A STUDY OF WOMEN’S HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE VALLEY AREAS OF MANIPUR

ABSTRACT

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN EDUCATION

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DECLARATION

I, Khangembam Malemnganbi Chanu, hereby declare that the subject matter of this thesis is the research work done by me, that the contents of this thesis did not form the basis of award of my previous degree to me and the best of my knowledge to anybody else and that the thesis has not been submitted by me for any research degree in any other University/Institution.

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Introduction:

Women’s higher education helps in moving the family and society in higher strata and developed the nation in better ways. Education enables women to acquire basic skills and abilities and foster a value system which is conducive to raise their status in society. They also represent valuable human resources and play an important role in the development of the community and national economy. Educated women can easily understand and adjust to the environment from time to time accordingly.

Profile of Manipur:

Manipur, one of the states in the states situated in the North-Eastern Region of India, is an isolated hill-girt state stretching between 92°58’E to 94°45’E longitudes and 23°42’N latitudes. It is a charming place encircle by nine hill ranges on all sides with a small and beautiful oval shaped valley at the centre. The state has 352 kms. long border with Burma (Myanmar) to the south-east and 502 kms. long border with the adajecnet states of Nagaland on the north, Cachar District of Assam on the west and chin Hills (Myanmar) and Mizoram on the Upper Chindwin of Myanmar (Burma) on the East. The altitude of the state above the mean sea level varies from 790 metres to 2020 metres. It has a salubrious climate.
Manipur lost her independence to the British India in the year 1891. From 1892 onwards it became a princely native state under the political control of Government of British India. Accordingly, the administration of the state came under the influence of a political agent by vesting all executive power in him. This British Paramouncy continued till 1947 in which India got independence.

According to a merger agreement signed on 21st September, 1947 between Maharaja Budhachandra, the then king of Manipur and the Government of India, the state was merged into Part “C” state on the 15th October, 1949 and administered by the President of India through a Chief Commissioner. Manipur ceases to be part “C” state on 1st November, 1956 and became a Union Territory under the Union Territorial Council Act, 1956. The Territorial Council consisting of 30 elected members and 2 nominated members was constituted on 16-08-1957. However, the Territorial Council was replaced by a territorial Legislative Assembly of 30 elected members and 2 nominated members from 23-07-1963. Manipur became a full – fledged state within the Indian Union with a Governor as the Head of the state on the 21st January, 1972 and the members of the Legislative Assembly was increased to 60. The first popular Ministry, after attaining statehood, was installed on March 20, 1972.

Manipur has a geographical area of 22,327 sq.kms. which constitutes 0.7 percent of the total land surface of India. Ninety percent (90%) of the total
geographical area of the state i.e 20,089 sq.kms. is covered by hills, the remaining area is a small valley covering only 2,238 sq.kms. and accounting for only one-tenth of the total area of the state.

**Education in Manipur:**

The literacy rate has increased from 11.4% in 1951 to 32.9% in 1971 and also 68.87% in 2001. The overall literacy rate of the state according to 2011 census is 79.85% of which 86.49% are male and 73.17% are females. The female literacy rate has been increased rapidly which is shown in the below figure.

![Fig No.1.1 Literacy Rate of the 4 Valley Districts by 2011 Census](image)

**Rational of the Study:**

Women’s higher education is the most effective means for accelerating the progress of the society and nation by giving empowerment to them with the
access of higher education. There is a need for undertaking an explorative study on women’s higher education in the state of Manipur especially in the valley areas. The study will give a significant contribution in the study of women’s status and women’s higher (general, professional and technical) education. The Government and public at large will be benefited to make proper plans, policies and programmes for uplifting women education in both the rural and urban areas of Manipur on the basis of the research findings. Keeping in view of this, the investigator felt very strongly to undertake the investigation on the study of women’s higher education in Manipur with reference to the Valley areas.

**Statement of the Problem:**

The statement of the problem is entitled as **“A Study of Women’s Higher Education in the Valley Areas of Manipur”**.

**Operational Definition of the Key Terms Used:**

The terms used in stating the problems are operationally defined as follows:-

(a) **Women Education**: Women education refers to the education imparted to women. In the proposed study, women pursuing undergraduate, post-graduate and research levels are included. Here the term ‘girls’, ‘women’ and ‘female’ will be used synonymously.
(b) **Higher Education**: Higher Education means general, professional and technical education provided at undergraduates, post-graduates and research levels.

(c) **Valley Areas**: Valley Areas are popularly known as valley districts of Manipur. It covers four (4) districts i.e. Imphal – East, Imphal – West, Bishnupur and Thoubal Districts of Manipur. Here, ‘valley areas’ and ‘valley districts’ will be used synonymously.

**Delimitation:**

The study is delimited to Manipur University, all the general colleges, professional and technical institutions affiliated to Manipur University located in the valley areas of Manipur.

**Objectives of the Study:**

The main objectives of the present study are:-

1. To study the development of women’s higher education in the valley areas of Manipur since statehood (1972).
2. To find out the enrolment pattern of women’s higher education in General, Professional and Technical colleges and the Manipur University in the valley areas of Manipur.
3. To study the opinion of women students towards higher education (general, professional and technical) in the valley areas.
4. To find out the problems of women students attending higher education in the General, Professional and Technical Colleges and the Manipur University with reference to:
   a. Infrastructures
   b. Financial
   c. Social
   d. Academic.

5. To find out the opinion of policy makers (Director of Higher Education, Vice Chancellor etc.) towards women’s higher education.

6. To suggest measures for improvement of women’s higher education in the valley areas of Manipur.

**Research Questions of the Study:**

The research questions of the present study are as follows:

1. What is the development of women’s higher education in Manipur since statehood?
2. What is the enrolment pattern of women’s higher education in the General, Professional and Technical colleges and the Manipur University?
3. What are the opinions of women students towards higher education (general, professional and technical)?
4. What are the problems faced by women students in General, Professional and Technical Colleges and the Manipur University regarding infrastructure, financial, social and academic problems?

5. What are the opinions of policy makers towards women’s higher education?

6. What can be done to improve of women’s higher education in the valley areas of Manipur?

**Methodology:**

Descriptive survey method is adopted in the present study.

**a. Population:**

For the present study, the population included of all the women students studying in higher education institutions (general, professional and technical colleges and Manipur University) which is residing in the Valley areas of Manipur.

**b. Sample:**

Random sampling technique is used to select the sample. The sample of the study consisted of 1000 (10%) women students which includes of 600 from 18 general colleges, 200 from 8 professional and technical colleges and 200 from the Manipur University. However, out of 1000 women students only 800 (8%) responded to the questionnaires even though the investigator went many
times to collect the questionnaires they did not responded. Out of which 500 women students are from 18 general colleges, 150 each women students are from 8 Professional & Technical Colleges and 15 departments of Manipur University.

**Tools of the study:**

The following tools were used for data collection.

A. A separate sets of questionnaire were developed for the following:

i) Principals of the general, professional & technical colleges.

ii) Women students of general, professional and technical colleges and the Manipur University.

B. An Interview schedules were developed for:

i) Vice Chancellor of Manipur University

ii) University Authority i.e. (a) Dean of Students’ Welfare, (b) Finance Officer
    (c) Director College Development Council

iii) Director of University and Higher Education (Government of Manipur).

iv) Controller of Technical Education (Government of Manipur).
Try Out:

The questionnaires were first tried out among women students, principals of different colleges and different heads of department of Manipur University of the selected sample. When the responses received, they were analysed and did slight modification to the questionnaires.

The investigator felt necessary to ensure experts view and comments, therefore, the modified questionnaires were given to different experts of department of education for their comments and suggestions for improvement of the same. Their suggestions were accepted and tools were ready with minor modification.

Collection of Data:

Keeping the objectives in view, besides the above tools, consultation of various primary sources such as reports, records and any Governments publications on women and higher education were consulted. Moreover, other secondary sources i. e. books, journals, magazines were also consulted from several libraries connected with women’s higher education (general, professional and technical) in Manipur.

Analysis of Data:

After collecting data from various sources i.e. (a) tools (b) primary sources and (c) secondary sources, it will be analyzed qualitatively and
quantitatively. Percentage was used as a statistical technique for analyzing the data.

Major Findings of the Study:

**Development of Women’s Higher Education in Manipur.**

With the attainment of statehood in the year 1972, the study revealed that only 25.9% of female students at the college level and 33% of female students at university level were enrolled in Manipur in 1972-73. In the year 1975-76, the study found that the enrolment of female students reduced to 29.8% and 29.2% both at the college and university level. But the percentage of women students for their higher education rose to 37.5% and 42.6% in the year 1980-81. In the year 1985-86, the enrolment of female students in the colleges increased to 45% but it was only 37.3% at the university level. Also it is revealed that 42.7% and 45.3% of female students were enrolled both at the college and university level in 1990-91. With the establishment of Central Agricultural University (CAU) at Imphal, 40.8% and 44.4% of female students at the college and university level in the year 1995-96. The study revealed that in the year 2000-01, the enrolment of female students in higher education reached 46.8% and 48.3% at college and university level of Manipur.

The study also found out that in the year 2002-03, 50.2% and 45.5% of female students in the colleges of four valley districts and Manipur University
were enrolled. It is also seen that the enrolment of women students had reduced to 46.9% and 44.4% in the colleges & Manipur University while 48.9% and 44.3% of women students were enrolled in 2008-09. In the year 2011-12, the study found that 47.7% and 49.6% of women students were enrolled both in the colleges and Manipur University of valley areas of Manipur. Comparing the 10 consecutive years i.e., 2002-03 to 2011-12, it is found that the female students’ enrolment for their higher education had decreased except Manipur University in 2011-12 which reached 49.6% of women enrolment.

**Enrolment Pattern of Women’s Higher Education in the Valley Areas of Manipur**

Among the overall enrolment pattern of women higher education in the colleges of general, professional & technical colleges, 37% of colleges followed selection tests, 33.3% of colleges followed merit basis and 22.2% of colleges followed open admission and only 7.4% of colleges followed first come first serve basis. Manipur University followed only selection test for the enrolment of students.

**Opinion of Women Students towards Higher Education in the Valley Areas of Manipur.**

In the general colleges of valley areas of Manipur, majority (87.8%) of women student’s objective of studying higher education is to make better life
of present and future. Regarding the preference institutions, the study showed that majority of the women students (72.4%) preferred only girls institutes. None of the women students preferred residential institutes in the general colleges of valley areas of Manipur. The study found out that 71.4% of women students desired to continue for higher education. Majority (84%) of them felt that higher is must for women as it gets respect in the family and society. Regarding the semester system, 46% of women students are in favour of semester system as it provides good academic atmosphere.

In the professional & technical colleges of valley areas of Manipur, majority of the women students (87.3%) are opting higher education with a view to make better life of present and future. None of women students from professional & technical colleges in the valley areas of Manipur opt higher education just to complete the degree. It is found out that 54% of women students preferred co-educational institutes and none of the women students from professional & technical colleges preferred residential institutes. The study revealed that there were 60.7% of women students from the professional & technical colleges in the valley areas of Manipur who are willing to continue higher. None of the women students from professional & technical colleges would like to get married after their courses. Majority (74.7%) of women students are in favour of higher education of women as it gets respect in the
family and society. Regarding semester system, 44.7% of women students from the professional & technical colleges of valley areas of Manipur are in favour of semester system as it provides good academic atmosphere.

Among the women students studying in the Manipur University, almost all (94.7%) women student’s objective of studying higher education is to make better life of the present and future. None of the women students from Manipur University opt higher education just to complete the degree. Regarding preference institutions, majority (84%) of them preferred co-educational institutes for their higher education. None of the women students from Manipur University opt for residential institutes for their higher education. The study also revealed that 51.3% of women students willing to try for job after completing their course. Also 58% of women students from Manipur University are of the view that higher education is must for women as it gets respect in the family and the society. Majority (75.3%) of women students are in favour of semester system as it provides good academic atmosphere.

Problems of Women Students with reference to (a) Infrastructure (b) Financial (c) Social (d) Academic

In the general colleges of valley areas of Manipur, all the colleges (100%) have its own building but only 33.3% of general colleges have hostel facility. Regarding the infrastructure of the institution, all the general colleges (100%) have adequate building and auditorium but only 11.1% of general colleges have
inadequate playground, laboratory and water facility while 44.4% of general colleges in the valley areas of Manipur have inadequate sanitation. Regarding the classroom, all the colleges (100%) have good and satisfactory size of the classroom, lecture stand, blackboard, desks and benches. While 77.8% of general colleges faced electricity problem and only 16.7% have poor ventilation. All the general colleges (100%) in the valley areas of Manipur have its own library having 100% of books, newspaper and issuing facility. It is found out that 38.9% of general colleges are not having photocopying facility and 11.1% of general colleges do not have sufficient reading room while 61.1% of general colleges do not have internet facility in their library. Also 55.6% of general colleges do not have journals and 38.9% of general colleges are not having newspaper in their library. Regarding the financial problems of women students in the valley areas of Manipur the study found that almost all (92.2%) of women students are financed by their parents in the general colleges. The study also revealed that 69% of women students from the general colleges of valley areas of Manipur are getting scholarship. It is highlighted that 49.8% of women students in the general colleges of valley areas of Manipur are facing financial problem during the course of their study. The study also showed that in the general colleges of valley areas of Manipur, only 0.8% of women students do not get favourable attitude from their parents regarding their study. Also it is found out that majority (84%) of women students in the general colleges of valley areas have friendly and cordial relationship with their classmate. The
study also showed that 20.2% of women students felt uneasy to express their opinion in front of their male classmates. There were 15% of women students who faced difficulty during the course of the study. It is revealed from the study that only 11% of women students in the general colleges of valley areas of Manipur are not getting sufficient time for study. Also 18.2% of women students do not get proper guidance at home.

Regarding the problems of professional & technical colleges, the study highlighted that all the professional & technical colleges (100%) in the valley areas of Manipur have its own building but only 25% of colleges are providing hostel facility. Regarding infrastructure of the institution, 12.5% of professional & technical colleges in the valley areas of Manipur do not adequate building, 50% of colleges have inadequate playground, sanitation and water facility. Also, 37.5% of colleges have inadequate laboratory and auditorium. Regarding the classroom conditions of professional & technical colleges in the valley areas of Manipur, all the colleges (100%) have good and satisfactory facility except electricity having 37.5% of poor facility in the colleges. All the professional & technical colleges (100%) in the valley areas of Manipur are having its own library, sufficient reading rooms, newspaper and issuing facility in their library. Also 12.5% of professional & technical colleges do not have photocopying facility, internet, and journals in their library and also 37.5% of colleges do not magazines in their library. Almost all (91.3%) women students are financed by
their parents. It is also found that 58.7% of women students in the professional & technical colleges are getting scholarship. All the women students (100%) from professional & technical colleges are getting favourable attitude from their parents. Majority (89.3%) of women students have friendly and cordial relationship with their classmate. It is revealed from the study that only 18% of women students in the professional & technical colleges of valley areas of Manipur feel uneasy to express their opinion in front of their male colleagues. Also Only 10% of women students feel difficulty during the course of study. Among the women students from professional & technical colleges only 4% are not getting sufficient time for study. The study also found out that only 14% of women students from the professional & technical colleges are not getting proper guidance at home.

Regarding the problems of Manipur University, the study revealed that Manipur University have enough building and infrastructure, good and satisfactory classroom conditions and also having enough photocopying facility, books, journals, magazines, etc., in the library. The study found out that almost all (92.7%) women students from Manipur University are financed by their parents. It is revealed that 82% of women students from Manipur University are getting only SC/ST/OBC scholarship. All women students (100%) from Manipur University are getting favourable attitude from their parents for their study. Regarding the relationship with their classmate, majority of them
(87.3%) are having friendly and cordial. Only 10% of women students from Manipur University feel uneasy to express their opinion in front of their male colleagues. There were 10.7% of women students from Manipur University who have difficulty during the course of their study. The study also found that only 7.3% of women students from Manipur University do not get sufficient time for study. Also 21.3% of women students from Manipur University are not getting proper guidance at home.

**Opinion of Policy Makers towards Women’s Higher Education.**

All the policy makers like Vice Chancellor of Manipur University, Dean of Students’ Welfare, Director, College Development Council, Director of University and Higher Education, Controller of Technical Education are in favour of women’s higher education in the state. They have given their opinion towards women’s higher education as below:

For the appropriate/proportionate development of both sexes and for a good standard of living, higher education is must for women. Education makes women aware about the rights and duties and can join together with men for social and economic upliftment of the society. Women should have full knowledge in every aspect of life which can be achieved only through higher education. The more education is provided to women, the better society would be and faster development in all fields of the society and the state.
Suggestions/Recommendations for the Improvement of Women’s Higher Education in the Valley Areas of Manipur.

The researcher suggested following measures for the improvement of women’s higher education in the valley areas of Manipur:-

1. Professional & Technical colleges should be established in each district of Manipur to fulfill the desire of professional & technical education among women.
2. There should be some relaxation of marks for the enrolment of women students both in colleges and Manipur University.
3. Every institution should provide girls’ hostel.
4. Proper electricity should be provided in all the colleges/institutions/universities.
5. Photocopying facilities should be available at minimum rate within the campus of the institutions.
6. Internet facilities should be available free of cost within the campus of the institutions.
7. Updated books, journals and magazines should be kept in the library.
8. Financial assistance like scholarships, free tuition fee should be given specially for female students.
9. Free and compulsory education should be provided upto college level specially for female students.
10. Awareness should be given to parents so that they can encourage their
daughters to go for higher education without fail specially in the rural and
hilly areas of Manipur.

11. Proper attitude of both teachers and parents in dealing with female
students is also significant as they are very emotional.

12. Women students should be motivated to have research minded and
developing scholarly attitude.

13. Special classes should be made periodically is necessary so that students
can improve their weakness.

14. Counseling should be done periodically in each institution among the
female students so that they can express their opinion freely.

15. The teaching should be attractive and tactful according to the needs of
the students.

**Suggestions for Future Researcher:**

The investigator of the present study viewed that it would be worthwhile
to put some suggestions which might be helpful in carrying out the further
research in the similar area by future researcher.

Following studies can be made by the future researcher:-

1. The same study can be extended to the whole districts of Manipur.
2. Comparative study can be made between valley and hill districts of Manipur.

3. A study on performance of women students in the colleges of Manipur.

4. A study on awareness programmes of women education in the rural areas of Manipur.

5. A study on development of women’s colleges in Manipur.

6. Issues and trends of higher education in Manipur.

7. Problems and prospects of women’s higher education in Manipur.

8. Women’s higher education in the professional & technical education.

9. Comparative study of women’s higher education in the Manipur University and Central Agricultural University.

10. A study on management of women’s higher education in Manipur.

11. A comparative study of women’s higher education in general and professional & technical education.

12. Attitude of women students towards higher education in the valley areas of Manipur.

**Conclusion:**

Almost all the works of the family except the heavier ones are done by women in Manipur. The markets both in hill and valley (both in rural and urban) areas are dominated by them. It is also a clear example that Manipuri women take more important role in household maintenance. They are simple,
courteous, mild and peace living. But they can become ferocious in case their rights are suppressed by others/ rulers. The clear examples are- First Women’s Movement (Ahanba Nupi Lal) of 1904 and Second Women’s Movement (Anisuba Nupi Lal) of 1939. Hence, their capabilities are very fantastic. Such women of distinctive qualities if they are well trained and well educated by giving higher education, how fast our society will be developed. Keeping the needs and importance of higher education in mind the policy makers of Manipur are opined that women’s higher education is must in the state as the more education is provided to women, the better the society would be and faster development in all fields of the society and the state.

The present study revealed that parents have equal favourable attitudes for the higher education of both their sons and daughter. Therefore, equal opportunity is provided to them to continue their study. But still the enrolment rate is little bit lower than that of male students. Therefore, there should be awareness programme, workshops, seminars and debates regarding women’s higher education so that more women students may enrol for higher education. Majority of the Manipuri women students do not face any social and academic problems during their higher education. Even though Government of India has introduced many schemes and special facilities for female students, still some of them face financial problem due to financial problems faced by their parents which affects to their daughters.
In order to make women’s higher education in Manipur best at National level, we, the people of Manipur should work together so that every woman continue their higher education. Therefore, young women should be encouraged and motivated to pursue higher education without fail. Also, the Government of Manipur should introduced some attractive schemes like free tuition fee, special scholarship for women. And awareness should be given regarding the need and importance of higher education among women specially in the rural areas for more development of women’s higher education in Manipur.
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