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1.0 Introduction

The development of any country mostly depends upon the expansion of education in society. Progress of a society is possible only when its citizens are educated, dynamic, resourceful, enterprising, responsible and so forth. Without such citizens, progress of a country can hardly be achieved in any field. Education herein helps in moulding such type of citizens apart from the personality development of the individuals by inculcating certain values. It is one of the most important factors for achievement of rapid economic development and technological progress. In the development of any country like India primary education helps in creating the base while higher education is important for providing the cutting edge. Recently education is recognized as a fundamental right for every people of India. The “Right to Education Act” was passed on April 1, 2010 by an Act of Parliament and it was included in the Constitution of India.

In India, Higher education refers to a level of education that is imparted after +2 stages i.e. collegiate and university level. It is based on (10+2+3) system of education recommended by National Policy of Education, 1986. It is provided at colleges, universities, community colleges, liberal arts colleges, institutes of technology and certain other collegiate institutions such as vocational schools, trade schools and career colleges that award academic degrees or professional certifications.

Among the educational institutions, the universities have become the chief agencies of higher education across the world. Higher education in India was first introduced by the then British Government in 1857 with the establishment of universities in Calcutta, Bombay and Madras. From time to time the British Government stressed higher education in their educational policies. After India's independence various academicians as well as politicians emphasized higher education. Academicians like Radhakrishnan, Gokhale, Kothari and other perceived the role of higher education and recommended it as a basic requirement for the elevation of the society. The first union Government led by Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru, the architect of modern India, also realised the
importance of higher education in the process of nation building. The successive Central Governments and the Planning Commissions of India sanctioned huge amount of fund for higher education. On the other hand, the Commissions constructed in the post independence India also recommended higher education for the citizens.

Higher education in India has undergone drastic expansion with the formal structure suggested by National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986. At present in India, there are 450 universities, 20 thousand colleges, 106 lakh students' and 4.6 lakh teachers (University News, 47 (02) January 12-18, 2009) whereas in 1947-48, there were 20 universities, 500 colleges and 2,41,369 students enrolment. Its huge structure has made India the third largest system of higher education in the world after the United States of America and China.

The current challenge for our nation is to improve the quality of education at all levels and also to extend its horizon so that it becomes more inclusive. The 11th Five Year Plan (2007-2012) has given priority and more financial allocation to higher education. Its triple objectives include expansion, inclusion and excellence. The implementation of these measures with a sense of urgency would help in realizing the target. The education system as a whole and every constituent unit i.e. every school, every college and every university must focus on how these three objectives can be realized.

Despite such initiatives by the governments throughout their successive plans, the literacy scenario of the country is not up to the mark. It may be mentioned here that the gross enrolment ratio in higher education is 11% in India against 54% in the developed countries. Hence, it is high time on the part of our government, central and state to take measures to improve the scenario and to ensure that all sections of society are a part of a knowledge thrust. It is because development in a country will be sustainable when it does not leave behind any section of society and in which the benefits of education are reflected in all spheres. On the other hand, it may be mentioned here to achieve this target the education system of a nations must be broad-based and multi dimensional. Apart from this, every educational institution has an obligation to strive for excellence
as it is the quality education only that can help the nation to maintain its leadership in the 21st Century.

Assam is one of the premier states of North-East India. It is the anglicized version of Assam (Axom). Geographically, Assam is surrounded by Bhutan and Arunachal Pradesh on the North, Nagaland and Manipur on the East, Meghalaya and Mizoram on the South and Bangladesh, Tripura and West Bengal on the West. At present, it has 27 administrative districts.

Assam covers an area of 78,438.08 sq. km and supporting a population of 31,169,272 (Census 2011) of which 1, 59, 54,927are males and 15,2,14,345 are females. It is located between 24° 13’ and 28° North latitudes and 89° 46’E to 96° 4’ East longitude. According to 2011 census the literacy rate of Assam is 73.18% out of which 78.81% are male literates and 67.27% are female literates.

Assam is known for its rich cultural heritage and picturesque beauty and natural panorama. It is famous for the rare one horned rhinoceros, silks such as paat and muga which rank amongst the finest in the world and the Khamakhya temple of where thousands of devotees come to worship the goddess Khamakhya every year.

2.0 The study area

The State of Assam is divided into two parts viz. the Upper and Lower Assam. The division was done based on the flow of Brahmaputra River which flows from high land to low land. The river flows from east to west, the eastern part of Assam lies on the high land is known as Upper Assam while the western part lying on the low land areas is known as lower Assam. Upper Assam covers mainly 7 (seven) districts viz. -Dibrugarh, Tinsukia, Sibsagar, Jorhat, Golaghat, Lakhimpur, Dhemaji. It also has three extended districts viz. Sonitpur, Karbi Anglong and Nagaon. The Upper Assam region is the most productive region in the state which is rich in natural resources like coal, oil and natural gas as well as tea plantations.

In Assam, Higher Education means education after +2 stages and includes graduates, post-graduates and research workers. It follows the mandate
of National Policy on Education 1986. In Assam, the State Government has been quite alive to the requirements, improvement and the expansion of education in the State. Upper Assam has historic contribution in spreading higher education in Assam and other parts of the region. The history of higher education in Assam witnesses the initiatives undertaken by the British for establishing higher educational institutions which has been contributing a lot in spreading the overall socio-economic and political lives of the people of Upper Assam in particular and other parts of the country and abroad. In Upper Assam people are highly concern about education as a result of which a number of higher educational institutions have grown up both in respect to general and professional education. At present there are a total of 143 colleges and a massive student enrolment of 70,477 in Upper Assam.

3.0 Need and Justification of the Study

Higher education is important for socio-economic advancement of the country, as it satisfies the manpower needs. In today’s fast changing socio-economic fabric, higher education system should be exposed to greater pressure for expansion. It is the duty of higher education to accumulate, to consolidate and to disseminate the novel information in the other levels of education system. The goals and the objectives of higher education are to promote, dissemi- nate and generate knowledge, as well as to promote humanism and reasoning. It should change the values and attitudes of the students, creating in them an urge or necessary motivation for social change. Therefore, it is very much important to study the system of higher education.

By pointing out the importance of higher education International Commission on Higher Education for 21\textsuperscript{st} century in the World’s Conference on higher education of 1998, organised by the UNESCO stated that the mission of higher education is to educate, to train and to undertake research. Higher education is undergoing rapid changes and has experienced innovative developments during the second half of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century.
Although higher education has been developing in India, the present scenario of higher education in North-east India is not so encouraging. In this regard North-eastern states are lagging behind in comparison with other states of the country. In North-eastern states, higher education is confined only to 6.39% of total population.

Under such circumstances, we shall have to reconsider the case of higher education in North-Eastern Region. The present study is designed to study higher education in Upper Assam, which is one of the most important divisions of Assam. Higher education in Upper Assam includes the development, enrolment, administration, financing and evaluation etc. in the colleges and universities of the area. In Upper Assam, there are enough man power resources. But due to the lack of systematic plans and programmes in the area, it is not developed up to the level expected. There is lack of research done in the field of education. This apart, outdated curriculum, traditional method of teaching, lack of interest etc. has worsened the situation. Therefore, it is expected that the study of higher education in Upper Assam would have positive impact on the smooth functioning of the higher educational institutions and the outcome of the present study will have effects in making the higher education more relevant in the present day context. Apart from this, elaborate study of higher education is not carried out so far. The fruitfulness of this study is also expected on the ground that analysis and suggestions relating to the higher education would help the policy framers to target the socio-cultural, economic and all round development of the society by making higher education more effective and bringing about social stability within the society.

Hence, it has become an urgent need of time to study Higher Education in Upper Assam.

4.0 Statement of the Problem

Based on the need and justification of the study the statement of the problem can be stated as follows:

“A Study of Higher Education in Upper Assam”
5.0 Operational Definition of the Key Terms Used

**Higher education:** It refers to education after + 2 stages i.e., collegiate and university level. The stage of higher education covers undergraduate, graduate, post graduate and research level.

**Upper Assam:** Upper Assam is one of the major divisions of Assam. It covers seven (7) districts namely- Dibrugarh, Tinsukia, Sivasagar, Jorhat, Golaghat, Lakhimpur and Dhemaji and three extended districts viz. Sonitpur, Karbi Anglong and Nagaon.

6.0 Delimitation

The study is delimited to the colleges of the seven districts of Upper Assam which are affiliated under Dibrugarh University and two universities viz. (1) Dibrugarh University, Dibrugarh and (2) Assam Agricultural University, Jorhat.

7.0 Objectives of the Study

The proposed study intends to achieve the following objectives:

1. To trace the origin and development of higher education in Upper Assam.
2. To study the enrolment pattern of college and university students.
3. To study the system of management and administration of higher educational institutions in Upper Assam.
4. To find out the system of examination in Upper Assam.
5. To find out the problems faced by the students and teachers of the higher educational institutions in Upper Assam.
6. To study the research and extension activities at the university level.
7. To suggest measures for improvement of higher education in Upper Assam.
8.0 Research questions

On the basis of above objectives, the following research questions can be raised by the investigator:

1. What is the origin and development of higher education in Upper Assam?
2. What is the trend of students’ enrolment pattern in the system of higher education in Upper Assam?
3. What is the system of management and administration of higher educational institutions in Upper Assam?
4. What is the present system of examination at the higher educational institutions in Upper Assam?
5. What problems do the students and teachers face in the higher educational institutions of Upper Assam?
6. What can be done for the improvement of higher education in Upper Assam?

9.0 Methodology

The present study is based on the descriptive method which describes and interprets what exists at present. It is one of the most popular and widely used research methods in education. It helps to explain educational phenomena in terms of its conditions or relationships that exist at present.

10.0 Population of the study

The population of the study comprises of all the government, provincialised, non-provincialised and private colleges of the seven districts of Upper Assam namely Dibrugarh, Tinsukia, Sibsagar, Jorhat, Golaghat, Lakhimpur and Dhemaji. It also includes two universities, namely, Dibrugarh University and Assam Agricultural University. The following table 1.1 shows the population of the study area.
Table 1.1 Number of Colleges in Upper Assam

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. no.</th>
<th>Districts</th>
<th>Type of colleges</th>
<th>Number of colleges</th>
<th>No. of colleges</th>
<th>No. of teachers</th>
<th>No. of students</th>
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<table>
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<td>1.</td>
<td>Dibrugarh University</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Assam Agricultural University</td>
<td>531</td>
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Govt- Government; Prov- Provincialised; Nprov- Non provincialised; Prof- Professional; Gen- General

Source: Annual Report, Dibrugarh University and Assam Agricultural University
### Table 1.1.1 Division of sample colleges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. no.</th>
<th>Districts</th>
<th>Type of Colleges</th>
<th>No. of Colleges</th>
<th>No. of Teachers</th>
<th>No. of Students</th>
</tr>
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<td>Prov</td>
<td>Nprov</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
</tr>
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<td>Prof</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Golaghat</td>
<td>Gen</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>Grand total</td>
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**Number of Universities in Upper Assam**

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>University</th>
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<th>Prov</th>
<th>Nprov</th>
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<th>No. of Teachers</th>
<th>No. of Students</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Assam Agricultural University</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Govt- Government; Prov- Provincialised; Nprov- Non provincialised; Prof- Professional; Gen- General

Source: Annual Report, Dibrugarh University and Assam Agricultural University
11.0 Selection of the Sample

I. **Institutions**: A representative sample of 26 colleges (both general and professional) has been randomly selected for the present study. Out of these 26 colleges, 16 are general colleges and 10 are professional colleges. Apart from these, seven departments and two centres of studies from Dibrugarh University and eight departments out of the autonomous colleges of Assam Agricultural University have been selected for the study. The distribution of the sample collected is given in Table 1.1.1 Data have been collected from the college principals and from the university head of the departments as well. Only 20 principals out of 26 colleges and a total of 5 heads of the department (3 DU and 2 AAU) from both the universities have responded in the questionnaires designed for them.

II. **Teachers**: A total of 440 teachers belonging to 26 colleges have been selected for the study. However, only 412 college teachers responded to the questionnaires provided to them. Besides, a total of 50 teachers have been randomly selected from the university departments. All the university teachers responded in the questionnaire designed for them. (Table 1.1.1)

III. **Students**: A total of 2000 students from the selected colleges have been taken for the study but only 1900 students responded in the questionnaires designed for them. Besides, 200 university students have been taken up for the study. (Table 1.1.1)

12.0 Sources of data

Various primary and secondary sources have been consulted for collection of data in the present study which is based on descriptive method. The secondary sources include government documents, reports, pamphlets, newspapers, journals, magazines, books and so on.
13.0 Tools used for data collection

This researcher has to depend on the questionnaire as no ready-made tools have been found useful for the present study. Before framing the questionnaires this researcher has gone through different books, journals, magazines, dissertations, theses etc on higher education keeping in mind the objectives of the study.

Six sets of questionnaire were prepared, three for the college level and another three for the university level. The divisions are provided below-

a) A set of questionnaire has been prepared by this researcher for the college principals.

b) Another set of questionnaire has been prepared for the college teachers.

c) One more set of questionnaire has been prepared for college students.

d) Apart from these, questionnaires have also been developed for the university heads of the department for gathering implicit information

e) This researcher has also developed the questionnaire for the university teachers as well.

f) Lastly, questionnaires have also been designed for the university students

The questionnaire prepared for the colleges encompasses different dimensions like academic, infrastructural, administrative, management, financial etc. In the principals questionnaire more importance has been given on administrative, management and financial parts whereas in the questionnaire designed for the teachers and students academic side was stressed. They have also been asked about infrastructural, administrative, management and financial part. The problems and suggestions regarding all these have also been included in the questionnaires.

The questionnaires have also been developed for the Head of the Department, teachers and for the students of the two selected universities. They have also been asked about the academic, infrastructural, administrative, management and financial aspects. In the questionnaires designed for the Heads of the department more emphasis has been laid on infrastructural, administrative,
management and financial aspects whereas in the questionnaires developed for the teachers and students stress has been laid on the academic side.

For collection of more authentic data structured interview schedule have also been designed for the following:

a) Interview schedule for the Vice Chancellor of Dibrugarh University and Assam Agricultural University.

b) Interview schedule for the Director of Higher Education as well as Director of Higher and Technical Education, Government of Assam.

The questionnaires and interview schedules developed for the collection of primary data has been enclosed in the appendices of this thesis.

14.0 Analysis of data

The data of open ended questions collected through questionnaire were tabulated and analysed with the help of percentages. Moreover, close ended questions of the questionnaire and the interview schedule were analysed qualitatively.

15.0 Findings, discussions and suggestions

1. Based on the first objective: Origin and development of higher education in Upper Assam (detail explanation is given in chapter-IV)

Following major findings were revealed regarding the origin and development of higher education in Upper Assam:

DEVELOPMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN UPPER ASSAM BEFORE INDEPENDENCE: Higher education in Assam started with the establishment of Cotton College in Guwahati in 1901. The people of Assam used to go to Calcutta or some other places in the country or even abroad to receive higher education before the establishment of this college. Till 1930, there was no higher educational institution like college or university in the area of Upper Assam.

Higher education in Upper Assam started with the establishment of Jagannath Barooah College at Jorhat in 1930. This college was named after the
first graduate of the area, Jagannath Barooah. Prof. Krishna Kanta Handique, former Vice-chancellor of Gauhati University was the founder principal of this college. This college was affiliated to Calcutta University at that time. This college started with 7 teachers and 14 students with Intermediate of Arts (IA) at the beginning. At present, it has more than 15 teaching departments with arts, science and commerce stream. Besides general courses, it offers degrees and diplomas in professional courses like Post-graduate Diploma in Computer Application (PGDCA), Bachelor in Computer Application (BCA), BSc (IT), Information Technology Enabled Services (ITES) sponsored by DOEACC etc. The college also has diploma/ certificate course on Computer Hardware. Moreover, the college offers Post-graduate courses in Geography and Philosophy. The college also have the study centres of Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), Krishna Kanta Handiqui State Open University (KKHSOU) and Dibrugarh University Distance Education Programme both in Under-Graduate and Post-Graduate level.

Till 1947, there were only three colleges namely Jagannath Barooah College at Jorhat (1930), DHSK College at Dibrugarh (1945), Sibsagar College at Sibsagar (1947) in Upper Assam. The first professional college of Upper Assam was the Assam Medical College established at Dibrugarh in 1947.

DEVELOPMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN UPPER ASSAM AFTER INDEPENDENCE: After independence, a number of colleges were established in Upper Assam. In between 1948 to 1970, 39 general colleges were established covering various districts of Upper Assam. At present, there are 117 general colleges affiliated to Dibrugarh University in Upper Assam.

Regarding the growth of professional colleges, progress is not so rapid as compared to general colleges. Though the first professional college was started in 1947, there were only 30 professional colleges in the area till 2012. The highest number of professional colleges i.e. 11 (eleven) was established in between 2001-2010.

Quality of the educational institutions is reflected by the educational achievements of the students in the examinations. The analysis of pass
percentage over the years 2004-2013 of the BA and BSc courses of the colleges affiliated to Dibrugarh University reveals that the pass percentage was satisfactory (more than 70%). But in certain years the pass percentage in BCom final examination is not satisfactory. In addition, the result analysis of BEd courses of 10 years is not satisfactory.

The first University of Upper Assam and second of the North-Eastern Region i.e. Dibrugarh University at Dibrugarh was established only in the year 1965. From the beginning onwards this university is progressing qualitatively and quantitatively as it is seen from the following aspects:

- Various departments and centres of teaching were there in the university.
- The number of affiliated colleges is increasing.
- The number of students enrolled in various courses is also increasing.

The number of teachers is increasing year by year in various departments of Dibrugarh University. In the year 2003-04, the number of faculty was 173 and it increased to 270 in 2011-12. Moreover, the number of students enrolled in various departments and centres of studies are also increasing.

The first Technical University of Upper Assam known as Assam Agricultural University, Jorhat was established in the year 1969. This university is also progressing satisfactorily

- Various departments and centres of teaching are there in the university.
- Number of autonomous colleges is increasing.
- Number of students enrolled in various courses is also increasing.
- Pass percentage is increasing (except few courses) annually.

The highest numbers of students were enrolled in the session 2012-13 in various undergraduate and PhD courses of Assam Agricultural University. However, with regard to post-graduate courses enrolment was highest in 2010-11. It is also clear that the university witnessed lowest number of students in undergraduate courses for the academic session 2002-2003. During this 12 years
period, enrolment for post-graduate courses was lowest in the session 2007-08 while PhD course had lowest enrolment in the session 2003-04. There are ups and downs in the results of undergraduate, post-graduate and PhD courses of AAU. The highest number of students got the graduate as well as PhD degree in 2002 and in case of post-graduate courses it was highest in the year 2012.

2. Based on the second objective: Enrolment pattern of college and university students

I. Findings regarding enrolment at the college level:
   - In both the types (general and professional) of colleges students were enrolled on the basis of merit of the students.
   - Almost all the colleges have an admission committee for the smooth conduct of the admission procedure. Principals, teachers and office staffs of the college are appointed as members of the admission committee.
   - Findings revealed that intake capacity of the college fulfils the needs as revealed by 85.71% of the general college principals and 66.67% of professional college principals.
   - In general colleges 100% seats are occupied every year and in professional colleges sometimes seats remain vacant as revealed by 16.67% of the principals.
   - Majority of the colleges have provision for only day shifts in their colleges.
   - Enrolment is high in arts faculty as compared to other faculties among the sample colleges.
   - It is also found that in majority of the professional colleges female enrolment is higher than males’ and in general colleges male enrolment is higher than females’ enrolment.
   - The findings revealed that majority of the college teachers are satisfied with the enrolment system of the college. However, some of them are not satisfied with the system. As regards to the problems the general college teachers stated that the enrolment system is not
systematic as well as not free and fair. Besides, sometimes enrolment is higher than the seat capacity; English department has less number of faculty and reservation for SC/ST/OBC and physically handicaps/sports etc. Moreover, some problems as revealed by professional college teachers include lack of infrastructure and manpower, lack of hostel facility and laboratory and lack of permanent faculties of teachers in the colleges.

II. Findings regarding enrolment at the University level:

- Both the universities have admission committees for the smooth functioning of the admission procedure and the findings of the present study revealed that students were enrolled on the basis of merit. In Dibrugarh University the admission committee is constituted at the department level and in Assam Agricultural University admission is managed by a selection committee.
- The findings revealed that in Dibrugarh University almost all the seats in various departments were fulfilled every year. But in Assam Agricultural University, in some departments some seats remain vacant sometimes.
- The findings revealed that in Dibrugarh University the number of male students is higher than that of female and in Assam Agricultural University there are equal numbers of male and female students.
- Both the universities have post-graduate and PhD courses. In Dibrugarh University some of the department have MPhil courses also but there is no MPhil course in AAU.
- Findings revealed that majority of the teachers of Dibrugarh University are members of the admission committee. However in Assam Agricultural University, only 48% are involved in the admission process.
- Majority of the teachers of both the universities are satisfied with the enrolment system of their departments. However, some of the
respondents are not satisfied with the enrolment system and the drawbacks as revealed by them include merit reflected in the mark sheets sometimes is misleading and fewer students are attracted towards agricultural biochemistry because of job prospects.

3. Based on objective three: Management and administration of higher educational institutions in Upper Assam

Following major findings were revealed in this regard:

I. Findings regarding management at the college level

- Findings revealed that majority of the colleges have Managing Committees in their colleges.
- From the study it is also clear that majority of the colleges have a permanent principal.
- Only 57.14% of the general college principals revealed that the colleges receive sufficient fund from the UGC. Besides UGC, some of the colleges have other funding sources like public donation and donation from private sources.
- The study shows that almost all the colleges of Upper Assam are visited by NAAC after every five years. The study also reveals that majority of the non-provincialised colleges were not visited by NAAC peer team. Besides, NAAC team colleges are visited by higher officials from the Directorate office as well as from the university.
- Majority of the teachers are not engaged in preparation of the college budget. So, some of the teachers’ revealed dissatisfaction in this regard.
- Only, a few teachers are engaged in the preparation of the college curriculum for different levels of education.
- Most of the general college students revealed that college fee is not high for them and in professional colleges students revealed that amount of fee is high for them.
Majority of the students were satisfied with the college time table as well as the duration of the classes in both general and professional colleges.

Findings revealed that teachers as well as the college authority is strict regarding attendance of the students.

II. Findings regarding management at the university level

Majority of the respondents revealed that the various departments of the university were monitored and supervised by the concerned authority from time to time. NAAC peer team visits Dibrugarh University after five years. Likewise, the Assam Agricultural University is visited by Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) representatives from time to time.

The study shows that the budget is prepared by the Department Managing Committee (DMC) and head in consultation with the faculty in Dibrugarh University. But in Assam Agricultural University, it is prepared by the university authority.

Some of the heads revealed that they face problems in managing the department.

In Assam Agricultural University majority of the students revealed that the university education is expensive for them as compared to Dibrugarh University students.

III. Findings regarding administration at the college level

All the college principals revealed that they prepare annual academic planning/schedule for the next calendar year. Moreover, majority of the colleges were found to have adequate and efficient administrative staff.

The composition of the administration include Governing Body, Principal, Vice-principal, one supporting staff, three UDAs, five LDAs and five to six Grade-IV employees.

Findings revealed that majority of the colleges have a Governing Body. The composition of the Governing Body includes...
president/chairman, two university nominees, two guardians’ representatives, two teacher representatives, one office staff and the principal of the college.

- Findings also revealed that the majority of the colleges conduct meeting with the governing body members as and when required.
- Majority of the college principals do not have problems in the administration of the college. But some colleges face problems due to the lack of adequate and efficient administrative staff.
- Findings revealed that the college teachers were appointed on the basis of UGC/NCTE/BCI norms. However, government college teachers were selected through Assam Public Service Commission (APSC).
- Findings revealed that the government colleges do not have a Governing Body. But provincialised colleges have a Governing Body and the teachers of such colleges have good relation with the members of Governing Body.
- Majority of the college teachers have a good relationship with the principal of the college.
- Majority of the college teachers revealed that the college principal discusses various matters with the faculty members.
- Findings revealed that the teachers are happy with their salary and they revealed that they are getting their salary according to their work load. But majority of non-provincialised college teacher are not happy with their salary.
- Majority of the college teachers revealed that they get their increment annually as per Directorate of Higher Education (DHE) and Directorate of Technical Education norms. They revealed that this annual increment is 3% of basic pay. However such provisions are not there for non-provincialised college teachers.
- It was found that the teachers can take 10 days Casual Leave (CL) and 15 days (Earned leave) from the colleges. It was also revealed that the
general college teachers are satisfied with the number of days for casual leave and professional college teachers revealed that it is less for them. The teachers stated that their salary is not curtailed for taking such leave.

- It was also found that both general and professional colleges are strict with regard to students’ attendance.
- Almost all the colleges keep the record of students’ overall performance.
- The teachers of both general and professional colleges plan their activities in advance for carrying out different works smoothly.
- Majority of the college teachers do not have problems with regard to administrative task of the college.
- Majority of the college students are satisfied with the administration of the colleges.
- Most of the college students have a good relationship with the administrative staffs of the colleges.
- It was found out that majority of the administrative staffs are punctual in their duties and so the students do not face any problem in this regard. Though they have adequate number of office staff, the functioning of the administrative staffs are moderate as revealed by most of the college students.

IV. Findings regarding administration at the university level

- It was found that the main duty of the university head is supervision and administration of the department.
- All the heads revealed that the teachers were appointed on the basis of UGC/ICAR norms.
- The study found that the universities have 230 working days and 180 teaching days in a year.
- Departments are strict with regard to students’ attendance. Moreover, both the universities keep records of students’ overall performance.
• Majority of the heads revealed that they plan their activities in advance. The heads also stated that integrated MSc and MSc programme in seed solar and technology in addition to the current programmes will be introduced shortly.

• Sometimes the Heads of Department face problems of unforeseen situation like bandhs and agitation programmes (DU) and sometimes decisions are taken at the Academic Council level at their own disposal without consulting with the teachers regarding the problems in implementing them (AAU). Moreover, there is lack of proper assistance at the clerical level in DU and lack of decentralisation in certain aspects like management of experimental field creates practical problems in AAU.

• Majority of the university students are satisfied with the administration of the university. The study makes it clear that some of the students have good relationship with the administrative staff and some have average relationship with the office staffs of the university.

• The study found that both the universities have enough administrative staff for office work and they are competent and experienced enough to their work.

• Majority of the university students revealed that the administrative staffs are moderately efficient in their work.

4. Based on objective four: System of examination in Upper Assam
Following major findings were revealed regarding the examination system in Upper Assam:

I. Findings regarding examination at the college level

• Almost all the colleges have examination committees. In majority of the colleges the principal and the teacher looks after the examination work. In some colleges, some of the office staffs are also involved.

• Findings revealed that majority of the colleges have the provision for internal marks in their colleges and in almost all the general college
teachers gives the internal marks to the students. But in professional colleges both the principal and the teachers are equally involved.

- Majority of the college teachers are satisfied with the present examination system i.e. semester system. But in some professional colleges, the annual system is still prevalent and the teachers are in favour of changing it from annual to semester.

- Most of the professional colleges’ teachers are satisfied with their work load but in general colleges most of the teachers revealed that in the present semester system work load is more as compared to the annual system.

- Majority of the college teachers revealed that internal assessment is very much important for the students.

- The findings revealed that majority of the colleges have sessional examinations, some of the colleges have unit test and some have terminal/periodical examinations in their colleges. Moreover, some of the colleges have assessment test, class test, part com waro completion test, WARD completion test (medical college), viva-voce and weekly test.

- The study makes it clear that majority of the college students are highly satisfied with their performance in their examination.

- Majority of the college students revealed that the present syllabus gives equal importance to theory and practice.

II. Findings regarding examination at the university level

- Both the universities have examination committees and all of them prefer semester examination system.

- In both the universities no pre-selection test is conducted.

- Majority of the teachers of Dibrugarh University are satisfied with the Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) of examination.

- Both the universities have internal marks and they concluded that it is important for the students. Moreover, all the teachers of Dibrugarh University revealed that only the teachers are engaged in giving
internal marks. On the other hand, in Assam Agricultural University besides the teachers, some of the heads are also involved.

- Majority of the students of DU and AAU are satisfied with the examination result.
- Problems regarding examination system as revealed by DU teachers include unsystematic maintenance of records, adverse effect on classes due to teachers involvement in examination work, enticement on students to be examination oriented, improper implementation of CBCS due to time constraints, improper regulation and so on. In case of BEd, the students have to spend lengthy four hour duration in examination.
- Problems as revealed by Assam Agricultural University include extension of examination days due to conduct examinations centrally which results in reducing the teaching days; constant change in curriculum and vastness of the course content. Apart from all these, the prevailing semester system becomes very hectic at times, compounded by frequent holidays for which course completion becomes difficult.

5. Problems from the students and teachers (objective 5)

Problems faced by the college students

It can be concluded that the college students are facing problems of shortage due to computers, dearth of various co-curricular activities viz. NSS, art education, socio-economic survey, body lifting, lack of playground and photocopying machine, common room, students’ aid fund (in majority of the professional colleges), separate library building, gymnasium hall, transport facility, medical facility, shortage of professional courses, career oriented courses, placement cell and community services and scholarships.

Problems faced by the university students

The major problems as stated by the university students include scarcity of proper drinking water facility in the campus, lack of maintenance of the building,
limited number of hostels for the students, lack of transportation, lack of Wi-Fi facility, lack of security, shortage of revised books and non-availability of scholarships for all sections of students.

**Problems faced by the college teachers**

The major problems faced by college teachers include lack of reference books in the colleges, lack of teaching-learning materials, congestion in classrooms, lack of activity based learning, lack of students involvement due to their poor language ability, insufficient audio-visual aids, lack of ICT devices in teaching, poor infrastructure of classrooms, lack of basic subject knowledge of the students, lack of proper students-teacher ratio, shortage of proper drinking water facility, lack of INFLIBNET facility, dearth of residential quarters and dearth of teachers in majority of the professional colleges.

**Problems faced by the university teachers**

The major problems as revealed by the university teachers include paucity of fund to meet the educational expenses of the department and adverse effect of *bandh* culture and so on.

6. **Research and Extension activities at the university level (objective 6)**

**Findings regarding extension activities**

- 100% of the Assam Agricultural University teachers and 66.67% of the Dibrugarh University teachers were found to have undertaken major and micro research projects. From the study it is clear that teachers of Assam Agricultural University are contributing more in research work.

- Findings revealed that both the universities have remedial classes for SC, ST, OBC (Non creamy layer) and for Minority students.

- Majority of the heads of Assam Agricultural University as well as Dibrugarh University revealed that they offer career guidance among the university students.

- Majority of the Dibrugarh University respondents (66.67%) revealed that they have self funding courses for the students. However, such courses are not available in Assam Agricultural University.
• All the respondents of AAU have undertaken extension activities in their departments. The extension activities include execution of research works like demonstration programme in farmers field, imparts training to the farmers as well as to the self help groups, imparts training to the NGO's and also gives radio talk, TV programme etc, farmers fair(exhibitions), identification of crop diseases of the state and suggestion of management strategies, popularisation of edible mushroom flora and demonstration of cultivation technologies, motivation to farmers regarding organic farming, use of pesticides, refreshers training of officers from Govt. Agricultural officials, and research work-on farm in farmers field. Moreover, teachers have visited the farmer’s field and provide training to farmers as well as officers of state department. Whereas, in DU only 33.33% have undertaken such activities. the activities include as revealed by the teachers of DU include participation in various evaluation procedures conducted by various agencies from time to time, guidance to students on spoken English, visit colleges as resource persons, community work and socio economic survey of B Ed course every year, village adoption, consumer awareness, regarding language, literature and culture museum collection, old rare manuscripts collection.

• **Problems regarding extension activities:** The problems as revealed by DU teachers include shortage of faculty, problem of limited fund, lack of infrastructural building, lack of proper funding and lack of proper human resource. The problems revealed by Assam Agricultural University teachers include slow release of fund, slow input delivery system, shortage of manpower, lack of motivation for new technology and so on.

7. **Suggestions for improvement of Higher Education in Upper Assam**
   (based on objective 7)

**SUGGESTIONS AT THE COLLEGE LEVEL**

**Suggestions for general colleges**

1. Government of Assam should take some measures to introduce skill based courses, technical courses etc. for better improvement of students.
2. Management at all level should be dynamic and efficient. Academic ethics and ideals ought to be followed not only by the teachers but also by all sections of people involved in management. Academic activities should be given preference above all. Monitoring of activities should be done in a proper way.

3. 100% dedication of teachers, administration and government towards higher education is needed.

4. As far as Assam is concerned, statements and educationists should be involved in policy making rather than politicians regarding higher education.

5. Bifurcation of the professional course should be done in the high school level and every capable student should get proper training, encouragement and facility to specialise their own line of thinking. There should be a motive to produce proper human resource for the all-round development of the country.

**Suggestions for professional colleges**

1. Higher education should aim at raising the intellectual standard of society, at cultivating the public mind, at purifying the national taste, at supplying true principles to popular enthusiasm and fixed aims to popular aspiration and at giving enlargement. The quality education depends on research and without quality a nation will fall back. There is an urgent need for reforming and reorganising post graduate teaching and research work in our country.

2. Reformative policies should be adopted by the government for the benefit of the students. For the development of the skill of the student modern methods of teaching should be adopted in the higher educational institutions.

3. Higher education can be improved by recruiting proper person with academic interest. Up-gradation of faculties can be done by sending each of them for refresher course, which is not available at the medical colleges.
4. Job oriented education be given to attract the students for formal higher education
5. Recruitment of deserving qualified teachers, proper training facilities, efficiency or performance based salary for teachers should be introduced. Performance based allocation of fund for higher educational institutions by the government are necessary.

SUGGESTIONS AT THE UNIVERSITY LEVEL

Suggestions for Dibrugarh University
1. Physical education should be made a compulsory subject for all round development of students.
2. Students as well as teachers should be co-operative and friendly. Students should devote themselves for education, should learn more things, and should try for the upliftment of education in Upper Assam as a whole.
3. Government should take immediate step to set up more universities in the area and more funds should be allocated for them. Due to limited seat capacity and limited number of universities many of the students are unable to get higher education.
4. It should provide placement for all the students after passing out examination and provide proper amount of scholarship for the completion of the course.
5. Library should be kept opened for longer hours. Internet connection with Wi-Fi facility should be there. The number of hostels should be increased, security measures should be increased, international level seminars, meeting should be organised and participation of students towards talks, discussions on any matter or case of university should be ensured. There should be provision for recruitment of qualified students.

Suggestions for Assam Agricultural University
1. Exposure to different university, personality development and other such programmes should be there in every college and university.
2. The admission systems should be computerised. Frequent tour programme should be arranged, free opportunity for practising practicals should be provided. Transport and infrastructure around the university should be improved.

3. Awareness of general public with a motivation towards higher education should be created.

4. Educational institutions should be adequately managed by qualified persons.

5. Career counseling is required from time to time. Job must be increased in any line so that people get interested to go for higher education instead of going for business.

16.0 Suggestions for Further research

Future researchers can carry out their study in the following fields:

1. A study of the progress and development of professional and Technical colleges of Assam.

2. A study of women’s Higher Education in Assam.

3. A comparative study of rural and urban colleges of Upper Assam.

4. A comparative study of the higher educational institutions affiliated to Dibrugarh University and Gauhati University.

5. A comparative study of higher education among the tribal and non-tribal students of Assam

6. A Study of the problems of educationally backward districts of Assam.