



Higher Education In Jammu And Kashmir: Issues And Challenges

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"Education must be of a new type for the sake of the creation of a new world".

M.K. Gandhi

Abstract

Higher education plays a crucial role in societal development by promoting knowledge and economic progress. Quality education is essential for the growth and prosperity of a country, emphasizing the need for research-focused institutions. The paper explores the different types of higher education institutions like University-Colleges, Research-Universities, and Technical Universities, highlighting the significance of research in their advancement. Challenges within the higher education system are addressed, emphasizing the importance of integrating research into the curriculum to overcome these obstacles and foster progress. The study underscores how higher education is a catalyst for scientific and economic advancements globally, showcasing its pivotal role in driving innovation and development.

keywords- Higher education, knowledge, economic progress, Quality education, skilled professionals, country's development.

Introduction

Higher education is the backbone of a society. Theocharis Kromydas (2017) defines higher education as a stage on which teaching and research can be accommodated in an organized trends for the promotion. It promotes various types of knowledge across the world and have developed their economy to the great extent due to highly educated professionals. India is a developing country and its education system is still improving. The people of the country could develop only when they are educated. If we value based citizen are developed through quality education. We have to work on the quality education. Higher education is a "path to scientific and economic progress" (Parry. 2015). Gordon Graham (2013) distinguishes three kinds of institutions related to higher education namely: University-College, Research-University and Technical University. Quality research holds the key for any university or college to progress and flourish. Higher education is basically focused on research knowledge and technical knowledge. Research enhances the quality of institutions. Many challenges are there in higher education and this can be dealt by increasing research in curriculum. Now a days we can observe the challenges in the higher education system worldwide. With the help of higher education we can easily promote research.

From the last few decades higher education experienced the remarkable changes in terms of its growth and development. Henry Hasley (2006) argues that 'higher education has multiple ends'. However in the contemporary world, the role of higher education is frequently associated with the formation of human resources. It is also argued that one of the important roles of education is enhancing strength of knowledge clear vision of life. (Saito, 2003, walker and Unterhalter, 2007) Higher education develops cultural and moral values in the student. It also enhances the talent and critical thinking among the individuals.

The rapid growth of higher education system has brought so many challenges related to the standards of its qualities but also equal opportunities of higher education facilities to all the people of the society. In Jammu and Kashmir, large number of the people belong to the middle class and the lower middle class and they struggle hard to fulfill their basic needs. Their geographical condition force them to compromise with higher education specially the youth of the rural areas and females of the rural and urban areas both.

Education and especially higher education is quite disturbed in Jammu & Kashmir due to terrorism. This results in unemployment. Interrupted studies leads to major dropouts, safety & security is the primary reason behind high rate of dropout in female students.

A recent survey (Ref) of National Statistical Office states that male literacy rate is higher 85.70% as compared to female 68%. Rate of literacy is further reduced in rural areas 66% as compared with urban female 75-70%. The numbers are dicey as literacy standards vary. The scenario is more detonating in higher education. Only 8.4% males and 2.8% of females are graduates. (Census 2022).



Objectives of the research Paper

This piece of work intends to study the status of education in Jammu and Kashmir with appropriate reasoning of dropouts, problems, challenges and crucial circumstances of COVID-19 situation in particular. The objectives are:

1. To determine the status of higher education in Jammu and Kashmir.
2. To find out the problems and challenges in higher education in Jammu and Kashmir.
3. To find out the reasons behind the dropout students from the college.
4. To highlight the problems of students and teachers in during COVID-19.

Methodology

As such the paper is based on the secondary data sources. The data has been collected from different newspapers and websites, reports, journals; research papers, economic surveys of National Statistical Office (NSO). The research is based on the study of Gross enrollment ratio (GER) of higher education in urban and rural areas of Jammu and Kashmir.

Literature review:

(i) Mehonood Yasar (March 2020) did a detail study since 1949-2018. He had discussed Kashmir as center of Sanskrit learning, making a great history of literature study. He also stated the literacy rate as 74.04% and 68.4% of Jammu & Kashmir respectively

(ii) Malik Aamier Mohd. Rather Lateef Towhead (2021) also discussed the literacy rates and mentioned; to bring sociological reformation in the field of higher education is a powerful factor. They analyzed the challenges of higher education & suggested some solutions for improvement in higher education in Jammu & Kashmir.

(iii) **Bhagat Ritu (2013)**: This paper is based on new demands and standard of higher education in Jammu and Kashmir. It also suggested some important steps for improving the quality of higher education in Jammu and Kashmir. Author discusses the development history of higher education in Jammu and Kashmir.

(iv) **Mir Ahmad Muzafar, Dr. Butt Kumar Chanchal, Dr. Veeraiah P. (August 2017)**: In this paper author presented the needs of education for every individual to grow up into more efficient person. Author gives the suggestion for the growth of higher education of the Nations. He also discussed education as a main component for innovation, growth and development. The author emphasized on importance of contribution of youth in India's development. He called upon all the in education system to have proper authority, responsibility and accountability.

(v) **Sharma Sheetal (May 2014)**: Education is a very important pillar of the Nation. This paper presents the data analysis related with the higher education in Jammu and Kashmir. Jammu Kashmir is the only state where education is free up to university level. In Jammu and Kashmir there is continuous increment of higher education. The gross enrolment ratio for the state of Jammu and Kashmir was 10.36% in 2007-08 and has increased to 18.2% in 2011-12, which is higher than national GER of 15%. (According to NSO)

(vi) **Bazaz Yaseen Rabiya, Akram Mohammad Feb (2020)**: This paper reports all the facts of higher education after the removal of Article 370. On the basis of survey the total literacy rate of Jammu and Kashmir is 68.4%. The total male and female literacy rate is 78.26% and 58.01% respectively. They tried to overcome the limitation of the higher education in Jammu and Kashmir and study the different categories of the higher education.

Virtually the roots of education can be seen in the history of J&K in which Sanskrit education was imparted to the students. Later on the growth of higher education can be seen in Buddhist period in which Takshila, Nalanda, Jagadala, Vikramshila etc were the main centres of education. In the context of J&K the progress of higher education can be seen during the period of Maharaja Ranbir Singh (186-1885 AD) the son of Maharaja Gulab Singh who established the Vidya Vikas press the first press in the state to translate books into Sanskrit for scholars. He also set up Raghunath Sanskrit Maharaja Pustkalya. Further the progress of higher education can be seen during the period of Maharaja Pratap Singh (1885-1925 AD) who took the initiative to open the college for higher education in Annie Besant college (1905 AD). For the progress of education a committee was appointed under the chairmanship of Mr. Sharp, in 1916. In 1938, an education re-organization committee was founded under the chairmanship of Mr. KG Saijidain. Based on the guidelines of the committee a Teacher's Training School was opened in Srinagar. The basic training classes were established for the training of graduate teachers in state in 1940. An education re-organization committee came into existence in 1950 under the chairmanship of Mr. A.A. Kazmini who recommended completely free education at the levels i.e. from pre-primary to the higher education stage.

Research Hypothesis:

The higher education in Jammu and Kashmir will improve the overall condition of the society at large in Jammu and Kashmir if only NACC guidelines are implemented effectively.



Status of Higher education in Jammu and Kashmir

Most of the college and universities are set-up in the urban area but most of the people of Jammu and Kashmir are living in the rural area so there is a serious problem for the people residing in rural areas especially for girls. The department of higher education should have the accountability to monitor and regulate the higher education in Jammu and Kashmir. This department should also have the responsibility to establish the universities and colleges in Jammu and Kashmir.

The Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) is the ratio of the number of enrollment in higher education to the total population in the age group of 18-23 years. Generally a high GER indicates a high degree of participation in higher education.

According to AISHE (All India Survey on Higher Education) report there are around 15 lakh youth in the age groups of 18-23 age. Out of there only 5 lakh pursue higher education in colleges within Jammu & Kashmir and outside state.

These students are facilitated with PMSSS (Prime Ministers special scholarship scheme). They may be enrolled in distance learning through IGNOU or MANNU. Still only 31% of youth in age group 18-23 are enrolled for higher education.

There are around 140 Degree College including newly established 50 colleges, functional in Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory (UT) with approximately 1.82 lakh students only.

Despite witnessing a huge expansion of college the GER in Jammu and Kashmir is very low which exposes the poor response of the students towards higher education.

The student are diverted and indulged in the training of terrorism. The parents of these students appeal their children to come back. According to the censuses the youth is turning more towards terrorism after withdrawal of Article 370 in 2019. Many youth between the age of 18 to 25 were kidnapped. Many of the parents of these youth are afraid of prevailing circumstances in J & K and do not approach police for FIR of their missing children. During 10th March to 9th April 2022 many scholar students were shot dead. Among them were Raja Nadeem Rather who was the graduate of animal husbandry. Virtually Nadeem became terrorist.

(Dainikbhaskar.com, Dated 14.06.2022, Page no. 1)

Challenges:

A lot of challenges are listed in the education system of Jammu and Kashmir as follows:

1. Most of colleges & university do not abide to the rules of admission policy. Student with as less as 10/160 are admitted in technical courses. The complete systems are biased.
2. **Faulty recruitment system:** Besides poor admission rules there is no recruitment system followed by the government of J&K. The relatives of posted professors can easily secure jobs in colleges and universities in the valley. This shows the corruption level in the state is at its peak. Even the reforms regarding the recruitment rules are not being implemented due to negligence, ignorance of the authorities. There are many colleges and universities in the state where we have shortage of teachers due to which students suffer.
3. **Political disturbance:** Because of the political disturbances and terrorist activities the colleges and universities remains shut for the most of the time This has put the career of the students at the brink. Due to strikes/hartals the carrier of the students of J&K is in danger.
4. **No computer labs:** Most of the Universities and Colleges are without computer labs. There are the graduates who don't even know the uses of IT. Information technology has brought the revolution across the world, so students should get benefit from this facility. Students should be well equipped with the latest technology.
5. **Lack of Research:** In J&K the students are not motivated for doing the latest research. Even the universities also do not promote the students for the research. So the students are not acquainted with the research criteria.
6. **SWOC analysis:** In most of the universities and colleges in the J&K there is not even the concept of SWOC analysis. Majority of the colleges in the state are not NAAC accredited. When we talk about the NAAC accreditation, the core parameter for any accreditation is SWOC (Strength, Weakness, Opportunities, and Challenges).
7. **Poor Administration and infrastructure:** The poor administration is also another problem of higher education in college and universities of J&K. The colleges are running without IT facilities, modern changes and poor infrastructure.
8. **Examination system:** Current examination system is pathetic as exams are never getting conducted on time due to political disturbances and many other reasons. University is conducting exams from last few years without knowing whether syllabus has been covered or not, students are ready to face exams or not. There is no particular session when exams can be conducted smoothly. Often exam papers get postponed which has become the routine and every year exam pattern gets changed, which results in inconsistency.
9. **Drop out ratio:** Due to the political disturbance the drop out ratio in the colleges and universities is



increasing. When the students will earn a degree then only they can start earning. With each degree earned the average earning increases.

10.Poverty: Poverty is one of the main issues and indicates a condition in which a person fails to maintain a living standard adequate for a comfortable lifestyle. Mere growth of economy cannot bring social justice and balanced development unless it coupled with poverty alleviation and employment generating opportunities for deprived and marginalized sections of the society. The survey conducted by the State during 2007-08 put the BPL population at 21.63 percent. A host of poverty alleviation programme are in operation in the State mostly with central assistance.

11.Funds Utilization: There is also no proper management of utilization of funds. Due to lack of proper management of funds also the higher education system is suffering in J&K.

Suggestions:

Certain effective steps could be taken for improving quality of Higher Education so that along with quantity, quality can also be assured:

- i. Degree Colleges, Colleges of Education and other Higher Educational Institutions should be opened with proper infrastructure facilities and modernized IT system.
 - ii. The research should be promoted by giving the proper facilities and opportunities to the teachers and professors to complete and initiate their PhD's and designation work. Digital library facilities, research Journals, magazines and other related materials should be available in the college library. For the research in higher education orientations, refreshers, seminars, workshops and conferences should be organized as they are must required. For this purpose research grants should be given to the higher education system by the State & Central government.
 - iii. The student-teacher ratio should be maintained by colleges as well as the universities and the teaching method should be based on the student centric approach. In which the student should be free think out of the box and develop his creativity.
 - iv. Government has increased no. of colleges wherever possible. It has only increased the quantity but quality is compromised, as shown in table no. 6, during 2008 ? nine colleges were opened but without any infrastructure facility.
 - v. The job oriented courses should be promoted by the state and central govt. With the help of these courses the student not only can enhance academic level but also get the opportunity of better livelihood.
 - vi. It is further to be suggested that examinations should be conducted on time as per academic calendar, papers should be evaluated as early as possible and the results be declared within shorter period so that the common students do not suffer.
 - vii. The higher education institutions should be come under the guidelines of the NAAC. For the promotion of the faculties their academic achievements (results of the classes in which they are teaching) and their personal achievements (conferences, seminars, workshops, articles, publications, etc.) are to be kept into consideration.
 - viii. The political issues should be separated from the education system. It should not be merge with political affairs.
 - ix. The counselling sessions should be organized that can trace the problems of the students & the parents to provide the appropriate directions to come out with these problems.
 - x. The other states also take the responsibilities to conduct the interstate level academic as well as the sports competitions so that the students can be easily motivated.
- Education must be free from politics and every politician must work wholeheartedly for the growth of Jammu & Kashmir.

Conclusion:

With the help of opening the new colleges and universities the higher education get the way of progress in J&K. These education institutions would be equipped with requisite physical infrastructure and staff. Many Model college would be opened in every district of J&K. These model colleges impart the education of vocational and nonvocational level. For this purpose many projects should be launched in every district of J&K by the state and centre govt. For the growth of Higher education it should be free from politics and every politician must work wholeheartedly for the growth of J&K.

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