



IMPLEMENTATION OF RASTRIYA UCCHATAR SIKHYA AVIYAN IN MIZORAM

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ABSTRACT

Rastriya Uchatar Sikhya Aviyana (RUSA) a central sponsored programme to attain higher levels of access, equity and excellence in the state higher education system with greater efficiency, transparency, accountability and responsiveness. Mizoram is a north eastern state having 32-degree colleges only not progressed much in higher education with respect to quality and accesses. The present study examined the awareness on RUSA among college teachers in Mizoram and study the best practices implemented in the colleges of Mizoram. evaluated the RUSA programme in Mizoram. A structured interview schedule was developed and administered to collect the data from the 52 respondents. The findings of the study that the teachers of Mizoram are not aware about the centrally sponsored scheme RUSA. Government of Mizoram must take care of that and arrange orientation training programme for the degree college teachers on RUSA. Government of Mizoram must take care to proper utilize the funds under RUSA and colleges should give more emphasis to increase GER.

KEYWORDS- Higher education, Gross enrolment ratio, RUSA, Quality, Access, Equity

INTRODUCTION

The Higher Education system of a country is the gateway of its recognition in the global platform. It is the most critical component of bringing change in a society and a nation. Through Higher Education, a nation can address the issues relating to equity, accessibility, quality, values and development. Higher education enables individuals to expand their knowledge and skills, express their thoughts clearly in speech and in writing, grasp abstract concepts and theories, and increase their understanding of the world and their community. Higher education improves an individual's quality of life. India's higher education system is the third largest in the world, next to the United States and China. The main governing body at the tertiary level of Indian Education is the University Grants Commission (UGC), which enforces its standards, advises the government, and helps coordinate between the centre and the state. The higher education system as a whole is faced with many challenges such as financing and management, access, equity, relevance and re-orientation of policies and programs for laying emphasis on values, ethics and quality of higher

education together with the assessment of institutions and their accreditation. These issues are of vital importance for the country, since higher education is the most powerful tool to build a knowledge-based society for the future. The enormity of the challenge of providing equal opportunities for quality higher education to an ever-growing number of students is also a historic opportunity for correcting sectoral and social imbalances, reinvigorating institutions, crossing international benchmarks of excellence and extending the frontiers of knowledge.

As per All India Survey on Higher Education, Government of India (2019), there are 993 Universities, 39931 Colleges and 10725 Stand Alone Institutions in India. Out of 993 universities 385 Universities are privately managed. 394 Universities are located in rural area. 16 Universities are exclusively for women, 3 in Rajasthan, 2 in Tamil Nadu & 1 each in Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Delhi, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Odisha, Uttarakhand and West Bengal. In addition to 1 Central Open University, 14 State Open Universities and 1 State Private Open



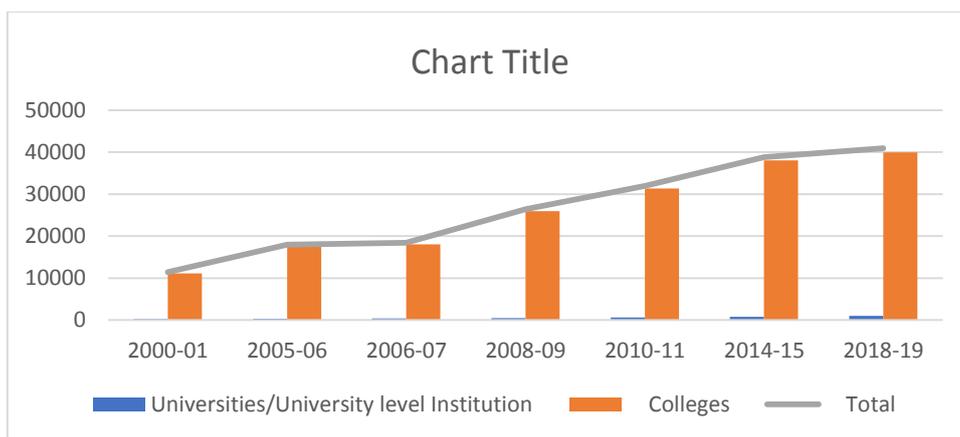
University, there are 110 Dual mode Universities, which offer education through distance mode also and the maximum 13 of them are located in Tamil Nadu. There are 548 General, 142 Technical, 63 Agriculture & Allied, 58 Medical, 23 Law, 13 Sanskrit and 9 Language Universities and rest 106 Universities are of other categories. The top 8 States in terms of highest number of colleges in

India are Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Haryana, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh. There are 34.8% Colleges, which run only single programme, out of which 83.1% are privately managed. Among these, 38.1% colleges run B.Ed. Courses only.

Year	Universities/University level Institution	Colleges	Total
2000-01	266	11146	11412
2005-06	346	17625	17973
2006-07	367	18064	18431
2008-09	467	25951	26418
2010-11	611	31324	31935
2014-15	757	38056	38813
2018-19	993	39931	40924

Table-1 Growth of Higher education Institutions in India (2000-2019)

Source -University News



As per All India Survey on Higher Education, Government of India (2019),

“Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education in India is 26.3%, which is calculated for 18-23 years of age group. GER for male population is 26.3% and for females, it is 26.4%. For Scheduled Castes, it is 23% and for Scheduled Tribes, it is 17.2% as compared to the national GER of 26.3%. Distance enrolment constitutes about 10.62% of the total enrolment in higher education, of which 44.15% are female students. About 79.8% of the students are enrolled in Undergraduate level programme. 1,69,170 students are enrolled in Ph.D. that is less than 0.5% of the total student enrolment. Pupil Teacher Ratio (PTR) in Universities and Colleges is 29 if regular mode enrolment is considered whereas PTR for Universities and its Constituent Units is 18 for regular mode. At Post Graduate level M.A. pass number of

students is maximum followed by M.Sc. and M.B.A. The highest number of students (23.3 Lakh) have graduated in Arts courses. At Ph.D. level, maximum numbers of students out-turn is in Science stream followed by Engineering and Technology. On the other hand, at PG level maximum students out-turn is observed in Social Science and Management stream comes at number two. The share of Ph.D. student is highest in State Public University (34.3%) followed by Institute of National Importance (21.6%), Deemed University-Private (21.6%) and State Private University (13.4%). Around 26.99 lakh students and out of this majority of students are enrolled in Teacher Training, Nursing and Technical streams. Uttar Pradesh, with its highest student enrolment in India, has 49.30% male and 50% female students. Maharashtra has the second highest student enrolment with approx. 54.95% male and approx. 45.05% females. Thereafter, Tamil



Nadu has 50.87% male and 49.13% female, West Bengal with 50.37% male and 49.63% female students. In Karnataka, percentage of females enrolled is 50.04% whereas in Rajasthan more male students are enrolled as compared to female students. Out of total no. of 14,16,299 teachers for 2018-19 about 57.85% are male teachers and 42.15% are female teachers. The lowest gender proportion is recorded in Bihar where female to male teachers' ratio is 1:4 which in percentage terms is 78.97% for male and only 21.03% for female teachers. Jharkhand comes close second with 69.8% male teachers and 30.2% female teachers. Uttar Pradesh has 32.3% female teachers of the total teachers in the State. A few States like Kerala, Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Delhi and Goa on the other hand have more female teachers than male teachers".

The Central Advisory Board on Education (CABE), the highest advisory body of the Government of India in education on policy matters, gave in-principle approval to Rastriya Uchchar Sikhya Aviyan (RUSA). The vision of the RUSA is to attain higher levels of access, equity and excellence in the state higher education system with greater efficiency, transparency, accountability and responsiveness.

RUSA is an umbrella scheme operated in mission mode that would subsume other existing similar schemes in the state higher education sector. The key features of RUSA is Norm-based and performance-based funding, commitment by States and institutions to certain academic, administrative and governance reforms will be a precondition for receiving funding. Funding to the states would be made on the basis of critical appraisal of State Higher Education Plans (SHEPs). State Higher Education Councils (SHEC) will have to undertake planning and evaluation, in addition to other monitoring and capacity building functions. Centre-State funding would be in the ratio of 90:10 for North-Eastern States, Sikkim, J&K, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand and 65:35 for Other States and Union Territories (UTs). The objectives of RUSA would be achieved through need based and customized equity interventions, quality improvement programs, and obtain mandatory accreditation. Faculty issues would be addressed through creation of new posts, filling of existing posts by full time faculty and faculty improvement programmes. Largosen, et al (2004) studied the adaption of quality controlled, academic freedom and superficial and diluted excises of higher education institutional. He founded that quality control and sustains are two major factors of quality management of higher education. Kumar (2004) studied the major

sources of finding higher education. He concludes that for government own institution government acceptor and for private institution donation, fees and income from endowment form are the main sources of income. National Knowledge Commission (2006) studied the higher education system and recommends that, research, collaboration; equality and assessment, rationalization of fees, private investment, public private partnership and developing international student's trust need to be implemented.

Tilak (1995) studied the funding of higher education in India. The study found that higher education, in particular, has been considered a better and more effective instrument for ensuring equity and social justice than many other direct measures (Tilak 1995, Basaril, G. 2016, Chandra,2005.). Agarwal (2006) specifically pointed out that a higher level of education has contributed towards the inculcation of human values and also towards building democratic civil societies even in developed countries the national expenditure has fallen after 2008 global recession. Sing J D (2007) studied issues and challenges in higher education. It concludes that although there have been challenges to higher education in the past, these most recent calls for reform may provoke a fundamental change in higher education. This change may not occur as a direct response to calls for greater transparency and accountability, but rather because of the opportunity to reflect on the purpose of higher education, the role of colleges and universities in the new millennium, and emerging scientific research on how people learn. These disparate literatures have not been tied together in a way that would examine the impact of fundamental change from the policy level to the institutional level and to the everyday lives of college and university administrators, faculty and students. Now the time has come to create a second wave of institution building and of excellence in the fields of education, research and capability building. We need higher educated people who are skilled and who can drive our economy forward. When India can provide skilled people to the outside world then we can transfer our country from a developing nation to a developed nation very easily and quickly

The Economic Survey (2011) stated that India, currently had a gross enrolment ratio (GER) of 13.5 percent in higher education (in the age group 18-23 years) as compared to 81.6 per cent for USA, 22.1 percent in China and 29.7 percent in Malaysia. There is a need to focus on such policy measures and programmes that can bring good number of students from socially and economically disadvantaged sections into the fold of higher education. He further observed that good quality higher education still remained elite in nature as it was still not accessible by a large bulk of eligible population. Government should realize the limitations of the private sector and strengthen higher education in areas which are very



vital in improving nation's competitiveness through fundamental research. Besides, austerity measures in higher education have taken a heavy toll on the quality of higher education. He also suggested that these trends in funding should be reversed and public funding for higher education should be substantially increased.

Studies conducted on RUSA (Naorem R. Singh, M 2014 Balu, A & Kumar, P 2015, Giri,D,2018) explains about the Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) National Higher Education Mission, a Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) for reforming the State Higher Education System in India. and also, the economic impact of the scheme on the current Higher Education System of India. It concludes by mentioning that most of the Colleges are understaffed with inadequate Teaching Faculty. The Primary and Secondary education is the right of every person and therefore it is the main duty of government to provide education for all. But so far higher education is concerned the main problem is that of funding the system and it is important issue which the higher education is facing. The teachers belong to the intellectual class of the society and they are affected with privatization of higher education. Mizoram is one of the seven sisters of Northeast India, bordered by Myanmar (formerly known as Burma) to its east and south, Bangladesh to its west, and the states of Manipur, Assam, and Tripura to its north. Mizoram means 'Land of the Highlanders' and its local language is Mizo. The Mizo Hills, which dominate the state's topography, rise to more than 2000 m (6560 ft) near the Myanmar border. Aizawl, the state capital, is 1220 m (4000 ft) above sea level. The state covers a total area of 8,139.4 sq miles or 21,087 sq. km.

According to the census performed in 2011, the population of the state is 1,091,014. Mizoram has 8 districts namely Aizawl, Kolasib, Lawngtlai, Lunglei, Mamit, Saiha, Serchhip, Champhai, with 22 towns and 817 villages. Mizoram comprises of a formal system of education which ranges from elementary to university education, training to technical courses. By census 2011, the state has the third highest literacy rate in the country i.e. 92%. There are about 3900 schools 32 colleges (report of college development council) in the state which are either privately owned or are fully or partially managed by the government. Mizoram state is having only one university and a few numbers of colleges. The history of higher education in Mizoram started in 1958 when Aijal Night College, (later renamed as Pachhunga College, and now a Constituent College of Mizoram University bearing the name 'Pachhunga University College') was established with a donation by Mr. Pachhunga, an education minded businessman of Aizawl. Higher education in the state therefore is only a little more than 50 years old and many of the first-generation learners are still alive leading active

life. Six years after the establishment of the first College, another College now known as Lunglei Govt. College was established in Lunglei, the second capital of Mizoram. Most of the present Colleges are established only after Mizoram attained the status of Union Territory in 1972. Mizoram University started functioning in the middle of 2001 by taking over all the assets and liabilities of the erstwhile NEHU Campus in Aizawl. There were as many as seven PG departments viz. English, Public Administration, Education, Psychology, Economics, Forestry and Mizo at that time. Mizoram University at present runs as many as 25 PG Departments and 4 B.Tech. Courses. All Colleges under the State Government got their affiliation to Mizoram University. The teachers may or not be aware about RUSA, and their attitude towards it can be different. Teacher's awareness is important for better implementation of plans and programmes in higher education sector. The present study examined the awareness on RUSA among college teachers in Mizoram and study the best practices implemented in the colleges of Mizoram. evaluated the RUSA programme in Mizoram.

METHODOLOGY

Keeping in view the objectives of the study and nature of the problem survey method has been used for the present study. Descriptive survey research aims at gathering and tabulating the data, interprets the meaning and finds out the significance of the results. The population of the study was 1004 teachers of general degree colleges of Mizoram. Simple random sampling procedures were adopted for the study. The researcher selected eight colleges (one college from each district) of Mizoram. Fifty-two teachers of degree colleges, eight principals and Director higher and technical education, Mizoram was taken as sample of the study. The investigator met the principal from whom he collected different information regarding RUSA programme and about the teachers. With the help of principal from each sample college, the investigator randomly selected teachers who are available on the day of data collection. Fifty-two teachers were interviewed in the present study by self-made interview schedule which includes concepts, components and implementation of RUSA. The interview schedule was administered personally by the investigator. One Focus Group Discussion was conducted for the study.

MAJOR FINDINGS

Awareness of college teachers on RUSA refers to the factual knowledge about important aspects of RUSA and its allied problems. It also refers to the capacity on the part of the individual to make proper diagnosis and thereby develop an attitude of mind. With regards to the concept of



RUSA a programme for Higher Education. 76% of teachers accepted it. Similarly, 12% of teachers said that GER of Higher Education is 25%. It indicates that only 12% of teachers knew about the GER of Higher Education. Regarding the funding pattern and structure of RUSA, only 21% of the teachers were aware about it. Fifty-three percentage of the teachers reported that they are not aware about the quality components of RUSA. Similarly, 89% teachers said that they are not aware about the provisions of professional development of teachers under RUSA. From the above analysis it is found that most of the teachers were not aware about RUSA and its Implementations. State government has not sensitized them about RUSA. The teachers were not familiar about the basic components of RUSA i.e. the objectives, structures, funding pattern and the Gross Enrolment Ratio.

Before 2013, Government of Mizoram (GoM) have not been able to allocate enough funds to its higher education sector, as a result, the quality of infrastructure and teaching in the State Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) is far below the acceptable levels. All colleges are inadequate infrastructure for creating good academic ambiance After Implementation of RUSA, 8 colleges out of 32 colleges accredited and got 2.56 CGPA by National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC). It implies poor academic quality, less valid NAAC accredited Institutions with high CGPA score. Hence government of Mizoram should upgrade academic facilities, strengthening of Quality Assurance Cell.

Case-1

Best Practice - Reviving Culture and Traditional Values to Promote National Unity and Integrity

The state of Mizoram and the Mizo are much influenced by the westerners because their religion, their alphabets and the modern lifestyle can be credited to the Christian missionaries. The Mizo youth need to retrieve their traditional cultural values and preserve their folksongs, dances and folklore that could be in danger of being forgotten. The influence of the colonizers and also the experience at the hands of the Indian armed forces during insurgency has also resulted in non -acceptance of the ways and lifestyle of mainland India or the rest of India. Mizo youth began to consider themselves different and apart from the rest of the Indians. There is a need to raise and strengthen the spirit of unity and affirm our identity as Indians.

The College has a Govt. registered cultural club known as the Thingsiri Cultural Club which is the first club to be registered from among the colleges in the state. The club takes the responsibility to teach various dances to all students who desire to learn. The club has represented the state in various cultural events and performed in different states of India. The club has won various competitions in the

state. Cultural day is observed in the college where students are requested to come to college in their traditional attire. Motivational speech on Traditional values is presented by teachers in the classroom. Cultural exchange program was organized to celebrate the Silver Jubilee celebration of the college. Another recent National level event, the North East Natya Sangam was jointly hosted by the college with Sangeet Natak Akademi and Deptt. of Art and Culture, in which cultural and drama troupes from all states of the North East and Delhi participated. Most students have received awareness on our own culture, tradition, and traditional values of the past and those of our brothers and sisters of different states. The understanding and acceptance of the Indian brotherhood became easier through the activities of the cultural clubs and their opportunity to go on tours to mainland India. Hosting cultural programs has instilled values in the students to become mature and responsible citizens of India. RUSA has given financial Support for the above programme and implementation of student cultural exchange programs. Under RUSA college has constructed one girls' hostel and academic block. Computers are also installed in the college for improving the quality of higher education.

Case-2

Best Practice - To Protect and Preserve Natural Environment

As one of the most grievous universal problem faced today is environmental imbalance, the college has adopted the protection and preservation of the natural environment as one of the best practices of the college. Planting of trees and plants is a mission for the Eco club and the Cleanliness and Beautification Cell. They take up the task of taking care of the trees and plants in the campus. Deforestation cannot be avoided due to development of infrastructure in the campus with a number of constructions works going on. The cells and NSS also help keep the locality clean and green by organizing Cleanliness Drive and social works.

Workshop on E-waste Management was conducted. Awareness is given to students regarding cleanliness, social work is conducted in collaboration with NSS in the campus and the locality where the college is located. The civic sense to reach out and help to preserve a clean and green environment is instilled in the students. The college was the first institution to volunteer and help the District Commissioners Office to clean Chite River in the Save Chite Project of the Government. To put a check to ourselves, Green Audit was initiated by the college and was done by the State Pollution Control Board. Regular checking is done to make sure that students and staff have a pollution free certificate for all vehicles that enter the campus. It is a must that each department of the college contributes towards planting of trees. NSS also take care of the tree



plantations in the forest reserve area. The effort of the authorities and cells concerned has borne fruits. The college campus is one of the cleanest and greenest campus of the city. Financial support was provided by government of Mizoram under RUSA component for the implementation of the above programs.

Case-3

Best Practice - Gender Equality Ambiance

The status of women in the country and state has improved but is far from being equal with men. Mizo girls often lack confidence to rise high as the home and social environment does not permit her to equip herself as much as she wants to or is capable of. Therefore, Gender Equality Ambiance is included among the best Practices of the college. A Remedial class for weak learners is also conducted in the college. Girl Students are encouraged to attend it and improve their knowledge. The college aims at equipping women students to fight against all odds to reach the best of what they can be.

The Mizo society has evolved to a modern society with a high literacy percentage. However, the status of a girl child, or a daughter, a wife or a daughter in law has never been equal to their counterparts. The woman in the family is often deprived of the various opportunities of life of life which are open to the men of the family. A girl student has less studying atmosphere in the home where she has to perform all her household chores. Our college has been a blessing since long for economically and academically disadvantaged students from remotest areas of the state. Financial assistance has been often provided. Girls from outside the city stay as maids or take up part time jobs and depend on their distant relatives by staying in their house and help them in the household work. It is difficult for them to spare much time for studies. Therefore, running a girls' hostel with minimum fees was the priority of the college.

Equipping the girls with self-defence Taekwando training, making them aware of laws that are in the favour of their safety (Jurisprudence Course), improving their skills through cooking and baking classes and other such related programs has made them confident and brave. Realizing that running of girl's hostel by the college has been a blessing for many girls in utter need has inspired the college to open another hostel for economically disadvantaged students. Remedial classes have proved effective as pass percentage among the girls has increased. The College has received funds from UGC for a girls hostel and is going to receive more to open a new hostel from Ministry of Tribal Affairs. conducting of value-added Courses was possible through the funds received from RUSA under equity. Professors have often financed and freely donated for the upliftment of the status of the girl students in the college.

CONCLUSION

The Higher education system of Mizoram state is not as per the National level. The number of institutions is very less; student's enrolment is also less in comparison to National level. Only one central university takes care about the affiliation system of colleges and conducts the examination also. Teachers working in the degree colleges of Mizoram were also not aware about the recently launched programme RUSA. The quality of education depends mainly in three aspects i.e. the human resource, infrastructural and instructional facilities of the colleges. Due to lack of awareness, teachers are showing neither positive nor negative attitude towards this programme. Hence state government should orient the teachers about this programme in a phased manner. They should know the pros and cons of the programme. Many aspects like promotion of research, funding pattern, up gradation of colleges to universities and making colleges more autonomous are still unaware by the teachers. So, it is the responsibilities of the UGC-HRDC to conduct special refresher course or summer course on Rastriya Uchcharat Shiksha Abhiyan in which teachers from all streams may participate. Seminars and workshops and conferences on the above topic may be conducted to sensitize the teachers of Mizoram state. The colleges will put more focus to increase GER. The administrative authority may develop a mechanism to monitor the progress of civil work in colleges and proper utilisation of RUSA funds in different components.

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