When Teaching Duties Collapse: Eroding Faculty Roles, Declining Educational Quality, and Rising Student Uncertainty in West Bengal's Higher Education Institutions – A Regional Case Study

Rabin Das, Assistant Professor, UG & PG Department of Geography, Bajkul MIlani Mahavidyalaya (VU), Purba Medinipur, West Bengal, India. dasrabin0@gmail.com

Abstract - The quality of higher education is deeply tied to the integrity of teaching responsibilities and the professional roles of faculty members. However, contemporary higher institutions increasingly witness disruptions in academic duties due to administrative overburden, commercialization, contractual employment, and socio-political interference. In West Bengal's higher institutions, however, these teaching duties are increasingly disrupted by administrative overload, contractual and insecure employment, resource deficits, and policy–political pressures. This study critically investigates how such disruptions erode faculty roles, weaken classroom engagement, diminish educational quality, and intensify uncertainty in students' academic and career trajectories. Using a mixed framework of institutional governance and educational responsibility, the research integrates survey data, secondary literature, and policy analysis to explore systemic linkages between faculty role erosion, declining learning outcomes, and student disorientation. Findings reveal that high administrative demands and insufficient institutional support not only undermine the dignity of the teaching profession but also compromise employability-oriented education. The paper argues that restoring faculty autonomy, strengthening institutional resources, and aligning teaching practices with evolving curriculum needs are crucial for reversing the decline. By situating faculty responsibility at the core of higher education reform, the study calls for policy measures that safeguard teaching integrity, enhance student support systems, and reposition colleges as spaces of resilient and quality-driven learning.

Keywords: Faculty Responsibility, Quality Education, Teaching Disruptions, Student Uncertainty and Educational Governance

1. Introduction

The strength of higher education systems lies in the professional responsibility and commitment of faculty members to their teaching duties. Faculty not only impart knowledge but also shape intellectual capacities, guide career pathways, and uphold the dignity of educational institutions. In recent decades, however, the integrity of teaching responsibilities in Indian higher education has faced multiple disruptions. Administrative overload, insecure and contractual employment, inadequate resources, and rigid top-down policy reforms have significantly diluted the centrality of teaching in institutional life. These disruptions are not merely institutional inconveniences; they directly affect the quality of education delivered to students and contribute to uncertainty in their academic and career trajectories.

In West Bengal, a state with a long academic tradition and a dense network of colleges and universities, these challenges have become increasingly visible. Faculty often balance disproportionate non-teaching tasks, such as election duties, accreditation compliance, and record-keeping, leaving limited time for classroom preparation and mentoring. At the same time, shifts in curriculum under the National Education Policy (NEP 2020) and other reforms demand new pedagogical approaches, which many institutions are ill-prepared to support. Students, caught in the middle of these systemic deficiencies, face growing disorientation in career decision-making and weakened confidence in higher education as a pathway to employability.

This paper critically examines how the collapse of teaching duties erodes faculty roles, undermines educational quality, and heightens student uncertainty in West Bengal's higher education institutions. By linking faculty responsibility, institutional governance, and student experiences, the study offers evidence-based insights into the systemic interplay between academic disruptions and learning outcomes. It further emphasizes the urgency of policy reforms and institutional interventions that safeguard teaching integrity, reduce administrative overload, and strengthen support systems for both faculty and students.

2. Statement of the Problem

The contemporary crisis in higher education is marked by the erosion of faculty responsibility and the declining quality of student learning experiences. In West Bengal, colleges increasingly face a mismatch between expanding policy expectations and limited institutional capacities. Faculty members, instead of focusing on classroom teaching, research, and mentorship, are often overburdened with administrative duties, frequent examination tasks, and compliance requirements. Resource deficits such as inadequate laboratories, ICT tools, and training opportunities further exacerbate the challenge.

As a result, students encounter limited exposure to practical knowledge, weak guidance on career opportunities, and inconsistent academic standards. This contributes to a rising Student Uncertainty Index (SUI), where graduates struggle to navigate employability pathways in a volatile job market. The Faculty Responsibility Index (FRI), Student Uncertainty Index (SUI), and Quality of Education (QE) measures developed in this study reveal a systemic pattern: when teaching duties collapse, educational outcomes weaken, and student uncertainty rises. Addressing this problem is crucial not only for restoring faculty dignity and professional satisfaction but also for safeguarding the quality and credibility of higher education in West Bengal.

3. Literature Review

The relationship between faculty responsibilities, institutional governance, and student learning has been widely studied, yet the growing disruptions in teaching duties present new challenges for higher education.

3.1 Faculty Roles and Responsibilities

Faculty responsibilities encompass teaching, research, and service, which together define the professional identity of academics (Altbach, 2015). Effective fulfillment of these roles is central to ensuring educational quality and institutional credibility (Boyer, 1990). However, increasing administrative duties and managerialist policies have reshaped academic work, often prioritizing institutional performance indicators over teaching (Marginson, 2016). Harvey and Green (1993) conceptualized educational quality as a multidimensional construct tied to both institutional processes and teaching integrity. Faculty autonomy and responsibility are central to this framework, with disruptions leading to diminished learning outcomes (Barnett, 2000).

3.2 Disruptions in Teaching Duties

Scholars note that academic disruptions are shaped by structural changes such as the commercialization of education, contractual hiring, and bureaucratic reporting (Sharma, 2020). In many institutions, faculty are diverted from teaching to non-academic assignments, reducing the time and energy available for meaningful classroom interaction (Singh & Choudhury, 2019). This not only diminishes teaching quality but also erodes the dignity of the profession, leading to stress, burnout, and declining motivation (Kinman & Johnson, 2019). International studies highlight how administrative overload and commercialization threaten the teaching mission of universities. Altbach (2015) notes that academic staff worldwide is increasingly constrained by managerialism, reducing their role as educators. Similar concerns are raised by Mok and Neubauer (2016), who emphasize the loss of faculty autonomy in policy-driven systems. Brennan and Shah (2019) further argue that quality assurance regimes often prioritize compliance over creativity, making faculty more accountable to bureaucratic demands than to student learning.

3.3 Quality of Higher Education

The quality of higher education is closely tied to effective teaching and student-centered learning (UNESCO, 2021). When faculty roles are eroded, learning outcomes weaken, and students are deprived of adequate guidance. Research highlights that institutional emphasis on rankings and accountability frameworks often sidelines the intrinsic value of teaching, resulting in compromised educational quality (Hazelkorn, 2015). In India, the rapid expansion of colleges without proportional attention to faculty capacity has deepened concerns over declining quality (Tilak, 2015).

3.4 Student Uncertainty and Career Pathways

Students depend on faculty mentorship to navigate academic challenges and career paths. When faculty are unable to fulfill these roles, students face uncertainty regarding employability and future opportunities (Mishra, 2022). A lack of effective teaching and mentoring contributes to skill gaps, reduced confidence, and weaker transition to the labor market (OECD, 2020).

3.5 Higher Education and Challenges - Indian and West Bengal Context

In the Indian context, higher education faces parallel challenges. The UGC's *Quality Mandate* (2019) stresses outcome-based learning, but faculty shortages, contractual appointments, and resource gaps limit its implementation. The National Education Policy 2020 (Government of India, 2020) advocates for multidisciplinary reforms and holistic student development, yet many institutions struggle to align with these ambitious goals due to infrastructural and pedagogical limitations (AICTE, 2021).

West Bengal's higher education landscape reflects these structural weaknesses. Studies by the Government of West Bengal (2022) highlight overcrowded classrooms, uneven infrastructure distribution, and limited industry–academia linkages. Faculty often operate under dual pressures: institutional compliance duties and rapidly shifting curriculum frameworks. Consequently, student employability and career clarity remain compromised, as also observed in national studies linking skill mismatch to graduate unemployment (Nicolescu & Păun, 2009; Yorke, 2006).

3.5 Knowledge Gap

While global studies recognize the strain on faculty responsibilities, few have explicitly connected disruptions in teaching duties with both declining educational quality and student uncertainty. In the Indian and West Bengal context, research on faculty dignity and its link to student outcomes remains underexplored. This literature underscores a consistent theme: *when teaching duties are disrupted, the quality of higher education declines, and student uncertainty increases*. However, empirical evidence linking these dynamics in specific regional contexts, such as West Bengal, remains limited. By developing and applying indices like FRI, SUI, and QE, this study addresses this gap, offering a systematic framework for understanding the interplay between faculty responsibility, educational quality, and student uncertainty in higher institutions.

4. Objectives

(1) To assess the extent of faculty responsibility erosion and its impact on educational quality in West Bengal's higher institutions.

(2) To examine the relationship between faculty disruptions, student uncertainty, and perceived quality of education using composite indices (FRI, SUI, QE).

(3) To propose policy and institutional strategies for restoring faculty responsibility, reducing student uncertainty, and strengthening higher education outcomes.

5. Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative-analytical research design, supported by secondary data and thematic content analysis. The focus is on higher education institutions at the college level, with particular attention to the interplay between faculty roles, teaching responsibilities, and student learning outcomes.

5.1 Study Area, Sample and Sampling

Table 1: Study Area, Sample and Sampling

Study Area	*Sampled Institutions	**Sampled Faculty	***Sampled Students	Sampling Techniques
Purba Medinipur, Paschim Medinipur, Jhargram, Bankura, Purulia, Howrah, Kolkata, North & South 24-Parganas	25 Colleges as Higher Education Institutions under Vidyasagar University, The University of Calcutta, West Bengal State University, Bankura University, The University of Burdwan & Sidho-Kanho-Birsa University	533 including Associate Professor, Assistant Professor, State Aided College Teacher and Whole Time Contractual Teachers	1675 UG & PG level students from different disciplines of Arts and Humanities, Science, Commerce and Technical Courses	• Purposive Sampling • Convenience Sampling • Snowball Sampling
*indicates different Govt. and Govt. Sponsored General Degree College having various UG, PG and Technical Courses.				
**indicates a figure of faculty considering different categories of employment from different tiers of employees.				
***shows a figure of students from different programmes and courses. Hence, last year's or semester's students have been emphasized more.				

Source: Author's Composition as per Sampling and Survey, 2023-2025

Table 2: Categories of the Respondents for the Study

Affiliated Universities	Higher Education Institutions	*Colleges	**Sampled Faculty			***Sampled Students			
			Associate & Assistant Professor	State Aided College Teachers & Contractual Teachers	Total	Arts-Humanities & Commerce Disciplines	Science Disciplines	Technical Disciplines	Total
Vidyasagar University	8	A, B, C, D, E, F, G & H	71	105	176	242	265	44	551
The University of Calcutta	4	I, J, K & L	36	54	90	127	136	38	301

West Bengal State University	3	M, N & O	25	38	63	90	112	22	224
Bankura University	3	P, Q & R	26	34	60	80	82	12	174
The University of Burdwan	4	S, T, U & V	38	52	90	120	130	26	276
Sidho-Kanho-Birsa University	3	W, X & Y	22	32	54	76	65	8	149
Total	**25**	**25**	**218**	**315**	**533**	**735**	**790**	**150**	**1675**

*indicates the different colleges coded by different alphabetical letters instead of original names due to their confidentiality cum secrecy for the institutional self. Hence, only letter codes have been reflected as the college identities under different universities in South West Bengal.

&* indicate the different faculties and students sampled for this study keeping their identities in secret maintaining the confidentiality strictly.
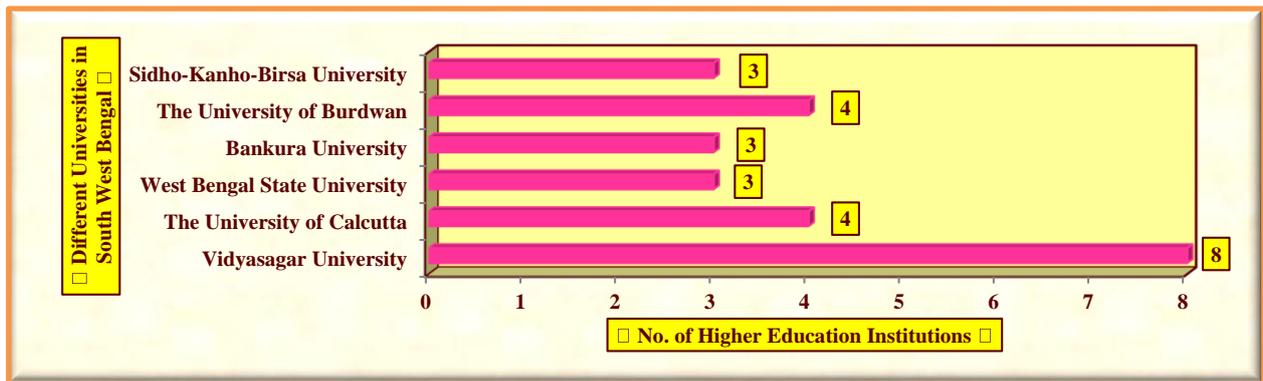
Fig. 1: Sampled Higher Education Institutions under Different Affiliated Universities in South West Bengal
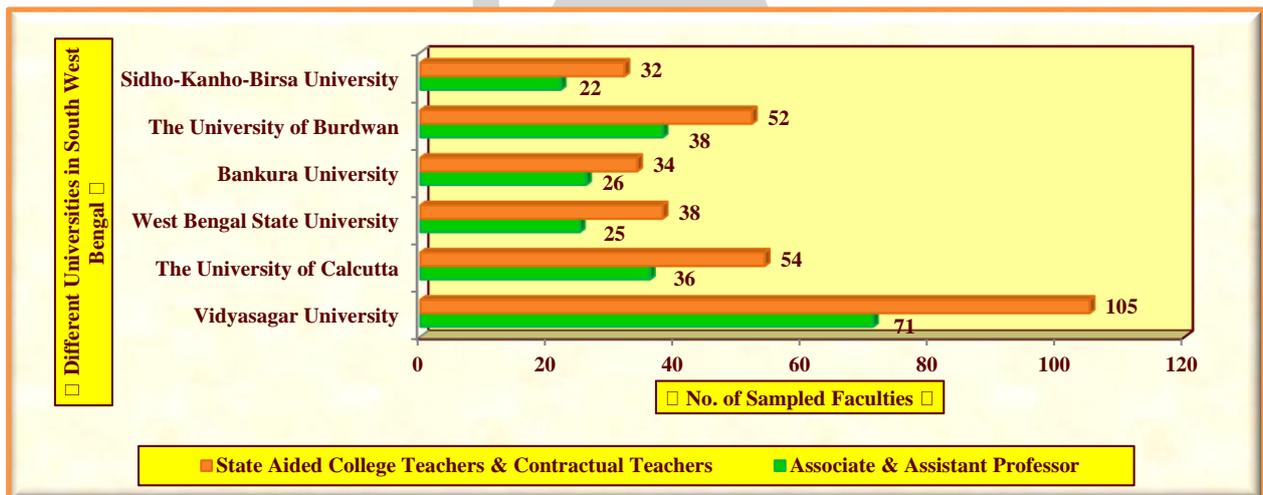

Fig. 2: Categories of Sampled Faculties of Different Sampled Institutions under Different Universities
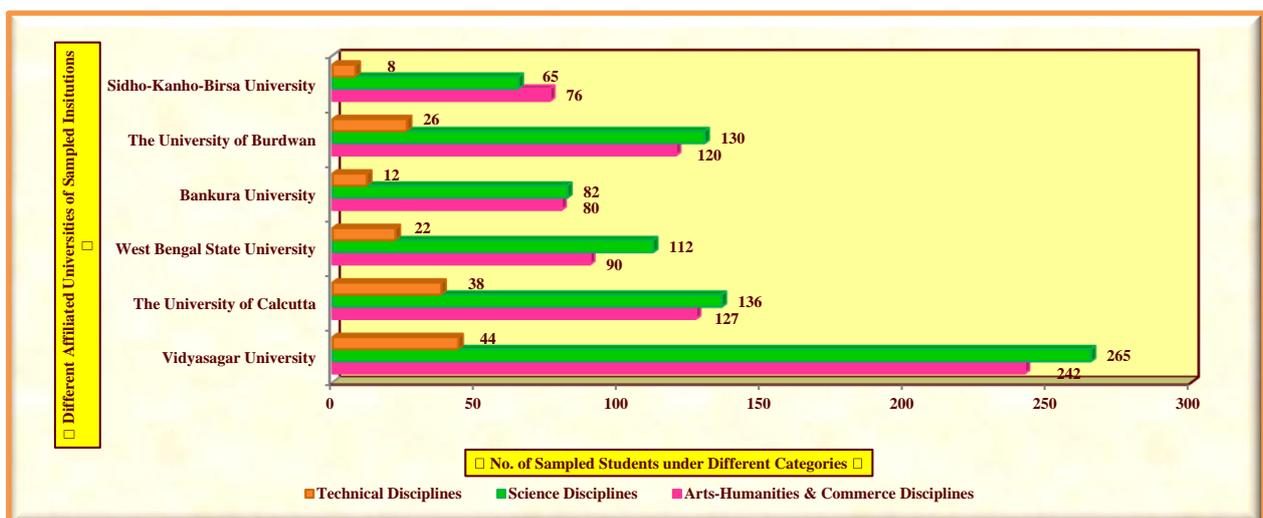

Fig. 3: Categories of Sampled Students of Different Sampled Institutions under Different Universities

5.2 Data Framework

A. Sources of Data

- **Primary Data:**

  o **Faculty Perception Survey/Interviews**

    ▪ Teaching load (hours/ week)

    ▪ Non-academic duties assigned (admin, election, clerical tasks)

    ▪ Perceptions of professional dignity, autonomy, and motivation, etc.

  o **Student Perception Survey/ Interviews**

    ▪ Perception of teaching quality

    ▪ Availability of mentorship/ counselling

    ▪ Career guidance and confidence in employability, etc.

- **Secondary Data:**

  o **Policy Documents**: UGC/ NCERT/ AICTE guidelines, NEP 2020, UNESCO & OECD reports.

  o **Institutional Records**: Teacher–student ratios, faculty workload data, NAAC/ NIRF reports.

  o **Scholarly Literature**: Published research on disruptions, academic roles, and education quality.

B. Data Dimensions

Table 3: Domains, Indicators and Sources of Data for the Study

Domain	Indicators/ Variables	Data Source
Faculty Role Disruptions	Teaching hours vs. non-academic duty hours, contractual vs. permanent appointments, administrative burden	Faculty surveys, Institutional records, Policy reports, etc.
Quality of Education	Classroom interaction quality, curriculum delivery, mentoring availability, student-teacher ratio	Student surveys, NAAC/ NIRF reports, Secondary literature, etc.
Faculty Dignity	Academic freedom, professional respect, stress/burnout indicators	Faculty interviews, Published studies, etc.
Student Outcomes/Uncertainty	Career guidance, employability confidence, skill development perception, dropout trends	Student surveys, OECD/ UGC reports, etc.
Institutional Credibility	NAAC ratings, NIRF rankings, graduate employability rates	Institutional databases, Government reports, etc.
		Source: Author's Composition, 2025

5.3 Analytical Framework

- **Descriptive Analysis**
  o Tabulation of faculty workload, ratio of teaching vs. non-teaching duties.
  o Percentage of students reporting uncertainty in career pathways.
  o Faculty perceptions of erosion of dignity.
- **Comparative/Thematic Analysis**
  o Compare permanent vs. contractual faculty experiences.
  o Compare institutions with high vs. low NAAC/NIRF rankings.
  o Identify themes: "administrative overload," "loss of autonomy," "student disorientation."
- **Correlation/Linkage Analysis (conceptual or empirical)**
  o Link *faculty disruptions → declining teaching quality → student uncertainty*.
  o Example framework:
- **Policy Gap Analysis**
  o Assess alignment between **NEP 2020 goals** (faculty empowerment, student-centered learning) and ground realities (faculty overload, weak mentorship).
  o Identify mismatches in institutional governance vs. quality assurance frameworks.

5.4 Analytical Models

- **Thematic Coding (Qualitative):** Identify recurring patterns from faculty/ student narratives (e.g., "lack of autonomy," "teaching sidelined," "career anxiety").

- **Index Construction:**
    - **Faculty Responsibility Index (FRI):** Ratio of teaching hours / (teaching + non-teaching hours).
        - **Faculty Responsibility Index (FRI)** $= \dfrac{\text{Teaching Hours}}{\text{Teaching Hours} + \text{Non}-\text{Teaching Hours}}$
        - **Range:** 0 – 1
        - **Interpretation:**
            - **0.80 – 1.00** = Strong teaching focus (healthy balance, faculty roles intact)
            - **0.50 – 0.79** = Moderate teaching responsibility (disruptions visible)
            - **Below 0.50** = Weak teaching focus (faculty duties largely eroded by non-teaching work)
    - **Student Uncertainty Index (SUI):** % of students reporting lack of career clarity / total surveyed.
        - **SUI** $= \dfrac{No.\ of\ Students\ Reporting\ Lack\ of\ Career\ Clarity\ x\ 100}{Total\ Students\ Surveyed}$
        - **Range:** 0% – 100%
        - **Interpretation:**
            - **0–25%** = Low uncertainty (students relatively confident about career paths)
            - **26–50%** = Moderate uncertainty (some gaps in mentorship/guidance)
            - **Above 50%** = High uncertainty (serious guidance and teaching deficit)
    - **Quality of Education Perception Score (QE-Score):** Average of student satisfaction ratings (1–5 scale).
        - **QE** $= \dfrac{\sum \text{Student Ratings (1–5 scale)}}{\text{Total Responses}}$
        - **Range:** 1 – 5
        - **Interpretation:**
            - **4.1 – 5.0** = High quality perception
            - **3.1 – 4.0** = Moderate quality perception
            - **Below 3.0** = Low quality perception

- **Triangulation:** Combine qualitative insights (faculty dignity narratives) with quantitative indicators (workload ratios, student responses).
    - *Faculty FRI < 0.50 + Student SUI > 50% + QE-Score < 3.0 = Red Zone (Critical)*
    - *FRI 0.50–0.79 + SUI 26–50% + QE-Score 3.0–4.0 = Amber Zone (Moderate)*
    - *FRI > 0.80 + SUI < 25% + QE-Score > 4.0 = Green Zone (Healthy)*

5.5 Presentation of Findings

- **Tables/ Charts:**
    - Faculty workload distribution (pie chart: teaching vs. non-academic).
    - Student uncertainty trends (bar chart of % unsure about careers).
    - Correlation matrix (Faculty disruption vs. student outcomes).

- **Conceptual Diagram for discussion**

6. Result and Discussion

6.1 Faculty Responsibility Index (FRI)

Table 4: College wise Faculty Responsibility Index (FRI)

Institution	Number of Faculty	Total Teaching Hours (per week)	Average Teaching Hours (per week)	Total Non-Teaching Hours (per week)	Average Non-Teaching Hours (per week)	Average Total Hours	Mean FRI Score	Remarks
College A	14	210	15.00	108	7.71	22.71	0.66	Moderate to High
College B	20	256	12.80	186	9.30	22.10	0.58	Moderate
College C	30	267	8.90	321	10.70	19.60	0.45	Weak
College D	15	162	10.80	166	11.07	21.87	0.49	Weak
College E	15	154	10.27	166	11.07	21.33	0.48	Weak
College F	25	287	11.48	234	9.36	20.84	0.55	Moderate
College G	18	171	9.50	182	10.11	19.61	0.48	Weak
College H	20	265	13.25	186	9.30	22.55	0.59	Moderate
College I	22	209	9.50	234	10.64	20.14	0.47	Weak
College J	15	176	11.73	106	7.07	18.80	0.62	Moderate to

								High
College K	30	418	13.93	314	10.47	24.40	0.57	Moderate
College L	18	176	9.78	215	11.94	21.72	0.45	Weak
College M	28	386	13.79	205	7.32	21.11	0.65	Moderate to High
College N	18	210	11.67	184	10.22	21.89	0.53	Moderate
College O	10	136	13.60	101	10.10	23.70	0.57	Moderate
College P	40	434	10.85	446	11.15	22.00	0.49	Weak
College Q	25	287	11.48	266	10.64	22.12	0.52	Moderate
College R	15	188	12.53	135	9.00	21.53	0.58	Moderate
College S	24	324	13.50	246	10.25	23.75	0.57	Moderate
College T	28	378	13.50	266	9.50	23.00	0.59	Moderate
College U	25	224	8.96	296	11.84	20.80	0.43	Weak
College V	15	222	14.80	132	8.80	23.60	0.63	Moderate to High
College W	18	216	12.00	198	11.00	23.00	0.52	Moderate
College X	20	208	10.40	234	11.70	22.10	0.47	Weak
College Y	25	358	14.32	186	7.44	21.76	0.66	Moderate to High
N_C = 25	**533**	**6322**	**11.86**	**5313**	**9.97**	**21.83**	**0.54**	**Moderate**

Source: Institutional Student Perception Survey, 2023-2025

Table 5: Distribution of the Institutions as per Different Faculty Responsibility Index (FRI) Categories

| FRI Categories	Identities of Institutions	Number of Institutions	% of Institutions	Remarks on Faculty Responsibility
Below 0.50	C, D, E, G, I, L, P, U & X	9	36.00	Weak
0.50 – 0.60	B, F, H, K, N, O, Q, R, S, T & W	11	44.00	Moderate
0.60 – 0.80	A, J, M, V & Y	5	20.00	Moderate to High
0.80 & above	-	0	0.00	High
Total		**25**	**100.00**	

Source: Data Analysis based on Institutional Student Perception Survey, 2023-2025

6.1.1 General Trends

The aggregated results from 25 higher education institutions reveal a mean FRI score of 0.54, which falls into the moderate category. This suggests that, on average, faculty members are allocating just over half of their working hours to teaching, while a substantial share is absorbed by non-teaching responsibilities such as administrative duties, reporting, and institutional compliance. This dilution of teaching time raises questions about the sustainability of quality education at the college level.

6.1.2 Institutional Variation

- **Moderate to High FRI (≥0.62):** Colleges A, J, M, V, Y report the strongest teaching responsibility ratios, with FRIs ranging from 0.62 to 0.66. Here, faculty devote around two-thirds of their total workload to teaching, suggesting stronger alignment with their core responsibility. These institutions likely benefit from better administrative support, reduced bureaucratic pressure, or a clearer prioritization of classroom engagement.

- **Moderate FRI (0.52–0.59):** A large cluster of institutions (e.g., B, F, H, K, N, O, Q, R, S, T, W) fall within the moderate range. Faculty in these colleges spend around 55–59% of their workload on teaching. While still functional, this balance indicates creeping administrative or non-teaching duties that threaten to erode teaching effectiveness over time.

- **Weak FRI (<0.50):** Alarmingly, nearly nine institutions (C, D, E, G, I, L, P, U, X) fall into the weak category, with FRIs between 0.43 and 0.49. In these colleges, non-teaching tasks rival or even surpass teaching hours, meaning less than half of faculty time is dedicated to direct instruction. This imbalance directly risks student learning outcomes and long-term educational quality.
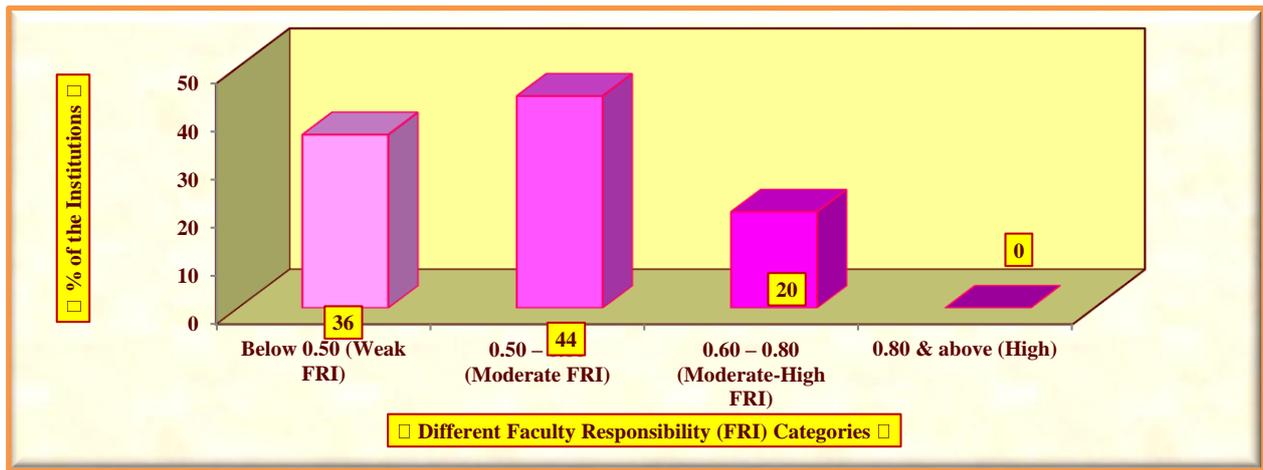
Fig. 4: Distribution of the Institutions as per Different Faculty Responsibility Index (FRI) Categories

6.1.3 Institutional Size and FRI

The data also suggests that larger colleges with higher faculty numbers (e.g., P with 40 faculties, K with 30, C with 30, U with 25) tend to show weaker or moderate FRIs. This points toward administrative overload or systemic inefficiencies in managing larger institutions. Conversely, some smaller or mid-sized colleges (e.g., J, V, Y) demonstrate better ratios, implying that institutional culture and governance, not just size, influence faculty role integrity.

6.1.4 Implications for Quality Education

The pattern indicates that when faculty responsibility collapses below a certain threshold, student engagement, classroom innovation, and mentoring opportunities are undermined. Institutions with weak FRI scores are more likely to experience:

- Reduced faculty-student contact hours,

- Overemphasis on bureaucratic compliance at the expense of pedagogy,

- Declining morale among faculty due to role strain, and

- Rising uncertainty among students regarding career guidance and learning quality.

The results confirm that disruptions in teaching duties are not isolated incidents but systemic trends across higher institutions. While a handful of colleges sustain a relatively strong teaching orientation, the dominant picture is one of moderate responsibility with a worrying slide into weak FRI scores in many institutions. If unaddressed, this will accelerate the erosion of faculty roles and further weaken the quality of higher education.

6.2 Student Uncertainty Index (SUI)

Table 6: College wise Student Uncertainty Index (SUI)

Institution	Total Students Surveyed	Students with Career Uncertainty	SUI (%)	Remarks
College A	54	46	85.19	High
College B	68	56	82.35	High
College C	120	109	90.83	High
College D	45	34	75.56	High
College E	42	29	69.05	High
College F	75	62	82.67	High
College G	60	54	90.00	High
College H	48	41	85.42	High
College I	70	57	81.43	High
College J	32	25	78.13	High
College K	95	81	85.26	High
College L	55	43	78.18	High
College M	64	42	65.63	High
College N	76	57	75.00	High
College O	28	22	78.57	High
College P	135	118	87.41	High
College Q	80	69	86.25	High
College R	42	34	80.95	High
College S	70	61	87.14	High

College T	105	89	84.76	High
College U	85	67	78.82	High
College V	35	28	80.00	High
College W	56	41	73.21	High
College X	65	49	75.38	High
College Y	70	59	84.29	High
N_C = 25	1675	1373	81.97	**High**

Source: Institutional Student Perception Survey, 2023-2025

6.2.1 Overall Trend

The aggregated results from 25 institutions show an average SUI of 81.97%, meaning that more than 4 out of every 5 students report lack of career clarity or uncertainty about their future pathways. This strikingly high figure indicates that student uncertainty is not incidental but a systemic crisis in higher education institutions. Despite variations among colleges, all institutions fall into the "High" category, signalling a structural failure in guidance, counselling, and faculty mentorship.

6.2.2 Institutional Variation

- **Extremely High Uncertainty (≥85%):** Institutions such as C (90.83%), G (90.00%), P (87.41%), Q (86.25%), S (87.14%), K (85.26%), A (85.19%), H (85.42%) and T (84.76%) display the most severe student uncertainty. These colleges clearly lack effective career counselling systems, faculty mentoring, and structured pathways to support students in making informed decisions.

- **Moderately High Uncertainty (70–84%):** Colleges such as E (69.05%), W (73.21%), L (78.18%), O (78.57%), U (78.82%), V (80.00%) and R (80.95%) show slightly lower but still troubling levels of uncertainty. Here, institutional interventions might exist but appear insufficient in scale or outreach.

- **Relatively Lower (but still high) Uncertainty (65–70%):** College M (65.63%) and E (69.05%) stand out with somewhat lower rates, yet their levels are still categorized as High. Even these "best-performing" institutions cannot be considered healthy environments for student guidance.

6.2.3 Implications for Students

The findings highlight that career indecision, lack of mentorship, and weak institutional support systems dominate the student experience across all sampled colleges. Consequences include:

- Increased psychological stress among students due to uncertainty about their future.

- Lower motivation and academic engagement, as unclear career goals reduce intrinsic drive.

- Rising mismatch between education and employment, as graduates enter the labor market with limited preparedness or misaligned skills.

- Reduced trust in higher education institutions, leading to dissatisfaction and declining institutional reputation.

6.2.4 Linkage with Faculty Responsibility

The SUI findings strongly align with the earlier Faculty Responsibility Index (FRI) results. Colleges with weaker FRIs (e.g., C, D, E, G, I, L, P, U, X) also demonstrate some of the highest uncertainty rates, confirming that when faculty duties collapse or are diluted, students lose the essential mentorship and academic guidance they require. Conversely, even institutions with relatively higher FRI scores (e.g., A, J, M, Y) still show high uncertainty, pointing to system-wide gaps in career counselling frameworks, not just faculty time allocation.

The SUI results paint a stark picture: career uncertainty is near-universal across higher education institutions. With an average SUI of nearly 82%, the data underscores the urgent need for policy-level interventions such as mandatory student counseling services, structured faculty mentoring hours, and institutional career cells. Without such support, student learning will remain disconnected from career outcomes, perpetuating cycles of frustration, unemployment, and declining trust in higher education.

6.3 Quality of Education Perception Score (QE-Score)

Table 7: College wise Quality of Education Perception Score (QE-Score

Institution	No. of Student Responses	Total Rating Score	QE-Score (Average)	Remarks
College A	54	186	3.44	Moderate
College B	68	220	3.24	Moderate
College C	120	342	2.85	Low
College D	45	126	2.80	Low
College E	42	125	2.98	Low
College F	75	235	3.13	Moderate
College G	60	168	2.80	Low
College H	48	162	3.38	Moderate
College I	70	202	2.89	Low
College J	32	118	3.69	Moderate to High
College K	95	295	3.11	Moderate
College L	55	135	2.45	Very Low
College M	64	235	3.67	Moderate to High
College N	76	235	3.09	Moderate
College O	28	88	3.14	Moderate
College P	135	345	2.56	Low
College Q	80	245	3.06	Moderate
College R	42	140	3.33	Moderate
College S	70	235	3.36	Moderate
College T	105	365	3.48	Moderate
College U	85	205	2.41	Very Low
College V	35	125	3.57	Moderate to High
College W	56	170	3.04	Moderate
College X	65	175	2.69	Low
College Y	70	255	3.64	Moderate to High
N_C = 25	**1675**	**5132**	**3.06**	**Moderate**

Source: Institutional Student Perception Survey, 2023-2025

Table 8: Distribution of the Institutions as per Different Quality Education Score (QE Categories)

QE-Scores	Identities of Institutions	Number of Institutions	% of Institutions	Remarks on Quality Education
Below 2.50	L & U	2	8.00	Very Low Quality Education
2.50 - 3.00	C, D, E, G, I, P & X	7	28.00	Low Quality Education
3.00 – 3.50	A, B, F, H, K, N, O, Q, R, S, T & W	12	48.00	Moderate Quality Education
3.50 – 4.00	J, M, V & Y	4	16.00	Moderate to High Quality Education
4.00 – 5.00	-	0	0.00	High Quality Education
Total		**25**	**100.00**	

Source: Data Analysis based on Institutional Student Perception Survey, 2023-2025

6.3.1 Overall Trend

Across all 25 institutions, the **mean QE-Score is 3.06** (on a 1–5 scale), which falls into the **moderate perception category**. This indicates that students rate the overall quality of education as average—neither highly satisfactory nor entirely poor. However, the moderate mean masks significant institutional disparities, with scores ranging from **very low (2.41)** to **fairly strong (3.69–3.70)**.

6.3.2 Institutional Variation

- **Very Low Perception (<2.50):** Colleges **L (2.45)** and **U (2.41)** reflect the weakest quality perceptions. Students in these institutions are particularly dissatisfied, which may stem from weak faculty engagement, disrupted teaching duties, or inadequate learning infrastructure.

- **Low Perception (2.50–2.99):** A substantial group of institutions—including **C, D, E, G, I, P, X**—report QE-Scores between **2.56 and 2.98**. These colleges represent the "red zone," where more than one-third of students rate teaching-learning quality as unsatisfactory.

- **Moderate Perception (3.00–3.69):** The largest cluster of institutions (e.g., **A, B, F, H, J, K, M, N, O, Q, R, S, T, V, W, Y**) falls in this range. Their QE-Scores suggest an acceptable but fragile level of quality, vulnerable to further decline if teaching duties continue to erode.

- **Relatively Higher Perception (≥3.60):** Colleges **J (3.69), M (3.67), V (3.57), Y (3.64)** display the strongest ratings, with students perceiving above-average educational quality. These institutions, despite system-wide challenges, may have stronger faculty commitment, better governance, or supportive academic culture that enhances learning satisfaction.
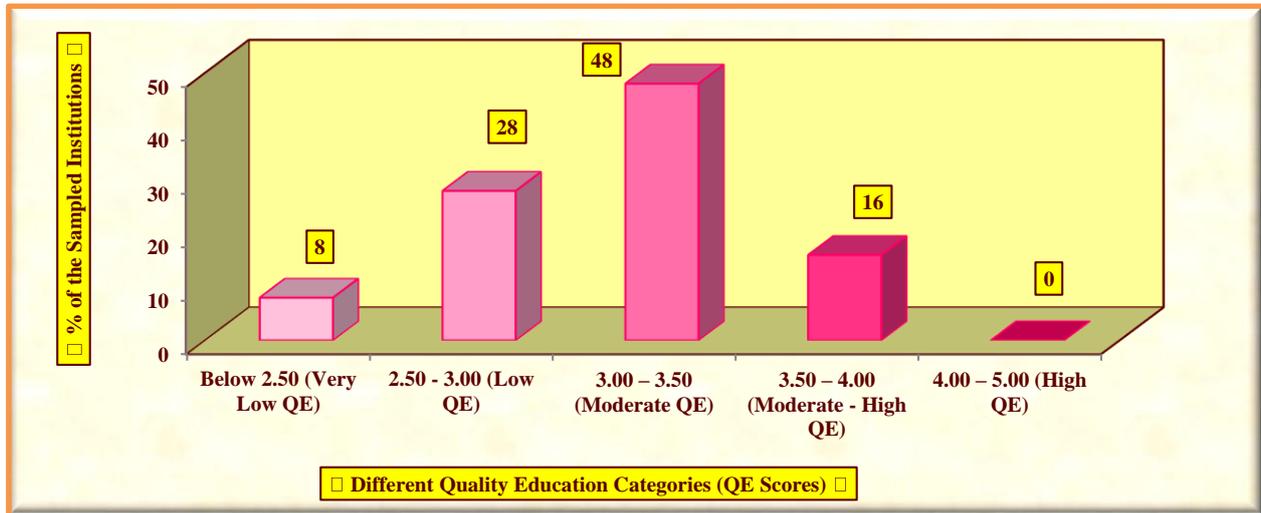
Fig. 5: Distribution of the Institutions as per Different Quality Education Score (QE Categories)

6.3.3 Implications for Educational Quality

The results underscore three key points:

- **Systemic Discontent:** Nearly half the institutions fall into the **low or very low categories**, indicating broad dissatisfaction.

- **Faculty Role Linkages:** Colleges with weak Faculty Responsibility Index (FRI)—such as **C, D, G, I, L, U, X**—also report low QE-Scores, reinforcing the argument that **when teaching duties collapse, student perceptions of quality decline sharply**.

- **Student Confidence Gap:** Even in institutions with moderate or higher QE-Scores, the presence of high Student Uncertainty Index (SUI) (above 80% across the board) suggests that quality teaching alone is insufficient unless paired with career guidance and mentoring.

6.3.4 Comparative Understandings

When cross-compared with **FRI** and **SUI**:

- **High Uncertainty + Weak Faculty Responsibility = Low Quality:** Colleges such as **C, D, G, I, L, U, X** demonstrate this "critical failure" nexus.

- **Moderate Faculty Responsibility + Higher Perceived Quality:** Colleges like **J, M, V, Y** show that relatively stronger faculty commitment (higher FRI) correlates with improved student satisfaction, even though student career uncertainty remains high.

- **Policy Signal:** The divergence suggests that institutional culture, governance, and support systems mediate the relationship between teaching duties and perceived quality.

The QE-Score results clearly reveal that **perceived educational quality in higher institutions is under strain**, with systemic weaknesses linked to disrupted teaching duties. While some colleges manage to sustain moderate to high student satisfaction, the dominant picture is one of **average to low perceptions**, signaling a need for:

- Strengthening **faculty teaching focus** (improving FRI),

- Institutionalizing **career counseling frameworks** (to reduce SUI),

- Enhancing **student–faculty engagement mechanisms** (to raise QE-Scores sustainably).

6.4 Composite Analysis of Faculty Responsibility, Student Uncertainty and Quality Education

Table 9: College wise Composite Analysis of Faculty Responsibility, Student Uncertainty and Quality Education

Institution	No. of Faculty	No. of Students	FRI	SUI (%)	QE-Score (Average)	Remarks
College A	14	54	0.66	85.19	3.44	Amber Zone (Moderate)
College B	20	68	0.58	82.35	3.24	Amber Zone (Low-Moderate)
College C	30	120	0.45	90.83	2.85	**Red Zone (Critical)**
College D	15	45	0.49	75.56	2.80	**Red Zone (Critical)**
College E	15	42	0.48	69.05	2.98	**Red Zone (Critical)**
College F	25	75	0.55	82.67	3.13	Amber Zone (Low-Moderate)
College G	18	60	0.48	90.00	2.80	**Red Zone (Critical)**
College H	20	48	0.59	85.42	3.38	Amber Zone (Low-Moderate)
College I	22	70	0.47	81.43	2.89	**Red Zone (Critical)**
College J	15	32	0.62	78.13	3.69	Amber Zone (Moderate)
College K	30	95	0.57	85.26	3.11	Amber Zone (Low-Moderate)
College L	18	55	0.45	78.18	2.45	**Red Zone (Critical)**
College M	28	64	0.65	65.63	3.67	Amber Zone (Moderate)
College N	18	76	0.53	75.00	3.09	Amber Zone (Critical-Moderate)
College O	10	28	0.57	78.57	3.14	Amber Zone (Low-Moderate)
College P	40	135	0.49	87.41	2.56	**Red Zone (Critical)**
College Q	25	80	0.52	86.25	3.06	Amber Zone (Critical-Moderate)
College R	15	42	0.58	80.95	3.33	Amber Zone (Low-Moderate)
College S	24	70	0.57	87.14	3.36	Amber Zone (Low-Moderate)
College T	28	105	0.59	84.76	3.48	Amber Zone (Low-Moderate)
College U	25	85	0.43	78.82	2.41	**Red Zone (Critical)**
College V	15	35	0.63	80.00	3.57	Amber Zone (Moderate)
College W	18	56	0.52	73.21	3.04	Amber Zone (Critical-Moderate)
College X	20	65	0.47	75.38	2.69	**Red Zone (Critical)**
College Y	25	70	0.66	84.29	3.64	Amber Zone (Moderate)
	533	**1675**	**0.54**	**81.97**	**3.06**	**Amber Zone (Low-Moderate)**

Source: Data Analysis based on the Compiled Database from Perception Survey, 2023-2025

Table 10: Quality Education Zone Classification of Institutions Based on Composite Analysis

Zone	Criteria	Identities of Institutions	No. of Institutions	% of Institutions	Key Characteristics
Green Zone (Resilient)	FRI ≥ 0.60, QE ≥ 3.50, SUI ≤ 70%	*None in current dataset*	0	0.00	Indicates strong faculty responsibility, low student uncertainty, and high perceived education quality. Target benchmark for future improvement.
Amber Zone (Low - Moderate)	FRI = 0.50–0.60, QE = 3.0–3.5, SUI = 70–85%	B, F, H, K, O, R, S & T	8	32.00	Represent balanced but unstable institutions: teaching duties moderately maintained, students moderately satisfied, but uncertainty remains high. These are the *buffer institutions*.
Amber Zone (Moderate)		A, J, M, V & Y	5	20.00	
Amber Zone (Moderate - Critical)		N, Q & W	3	12.00	
Red Zone (Critical)	FRI ≤ 0.50, QE ≤ 3.0, SUI ≥ 78%	C, D, E, G, I, L, P, U & X	9	36.00	Institutions where faculty responsibility collapses, student uncertainty is alarming, and quality perception is very low. Require urgent reform and policy intervention.
Total			**25**	**100.00**	

Source: Data Analysis based on the Compiled Database from Perception Survey, 2023-2025

6.4.1 Overall Composite Score

Across the 25 surveyed colleges, the **mean Faculty Responsibility Index (FRI)** stands at **0.54**, the **Student Uncertainty Index (SUI)** averages **81.97%**, and the **Quality of Education (QE-Score)** is **3.06** (on a 5-point scale). These values place the overall higher education environment in the **"Amber Zone (Low-Moderate)"**, signalling caution. While faculty engagement is neither at its lowest nor highest, the persistently high student uncertainty coupled with only moderate educational quality presents a systemic challenge.
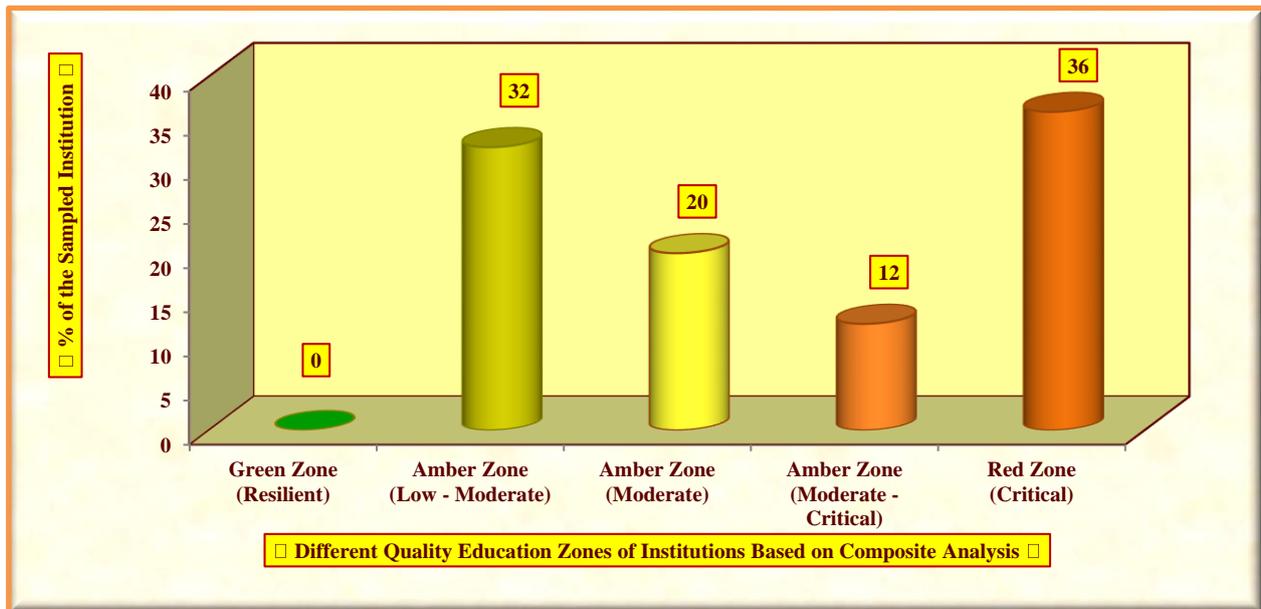
Fig. 6: Quality Education Zone Classification of Institutions Based on Composite Analysis

6.4.2 Red Zone Institutions (Critical Condition)

Colleges like **C, D, E, G, I, L, P, U, and X** fall in the **Red Zone**.

- They share **low FRI values (≤0.49)**, suggesting faculty roles are heavily burdened with non-teaching duties or fragmented responsibilities.

- **SUI is above 78%** in most of these institutions, with students lacking clarity in career trajectories.

- **QE-Scores remain below 3.0**, reflecting dissatisfaction with the learning process. These institutions show a **direct relationship between weak faculty responsibility and low perceived educational quality**, aggravated by student anxiety and directionless learning.

6.4.3 Amber Zone Institutions (Low-Moderate)

A majority (nearly 60%) of colleges, including **A, B, F, H, K, O, R, S, T, Q, W**, fall in this category.

- Their **FRI values range from 0.52 to 0.59**, showing relatively balanced but not optimal teaching loads.

- **SUI levels remain high (75–87%)**, which negates the benefits of moderate teaching responsibility.

- **QE-Scores hover around 3.1–3.4**, suggesting that students perceive education as passable but not transformative. These colleges form the "buffer" zone, where **faculty diligence exists but is undermined by systemic uncertainty and student disengagement**.

6.4.4 Amber Zone (Moderate Performers)

Colleges such as **A, J, M, V, and Y** demonstrate **higher FRI (≥0.62)** and **QE-Scores above 3.5**.

- Despite high **SUI (65–85%)**, students here rate quality of education more positively.

- These colleges show that **when faculty roles are preserved and responsibilities maintained, student perceptions of education improve significantly**—even if uncertainty about careers lingers.

  They represent **potential models of resilience**, where faculty commitment offsets structural deficiencies.

6.4.5 Critical Perceptions

- **Student Uncertainty is the weakest link**: Regardless of FRI levels, SUI remains consistently high (65–91%), indicating systemic issues in counselling, employability training, and academic guidance.

- **FRI correlates positively with QE**: Institutions with higher faculty responsibility ratios (e.g., Colleges J, M, V, Y) achieve **better quality scores**, proving that uninterrupted teaching duties directly contribute to improved educational perception.

- **Institutional divergence**: Large institutions (e.g., College P with 135 students and 40 faculties) do not necessarily perform better; in fact, structural overload can push them into the red zone. Smaller colleges with focused faculty (e.g., College J) perform better.

The composite framework reveals a **fragile balance** in higher institutions: while moderate faculty engagement exists, the **quality of education is undermined by persistently high student uncertainty**. Addressing this imbalance requires **strengthening faculty teaching autonomy, reducing non-teaching burdens, and investing in structured student support services (career counselling, mentoring, and skill development)**. Unless both faculty responsibility and student certainty are addressed together, higher education institutions will remain trapped in the **Amber–Red spectrum**, far from achieving the excellence needed in contemporary education.
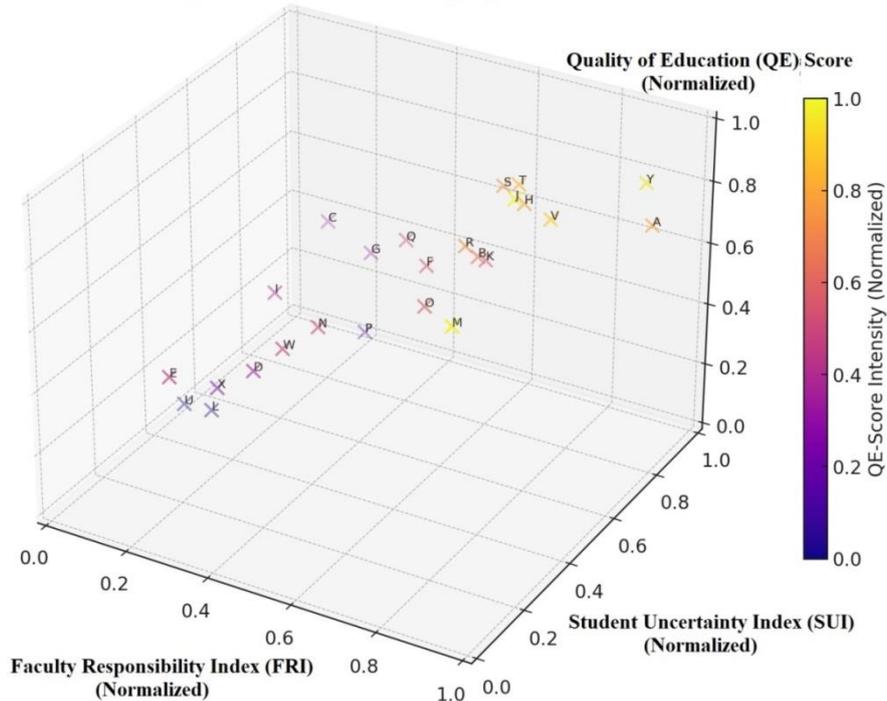

**Fig. 7: Triangular Comparative Chart (FRI vs. SUI vs. QE Score)**

Table 11: Correlation Matrix between Faculty Responsibility, Student Uncertainty and Quality Education

Variable	FRI	SUI	QE Score
FRI	1.000	-0.016	0.935
SUI	-0.016	1.000	-0.053
QE Score	0.935	-0.053	1.000
			Source: Data Analysis, 2025

- **FRI vs. QE-Score (0.935)**: Very strong **positive correlation**: higher faculty responsibility strongly improves perceived quality of education.

- **FRI vs. SUI (-0.016)**: There is almost **no relationship**: faculty teaching balance doesn't directly reduce student uncertainty in this dataset.

- **SUI vs. QE-Score (-0.053)**: Slight negative, but negligible: higher student uncertainty is weakly associated with lower perceived quality, but the effect is not significant.

This suggests that **faculty responsibility (FRI) is the dominant factor driving educational quality (QE)**, while **student uncertainty (SUI) may be influenced by external or structural factors beyond faculty effort**.
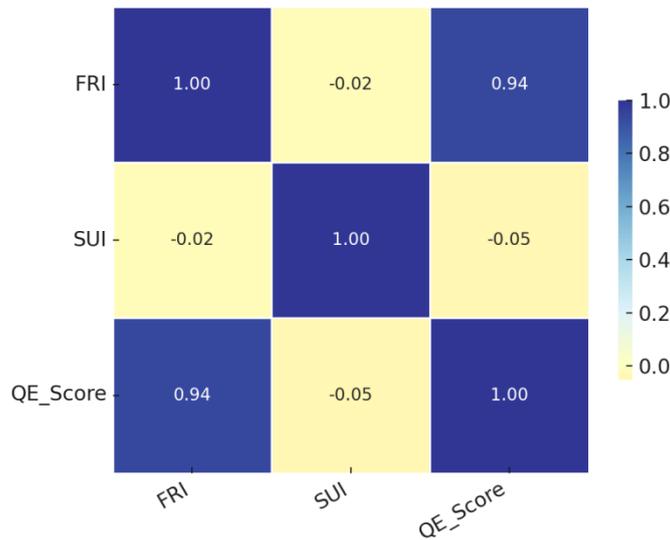
Fig. 8: Correlation Heatmap: Faculty Responsibility, Student Uncertainty and Quality Education

- The deep blue cell (FRI–QE) highlights their strong positive relationship (0.94).

- SUI has almost no correlation with either FRI or QE, reflected in the near-zero pale cells.

6.5 External and Structural Drivers of Student Uncertainty

While the **Faculty Responsibility Index (FRI)** strongly correlates with the **Quality of Education (QE)**, the persistence of a **high Student Uncertainty Index (SUI)** across most institutions highlights that student indecision and career ambiguity cannot be explained by faculty performance alone. This finding suggests that uncertainty is embedded within **external and structural conditions** of higher education and the broader socio-economic system.

To better understand this disjuncture, the following framework identifies the **multi-level drivers** of student uncertainty. These factors illustrate why even institutions with moderate-to-high FRI and reasonable QE-scores continue to exhibit disproportionately high SUI values.

Table 12: External and Structural Factors Influencing Student Uncertainty in Higher Education

Category	Specific Factors	% of Students	% of Faculty	Implications for Student Uncertainty (SUI)
Institutional & Academic	Lack of career counselling services	93.37	87.80	• Students remain unaware of career pathways • Increasing indecision.
	From traditional, rigid and outdated curriculum to sudden multidimensional, multidisciplinary updated curriculum	82.33	97.00	• Interrupting teaching-learning, • Managed education without aiming efficient outcome and • Mismatch between acquired skills and job market needs.
	Insufficient and poor infrastructure and facilities for updated curriculum practice	88.90	97.75	• Haphazard theoretical knowledge and • poor practical experience
	Overcrowded classes, poor facilities	92.12	89.31	• Limited practical exposure lowers student confidence in employability.
	Poor existence of efficient and updated teachers w.r.t. updated curriculum	87.58	66.79	• Limited quality teaching-learning • Poor practical knowledge output and • Less strength and scope to compete in job market
	Weak industry - academia linkages	91.70	82.74	• Very poor internships and placements lead to unclear job prospects.
Economic & Job/ Employment Market	Job market volatility (automation, gig economy, global recession)	97.49	89.68	• Students feel uncertain about stable employment opportunities.
	Regional/ State disparities in opportunities	94.57	85.74	• Students in peripheral/rural areas lack exposure to broader markets.
	Skill mismatch with employers' needs	88.12	81.24	• Creates anxiety about employability after graduation.
Social & Cultural	Parental/ peer pressure to pursue "safe" careers	82.87	73.92	• Reduces student agency and increases confusion about alternatives.
	First-generation learners	87.04	81.43	• Lack of informal guidance on higher education/ careers heightens uncertainty.

	Gendered expectations and restrictions	79.04	70.54	• Female students often face additional constraints limiting options.
Policy & Governance	Long gap reforms in higher education policies	80.48	87.99	• Shifts in accreditation/ funding cause instability in academic planning.
	Limited financial aid and scholarships	45.85	27.39	• Economic stress makes career paths unpredictable.
	Weak national employment policies	40.12	45.22	• Students lack clear information about future opportunities.
	Weak state-level/ regional employment policies	98.75	97.94	
		N_S=1675	N_F=533	

Source: Institutional Student and Faculty Perception Survey, 2023-2025

6.5.1 Institutional and Academic Drivers

The institutional dimension emerges as the **strongest contributor to student uncertainty**, with nearly all factors scoring above **85% among students and faculty alike**.

- **Lack of career counseling (Students: 93.37%, Faculty: 87.80%)** directly explains why career pathways remain vague. This confirms that uncertainty is not about teaching hours alone, but about missing structured guidance.

- The **transition from rigid curricula to sudden multidisciplinary reforms** (Students: 82.33%, Faculty: 97.00%) was flagged as highly disruptive. Faculty perceive it more acutely than students, indicating stress in adapting to policy-driven reforms without sufficient institutional support.

- **Infrastructure gaps (88–98%)**—particularly poor facilities for practicing updated curricula—reinforce theoretical over practical knowledge. Both students and faculty agree that such conditions weaken skill acquisition.

- **Overcrowded classes (Students: 92.12%, Faculty: 89.31%)** further dilute personalized learning, reducing employability confidence.

- The shortage of **efficient teachers trained for new curricula (Students: 87.58%, Faculty: 66.79%)** shows a significant perception gap: students feel the absence more strongly, while many faculty may not fully recognize their own limitations.

- Finally, **weak industry–academia linkages (Students: 91.70%, Faculty: 82.74%)** underline why job placements and internships remain poor, feeding high SUI values.

6.5.2 Economic and Labour Market Constraints

Here, **job market volatility (Students: 97.49%, Faculty: 89.68%)** was the single highest-cited factor across the entire survey. Both groups recognize that automation, gig economy dynamics, and global economic instability severely undermine certainty about stable employment.

- **Regional/state disparities (94.57%, 85.74%)** reflect spatial inequities, where students from rural/peripheral colleges are systematically disadvantaged.

- **Skill mismatch (88.12%, 81.24%)** intensifies anxiety about the value of degrees in the labor market.

Even when faculty responsibility and teaching quality improve, external economic conditions maintain a high baseline of uncertainty.

6.5.3 Social and Cultural Pressures

Social factors were also significant:

- **Parental/peer pressure (82.87%, 73.92%)** reduces student agency, often pushing students into "safe" but less suitable careers.

- **First-generation learners (87.04%, 81.43%)** remain particularly vulnerable, lacking informal role models.

- **Gender restrictions (79.04%, 70.54%)** illustrate how cultural expectations constrain female students' educational and career choices.

Social capital and cultural constraints remain invisible yet powerful barriers, explaining why even well-structured institutions still show high SUI.

6.5.4 Policy and Governance Gaps

Policy-level weaknesses add a final systemic layer:

- **Long gaps in reforms (80–88%)** create instability in teaching and planning.

- **Financial aid and scholarships (45.85% students, 27.39% faculty)** are acknowledged by fewer respondents, but for those affected, the economic stress is acute.

- **Weak employment policies at state level (98.75% students, 97.94% faculty)** received overwhelming agreement, showing this as the most structural constraint, far exceeding national-level policy gaps.

Students and faculty overwhelmingly believe that **regional/state-level employment policy failure** is the deepest structural cause of uncertainty, locking colleges in high-SUI conditions regardless of internal efforts.

This above analysis demonstrates that **student uncertainty is overdetermined**—rooted simultaneously in **institutional deficits**, **economic volatility**, **social-cultural pressures**, and **policy weaknesses**. Even as Faculty Responsibility (FRI) and Quality of Education (QE) improve, these structural factors keep SUI persistently high.

In other words, **teaching reforms alone cannot lower SUI**; the solution requires a multi-level policy intervention that integrates career services, labor market alignment, social support systems, and targeted state employment reforms.

6.6 Major Causes of Disrupted Faculty Responsibility and Its Impacts on Quality Education in the Higher Institutions

Table 13: Major Causes of Disrupted Faculty Responsibility and Its Impacts on Quality Education

Category	Specific Causes of Faculty Disruption	No. of Faculty Responses	% of Faculty Responses	Implications for Quality Education
Administrative Overload	Excessive non-teaching duties (meetings, election duties, record-keeping, accreditation tasks, etc.)	376	70.54	Reduces time for class preparation and student mentoring; erodes teaching focus.
Curricular Pressure	Rapid shift from traditional curriculum to multidisciplinary updated frameworks without adequate training	367	68.86	Faculty struggle to adapt, leading to managed teaching rather than meaningful learning outcomes.
	Declining Inter-gap between Semester Examination & Completion instead of Scheduled 6-Months	434	81.43	
	Frequent and Excessive Examination & Evaluation Duty	456	85.55	
Resource Deficit	Lack of updated teaching aids, ICT facilities, labs, and libraries matched to updated curriculum	464	87.05	Faculty unable to provide practical exposure and Students rely on rote learning instead of skills.
	Lack of Workshops, Orientation and likely programmes to well-conduct the new curriculum	444	83.30	
Faculty Shortages	Vacant full-time posts	416	78.05	Increases workload on existing teachers Reduces individual student engagement.
	Conditional ad-hoc appointments and contractual hiring	433	81.23	
Professional Development Gaps	Limited training in new pedagogy, research integration, or industry-linked practices	434	81.43	Teaching remains out-dated Students receive knowledge misaligned with current job markets.
Policy and Governance Burden	The top-down reforms with little consultation; pressure for compliance with guidelines over creativity	426	79.92	Faculty autonomy weakens Teaching becomes mechanical Quality education declines.
	Long term and large amount of unreceived due regarding DA and likely benefits from govt.	511	95.87	Loosening the interests in academic activities Declining the interests in professional responsibilities
	Lacking the least grants, schemes and projects to institutional infrastructural and facilities development for the years	506	94.93	Lacking infrastructure and facilities decline the interests in practical and quality education
Job Insecurity & Stress	Contractual/ Conditional employment like WCTT, SACT, etc.	376	70.54	Reduces motivation, commitment, and innovation in teaching-learning.
	Poor incentives,	386	72.42	Reduces the time expended for teaching

	Lack of recognition	372	69.79	and learning rather than support economies
	Finding the side occupations for economic smoothness and comforts	383	71.85	
Industry - Academia Disconnect	Weak collaboration with industries & poor internship coordination	432	81.05	Faculty cannot guide students on career pathways, deepening student uncertainty.
		N_F=533	100.00	

Source: Institutional Faculty Perception Survey, 2023-2025

The faculty perception survey (NF = 533) highlights multiple **systemic stressors** affecting faculty responsibility. These disruptions are not isolated; rather, they represent a **multi-dimensional burden** that significantly diminishes teaching quality and indirectly sustains a high Student Uncertainty Index (SUI).

6.6.1 Administrative Overload (70.54%): A substantial proportion of faculty report being overburdened with non-teaching duties such as election work, record-keeping, and accreditation exercises. This reduces the time and energy available for **lesson planning, mentoring, and innovation in pedagogy**, ultimately lowering the teaching focus and the quality of student learning.

6.6.2 Curricular Pressure (68.86–85.55%): The rapid and poorly supported transition to **multidisciplinary curricula** creates adjustment challenges. Faculty cite shrinking gaps between examinations and course completion (81.43%) and the heavy burden of evaluation duties (85.55%) as compounding stress factors. This results in a form of "managed education" where courses are delivered for compliance rather than for meaningful outcomes.

6.6.3 Resource Deficits (83.30–87.05%): Almost nine out of ten faculty members indicate a lack of adequate **teaching aids, ICT resources, labs, and training workshops**. Without these, faculty cannot implement the updated curriculum effectively, forcing students to rely on rote learning rather than gaining skills aligned with job markets.

6.6.4 Faculty Shortages (78.05–81.23%): Vacant posts and the prevalence of ad-hoc or contractual hiring exacerbate workloads, diluting student–teacher engagement and individualized mentoring. This structural shortage weakens the **student learning experience** despite faculty efforts.

6.6.5 Professional Development Gaps (81.43%): Most faculty members report limited opportunities for training in **new pedagogies, research integration, or industry-linked practices**, leaving their teaching outdated and disconnected from present employment needs.

6.6.6 Policy and Governance Burden (79.92–95.87%): This is the **most acute stressor**: long delays in receiving allowances (95.87%) and the absence of grants for institutional development (94.93%) erode motivation and institutional capacity. Top-down reforms without adequate consultation weaken faculty autonomy, leading to **mechanical compliance** rather than **creative teaching**.

6.6.7 Job Insecurity and Stress (69.79–72.42%): Precarious employment conditions (e.g., WCTT, SACT contracts), poor incentives, lack of recognition, and the necessity of side occupations generate stress. This diverts attention from teaching-learning to survival strategies, reducing commitment and innovation.

6.6.8 Industry–Academia Disconnect (81.05%): Weak institutional linkages with industries and insufficient internship opportunities diminish faculty ability to **guide students on career pathways**, thereby directly sustaining **student uncertainty about employability**.

The findings confirm that **faculty responsibility is not just an individual attribute but a structurally constrained phenomenon**. Administrative overload, curriculum overload, and governance-related delays emerge as the most significant disruptions, while resource gaps and job insecurity add further systemic strain. These disruptions produce a **chain effect**: reduced teaching quality, poor practical exposure, skill mismatch and student uncertainty. Thus, even with improved faculty commitment, structural bottlenecks prevent significant gains in educational quality or reductions in SUI.

7. Major Findings and Policy Recommendations for Strengthening Faculty Responsibility and Quality Education in Higher Institutions

Table 14: Major Findings and Policy Recommendations

Major Findings (Evidence from Surveys)	Implications for Quality Education & Student Outcomes	Policy Recommendations
Moderate average Faculty Responsibility Index (FRI = 0.54); wide variation with many colleges in *Weak/Red Zones*.	Teaching efforts diluted by administrative/non-teaching load; uneven faculty engagement across institutions.	Rationalize workloads by separating teaching and non-teaching duties; recruit administrative staff to reduce faculty burden.

Persistently high Student Uncertainty Index (SUI = 81.97%) across all colleges.	Students lack career clarity despite moderate teaching quality; employability concerns remain systemic.	Establish structured career counselling centres; strengthen internship/placement cells; embed employability skills in curricula.
Quality of Education Perception Score (QE = 3.06, moderate) with several institutions in *Low/Very Low* category.	Students perceive education as passable, not transformative; practical exposure missing.	Invest in ICT, labs, libraries; promote interactive pedagogy; link evaluation to competencies, not rote learning.
Red Zone institutions (C, D, E, G, I, L, P, U, X): low FRI, high SUI, low QE.	These colleges face critical erosion of faculty role and student confidence.	Priority intervention: faculty hiring, resource infusion, targeted policy reforms at college level.
External structural factors (85–98% student/faculty agreement): lack of career counselling, poor infrastructure, weak industry linkages, regional disparities, policy gaps.	Career anxiety persists regardless of faculty effort; systemic disconnect between higher education and job market.	Build industry–academia partnerships; regional employment missions; align higher education with labor market demands.
Faculty disruption factors (70–95% faculty responses): overload from exams/admin work, resource deficit, faculty shortages, lack of training, job insecurity.	Faculty unable to focus on core teaching/mentoring roles; autonomy weakened; professional morale declining.	Fill vacancies; stabilize appointments (phase out ad-hoc/conditional hiring); expand faculty development centres; ensure timely financial/benefit disbursement.
Policy & governance failures (95.87% faculty cite delayed dues; 94.93% cite lack of grants).	Demotivated faculty, declining institutional quality, widening gap between policy intent and classroom practice.	Ensure timely disbursement of salaries/benefits; decentralize reforms with bottom-up consultation; increase funding for institutional development.
Source: Findings and Implications Analysis based on the Result and Discussion from Surveyed Database, 2023-2025		

❧ Key Recommendations:

❖ **Rationalize Faculty Workload**

- Separate teaching from administrative responsibilities by appointing dedicated non-academic staff.

- Ensure adequate time for preparation, mentoring, and research.

❖ **Strengthen Faculty Capacity and Security**

- Fill vacant posts and reduce dependence on ad-hoc/contractual appointments.

- Institutionalize continuous professional development, including training in new curricula, ICT, and industry-linked practices.

- Ensure timely payment of allowances, grants, and incentives to restore morale.

❖ **Enhance Student Support Systems**

- Establish career counselling centres in all colleges.

- Develop structured internship and placement programmes in collaboration with industries.

- Embed employability skills, entrepreneurship, and soft skills into curricula.

❖ **Reform Policy and Governance Structures**

- Adopt consultative, bottom-up reforms rather than top-down directives.

- Increase funding for infrastructure, labs, and digital resources aligned with updated curricula.

- Design regional/state-level employment policies that address local disparities.

Rebuilding faculty responsibility and reducing student uncertainty require multi-level reforms. Only by strengthening faculty autonomy, enhancing resources, and aligning education with labor markets can higher institutions move from *amber–red fragility* toward a *green zone of resilient, quality education*.

8. Conclusion

This study confirms that the collapse of teaching duties in higher institutions is neither incidental nor individual but deeply rooted in systemic disruptions. The analysis of 25 colleges, supported by faculty and student perception surveys, reveals that while the **Faculty Responsibility Index (FRI)** holds a strong positive correlation with the **Quality of Education (QE)**, the **Student Uncertainty Index (SUI)** remains alarmingly high across all institutions. This paradox underscores that faculty diligence alone cannot mitigate the broader structural and policy barriers that undermine student confidence in education and career pathways.

The findings identify **administrative overload, curricular mismanagement, resource deficits, faculty shortages, inadequate professional development, job insecurity, and governance failures** as the principal disruptors of faculty responsibility. These factors collectively dilute teaching focus, weaken practical exposure, and erode the dignity of the academic profession. Simultaneously, students experience persistent uncertainty shaped by poor career counselling,

limited industry linkages, volatile job markets, and weak regional employment policies.

The evidence suggests that restoring the dignity and effectiveness of higher education requires a **multi-level reform strategy**: (i) safeguarding faculty time and autonomy for teaching and mentoring, (ii) equipping institutions with resources, infrastructure, and training, (iii) embedding career counselling and industry linkages into the student experience, and (iv) implementing stable, consultative policy frameworks with timely financial and institutional support.

In conclusion, when teaching duties collapse, the entire chain of higher education suffers—faculty roles are eroded, quality declines, and students are left directionless. Rebuilding this chain demands urgent, integrated reforms that place **faculty responsibility and student certainty at the heart of higher education policy**. Only then can institutions move beyond survival in the amber–red zones toward a resilient, transformative green zone of quality education.

☯ Limitations and Scope for Future Research

Table 15: Limitations and Scope for Future Research

Limitations	Future Research Directions
Reliance on **cross-sectional perception surveys** of students and faculty; findings may reflect perceptual bias rather than objective outcomes.	Conduct **longitudinal studies** to track faculty responsibility, student uncertainty, and quality outcomes over time.
Geographic restriction to 25 colleges in selected regions; limited generalizability across India or internationally.	**Expand institutional coverage** to universities and colleges across diverse regions and governance structures.
Indices such as FRI, SUI, and **QE-Score** rely on self-reported and institutional data, needing stronger validation.	Validate indices against **graduate employability data, performance metrics, and independent quality audits**.
Greater emphasis on **institutional and structural factors**; less attention to micro-level teaching dynamics.	Examine **pedagogy variations, classroom innovations, and faculty coping strategies** in future studies.
Lack of experimental testing of policy measures to reduce faculty disruption or student uncertainty.	Undertake **pilot interventions** (e.g., reduced administrative load, structured career counselling, stronger industry–academia collaboration) to evaluate effectiveness.
Study context limited to a single national setting.	Pursue **cross-country comparative research** to assess whether faculty role disruptions are context-specific or part of global higher education trends.

Source: Author's Own Composition, 2025

References

1. All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE). (2021). *AICTE annual report 2020–21*. New Delhi: AICTE.

2. Altbach, P. G. (2015). *The dilemmas of ranking: The international imperative and the national response*. Higher Education, 70(1), 1–13. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-014-9826-1

3. Altbach, P. G., Reisberg, L., & Rumbley, L. E. (2009). *Trends in global higher education: Tracking an academic revolution*. UNESCO.

4. Aristovnik , A., Kerˇziˇc , D., Ravšelj , D., Tomaževiˇc, N. and Umek, L. (2020). Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Life of Higher Education Students: A Global Perspective. Sustainability 12, 8438, 1-34. https://doi.org/10.3390/su12208438

5. Barnett, R. (2000). *Realizing the university in an age of supercomplexity*. Open University Press.

6. Brennan, J., & Shah, T. (2019). *Quality assurance in higher education: Policies, practices and perceptions*. Routledge.

7. Choudaha, R., & van Rest, E. (2018). *Envisioning pathways to 2030: Megatrends shaping the future of global higher education and international student mobility*. StudyPortals, EAIE & AIEA.

8. Choudhury, R. (2023). Teacher Burnout in West Bengal and Its Societal Implications: A Comprehensive Analysis. International Research Journal of Modernization in Engineering Technology and Science, 5 (8), 2677-2686.

9. Dewangan, R.L., Longkumer, I., Gupta, S. and Pathak, S. (2024). Beyond (COVID-19) lockdown: faculty experiences in the postpandemic academic landscape. Front. Educ. 9:1348775. https://doi.org/ 10.3389/feduc.2024.1348775.

10. Government of India. (2020). *National Education Policy 2020*. Ministry of Education. https://www.education.gov.in/nep-2020

11. Government of West Bengal. (2022). *Higher education in West Bengal: Statistical handbook 2021–22*. Kolkata: Department of Higher Education.

12. Harvey, L., & Green, D. (1993). *Defining quality*. Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 18(1), 9–34. https://doi.org/10.1080/0260293930180102

13. Hque, J. (2021). Quality Issue of Higher Education in West Bengal. Strad Research, 8 (1), 380-395. https://doi.org/10.37896/sr8.1/043

14. India, University Grants Commission (UGC). (2019). *Quality mandate of UGC for higher education institutions of India*. University Grants Commission. https://www.ugc.ac.in

15. India, University Grants Commission (UGC). (2022). *Annual report 2021–22*. UGC.

16. Knight, J., & Woldegiorgis, E. T. (2017). *Regionalization of African higher education: Progress and prospects*. Sense Publishers.

17. Maringe, F., & Sing, N. (2014). *Teaching large classes in an increasingly internationalising higher education environment: Pedagogical, quality and equity issues*. Higher Education, 67, 761–782. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-013-9710-0

18. McCowan, T. (2016). *Universities and the post-2015 development agenda: An analytical framework*. Higher Education, 72(4), 505–523. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-015-9965-6

19. Mok, K. H., & Neubauer, D. (Eds.). (2016). *Higher education governance in crisis: A critical reflection*. Springer.

20. Naru, R. and Choudhary, R. P. (2022). Study on Different Issues before Undergraduate College Teachers in West Bengal. Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research, 9 (1), e350-e355.

21. National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC). (2017). *Manual for self-study report: Affiliated/Constituent colleges*. Bangalore: NAAC.

22. National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT). (2024). Voices of Teachers and Teacher Educators. Ministry of Education, Government of India, New Delhi, XIII (I), 1-180.

23. Nicolescu, L., & Păun, C. (2009). *Relating higher education with the labour market: Graduates' expectations and employers' requirements*. Tertiary Education and Management, 15(1), 17–33. https://doi.org/10.1080/13583880802699999

24. Planning Commission, Government of India. (2013). *Twelfth Five-Year Plan (2012–2017): Social sectors, volume III*. Sage Publications.

25. Pyne, P. and Gope, L. (2022). Reflection of Pandemic Crisis over Trajectory of Educational Leadership: Challenges of Higher Education Institutions in West Bengal. American Journal of Educational Research, 10 (6): 413-419. https://doi.org/10.12691/education-10-6-7.

26. Rawat, A. and Dabas, P. (Eds.) (2018). Assuring Quality in Higher Education: Innovations and Challenges. Maharaja Surajmal Institute & Excellent Publishing House, 1-198.

27. Salmi, J. (2009). *The challenge of establishing world-class universities*. The World Bank.

28. Scott, P. (2014). *The reform of higher education in Europe*. In The Palgrave Handbook of European Higher Education Policy (pp. 23–40). Palgrave Macmillan.

29. Teichler, U. (2009). *Higher education and the world of work: Conceptual frameworks, comparative perspectives, empirical findings*. Sense Publishers.

30. Tight, M. (2019). *Higher education research: The developing field*. Bloomsbury.

31. Trow, M. (2006). *Reflections on the transition from elite to mass to universal access: Forms and phases of higher education in modern societies since WWII*. International Handbook of Higher Education, 18, 243–280. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4020-4012-2_13

32. UNESCO. (2021). *Reimagining our futures together: A new social contract for education*. UNESCO Publishing.

33. World Bank. (2020). *The changing nature of work and implications for tertiary education*. The World Bank.

34. Yorke, M. (2006). *Employability in higher education: What it is – What it is not*. Higher Education Academy.

35. Zha, Q. (2009). *Diversification or homogenization in higher education: A global perspective*. Higher Education in Europe, 34(3–4), 459–479. https://doi.org/10.1080/03797720903356618