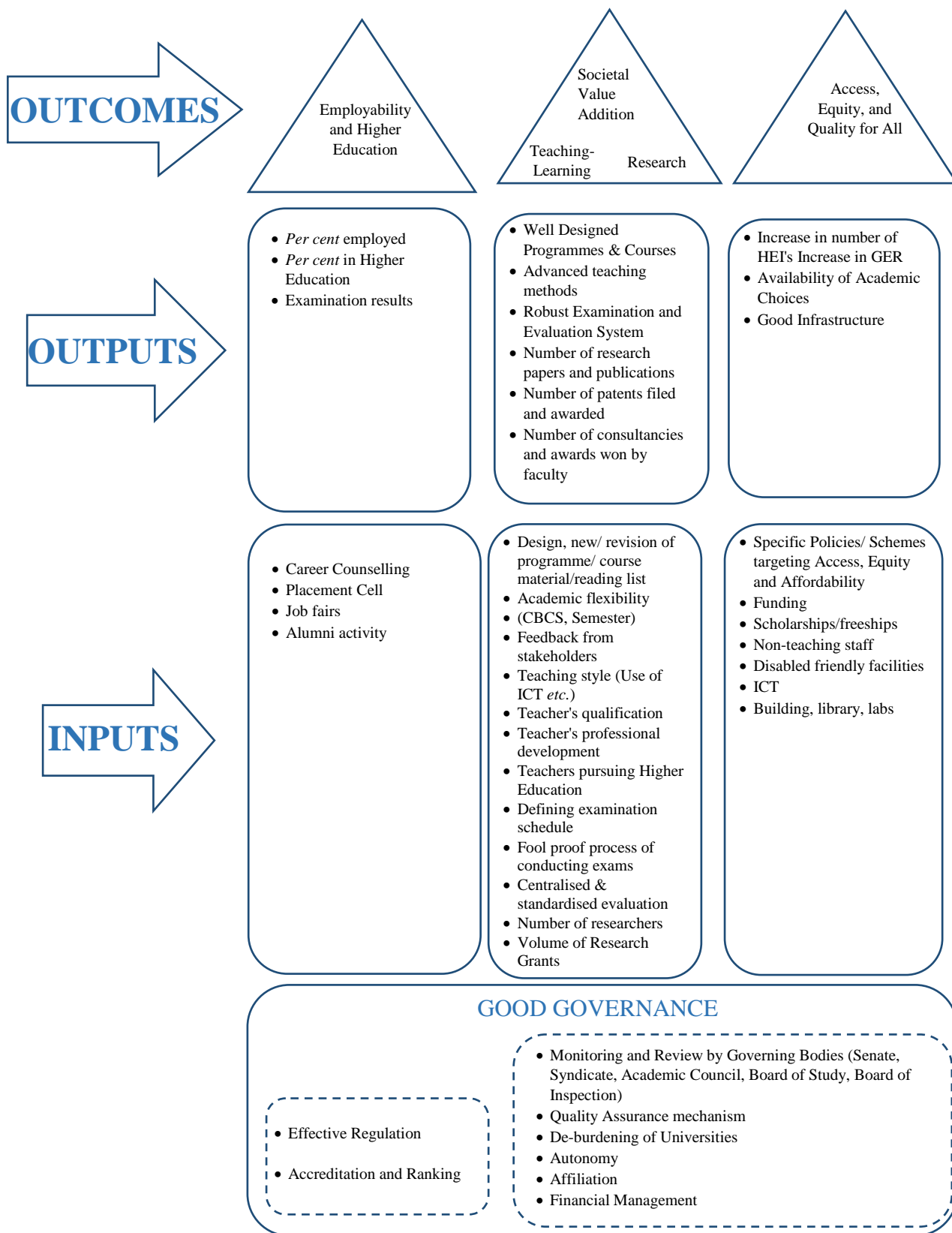
Strategic Framework of Twelfth Five Year Plan (FYP) and the Output Outcomes Budget 2018-19 of Government of India have identified four main areas of focus in Higher Education that need attention. These are Access, Equity, Quality and Governance. Outcomes of these areas have been defined as: (i) expanded availability of Higher Education Institutions, (ii) narrowing of group inequalities in access to higher education, and (iii) improving teaching and research across all institutions.

While it is possible to easily identify the inputs and outputs for evaluating higher education, identification of outcomes and their measurement is quite a challenging task. Student's desire of higher studies connected with employability as a primary outcome of higher education. The society wants higher education to contribute towards creation of new knowledge through research and effective teaching/learning processes. The Government aims to create a high quality higher education system with easy accessibility to all sections of society.

In order to assess the performance of higher education system in relation to the outcomes, key outcomes indicators (*Appendix 1.1*) as well as input-output indicators (*Appendix 1.2*) were formulated based on Twelfth FYP and assessment

indicators adopted by National Assessment and Accreditation Council. These indicators helped in evaluating the outcomes as well as the steps taken to achieve these outcomes. The outcomes, their related inputs and outputs are shown in *Chart 1.1*.

Chart 1.1: Diagrammatic representation of relation between outcomes of higher education and their related inputs and outputs



1.4 Audit objectives

The objectives for the Audit of Outcomes in Higher Education in Uttar Pradesh were to assess whether:

- I. equitable and affordable access to higher education was ensured for all;
- II. good quality higher education was ensured through effective teaching, learning and examination processes and high quality research;
- III. there was employability and progression of students to higher studies; and
- IV. governance and management of higher education system was adequate, efficient and effective.

1.5 Audit criteria

The Outcome Audit in Higher Education was conducted against the criteria derived from the following documents:

- Twelfth Five Year Plan;
- Inclusive & Qualitative Expansion of Higher Education-Twelfth Five Year Plan (2012-17);
- Uttar Pradesh State Universities Act, 1973;
- Guidelines/Regulations issued by University Grants Commission;
- Guidelines and Manual issued by National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC);
- Internal Quality Assurance Cell Manual issued by NAAC;
- National Institutional Ranking Framework Manual (NIRF);
- New Education Policy 2020;
- Circulars/orders issued by Department of Higher Education, *etc.*;
- Statutes, circulars and guidelines of the test-checked Universities;
- Minutes of the meetings of Senates, Academic Councils, Executive Councils, Finance Committees, *etc.*, of the selected Universities; and,
- Annual Accounts of the selected Universities.

1.6 Scope of Audit

The audit of outcomes was conducted during November 2019 to March 2020 covering the period of 2014-15 to 2018-19 to examine aspects of access, equity, quality, student progression and governance of higher education in State Universities and their affiliated colleges. The audit was conducted again in July to August 2021 for updating the report for the year 2019-20.

Two⁴ universities providing higher education in general streams (Arts, Commerce and Science) were selected applying simple random sampling without replacement (SRSWOR) method. While major coverage of one of the universities (University of Lucknow) selected was urban area of the Lucknow district, the major coverage of the other selected university (Mahatma Gandhi Kashi

⁴ Mahatma Gandhi Kashi Vidyapeeth, Varanasi and University of Lucknow.

Vidyapeeth, Varanasi) was rural areas of five districts (Bhadohi, Chandauli, Mirzapur, Sonebhadra and Varanasi) which represented two diverse geographical regions the Central and the Eastern regions of the State.

As of March 2019, 23 government colleges, 33 non-government aided colleges and 435 self-finance colleges were affiliated under both sampled Universities. Audit selected 10 government colleges and non-government aided colleges using SRSWOR method for detailed scrutiny of records. We had no audit mandate for self-finance private colleges, therefore, 40 such colleges affiliated by the selected two universities were selected for facility survey by Audit jointly (*Appendix -1.3*).

1.7 Audit Methodology

The aim of this audit was to assess and evaluate the State's performance in achieving outcomes of higher education. Since the Government of Uttar Pradesh has not clearly defined such outcomes, audit used the criteria which were based on policy documents, processes of accrediting and ranking HEIs and inputs from experts of the higher education domain including provisions of Twelfth FYP regarding higher education. Assessment indicators adopted by NAAC, NIRF were also utilised. Audit developed data annexure, audit questionnaires and student survey formats on the basis of these criteria.

An Entry Conference was held (15 November 2019) with Special Secretary, Higher Education Department, Government of Uttar Pradesh (GoUP), Additional Secretary, Uttar Pradesh State Council of Higher Education and Registrars of two selected Universities in which audit objectives, scope of audit, audit methodology and audit criteria including NAAC grading for the audit of outcomes in higher education were discussed.

The audit was conducted through scrutiny of records/documents, replies against audit queries/audit observations and joint physical inspections of teaching and other infrastructure in the test checked universities and the colleges. Evidence was collected through copies of relevant documents, discussion papers and photographs of sites. For evaluation of quality of education, feedback from students through a student's satisfaction survey was also obtained.

The draft report was issued to the State Government in October 2021 and their replies were received in July 2022. Exit conference was held on 15 July 2022 with Special Secretary, Higher Education Department. The reply of State Government and replies furnished by Universities⁵ have been suitably incorporated in the report.

1.8 Structure of the Report

This report has been structured on the basis of broad outcomes of Higher Education that have been identified keeping in mind the perspectives of major stakeholders i.e., Students, Society and Government.

Chapter-I of the report gives brief about introduction of the subject matter, organisational set up of HEIs, outcome parameters, audit objectives, audit criteria, scope of audit and audit methodology. Chapter-II deals with equitable and

⁵ The State Government forwarded (July 2022) the replies of UoL and MGKV on the draft report.

affordable access to higher education. Chapter-III is related with quality of higher education, employability and progression of students to higher studies. Audit findings pertaining to governance and management are discussed in Chapter-IV of the report.

1.9 Acknowledgement

We acknowledge the co-operation extended by Higher Education Department, Directorate of Higher Education, Uttar Pradesh State Council of Higher Education, Vice-Chancellors/Officers and staffs of Mahatama Gandhi Kashi Vidyapeeth, Varanasi, University of Lucknow, Principals of the test-checked government colleges, non-government aided colleges and private colleges in conduct of this Performance Audit of Outcomes in Higher Education.