

## **A STUDY OF HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INEQUALITY IN NORTH-EAST INDIA: CASE STUDIES IN MANIPUR**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Higher education is regarding as the college and University education. Apart from primary and secondary education, higher education is the linking bridge between development and transformation of society and only education can paved the way to reach the real destination to uplift a society. A social dimension of the education, in higher education, is pre-requisite to enhance the social cohesion and equity. The present paper aims to find out the regional inequalities in higher education in the northeast states of India. This paper also attempt to analyse and highlight the level of literacy, the status of higher educational institutes for quality improvement among the states of the region and disparities of institutional quality enhancement. The study of the present paper based on an outcome of in-exhaustive secondary sources of information /data available from e-resources and journals. The study is all about to focus on higher educational scenario in the northeast India after post-independence. Most of the Government and Government aided higher educational institutions of the region are funded by MHRD,UGC,NER and as well as state Government of the respective states but considering the ever increasing need of the students, the facilities provided are inadequate. With the help of secondary data, it has found that the disparity of quality and quantity of the students among the north-eastern states are due to the variation in physical, socio-economic and cultural development of different states. Though, there are number of universities and colleges and mushroom growth of private colleges, the quality of education maintain by the authority as well as infrastructures of the institutions are not up to date to meet the requirement of the students and globalisation criteria given by the University Grants Commission. It is a bit delay to think that

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good infrastructures applying of modern education technology providing ICT, sufficient funds for research works, skill and opening self employable Degree Programmes- Academic Credit System (ACS) can compete the students of the region to the national and global standard.

**Keywords:** Higher Education, Disparities, Conflicts, Quality Education, Inequality

## **INTRODUCTION:**

Higher education is regarding as the college and university educations in general, professional and technical. An Institution of Higher Education is a school that awards a bachelor and Master degree or not less than a 2 years programme that provides credit towards a higher degree. It provides not less than one year of training towards gainful employment or a vocational programme that provides training for gainful employment and has been in existence for at least two years. Apart from primary and secondary education, higher education is the main linking bridge between development and transformation of disciplines works as collective control mechanisms for higher education. Today, world has a galloping keen competition among the nations of their human resources not in quantity but in quality. The modern age of education in the North Eastern states started with the annexation of Assam with the British Empire in accordance with the Treaty of Yandaboo in 1926. According to the report of late W. Robinson, who was the first appointed inspector of schools in 1940 for the Brahmaputra valley prevailed the old and traditional educational system of learning without a proper school in the region. No doubt- during the pre-independence period, there was any educational infrastructure development in the North-Eastern States.

In the North Eastern India, states are now finds stepping towards an increasingly competitive and globalized international environment. Unfortunately, the region has a tremendously in a crucial disparities in educational infrastructure, research facilities, innovation systems, and lifelong learning among the states. The education system in the resent years represents a great paradox, especially establishing of world class IIMs and IITs that rank among the best institutes and on the other hand, there are numbers of schools in the country where there don't even have the basic infrastructures not only in schools but in higher education. The inequality distribution of higher educational institutions and facilities provided among the institutions of the region is the key to expose our development. It is says that education is the prime to handling a society.

Number of educational institutions has been increasing in the region therefore quantitatively higher education in the region is developed but qualitatively not up to the mark. The region suffers from substantial inequalities in education infrastructure, employment and development. According to UNESCO report in the 21st century, “higher education is the mandate to bridge the knowledge between countries and communities enriching and uplifting the knowledge, culture, exchange of ideas research and technologies (Richard, 1996)”. The North-Eastern region of India being characterized by the simultaneous existence of diverse, unpolluted distinct and highly specific tribal cultures, has its own unique identity. Nevertheless, the higher education and research works in the region have not able to uplift socio-economic development excepting Assam where attained the most wide-ranging networks of higher educational institutions in the whole of north-eastern region of India.

### **Objectives:**

The present paper aims to find out the regional inequalities in higher education in the northeast states of India. This paper also attempt to analyse and highlight the level of literacy, the status of higher educational institutes for quality improvement among the states of the region and disparities of institutional quality enhancement.

### **Database and Methodology:**

The study of the present paper based on an outcome of in-exhaustive secondary sources of information /data available from Census, reputed articles of research journals, books and e-journals. The study is all about to focus on higher educational scenario in the northeast India after post-independence. The studied areas comprises the states of seven sisters viz. Mizoram, Assam, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Nagaland and Tripura.

### **FINDINGS & DISCUSSION:**

In the North Eastern Region (NER) have as many as eight hundred and sixteen colleges in 2012-13 and thirty eight Universities of various streams. Assam state has seven universities and as less only two universities in Manipur, with other states having varying but small number of degree colleges. Such discouraging variable features of higher education and socio-economic conditions in the region raises serious questions about the centralized education policymaking,

funding to standardize the higher education in the region. The primary and secondary education of the region is in fact better. HE is the vehicle to equip students to be socially aware and give back benefits to the society. It is said that, 'Education is backbone of a society'. Education is the most important single input in promoting human resource development, achieving rapid economic development and technological progress, creating a social order, based on the virtues of freedom, social justice and equal opportunities.

### **HIGHER EDUCATION IN NORTH EAST INDIA:**

Education in India, in the ancient time were Brahminical residential schools for theology, philosophy, arts, military education, public administration, etc and privilege only children belonging to higher castes were allowed to receive the education. There were usually no books and transmission of knowledge was done orally. In those days, the teachers/Guru and the pupils used to stay together until the completion of education. Interestingly, education in India at that time was free; however, students returned the favours by helping the teacher with daily chores. During the Colonial Era, the Britishers colonised Indian territories and introduced western education in the country. In the post-colonial period, the knowledge and great achievements by European states shifted the focus of education on sciences and other popular studies elongated in India. CMS College Kottayam, Kerala was founded by the Church Missionary Society of England, in 1817 when no institution existed imparting the English language and western-style education in India. It is one of the main centres of literature and hence called Akshara Nagari or Land of Letters. In India, the Scottish Church College, Kolkata was established in 1830, the first Christian College in India. It was founded on 13 July 1830 (Asit, 2008).

The Higher Education in the region came in the year 1901 when the Cotton College established in Guwahati, Assam at the first time in the region. Economically the states of the region are very poor. Sources of income come from agriculture-based industries that also gambled by the seasonal monsoon and therefore due to inadequate of financial quittance, most students cannot continue their further studies after completion of 10+2. Lack of technical and medical institutions in the states, number of drop out cases has been increasing particularly in the rural remote areas and hills. However, the region is one in accordance of planning, but there are

disparities in the progress of higher education among the states. The region suffers from fiscal deficits, literacy, poverty, and low level of various infrastructures political conflicts, frequent and uncertain bunds and economic blockades. Every day people of the region are confusing that what shall be happen in the next moment. As a consequence, parents of the students' right from school education to higher education spending crores of rupees to educate their sons and relatives to other parts of India and even abroad. The fact is that, due to these high expensive in education, the socio-economy of the region is stagnant. Poor socio-economic conditions, lack of the basic requirement infrastructure like proper maintain classroom, modern practical equipments, library rooms, and seminar halls well-equipped research rooms for researchers in the higher educational institutes etc, the north-eastern states are not satisfied.

Table-1: Colleges in NER during Pre- Independence Period-1947

Sl. No.	Name of college	Districts/Capital	States	Year of Estd.
1.	Cotton College	Gwahati	Assam	1901
2.	St. Edmund's College	Shillong	Meghalaya	1924
3.	Jaganath Barooch College	Jorhat	Assam	1930
4.	Gurucharan College	Silchar	Assam	1934
5.	St. Anthony College	Shillong	Meghalaya	1934
6.	Lady Kean's College	Shillong	Meghalaya	1935
7.	St. Marry College	Shillong	Meghalaya	1936
8.	Madhab Choudhury college	Berpeta	Assam	1939
9.	Jaganath baraoh College	Jorhat	Assam	1943
10.	Nawgong College	Nagaon	Assam	1944
11.	Kanoi college	Dibrugarh	Assam	1945

12.	Karimganj College	Karimganj	Assam	1946
13.	Dhanamanjuri College	Imphal	Manipur	1946
14.	Maharaja's College	Agartala	Tripura	1947

Sources: NAAC (2004) & Vanalalchhawana (2006)

Table-2.: Number of Universities and Colleges under 2(f) & 12 B and 2(f) only in North East India, 2011

States	Number of Universities					Number of Colleges Under		
	Central	State Govt.	State Pvt.	Deemed	Total	2(f) & 12 B	2 (f) only	Total
Arunachal Pradesh	1	-	-	1	2	7	2	9
Assam	2	4	1	-	7	215	26	241
Manipur	2	-	-	-	2	49	6	55
Meghalaya	1	-	6	-	7	28	7	35
Mizoram	1	-	1	-	2	20	4	24
Nagaland	1	-	2	-	3	19	2	21
Tripura	1	-	1	-	2	18	-	18
NER Total:	9	4	11	1	25	356	47	403

Sources: UGC Annual Report, 2010-11

### **SIGNIFICANCE OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE NORTH-EAST INDIA:**

The north-eastern region's development is impeded by certain inherent difficulties such as inadequate infrastructure, adverse climatic conditions and mountainous landscape. The region's peace and social life is often disturbed by border clashes, educated un-employment and ethnic tensions. However, the region is higher in literacy rates (74.48%) than all India (74.04%) in 2011 Census (Table-3). The literacy rate is the number of educated people in a population, over the age of fifteen who can read and write. The region is fully endowed with natural resources and to exploit these, skilled human resources such as tea, timber, tourism, oil, coal and bio-resources, offer immense potential for the economic progress of the region is more applicable. It is needless

to mention that quality higher education is prerequisite for creation and development of skilled human resources.

Table-3: Male and Female literacy rates in North East India, 2011.

S.No.	State/Union Territories	Literacy Rate-Male	Literacy Rate-Female	Total Rate
1	Arunachal Pradesh	73.7%	59.6%	67.0%
2	Assam	78.8%	67.3%	73.2%
3	Manipur	86.5%	73.2%	79.8%
4	Meghalaya	77.2%	73.8%	75.5%
5	Mizoram	93.7%	89.4%	91.6%
6	Nagaland	83.3%	76.7%	80.1%
7	Tripura	92.2%	83.1%	87.8%

Source: Family Welfare Statistics in India, 2011 & Census India.gov

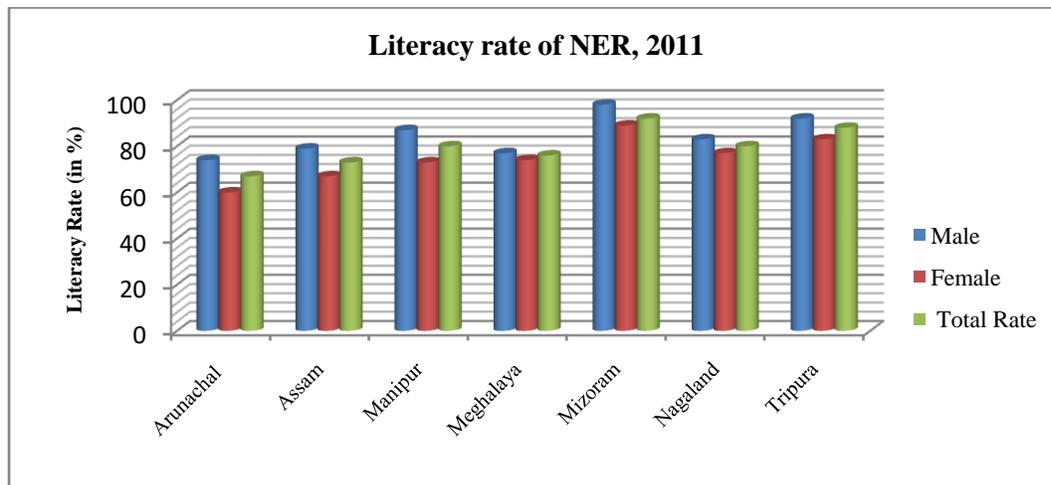


Fig.1

Quality higher education, thus especially in north - eastern region will help to circumvent the natural resource constraints and creation of knowledge infrastructure towards self-empowerment of the people. In the North Eastern Region (NER) have as many as four hundred and forty colleges in 2011-12, 816 in 2012-13 and 38 Universities (Basic Statistics, 2015). Out of which, Assam has 511 Colleges, 12 universities and 5 Medical Colleges. However, as less there are three universities in Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura (Table-4). Such discouraging variable features of higher education and socio-economic conditions in the region raises serious questions about the centralized education policymaking, funding to standardize the higher education in the region.

Table-4: Types and Number of universities and total number of Colleges in NER, 2011-12

Source: Basic Statistics of North Eastern Region, 2015, Table- XI 22. p.285

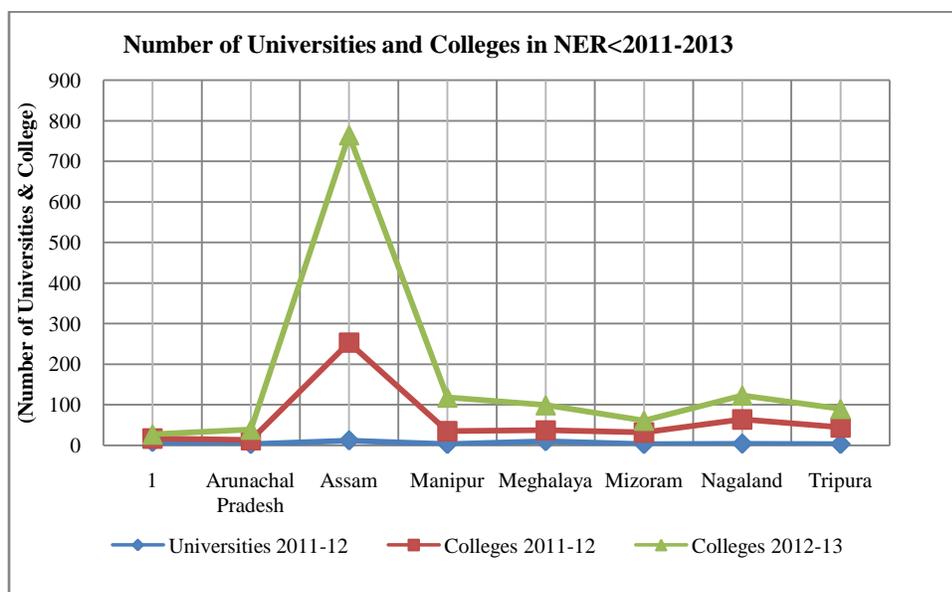


Fig.2

### HIGHER EDUCATION IN MANIPUR:

Higher education in Manipur in terms of quality is not encouraging. At present, there are two universities and seventy-four colleges (34 Govt. Colleges, 8 Govt. Aided Colleges, 18 Permanently Affiliated Private colleges and 14 private Affiliated Colleges). The quality of education in the colleges in the state has deteriorated due to the mushroom growth of private colleges. Most of the private colleges are opening maximum subjects without having adequate infrastructures, proper facilities, and lead to discriminating proper

States	Central Universit	Institution s of	State Public	State Open	State Private	Governmen	Gran d	Colleges	
								2011-	2012-
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
Arunachal Pradesh	1	1	-	-	-	1	3	10	26
Assam	2	2	4	1	3	-	12	241	511
Manipur	2	1	-	-		-	3	32	83
Meghalay	1	1	-	-	8	-	10	27	62
Mizoram	1	1	-	-	1	-	3	29	29
Nagaland	1	1	-	-	2	-	4	60	59
Tripura	1	1	-	-	1	-	3	41	46
NER	9	8	4	1	15	1	38	440	816
India	42	61	290	13	122	38	665	21,15	35,82

academic atmosphere except in few colleges in the state. There are few counselling Centres in the colleges where there is no information is being disseminated to the students properly about their educational and career choices. This system of education cannot monitor a quality higher education in the state. Huge amounts are utilized for the construction of swimming pools, indoor stadium etc instead of constructing classrooms. UGC sanction fewer amounts for the purchase of books and equipments to uplifting the higher education in the state. The centrally controlled and funded educational institutions are far better than the state funded institutions because of continuous of bureaucratic control and political interference in the higher education governance and institutions.

**Table No. of Colleges in Manipur Accredited By NAAC -2014**

Sl. No	Name of the college	Status/ Grade
1	D.M. College of Science, Imphal	Grade-B
2	United College, Chandel	Grade-
3	G.P. Women's College, Imphal	Grade-B
4	Manipur College, Singjamei, Imphal	Grade-(B+)
5	D.M.College of Arts, Imphal	Grade-(B+)
6	R.K.Sanatombi Devi College of Teacher Education	Grade-(B+)
7	Imphal College, Imphal	Grade-(B )
8	Oriental College, Takyelpat	Grade-(B )
10	Moirang College, Moirang	Grade-(B )
11	Don Bosco ,Mao Maram	Grade-(B )
12	S.K.Women College	Grade-(A )
13	Lamka College, Churachandpur	Grade-(C )
14	M.B. College, Palace Gate, Imphal	Grade- (B)
15	Thoubal College, Thoubal	Grade- (B)
16	Waikhom Mani Girls College, Thoubal	Grade- (B)

Sources: NAAC, Bangalore, 2014

**SUGGESTION AND RECOMMENDATION:**

The educational institutions, especially in Higher Education, infrastructure is primitive and quality education is almost non-existent in areas outside Imphal. This disparity institutional infrastructure has affected higher education, particularly in the hills where even the basic infrastructure is found lacking. The state Government, stakeholders and local educationists has noted this glaring disparity between the Imphal Valley and the rest of the state. Lack of access to quality and affordable education as well as vocational training institutes in the state has often led increase dropping out cases before acquiring any meaningful educational qualification. The never-ending law and order situation of the state has been disturbing in not only the regular classes in school, colleges and universities, but also drawback the economy of the state. Introducing application-oriented and industry-relevant degree courses, self-employment programmes for skill and capacity development, courses open in Colleges and Universities shall solved the present disparities of Higher Education in the state.

**CONCLUSION:**

The present higher education system in the region has contributed to the problem of unemployment in the State. It has been tremendously increasing of graduates in various general courses and seems to have a bit low in quality products. There is lack of professional and technical institutions. State government cannot provide employment to all the graduates coming out from the general and technical colleges. The State has no large-scale industries and other job oriented opportunities to absorb these educated youths. These create a serious unemployment problem in the State. There should be qualitative improvement of the college curricula, restricting the intake into the degree courses, introduction or opening of professional and vocational subjects/courses, setting up of career counselling units equipped with the latest information bulletins about the development of the prospective careers etc. Parents and teachers should be the effective and motivating forces of the students besides guiding them. There is also a need for improvement of the present system of higher education in the State. This can be brought only when students do their own academic activity, strict adherence of proper academic calendar, proper regulations to increase expenditure and adequate attention of government on education. Bandh, Blocked in the state frequently disturbing not only in the regular classes in

school, colleges and university but also drawback the economy of the state. Strengthening the educational infrastructure,

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