

Progress and Problems in Colleges of Higher Education in Manipur

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Abstract: *The present study attempts to explore the progress and problems in colleges of Higher Education in Manipur in relation to planning/administration, infrastructural facilities, courses of study, students' issues, examinations and co-curricular activities. The findings of research shows that the administration of higher education in the state lacks direction and vision. Colleges were severely lacking in most of the infrastructural facilities, relating to building, equipment, library services, hostels and sanitary services. All the colleges in Manipur offer same courses of studies and specialization. Quite a few students were involved in anti-social activities and political activities. The reliability of examination system in colleges was found quite doubtful. Organization of co-curricular activities was also considered inadequate and not properly planned and executed.*

Keywords: *Education, higher education, higher education in Manipur.*

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I. Introduction

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. Education is also at the heart of both personal and community development, its mission is to enable each of us without exception, to develop out talents to the full and to realize our creative potential, including responsibility for our own live and achievement of our personal aims.

Quality education is one of the principle means for fulfilling the outstanding, explicit and visible global human expectation of achieving higher and better quality of life for all. Education at its best is a dynamic process involving individuals and groups, reflecting upon their lives and society in which they live. It is a living process, which must be refined by the understanding of those involved and by the changing demands of the time.

Concept of Higher Education

In the present study the term “higher education” refers to college and university education which post-graduate institutions affiliated to the universities, getting either grant-in-aid or controlled and managed by the state governments.

Higher education which provides ideas and to give shape to the future and also sustain all other levels of education, has been given a place of special importance. It is at one and the same time one of the driving forces of economic development and the focal point of learning in a society. It is both repository and creator of knowledge. It is the principal instrument for passing on the accumulated experience, cultural and scientific, of humanity. In a world where resources of knowledge will increasingly predominate over material resources as factors in development, the importance of higher education and of higher education institutions can only grow. Moreover, the effect of innovation and technological progress means that economics will increasingly demand competencies that require high level studies.

The main function of higher education is to deepen man’s understanding of the universe and of himself in body, mind and spirit, to disseminate this understanding throughout the society, and to apply it in the service of mankind. Dissemination of learning, incessant search for new knowledge, increasing effort to plumb the meaning of life, provision for professional education to satisfy the occupational needs of the society, continuing education, international understanding are the vital functions of higher education.

Higher Education in Manipur

Higher Education in Manipur began around middle of the twentieth century, with the establishment of its first degree college Dhanamanjuri College (D.M. College), on 6th August, 1946 due to the pressure of students who had completed secondary education. Since then D.M. College has been playing a very significant role and till date is one of the best colleges in the state. The people of Manipur have been demanding a

university of their own since 1959, because for post-graduate the students had to go outside the state. The long cherished desire of the people of Manipur to have a university in the state was fulfilled in the year 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.

Total number of colleges in Manipur

Sl. No.	Types of College in the state	Total No. of Colleges	NAAC Accredited colleges in the state.
1	Government Colleges	29	13
2	Government Aided Colleges	16	3
3	Private Colleges	28	1
Total		73	17

Source: Directorate of University & Higher Education, Government of Manipur, 2016.

NAAC Accredited Colleges in Manipur

In Manipur, the total number of NAAC accredited colleges is 17 (23.29%) out of 73 colleges. It is very low percentage of NAAC accreditation as compared to other states, which creates the problem of quality in higher education in the state of Manipur.

Higher education system in Manipur, is still growing hence has many shortcoming relating to quantity and quality and faces many problems. The present research aimed to study the progress and problems in colleges of higher education in Manipur in order to highlight its strong and weak areas.

Objectives of Study

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 studies
- Students issues
- Examinations and
- Co-curricular activities

II. Methodology

In the present study, descriptive survey methods of research were used. The sample comprised 200 students selected from 5 districts of Manipur which were Imphal East, Imphal West, Thoubal, Bishnupur and Churachandpur. The (2) two colleges from each district were selecting students, incidental and purposive sampling techniques were used.

Tools

The tools for the study were used the opinion of college students regarding the functioning of the colleges which were sought through questionnaires, developed by the researcher himself. The questionnaire contained – questions seeking information about six aspects i.e. planning/administration, infrastructural facilities, courses of study, examinations, students issues, and co-curricular activities.

Statistical Techniques

The analysis of data was done by calculating frequencies and percentage for each questions.

III. Main Findings

Planning/Administration

- The present system of higher education in Manipur was considered unsatisfying by an overwhelming majority of the students (85.5%)
- 82 percent of students felt that higher education can provide better quality of life to the people of Manipur.
- The standard of higher education in the state was not considered to be at par with the national standards by quite a large number of the students (72%)
- Majority of students i.e. 72% felt that the centre and the state government was not taking sufficient interest in the development of higher education in the state of Manipur
- 68 percent of the students believed that the higher education institutions should build linkages with the industries.

- The administrators of higher education, at different levels, were not professionally trained, was reported by 67% of the students.
- 50 percent of the students reported that the colleges of Manipur had duly constituted administrative, academic and financial bodies. However, majority of the students (83.5%) felt the functioning of these bodies needed improvement.

Infrastructural facilities

- The research facilities, building and their maintenance were considered unsatisfactory by 81.5 percent of the students.
- The laboratories were neither well equipped nor well maintained (89%)
- Lack of health care centre in the college campuses (78.5%)
- Severe water/electricity shortage (89%)
- Sanitary arrangements were inadequate and poorly maintained (79.5%)
- No provision of photostating and typing at subsidized rates in the college (79.5)
- Unsatisfactory hostel accommodation and facilities available to boys and girls (80%)
- Unsatisfactory student welfare services in colleges (72%)
- 78.5% were not satisfied with the quantity and quality of text-books, journals and reference books available in the colleges libraries.

Courses of Study

- Only 58% response says yes, whether the curriculum at par with national standards and 42 percent says a lot about the adequacy of curriculum and other things, which needs attention of the academic bodies of the colleges and university of Manipur.
- 76.5% percent students response that the syllabi of higher education courses at graduate levels could not be up-dated from time to time as per the desire of students.
- 65.5% percent respondents, new up-coming courses were not introduced in the colleges of Manipur according to the demand of students.
- 70.5% students were not satisfied with the diversity of courses offered in the colleges of Manipur
- 82.5% students response that the vocational, technical and academic courses offered in the colleges were not sufficient in meeting the manpower requirements of the state.

Students Issues

- A duly constituted students' Association is a must in the higher education institutions was the majority opinion (81.5%)
- 52% of students response that association working for genuine causes of student but 48% negative response, meaning thereby that some of the organizations were not working for the genuine causes of students.
- 60% of students opined that the higher education students in Manipur were involved in political activities and acts of violence/rowdism.
- Taking private tuitions was found very common amongst colleges students (77.5%). Reasons could vary from just because it was fashionable to compelling circumstances.
- The student teacher relationship in the higher education institutions was not satisfactory in view of the 54% students response.

Examinations

- As per 60 percent of the students the examination system adopted by the university was not reliable. It implies that there is scope of improvement in the examination system.
- Cent percent (100%) positive response leads to the interpretation that the semester system adopted by Manipur University could not be able to complete the syllabus in time.
- 79% of students in favour of change in the examination system, need to restructure the examination system as per the requirements of students and teachers.
- 74% of students replied in affirmative when asked whether the papers were set according to the syllabus. The 26% negative response indicates some lacuna in paper setting which needs to be checked immediately.
- 74.5% of students response that teacher used guide books and other such literature while preparing question papers. This practice needs to be checked.
- The students were often not satisfied with the marking of their answer sheets and re-evaluation system is only for the namesake 80%.

Co-curricular activities

- Overwhelming majority of respondents i.e. 172 (86%) believed that the curricular and co-curricular activities both are important for overall development of the students, hence both should be given equal importance.
- 136 i.e. 68 percent students felt that co-curricular activities were not properly planned and organized in the colleges in Manipur, which is serious matter requiring attention of the concerned authorities/institutions.
- According to 172 i.e. 86 percent of the students, organization of debates and declamation contests was a usual feature in the colleges.
- 116 (58%) replied in negative to the question asking whether there were literary societies in the colleges. Therefore those institutions which do not have such societies should try to constitute them.
- 158 i.e. 79 percent of the students said that the colleges organized excursions and educational tours every years.
- 178 i.e. 89 students response that the colleges were organizing sports activities and competitions.
- 161 (80.5%) students replied in negative to the question asking whether colleges organized music concerts and competitions. Therefore, most of the colleges were not doing so, they should start organizing such activities.

Suggestions

1. Administrator of higher education in Manipur need vision and direction
2. 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 as they are going to implement the Government's policy and programmes.
3. Administrative bodies of colleges should develop linkages with higher education department for ensuing administrative efficiency.
4. All necessary infrastructures must be provided by the concerned authority at the colleges at the earliest to meet the needs of students.
5. Some of infrastructures are: more number of books, reading rooms in library, classrooms, hostel rooms for both male and female students, uninterrupted power supply, internet facility, sports equipments, playground, transport facility, adequate teaching aids of ICT, etc.
6. An expert committee should be constituted to examine all matter relating to infrastructural facilities, which should check the requirements of all the colleges and on the basis of its recommendations modifications should be made in the availability and quality of all the facilities, in all the colleges.
7. The question pattern of different examinations conducted by Manipur University must be reformed by forming the special academic committee to formulate blue print system.
8. Transparency in evaluation system is required. Subjective evaluation will not be there among the examiners.
9. Academic calendar should be strictly followed and there should not be any re-scheduling of examinations due to pressure from any quarter. The examination result of university should be declared as per the rule.
10. 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.
11. Political involvement of the students should be checked as far as possible. Acts of violence and rowdism, by the students should be dealt with patience and love by making them understand the causes of problems and their possible solutions.
12. Student/teacher relationships in the higher education institutions of Manipur need improvement, with both recognizing and appreciating the problems of each other. The love of teachers will act as a remedial measure for the students.
13. Co-curricular activities should form an essential component of college curricular. To save ethnic crisis in Manipur, exchanges of traditional and main cultural programmes of all the races inhabiting the state, should be included in the co-curricular activities organized by the colleges.
14. State government should provide facilities in the colleges of Manipur to do a research work in order to fulfill the desire of the students.
15. Strict control over finances is very necessary in order to ensure proper utilization of money, for the purpose it is meant for.
16. 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.

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