

**DEVELOPMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN MANIPUR IN THE POST - INDEPENDENCE ERA UPTO 2010**

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Abstract

The paper attempts to explore the development of Higher Education in the State of Manipur and to find out the opinion of college / university teachers and students regarding the present status of higher education in Manipur, in relation to planning / administration, infrastructural facilities, courses of study, students' issues, examinations, co-curricular activities, financing and teachers' issues. The finding of research shows that there has been a phenomenal growth and expansion of higher education. As a result of this unplanned expansion, the entire system of higher education has deteriorated. Innumerable higher education institutions have deteriorated standards and are functioning at a sub-standard level. Higher education institutions, particularly colleges were severely lacking in most of the infrastructural facilities. There is a poor finance to colleges resulting in inadequate facilities to students and teachers. All colleges in Manipur offer same courses of studies and specialization. This trend continues even today. No attempt or plan has been made for diversification to the new courses of studies and specialization.

Keywords: Education, development, higher education, higher education in Manipur

In the history of mankind, education has formed a continuum and a basis for the progress of human society as through development of attitudes, value capabilities, education provides strength and resilience to people to respond to changing situations, and enable them to cause and contribute to social and national development. Education today is facing new challenges in a changing dynamic world. It is not only one of the foundation stones of the national life, but also one of the greatest instruments of social change, making it a crucial factor in the development of a country.

One of education's principal functions is therefore that of fitting humanity to take control of its own development. It must enable all people without exception to take their destiny into their own hands so that they can contribute to the progress of the society in which they live, founding development upon the responsible participation of individuals and communities.

Higher education has been given a place of special importance because it can provide ideas and men to give shape to the future and also sustain all other levels of education. The quality of life and pace of development of any nation depends on the ideological climate, widespread perceptions of history, culture, tradition, and values and feeling of confidence in human capabilities to overcome material, social, and spiritual problems of living. Higher education plays a vital role in determining the quality of overall environment.

Development of Higher Education in Manipur: Graduate Level

Realization of the importance of higher education came to the people of Manipur only after the end of the 2nd World War. The long need of the people of Manipur for collegiate education was partially with the establishment of Dhanamanjiri College in Imphal on 6th August, 1946. Establishment of D. M. College in 1946 marked the beginning of a new era in the development of higher

education in the state. In about more than half a century since its inception, the system has made significant progress. The number of graduate and undergraduate has increased to 72 in 2010-11. The enrolment in colleges has increased from 60 students in 1947-48 to 43,577 in 1996-97. There has been tremendous increase in enrolment of girls (7 in 1950-51 to 20,017 in 1996-97), and SC/ST students (189 in 1960-61 to 7,316 in 1996-97). However, by 2010-11, the total number of students enrolment has declined to 35,182. 20672 male and 14500 female students. The decline of students enrolment may be because of more interest in the vocational subjects after passing + 2 by the students. So, they give emphasis on the vocational education instead of general education.

Development of Post-Graduate Education in Manipur

Post - graduate studies started in Manipur with the establishment of P.G centre in D. M. College in 1964, in only 3 subjects, followed by J.N.U. Centre of P.G. Studies in 1971. The long cherished desire of the people to have a University of their own was fulfilled in 1980, with the establishment of Manipur University, at Imphal. Recently, a remarkable improvement has come in the academic atmosphere of Manipur University as it has been converted into Central University under the Manipur University Act, 2005. Manipur University though started quite late has made significant progress. It now has 27 departments, under five schools of studies i.e. School of Humanities, School of Human and Environmental Sciences, School of Life Science, School of Mathematical and Physical Sciences and School of Social Sciences. Diploma course, Distance Education programme run under IGNOU Centre, and many other programmes. There has been tremendous increase in the enrolment of P.G. students and research scholars and in the number of University teachers. Higher education system in Manipur, is still in its infancy, is still growing hence has many shortcomings



relating to quantity and quality and faces many problems. The present research aimed to study the historical development of higher education system in Manipur as well as its existing position, in order to highlight its strong and weak areas.

Objectives of Study

To study the historical development and growth of higher education in the state of Manipur at Graduate and Post - graduate levels.

To find out the opinion of college students regarding the present status of higher education in Manipur, in relation to planning/administration, infrastructural facilities, courses of study, students' issues, examinations, and co-curricular activities.

To find out the opinion of college / university teachers regarding the present status of higher education in Manipur, in relation to planning/ administration, infrastructural facilities, financing, teachers issues, and examinations.

To find out the main problem areas of the existing higher education system in Manipur

To give suggestions for bringing about modifications in the higher education system at all levels.

Methodology

Historical and descriptive survey methods of research were used. The sample comprised of 200 higher education students, 50 university and 50 college teachers selected from 5 districts of Manipur which were: Imphal East, Imphal West, Thoubal, Bishnupur and Churachandpur. For historical analysis of the higher education system, primary and secondary sources of data were used, which included: Manipur University Annual Reports, Directorate of Economics and Statistics Government of Manipur Reports, Annual Administration Reports of Directorate of Education (U), Government of Manipur and books.

Tools

The tools for the study were used the opinions of students and teachers regarding the functioning of the higher education system which were sought through two questionnaires, developed by the research himself. The questionnaire for students contained 81 questions seeking information about six aspects of higher education i.e. planning / administration, infrastructural facilities, courses of study, examinations, students issues, and co-curricular activities. The questionnaire for University / College teachers included 79 questions which sought information about five aspects of higher education i.e. planning / administration, infrastructural facilities, financing, teachers issues, and examinations.

Analysis

The analysis of data was done by calculating frequencies and percentage for each question in the two

questionnaires, meant for university / college teachers and students of higher education.

Main Findings

There was consistency between the appraisal of higher education system in Manipur by the students and university / college teachers in 3 aspect, which were common to both the groups, namely, planning / administration, infrastructural facility and examinations.

Higher education in Manipur is still in its infancy, is still growing hence has many shortcomings relating to quantity, access equity and quality. Overall, the administration of higher education in the state lacks direction and vision. Quite a few administrator, at various levels were reported to be professionally untrained .

Quite a few colleges and university departments were not found to be having duly constituted administrative, academic, financial bodies and wherever these exist, were not functioning properly.

Lack of proper maintenance of the mushroom growth of colleges in the state has lead to deterioration of quality. Only one University in the state was considered insufficient to fulfil the demands of increasing enrolments and diversity of courses.

Professional and technical courses offered, were considered very less and obsolete to fulfil the upcoming manpower demands. The choice of subjects even in Arts, Sciences and Social Sciences was very limited and whatever courses were offered were rarely updated. These factors force the students to go outside the state for higher studies.

Higher education institutions, particularly most of the private colleges were severely lacking in most of the infrastructural facilities, relating to building, equipment, library services, laboratories, hostels, and sanitary services. All these facilities were inadequate in quantity and whichever facilities existed were very poorly maintained. This is a very serious problem and needs immediate attention of the concerned authorities as they were badly affecting the quality of higher education in the state.

Organization of sports and other co-curricular activities was also considered inadequate and not properly planned and executed.

Higher education system in Manipur is facing serious financial problems. Financial allocation was found to be very insufficient, both from U.G.C. and state government, due to which the colleges are facing financial crunch, causing shortcomings in all areas. Lack of proper control over expenditure and misuse of funds were adding to their miseries.

The reliability of examination system, particularly in colleges, was found quite doubtful. The marking of papers



was also not considered very authentic. These things were creating frustration, resentment and indiscipline in the students.

Private tuitions by college teachers was considered to be another big problem by the students, affecting the teaching standard in colleges, as teachers do not concentrate on teaching in the regular classes and encourage students to take private coaching.

Appointment of unqualified teachers and influence of extraneous factors in appointments and transfers of teachers, lack of adequate welfare services, teaching and research facilities were found to be some other problems confronting the higher education system in Manipur.

Regarding the courses of study, the students wanted updating of syllabi by subject experts, from time to time.

Suggestions for Priority Action for Change and Development of Higher Education in Manipur

Administrators of higher education in Manipur need vision and direction.

The schemes and programmes of the Directorate of Education (U), in the State should be made in concurrence with the principals of colleges, teachers and academicians of Manipur University as they are going to implement the Government's policy and programmes.

Appointment duly qualified educational administrators is required, who along with the requisite academic qualifications should have good personality, should be sincere and honest.

The principal occupies a key position in the organizational structure of the college; So Government should appoint full - time regular principals based on merit and performance, not on seniority basis.

Administrative bodies of colleges should develop linkages with higher education department, for ensuring administrative efficiency.

At least one more university should be established in the state.

An expert committee should be constituted to examine all matter relating to infrastructural facilities, which should check the requirements of all the college and on the basis of its recommendations modifications should be made in the availability and quality of all the facilities, in all the institutions.

The State Government should provide some kind of special assistance to the colleges which are not assessed by NAAC. On the basis of strength and weak areas of the

college, college can improve the quality of education.

Strict control over finances is very necessary in order to ensure proper utilization of money, for the purpose it is meant for.

Continuous modification of the professional, technical, academic courses offered, according to the manpower requirements of the state is needed. Variety of courses relating to vocational job-oriented courses, new upcoming areas, social and natural sciences, have to be introduced in the colleges of Manipur to attract the students and to increase the fund of the college.

In most of the colleges, a counselling cell and employment guidance bureau need to be opened.

State Government should provide facilities in the colleges of Manipur to do a research work in order to fulfill the desire of the students.

Need to establish clear policies concerning higher education teachers to make more effective and efficient in the teaching-learning process.

No political influence should be there in appointments and transfers of teachers.

The teachers of the private college, aided college and part-time teachers should be provided same facilities as Government college teachers.

Private tuitions by college teachers must be banned, instead special classes should be undertaken by the college themselves.

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