



STATUS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN TRIPURA

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ABSTRACT

Higher education comprises all kinds of post-secondary education. In the World Declaration on Higher Education adopted by the World Conference on Higher Education in 1998, higher education was defined as, "all types of studies, training or training for research at the post-secondary level, provided by universities or other educational establishments that are approved as institutions of higher education by the competent state authorities." Higher education in India has expanded rapidly over the years. It is also true that higher education in India suffers from several organizational and administrative deficiencies. Higher education in Tripura had a late start with the functioning of Maharaja Bir Bikram College in the year 1947. Tripura has a long history its own system of education during the period of princely rulers of the state. Tripura, erstwhile princely state, merged with the Indian Union on 15th October 1949 and became a fully fledged State on the 21st January, 1972. Significant efforts have been made after 1972 to improve the condition of education in the State. Since 1972, significant progress has been made in every sphere of education in the state of Tripura. The current study examines the present status of higher education in Tripura. Both the quantitative and qualitative aspects of higher education were examined during the study. The data was collected from different publications of Government of Tripura and Ministry of education, Government of India. The findings clearly show that growth and development in the area in higher education in Tripura was very significant during the last two decades. The Government of Tripura initiated a number of programmes and projects to attain the quantitative and qualitative improvement in the area of higher education. But more efforts are required to achieve the projected aim of development in the area of higher education.

INTRODUCTION

In Princely Tripura, as early as 1901, Maharaja Radhakishore Manikya made an attempt to establish a degree college in the-then capital city Agartala, but it failed to obtain the approval of Calcutta University. In 1937, Maharaja Bir Bikram Manikya had planned again to establish a college at Agartala and the plan was earmarked as "Vidyapattan Scheme". On 7th May, 1937, Maharaja Bir Bikram Manikya laid the foundation-stone of the college under the said scheme. But with the outbreak of the Second World War (1939-45), the work of construction had to be abandoned. The ground floor of the unfinished college building was converted into an Army Hospital for British Army. When the Second World War was over, the construction work could not be started immediately due to certain difficulties. Due to the death of Maharaja Bir Bikram Manikya on 17th May, 1947, the entire scheme of "Vidyapattan" could not be implemented into reality in due course of time. Within a short period of time, the Maharaja Bir Bikram College obtained the affiliation from the University of Calcutta. This college was once the only college in the state. As time progressed, some other colleges were established. In 1950, the Ramkrishna Mahavidyalaya was established at Kailasahar. Belonia Colledge, at Belonia was established in the year 1964. In 1967, Ramthakur College was established at Agartala. In the year 1982 all these

three private degree colleges were taken over by the state government. Thus all the degree colleges in Tripura became government colleges at that time. The Tripura University started its journey as the only university in the state in the year 1987. The MBB University, the only state university, was established on November 1, 2015 and it got the recognition of UGC on 16th March, 2016 under Section 22 of UGC 1956. Now there are three Universities, 25 General Degree Colleges, 2 Medical Colleges, 2 Engineering Colleges and one National Institute of Technology (NIT) functioning in the state of Tripura.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The present study attempts to

- trace the present status of higher education in Tripura.
- suggest the ways and means to solve different problems at higher level of education.

METHOD

As it is a descriptive study aiming at finding out the present status of higher education in Tripura, a systematic review of several data sources was carried out.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

In Tripura, the Directorate of Higher Education is entrusted with the task of providing opportunities to the knowledge seekers of the State ranging from general education to technical education and also for promotion of Art and Culture in the State. To improve the academic and infrastructure facilities, general and technical/professional colleges were provided with modern equipments and teaching aids. Efforts are also in process for introduction of job oriented new courses in phases based on the demand of the students of the state of Tripura.

The given table (Table 1) shows the number of higher educational institutions in Tripura from the year 1972, the year of the achievement of Statehood of Tripura. In 1972 there was no University in Tripura. There was no national level institution like NIT or IIT. In 1972, there were 3 (three) Government General Degree Colleges and 3 (three) Private General Degree Colleges in Tripura. During the same period there was 1 (one) Engineering College, 1 (one) Polytechnic Institute, 2 (two) Professional Colleges, 1 (one) B. Ed. College in the state of Tripura. In the year 1978 one more Professional College was functioning in the State. In 1998, there was one State University namely Tripura University, which was established in the year 1987. During the same period the number of General Degree Colleges was 14 and the number of Professional Colleges was 5. There was 1 (one) Pharmacy College, 1 (one) Veterinary College and 1 (one) Fishery College in existence in 1998 in Tripura. During the year 2019-20, there was one state university namely MBB University and one central university namely Tripura University in Tripura. During the same period there was one private university namely ICFAI University and one National Institute of Technology (NIT, Agartala) in the State. During the year 2019-20 the number of Government General Degree Colleges was 22 and the number of Private General Degree Colleges is 2 (two). There were 2 Engineering Colleges, 6 (six) Polytechnic Institutes, 2 (two) Medical Colleges, 15 Professional Colleges, 6 (six) B. Ed Colleges, 2 (two) Pharmacy Colleges, 1 (one) Agricultural College, 1 (one) Veterinary College, 1 (one) Fishery College and 1 (one) Pharmacy College in Tripura.

TABLE – 1
Number of Higher Education Institutions in Tripura

| No. of Institutions | 1972 | 1978 | 1998 | 2019-20 |
|---|-------------|-------------|------------------------------------|---|
| University (Government) | - | - | 1 Tripura University (State) | 2 MBB University (State) Tripura University (Central) |
| University (Private) | - | - | - | 1 ICFAI University |
| National Level Institute | - | - | - | 1 NIT, Agartala |
| Indian Institute of Information Technology (IIIT) | - | - | - | 01 |
| General Degree Colleges (Government) | 03 | 03 | 14 | 22 |
| General Degree Colleges (Private) | 03 | 03 | - | 02 |
| Engineering Colleges (Government & Private) | 01 | 01 | 01 | 02 |
| Polytechnic Institutes | 01 | 01 | 01 | 06 |
| Medical Colleges | - | - | - | 02 |
| Professional Colleges: Arts & Craft, Music, Law, Nursing, B.P.Ed (Government & Private) | 02 | 03 | 05 | 15 |
| B. Ed. College (Government and Private) | 01 | 01 | 01 | 06 |
| Pharmacy College | - | - | 01 | 02 |
| Agricultural College | - | - | - | 01 |
| Veterinary College | - | - | 01 | 01 |
| Fishery College | - | - | 01 | 01 |
| Paramedical College | - | - | - | 01 |
| TOTAL | 11 | 13 | 26 | 66 |

Source: Economic Review of Tripura 2019-20.

From the table-2 we can observe the district wise distribution of colleges and institutions under the control of Higher Education Department, Government of Tripura. From the said table (Table-2) it is found that there are 16 colleges and institutions including one State University and one Central University in West Tripura District during the year 2019-20. During the same period the number of colleges and institutions under the control of Higher Education Department, Government of Tripura was 2 (two) in Khowai District, 4 (four) in Dhalai District, 3 (three) in Unakoti District, 3 (three) in North Tripura District, 2 (two) in Sepahijala District, 3 (three) in Gomati District and 3 (three) in South Tripura District.

All the colleges in Tripura have registered for INFLIBNET sponsored by UGC for access to the digital library offered by them. New Computers and peripherals with LAN connectivity and also the facility of projectors have been installed in such e-library. The students, teachers and researchers are now able to access e-journal and e-resources. Work is going on to roll out this initiative in other RUSA beneficiary colleges with the support of MHRD.

TABLE – 2
Profile of Higher Education for the year 2019-20
 (Under the control of Higher Education Department)

| Items | District wise Number of Colleges/Institutions | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | West | Khowai | Dhalai | UNakoti | North | Sepahijala | Gomati | South | Total |
| University | 02 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 02 |
| General Degree College | 06 | 02 | 03 | 02 | 02 | 02 | 02 | 03 | 22 |
| Engineering College (TIT) | 01 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 01 |
| Polytechnic | 03 | - | 01 | - | 01 | - | 01 | - | 06 |
| Law College | 01 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 01 |
| Art College | 01 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 01 |
| Music College | 01 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 01 |
| B. Ed. College | 01 | - | - | 01 | - | - | - | - | 02 |
| Grand Total | 16 | 02 | 04 | 03 | 03 | 02 | 03 | 03 | 36 |

Source: Economic Review of Tripura 2019-20.

From the given table (Table-3) one can observe the numbers of Educational Institutes run by Central Government, State Government and Private Sector Management during the year 2019-20 in Tripura. There were 45 higher education institutions in Tripura under the control of the State Government. Total 4 (four) higher educational institutes including one Central University, one National Institute of Technology (NIT, Agartala), one Indian Institute of Information Technology (IIIT) and one Fishery College was functioning during the year 2019-20 under the control of Central Government in Tripura. There were 17 higher educational institutes functioning in the State during the same year under private sector management including one University (ICFAI University), 2 (two) General Degree Colleges, one Engineering College (Techno India), one Medical College (Tripura Medical College and Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Teaching Hospital), 4 (four) Teacher Education Colleges, one Pharmacy College and one Paramedical College. During the year 2019-20, there were 3 (three) Universities, 1 (one) Institute of Technology (NIT, Agartala), one Indian Institute of Information Technology (IIIT), 24 General Degree Colleges, 2 (two) Engineering Colleges, 6 (six) Polytechnic Institutes, 2 (two) Medical Colleges, 15 Professional Colleges, 6 (six) Teacher Education Colleges, 2 (two) Pharmacy Colleges, one Agricultural College, one Veterinary College, one Fishery College and one Paramedical College functioning in the field of higher education in the state of Tripura.

TABLE – 3
Educational Institutes Run By Central/State Government/Private Sector
Under Higher Education Sector in Tripura

| Item | State Government | Central Government | Private Sector | Total |
|---|------------------|--------------------|----------------|-----------|
| Universities | 01 | 01 | 01 | 03 |
| National Level Institute (NIT) | - | 01 | - | 01 |
| Indian Institute of Information Technology (IIIT) | - | 01 | - | 01 |
| General Degree Colleges | 22 | - | 02 | 24 |
| Engineering Colleges (TIT) | 01 | - | 01 (Techno | 02 |

| | | | India) | |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Polytechnic Institutes | 06 | - | - | 06 |
| Medical Colleges | 01 | - | 01 | 02 |
| Professional Colleges (Art & Craft, Music, Law, Nursing, B.P. Ed.) | 09 | - | 06 | 15 |
| B. Ed. Colleges | 02 | - | 04 | 06 |
| Pharmacy Colleges | 01 | - | 01 | 02 |
| Agricultural College | 01 | - | - | 01 |
| Veterinary College | 01 | - | - | 01 |
| Fishery College | - | 01 | - | 01 |
| Paramedical College | - | - | 01 | 01 |
| Grand Total | 45 | 04 | 17 | 66 |

Source: Economic Review of Tripura 2019-20.

India has one of the largest and diverse education systems in the world. To ensure the quality and relevance of higher education in the entire country the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) was established in 1994 as an autonomous institution of the University Grants Commission (UGC). The mandate of NAAC as reflected in its vision statement is in making quality assurance an integral part of the functioning of Higher Education Institutions in India. The NAAC has seamlessly metamorphosed itself to suit the changing requirements of Higher Education Institutions.

The Higher Education Department, Government of Tripura, has taken an all-out approach for ensuring accreditation of all non-accredited colleges of Tripura. With the endeavour of the Higher Education Department of Government of Tripura, 6 (six) General Degree Colleges have got NAAC accreditation namely Bir Bikram Memorial College – Agartala, MMD College – Sabroom, KN Mahavidyalaya – Sonamura, Rabindranath Thakur Mahavidyalaya – Bishalgarh, Government Degree College – Kanchanpur and Government Degree College – Teliamura in the year 2019. Rest of the colleges are under process. Out of 22 Government General Degree Colleges, 15 have been accredited up to 2019. Facts are stated in Table 4.

TABLE – 4
Educational Institutes as per NAAC Grading : 2019-20

| Sl. No. | Name of the Institutions | NAAC Grade | CGPA |
|---------|---|------------|---------------|
| 1 | Ambedkar College, Fatikroy | C | 1.52 |
| 2 | Dasarath Deb Memorial College, Khowai | B | 2.4 |
| 3 | Government Degree College, Dharmanagar | B | 2.79 |
| 4 | Government Degree College, Kamalpur | B | 2.24 |
| 5 | Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar College, Belonia | B | 2.19 |
| 6 | Maharaja Bir Bikram College, Agartala | B | 2.55 |
| 7 | Netaji Subhash Mahavidyalaya, Udaipur | B | 2.02 |
| 8 | Ram Krishna Mahavidyalaya, Kailasahar | C | 1.89 |
| 9 | Ramthakur College, Agartala | B | 2.27 |
| 10 | Women's College, Agartala | B | 2.61 |
| 11 | Bir Bikram Memorial College, Agartala | C | 1.91 |
| 12 | Swami Vivekananda Mahavidyalaya, Mohanpur | B | 2.06 |
| 13 | Government Degree College, Khumulwng | - | Under Process |
| 14 | Government Degree College, Teliamura | C | 1.79 |
| 15 | Government Degree College, GandaCherra | - | Under Process |
| 16 | Government Degree College, LT Valley | - | Under Process |
| 17 | Government Degree College, Kanchanpur | C | 1.85 |
| 18 | Kabi Nazrul Mahavidyalaya, Sonamura | B | 2.07 |
| 19 | Rabindranath Thakur Mahavidyalaya, Bishalgarh | B | 2.15 |
| 20 | AMBS Mahavidyalaya, Amarpur | - | - |
| 21 | Government Degree College, Santirbazar | - | - |

| | | | |
|----|----------------------|---|------|
| 22 | MMD College, Sabroom | C | 1.72 |
|----|----------------------|---|------|

Source: Economic Review of Tripura 2019-20.

It is to be noted here that three more Government Degree Colleges have achieved the NAAC accreditation in the year 2021. Government Degree College – Khumulwng achieved B Grade with CGPA 2.07. Government Degree College – Gandacherra obtained B Grade with the CGPA 2.15. The Adwaita Malla Barman Smriti Mahavidyalaya (AMBSM) – Amarpur also obtained B Grade in the year 2021. During the year 2020-21, some Government Degree Colleges achieved new Grade and CGPA after a fresh accreditation done by NAAC.

CONCLUSION

The Higher Education System of the State is being administered in a positive and constructive manner. All the higher education institutions have developed new physical infrastructures such as libraries, smart classrooms. The administrative machinery supports the institutions for the development works like construction of new academic and administrative buildings, increasing space of class rooms and other ancillary component like auditorium, separate common rooms for boys and girls, canteen, playground etc. During the last one decade, there has been substantial progress in building up physical infrastructure of the general as well as professional and technical degree colleges in the State. It is also to be mentioned here that there has been increasing growth of enrolment of the students in the higher educational institutions during last few years hitting the need of further development of the institutions. There is a need of introduction of new IT related courses, soft skill development courses side by side the general degree courses so that with such dual qualifications the learners become more competent for facing the job requirements. The State Government and its Higher Education Department is committed to high standard of performance and development of institutional environment. As per the All India Survey on Higher Education 2017-18, the Pupil Teacher Ratio (PTR) in the higher education institutions of Tripura was 28 against the all India figure 25 during the same period. The Gross Enrolment Ratio in the higher education institutes of Tripura was 13.6 in the year 2010-11 and 21.2 in the year 2017-18. As per Higher Education Profile 2019-20 of Ministry of Education, Government of India the Pupil Teacher Ratio (PTR) in the higher education institutions of Tripura was 26 in the year 2014-15 and 30 in the year 2019-20. . The Gross Enrolment Ratio in the higher education institutes of Tripura was 16.8 in the year 2014-15 and 20.2 in the year 2019-20. The proportion of degree colleges accredited by NAAC was 30.2 percent up to the year 2019.

In the end, it can be concluded that there are needs of further development in the area of physical infrastructure and appointment of sufficient number of teachers in every higher education institution of the State. Besides this, in-depth study should be conducted to find out the problems in the area of higher education so that suitable strategy can be evolved to improve the academic and other related conditions of the higher education sector of the State.

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