



Higher Education in Manipur

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Higher Education is an integral part of national development. It is most important input for the development of an individual, society and a nation. The scientists, sociologists, economists, educationists all over the world insist that education is the single most important factor for the development of any nation and the second most important factor for an individual after health.

The higher education system in India has grown in a remarkable way, particularly in the post-independence period, to become one of the largest system of its kind in the world. However, the system has many issues of concern at present, like financing and management including access, equity and relevance, reorientation of programmes by laying emphasis on health consciousness, values and ethics and quality of higher education together with the assessment of institutions and their accreditation. These issues are important for the country, as it is now engaged in the use of higher education as a powerful tool to build a knowledge-based information society of the 21st Century.

Many institutions of higher education in the country are excellent in the sense that their infrastructure, resources, faculty, programmes of teaching and research are almost as good as the best in the advanced countries. But, the same cannot be said of the average institutions of higher education in the country. They do not come anywhere near the level of average institutions of higher education in the advanced countries. This vast gap in standards and facilities has been a cause of constant anxiety and concern to the policy planners of higher education in India.

Higher education in Manipur suffers from quality deficit in all these respects. Very few Indian institutions have global recognition in terms of being Centres of Excellence in their field. It is essential that these islands of excellence be nourished and if possible expanded. In the paper an attempt has been made to analyse the higher education in Manipur.

Key words: Higher education, Manipur, excellence



Introduction

Education in India has always been valued more than mere considering it as a means towards earning a good living. Right from pre-historic days, education, especially higher education has been given a predominant position in the Indian society. Ancient India considered knowledge as the third eye that gives insight into all affairs. Education was available in Gurukulas, Agraharas, Viharas and Madarasas, throughout the country. The Indian higher education system is not only large but also the most complex one. Keeping these in view, present paper is focused on the following: (i) Higher education system in India and its growth – both in terms of institutions and enrolment, (ii) Growth of higher education in Manipur – both in terms of institutions and enrolment

Higher Education System in India

Though the Indian Higher Education Structure can be traced back to Nalanda and Takshashila Institutions, still “The foundation for modern education was laid by the Britishers. They set up network of schools to impart western education in English medium (Perkin, 2006). First such college to impart western education was founded in 1818 at Serampore near Calcutta. Over the next forty years, many such colleges were established in different parts of the country at Agra, Bombay, Madras, Nagpur, Patna, Calcutta and Nagapattinam. Its historical landmarks are McCauley’s Policy of 1835 to promote European learning through English, Sir Charles Woods’ Dispatch of 1854 which for the first time recognised the need for mass education with private and missionary help and gave up the policy of selective education known as the ‘filtration theory’ and finally the first Indian Education Commission of 1882 which recommended the initiative of private agencies in the expansion of education”.

An important step in the history of Indian education is marked by Sir Charles Wood’s epoch-making Dispatch of 1854, which led to (1) the creation of a separate department for the administration of education in each province, (2) the founding of the universities of Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras in 1857, and (3) the introduction of a system of grant-in-aid. Even when the administration of India passed from the East India Company into the hands of the British crown in 1858, Britain’s Secretary of State for India confirmed the educational policy of Wood’s Dispatch.

The newly established universities did not initially undertake any teaching responsibilities but were merely examining bodies. Their expenses were confined to administration and could be met from the fees paid by the candidates for their degrees and certificates. The then existing 27 colleges were affiliated to these three universities. Later on more universities were established. At the time of



independence in 1947, there were 19 universities and seven hundred affiliated colleges (CABE, 2005).

Although the establishment of the universities resulted in rapid expansion of college education and the products of the new learning displayed keen scholarship, the value of learning started decaying. In such circumstances it was ironic for the Indian Education Commission of 1882 to declare, “*The university degree has become an accepted object of ambition, a passport to distinction in public services and in learned professions*”. Another undesirable practice was the domination of the universities over secondary education through their entrance examinations. Universities policies regarding curricula, examination systems, language of instruction, and other vital issues were chalked out by university teachers who had little experience in school education and hence kept the administrative convenience college requirements. Thus, secondary schools education was geared towards preparation to college education than for quality life. Thus the system became top heavy.

Growth of Higher Education in India

After independence, which coincided with the post-Second World War era, India made concerted efforts to improve access to higher education and the system grew rapidly after independence. By 1980, there were 132 universities and 4738 colleges in the country enrolling around five percent of the eligible age group in higher education. No doubt Indian higher education is one of the second largest, other one is China and the United States. Yet is one of the most complex one.

Up till 1980, the growth of higher education was largely confined to liberal arts, science and commerce. Not only the government supported higher education by setting up universities and colleges, but also look over the responsibility of running the institutions set up through private sector, which were known as grant-in-aid institutions or private sector financed major part of the capital costs, public subsidies were provided to them to meet a part of the recurrent costs and occasionally for some capital works. Public funding was accompanied with considerable regulation of private institutions by the government (World Bank, 2003).

There were only 20 universities and 500 colleges with 0.1 million students at the time India attained independence. This has increased to 611 universities and university-level institutions and 31,324 colleges as on August 2011(12th FYP).



Table : 1 Growth of Higher Education Institutions and Enrolment in India

Year	Universities	Colleges	Total	Enrolment (Lakhs)
1947-48	20	496	516	2
1950-51	28	578	606	2
1960-61	45	1,819	1864	6
1970-71	93	3,277	3370	20
1980-81	123	4,738	4861	28
1990-91	184	5,748	5932	44
2000-01	266	11,146	11412	88
2005-06	348	17,625	17973	105
2010-2011	611	31,324	31,935	N.A.

Source : University Grants Commission Annual Report, 2009-10

Today Higher Education system is geared for the mass catering to meet the demands of a vibrant democracy committed to the principles of equity. India today's takes the pride for its best of the institutions and products. Yet it is not happy with its institutions that are not of that quality and hence the products are of the same quality. The growth of higher education in India has been largely guided by the serviceable prerequisite of the economy. After independence, the role of the state in planning out a development path and also in building higher education institutions was guided by the mutuality of purpose. Most observers of higher education in India feel that performance of higher education institutions has been less than satisfactory in terms of access, equity and quality. The reason of course is said to be ambivalent attitude of the state.

History of the Development of Colleges in Manipur

The history of higher education in Manipur is of recent origin. It has developed in the last part of the 20th century. The first institution of higher education in Manipur was marked by the establishment of Dhanamanjuri College (D.M. College) name after the Maharani Dhanamanjuri of Manipur, who contributed, Rs. 10,000/ for the purpose in 1946. Establishment of D.M. College in 1946 marked the beginning of a new era in the development of the higher education in Manipur. D.M. College is of co-educational institution. The college was managed by a private body. It started with strength of 60 students and seven lecturers as a night college in the premises of Johnstone High School. When the college started, it was affiliated to the Calcutta University up to the Intermediate standard. The college



was however, takes over on 14.7.1948 by the Government two years after its establishment. On the day of take over of the College, there were 350 men and 2 women students on the roll. The college was converted into Day College from the academic session 1949-50 with its own building constructed in the present location. The affiliation of the College was transferred to the Gauhati University in 1948. The first batch of graduates in Arts got their degrees from Gauhati University in 1950. Till 1950, the D.M. College provided general courses of studies in Arts subjects. From 1951, Science and Commerce courses were introduced. In 1952-53, D.M. College introduced Education subject leading to the award of B.Ed. and B.T. The subject grew and ultimately became a separate entity in 1971-72.

The D.M. College continued to be the only college in the state till the year 1951-52. In the year 1952-53, the first private intermediate college, the Imphal College was established. This college conducted classes in the evening. Such a college was very much beneficial to the working class as D.M. College, the only government college in Manipur became a day college in 1953-54. Manipur College began in a small way in 1958 and the Modern College in 1963 were established by the people.

Moreover, during 1963-64, two more colleges emerged in Imphal valley namely, Oriental College and Modern College; in the same year two other colleges were also established and functioning in Thoubal College and Moirang College. However, in the year 1964-65, the first Arts College, Seilmat Christian College was established in the tribal hill area of Churachandpur. Later in 1969-70, this college was combined with Churachandpur College and called as Churachandpur College. Apart from D.M. College, the other four colleges were private and unaided. During 1965-66, the first Women's College came into existence with the help extended from a person who donated a Cash amount of Rs. 1 lakh (one lakh) by a name called Shri Hidangmayum Dwijamani Dev Sharma, in remembrance of his mother late Smt. Ghanapriya Devi with an approval from the State government (Shanti Devi, 2001). Like D.M. College, the other college was named after her, Ghanapriya Women's College. Thereafter, Nambol L. Sanoi College and Maharaja Bodhachandra College were founded as private colleges in the year 1966 and 1969 respectively. Likewise, during 1966-67, Kha Manipur College in Kakching was established and started functioning by donating in Cash amount of Rs. 80,000 by the people of that community. Till the end of 1971, there were total number of 12 colleges in Manipur, out of which eleven colleges were situated in Imphal and other valley areas whereas only one college was established in the hilly districts. Thereafter, the colleges were established extensively in different parts of valley and hill districts of Manipur.



The second women's college, the Ideal Girl's College was established by the voluntary organisation in the year 1969-70. D.M. College was bifurcated into two Colleges – one for Arts and Commerce and another for Science in the year 1975. So in 1976-77 there were 19 colleges in Manipur. By 1980-81, there were 24 colleges in the state. D.M. College of Commerce was bifurcated from D.M. College of Arts and Commerce in the year 1996.

Table 1: Growth of Colleges in Manipur*

Year	No. of Colleges(including co-education college)	No. of colleges for female	Total colleges
1946	1	Nil	1
1950-51	1	Nil	1
1955-56	2	Nil	2
1960-61	2	Nil	2
1965-66	10	1	11
1970-71	11	1	12
1975-76	18	2	20
1980-81	22	2	24
1985-86	26	2	28
1990-91	27	2	29
1995-96	52	7	59
1996-97	57	7	64

* including RIMS, Agriculture College, Polytechnic and CEDT.

Sources : 1. Th. Mangoljao Singh, Western Education in Manipur, Vol. I&II, 1989.

2. Statistical Handbook of Manipur, 1992, Directorate of Economics & Statistics, Government of Manipur.

3. College statistics, 1995-96 &1996-97, College Development Council, M.U.



Enrolment in College level

Taking into consideration the enrolment in Arts and Science colleges of Manipur it may be observed that during the period 1947-48 to 1995-96 the growth was about 776 times. This may be due to the fact that as the population increased the percentage of this age group also increased. Table 2 gives a picture of the number of students at the college level in Manipur during 1947-48 to 1990-91.

Table 2: Enrolment of men and women in colleges 1947-48 to 2012-13

Year	Men	%	Women	%	Total
1947-48	350	99.43	2	0.57	352
1948-49	132	95.65	6	4.35	138
1949-50	256	98.08	5	1.72	261
1950-51	341	97.99	7	2.01	348
1951-52	301	96.47	11	3.52	312
1955-56	1,119	93.72	75	6.28	1,194
1960-61	1,771	87.93	243	12.07	2,014
1965-66	4,710	81.25	1,087	18.75	5,797
1970-71	7,767	76.51	2,385	23.49	10,152
1975-76	11, 293	67.98	5,311	32.02	16,584
1980-81	12,847	62.49	7,712	37.51	20,559
1985-86	11,816	60.55	9,651	39.44	24,467
1990-91	22,427	57.47	16,597	42.53	39,024
2012-13	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	41,608

Sources: 1. Prajatantra Supplement, Dated 15.8.88, p. 37.

2. Th. Mangoljao Singh, Western Education in Manipur, Vol. I & II, 1989.

3. Statistical Handbook of Manipur, 1992.

4. Poknapham, Dated 06.05.2013

From the data it appears that there was a sudden increase of enrolment since 1955-56 and the rate of growth was found steady. But for women, the enrolment increased suddenly in 1965-66. The students passing matriculation examination during these years were few. So the pass percentage at this state was 30-35 during the period from 1970-71 to 1980-81. Once the Board of Secondary Education was



established, the past percentage increased a little. It is because of these reasons that the enrolment in the colleges was found very steady. It is difficult for the colleges to accommodate all who aspire for higher studies. From 1955-56 to 1960-61, there was gradual increase in enrolment. But in 1965 there was a sudden increase in enrolment. In 1960-61 the number of enrolment was 2,014 but in 1965-66, it rose upto 5,797 and during this period men's enrolment rose from 1,771 to 4,710 and women enrolment from 243 to 1,037. The increase was more than four times. After 1965-66 both men and women enrolment increased rapidly. The reason may be that the state government made consistent efforts for the expansion of women's education so that the imbalance between men and women education can be eliminated as early as possible. Although efforts have been made with tremendous enthusiasm to uplift the women's education, there are many obstacles in different forms. After 1965-66 the rate of growth was found steady but the enrolment showed the peak in 1990-91. When the total enrolment reached 39,024. During this period men's enrolment was 22,427 and women's enrolment was 16,597. On the whole, there has been continuous development of college education in general since 1965-66. In 2009-10 the total number of enrolment was 34,204 including 15,392 women student (12th FYP).

History of the Development of Manipur University

The Jawaharlal Nehru University Centre was a stepping stone towards the objective of establishing a university in Manipur. The J.N.U. Centre was created with twin objectives of providing facilities for higher education and creating the necessary nucleus for a future university in Manipur. This Centre was established in 1971 at the Youth Hostel in the D.M. College campus with Prof. Ashim Kumar Dutta from the Jadavpur University, Calcutta as the Director of the Centre. The Centre started the post-graduate programmes on the 24th September 1972. It was later on shifted to the present site of the Manipur University in the premises of the then Basic Training Institute at Canchipur

On the establishment of the Centre, all the four Post-Graduate Departments of D.M. College viz., English, History, Mathematics and Economics were taken over by the Centre. In addition, M.A. courses in Political Science and Manipuri Language and Literature and M.Sc. courses in Applied Biology were introduced. The first batch of M.A., M.Sc. students (Mathematics, Economics, Political Science, Manipuri and Applied Biology) came out in 1974. By the end of the 5th Five Year Plan, the Post-Graduate Centre had 10 (ten) departments namely Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics, Life Sciences (originally Applied Biology), Economics, Political Science, History, English Language and Literature, Manipuri Language and Literature and Hindi. The divisions may be grouped into different Schools, i.e.



School of Language (English, Hindi, Manipuri), School of Social Sciences (Economics, History and Political Science) and School of Sciences (Mathematics, Chemistry, Physics and Life Sciences).

The Gauhati University could not conduct its various examinations owing to wide-spread agitations during 1980-81. This acute situation led the Government of Manipur to decide the matter of establishing a separate university of Manipur to save the academic lives of several thousand students in the undergraduate colleges of Manipur from the state of academic deadlock under Gauhati University to which all colleges including technical colleges were affiliated. The Manipur State Legislative Assembly passed a Bill towards the establishment of a University named the Manipur University which subsequently became an Act called the Manipur University Act 1980 (the Manipur Act No. 8 of 1980). This Act came into force on the 5th June, 1980 which date has since then been observed by the Manipur University as its Foundation Day. With the establishment of Manipur University, the aspirations of the people of Manipur to have a place of higher learning and research have been fulfilled. Manipur University was converted into a Central University w.e.f. 13 October, 2005. The Manipur University Act No. 54 of 2005 received the accent of the President on 28 December, 2005. Presently Manipur University has 72 affiliated colleges and one constituent college i.e. Manipur Institute of technology (MIT).

The Audio-Visual Research Centre (AVRC) was also established within the University campus in 1989 and Manipur University is perhaps the only University in the North-East having this facility. On the other hand, Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), Imphal centre has been serving the people of Manipur since 1987 with the main aim of providing access to higher education to a large segment of population, specially to the disadvantaged groups. The centre also provides first hand information to the people of remote rural areas.

Enrolment in university level

Though Manipur University was established very late in the year 1980, the progress and development in every sphere has been very fast and a new era heralded in the history of higher education in Manipur. In the first batch of the M.A./M.Sc. programme(1981-82), 435 students were enrolled. The total strength of faculty members at the time was only 70 including three lady teachers. Eleven research scholars were registered for Ph.D. programmes during 1981-82 in different departments.



Table 3: Enrolment of men and women in Post-Graduate & Research Scholar from 1980-81 to 2011-12

Year	Men	Women	Total	Research Scholar
1980-81	-	-	435	11
1981-82	388	264	652	N.A.
1982-83	589	378	967	N.A.
1983-84	600	379	979	N.A.
1985-86	660	405	1,065	N.A.
1990-91	716	585	1,301	N.A.
1995-96	913	656	1,569	62
1996-97	950	649	1,599	79
2011-12	N.A.	N.A.	1,162*	87 *

Sources :

1. Prajatantra supplement, Dated 15.08,1988, p. 38
2. Manipur University, annual Report, 1981-82, 1985-86, 1990-91, 1995-96, 1996-97 & 2011-12
* only 27 PG Departments of the University

The strength of Post-graduate students have increased from 435 in 1980-81 to as much as 1599 in 1997 including 649 women students that shows 40.59% of the total students. Thus a three and a half fold in the enrolment of students is seen during a period of 17 years. From the record available in the College Development Council, Manipur University, in 2009-10, number of Post-graduate students of Science, Arts and Commerce were 306, 507 and 33 respectively. The scope of research programmes is also expanding to a great extent by registering almost 79 research scholars under this University in 1996-97 where the number of research scholars was only 11 in 1980-81. From the record available in the College Development Council, Manipur University, it is found that there are 886 registered research scholars including 649 women in 2009.

Higher education has expanded over the years in Manipur, both in terms of the number of institutions and enrolment of students. From only one college in 1946-47, today higher education is imparted through 2 universities and 72 colleges including 7 women colleges but concentrated mainly in



the valley districts. Of these 72 colleges affiliated under Manipur University, 28 colleges are under government management including 2 colleges of teacher education, one medical (RIIMS) and one Law College (LMS Law College). The number of aided colleges is 8 and remaining are privately managed colleges including 3 Law Colleges and one college of Physical Education. In terms of enrolment also, there has been a massive expansion in higher education from only 60 students in 1947-48, it rose to 35,424 in 2001-2002. The share of girl students to the total enrolment has also increased considerably, from only 2.01 percent in 1950-51 to 44.3 percent in 2001-2002.

Conclusion

After independence, there has been tremendous increase in institutions of higher education in all disciplines. But with the quantitative growth has it been able to attend to the core issue of quality. Quality should embrace all its functions and activities: teaching and academic programs, research and scholarship, staffing, students, building facilities, equipments, services to the community and the academic environment. Internal self-evaluation and external review, conducted openly by independent specialists, if possible with international experts, are vital for enhancing quality. Due attention should be paid to specific institutional, national and regional context in order to take into account the diversity and to avoid uniformity. Quality also requires that higher education should be characterized by its international dimensions: exchange of knowledge, interactive networking, mobility of teachers and students and international research projects, while taking into account the national cultural values and circumstances. To attain and sustain national, regional or international quality, certain components are particularly relevant, notably careful selection of staff and continues staff development, in particular through the promotion of appropriate programs for academic development, including teaching/learning methodology and mobility between countries, between higher education institutions and between higher education institutions and the world of work, as well as student mobility within and between countries.

The regulatory environment for higher education as it exists in India today taking into consideration, the emerging market structure for higher education and peculiar nature of higher education as a service and specific areas of concern need to be identified. In absence of a detailed planning and control approach – not found useful in the experience on many countries, a regulatory framework that takes care of market failure and facilities market coordination need to be considered.

The overall standards of academic research in the country are very poor. Several measures are required to be taken to ensure that India has a respectable position in its research performance. These



measures would include increasing the level for funding academic research in India and altering the funding mechanism, improving physical and information infrastructure for quality research through a nationally co-ordinated approach, putting in place objective measures for assessing research performance and rewarding performance and promoting collaboration along with competition in research in India.

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