

Quality Of Education And Some Barriers: Especially In Higher Educational Institutions (Rural Colleges) And It's Impacts On Society

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Abstract

Education is the mirror of a society. A nation can be built through education and for that teaching-learning approaches, are applied. Every conscious person in a society puts their focus on education and for this we are looking basically for quality. Quality education is one of the main factors of competitive advantages.

Globalisation has created more competitive environment, which in turn have created a challenging market in the field of education, especially for HEI's.

The quality of education, particularly in higher educational institutions located in rural areas, significantly impacts society on multiple levels. Despite efforts to improve accessibility and inclusivity, rural colleges often face unique challenges that impede the delivery of quality education. This abstract explores these challenges and their broader societal implications.

Limited resources constitute a significant barrier to quality education in rural Colleges. Outdated infrastructure, shortage of qualified faculties, slow learners and inadequate funding are the main barriers to qualified faculties, slow learners and inadequate funding are the main barriers to quality education. Moreover, the lack of technology and learning material further exacerbates the disparity in educational outcomes. The technological divide not only affects individual students and hampers rural communities' overall development and competitiveness. Furthermore, geographical isolation and social attitudes towards rural education are also some short of barriers. Due to these inequalities, Students in rural areas may not receive the same level of education as urban areas.

This work mainly based on fieldwork activities; the Study highlights the difference between rural and urban education systems and it finds out the reason for varied levels of quality in the education system which is provided by a country (but varies at rural vs urban level), it helps to find out the factors which is generally responsible for making a difference in the quality of education (Low versus high quality) and will try to find out some positive sign to overcome from such obstacles and also for fostering social equity, economic development, regional prosperity.

Keywords: Society, Quality, Education, Barriers, HEI's.

Introduction:

Without education, it is pretty impossible to think about our lives. Society can be reformed through this education. Raja Rammohan Roy, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar are renowned educationists who made reformation through education. Education is often regarded as the cornerstone, i.e., the foundation pillar of societal progress. Education serves as a catalyst for economic development, social mobility, and cultural enrichment. Now a days, in this present world, Education is playing a vital role in every sphere of life. So far changing life - there must be some important factor; in our simple language, we can call it quality. However, the quality of education, particularly in higher educational institutions located in rural areas, presents as complex challenge with profound implications for society. In this study, we will delve into the dynamics of educational quality in rural colleges, explore the barriers that impede its enhancement and analyse the far-reaching impacts on individuals and communities.

Access to quality education is widely acknowledged as a fundamental right and cornerstone for societal progress. However, in many parts of the world, particularly in rural areas (rural areas of Assam, like Barak Valley), higher educational institutions face many difficulties.

Rural colleges, nestled in remote and often under-reserved regions, play a crucial role in democratising access to higher education. Rural colleges cater to a diverse student population, including first generation learners, individuals from marginalized background class and these seeking education close to their communities. Despite their significance, rural colleges frequently encounter formidable obstacles in delivering high-quality education comparable to their urban counterparts. Rural colleges of Barak Valley, specially the newly provincialized Colleges are not able to compare to The Urban Colleges.

The village Schools are the feeder to These Colleges. From the school level, most of the education system in this Barak Vallery area is not merely up to the mark. In writing- the system Shows its accuracy, i.e. the system is precise, but the situation is quite different; the intention is good, but more effort is needed in its real execution. So quality of Education is of utmost requirement without proper quality education it is quite impossible to build a nation. We can remember here the famous statement of Nelson Mandela, which is displayed at the entrance of the university of South Africa, thus- Destroying any nation does not require the use of atom bombs or the use of long-range missiles. It only requires lowering the quality of education and allowing cheating in the examination by the students.

Nelson Mandela try to seek everyone's attention for the quality of Education if Society do not focus on its quality education, allow the children for cheat, help them in examination, do not encourage the students for hard work, make them weak by providing such kind of defective education rather putting more attentions towards another activities (looking after mid-day meal) by the teaching faculty members all such things are very much responsible for providing defective education. Lack of awareness, preparedness, traditional way of teaching approach etc. are some of the things which are responsible for collapses a nation.

Nowadays, globalisation makes the entire world like a village. NEP 2020 try to make education policy in such a way that people can get benefit and can fit them anywhere in the world. But only written policy alone cannot bring about very much change. For Proper implementation of such thinking can change our- entire education system, but main thing is that it's required proper execution. However nowadays it is quite impossible to compare education system to the other nations of the world. During 16 - 17th century, when the western Writer like W. Shakespeare published his writings- various play, drama etc. (Macbeth, Julius Caesar etc.) in India people were busy to follow the tradition believe like untouchability and after 1757 when Britishers made colony in India from than only 'we' the common people got the chance to become educate-though their intention was not good on only for making conversion they start this process and because of them after (200/ two hundred year, we tried to follow that way, gradually we reached in 21st Century world, now the situation is quite different; after becoming independent, we are now in the 'Golden era'. We are awaiting to celebrate our 100 years of getting independence and this time we want to compete with the world, but this can only be possible if we put our attention towards the quality of education, because education is the only way which can connects the people and through education a nation can develop.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Soliba, K., & Salib Zoram, 2018 in their writings (Measuring Higher Education Services using the SERVQUAL Model) says that the gap between the expected quality and perceived quality should be calculated, and it is observed that if the quality of Education improved and expected quality Donlagic, S.,& Fazlic, S. (2015) talks about some model for identifying quality dimensions. Donlagic put emphasis on the SERVQUAL model because it is the commonly used tool which is generally used for quality assessment . Sumaedi et al., 2011, in his writings says that- the quality of services in Higher Education is defined by the students' expectations and their real gain and also on the students' assessment related to the level of performance of services offered by the Higher Educational Institution compared to their real expectations.

India is a place of 'unity in diversity', it can also be called an 'Anthropological Garden', so different kind of people having different life style, like wise we found differences in the life style of village and town people. As there is differencesreflection is seen everywhere; in the field of education also we find these differences. Education is the backbone of a society, and in this field, we find some differences in providing the quality education, as our main focus is to find out the real obstacles or barriers which is faced by the rural colleges - like the Venture or newly provincialized Colleges of Barak valley, Assam, are the dearth of resources of education. These institutions often grapple with limited funding, inadequate infrastructures and a scarcity of qualified faculty members, shortage of teaching staff. The lack of financial investment constrains their ability to upgrade facilities, procure modern teaching aids and retain talented educators. As a result, students enrolled in rural colleges may not have assets to state of the art laboratories, well equipped libraries or technology enabled learning environments compromising their educational experience and prospects.

Moreover, state like Assam - the village area, are more backward in comparison to other developed states of our country. The Geographic isolation of Rural colleges exacerbates the challenge of recruiting and retaining skilled faculty. As the quality of students from the feeder school are also not up to the mark, these things sometime become the reason of less interest from the part of the faculty. Many educators, drawn to urban centres by better career opportunities and amenities are reluctant to relocate towards remote areas with fewer professional and social opportunities. Consequently, rural colleges often Struggle to maintain a competent and motivated teaching staff, leading and student engagement.

Besides these resource constraints, rural colleges face Systematic barriers rooted in socio-economic disparities and cultural norms. Extreme poverty is one of such reason, in Assam specially in Barak Valley the rural colleges are facing such kind of barriers. Students hailing from impoverished backgrounds may confront financial obstacles that impede their access to Higher Education such as - tuition fees, transportation costs and living expenses. But now a days the Govt. of Assam has provided a new free weiver scheme, which the helps the student of below poverty line.

Furthermore, societal expectations and gender roles prevalent in rural communities may discourage certain demographic groups, particularly women and minorities, from pursuing higher education due to financial obligations, traditional beliefs or limited role models.

Furthermore, the curriculum and pedagogical approaches in rural colleges may not always align with the evolving needs of society and the demands of the job market. Outdated traditional Instructional methods, the theoretical emphasis over

practical skills and a lack of industry-academic protection collaboration can diminish the relevance and employability of graduates from rural colleges. This difference between educational offerings and market demands perpetuates cycles of unemployment, underemployment and economic stagnation in rural areas, undermining the aspirations of students and the development prospects of their communities. This work tries to put special attention to such type of situation where the education system faces some problems.

The impact of these challenges extends far beyond the confines of rural Colleges reverberating throughout society in multifaceted ways. A compromised quality of education perpetuates socio-economic inequalities, hindering social mobility and perpetuating cycles of poverty. The underrepresentation of rural populations in higher education, exacerbated regional disparities in development, widening the urban-rural divide and fostering feelings of alienation and neglect among the marginalised communities.

In Short, the quality of education in rural colleges of Barak Valley is not merely an educational issue but a societal concern with profound implications for equitable development and Social cohesion.

Addressing the barriers to educational quality in rural areas requires a multifaceted approach encompassing policy interventions, financial investments, community engagement and cultural transformation. By empowering rural colleges to provide high-quality education we can unlock the untapped potential of individuals and communities, fostering inclusive growth and sustainable progress for the entire society.

Quality Education can easily show the difference in society. For acquiring quality education, many students of our country have gone to foreign Countries¹.

The number of Indian students studying outside India rapidly increased by 163% between 1999 and 2006, to reach 145,539 as compared to slower growth of 25% between 2006 and 2013 to reach 181,872, according to an analysis of UNESCO data².

As of January 2021, more than 1 million Indian students studying in 85 countries outside India³, more than 50% of Indian study in North America⁴. Here, we try to put some study destinations for Indian students based on No. of active students.

YEAR	COUNTRY	NO OF STUDENTS
2023	Canada	319,130
2022	United States	211,930
2022	United Kingdom	139,539
2022	Germany	33,753
2021	United Arab Emirates	219,000
2021	Australia	96,000
2021	Saudi Arabia	80,800
2021	Oman	43,600
2019	China	23,000
2015	New Zealand	29,000

Top Countries for Indian Students

(Source Internet)

Depending on the quality- difference can be seen in every field the above data shows the quality chart provided by a country for the overall development of the students and the society as well. Perceived quality of education or services in Higher Educational Institutions can be defined as the difference between what student expects to receive and their perceptions of what they really get. Now the Indian Govt. is trying to implement NEP-2020 for the overall development of the students and also for the society and for the country as well.

If the Higher Educational Institutions get acquinted with Students expectations, they will have the opportunity to adjust their behaviour to what is expected of them and thus to positively influence the student's perceived quality of services. But in HEI's in rural areas specially in Barak Valley, the Institutions cannot provide quality education to students. Sometime the students grown in such an atmosphere (poor School education system) that they are not in a position to know about their expectations; they are not aware, even some students are not in a position to write an application correctly, but they get 1st Division in HSLC or H.S. (12th). It is seen that, in most of the schools (High School or Higher Secondary School of Barak Valley) during examination time invigilator, office staff (Non-Teaching) help the students cheating in examinations, Govt. pressure need of high pass examinations. A case study regarding this was made by the author on the basis of some questionnaire to the students who have passed out from such type of atmosphere with a condition of not sharing their identity). This Kind of education system is not good for society; rather, this system can destroy the future of rural students. in such a situation, most educated people so, circumstances only policy cannot help the student, for such kind of collapse in education system sometime the common people are also very much responsible. People or the common/general parents become very happy if they heard that their son or daughter got 1st Division or in some good position. They do not take care about about what their children (son or daughter) actually knows. In rural areas most of the guardians are illiterate, their sons & daughters are some time the first generation learner.

This practical policy in schools, colleges particularly in rural areas of Barak Valley, leads the future of the students of this region in a very devastating way. Some expectation is there but this is very limited indeed.

Nowadays, globalization has created a mere competitive environment and opened a market for HEI's. It affected on ensuring high quality of services. The quality of a Higher Educational Institutions is of key importance for society because

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the students, employers and society benefits from it, and quality education contributes to the economic development of the country. As the quality of education of some Higher Educational Institution (rural colleges) of Barak Valley is not good, for that it can't helps its students to compete themselves in this global competitive environment. So, there must be some action plan from these HEIs needed to overcome such obstacles. There must be some practical practice for those written policy which are basically assigned for these HEI's. For getting better results modification and implementations should be done from root level i.e. from school level. Some Implementation should be the part of teaching faculty, administration, society and also from the part of o Govt. This study tries to find out those main reasons which are responsible for lack of quality education. This study will help us to find out the barriers which are come across in the process of education, especially the HEIs of rural areas of Barak Valley, and also find out some ways or strategies for which barriers can be overcome.

The environment brings big changes which are more dynamic, numerous and diversified. The Educationist, the people of the society should aware to bring such kind of environment now a days has become one of the main factors of the competitive advantages of an institution. The existence of Higher Educational Institution in the global market can be ensured only by high quality of Services provided by the institution and openness to other countries.

The aim of this paper is to show through the theoretical review, the importance of providing and maintaining a high quality of services for user satisfaction, where special attention will be paid to 'quality' in higher education, specially the rural colleges of Barak Valley. The paper will also show the level of education, students satisfaction in case of some higher educational Institutions i.e. Some Rural colleges of Barak valley through the presentation of empirical research results. In addition the study will identify differences in perception of service quality among students of first, second and third year i.e. 1st to 6th Semester of study.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For the purpose of research title cited above i.e. for quality of Education and some barriers, especially the HEI's of rural areas to find out its impact on society, we took the help of primary data which is solely based on personal fieldwork. For collecting data I / we have visited various rural colleges and try to find out the reality what are the barriers , which are basically faced by the HEIS especially in rural colleges of Barak Valley and have tried to find out some way through which we can overcome from such type of barriers, so that this institution can complete with this 'Global village'.

This study mainly focused on some questionnaires which is placed before various HEI's of Barak Valley, especially to the rural colleges. In our fieldwork this questionnaire were put before the SR college, Kalain, Silchar; Silchar; Silchar; SV College, Chandkhira, Karimganj; ALC College, Algapur, Hailakandi; Nilambazar College, Nilambazar, Karimganj.

Here are some questions:

> Do your institution fulfilled the required number of teaching staff for providing quality teaching to the student's?

Response option- Yes/No.

Answer: Replied - No

same question have put forward to each and every college out of all these institutions maximum institution agreed to the second option i.e. 'No', almost 95% percent responded the same answer.

> Whether institution receive any government money for infrastructural development? Response-Yes/No

Answer: 80% of the respondents have replied to the second option.

> Can your institution fulfill the requirement of all the students?

Response -Yes/No

Answer: For this question we can get again maximum response in- 'No'. Around 90% of HEI's of this rural areas (provincialized from venture state) give the same response.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The occurrence of the concept of quality in education relates to the occurrence of human civilisation. The beginning of the industrial revolution has caused the need for quality management in large systems.

At the beginning of the 20th century there was a culmination of quality that represented a civilization response to an industrial society. In the 70s of the 20th century Japan took world's leading option in quality and become world powers so in everywhere quality plays an important role if we purchase some product we find the brand that is the quality, ISI mark for gold, hallmark for quality acceptance etc.

The culture of constant improvement has led to the biggest changes with greatest emphasis on the education of quality experts and the introduction of mass training programs. Quality of services issue is present in the theory and practice of management for many years in today's conditions of business it is specially evident. Nowadays the ISO quality system is widely accepted in Europe.

Nowadays, quality is the most important type of business, and it is one of the key factors of competitiveness.

Analysis of quality of services in higher educational institutions has become one of the main factors of the competitive advantages the quality of services in HEIS depends largely on students expectations and their perceptions of the performance of service received. But in the HEI's of rural area (as in Barak Valley) are not up to the mark, neither the Rural colleges nor the students can provide or agree on the level of service received with the expected service.

Students of this colleges themselves are not in a position to know their requirement, what they are getting here according to their knowledge it is enough for them even they are sometimes happy and already become adjusted in this kind of situation. From school level they have brought up in the same atmosphere.

Numerous stakeholders, such as students, employers, parents the labour market, society and other are involved in the process of ensuring quality in the higher education and in accordance to this the system of higher education should meet their demands and expectations and ensure the quality of the educational process according to author Makimm (2009) maintaining quality is the key responsibility of higher education institutions⁵.

Maintaining quality is also one of the ways to transfer the learning process from the teacher to the students and their needs, quality of knowledge and abilities acquired during studies⁶.

In our country, the matter of quality in higher education is clearly defined in strategy for education department especially by the NAAC. NAAC covers the areas like- internal quality Assurance organized and established by the institution of Higher Education itself and another use in external quality assurance that is self-evaluation, and external evaluation.

SIGNIFICANCE OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN RURAL AREAS

For several reasons Higher Education is significant. It is important for economic development, community Empowerment Innovation and Research, cultural representation, rural urban divide etc.

Higher educational Institutions in rural can provide specialized training and skills to the students that can contribute to local economic development. Agriculture, rural, healthcare and small business management (like tea garden management). Programme can be included for sustaining rural economy. Access to higher education empowers individuals in rural communities by providing with the knowledge and skills needed to address local challenges and through this it can lead to the development of community leaders for the betterment of the areas.

Higher education Institutions in rural areas can serve as hubs for innovation and research, focusing on issues relevant to rural communities such as sustainable agriculture, renewable energy and environmental conservation etc.

Higher education in rural areas also helps bridge the rural-urban divide by offering opportunities for individuals to access quality education without having to migrate to urban centres.

Higher Education Institutions in rural areas can also play an important role in preserving local cultures, traditions and languages by offering programmes that focus on cultural heritage and identity.

In short, it can be said that, Higher Education in Rural Areas is essential for fostering socio-economic development, empowering local communities, and preserving local identities.

Preview the barriers to quality education in rural colleges and their societal impact:

Barriers to quality education in rural colleges often include limited resources, inadequate infrastructure, lack of qualified faculty, limited access to technology, and insufficient funding. These barriers can result in lower educational outcomes, limited opportunities for students, and perpetuation of socio-economic disparities.

Barriers faced by the rural colleges (specially newly provincialized colleges of Assam) in providing quality education.

Limited Access to Resources:

Rural colleges are found everywhere in Barak Valley, most of the newly provincialized and non-provincialized colleges have fewer resources. Because of lack of funds, textbooks, reference materials, and academic journals are scarce. These Institutions cannot provide limited access to research funding, etc., which are some of the problems faced by the institution.

Financial constraints:

It is very tough to navigate financial constraints. Insufficient funding for academic programmes and extra-curricular activities are also some barriers for providing quality education. Constraints may stem from limited Govt. funding, lower enrollment, and fewer opportunities for private donations, etc. These things affect the academic programmes and student support services. Additionally, for thus colleges fails to provide competitive salaries, attract quality faulty and also fails to provide modern facilities that is why such kind of problems requires creative solution.

Shortage of Infrastructure

In rural colleges, the lack of infrastructure can significantly impact the quality of education and overall student experience. Inadequate facilities such as classrooms, outdated technology, insufficient library resources, limited access to laboratories, and poor internet connectivity are the main reasons for providing quality education- rural colleges of Barak Valley often face such kind of problem.

Shortage of qualified faculty

Due to poor financial strength, the HEI's of rural areas face difficulty in attracting and retaining skilled educators, limited access professional development opportunities are also the main reason for having a shortage of qualified faculty members. Qualified teachers are sometime fails to get such kind of atmosphere in rural areas. Sometime qualified teachers are not getting satisfaction in serving such kind of atmosphere. This is another type of barriers to quality education faced by the rural college.

Geographical challenges

It is another type of obstacle, limited access to transportation, difficulty attracting and retaining faculty and staff, fewer opportunities for academic and professional development and limited access to cultural and recreational activities are the some reason,. through which the rural college fails to provide quality education. Investing in infrastructure improvements and community engagement initiatives can help mitigate some of the challenges associated with the remote location of rural colleges.

Impact of Barriers - Limited access of quality education on Society:

Here we have discussed about the various forms of barriers which are generally found in rural areas, these barriers have some effect in our society also. Barriers which are faced by the HEI's of rural areas lead to some socio-cultural, economic, and political impacts.

Socio-economic-Political and cultural impact

Limited access to quality education can have significant economic implication, it hinders economic development in rural areas. It can perpetuate income inequality, hinder social mobility and lead to a less skilled and less competitive workforce. This can also negatively affect economic growth and development.

Limited access to quality education in rural colleges have profound cultural effects. It can perpetuate inequalities and limit opportunities for social mobility and reinforce existing Power structures without exposure to diverse perspectives and knowledge, cultural development may stagnate hindering innovation and progress.

Limited access to quality education or educational resources affects health literacy and preventive healthcare practices. Lower educational attainment correlates with higher ratio of poverty and poor health outcomes.

Defective education leads the society in dangerway. Educational disparities contribute to social inequality and marginalization. If some HEI's fails to provide quality education, it will automatically affect the students. Defective education reduce the interest of the talented student. Brain drains as talented individuals migrate to urban areas for better educational opportunities.

Limited educational opportunities can result in a lack of political awareness and participation. Defective education or limited to quality education fails to produce rural voices in policy making and governance.

Though there are some obvious impacts which can be generally seen due to some barriers found in rural areas which are faced by the HEI's like that of the newly provincialized Venture colleges and also some Govt. rural colleges of Assam; though Some barriers and its impact seen in the education system and for that we can easily find out the quality of education here but some good students are still coming out from these places also. Earlier days some renowned personalities were born in these rural areas and have created history. Now one more question arises -Can we overcome from such situation? we can say 'yes', 'yes', we com can overcome these barriers if we follow some remedial techniques or some strategies and this can be done. If we can improve or develop the infrastructure through some investment, both from Govt. and private Initiatives to improve latest technology and infrastructure in rural colleges.

Providing Some financial support by increasing funding for higher educational institutions in rural areas, also by expansioning some scholarship (Assam Govt. provided various such scholarship schemes for all categories of students specially SC/ST and minority students) who are from disadvantaged backgrounds. These can be overcome by some capacity-building techniques like some training and professional development Programmes for faculty members for their skill development and this can be done by providing some incentives and by encouraging them to join in various projects etc.

Community engagement is also one of the important aspects through which the above mentioned barriers can be overcome. Collaboration between local communities, organisation, various colleges can solve some educational needs. Through some outreach programmes we can promote in education and carrier opportunities in rural areas for this community engagement is recognized as one of the most important strategy for overcome the said barriers, mentioned over in this discussion, for which quality education can be achieve in the rural colleges.

CONCLUSION:

The barriers to availing & quality education in Higher Educational Institutions i.e in rural colleges. are nodoubt a kind of key challenge to develop or can say a developing rural college. Lack of infrastructure, Shortage of quality Faculty, lack of resources, financial Support, Geographical challenges and its impact on the Higher Educational Institutions specially in the rural colleges; lack of practical knowledge, lack of exposure, language barriers i.e. non-English speaking backgrounds and struggle with language intensive coursework - these challenges lead to lower academic performance and reduced self-confidence among students.

Moreover the impact of poor educational quality in rural colleges is far reaching on, an individual level lower quality of education limit the socio-economic mobility. The educational gap between the rural and urban leads the 'brain drain' phenomenon, where talented students from rural areas move urban centres or abroad for better opportunities; leading their communities and deprived of skilled professionals.

To overcome from these barriers and improve the quality of education in HEI's especially in the rural colleges, investment in rural educational infrastructure, Scholarships, etc. could be essential steps. Various Govt. policies and private partnerships are playing a pivotal role in supporting these changes. Society can prosper if there can be fairness education system and no cheating at all, less corruption, less partiality, where there will be a prosperous society. Society can be develop, if every individual regardless of their geographical location follow this way. In Barak Valley, specially in rural areas, the geographical condition and communication condition is still underdeveloped, which is a serious threat to improve the quality of education, and for that we are facing this kind of problem. Every individual regardless of their geographical location has the opportunity to contribute to national and global progress; for that we have to awake first and also make aware the general people too, otherwise it will not be so easy task to achieve.

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