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Higher Education in Manipur: A Critical Examination of Growth, Student Enrollment and Issues

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Abstract

This study examines the growth and development of colleges in Manipur from 1946 to 2022, providing a comprehensive overview of the higher education landscape in the state. The research analyzes the types of colleges, including government, aided, private, engineering, medical, nursing, and law colleges, and their year of Establishment. It also investigates the number of colleges managed by local bodies and universities, and the number of colleges recognized under Section 12B of the UGC Act 1956 and Section 2(f). The study further explores student enrollment trends in university teaching departments, affiliated colleges, and various academic programs, including BA, PG, and professional courses. It also examines the gross enrollment ratio in higher Education at the national level in Manipur. The study reveals significant disparities in colleges and universities between hill and valley districts. A further examination reveals enrollment disparities among the General, OBC, SC, ST, and PWD categories. The research highlights various issues in higher education in Manipur and identifies areas for improvement. It concludes by suggesting measures for better developing higher education institutions in Manipur.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Despite being one of India's smallest states, Manipur's higher education landscape is a paradox of progress and disparity. Manipur's higher education sector is thriving with a staggering growth from one college in 1946 to over 117 colleges and 12 universities today. However, a complex web of challenges and inequalities lies beneath this impressive expansion. The state's unique geography, demographics, and socio-political context have created a higher education ecosystem that is both fascinating and flawed. Geographically, Manipur comprises Hills and Valleys, with a total land area of 22,327 square kilometers. The state has 10 Hill and six Valley districts, with significant population distribution and reservation policy disparity (Haokip, T 2015, Pp. 195-208a). The Hills are home to various tribal communities, including the Kukis and Nagas, with distinct cultural, linguistic, and socio-economic profiles. In contrast, the Meiteis community predominantly inhabited the valley. This unique demographic landscape has significant implications for higher education in Manipur. The state's reservation policy, which allocates 31% of seats to tribal communities and 69% to non-tribal communities, has created a complex web of access and equity issues. Furthermore, the state's higher education institutions face numerous challenges, including inadequate infrastructure, teacher shortages, and limited research opportunities. Despite these challenges, Manipur's higher education sector has made significant strides recently. The Establishment of Manipur University in 1980 and the Central Agricultural University in 1992 marked significant milestones in the state's higher education journey (Singha S. Merina 2021, Pp. 3596-3599). Manipur boasts diverse higher education institutions, including universities, colleges, and technical institutes. This study examines the growth pattern of higher education institutions in Manipur, focusing on the numbers and names of colleges and their year of Establishment. It also analyzes enrollment trends, categorizing students into General, OBC, SC, and PWD. The study aims to identify the challenges facing higher Education in Manipur, including admissions. teacher shortages. curriculum. infrastructure, and the impact of the state's political conditions. By exploring the complexities of Manipur's higher education landscape, this study seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of the state's unique challenges and opportunities. It also aims to inform policy decisions and interventions to help address the disparities and inequalities in Manipur's higher education sector.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The primary objective of this study is to:

- 1. Analyze the growth and development of colleges in Manipur from 1946 to 2015, including the types of colleges, their year of Establishment, and the disparities between hill and valley districts.
- 2. Examine the student enrollment trends in university teaching departments, affiliated colleges, and various academic programs, including BA (Bachelor of Arts) and PG (Post Graduate) courses.

- Investigate the issues and challenges facing higher education in Manipur, including the availability and accessibility of colleges, the quality of education, and the governance and management of higher education institutions.
- 4. Identify the disparities and inequalities in higher education between hill and valley districts, including the number of colleges, student enrollment, and infrastructure facilities.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant because it provides a comprehensive understanding of Manipur's higher education landscape, highlighting disparities and challenges. By analyzing institutional growth, student enrollment trends, and socioeconomic disparities, this research informs policymakers, educators, and stakeholders about areas requiring improvement. The study's findings and recommendations can contribute to promoting accessibility, equity, and quality in higher education, ultimately enhancing human resource development and socioeconomic progress in Manipur. Furthermore, the research serves as a valuable resource for future studies, policy formulation, and initiatives aimed at improving the state's educational landscape, making it a crucial contribution to the field of higher education.

Statement of the problems

Despite significant progress in higher Education, Manipur faces challenges in accessibility, equity, and quality. Disparities in the distribution of colleges and universities between hill and valley districts characterize the state's higher education system. Additionally, there are significant differences in student enrollment patterns among various socio-economic groups, including General, OBC, SC, ST, and PWD categories. These disparities and differences significantly challenge the state's efforts to promote inclusive and equitable higher education. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the growth and development of colleges in Manipur, identify the disparities and differences in higher education, and suggest measures for improving the accessibility, equity, and quality of higher education in the state.

3. METHODOLOGY

1. Data Sources: This study pulls from a variety of secondary data sources, which include: (i) Institutional reports: Annual reports from Manipur University, the Directorate of Higher Education, and the College Development Council. (ii) Government publications: Reports from the State Higher Education Commission, government orders, notifications, and statistical records. (iii) Academic literature: A collection of journal articles, textbooks, and research studies. (iv) Online resources: Various websites, news articles, and college prospectuses. (v) Official documents: The list of colleges under Section 12B of the UGC Act, 1956, and Section 2(f) from the North Eastern Regional Office in Guwahati, as well as the

University Grants Commission Annual Report for 2019-2020. (vi) Statistical data: Student statistics from Manipur University (2012-2018), the All-India Survey on Higher Education (2015-2016), and the national higher education gross enrollment ratio for 2022.

2. Research Design and Approach: This study adopts a mixed-methods approach, blending both quantitative and qualitative research methods to gain a well-rounded understanding of the higher education landscape in Manipur. The research takes a secondary approach, relying on existing data sources to explore the state of higher education in Manipur. This method allows for a thorough analysis of a wide array of data, including institutional reports, government publications, academic literature, online resources, official documents, and statistical data. The study employs a descriptive and comparative analysis approach, examining data from various sources to uncover trends, patterns, and disparities in Manipur's higher education system. By comparing data across different institutions, regions, and periods, the analysis aims to provide a detailed picture of the current state of higher education in Manipur.

1. Establishment and Growth of Higher Education Institutions in Manipur

Between 1946 and 2022, Manipur's higher education sector experienced rapid growth, surpassing that of Assam and Meghalaya. Notably, Manipur is the third state in North East India to establish higher education institutions, with the first college, Dhanamanjuri College (DM College), founded in 1946 in Imphal, the state capital (History of DM College and Research Centre, 1946). Unlike Meghalaya and Assam, Manipur received limited British support for its educational growth. Nevertheless, the state established and developed higher education institutions independently from 1946 onwards. The Manipur State Darbar recognized the need for colleges and committed to establishing them. In contrast, Guwahati University was established in 1947 and became a full-fledged university in August 1949, following India's independence. Initially, the University faced challenges, including limited facilities and capacity. Dhanamanjuri College, the first institution of higher learning in Manipur, was affiliated with Calcutta University until the intermediate level, as Manipur lacked a university before independence. The college began as a private institution with 68 students and 10 teachers, operating from the Johnston School Building in Imphal. On January 20, 1950, Manipur established its own Department of Education (DOE), responsible for curriculum development, inspection, supervision, textbook selection, and syllabus design. Subsequently, Manipur College and Imphal College were established in 1952 and 1958, respectively (Manipur College Prospectus 2022). The Establishment of Manipur University in 1980 was a significant milestone in the state's higher education history. Before this, the Universities of Kolkata and Assam had state institutions affiliated with them. The founding of Manipur University fulfilled the long-standing desire of the Manipuri people for a center of advanced study and research (AK Chishti 2014). As a result of the University's Establishment, numerous colleges emerged, catering to the growing demand for higher Education. By 2022, the state boasted 117 colleges, including run, government-aided, and government-run institutions. However, despite this growth, women's higher Education in Manipur has lagged, with only seven women's colleges in the state, all located in the Valley area (Haokip, T 2015, 195-208b). In contrast, the hill areas or tribal regions lack women's colleges, highlighting a significant disparity in access to higher Education. Nevertheless, Manipur remains one of the premier academic centers in India's Northeastern region, with a high concentration of colleges. Manipur has witnessed significant improvements in its education system, as evidenced by its impressive literacy rate of 79.85%, which surpasses the national average (R. Panmei, Luckyson 2013, Pp. 82-91). Over the years, the state has made concerted efforts to enhance access to Education, substantially increasing educational institutions. As of 2022, Manipur boasted an impressive array of 117 colleges and more than ten universities, offering undergraduate and graduate degree programs across various disciplines, including Humanities, Sciences, Commerce, Engineering, Law, Bachelor of Education (B.Ed), and Medicine. According to the Census of 2011, these institutions have contributed significantly to the state's educational landscape. The following table provides a comprehensive list of the 117 colleges and departments, categorizing them as government-run, government-aided, and privately managed:

Table 1: Growth of Colleges in Manipur: A Year-wise Analysis of Establishment

	Types of College		Year of
SN	Government Colleges	Districts	Establishment
1	Dhanamanjuri College of Science	Imphal	1946
2	DM College of Arts	Imphal	1946
3	Imphal Art College	Imphal	1949
4	Imphal College	Imphal	1952
5	Manipur College	Imphal	1958
6	Modern College	Imphal	1963
7	Moirang College	Bishenpur	1963
8	Thoubal College	Thoubal	1963
9	Oriental College	Imphal	1963
10	Churachandpur College	Churachandpur	1964
11	GP Women's College	Imphal	1965
12	Chanam Ibomcha College	Bishenpur	1965
13	Pettigrew College	Ukhrul	1965
14	Kha – Manipur College	Thoubal	1966
15	Nambol L. Sanoi College	Bishenpur	1966
16	MB College	Imphal East (E)	1969
17	Maharaja Budhachandra College	Imphal	1969
18	NG College	Imphal	1970
19	Ideal Girls College	Imphal	1970
20	YK College	Thoubal	1972
21	Presidency College	Kangpokpi	1973
22	Biramangol College	Imphal East	1973
23	Lamka College	Churachandpur	1976
24	Lilong Haoreibi College	Thoubal	1976
25	Hill College	Senapati	1978
26	Liberal College	Imphal	1979
27	Standard College	Imphal	1979
28	Thambal Marik College	Bishenpur	1980
29	United College	Chandel	1980
30	Waikhom Mani Girls' College	Thoubal	1980
31	Kamakhya Pemton College	Imphal	1981
32	Kakching Khunou College	Thoubal	1081
33	Mayai Lambi College	Imphal	1981
34	Jiri College	Jiribam	1981
35	S. Kula Women's College	Bishnupur	1981
36	South East Manipur College	Chandel	1981
37	Tamenglong College	Tamenglong	1986
38	Institute of Cooperative Management	Imphal (W)	1988
39	Moreh College	Tengnoupal	1992
40	College of Agriculture	Imphal	1993
41	DM College of Commerce	Imphal	1996
42	Jadonang Memorial College	Tamenglong	2013
43	College of Food Technology		2015
43	College of Food Technology	Imphal	2015

Source: Government of Manipur, 2024, Annual Administrative Report 2023-2024

According to Table 1, the first government college in Manipur was established in 1946, marking the beginning of a significant era in the state's higher education landscape. By 2015, the total number of government colleges established in the state had reached 43, demonstrating a substantial growth in the availability of higher education institutions. A total of 11 government colleges exists in the hill districts or areas, as revealed by a close examination of the data. In contrast, 32 were established in valley areas districts or areas, highlighting the efforts made to ensure equitable distribution of educational opportunities across different regions. Notably, the government established its first college in the hill districts of Churachandpur in 1964. The

Establishment marked a significant milestone in expanding access to higher Education in the region, previously underserved areas. The Establishment of this college paved the way for further development of higher education infrastructure in the hill districts. On the other hand, the most recently established government colleges were Jadonang Memorial College in Tamenglong district, a hill district established in 2013, and the College of Food Technology in Imphal West district, a valley district established in 2015. These recent additions to the state's higher education landscape demonstrate the ongoing efforts to enhance the availability and quality of educational opportunities in Manipur.

Year of SN Arts Colleges managed by Local Body District Establishment 1 Kanggui Christain College Kangpokpi 1999 Heritage Christian College 2013 Senapati SN Medical College managed by Local Body District 2007 Kangleipark Medical and Nursing Institute Imphal East 2 R D O College of Nursing Imphal West 2011 3 SIMPMS 2014 Imphal East BEd College managed by Local Body SN District 1997 1 THTET Bishenupur Ibotombi Institute of Education 2014 Imphal West SN Managed by University District 2018 Mt Zion College Senapati

Table 2: Growth and Establishment of Colleges in Manipur under Local Body and University Management

Source: List of All Degree Colleges in Manipur, 2022-2023, AUBSP

Abbreviations: (i) **SIMPMS:** Saraswati Institute of Management and Para Medical Science (ii) **THTET:** Thokchom Ibotombi Institute of Teacher Education and Training

According to Table 2, local bodies and universities manage eight colleges in Manipur. The Establishment of these colleges spanned from 1999 to 2018. Among these institutions, local bodies manage two arts colleges, two medical colleges, and two BEd colleges, while a university manages one college. Regarding geographical distribution, three colleges are located in hill

districts or areas, while five are in valley districts or areas. Notably, Kanggui Christian College, managed by a local body, in 1999, authorities established it as the first institution in a hill district. Another significant institution is the Kangleipak Medical and Nursing Institute, a local body established in 2007, which also manages it. The most recent addition is Mt. Zion College, located in the Senapati Hill district, established in 2018. The growth of aided colleges and their year of establishment are presented in the table below.

Table 3: Growth of Aided Colleges and Year of Establishment

SN	Name of Aided College	District	Year of Establishment
511	8		1000
1	Mangolnganbi College	Bishenpur	1980
2	T.S. Paul Manipur Women's College	Imphal	1980
3	Western College	Imphal West	1980
4	Pole Star College	Thoubal	1981
5	Pravabati College	Imphal	1981
6	Regional College	Imphal	1981
7	Kumbi College	Bishenpur	1981
8	Ng. Mani College	Imphal	1982
9	Shree Shree Guru Gobind Girls' College	Imphal	1985
10	N. Birahari College	Imphal East	1986
11	Kanon Devi Memorial College of Edn.	Imphal	1992
12	Mt. Everest College	Senapati	1999
13	Don Bosco College	Senapati	2000

Source: List of Colleges in Manipur University, n.d., Government Colleges, Permanently Affiliated Private Colleges, Private Affiliated Colleges

According to Table 3, Manipur has 13 aided colleges that provide higher education opportunities to students across the state. The Establishment of these colleges began in 1980, marking the start of a significant expansion in aided higher education institutions. Authorities established more colleges over the next two decades, with the most recent addition in 2000. A geographical analysis of these colleges reveals a notable imbalance in their distribution. Only two aided colleges are located in hill districts, whereas 11 are in valley districts. This disparity highlights the differences in the development of higher education infrastructure between the hill and valley districts of Manipur. The first aided college was established in 1980 in the valley district of Bishnupur, paving the

way for the expansion of aided higher Education in the valley districts. The first aided college in the hill districts was established in 1999 in Senapati district, marking a significant milestone in extending higher education opportunities to the hill districts. This development reflects the state's efforts to promote higher Education and address regional disparities. However, the data also underscores the need to expand further and develop higher education infrastructure in the hill districts to ensure equitable access to quality education. The growth of unaided colleges and their year of establishment are presented in the table below.

Table 4: Growth of Private Unaided Colleges and Year of Establishment

PEER-REVIEWED JOURNAL

SN	Name of Private Unaided Colleges	District	Year of Establishment
1	Imphal Arts College	Imphal	1949
2	Bethany Christian College	Churachandpur	1971
3	Naorem Birahari College	Imphal	1986
4	Damdei Christian College	Kangpokpi	1987
5	Yairipok College	Thoubal	1990
6	Rayburn College	Churachandpur	1994
7	Sentinel College	Ukhrul	1996
8	Temple of Learning Degree College	Imphal West	2007
9	College of Social Work	Imphal West	2008
10	Mt Pisgah College	Senapati	2010
11	Asufu Christian Institute	Senapati	2010
12	St Joseph College	Ukhrul	2015
13	Lungnila Elizabeth School of Social Work	Senapati	2015
14	Highland National College	Imphal West	2016
15	PDDUIAS	Bishnupur	2017
16	SAIRAM	Imphal West	2018
17	Yaima College of Optometry	Imphal West	2018
18	Chil Chil Christian College	Imphal	2018
19	Young Pillar College	Churachandpur	2008
20	Jcre Global College	Imphal West	2019
21	CHCSB	Kangpokpi	2019
22	St Xavier College	Senapati	2019

Source: List of Colleges in Manipur University, n.d., Government Colleges, Permanently Affiliated Private Colleges, Private Affiliated Colleges

Abbreviations

- (a) PDDUIAS-Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhayay Institute of Agriculture Science
- (b) SAIRAM South Asian Institute of Rural and Agricultural Management
- (c) CHCSB College of Horticulture Community Science and Biotechnology.

According to Table 4, Manipur has 22 private unaided colleges evenly distributed across valley and hill districts. Notably, 11 colleges are in hill districts, while another 11 are in valley districts, demonstrating a deliberate effort to ensure equal access

to private higher education opportunities statewide. Historically, Imphal Arts College, established in 1949 in a valley district, was Manipur's pioneering private unaided college. Its Establishment marked the beginning of a new era in Manipur's educational landscape, paving the way for the growth and development of private higher Education. In contrast, Bethany Christian College, established in 1971, was the first private unaided college in the hill districts. This milestone marked a significant turning point in expanding private higher education opportunities to previously underserved areas, demonstrating a commitment to providing educational opportunities to the hill districts.

Table 5: Growth of Government & Private Engineering Colleges and Year of Establishment

SN	Name of Government Engineering Colleges	District	Year of Establishment
514			1075
1	Government Polytechnic College	Imphal	1956
2	NIEIT	Imphal	1987
3	CIPETIE	Imphal	1988
4	Manipur Institute of Technology	Imphal	1998
5	National Institute of Technology	Imphal	2010
6	Civil Engineering Department	Imphal	2013
7	Indian Institute of Information Technology	Senapati	2015
8	Manipur Technical University	Imphal	2016
SN	Name of Private Engineering College	District	
1	Centre for Electronics Design & Technology	Imphal	1987
2	VIMIT	Imphal	2019

Abbreviations:

(a) NIEIT- National Institute of Electronics and Information Technology, (b) CIPETIE- Central Institute of Plastics

Engineering & Technology Industrial Estate, (c) VIMIT - Vibgyor Institute of Management & Information Technology

Source: List of All Degree Colleges in Manipur, 2022-2023

According to Table 5, Manipur has 10 engineering colleges, consisting of 8 government institutions and two private colleges, as per Table 5. Government Polytechnic College, established in 1956, was the first government engineering college, while Vibgyor Institute of Management and Information Technology, established in 2019, is the most recent addition. The distribution of government engineering colleges reveals a notable imbalance. While the Indian Institute of Information Technology in Senapati

is the only government engineering college in a hill district, established in 2015, the remaining seven are in valley districts. In addition to government institutions, Manipur is also home to 2 private engineering colleges, both situated in valley districts. These private colleges provide students with additional options for pursuing engineering education, catering to the growing demand for skilled engineers in the region.

Table 6: Growth of Government Medical/Nursing Colleges and Year of Establishment

SN	Government Medical/Nursing/ Dental Colleges	District	Year of Estab.
1	Regional Institute of Medical Science	Imphal	1972
2	Jawaharlal Nehru Institute of Medical Sc.	Imphal	1989
3	Nursing College, RIMS	Imphal West	2009
4	Dental College, RIMS	Imphal	2011
5	College of Nursing	Imphal West	2012
6	Medical College	Churachandpur	2022

Source: Colleges in Manipur n.d.

According to Table 6, Manipur boasts a total of 6 government medical colleges, providing students with opportunities to pursue medical Education. The Establishment of these colleges spans several decades, with the first government medical college dating back to 1972. Over the years, the state has continued to invest in medical Education, with the most recent addition being a government medical college established in 2022. This newest

institution marks a significant milestone in Manipur's efforts to enhance medical Education and healthcare services. Interestingly, the distribution of government medical colleges across Manipur reveals a notable imbalance. Five colleges are in valley districts, while only one is in a hill district. Established in 2022, the Lone Hill District College represents a crucial step towards addressing the medical education needs of this region.

Table 7: Growth of Private Medical /Nursing Colleges and Year of Establishment

			Year of
SN	Private Aided Medical/Nursing College	District	Establishment
1	Bethesda College of Nursing	Churachandpur	1995
SN	Private Medical/Nursing Colleges	District	
1	C M C College of Nursing	Imphal East	2012
2	Shija Academy of Health Science	Imphal	2021

Source: Government of Manipur, Annual Administrative Report 2023- 2024a

Manipur's medical education landscape has grown significantly since the Establishment of private medical and nursing colleges. Notably, the first private aided medical or nursing college was set up in 1995, marking a pivotal moment in the state's efforts to enhance medical Education. Furthermore, two private medical or nursing colleges were established in 2012 and 2021, respectively,

contributing to expanding medical education opportunities in the region. These private aided and private institutions are concentrated in the valley area, highlighting the need for greater geographical diversity in the distribution of medical colleges across the state.

Table 8: Growth of Government, Aided, and Private Law Colleges and Year of Establishment

			Year of
SN	Government Law Colleges	District	Establishment
1	LMS Law College	Imphal	1958
SN	Private Aided Law College	District	
1	Royal Academy of Law	Bishnupur	1994
SN	Private Law Colleges	District	
1	LMG Memorial Law College	Churachandpur	1982
2	Vishal Law Institute	Imphal West	2014

Source: Government of Manipur, Annual Administrative Report 2023-2024

Manipur's legal education landscape comprises a mix of government-run and private institutions. According to Table 8, the state has four law colleges, each with distinct characteristics. The government law college, established in 1958, is the oldest institution of its kind in the state. In addition to this public institution, there is one private aided law college, established in 1994, and two private law colleges, established in 1982 and 2014, respectively. A closer examination of these institutions' geographical distribution reveals that three of the four law

colleges - namely, the government law college, the private aided law college, and one of the private law colleges - are located in the valley region. In contrast, only one private law college has been established in the hill areas or districts, highlighting the need for greater accessibility and equity in legal education opportunities across the state. The growth of BE.d of both government and private colleges, along with their year of establishment, is presented in the table below.

Table 9: Growth of B.Ed. Government Colleges & Private Colleges, & Year of Establishment

		Year of Establishment	
SN	B.ed Government Colleges	District	Tear of Establishment
1	DM College of Teacher Education	Imphal	1972
2	Hindi Teacher's Training College	Imphal	1975
SN	BE.d Private Colleges	District	
1	Institute of Rural Education	Thoubal	1984
2	Trinity Teacher Training College	Imphal	2003
3	R.K. Sanatombi Devi College of Education	Imphal	2004
4	Slopeland College of Teachers Education	Thoubal	2014
5	TC College of Teacher Edn. & Social Work	Kangpokpi	2015
6	The Ideal Teachers Training Academy	Imphal	2016

Source: Colleges in Manipur, n.d., Private, Government, Engineering, Medical, & Law

Manipur's education sector has witnessed significant growth with the Establishment of numerous BEd colleges, which play a vital role in shaping the state's teaching fraternity. According to Table 9, the state is home to eight BEd colleges, comprising two government institutions and six private colleges. The government's initiative to establish BEd colleges dates back to 1972, when authorities first set up an institution, followed by a second college in 1975. However, it is noteworthy that the government has not established any additional BEd colleges since then, with the total number remaining at two as of 2025. A closer examination of the geographical distribution of these institutions reveals a significant imbalance. Both government

BEd colleges are situated in valley districts or areas, leaving the hill districts or areas without government institutions. This disparity underscores the need for greater accessibility and equity in Education, particularly in remote and underprivileged areas. On the other hand, private BEd colleges have made some inroads into the hill districts, with one institution located in these areas. Nevertheless, five private colleges are concentrated in valley districts or areas, reinforcing the existing geographical divide. The total number of growth/recognised Colleges in Manipur under Section 12B of the UGC (University Grant Commission) Act, 1956, and Section 2 (f) is presented in the table below.

Table 10: Growth of Colleges in Manipur under UGC Act 1956 (12B and Section 2f)

SN	UGC Act, 1956 (Manipur)		Total
1	No. of Colleges (Sec.2(f) &12B	2f not covered by Sec.12B	
	60 Colleges	01 College	61
2	Affiliated Colleges	Constituent Colleges	
	85 Colleges	02 Colleges	87
3	Off-Campus Centers (PG)	Recognized Centre	
	00	01	01
4	State Alone Institutions	-	
	11 Colleges	-	11

Source: List of Colleges as per 12B of the UGC Act and Section 2(f), 1956, North Eastern Regional Office, Guwahati

According to Table 10 and as stipulated in the University Grants Commission (UGC) Act, 1956, Manipur boasts a diverse and expansive higher education landscape. Notably, the state is home to a total of 60 colleges that are recognized under Section 2(f) and 12B of the UGC Act, underscoring the state's commitment to providing quality higher education opportunities to its citizens. Additionally, one college falls under Section 2(f) but is not

covered by Section 12B, highlighting the complexity and nuance of the state's higher education ecosystem. Regarding institutional structure, authorities characterized Manipur's education landscape with a mix of affiliated, constituent, and independent institutions. The state has 85 affiliated colleges affiliated with various universities and two constituent colleges integral to a university. Furthermore, Manipur is home to 11 institutions that

operate independently under the state government, providing specialized Education and training in various fields. Moreover, the state has one recognized center that offers specialized programs and courses. However, it is noteworthy that Manipur does not have any off-campus centers, which could potentially provide greater flexibility and accessibility to higher education opportunities.

Table 11: Growth of Colleges and Universities under Community and their locations

SN	Name of College	District	Located
1	Chanam Ibomcha College	Bishnupur	Valley
2	Churachandpur College	Churachandpur	Hill
3	Manipur University	Canchipur	Valley
4	Pettigrew College	Ukhrul	Hill
5	St. Kula Women's College	Bishnupur	Valley
6	Waikhom Mani Girl's College	Thoubal	Valley

Source: A list of the affiliated Colleges with Manipur University

According to Table 11, six institutions are under the Community category in Manipur, comprising five colleges and one University. A closer examination of the data reveals an interesting geographical distribution of these institutions. Specifically, two of the five colleges have been established in the hill districts of Manipur, while authorities established three in the hill districts and the rest in the valley districts. Notably, the valley districts are home to the University under the Community category, with no university established in the hill districts. This distribution highlights the efforts made to provide accessible Education to communities across different regions of Manipur, with a notable emphasis on hill and valley areas. The Establishment of these colleges and universities in various districts of Manipur demonstrates a commitment to promoting Education and development in the state. The government and other stakeholders aim to bridge the gap between different regions and communities by providing educational opportunities in both hill and valley districts, ultimately contributing to Manipur's overall growth and prosperity.

2. Types, year of Establishment, and the Growth of University in Manipur

There are more than six types of Indian Universities, depending on their Establishment. These are Central Universities, State Universities, Deemed Universities, Private Universities, Institute of National Importance, and others (Types of Universities and Colleges in India, 2024). Each type of University has unique characteristics, governance structure, and role in the education system. Manipur, a state in northeastern India, has witnessed significant growth in its university landscape, reflecting the national trends. With a growing demand for higher Education,

Manipur has seen an increase in the number of universities, colleges, and other institutions. The need to provide access to quality education has driven this growth, promoted research and innovation, and supported the state's economic development. As a result, Manipur's university landscape has become more diverse, with a range of institutions catering to different needs and aspirations. We can categorize the universities in Manipur into the following types: (i) Central Universities (ii) State Universities (iii) Deemed Universities (iv) Private Universities (v) Regional Campuses (vi) Institutes of National Importance (INIs)

The establishment and governance structure of the universities form the basis of these categories. The growth of these universities has contributed significantly to the development of Manipur's education sector. The expansion of universities in Manipur has increased access to higher Education and improved the quality of Education. The increase, in turn, has led to a more skilled and educated workforce, contributing to the state's economic growth and development. Furthermore, the diversity of universities in Manipur has enabled students to pursue various academic programs, from arts and humanities to science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). This diversity has also facilitated research collaborations and innovation, driving progress in various fields. The growth of universities in Manipur has been a significant factor in the state's development. As the demand for higher Education continues to rise, it is essential to ensure that these institutions remain committed to providing quality education, promoting research and innovation, and supporting the state's economic development. The classification of universities is as follows:

Table 12: University Growth, types, and year of Establishment

SN	Name of University	Type of University	Year of Estab.
1	Manipur University	Central University	1980
2	Central Agriculture University	Central University	1992
3	IGNTU	Regional Campus (Manipur)	2009
4	National Institute of Technology	INI	2010
5	IIIT	INI	2014
6	Manipur University of Culture	State Government University	2015
7	Sangai International University	Private University	2015

8	Manipur Technical University	State Government University	2016
9.	Dhanamanjuri University	State Government University	2018
10	National Sports University	Central University	2018
11	Manipur International University	Private University	2019
12	Bir Tikendrajit University	Private University	2020

Abbreviations:

- (I) IGNTU Indira Gandhi National Tribal University
- (ii) IIIT Indian Institute of Information Technology
- (iii) INI Institute of National Importance

Central Universities: According to the UGC website, as of November 18, 2020, Manipur hosts three central universities (Bhavan Vigyan 2003). These universities are established and funded by the central government. Except for IGNTU, located in Kangpokpi district, the valley areas of Manipur, including the state capital, concentrate on these institutions. Central universities are crucial in promoting higher Education and research in the state.

Private Universities: There are three private universities in Manipur. However, Sangai International University, in Churachandpur District (Hill areas), was delisted in 2024. Private organizations or individuals establish and fund private universities. They offer a range of academic programs and provide students with opportunities for skill development and research.

State Government Universities: Manipur has four state government universities established and funded by the state government. They are also mainly located in the Valley (Imphal), except for one University (IGNTU) in the hill areas. State government universities play a vital role in promoting higher Education and research in the state and offer students a range of academic programs.

Institutes of National Importance: Manipur is home to two institutions of National Importance. Recognized for their excellence in specific fields, these institutions receive funding from the central government. They offer specialized programs and provide students with research and skill development opportunities. Institutes of National Importance are crucial in promoting higher Education and state research excellence.

Regional Campuses: One University in the Hill Area is a university's regional campus in Manipur. Specifically, Indira Gandhi National Tribal University (IGNTU) has a regional campus in Manipur, which offers only a few departments. The University's regional campus in Manipur faces challenges, including limited infrastructure and resources. Despite these challenges, the campus provides access to higher Education for students from the hill areas, who might otherwise have to travel to other parts of the state or country to pursue their studies.

Source: List of Manipur's higher education institutions, 2022 It is worth noting that Manipur does not have any Deemed Universities. Deemed universities are institutions recognized as universities by the central government, but the government does not establish them. Private organizations or individuals typically establish and fund these institutions. Overall, the university landscape in Manipur is diverse, with a range of institutions offering students' academic programs and research opportunities. However, the state still faces challenges in promoting higher Education and research, particularly in the hill areas.

3. Student Enrollment in Manipur Universities and Colleges Student Enrollment in Manipur Universities and Colleges, including National Level

Higher education enrollment in Manipur has experienced significant growth, particularly since the 1990s. This trend has both positive and negative aspects, offering dual perspectives. On the one hand, as the world's largest democracy, democratization in Education, notably higher Education, is a substantial challenge, given that a vast portion of the population resides in rural areas where access to higher Education is limited. The increase in enrollment suggests that higher Education is becoming more inclusive and democratic. On the other hand, rapid growth in the number of institutions and students enrolled in higher Education often compromises the quality of Education. According to the data, in 2010-2011, the number of graduate and undergraduate students increased to 72. College enrollment significantly rose from 60 students in 1947-1948 to 43,577 in 1996-1997. Furthermore, the enrollment of girls increased substantially from 7 in 1950-1951 to 20,017 in 1996-1997.

Similarly, the number of SC (Scheduled Caste) and ST (Scheduled Tribe) students enrolled also rose significantly from 189 in 1960-1961 to 7,316 in 1996-1997. However, by 2010-2011, the total enrollment had decreased to 35,182 students, comprising 14,500 female and 20,672 male students. This decline in enrollment may be attributed to the increasing interest in vocational subjects among students after completing their +2 diplomas, leading to a greater emphasis on vocational Education over general Education. The tables provide a detailed breakdown of student enrollment in each category: General, OBC (Other Backward Classes), SC, ST, and PWD (Persons with Disabilities). It includes UG (Undergraduate), PG (Post Graduate), Diploma, and PhD (Doctorate of Philosophy).

Table 13: Student Enrollment in University Teaching Department 2012-2013 (Manipur)

SN	Course	General	SC	ST	OBC	PWD	Total
1	UG	40	05	05	57	00	107
2	PG	339	195	520	1100	06	2160
3	Diploma	07	02	09	22	00	40
4	PhD	421	73	152	267	03	913

Source: Manipur University, Students Statistics, 2012-2018

Table 14: Student Enrollment in University Teaching Department 2013-2014 (Manipur)

SN	Course	General	SC	ST	OBC	PWD	Total
1	UG	34	14	06	81	00	135
2	PG	352	231	551	1113	10	2257
3	Diploma	19	02	04	15	00	40
4	PhD	458	78	159	276	03	974

Source: Manipur University, Students Statistics, 2012-2018

Table 15: Student Enrollment in University Teaching Department 2014-2015 (Manipur)

SN	Course	G	SC	ST	OBC	PWD	Total
1	UG	67	16	54	101	12	250
2	PG	619	180	595	901	58	84
3	Diploma	79	-	5	-	-	855
4	PhD	287	90	161	311	1	3551

Source: Manipur University, Students Statistics, 2012-2018

Table 16: Student Enrollment in University Teaching Department 2015-2016 (Manipur)

SN	Course	G	SC	ST	OBC	PWD	Total
1	UG	141	24	50	146	-	361
2	PG	505	146	871	932	4	2458
3	Diploma	68	6	35	89	-	198
4	PhD	161	86	137	259	6	649

Source: Manipur University, Students Statistics, 2012-2018

Table 17: Students enrolled in the affiliated colleges under Manipur University, 2012-2018

SN	Year	General	SC	ST	OBC	PWD	Total
1	2012-13	12778	15730	1938	14512	ı	44958
2	2013-14	14778	19215	2481	19353	33	55860
3	2014-15	17323	20142	3217	19176	34	59892
4	2015-16	17727	20851	2720	18203	17	59518
5	2017-18	16763	3313	21373	18674	41	60164

Source: Manipur University, Students Statistics, 2012-2018

According to the table 13, 14, 15, and 16, the enrollment of Other Backward Classes (OBC) students in various courses is significantly higher than that of Scheduled Tribe (ST) students. However, a review of the 2011 census report reveals a disparity between the population percentages and reservation quotas. Specifically, the OBC population comprises 17%, while the ST population accounts for 43.2%. The reservation quotas for these groups are 17% for OBC and 31% for ST. A closer examination of student enrollment in university teaching departments from 2014 to 2016, categorized by reserved groups and population, reveals inconsistencies. Notably, the 17% reservation quota for OBC and 31% for ST are not strictly adhered to, as OBC students outnumber ST students significantly. Furthermore, the enrollment of Scheduled Caste (SC) students in teaching

departments is between 4% and 6%, which exceeds the population percentage and reservation quota.

The SC population accounts for 3.8%, with a reservation quota of only 2%. Similarly, OBC enrollment surpasses the general category, while general student enrollment ranges from 55% to 60%, exceeding the 50% reservation quota. In contrast, the enrollment of students with disabilities (PWD category) does not present any issues. Additionally, the enrollment of students from SC, ST, OBC, and general categories at affiliated colleges is average, and there are no concerns in this regard, as there are no specific population or reservation requirements. The overall average pass rate for colleges in hilly areas has consistently shown improvement. The remarkable growth rate of 90% is a source of pride for these colleges. In the past, many colleges

struggled with low student enrollment, which often led to complacency among teachers and an inert campus climate. While the overall enrollment trend is positive, the annual growth rate remains inadequate. Nevertheless, the increase in enrollment over the past few decades has been notable.

Table 18: Gross Enrollment Ratio in Higher Education in Manipur at the National Level, 2020

SN	Categories	Sex	Enrolment %	Year
1	All Categories	Both Sex	38.3	2020
2	All Categories	Male	37.7	2020
3	All Categories	Female	38.9	2020
4	SC (Scheduled Castes)	Both Sex	67.3	2020
5	SC	Male	68.7	2020
6	SC	Female	65.9	2020
7	ST (Scheduled Tribes)	Both Sex	23.5	2020
8	ST	Male	23.1	2020
9	ST	Female	24	2020

Source: All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) Report, 2020-2021

Table 19: The total number of BA and PG Students enrolled in various departments in Manipur and the enrollment of BA students for the academic Session 2019-2020

SN	Name of Departments (2019-2020)	Total No. of Students				
1	School of Humanities	393				
2	School of Education	267				
3	School of Human and Environmental Science	233				
4	School of Life Science	191				
5	School of Mathematical and Physical Science	280				
6	School of Social Science	697				
	Number of Graduate Students Enrollments for the Academic Session 2019-2020					
1	Department of BA, Dance and BA Music 28					
2	Number of One-Year Diploma and Certificate Courses 337					
3	Number of Undergraduate B. Voc. Course 109					

Source: Manipur University, 2020, Annual Report Academic Year, 2020-2021

According to Table 18 above, Manipur's overall enrollment percentage for all categories in 2020 is 38.30% nationally. Manipur has fewer students in higher Education than most states, indicating a lower student enrollment rate. Across all demographic groups, higher education enrollment rates are higher for females than males (All India Survey on Higher Education n.d.). However, in the SC category, male students outnumber female students. Conversely, among ST students, females outnumber males. Interestingly, a significant proportion of students (74%) opt for humanities or social sciences. Nevertheless, it is essential to encourage students to explore disciplines beyond the arts. Among the various departments, BA (Bachelor of Arts) and PG (Post Graduate), from 2019-2020, the School of Social Sciences has the highest enrollment, with 697 students. In contrast, the School of Life Sciences has the lowest enrollment, with 191 students. However, enrollment growth across various departments is noticeable compared to the previous year. According to Table 19, the number of graduate student enrollments for the academic session 2019-2020 reveals the following trends. The one-year diploma and certificate courses have attracted 337 students. The Department of BA (Bachelor of Arts), Dance, and BA Music have enrolled 28 students. Furthermore, the undergraduate B. Voc. course has seen an enrollment of 109 students. These numbers indicate a significant increase in student admissions.

4. Issues of Higher Education in Manipur

4.1 Curriculum and Admission Issues: The Manipur Education Department, Government of Manipur, has primarily disregarded the University Grants Commission (UGC) guidelines and standards. These guidelines stipulate that state colleges should update their undergraduate, graduate, and postgraduate curricula every three to five years. However, most courses offered by Manipur University colleges are nonprofessional. Furthermore, only a few colleges/universities offer post-graduate, M.Phil., and Ph.D. programs with full residential facilities. The rate of student enrollment is also low. Many colleges in Manipur's outlying regions continue to operate with very few students enrolled. Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) has established study centers for the distance learning system at various colleges in Manipur, offering undergraduate and graduate programs. However, despite this initiative, the enrollment rate has remained stagnant. Private colleges, which rely heavily on tuition fees as their primary funding source, can only operate by enrolling students. The undergraduate and graduate admissions processes in colleges affiliated with Manipur University differ, as each college has its system based on marks or a written examination (Singh, Taorem Surendra 2013, Pp. 9-14a). Each college also has a different seat capacity. Most colleges struggle to find enough students, while some have an excessive number of students.

4.2 Poor Government Infrastructure and Examination Results Issues

Introducing the semester instruction system at various colleges affiliated with Manipur University has led to a severe infrastructure crisis. There is a pressing need for additional facilities, including books, library reading rooms, classrooms for male and female students, and uninterrupted electricity, as many students have enrolled in institutions for multiple semesters. Internet access, sporting equipment, playgrounds, adequate ICT (Information and Communication Technology), teaching aids, and transportation facilities are desperately needed. However, most colleges can only provide some of these facilities. According to NAAC (National Assessment and Accreditation Council) standards, it will take government colleges a long time to address these infrastructure shortages (Gufran, Mohammed Irfan 2020). Even private colleges face financial difficulties in providing adequate facilities. Timely conduct of examinations is essential for determining a student's level. However, the education department in Manipur often fails to hold examinations on schedule. Manipur University occasionally experiences leaks of question papers for its various examinations. Examination results are only posted on the university website when declared. Moreover, the University often delays the declaration of examination results and fails to post exact examination scores on its website.

4.3 Inadequately Qualified Teachers and Staff Issues

The lack of regular teachers and non-teaching staff severely

impacts the academic operations of most colleges in Manipur, particularly government colleges. The standard of higher Education in Manipur is significantly lower (Kengoo, Kashung Zingran 2012, Pp. 126-141). When calculating the full-time to adjunct faculty ratio, the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) does not include temporary or part-time faculty members. However, as of 2014, the Department employed 432 part-time teachers and 46 guest lecturers at various government colleges. Implementing the semester system in higher Education has resulted in a severe shortage of teaching staff, as more teachers are needed to accommodate different batches of students. Furthermore, due to staffing shortages, teachers often work overtime during regular classes, exams, and other activities. Additionally, due to financial constraints, many teachers could not enroll in Manipur University's Ph.D. program or complete their research. Therefore, if the Department assigns some college teachers to reserved seats at the university level for Ph.D. programs, more teachers will have the opportunity to pursue career advancement and enhance their qualifications. According to Manipur University, as of 2015, government colleges required approximately 1,918 teachers. However, the Education Department (U) had only 1,264 sanctioned posts. As of March 5, 2011, there were 1,027 vacant positions at government colleges. The vacancy represents a shortage of 654 teaching positions between the Department and Manipur University. The Department of Education estimates 237 teacher shortages, while Manipur University reports 891 shortages. Therefore, there is a significant teacher shortage at government colleges. Furthermore, sanctioned under Education (U) are 956 non-teaching staff posts, compared to 705 non-teaching staff positions as of March 5, 2011. The difference represents a shortage of 251 non-teaching staff positions at government colleges (Singh, Taorem Surendra 2013, Pp. 9-14b).

- **4.4 Teachers' Professional Ethics, Accountability, and Issues** with Posting and Transferring Them: No specific departmental transfer and posting policy exists. The academic atmosphere of colleges suffers due to the constant shifting of teachers to any place at any time. Some teachers undergo frequent transfers, while others do not. As a result, college teachers reported low job satisfaction levels, leading to their involvement in coaching, politics, business, and construction.
- 4.5 Issues with Part-Time Teachers and Failure to Implement UGC Programs: Providing quality education in Manipur's colleges poses a significant challenge. Most principals find it difficult to assign responsibilities and duties to parttime/guest teachers in government colleges, similar to those of full-time teachers. Guest or part-time teachers were employed to compensate for the acute shortage of teachers in government colleges. However, the poor service conditions contract/guest/part-time teachers may contribute to their low job satisfaction (Gufran, Mohammed Irfan 2020). The Department employs over 46-60 guest teachers and more than 432-450 parttime teachers. Unfortunately, this has negatively impacted students, as educational institutions cannot function optimally. If a teacher's service conditions are favorable and appealing, they will teach and participate in college welfare activities with honesty and dedication (Sheikh, M. R 2016, Pp. 583-590). However, the UGC scheme, aimed at improving higher education quality, remains unimplemented due to unpaid Special Central Assistance (SCA) and Traveling Allowance (TA). This scheme is a crucial area for improving the quality of Higher Education.
- **4.6 Quality and Political Interference:** One of the most significant challenges Manipur faces is ensuring the quality of higher Education. High-quality Education is a government priority. However, a substantial percentage of Manipur's colleges and universities still fail to meet the minimum requirements set by the UGC. Consequently, most cannot rank among India's top academic institutions. Furthermore, increasing political interference in the sector threatens the autonomy of higher Education (Singh N. Samungou 2019).
- **4.7 Insufficient Focus on Research:** According to the survey results, universities in Manipur devote inadequate attention to research. The number of qualified faculty members to guide students is limited, and more resources and facilities are needed. Moreover, most research scholars received their fellowships late, impacting their work. Additionally, many Ph.D. candidates cannot secure admission to Manipur's government universities due to unfair admission practices and a lack of research facilities.

4. SUGGESTION

Addressing Higher Education issues in Manipur requires several key measures.

- (i) Establishing a Deemed University and Expanding Government Colleges: A Deemed University should be established in Manipur to develop colleges further in the state. Moreover, the government should set up more colleges and universities in Manipur's hill districts, where only 15-20% of colleges and universities are government institutions, compared to 85-90% in valley regions.
- (ii) Addressing Decline in Student Enrollment: Authorities must address the decline in student enrollment, and the government should implement changes to reverse this trend. Utilizing student motivation, reducing response time through automation, dynamic engagement strategies, leveraging technology, and other methods can help increase student enrollment in colleges and universities.
- (iii) Implementing Reservation Policies: The Manipur government must adequately implement the 31% reserve for tribal/Hill people to avoid a lack of higher education faculty, enrollment, and other issues.
- (iv) Improving Infrastructure and Academic Programs: The responsible authority must provide all necessary infrastructures at colleges to satisfy students' needs. The Directorate of Education should consult college principals, teachers, and academicians when developing plans and programs. Academic, technical, and professional courses must be modified to meet the state's work requirements, and new courses must introduce new courses to attract students and increase funding.
- (v) Enhancing Efficiency and Quality: College administrative bodies should collaborate with the higher education department to improve efficiency. The state government should provide college facilities for research to satisfy students' desires. Authorities must form a committee of experts to examine infrastructural facilities and make recommendations for improvement.
- (vi) Improving Higher Education Administration: Manipur's higher education administrator needs vision and guidance. The State's Quality Coordination Committee (QCC) and Quality Assurance Cell (QAC) must improve the overall quality of higher Education in Manipur. Higher authorities and universities must oversee colleges to achieve high-quality status from the NAAC. Implementing these measures can improve higher Education in Manipur, paving the way for a brighter future for the state and the country.

5. CONCLUSION

Higher Education is significant in driving economic, social, and political development in Manipur; its importance warrants the most substantial emphasis. Despite its importance, the state's higher education sector faces numerous challenges, particularly in the Hill districts, where a severe shortage of institutions persists. The disparity in the distribution of higher education institutions between Hill and Valley districts is striking, with the latter boasting an overwhelming majority. This imbalance has far-reaching consequences, including limited access to quality

education for Tribal or Hill people. Enrollment patterns reveal further disparities, with OBC students consistently outnumbering ST students in various courses. Moreover, the representation of SC and General Caste students exceeds their population and reservation percentages. Addressing these inequalities, the Manipur Government must prioritize establishing higher education institutions in Hill districts. Additionally, it must increase enrollment opportunities for ST students and ensure that the curriculum remains relevant and up-to-date. Ultimately, bridging the gaps in Manipur's higher education sector requires a multi-faceted approach that involves government initiatives, stakeholder engagement, and a commitment to promoting inclusivity and equality.

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