



An Analysis of the Implementation of RUSA with respect to Equity in Srinagar District

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Abstract: Education is essential for any nation's progress and development. The importance of education, particularly higher education is persistently growing, as knowledge-based industries and research institutes are playing a central role in the process of development. Higher education provides an in-depth understanding of many professions, cultures and solutions to various challenges faced by the present generation. The scope and demand for higher education is growing every day in the global setting. Quality and excellence at higher education level in India is the main requirement as our country is becoming the hub of education. Quality of teaching, research, evaluation procedures, overall results and placement of students determine the standard of a higher education institution. Higher education in India is not very strong in these areas, to which administration should pay attention. Therefore, every university and higher education institutions should have their own Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) for maintaining record of the progress of their faculty members and thus able to facilitate NAAC. University Grants Commission (UGC) should provide guidelines to the universities and other higher education institutions in the light of the recommendations given by National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) in order to make improvements in the standard and quality of HEIs. Another factor that has become the cause of concern is 'equity' in higher education. Our country has witnessed considerable progress over the years as it has shifted from elite class to masses. However, our Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) still remain below the world average and GER in various caste groups and minorities is still very low. Moreover, apart from the low GER of these groups, wide caste and gender disparities are extensively evident across geographical regions, socio-economic and socio-religious groups. Government initiatives have been undertaken in this regard and a holistic centrally sponsored scheme for the development of higher education namely Rashtriya Uchchar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) or National Higher Education Mission is built on the success story of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) and Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA). RUSA is spread over two plan periods i.e. XIIth and XIIIth plans for improving access, equity and quality in the state higher education system and the goal of the XIIth plan period was inclusive development. The present paper focuses on the analysis of the implementation of RUSA with respect to Equity, level of awareness among male and female teachers of higher education institutions in Srinagar district of J&K and suggest some measures for effective implementation of RUSA.

Index Terms - Equity, Gross Enrolment Ratio, Higher Education, National Assessment and Accreditation Council, Rashtriya Uchchar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA).

I. INTRODUCTION

Higher education is an imperative sphere for human growth and development. It is central to a country's progress, without it, countries will inevitably fall behind in the race of development. The nation's success and prosperity cannot be visualized without the development of human resources and establishment of new institutions. After Independence, first attempt to re-orient the education system in accordance to the needs and aspirations of the people was made by the Government of India through the appointment of the University Education Commission (1948-49) under the Chairmanship of Dr. S. Radhakrishnan which laid the foundation for the future of higher education in India.

The landmark event in the recent development of higher education in advanced countries has been the frequent increase in proportion of students enrolling in higher education, therefore, its expansion is occurring to an increasingly diverse population. It appears logical to presume that the development of higher education has aided access for those from less privileged social classes, so it is significant to examine to what degree this considerable rise in higher education participation has reached to all social, economic, and cultural groups.

Much thought has been given to the increasing concerns of higher education. Higher education in India has the vision to realize the country's human resource potential while ensuring equity and inclusiveness. This necessitates providing more options for people from all walks of life to gain access to higher education. India has introduced several measures to promote higher education. The latest of these includes a centrally sponsored scheme namely Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) launched in 2013 with a goal to provide planned funding to eligible state higher education institutions. The main objectives of RUSA are to improve access, equity and excellence in higher education.

This scheme emphasized that both states and institutions must keep in mind the principle of equity-based development while developing or expanding their plans. The issue of equity must not be sacrificed in the pursuit of wider access. Any expansion of higher education must provide equal opportunity for marginalized communities, women, minorities and differently-abled people. In addition to this, development must place a larger emphasis on rural and tribal communities. When deciding allocations, the plan evaluation process would take this into account. The scheme will encourage special interventions using new tactics. Equity strategies that are well-calibrated must be incorporated into the entire state planning process.

Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan:

Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) is a Hindi term for "National Higher Education Mission" which is a comprehensive scheme of development for higher education in India, introduced in 2013 by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), Government of India. This scheme aims to provide funds strategically to higher education institutions across the country. The distribution of funds under RUSA would be based on clear-cut norms and related to certain key administrative, academic and governance reforms in the State higher education system. RUSA scheme will be implemented through the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) with matching contributions from State governments and Union Territories (UTs). The funding pattern of the scheme is 90:10 for special category states which include Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Mizoram, Tripura, Jammu & Kashmir, Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, and 65:35 for Other general category States and UTs.

Objectives of RUSA

The objectives of the scheme are as follows:

- To achieve target of 32% of GER by the end of XIII Plan.
- To usher transformative reforms in the state higher education system by creating a facilitating institutional structure for planning and monitoring at the state level, promoting autonomy in State Universities and improving governance in institutions.
- To improve overall quality of existing state institutions by ensuring that all institutions conform to prescribed norms and standards and adopt accreditation as a mandatory quality assurance framework.
- To enable conversion of some of the universities into research universities at par with the best in the world.
- To ensure academic and examination reforms in the higher educational institutions.
- To create an enabling atmosphere in the higher educational institutions to devote themselves to research and innovations.
- To ensure adequate availability of quality faculty in all higher educational institutions and ensure capacity building at all levels of employment.
- To create opportunities for states to undertake reforms in the affiliation system in order to ensure that the reforms and resource requirements of affiliated colleges are adequately met.
- To improve equity in higher education by providing adequate opportunities of higher education to SC/STs and socially and educationally backward classes; promote inclusion of women, minorities, and differently-abled persons.

- To correct regional imbalances in access to higher education by facilitating access to high quality institutions in urban and semi-urban areas, creating opportunities for students from rural areas to get access to better quality institutions and setting up institutions in un-served and underserved areas.
- To expand the institutional base by creating additional capacity in existing institutions and establishing new institutions, in order to achieve enrolment targets.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

1. To study awareness level among teachers of higher education institutions of Srinagar district towards RUSA.
2. To find out whether significant difference exists between the awareness level of male and female teachers of Srinagar district towards RUSA.
3. To assess the implementation level of RUSA in higher education institutions of Srinagar district with respect to Equity.
4. To give suggestions to the administrators for more effective implementation of RUSA.

HYPOTHESIS:

Null Hypothesis (H₀): There is no significant difference between the awareness level of male and female teachers of Srinagar district towards RUSA.

METHODOLOGY:

Population of the study: The population of the study consists of all teachers of higher education institutions of Srinagar district.

Sample of the study: For the present study, **145** teachers were selected from Higher Education Institutions, that come under RUSA, of Srinagar district through purposive sampling technique, out of which **77** were male and **68** were females.

Tool Used: Self-constructed questionnaire was used by the researchers to collect the data.

Statistical Techniques: Percentage and t-test were used to analyze the data. The analysis of data was done by using SPSS software version 20.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA:

Objective 1: To study the awareness level among teachers of higher education institutions of Srinagar district towards RUSA.

Table-1: Level of Awareness among teachers of HEIs of Srinagar district towards RUSA

Level of Awareness	Frequency	Percentage
High Awareness	50	35
Average Awareness	48	32
Low Awareness	47	33
Total	145	100.0

Table-1 indicates that out of a total sample of 145 teachers, 35 percent of teachers have a high level of awareness towards RUSA, 32 percent teachers have an average level of awareness whereas 33 percent teachers have a low level of awareness towards RUSA. So, it is evident from table-1 that almost equal number of teachers of higher education institutions of Srinagar district have high, average and low level of awareness towards RUSA. It is also shown in the Figure-1 as given below:

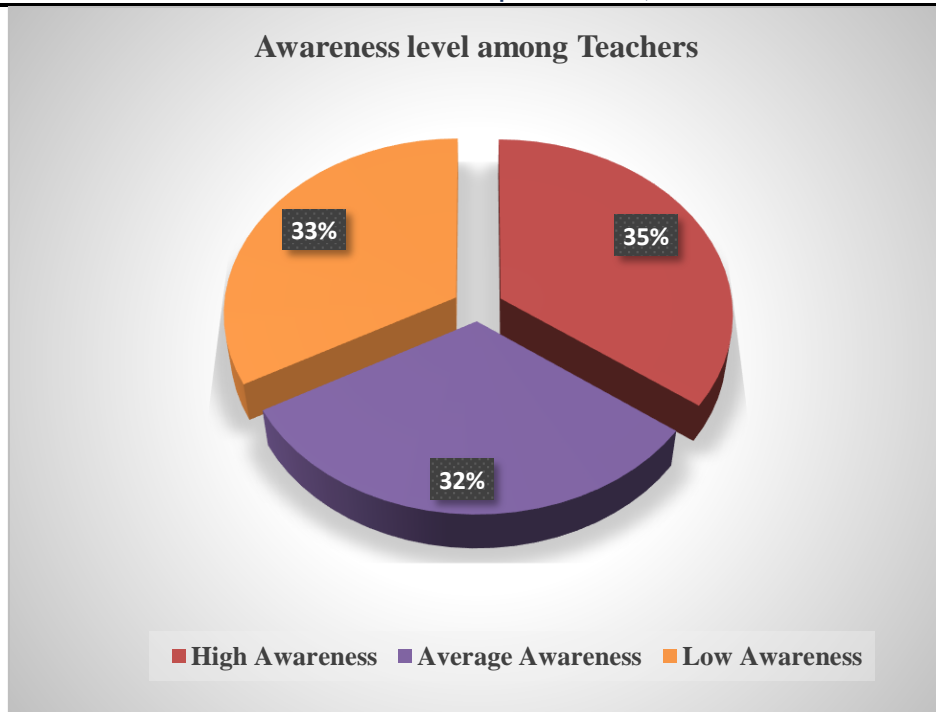


Figure-1: Showing awareness level of teachers of HEIs towards RUSA

Objective 2: To find out whether significant difference exists between the awareness level of male and female teachers of Srinagar district towards RUSA.

Null Hypothesis (H₀): There is no significant difference between the awareness level of male and female teachers of Srinagar district towards RUSA.

Table-2: Showing difference between the mean scores of male and female teachers of HEIs of Srinagar district regarding level of awareness towards RUSA

Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value	P
Male	76	13.79	2.05	143	.020	.984
Female	69	13.78	2.09			

Note: $p > 0.05$

Table-2 represents a comparison between the mean scores of male and female teachers regarding level of awareness towards RUSA. It is observed that the mean score of male teachers is 13.79 with a standard deviation of 2.05 and the mean score of female teachers is 13.78 with a standard deviation of 2.09. The t-value .020 ($p > 0.05$) with a degree of freedom 143 is not significant at 0.05 level. It means that there exists an insignificant difference between the awareness level of male and female teachers of higher education institutions of Srinagar district towards RUSA. It is also clear from given below Figure-2. Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted that there is no significant difference between the awareness level of male and female teachers of Srinagar district towards RUSA.

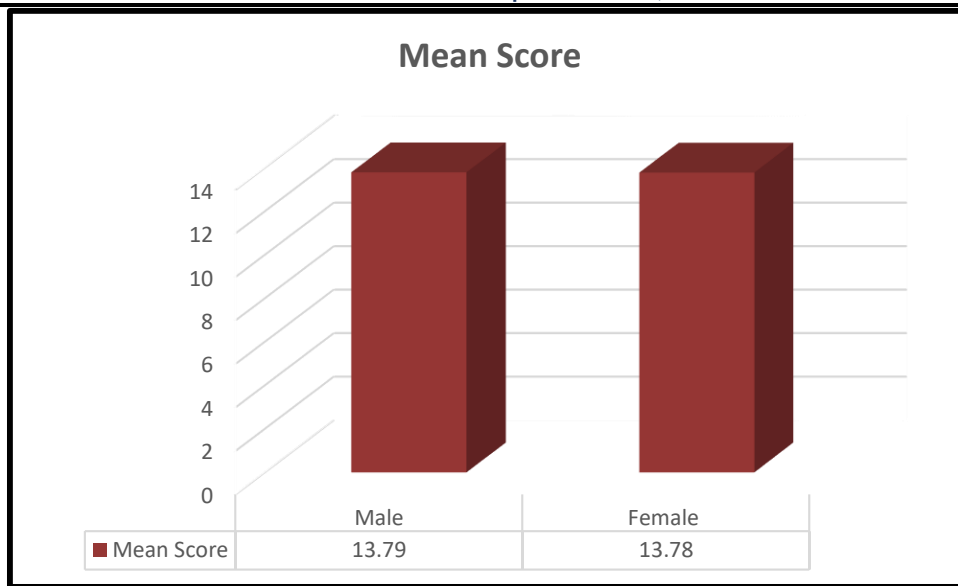


Figure-2: Showing the mean difference among male and female teachers of HEIs towards awareness about RUSA

Objective 3: To assess the implementation level of RUSA in higher education institutions of Srinagar district with respect to Equity.

Table 3: Implementation level of RUSA with respect to Equity in HEIs of Srinagar district

Implementation Level of equity	Frequency	Percentage
High	47	32.4
Average	21	14.5
Low	77	53.1
Total	145	100.0

Implementation of RUSA in context to equity has been categorized into three levels i.e. high, average and low which is shown in Table-3 and it also indicate that 32.4 percent of teachers of higher education institutions of Srinagar district are of the opinion that level of implementation of RUSA is high, whereas the level of implementation of RUSA in context to equity is average according to 14.5 percent of teachers of HEIs of Srinagar. However, the level of implementation of RUSA in context to equity is low in the opinion of 53.1 percent of teachers of HEIs of Srinagar district.

It will be more clear from Figure-3.

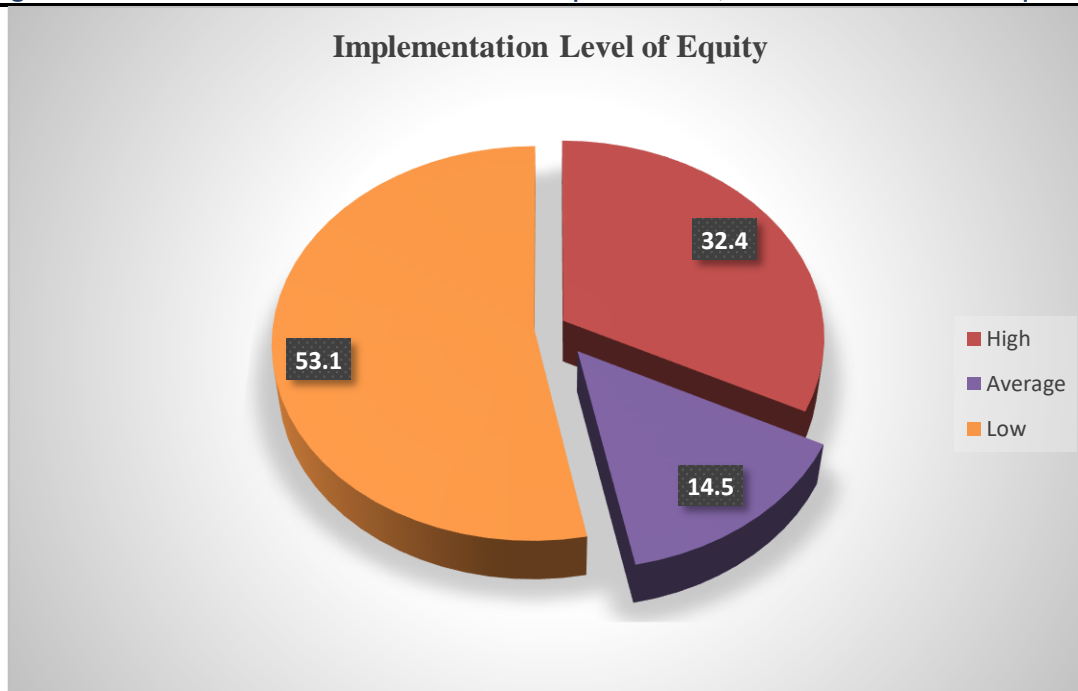


Figure-3: Showing implementation of RUSA with respect to Equity

Objective 4: To give suggestions to the administrators for more effective implementation of RUSA.

The suggestions based on the findings of the study are as follows:

- To create awareness among the beneficiaries of the scheme by conducting awareness programs like, seminars, webinars, conferences, etc.
- Orientation programmes should be conducted for RUSA coordinators in order to implement the scheme in a more effective manner.
- For implementing 'Equity' in true spirit, higher education institutions should focus more on inclusive development at the time of admission by making a clear-cut policy of reservations.
- Higher education institutions should be established in the under-served and un-served areas.
- Government should pay more attention to make higher education institutions more friendly to differently-abled students.
- Vocational courses should be implemented in true spirit. This is possible only if higher education institutions have sufficient infrastructure for providing students with hands-on experiences i.e. by organizing workshops.
- Government should pay more attention to reduce gender disparity by providing reservations in admission at higher education level.
- Women colleges may be set up for enhancing the (GER) Gross Enrolment Ratio of women.
- Scholarships and other financial assistance may be given to disadvantaged groups.

CONCLUSION:

It is revealed from the findings of the study that teachers of HEIs of Srinagar have an average level of awareness towards RUSA. Male and female teachers of HEIs of Srinagar district do not differ significantly on their awareness level towards RUSA. Further, it has been found that there is low implementation of RUSA 53.1% in context to equity in higher education institutions of Srinagar district.

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