COLLEGE MANAGEMENT IN ASSAM- A CRITICAL ANALYSIS
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ABSTRACT
This study investigates the role of University Grants Commission (UGC), affiliating university and State Government as well as the functions of Principal, Vice Principal and Head of the Departments (HODs) of a degree college functioning in the State of Assam. An attempt has been made to give the meaning of management and administration according to management literature. Some implications of the study are discussed as in the management of degree colleges the UGC, the University and State Government have been playing a vital role for overall development of the colleges. Moreover, for effective management of the college apart from the Principal, the Vice Principal, HODs as well as teachers and the office staff must be able to complete their work efficiently. For this purpose, they need an efficient manager as Principal of the college having the knowledge of Business Administration or Public Administration along with the requisite qualifications prescribed by the UGC as well as respective State Governments.

Keywords: UGC, Universities, Governments, Principals, Vice Principals, HODs.

INTRODUCTION
Higher education is the driving force for socio-economic development of a nation. It contributes national development through dissemination of knowledge and skill. However, higher education not only provides knowledge and skill to the society but also training and research, required for different professionals like teachers, doctors, engineers, lawyers, scientists, technologists, civil servants and others. Thus, it is a field of teaching, learning and research which reflects social, cultural, moral, spiritual and economic issues of human being.

One of the most important features of higher education in India is the education through colleges, which may be professional or general in nature. These colleges may be private or government which may also include provincialized colleges. A provincialized college means that college which comes under the purview of “The Assam College Employees (Provincialization) Act, 2005.”

Basically most of the colleges of our country are functioning under the affiliation of university. These affiliated colleges have to follow the rules and regulations framed by the respective university for their academic curriculum. These colleges also get the financial support from the State Government as well as UGC for maintenance and development. Nearly 88 percent of total enrolment of students in under graduate level is found in the affiliated colleges, functioning in our country. Again it may be noted that more than 81
percent of the total enrolment for higher education is under the faculty of arts, science and commerce.

For the development of higher education nearly 281 numbers of State universities, 41 Central universities, 94 Private universities, 130 deemed universities, 9,071 colleges for professional education and 11,698 colleges for general education are functioning in our country. In case of Assam, 5 State Universities, 2 Central Universities, 1 Private university, 32 Professional Colleges and 329 affiliated colleges for general education are rendering their services in the field of higher education of the State. Out of these 329 affiliated colleges under Gauhati, Dibrugarh and Assam University, 5 colleges exist as Government colleges and 189 colleges are functioning as provincialized colleges in the State. Remaining 135 affiliated colleges are in the pipeline of Provincialization. The following Table (Table-1) shows the existing number of general and professional colleges in India and the study State Assam:

**Table: 1 (Number of colleges in India and Assam)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of colleges</th>
<th>Numbers of colleges in India</th>
<th>Numbers of colleges in Assam</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General education</td>
<td>11,698</td>
<td>329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional education</td>
<td>9,071</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20,769</td>
<td>361</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sources:** www.mbrd.in, www.dibru.ac.in, www.gauhati.ac.in

In management literature there has been a controversy on the use of the two terms: management and administration. Many experts of management science make no distinction between management and administration while other has found the distinction between these two. In 1923, the first terminological conflict was raised by Oliver Sheldon when he emphasized administration as decision making function and management as execution function. Afterwards, there have been a lot of controversies between these terms. Some take management and administration as one; others take these as different. However, the distinction between administration and management is superfluous and meaningless. In practice, the two terms are used interchangeably because both involve the same principles and functions. Somehow, the word management has become popular in business enterprises where economic performance is of primary importance. On the other hand, the term administration preferred in Government departments, hospitals, religious trusts, educational institution and other non-business organizations. Though, college is an educational institution but here we have used the term administration and management interchangeably.

**MATERIALS AND METHODS**

To gather the knowledge and information about the management of colleges the researcher visited 12 sample colleges and collected the information from the rules, regulations, circulars and Act of UGC, affiliating universities and State Government. Moreover, some information was also collected through personal interviews with teaching and non-teaching staff including
Principals. On the basis of this information the researcher has tried to explain some inferences of college management in Assam.

In case of management of degree colleges the UGC, the university and State Government have been playing a vital role. They are directly or indirectly involve with the management of college by imposing rules and regulations in different matter for overall development of the college. Therefore, it is necessary to analyze their role in this respect.

**ROLE OF UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION (UGC)**

The University Grants Commission (UGC) was formed by an executive order of the Government of India in 1953, and became a statutory body in 1956 by an Act of Parliament.

The UGC performs two main functions:

- Disbursement of grants to eligible universities and colleges;
- Determination and maintenance of standards in higher education.

As mentioned earlier an affiliated college under a university is eligible for receiving the financial support from the UGC for its infrastructural development. However, for receiving the financial support from the UGC, the college has to follow the rules and regulations imposed by the university from time to time. First of all, a college must be recognized by the UGC under section 2(f) and 12(B) of the UGC Act, 1956.

The college has to submit their proposals in time for receiving the financial support. Again college has to submit the utilization certificate for receiving the fund of existing proposals as well as new proposals.

Since the UGC not only provides the fund for infrastructural development of the college, but also for academic activities like research activities amongst the teachers, so there is a need to follow the prescribed rules and regulation by the faculties of the college in this respect. Besides this, it may also provide guidelines for implementation of various plans and programmes initiated by Government from time to time for development of higher education.

**ROLE OF AFFILIATING UNIVERSITIES**

Universities are playing a positive role in overall development of its affiliated degree colleges including provincialized colleges functioning in the State of Assam. Generally, university does not provide any financial support to its affiliated colleges but, it plays a major role in the management of college. Because the rules and regulations provide by the university has to be followed by the affiliated degree colleges in both the fields of academic and administration of the college.

It is to be mention here that the university prepares course curriculum, academic and examination calendar for its affiliated colleges which should strictly be followed. University also provides the rules for collecting different fees from the student like examination, registration and issue of original certificate etc. Again at the time of appointment of new teaching faculty as well promotion of existing faculty members, the affiliated college has to request the university authorities to appoint university nominee for the Interview Board. The
affiliated college has to invite college inspection team from the University for opening of new subject, its affiliation and concurrence etc. Thus, role of university in college management can not be ignored.

ROLE OF STATE GOVERNMENTS

A majority of State Governments have laid down elaborate rules in governing the formation of Governing Bodies, creation of reserve fund, qualification of teachers, enrolment and tuition fees of students etc. However, formation of Governing Body is one of the major roles of the State Government in the management of the degree colleges.

According to the Assam Non Government College Management Rules, 2001 which is also applicable to the provincialized colleges of Assam (excluding Government College) every non-government college affiliated to any Central or State university of Assam and duly concurred by the State Government, shall be governed by a Governing Body to be constituted by the Director of Higher Education of Assam.

The Governing Body is responsible for the proper financial management, including the maintenance of the assets of the college and management of its academic affairs. However, there exist some duties and functions of Governing Body.

Duties and Functions of Governing Body

In general the following are the main duties and functions of a governing body in respect of provincialized degree colleges of Assam:

- To arrange the maintenance of the college buildings, furniture, equipments, play ground, auditorium and libraries;
- To submit annual audited accounts preferably audited by Charted Accountant latest by 30th June every year in respect of the preceding year;
- To determine the general scheme of the studies of the college subject to approval of the affiliating university concerned as well as State Government, to be obtained through the Director with regards to the inclusion of additional subjects, introduction of major course in existing subject or opening of new department and creation of additional posts;
- To deal with the discipline and conduct of the teaching and non-teaching staff of the college;
- To consider and initiate projects for improvement of the college, including prohibitions of taking private tuition by the teaching staff;
- To deal with the academic calendar within the norms of University Grants Commission and to compel scrupulous compliance of the guidelines in respect of working days and holding of classes, etc.

Functions of the Principal

The principal as the secretary of the governing body have to manage all the college affairs subject to the
final approval of the Governing Body. Usually, the following are the basic functions of the principal of a college:

- To make call for the governing body meeting and to keep minutes of the meeting;
- To undertake financial management of the college;
- To arrange for the maintenance of college building, furniture, fixture and equipments;
- To grant leave to the teachers and non-teaching staffs;
- To appoint teaching and non-teaching staffs;
- To submit Annual Report with statistics of the enrolment of the students stream-wise and subject-wise, results, teaching days held, in an academic session to the Director and to the affiliating university concerned;
- To receive and draw the grants sanctioned by the State Government, Government of India i.e. UGC from time to time;
- To utilize the grants for the purpose for which it is sanctioned and submit utilization certificate to the concerned authority in time with intimation to the Director;
- To disburse grants sanctioned by the director towards salary of teaching and non-teaching staff and to disburse scholarship to the students in time;
- To introduce major course in any existing subject or opening of new faculty and creation of Additional posts;
- To deal with the discipline and conduct of the teaching and non-teaching staff and to deal with academic calendar with the norms of the UGC.

After all, Principal is the officer relating to Vice Principal, Head of the Departments (HODs), teachers, Students, Governing Body, General Public and Government.

Functions of the Vice-Principal

Though, in general the position of Vice-Principal in the managerial cadre of a provincialized college is subordinate to the Principal, but in practice he has to perform certain functions in the management of the institution. The main functions of the Vice Principal are stated below:

- The Vice Principal shall hold charge of the Principal when Principal is on leave. He can discharge all administrative affairs of the college during that period;
- On behalf of the Principal he can verify all the departmental accounts. He can call any documents from the Head of the departments in connection with accounts;
- The Vice Principal shall be liable for the college time-table for classes and shall prepare it in consultation with the Head of the Department;
- The Vice Principal on behalf of the Principal shall maintain permanent record on leave of the teachers, progress of the courses, teacher’s attendances, records of seminars, tutorials, departmental and staff meeting, etc.
The Vice Principal shall see the classes have been properly run as per the routine and if there arise any irregularity in attending the classes by any teacher as reported by the Head of the departments, he shall promptly bring these to the notice of the Principal;

The Vice Principal shall chair the Library sub-committee and see the proper functioning of the library and the reading room. The library purchase be made through this committee where at least one representative from each department be there as member;

Over and above, these, the Principal may entrust the Vice Principal with any other duties he may deem to be fit for smooth functioning of the college;

The Vice Principal may be answerable to the Principal for anything in connection with college administration.

Functions of Head of the Departments (HODs)

Usually, the HODs of a college are the senior most teachers of the respective departments. The main functions of the HODs can be enumerated as follows:

The HODs should prepare the departmental time table (class routine) in consultation with the main college routine;

He shall maintain a departmental attendance register and to hold the classes, seminar and tutorials etc. regularly;

The HODs shall have the authority to keep themselves self posted with the progress of lessons allotted to individual teacher and when necessary shall draw the attention of the teacher in departmental staff meeting;

He shall have to maintain the accounts of classes taken out or not taken for preparing appraisal report of the teachers;

He shall hold a departmental staff meeting every month to discuss on academic progress of the departments and proceedings are to be recorded;

The HODs shall maintain a leave register both for causal and other leaves admissible and forward the application to the Principal for approval;

He shall arrange substitute classes when teacher is not present in the college;

The HODs shall have the authority to control and guide the staff in the institution and the respective departments.

Apart from this the teachers, librarian and office staff of a college have to perform certain functions for fruitful management of the college. In short the HODs, the librarian, the office staff shall be responsible to the Principal and Vice Principal and the teachers should be responsible to the HODs in all activities of the departments. The Chart 1 shows a model organizational structure of a college.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From the above study it reveals that the UGC, the University and the State Government are directly or indirectly involve with the management and administration of colleges by imposing rules and regulations on different matters for their overall development.
The study also reveals that the overall management of every provincialized college has been vested upon the Governing Body of the college. Therefore, the Principal and the Governing Body of a provincialized college have to play a major role in the college management. But, in many cases the Governing Body members do not play active role in the affairs of the college because of the political interference.

Besides these, it is found that though the Principal of the college involve in both internal and external management of the college but functions of the Vice Principal as well as Head of the departments basically involve with the internal management and also academic matter of the college. Therefore, the following suggestions are put forward so that provincialized colleges of Assam in particular and the colleges of India in general can play a better role in the management of these institutions in near future:

- To maintain a congenial environment in the college, the Principal may constitute a coordination committee with the representative(s) of teachers, non-teaching staff and students. The committee should organize the meeting at a regular interval to discuss the academic and other matter of the college;
- There should be proper plans and policies for procurement of equipments like computer, etc., which will help both the students and staff for recording and preserving up to date information, etc., through the use of information technology. At the time of purchasing books, journals and equipments, the Principal should involve the concerned person/staff of the respective departments;
- The Principal should allow the faculty of the college for attending the training course organized by Academic Staff Colleges and others which will not only help the teachers but also the student in the teaching-learning process;
- At the time of nominating a member to the Governing Body of the college, the Government should give more emphasis to the people who have knowledge of college education and administration;
- Information technology should be widely used for receiving and recording information;
- College institution must be given autonomy to manage their internal affairs, but with this autonomy there must come clear and transparent accountably to the government, students and the wider society;
- The Principal should develop administrative process in such a manner as to promote cooperative endeavour between teaching and non-teaching staff as well as students of the college.

CONCLUSIONS
To conclude, the only truth is that though the UGC, affiliating universities, State Governments as well as Governing Bodies of the colleges are playing a vital role in the management of degree colleges in Assam but the role played by the Principal can be compared with the professional manager of an organization. Therefore, we need to have proactive manager as Principal of the college with appropriate skills and mindset to lead the institution forward. We need to have Principal as educational leaders who have a vision of the future, project mission for the institution, develop strategic goals, action plans and monitoring evaluation system for fulfilling the mission of the institution. For this purpose a person
having the knowledge of business administration or public administration along with the requisite qualifications prescribed by the UGC as well as respective State Governments should be preferred to act as Principal in the degree colleges of Assam in particular and the country as a whole as they can put better performance of managing the institution. Thus, the existing structure of college management and administration is not adequate; therefore, it requires the re-organization of its structure.

**Chart – 1 (A model chart showing Organizational Structure of a college)**
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