

# Trends In Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) Of Higher Education Institutions (HEIS) In Andhra Pradesh: A Case Study From Andhra University

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## **Abstract:**

**Background:** Higher education enhances individual lives, broadens skills, and promotes societal growth. This study as comprehensive analysis focuses on the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in Andhra Pradesh state higher education, with a detailed case study of Andhra University (AU) and its affiliated colleges. The GER increased from 6% in 1990-91 to 27.3% in 2020-21, indicating improved access, particularly for females.

**Methodology:** It is aimed to analyze trends in GER from 2021 to 2025, assess enrolment across gender, religion, and social groups, and also examine programme-specific enrolment patterns, based on multiple sources including the All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE), National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF), Andhra University and Government reports.

**Results:** A decline in NIRF rankings from 2021 to 2025 due to academic factors like faculty-student ratios, AU's rankings recovered in 2025, reflecting improved graduation rates and inclusivity measures. As per the findings, the student body is predominant with females, while 5% come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

**Conclusion:** Despite significant growth in higher education and narrowing gender gaps, challenges persist for socially challenged and marginalized groups. It is suggested that achieving NEP 2020 goals will be essential for equitable and quality opportunities, aiming for a 50% GER by 2035.

**Key Words:** GER, HEIs, TLR, OI, GPI, Andhra University.

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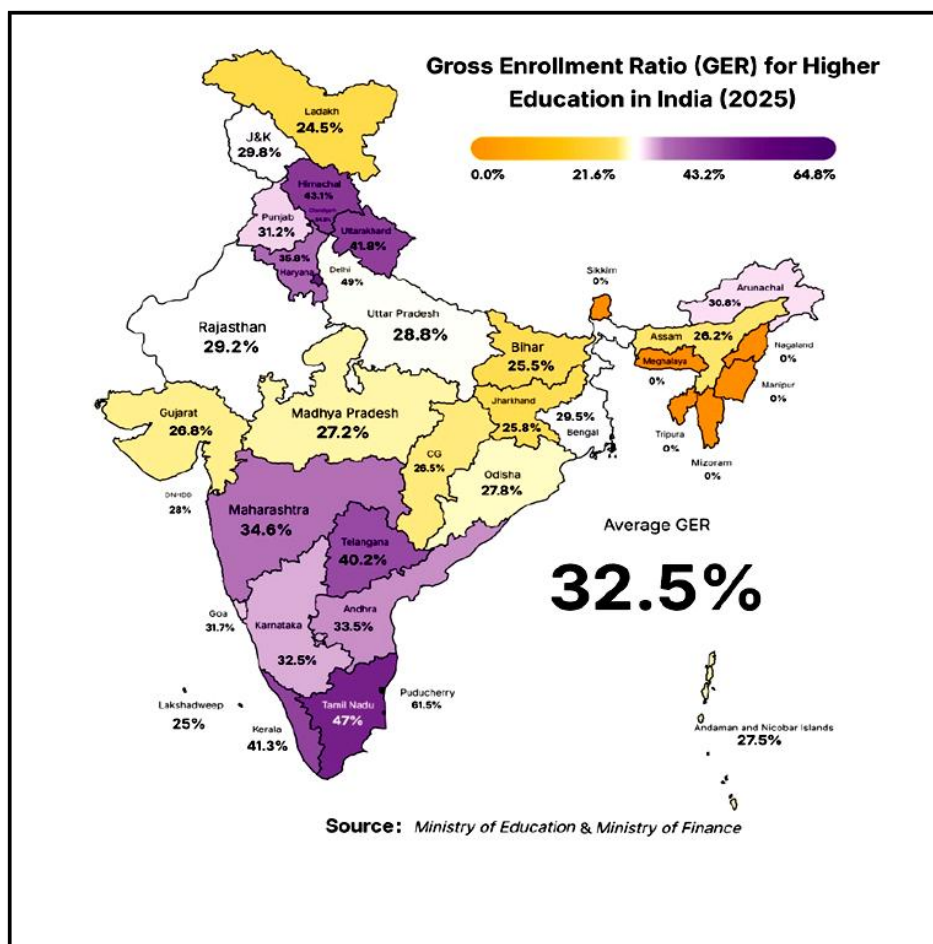
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## **I. Introduction**

Higher education is instrumental in enhancing quality of life among individuals', broadening knowledge and skills, and fostering effective communication. It enables individuals to grasp complex concepts and develop a nuanced understanding of their communities and the world. In India, higher education system targets 46.5 million enrolments by 2025, up from 43.3 million in 2021, yet experiences significant disparities across all states and Union Territories. Through continue the policy innovation and commitment to expanding educational opportunities, can enhance its higher education landscape, contributing to all societal advancement and economic growth. Across the different social groups, gross enrolment ratio (GER) is a crucial indicator of educational access, has been analyzed. GER trends in higher education across the country point to significant growth and progress, yet they also highlight ongoing challenges, particularly in terms of equitable access for marginalized communities. Historically, India's GER appears to have risen from 25.2% in 2016-17 to 27.3% in 2020-21. Tamil Nadu recorded the highest GER at 46.9%, while Bihar recorded the lowest at 15.9%, which is presenting in the India map. In 2020-21, the GER for women was 1.1% higher than that for men (AISHE, 2021)<sup>[1]</sup>.

With south Indian states like Andhra Pradesh, the national education policy (NEP-2020) targets a 50% GER by 2035, improving accessibility of online courses and vocational training. Despite the growth and progress, challenges remain regarding ensuring equitable access for all social groups. There is a pressing need for policies that promote inclusivity and address disparities in educational attainment. To improving GER further, enhancing the number of institutions and focusing on both rural and female access will be crucial. In review of literature, there are many studies show that gender disparities: men have a GER of 27.9%, whereas women are at 26.7% respectively (Khan, K 2021; MoF, 2021; Mittal, P & Patwardhan, B 2020; Komal Rawat, 2020; Shanjendu Nath, 2014)<sup>[2-6]</sup>. Among the marginalized communities, such as Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST), continue to lag with GERs of 23.1% and 18.9%, indicating persistent inequalities in access to higher education (AISHE, 2020)<sup>[7]</sup>. Since 1990, gender gap in higher education of India has narrowed significantly. Government initiatives including establishing exclusive for women, enhancing rural access, and reservations in admissions, has positively influenced enrolment rates. Further, societal shifts toward valuing

female education support this upward trend. Notably, female enrolment has increased from 10.9% in 1950-51 to 48.2% in 2020-21, demonstrating effective strategies by various governments to enhance access to higher education. Keeping in view of mind, the present study examines the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), utilizing secondary data, with special reference to a case study of Andhra University and its affiliated colleges.



### Higher Education in Andhra Pradesh state

Andhra Pradesh has built a wider and more inclusive higher education system with a large number of universities and colleges spread across the state, expanding access to higher education significantly. In the state conference of the VCs from all the state universities and dignitaries, Andhra Pradesh Governor S. Abdul Nazeer said that higher education is undergoing a major shift with the implementation of NEP-2020 and is laying out a vision for a remarkable transformation in state’s higher education landscape, the Governor stated that over the years. He pointed out that many young, especially from rural and from first-generation learner backgrounds, was able to aspire to university education and opined that the increasing participation of women in higher education was a positive and encouraging trend, by ensuring near-equitable participation of women in higher education, was a clear sign of progress. Many factors influencing the disparities in higher education include population size, urbanization, and the availability of educational institutions. Due to college availability, Indian states with larger populations like Andhra Pradesh show higher enrolments. The AP state government for taking up significant steps/ initiatives inclusively to support students through welfare measures of scholarships, fee support and others, and also maintained such efforts helped many young learners enter the higher education system (Government of Andhra Pradesh, 2021) [8].

### Higher Education at Andhra University: A Way Forward

If reforms under NEP (2020) and state higher education policy (APSCHE) are implemented consistently, Andhra University can reposition itself as a leading research and innovation-driven public university in India’s coastal region. The evolution of AU reflects the broader story of Indian public universities classifying into three phases for easy understanding are:

**Foundation and Early Growth (1926-1950):** Andhra University established in 1926 under the Madras Act 1926, Sir C.R. Reddy was the first Vice-Chancellor, is one of India's oldest state residential and multi-disciplinary universities, celebrated its centenary. It is a prominent research and teaching-cum-affiliating institution under a single system, serving the northern coastal districts, Among Indian universities by NIRF-2025, 23<sup>rd</sup> rank received and accredited with A++ by NAAC-2023. The expansive 425-acre campus hosts over 350 affiliated colleges. However, the Andhra University offers diverse UG, PG, and PhD programs. This period is often considered, where AU became a model for public university education in South India.



Source: The Hindu Newspaper

**Expansion and Academic Peak (1960-1990):** During second phase, rapid expansion of departments like engineering, sciences, arts, law, pharmacy. Across coastal Andhra Pradesh, academic growth as peak in affiliated colleges and strong reputation in research and postgraduate education. AU became a regional academic hub, with key strengths are regarding research-oriented faculty, strong public university identity, and leadership in humanities and science disciplines in this phase.

**Stagnation and Competitive pressure (2000-Present):** Growth from the 2000s onward slowed due to administrative and structural constraints, rise of private universities and deemed institutions, and increased competition from central institutions in Andhra Pradesh.

### **Challenges, Opportunities and Strategies at University**

Andhra University still maintains recognition of NAAC “A++” as high quality rating and continued relevance in state higher education system. Recent analysis highlights on the AU status: Only ~20% of required teaching staff currently available, aging infrastructure and limited modernization. This university has been faced many challenges include: a) Faculty and Human Resource Crisis; b) Infrastructure Modernization; c) Competition from Emerging Institutions; d) Curriculum Relevance and Industry Linkages; e) Governance and Autonomy Issues; and f) Digital Transformation and AI Integration. With these remedies have been practiced, the opportunities and strategic direction at Andhra University is increasingly positioning itself in future as: A century-old heritage university, transitioning into a modern innovation-driven institution. Despite challenges, Andhra University has a strong potential if reforms continue: 1) NEP 2020-driven transformation; 2) Industry collaboration; 3) Research specialization, and 4) Heritage and Innovation model.

## **II. Methodology:**

The primary objective of the study is “to analyze GER trends in Andhra Pradesh state higher education with special reference to a case study of Andhra University from 2021 to 2025”, with the following specific objectives twofold that are: 1) to examine enrolment patterns across age, region, different social groups, and 2) to understand programme-wise enrolment. Based on the secondary sources including the All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE), the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF), Andhra University and

Government Reports, the present study is comprehensive approach which aimed to analyze GER trends at the HEIs in Andhra Pradesh from 2021 to 2025.

### III. Results

To educational equity, highlighting implications for broader educational reforms, Andhra University’s performance and commitment have improved. The results of the study in Table-1 revealed that an analysis of trends in higher education at Andhra University (AU), highlighting a systematic increase in sanctioned intake for both UG and PG programs over the years. The student demographics are increasingly diverse, with successful placements reinforcing AU's status as a progressive institution. In 2025-26, total UG students reached 3224, with a significantly higher female-to-male ratio (2155 females vs. 1069 males). Enrolment in 4-year UG programmes surged from 2171 in 2021 to 3224 in 2025, while female enrolment nearly doubled. Conversely, 3-year UG programmes declined from 280 to 120, indicating a shift towards NEP-aligned structures. PG 2-year programmes saw a slight drop from 6084 to 5260. Integrated 5-year programmes grew steadily, achieving gender parity, while PG 6-year programmes exhibited significant female dominance.

**Table No.1:** Trends in GER at the UG and PG Programmes by Gender

Number of Students	Under Graduation			Post-Graduation		
	3 yrs	4 yrs	5 yrs	2 yrs	3 yrs	6 yrs
<b>2025</b>						
Male	79	1069	218	2182	6	47
Female	41	2155	222	3078	20	118
Total	120	3224	440	5260	26	165
<b>2024</b>						
Male	76	1252	258	2463	4	51
Female	44	1972	172	3137	25	124
Total	120	3224	430	5600	29	175
<b>2023</b>						
Male	102	1484	289	3164	11	66
Female	58	1388	181	2920	22	123
Total	160	2872	470	6084	33	189
<b>2022</b>						
Male	131	1330	233	3277	11	60
Female	69	1190	197	2697	20	123
Total	200	2520	430	5974	31	183
<b>2021</b>						
Male	181	1195	203	3073	12	51
Female	99	976	187	2951	18	102
Total	280	2171	390	6024	30	153

Figure-1 shows a decline in male GER in Undergraduate programmes at Andhra University from 55.6% in 2021 to 36.1% in 2025. In contrast, female GER increased from 44.4% to 63.9%, with a crossover around 2023. By 2025, female enrolment exceeded male enrolment, indicating improved access and preference for women in UG education, reflecting positive trends in gender inclusion and educational opportunities.

**Figure No.1:** Trends in GER at the UG Programmes by Gender

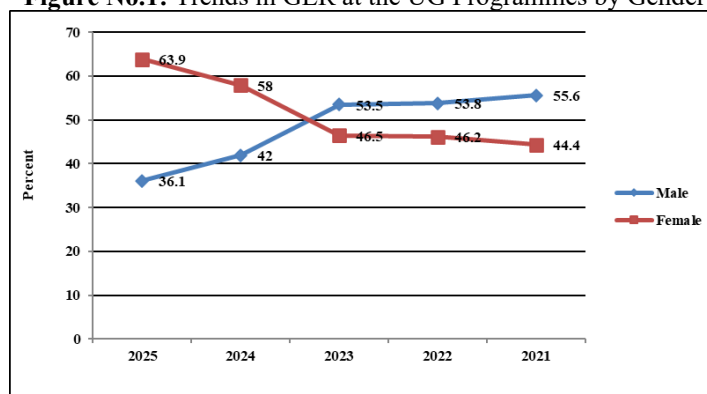
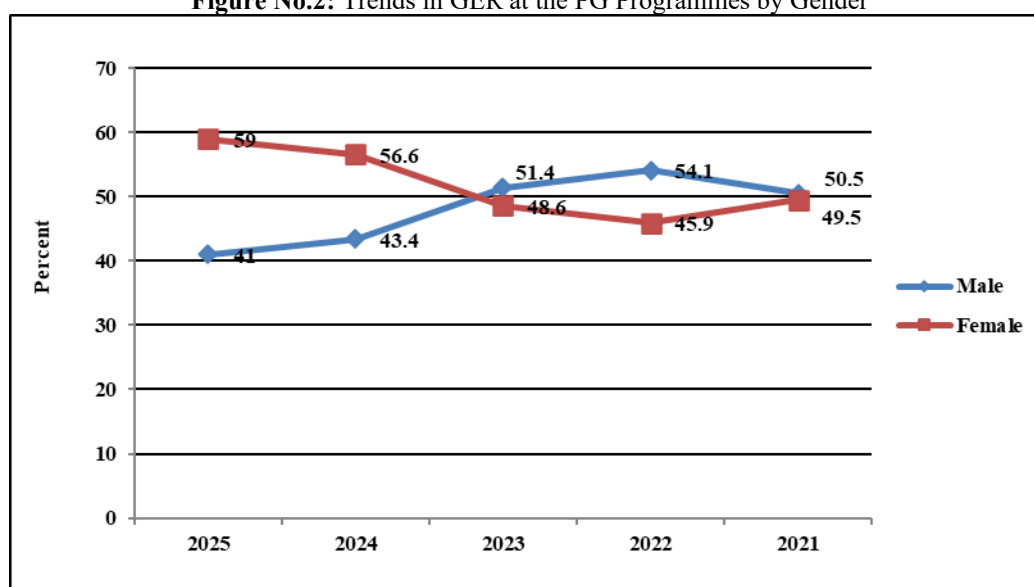


Figure-2 shows the Gender-wise Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in Postgraduate programmes at Andhra University from 2021 to 2025. Male GER increased from 50.5% in 2021 to 54.1% in 2022, and then declined to 41.0% by 2025. Female GER, starting at 49.5%, decreased to 45.9% in 2022 but rose to 59.0% by 2025, surpassing male participation from 2024, indicating a shift towards greater female enrolment.

**Figure No.2:** Trends in GER at the PG Programmes by Gender



Andhra University mainly enrolls students from Andhra Pradesh, especially in PG 2-year and integrated UG programs. As per Table-2, a decline in UG 3-year programs (from 280 to 109) reflects a shift to NEP-aligned 4-year structures. In 2023, 2,441 UG 4-year students are from within the state, while 2,104 are from outside, showing expanding appeal. Outside-state enrolment significantly grew from 111 to 1,776 in UG 4-year and from 199 to 2,692 in PG 2-year from 2024 to 2025, enhancing national visibility. International enrolment is limited, peaking at 460 in PG level.

**Table No.2:** Trends in GER at the UG and PG Programmes by Region

Number of Students	Under Graduation			Post-Graduation		
	3 yrs	4 yrs	5 yrs	2 yrs	3 yrs	6 yrs
<b>2025</b>						
Within State	109	1120	203	2444	13	94
Outside State	11	1776	228	2692	13	71
Outside Country	0	328	9	124	0	0
Total	120	3224	440	5260	26	165
<b>2024</b>						
Within State	100	2140	360	4291	26	151
Outside State	20	816	68	849	3	18
Outside Country	0	268	2	460	0	6
Total	120	3224	430	5600	29	175
<b>2023</b>						
Within State	149	2441	443	5585	33	189
Outside State	11	151	27	257	0	0
Outside Country	0	280	0	242	0	0
Total	160	2872	470	6084	33	189
<b>2022</b>						
Within State	197	2345	425	5756	31	166
Outside State	3	45	5	116	0	6
Outside Country	0	130	0	102	0	11
Total	200	2520	430	5974	31	183
<b>2021</b>						
Within State	280	1972	386	5746	30	151
Outside State	0	111	4	199	0	0
Outside Country	0	88	0	79	0	2
Total	280	2171	390	6024	30	153

Figure-3 displays the percentage distribution of Andhra University's GER for within state, outside state, and outside country from 2021 to 2025. The students within state show a downward trend from 94.7% in 2021 to 43.1% in 2025. In contrast, outside state exhibits a significant upward trend, increasing from 3.5% in 2021 to 51.9% in 2025. Outside country fluctuates slightly, indicating a slight decrease from 1.9% in 2021 to 4.9% in 2025.

Figure No.3: Trends in GER at the UG and PG Programmes by Region

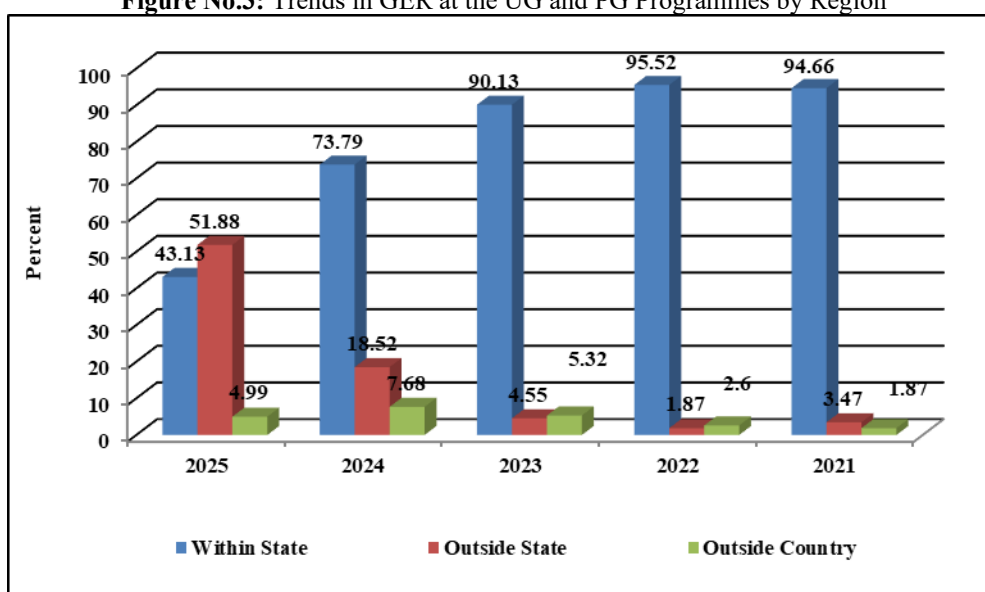


Table-3 indicates a marked increase in SC/ST/OBC student participation in educational programmes, with UG enrolments rising from 1086 in 2021 to 2527 by 2025 and PG enrolments from 3009 to 4398. NEP-oriented initiatives improved access for these groups. Economically backward students show stable enrolment, though post-2023 fluctuations align with scholarship changes. A decline in the 'others' category suggests Andhra University's focus on social inclusivity, while PG 6-year programmes reflect ongoing engagement from socially challenged groups.

Table No.3: Trends in GER at the UG and PG Programmes by Social Groups

Number of Students	Under Graduation			Post-Graduation		
	3 yrs	4 yrs	5 yrs	2 yrs	3 yrs	6 yrs
<b>2025</b>						
Economically Backward	12	505	42	261	0	4
Socially Challenged (SC+ST+OBC)	84	2527	325	4398	26	161
Others	24	192	73	601	0	0
Total	120	3224	440	5260	26	165
<b>2024</b>						
Economically Backward	12	358	87	588	1	29
Socially Challenged (SC+ST+OBC)	84	2296	233	3861	18	93
Others	24	570	110	1151	10	53
Total	120	3224	430	5600	29	175
<b>2023</b>						
Economically Backward	41	295	87	1505	13	15
Socially Challenged (SC+ST+OBC)	95	1722	233	3012	17	94
Others	24	855	150	1567	3	80
Total	160	2872	470	6084	33	189
<b>2022</b>						
Economically Backward	46	355	89	876	4	52
Socially Challenged (SC+ST+OBC)	151	1580	283	3109	25	72
Others	3	585	58	1989	2	59
Total	200	2520	430	5974	31	183
<b>2021</b>						
Economically Backward	78	287	78	1248	4	47
Socially Challenged (SC+ST+OBC)	140	1086	263	3009	26	68
Others	62	798	49	1767	0	38
Total	280	2171	390	6024	30	153

**Figure No.4:** Trends in GER at the UG and PG Programmes by Social Groups

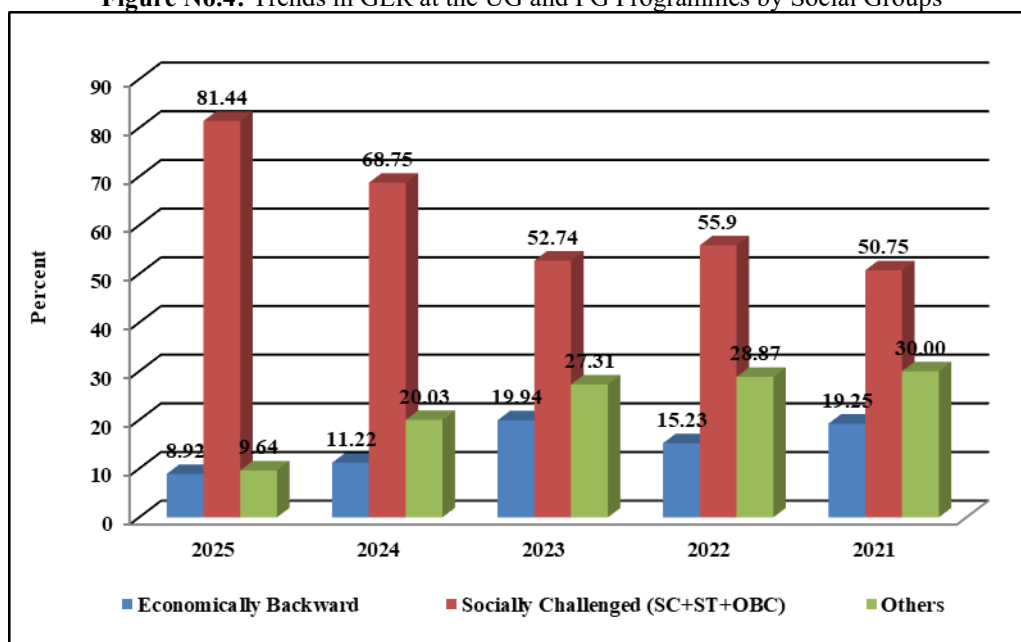


Figure-4 illustrates gross enrolment ratio (GER) trends at Andhra University from 2021 to 2025 across social groups in UG and PG programmes: Economically Backward, Socially Challenged (SC+ST+OBC), and others. Socially Challenged groups rise from 50.8% to 81.4%, peaking in 2024-2025. Economically Backward enrolment declines from 19.3% to 8.9%, while others drop from 30% to 9.6%. Overall, there's a notable shift towards the inclusion of disadvantaged groups, reflecting positive policies.

**Table No.4:** Trends in GER of Andhra University by NIRF ranking (2017-2025)

Year	Overall Rank	University Rank	Trends in GER
2025	41	23	Stable improvement OI score
2024	41	25	Strong recovery in OI and GO
2023	76	43	Continued decline due to weaker faculty ratio/research despite decent inclusivity
2022	71	36	Significant drop with moderate inclusivity
2021	48	24	COVID-era impact
2020	36	19	Slight decline
2019	29	16	Peak performance period
2018	36	22	Major improvement
2017	69	43	Entered rankings

Table-4 shows that Andhra University experienced notable trends in higher education from 2017 to 2025, influenced by increased inclusivity and recognition. The evolution of the gross enrolment ratio and institutional performance underscores the focus on sustaining progress and equitable access for diverse students. Rankings improved from 69 to 29 before slipping to 76 due to decreased research output and COVID-19 impacts from 2020-2023, despite steady inclusivity. A recovery in 2024-2025 saw the rank rise to 41, supported by better stability and accessibility. Overall, the university's trajectory included significant gains from rank 43 in 2017 to 16 in 2019, followed by subsequent fluctuations.

**Table No.5:** Indicators of Andhra University's GER and Performance

Indicator	Observation
Female student participation	Higher than male in several PG/UG
Socially challenged students	Very high SC/ST/OBC representation
Economically backward students	Significant scholarship/fee reimbursement support
Regional diversity	Mostly Andhra students, but some national/international enrolment
OI Score	~73.86

It is observed from Table-5 that Andhra University demonstrates strong inclusivity with high OI scores (75.86), supporting reserved categories and low-income students, while improving female enrolment and needing enhancement in interstate intake and global visibility.

#### IV. Discussion

India's higher education faces a 25.2% Gross Enrolment Ratio, significantly lower than the 57% average of advanced countries. Andhra Pradesh exceed the national average of 28.4% with a Gender Parity Index (GPI) of 0.93, many initiatives like scholarships have helped. The All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) indicates the GER at state level improved from 31.2% in 2014-15 to 35.2% in 2019-20, with male GER at 38.3% and female at 32.2%, reflecting gender disparity.

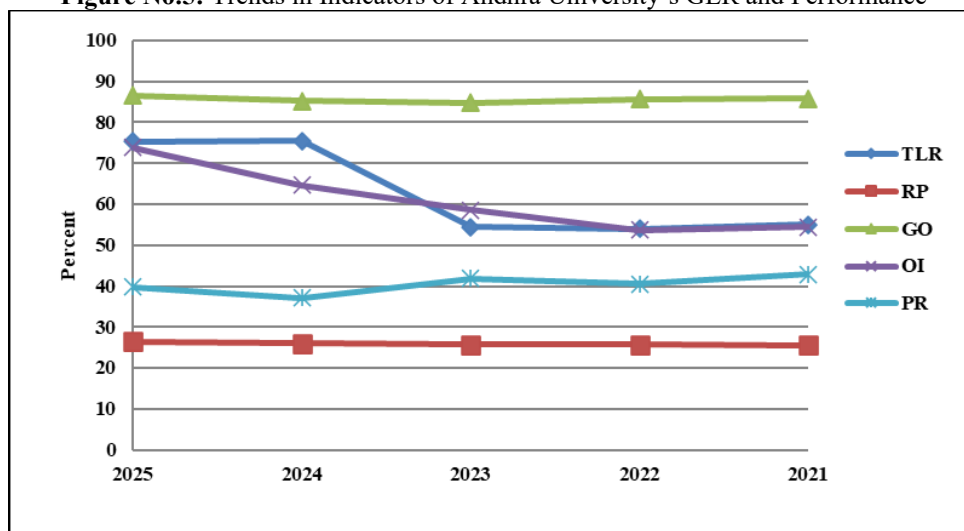
When compare to the national GER rose 24.1% to 27.3% between 2016 and 2020, with AU improving its NIRF ranking significantly. The Andhra University's OI scores from 54.46 to 73.86 align with NEP-2020 goals, reflecting diversity and support for disadvantaged students. The university achieved 4th place nationally in the 'State Public Universities' (SPU) category for 2025, improving from 7th last year, and ranked 41st overall. Other universities like Acharya Nagarjuna and Sri Venkateswara ranked lower. While Andhra University doesn't publish its GER separately, relevant metrics appear under Outreach & Inclusivity (OI) and Graduation Outcomes (GO), with a GO score of approximately 86.6, highlighting strong graduation results, placements, PhD output, and student advancement.

During this period (2017-2025), Andhra University's NIRF ranking fluctuated [9-15], declining initially due to a poor faculty-student ratio and low research output. However, significant improvement occurred in 2024-2025 due to better graduation rates and inclusivity reforms. This university continues to enhance academic offerings, infrastructure, and placements, solidifying its role in India's education sector.

**Table No.6:** Trends in Indicators of Andhra University's GER and Performance

Indicator	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021
Teaching, Learning & Resources (TLR)	75.27	75.44	54.39	54.05	55.04
Research and Professional Practice (RPP)	26.41	26.05	25.74	25.8	25.59
Graduation Outcomes (GO)	86.6	85.19	84.77	85.7	85.84
Outreach and Inclusivity (OI)	73.86	64.68	58.63	53.73	54.46
Perception Rate (PR)	39.85	37.09	41.85	40.53	42.86

**Figure No.5:** Trends in Indicators of Andhra University's GER and Performance



#### V. Summary And Conclusion

Through effective policy and strategy implementation, Andhra University has made significant progress in educational equity. The university's commitment to reform is reflected in its targeted policies within India's higher education system. Enrolment trends indicate an increase in sanctioned intakes for undergraduate (UG) and postgraduate (PG) programs, particularly among female students. In the 2025-26 academic years, AU had 3224 UG students, with a female-to-male ratio of 2155 to 1069. Four-year UG program enrolment rose from 2171 in 2021 to 3224 in 2025, indicating heightened female participation, while three-year UG programs saw a decline in line with the national policy directives. PG programs faced slight reductions, with 2-year programs decreasing from 6084 to 5260, yet integrated 5-year programs attained gender parity. Trends in PG gender enrolment showed fluctuations, with female gross enrolment ratio (GER) surpassing males by 2024. AU experienced substantial growth in out-of-state enrolments and SC/ST/OBC student representation, rising from 1086 in 2021 to 2527 in 2025. AU's rankings improved significantly, reflecting stability and inclusivity, exemplified by a high Outreach and Inclusivity (OI) score of 75.86, aligning with NEP-2020 objectives and advancing inclusivity within India's educational landscape.

### **Limitations**

This study provides a comprehensive overview of the process of secondary data analysis, as well as the benefits inherent in this research methodology. The most obvious limitation of this study is that the data has already been collected.

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### **Conflicts of Interest**

The author(s) declare that no generative AI or AI-assisted technologies were used in the preparation or writing of this manuscript. There are no conflicts of interest.

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