



HIGHER EDUCATION IN KARBI ANGLONG DISTRICT-A SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

Higher education plays a very crucial role for the socio-economic development of the Nation. According to the UNESCO Report in 21st century "Higher education is the mandate to bridge the knowledge gap between countries and communities, enriching dialogues between people, culture, International living and networking of ideas, research and technologies". Higher Education in Assam made its appearance in educational map of India only towards the beginning of the twentieth century. The number of Higher Educational Institutions both at the College and University level grew substantially in the course of time to match somehow with the total population of the region but failed quite far to cover proportionate geographical area. Diphu Government College in 1964, which marked the foundation of tertiary education in the region. Since then, the number of colleges in the District has steadily increased in response to the growing educational aspirations of the local population. A notable addition was the establishment of the Assam University Diphu Campus in 2007 under the Central Government. However, despite its potential as part of a central university system, the campus has struggled with serious constraints, including the absence of a well-developed campus, inadequate infrastructure, and a shortage of teaching staff. Although the higher education sector in the District faces significant challenges, it also presents considerable opportunities for progress. Addressing infrastructural deficiencies, enhancing faculty strength, and broadening academic programs could transform the existing scenario and ensure better access and quality of education. In this context, the present study tries to examine the current status of higher education in Karbi Anglong District, with a particular focus on both the challenges and opportunities.

KEYWORDS: Higher education, Development, Quality, Karbi Anglong District and NEP 2020

INTRODUCTION

Higher education plays a very crucial role for the socio-economic development of the Nation. According to the UNESCO Report in 21st century "Higher education is the mandate to bridge the knowledge gap between countries and communities, enriching dialogues between people, culture, International living and networking of ideas, research and technologies". Higher education is an effective tool to advance the socio-economic development of nation. It has made a significant contribution to economic development, social progress and strengthened democratic ideals and values in India (Taba,P.). Its main goal is to develop the total personality of the individual by providing him the best knowledge by improving his conduct and behaviour by refining his soul and by inculcating cultural knowledge. Since Independence, India has achieved substantial development in the terms of increasing member of institutions and growth of enrolment ratio, gender parity index etc. but as compared with the other state of India, Assam has not enough number of Higher Educational Institutions. Some District of Assam are very poor condition on higher education front, Karbi Anglong District is one of them.

AREA OF THE STUDY

Karbi Anglong ranks as the 16th District among the 33 Districts of Assam and is recognized as one of the Sixth Schedule Autonomous Hill District Councils of the state. Its administrative headquarters is situated at Diphu, a name derived from the Dimasa Kachari language, where "Di" denotes water and "Phu" signifies white (Bordoloi, 1984). In the post-Independence period, both the State Government and the District Council played a significant role in promoting and expanding educational facilities in the District.

The Karbi Anglong District is located in the central part of Assam, forming one of the two autonomous hill Districts under the Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution. It holds a distinctive position within Assam due to its geographical features, cultural heritage, and administrative autonomy. The District headquarters is located at Diphu, which also serves as the hub of administration, education, and socio-economic activities in the region. Geographically, the District lies between 25°33' N to 26°35' N latitude and 92°10' E to 93°50' E longitude, covering an extensive area of hills, valleys, and plateaus. It represents the North-Eastern extension of the Meghalaya Plateau, and much of its landscape is characterized by forested highlands, undulating



terrain, and fertile valleys. The region is also endowed with rich biodiversity and mineral resources.

In terms of boundaries, Karbi Anglong is surrounded by Nagaon and Golaghat Districts in the North, Dima Hasao District in the South, Golaghat District and Nagaland state in the East, in the West Hojai District. This central location gives it a strategic position, connecting the hill areas with the plains of Assam as well as the neighbouring states. The District underwent administrative reorganization in 2016, when its Western part was carved out to form the West Karbi Anglong District. Since then, the present Karbi Anglong District covers the eastern portion, while Diphu continues to be its administrative headquarters.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The present study is designed to fulfil the following objective.

1. To study the present status of Higher education in Karbi Anglong District of Assam.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Karbi Anglong, being an Autonomous Six Schedule Hill District of Assam, occupies a unique socio-cultural and geographical position. However, its higher education sector continues to face multiple challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, limited institutional presence, shortage of faculty, and low accessibility for students belonging to marginalized and rural communities. Compared to other parts of Assam, the District has lagged behind in terms of the growth and development of higher educational institutions, which directly affects the educational opportunities of its youth. Understanding the status of higher education in Karbi Anglong is significant because education is one of the key drivers of social mobility, economic development, and political participation in the region. As the District is inhabited largely by tribal and ethnic communities, access to quality higher education can empower these groups by enhancing employability, reducing inequalities, and fostering social inclusion.

REVIEW RELATED LITERATURE

Paul, D. (2019), investigated the development of Higher education and important aspects related to university administration in North–East region of India. The study revealed that the number of universities and institutions of Higher learning is very high in relation to the total population of the region. Further, per capital expenditure in Higher education with regard to enrolment is also high.

Borchetia, B. (2019), conducted the study on challenges of Higher Education in Assam. The findings revealed that the Higher Education in Assam is facing big challenges having them to compete with the global players especially after education became a marketable product and after India opened its market for global competitors. However, institutions of higher education in Assam, with crying needs for basic amenities and infrastructure are hardly ready for this global competition.

Nath, D. (2022), highlighted on her research paper that higher education in Assam were facing significant difficulties, particularly since education has become a market to foreign competitors. However, Assam's higher education institutions, which urgently lack basic amenities and infrastructure, were hardly prepared for this international competition.

Taba, P. (2023), conducted a study on challenges of Higher education in North East India. The findings revealed that it was undeniable importance on the development of this region has been hampered by a series of challenges. One of the primary obstacles was the inadequacy of infrastructure, a concern that hampers economic growth and social development. The geographical layout, characterized by mountainous terrain and adverse climate conditions, poses significant logistical challenges, making the construction of essential transportation and communication networks a formidable task (Das et al.2020).

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The present study is a descriptive study. It is primarily based on the secondary data was collected from different Govt. publications, books, journals, e- journals publications of Government and semi Government organisations and Government and Provincialised Higher Educational Institutions of the District. The collected data was processed and tabulated with justified analysis. The investigator has discussed the present scenario of status of Higher Education in Karbi Anglong District.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

The researcher tried to find out the present status of Higher Educational Institutions of the District. The investigator collected secondary data from the different types of Higher Educational Institutions, Additional Director of Higher Education Office, Library of KAAC in the District and from the different records of the Assam Govt. related to Higher Education.

Since independence, India has achieved substantial development in the sector of higher education, especially in terms of increasing number of institutions and growth of enrolment ratio, gender parity index etc. But as compared with the other state of India, Assam has not enough number of higher educational Institutions. Some Districts of Assam are in a very poor condition on higher education front, Karbi Anglong District is one of them.

NUMBER OF HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN KARBI ANGLONG DISTRICT OF ASSAM

Karbi Anglong District has a very less number of Higher Educational Institutions as compared to other District of Assam. In this District, only one Govt. college was established after 17 years of Independence of India. Till now only one Govt. college and one Govt. Model college, three in numbers of Provincialised colleges and other 6 in number of under KAAC (Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council) deficit Grant in -Aid Colleges in this District.


Table 1: Distribution of Higher Educational institutions in the District

S.I. no	Name of the higher educational institutions	Year of establishment
1	Diphu Govt. college, Diphu (Govt. college)	1964
2	Diphu B.Ed.college, Diphu (Professional)	1975
3	Diphu Law college, Diphu(Professional)	1979
4	Thong Nokbe college, Dokmoka (Povincialized)	1984
5	Rukasen college, Bakalia (Provincialised)	1992
6	Diphu Girls College, Diphu (KAAC)	1992
7	Howraghat college , Howraghat (KAAC)	1993
8	Eastern Karbi Anglong, Sarihjan (Provincialised)	1997
9	Bokajan college(KAAC)	1998
10	Assam University, Diphu Campus, Diphu (Central Govt.)	2007
11	Diphu Polytechnic college, Diphu (Professional)	2008
12	Deopani college, (KAAC)	2009
13	Pranab Jubili college , Bokajan (Private)	2010
14	Donbonsco college (Private)	2014
15	Langhin College (KAAC)	2014
16	D.I.E.T., Diphu (Professional)	2017
17	Diphu Medical College, Diphu(Professional)	2019
18	Govt. Model College, Deithor (State Govt.)	2020
19	Tularam Senapati Memorial College, Dhansiri (KAAC)	2021

Sources: *Information Brochure, Office of Additional Director, Higher Education, Karbi Anglong District, 2023*

The journey of higher education in Karbi Anglong District began modestly with the establishment of Diphu Government College in 1964. For almost two decades, this stood as the lone centre of higher learning in the District. The arrival of Diphu B.Ed. College in 1975 and Diphu Law College in 1979 gradually introduced professional education, signaling the first steps towards diversification. The 1980s and 1990s marked a slow but steady spread of Institutions into different parts of the District. Colleges like Thong Nokbe College (1984) and Rukasen College (1992) opened up new opportunities for rural and semi-urban students, while Diphu Girls' College (1992) reflected an increased concern for women's education. Around the same time, KAAC-run Institutions such as Howraghat College (1993) further strengthened access to education at the local level.

From the late 1990s onwards, the pace of expansion became more noticeable. The setting up of Assam University Diphu Campus, Diphu in 2007 was a landmark moment, connecting Karbi Anglong with the broader academic network of a Central University. The following years also saw the rise of technical and vocational institutes such as Diphu Polytechnic (2008), alongside general colleges like Deopani College (2009). The most rapid growth, however, has been witnessed in the last decade. Private institutions such as Pranab Jubilee College (2010) and Don Bosco College (2014) added to the educational landscape, while professional colleges like DIET (2017) and Diphu Medical College (2019) brought specialized training in teaching and healthcare. More recently, the Govt. Model College at Deithor

(2020) and Tularam Senapati Memorial College (2021) highlight continued government and KAAC efforts to extend higher education to underserved corners of the District.

Looking at this overall trajectory, it is clear that higher education in Karbi Anglong has moved from a slow, centralized beginning in the 1960s to a wider, more diversified system after 2000, covering general, professional, technical, and medical fields. This growth not only widened access for students but also reflects the District's changing educational aspirations and the commitment of both government and private stakeholders.

DISTRIBUTION OF THE TOTAL TEACHERS IN THE DISTRICT

Teachers are the backbone of Higher education, as the quality of teaching, learning, and research largely depends on their availability, qualification, and commitment. The distribution of teachers across different higher educational institutions in the District reflects not only the academic strength of the institutions but also the overall capacity of the District to provide quality education to its students. A balanced teacher-student ratio and adequate staffing are essential for ensuring effective classroom engagement, mentoring, and academic growth. In this context, the following section presents the distribution of teachers in the District according to the type of institutions, thereby offering insights into the present academic infrastructure and highlighting areas where interventions may be required.



Table No.2: Distribution of College teachers in different categories

s.l. no	Types of college	Category of teachers			Total
		Permanent Asstt. Prof. & Associate Prof. salaried by state Govt	Asstt. Prof.(Tutor) salaried by state Govt.	Asstt. Prof. salaried by KAAC authority	
1	Govt. college one in number(arts, commerce & science streams).	35	Nil	57	92
2	Govt. model college one in number(Arts)	17	Nil	Nil	17
3.	Provincialised colleges,three in numbers (Arts & science)	54	65	61	180
4.	Private colleges two in number(Arts& Commerce)	Nil	Nil	Nil	63
5	KAAC deficit grant in aid colleges, 6 in numbers (arts)	Nil	Nil	121	121
6	Professional colleges , 5 in numbers	97	NIL	27	124
7.	Assam University, Diphu Campus(central Govt.)	80(central Govt.)	Nil	Nil	80

Sources: *The documentation of respective Higher Educational institutions as recorded up to the Month of Sept. 2024.*

The distribution of teachers across different types of Higher Educational Institutions in the District reflects a diverse pattern of recruitment and funding. Out of the total 692 teachers, the majority are employed in Provincialised Colleges (180), which remain the backbone of higher education in the District. These colleges exhibit a mixed funding pattern, with 54 teachers under permanent State Government salary, 65 tutors also state salaried, and 61 teachers under KAAC authority, highlighting the shared responsibility in maintaining faculty strength.

KAAC Aided Colleges stand out with 136 teachers entirely funded by the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council, indicating the council's significant role in supporting higher education in the Hill District. Similarly, Private Colleges depend fully on college-funded teachers (63 faculty members), which shows their autonomy but also points to the lack of government-backed teaching staff.

Government-run institutions like the single Government College (92 teachers) and the Government Model College (17 teachers) are fully sustained by the State Government, whereas the Central Government institution (80 teachers) operates independently under central funding, providing stable faculty positions. Professional Colleges employ a considerable number of teachers (124 in total), with a strong base of permanent state-salaried

professors (97), supplemented by 27 KAAC salaried staff, thereby ensuring both technical expertise and regional support.

Overall, the data suggests that while government and Provincialised Institutions provide the largest share of teaching staff, the role of KAAC in teacher appointments is highly significant, particularly in aided and Provincialised colleges. At the same time, private colleges depend solely on self-financing mechanisms, which may impact faculty stability and quality. This uneven distribution highlights both the strengths and the challenges of sustaining higher education in the District, especially with respect to balancing state, central, council, and private funding sources.

THE TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLMENT (ALL SEMESTERS) IN HEIS IN THE DISTRICT

Student enrolment in Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) is a crucial measure of the educational progress of a District. It highlights the extent of access to higher education and the growing demand among the youth for academic advancement. The total enrolment figures, covering all semesters, present a comprehensive picture of the student strength in different institutions of the District and serve as a basis for understanding the District's higher education scenario.



Table No. 3: Distribution of Students Enrolment in Higher educational institutions

S.I. no	Type of institutions	2023	2024	Total
1	Govt. college	5698	6000	11698
2	Govt. Model college	69	84	153
3	Provincialzed college	2857	2904	5761
4	Private colleges	853	861	1714
5	Under KAAC Deficit grant in aid colleges	897	954	1851
6	Professional institutions	395	390	785
7	Assam University, Diphu campus	879	881	1760
Total				22008

Sources from respective Higher Educational institutions' Annual records (from the year of 2023to 2024)

The enrolment pattern (Session of 2022-23 & 2023-24) shows that government colleges and Provincialised colleges account for the largest share of students, highlighting their central role in higher education. Government model colleges and KAAC Grant-in-Aid colleges, though smaller in scale, indicate steady growth in enrolment. Private colleges show some fluctuation but maintain moderate participation. In contrast, professional institutions witnessed a decline after 2022, possibly due to limited

capacity or reduced demand. Assam University's Diphu campus recorded consistent growth, strengthening its academic presence in the District. Overall, a total of 22008 students were enrolled over two years, reflecting a gradual expansion of higher educational opportunities, with government institutions remaining the backbone of the system.

Table no.4: The results of the students in HEI for the session from the year of 2023to 2024:

Table 4: Distribution of passed percentage in HEI for two years in the District

S.I. no	Types of Institutions	2023	2024
1	Govt. college	51.8%	53.6%
2	Govt. Model College	54.9%	55.7%
3	Provincial zed colleges	50.8%	51.4%
4	Private colleges	62.5%	56.8%
5	Under KAAC Deficit grant in Aid colleges	47.5%	49.7%
6	Professional Institutions	52.04%	55.3%
7	Assam University, Diphu campus	49.08%	51.3%

Sources: *Respective Higher Educational institutions' Annual records (from the year of 2020 to 2024)*

The analysis of Pass Percentages across different categories of higher educational institutions in the District during 2023 and 2024 reveals a mixed yet largely positive trend. Government colleges showed steady improvement, rising from 51.8% in 2023 to 53.6% in 2024, while Government Model College also maintained consistent performance with a slight increase from 54.9% to 55.7%. Provincialized colleges recorded only marginal growth, moving from 50.8% to 51.4%, which indicates that despite their wider presence, they continue to face challenges such as inadequate infrastructure and faculty shortages. A contrasting scenario is seen in private colleges, where the pass percentage declined significantly from 62.5% to 56.8%, though they continue to lead compared to most other categories. KAAC deficit grant-in-aid colleges, which remain the lowest performers, improved modestly from 47.5% to 49.7%, reflecting slow progress despite persistent financial and structural constraints.

Professional institutions displayed the most notable improvement, increasing from 52.04% to 55.3%, highlighting

their growing role in delivering quality education. Assam University, Diphu Campus also recorded progress, from 49.08% in 2023 to 51.3% in 2024, although its performance still lags behind private and professional institutions. Overall, while the District's higher education sector shows encouraging signs of growth, disparities remain evident, with private and professional institutions leading, Government and Provincialized Colleges showing modest gains, and KAAC Deficit Colleges continuing to struggle at the bottom.

NEP2020 AND HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE DISTRICT

The NEP2020 has implemented from the year of 2023 in all colleges of this District, it is known as FYUG (Four year degree course). Follow the NEP2020, along with regular courses some new program has been introduced in degree colleges such as IDC (Interdisciplinary Course), Add on courses(co-curricular activities) which one provides certificate for Diploma in plumber, embroidery, knitting & cutting, beautician, food processing, computer application, physical education, NSS, mushroom



cultivation, English speaking course, games and sports etc. in some colleges of the District. But till now, any one college didn't get ITEP (Integrated Teacher Education Program) which greatly mentioned for higher education on NEP2020. There is only one Govt. College which one covered all streams of the course at college level. It is not fully implemented of NEP2020 due to lots of problems such as lack of qualified teachers, lack of available courses and lack of different updated vocational program in the District.

ODL UNDER THE STUDY AREA

In the District, opportunities for higher education are further enhanced through the presence of open and distance learning Centre. The Krishna Kanta Handiqui State Open University (KKHSOU) has established three Study Centre in the three Provincialised degree colleges of the District. These centre primarily cater to students who wish to pursue Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) and Master of Arts (M.A.) Programs in different disciplines of Arts. In addition, the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) has set up a study centre at Diphu Government College. This centre offers a wider range of programs, including B.A., M.A., and the professional course of Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.). The presence of these study centre plays a significant role in expanding access to higher education, particularly for learners who may not be able to pursue regular courses due to geographical, financial, or personal constraints. Thus, both KKHSOU and IGNOU have been instrumental in providing flexible learning opportunities, contributing to the growth of higher education in the District.

CONCLUSION

Higher education in Assam, with a specific focus on the hills region plays a pivotal role in shaping the future of the nation and the development of its diverse and culturally rich communities. Assam's higher education system has witnessed remarkable growth, with a significant increase in number of universities, colleges and student enrolments since gaining independence. This expansion reflects the nation's commitment to provide access to quality education for its citizens. The hills region, characterised by its geographical and cultural diversity presents a unique set of opportunities and challenges within the realm of higher education. Despite facing infrastructural constraints, linguistic diversity and border tensions, this region has made significant studies in expanding access to higher education. The establishment of only one central university campus and colleges both public and private has been instrumental in offering educational opportunities to the local population. Government initiatives, scholarships and financial incentives have further enhanced accessibility and inclusivity in higher education in the District.

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