Higher Education and Policy Knowledge: Students

A Case Study of Rajasthan

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Introduction

Studies show that political awareness is higher in Indian states and in states like the north Indian state of Rajasthan as compared to other parts of the country. A good university education and success in life has become a barrier. A better life depends on higher education. Therefore, the implications for India are immense. In this article, we attempt to analyze the trends in higher education in India and assess their impact on knowledge studies and politics. It determines not only the level of personal well-being but also the health and safety of the country as a whole. As a rule, the ideology that governs a country also affects the education system. Education allows people to participate in discussions and thus to have access to a wide range of information on various subjects. Well-educated people are more likely to be successful and usually have better political knowledge than less educated people. These experiences develop the student's political skills and sense of efficacy, which increases his or her likelihood of participation, thus increasing his or her knowledge and skills, and leading to continued cooperation.

Higher education is a step forward and occupies an important position in the education of every country and is at the top of all educational standards. In fact, it affects almost all important national projects by providing workers in various fields of production, planning, management, and technological development. In general, higher education is important for all economic, political, and social development. Since the primary role of universities is to provide people with the knowledge and skills required for government, business, and work, it affects the future. The frontier of the country is huge.

• Participate in the process of people's development and health.

Geographical Location

230°30'N   -   300°12'N   and   690°30'E   -   780°17'E
Average Temperature: 32°C in summer – 8° to 10°C in winter; rainfall – 80 to 100 cm.

India has witnessed an unprecedented expansion in higher education and rapid growth of colleges and universities. Rajasthan's higher education system has been reputed to be among the best universities in India for over a century. Rajasthan University was established in 1947, and most of its affiliated institutions have a great reputation for their teachers and the professors, politicians, scientists, and other professionals they have created. Due to the small number of colleges affiliated to the University of Rajasthan, interaction between colleges and universities is close and well developed, allowing for high flexibility in arranging courses and classes. Rajasthan is also unique in having the first Birla Pilani Institute, which was self-financed through charitable donations in 1929. Similarly, Rajasthan has the largest number of colleges (751) and the largest number of colleges with NAAC accreditation (Rajasthan has 98 colleges and 4 out of 30 accredited colleges). Despite the variety of independent schools, many universities are affiliated to universities. Since the participating universities conduct all education under the jurisdiction of the university and also work for examinations and higher education, teachers are limited in publishing material on the worksheet. This situation still exists today; most of the universities are interconnected, and this is the bane of higher education in India today.

Table 1: Status of Affiliated College - 2008

S.No.	Type	Post Graduate			Graduate			Total		
		Co-Edu	Women	Total	Co-Edu	Women	Total	Co-Edu	Women	Total
1.	Govt. College	50	15	65	31	18	49	81	33	114

2.	Private	74	45	119	325	194	519	399	239	638
	(1) Aided	33	22	55	9	7	16	42	29	71
	(2)Unaided	41	23	64	309	185	494	350	208	558
	(3) SFS	-	-	-	7	1	8	7	1	8
	Total - 751									

Table – 2 : Current Quality status of university in Rajasthan

(March – 2007)

S.No.	Details of Quality Status	No. of Universities
1.	Total number of university level institution	19
2.	Total number of university under UGC	12
3.	Number of university funded by the UGC	16
4.	Number of university accredited by the NAAC	06
5.	Number of university accredited by the NAAC and scoring about 60 percent	01

Table – 3 : NAAC Ranking of Total P.G. and U.G. College in Rajasthan-2007

S.No.	NAAC Grading	No. of Colleges in each grade	Grading based on quality	Percentage
1.	A++, A+, A	2	High quality	4%
2.	B++, B+, B	58	Medium	58%
3.	C++, C+, C	38	Low	38%

4.	College not assessed (self financing, not permanently affiliated)	653	Grade not known presumably low quality	100
	Total PG & UG College	751		

Higher Education in Rajasthan

Higher education in Rajasthan has various types of institutions, including affiliated colleges, single colleges, and colleges offering vocational and general education. The university system consists of affiliated, autonomous, or self-governing universities that provide undergraduate and/or postgraduate degrees in arts, sciences, and other disciplines. Many universities also offer various undergraduate and postgraduate correspondence courses both domestically and internationally. Rajasthan has established colleges for technical education and training in music, physical education, teacher training, etc., and has appointed directors of education for these institutions. These institutions cater to the needs of the public, especially the youth, in many ways.

Students will be the citizens of this country. They will govern and manage the nation, making it beneficial to develop political awareness among them. Educated students will become good citizens who can effectively govern and manage the country. If we expect young people to be committed to freedom, they must understand its value. They need to know how the country is governed at all levels, who receives what and why, and what their roles are in politics, especially in a world with diverse political systems.

Students should also understand the ideology of their country and their schools. Their understanding of independence should be based on a correct and positive assessment of their strengths and weaknesses, grounded in our traditional heritage while also comparing it with other systems. Research indicates that certain demographic variables affect the level of political awareness among students. Taking leadership roles in international meetings can contribute to international peace and help establish stable governance within the country.

As political organization plays an essential role in daily life, political knowledge has become particularly significant among students. It is a pathway to being good citizens and enjoying freedom responsibly. Socialism and democracy can largely be achieved through student leadership. Therefore, the political knowledge of students is crucial for social integration and shaping the future of India.

The right to vote, which is an adult's civic duty, applies to individuals over the age of eighteen. If students understand the politics of their own country and those of others, they can become informed citizens who choose the best leaders for the nation. The country needs individuals with political knowledge to select capable leaders.

It is evident that education and political awareness mutually influence one another. Changes in politics tend to quickly affect educational thinking, while education influences politics more gradually and indirectly. It is vital for students to comprehend how these factors impact their lives and the lives of others.

To foster this understanding, initiatives should encourage young people to:

- Think beyond themselves.
- Understand local, national, and international issues.

In this context, opportunities must be created for students to respond to current problems and situations. Establishing good relationships with peers and informing the planning process for young people and society is crucial. Political science courses can incorporate various methods, including:

- Exams
- Group discussions
- Debates
- Research
- Social media polls
- Photography
- Music
- Collage

- Role-playing
- Youth meetings and community boards
- Participation in group memberships
- Community meetings
- Journaling
- Resource utilization (pictures, worksheets, etc.)
- Field visits
- Conference planning
- Observations (e.g., parliamentary meetings, court cases)
- Local history research

Political Socialization as a Standard of Political Awareness

- Political socialization is defined as the transmission of political preferences, knowledge, attitudes, and norms from one generation to the next, cultivated through cultural practices at both personal and societal levels. Social policy has also been defined as the formation and development of attitudes and beliefs within political organizations. In a narrower sense, political socialization involves the deliberate inculcation of political rhetoric, values, and practices by representatives of organizations who assume this official role.

- The broader concept encompasses all political education as well as non-political education that affects leadership, including the study of political behavior and personal behavior related to politics. Socialization should prepare individuals to participate in various organizations, especially in political contexts, necessitating the inclusion of social characteristics that promote active participation in the life of the country.

- This process by which people learn about politics is multifaceted. Sociologists are interested in how individuals relate to groups and societies, while psychologists focus on how individuals understand their own culture. Political relations can take many forms, involving the dissemination of political messages in the public sphere. Knowledge and information are deemed desirable and useful for life. Since political relations are ongoing, they do not cease with the passing of a group or generation; attitudes, values, beliefs, and knowledge are transmitted from generation to generation.

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- Political socialization is a continuous process occurring at every stage of a person's life. It is both inter-generational and intra-generational, encompassing the entirety of an individual's life. Almond and Powell argue that two fundamental concepts need clarification to understand the socialization process: first, socialization continues throughout life; second, attitudes are not static. They are influenced by ongoing experiences. Early experiences may foster a favorable view of a political party, but subsequent education can alter that perception. Thus, the social system is dynamic, adapting to societal and environmental changes.

- Mass media play a significant role in shaping political knowledge. The influence of mass media varies across societies; the community structure and the distribution of resources are critical factors. In societies where wealth is unevenly distributed, mass media often reflect the views of the dominant culture. This relationship underscores the connection between media and the political process, revealing how personal communication—through interactions with friends, family, and colleagues—also serves to educate individuals politically, which is essential for participation in the democratic process.

- Research indicates a positive correlation among various variables influencing the political views of university students. For instance, connections exist between education and employment, education and religion, and various cultural aspects. Notably, there are no significant differences in political knowledge between male and female students, nor between those from joint families and those from nuclear families. Public advertising campaigns can effectively reach wider audiences, and mass media serve as a vital conduit for political messaging, particularly for those unable to engage in direct political experiences.

- Daily newspapers predominantly feature political news, making political knowledge more accessible after university education. Consequently, it is crucial for students to engage with politics, as a country cannot progress without active citizen participation. As Jawaharlal Nehru remarked, "School represents humanity, patience, logic, intellectual adventure, and the search for truth. It signifies mankind's progress toward the future. If the school fulfills its mission, it benefits the country and its people."

- With over a billion people, the majority of whom are young, India stands at a pivotal moment. According to Swami Vivekananda, "We hope that through education we will

build character, strengthen the mind, expand knowledge, and through this education, people will become self-sufficient."

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