

## Higher Education and Sustainable Development in Uttarakhand

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### ABSTRACT

*The description of Higher Education can be found in the primitive literature of Vedic India. In India, the Higher Education flourished and developed along with the time. The temples of Higher Education in India play an important role in shaping the development of the society as well as the economic development of the nation. Ancient India had realised the importance of Higher Education right from the Vedic age, but with the invasion and foreign attack and skirmish the traditional foundation of Higher Education got disturbed and destroyed. By the end of 17th century, the indigenous system of Higher Education was on the verge of extension. British took initiatives to revive the system of Higher Education in India, but this had both positive as well as negative impact on the traditional Higher Education. The traditional indigenous system suffered heavy loss as the new system which was being introduced benefited only that section of the society which served the English government.*

*Higher Education in Uttarakhand was established on July, 2001. At the time of the establishment of Directorate there were only 34 government degree colleges. At present, there are 28 Universities, 7 Institutions of National importance, 1 Central University, 11 State Universities, 3 Deemed Universities and 14 Private Universities. According to the AISHE report (2016-2017) there are 33815947 students enrolled in Higher Education in India, out of those 380654 students belongs to Uttarakhand which is only 1.125%.*

*This research paper discusses the quality assessment and possibilities of Higher Education in Uttarakhand. It examines both governmental as well as individual solution to the prevailing problems faced by the state in Higher Education.*

*This research paper then discusses the argument that targets the incompetence of Higher Education system of Uttarakhand in producing quality research. Further it discusses the role of Higher Education in sustainable development in Uttarakhand.*

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### INTRODUCTION TO HIGHER EDUCATION IN UTTARAKHAND

Uttarakhand is the 27th state formed on 9th November 2000, spread across 53,483 sq km; it is a unique geographical entity in the Western Himalayan terrain and has an altitudinal range of 200 to 7784 meters above sea level. The state is 86% mountainous and 65% is covered by forest. The state also shares international boundaries with Nepal in east and China in the north. The State has two administrative blocks which divides the state into two parts namely Kumaun and Garhwal. Kumaun region have 6 districts namely Nainital, Udham Singh Nagar, Almora, Pithoragarh, Bageshwar and Champawat whereas Garhwal region have 7 districts namely Uttarkashi, Dehradun, Tehri Garhwal, Rudra Prayag, Chamoli, Haridwar and Pauri.

Out of the 13 districts of the State, 3 are plain districts and the remaining 10 are hill districts.

Establishment of Directorate of Higher Education in Uttarakhand dates back in July 2001. At the time of the establishment of Directorate there were only 34 government degree colleges. At present, there are 28 Universities, 7 Institutions of National importance, 1 Central University, 11 State Universities, 3 Deemed Universities and 14 Private

Universities. According to the AISHE report (2016-2017) there are 33815947 students enrolled in Higher Education in India, out of those 380654 students belongs to Uttarakhand which is only 1.125%. Looking at the Population Census India 2011 the population of Uttarakhand was 10086292. The decadal growth rate of population of Uttarakhand was 18.81%. Thus, in 2016 the population of the State stands approximately 23877921, which state that only 1.5942% of the total population of the State is enrolled in Education which is very critical when the mean age of the country is 26.6 years.

### RESEARCH PROBLEM

- Low percentage of the Enrolment of Students in Higher Education in the Hill Districts of Uttarakhand.
- Lack of Availability of Quality Higher Education in Uttarakhand.
- Lack of Quality Research output in Uttarakhand.
- Primitive Methods of teachings at Higher Education.
- Sustainable Development through Higher Education.

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

The importance of Higher Education is effectively discussed in the work of Martin A. O'Neill, Adrian Palmer (2004), it addresses the issue of service quality evaluation within the higher education sector and stresses the need to develop measures that are both psychometrically and practically sound, it also discusses the need to develop valid, reliable and replicable measures of service quality, it is suggested that educators must not lose sight of the original purpose for which these measures were designed, i.e. their practical value in informing continuous quality improvement efforts. It critiques the use of disconfirmation models and reports on a study of students' perceptions of quality using importance - performance analysis (IPA).

The study done by John Stephenson and M. Yorke (Stephenson and Yorke 1998) discusses the capability and quality in Higher Education. In the study by Thomas C Reeves (Reeves 2006), evaluations of traditional, online, and blended approaches to higher education teaching indicates that the most commonly misaligned factor is assessment. The importance of Higher Education in Sustainable Development is discussed in the work of M. Barth, J. Godemann, M Rieckmann and Ute Stoltenberg (Godemann 2007), Dawe, Gerald, Rolf Jucker and Stephen Martin (Dawe 2005), Svanstrom, Magdalena, Francisco J. Lozano-Garcia and Debra Rowe (Debra 2008), Stephen Sterling 2004.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Research Approach is Applied and Qualitative in nature. This research involves finding new applications of scientific knowledge for the solution of the problems such as development of the new system, or new methods or tools in order to solve the prevailing problems faced by Higher Education System in Uttarakhand. This study is also aimed to discover non-quantified relation between exiting variables.

**ENROLMENT RATIO IN VARIOUS DISTRICT IN UTTARAKHAND**

Total number of students enrolled in Higher Education as according to the report of AISHE (2016-2017) stands at 3,80,654 amongst which 1,98,127 are male students and 1,82,527 are female students. Enrolment ratio is very critical in the hill districts as nearly all hill districts have a poor enrolment of both females as well as male student, however, the female enrolment surpasses male enrolment in almost in every hill district. The reason for the higher female enrolment ratio in Higher Education in hills can be attributed to the fact that males often migrate to the urban plains for both education as well as for employment.

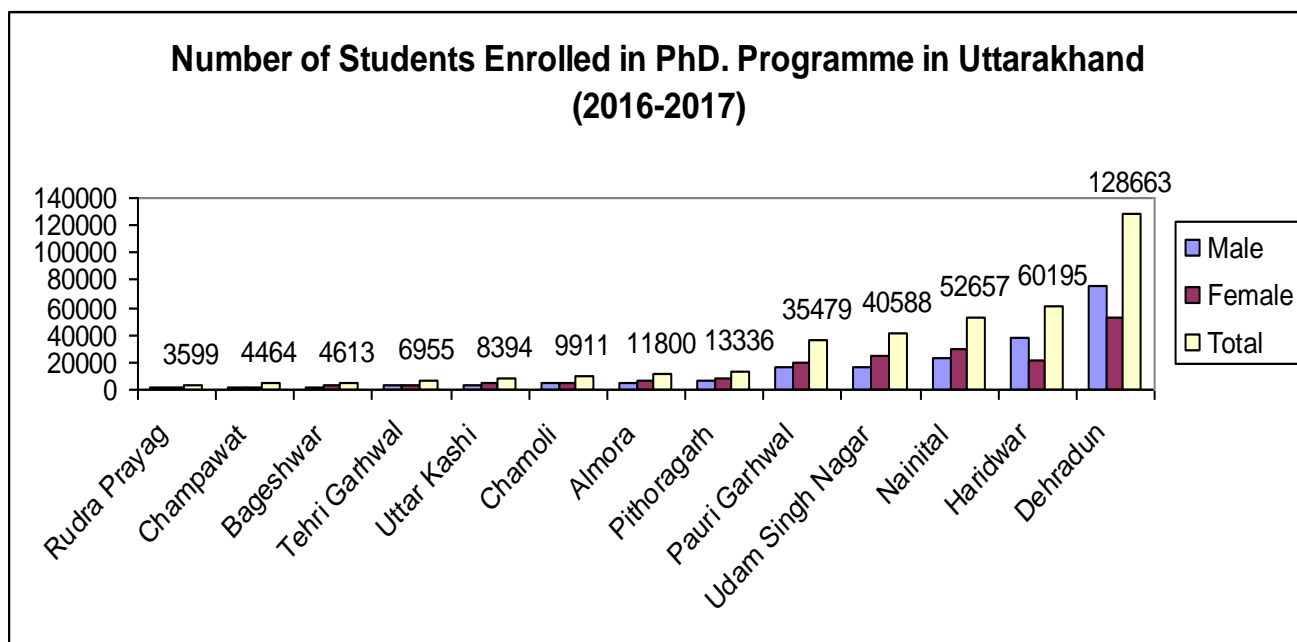


Fig.1: District & Level-Wise Male & Female Student Enrolments  
Sourced From: AISHE Report 2016-17

Among the 13 districts the Dehradun district tops the rank for the highest enrolment of both male as well as female student with 1,28,663 enrolled students comprising 75903 male

and 52760 female students. The district which stands at the bottom is Rudra Prayag with only 3,599 students enrolled in Higher Education.

**PROBLEMS FACED BY HILL DISTRICTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

**a. Few Higher Education Institutions**

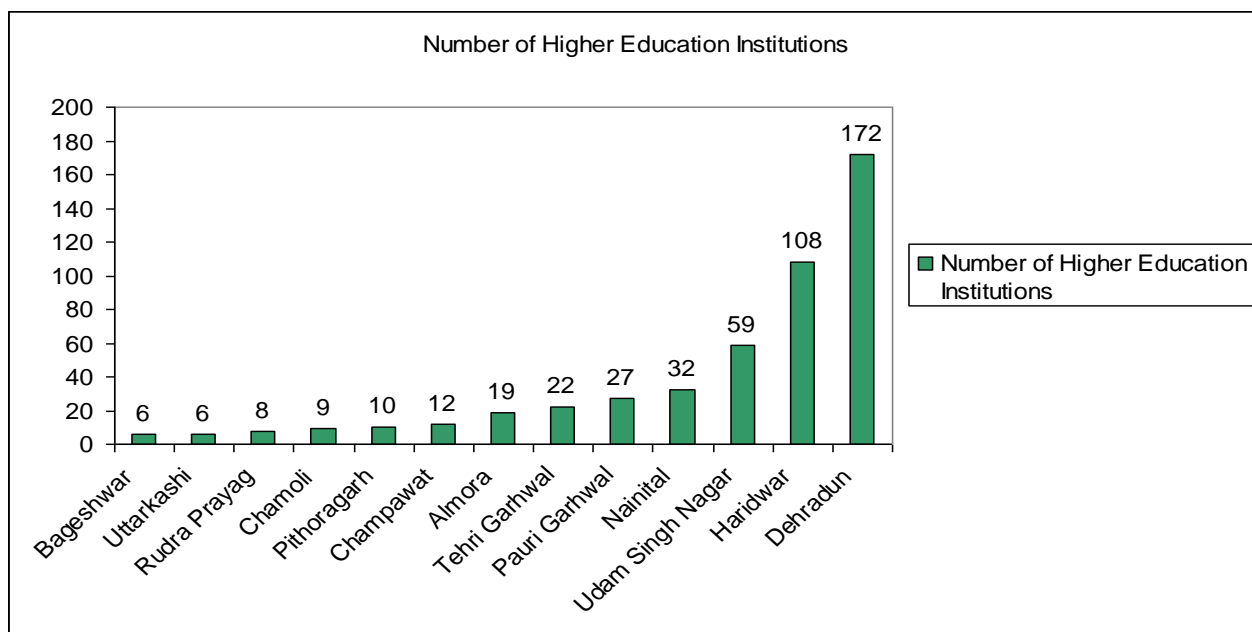


Fig.2: Number of Higher Education Institutions in Uttarakhand  
Sourced From: AISHE Report 2016-17

The state capital Dehradun offers the highest number of Higher Education Institution in the state. The condition of Higher Education in hill is very critical as the number of Higher Education Institutions in hill districts is below the

critical level. Today the combined number of Higher Education Institutions in all hill districts stands at 119 which are below the number of Higher Education Institutions that are established in Dehradun

**b. Quality Education**

Quality in Higher Education is very essential component in maintaining the standards of Higher Education. The state of Uttarakhand which is situated in Western Himalayas, experiences the extreme problems of geography, economy as well as social infrastructure. These units of problems add up and affect the quality of Higher Education in the state, the hill

districts are severely affected due to the lack of quality in Higher Education and as a result of this though the enrolled students step out of these colleges as a graduate or a post graduate, but in cruel reality they have only got a degree without any professional specialization.

**c. Lack of Teachers**

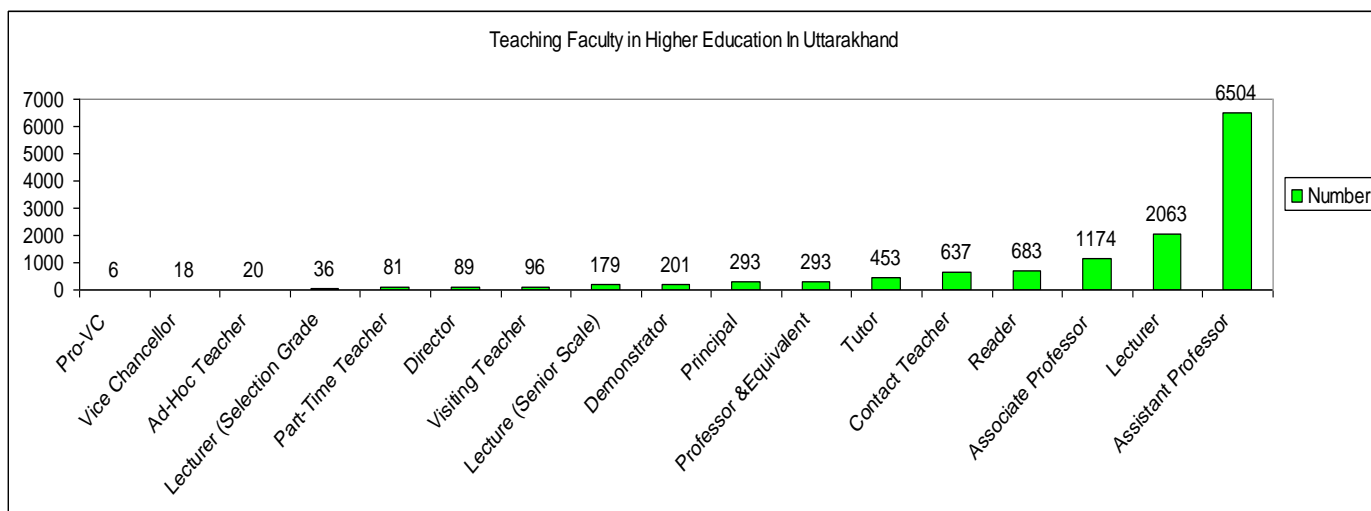


Fig.3: Teaching Faculty in Higher Education in Uttarakhand  
Sourced From: AISHE Report 2016-17

The lack of teaching faculty is one of the major reasons for the bad health of Higher Education in the state. The total number of teaching faculty is 12,826 whereas the total number of students is 380654 this implies that the teacher pupil ratio stands at 1 teacher for 30 students. The major reason for the

low teacher pupil ratio is due to large number of vacant seats in the remote colleges of hill districts, studies suggests that there are approximately more than 1500 seats vacant in both government as well as in private colleges.

**d. Migration of Peoples from hills to urban plains**

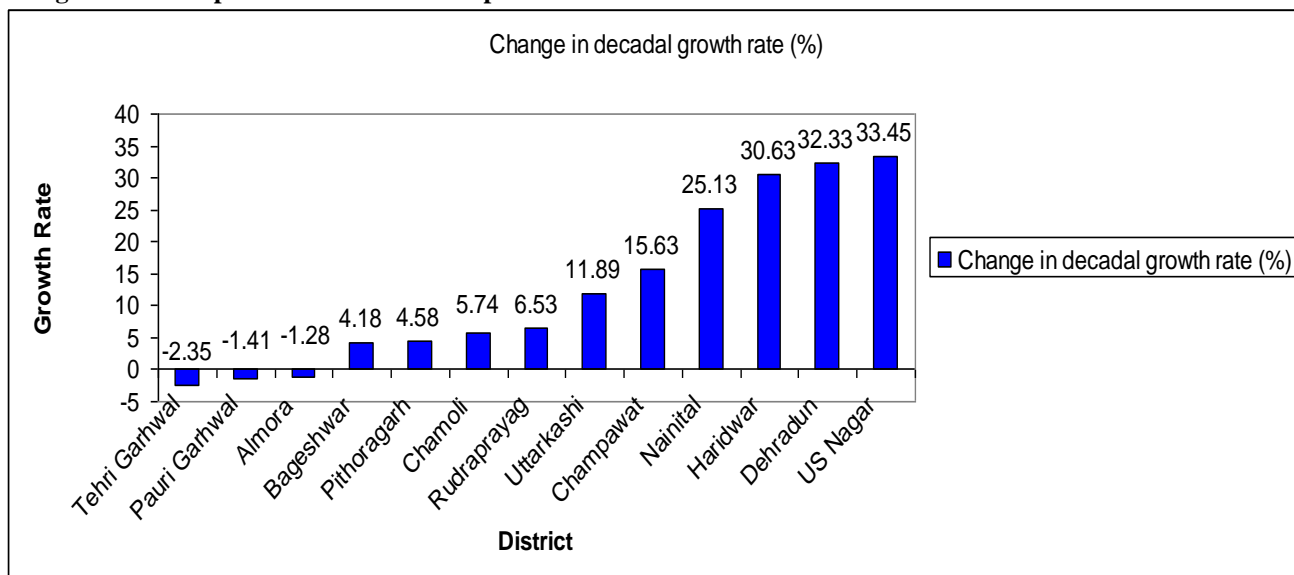


Fig.4: Change in Decadal Growth Rate of Districts of Uttarakhand  
Sourced From: Population Census of India 2011

Migration of people from the hill districts possesses heavy threat to the demographic structure of the hills. Population Census of India 2011 shows that the decadal growth rate of hill districts tends to be negative whereas the decadal growth of the

plain districts is in double digit. The Higher Education system in Uttarakhand suffers the aforesaid problem in the highest level. The situation is so critical that only few colleges' offers professional or job oriented courses.

**e. Lack of Job Oriented courses in Higher Education**

The government colleges in the hill districts even find it hard to maintain its faculty for traditional courses and lack of skilled teaching staff is one of the common problems. The introduction of interdisciplinary courses is still a new thing to

be understood in some remote colleges of Higher Education. Students in the hill districts also face the lack of vocational courses as the colleges hardly provide any exposure to vocational studies.

**RESEARCH ORIENTED HIGHER EDUCATION IN UTTARAKHAND**

Research oriented Higher Education is plays an important role in the quality research and development of any nation. But unfortunately in Uttarakhand the Higher Education system doesn't provides that platform which is essential for the

nourishment of quality research development. AISHE report of 2016-17 gives a brief picture of incompetence of Higher Education system in providing good and quality research students.

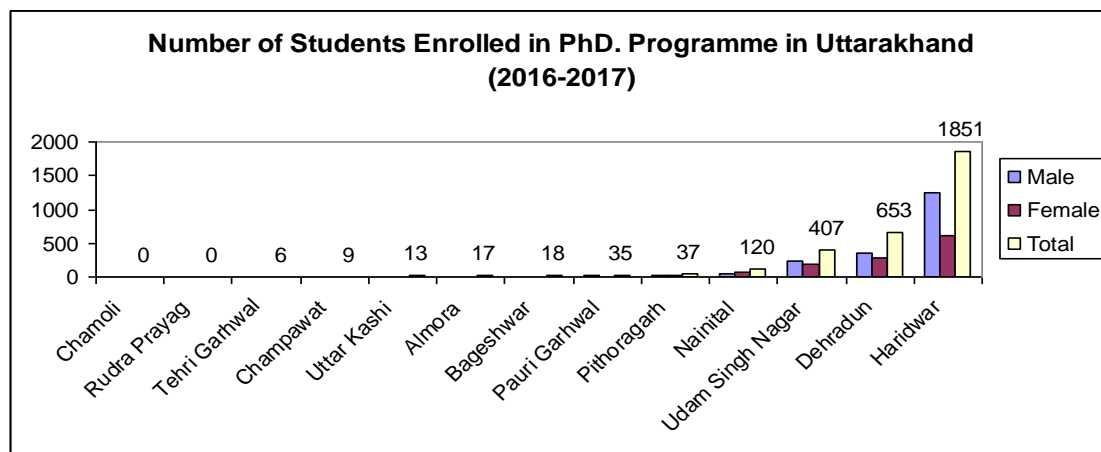


Fig.5: Students Enrolled in PhD Programme in Uttarakhand  
Sourced From: AISHE Report 2016-17

Haridwar district has highest number of students enrolled in PhD programme, whereas hill districts such as Chamoli, Rudra Prayag has no student enrolled in PhD programme.

**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH HIGHER EDUCATION**

Sustainable development is the master principle for meeting human development goals without disturbing the balance of nature, or it is the plan for exploring the nature resources upon which the economy and society depends. While the modern concept of sustainable development is derived from the 1987 Brundtland Report, it is also rooted in earlier ideas about sustainable forest management and twentieth century environmental concerns. As the concept developed, it has shifted to focus more on economic development, social development and environmental protection for future generations. Higher Education can play and even playing a very significant role in sustainable development. Higher Education provides base for the research and development

which in real sense provides back bone to the sustainable development. Along with the R & D, Higher Education also infuses the ethics and morals in the lives of youth which is the burning engine of the society and shapes the tomorrow of the society.

The report by the Directorate of Economics & Statistics Planning Department, Government of Uttarakhand (2017) shows that the per capita incomes of the districts which have a good number of Higher Education Institution have higher per capita income as compared to those districts those have fewer Higher Education Institutions. Another possible reason for the low per capita of hill districts can be attributed to lack of other social and economic overheads like transportation, hospitals and schools.

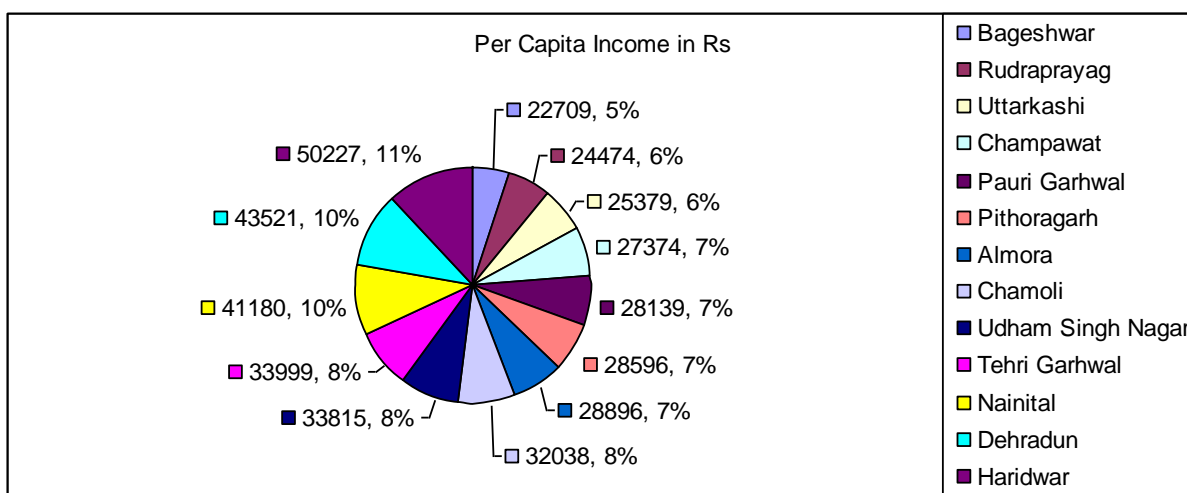


Fig.6: Per Capita of Various districts of Uttarakhand  
Sourced From: Economic and Statistics Department of Uttarakhand (2011-12)

**CONCLUSION**

The paper discussed the Low percentage of the Enrolment of Students in Higher Education in the Hills and found out that merely 1.59% of the total population is enrolled in Higher Education, the lack of availability of quality Higher Education is also major problem in the state as most of the colleges are located in the remote areas and due to poor connectivity the

usage of advanced techniques in teaching is not popular, the lack of Quality Research output is one of the many problem which is a result of poor Higher Education infrastructure in the state, sustainable development can be achieved through Higher Education as many quality that drives the sustainable development process comes only through Higher Education.

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