

Inferences of SWOT Analysis

a) e-governance/Institution Governance

Strengths:

- High level of motivation to implement academic and examination reforms at the level of faculty and management.
- University has been accredited since 2002 and re-accredited by NACC for all its programmes running in the campus and constituent colleges with B grade from December, 2009.
- Campus has a network of internal communication through a dedicated telephone exchange with DID (Direct Inward Dialling) facility.
- Campus has a dedicated optical fibre based computer network wired for 1028 I O points which is being further extended for hostels with a Wi-Fi network under NMEICT program.
- University has started implementing computerized reader services and online catalogue facility in the H.P. University Library for which dedicated computer network within the Library with access across departments has been provided. This is being done through SOUL software of inflibnet.
- University also in the process of receiving funding from UGC Inflibnet for digitization of books, thesis etc. and an MOU has already been signed for this purpose.
- All departments, to generate internal resources, have self-financing seats. Part of these fund raised through these seats are available to the Departments to upgrade their infrastructural facilities such as computational needs, raising of seminar halls, repair of instruments, purchase of equipment's to help appoint guest faculty, contract faculty and human resource such as technicians etc.
- University has a well-made vision document with a strategic Plan in Place (**Appendix-**). This document has been made after wider discussions, brain storming sessions, seminars on quality assurance with invited inputs from faculty, students and stake holders. Vision document has identified implementable time line in the form of PERT Chart. It is a comprehensive strategic plan document of the University.
- University has well drafted student charter showing the commitment of the University towards transparency, good practices and empathy towards the students and other stake holders. (**Appendix-**).

- University has floated twenty three clubs/societies for providing linkage of the Departments/Institutes with communities within the campus and outside the campus. **(Appendix-)**.
- H.P. University has an active Internal Quality Assurance Cell, which has acted in the last 2 years as a think tank for identifying academic, governance, equity and access initiatives.
- University has a dedicated Computer Centre for the Examination Wing, which has developed inhouse software for pre and post examination processes.
- University has a website which is regularly updated and has dedicated web applications for on-line services for students(e-examinations form, down loadable pdf forms, down loadable courses of study etc.) and is turning out to be boon for the stake holders internationally.
- IQAC acts as think tank of the University's new academic and governance initiatives and has many success stories in the last 3 years.
- IQAC has focused on systematic and scientific interventions.
- IQAC has adopted participatory approach through working groups, seminars, lectures, e forms etc.
- IQAC conducts e-survey.
- IQAC alive to quality assurance needs.
- IQAC use IT Tools, brochures, calendars, cards to keep stake holders aware about quality issues.
- IQAC regularly hold meetings as per UGC & NAAC requirements.
- IQAC maintains records that are accreditation ready records.

Weaknesses:

- Location of the University in a hilly terrain also is a severe constraining factor for the expansion of University horizontally.
- Absence of reliable air connectivity inhibits University-Industry interaction.

- Absence of timely implementation of approved projects because of out dated rules and regulations and red tapism at the finance end has resulted in delays leading to surrendering of funds.
- Budgetary allocations are not increasing with rising cost of needed resources for various courses where new technologies and practices are changing at a fast pace.
- Funds for strengthening resources have dwindled on the part of University.
- Tenure position of just 2 years for chairpersons of departments is too small to take any effective steps.
- Culture of appointment of faculty specialized in a particular area of research is evaporating with no plan in place to encourage development in niche areas and to produce manpower which is employable.
- Alumni association is inactive with low flow of charitable/gratuitous grants.
- No funds are available for repair and maintenance of equipments in regular budget.
- Support staff available in the Departments is not adequately trained and University finds it difficult to put them on alternative jobs involving same financial compensation.
- Poor work culture and non-anticipation of timely action is leading to pending of projects and frustration at the level of stake holders.
- Non-teaching wings are also running at much lower sanctioned strengths and e-governance is at a very low pace to have tangible effects on the functioning of the administrative wings.
- Some of the Departments even after more than 40 years of the establishment of the University are functioning from temporary sheds.
- University does not stick to budget allocations leading to further deterioration in quality of services.
- Sanitary conditions are awful, toilets are in disrepair, an area of concern for comfortable learning environment.
- In some departments only form of facilities is there without functionality.
- Late declaration of results impacts poorly on credibility of the University functioning and gathers negative reporting in media.

- Internal Resource Generation is inadequate, service support services are being provided to the users at highly subsidized prices. Fee structure needs to be revised and linked with price index.
- Shimla Campus of H.P. University has no land to grow further infrastructure.
- Fee for support services provided by University to affiliated colleges is too meager to met actual expenses.
- For raising infrastructure, design of facilities being created should be as per the norms of regulatory bodies such as AICTE, UGC, BCI, MCI etc. University should ensure compliance of such regulations.
- Provide more financial autonomy to make academic autonomy a reality, because academic autonomy is meaningless without financial autonomy.
- While starting new programmes provision for academic spaces, faculty, laboratory requirements and other such needs should be a prerequisite so that innovative initiatives do not die in the absence of vital requirements.
- To encourage healthy work culture a system of monitoring should be put in place which honour performer and penalizes non-performers.
- Biometric attendance system should be introduced uniformly to bring punctuality with proper monitoring.
- Following e-governance initiatives should be given highest priority
 - Computerization of CCA and End term examinations.
 - Online forms for variety of needs of the stake holders.
 - Introduction of e-banking.
 - Mandatory e-mail account for all teaching, non-teaching and registered students.
 - Complete computerization of Library Introduction
 - Computerized Fund Management system
 - Computerized student help computer centres should be opened in all affiliated colleges to reach students and provide them hassle free e-support services.
- Dedicated online Distance Learners Resource centre needs to be in place to address their day-today conceives with direct access to mentors.

- To take care of late declaration of results it is desired to completely computerize the examination process by encouraging investment in ICT and redeployment of current staff in examination wing towards ICT processes through adequate training.
- University Library lacks e-governance.
- Outdated account manuals and procedures prevailing in the system lead to unnecessary objections by Finance and Audit Wings.

Opportunities:

Vision document of the Himachal Pradesh University has provided a complete overview of opportunities with an action plan. However, during SWOT following opportunities were highlighted:

- Biggest opportunity is to bring full e-governance at all levels of University functioning.
- Investment in e-learning and starting of Massive Online Open Course (MOOC's) is an opportunity waiting to be harnessed for quality education and to generate resources particularly through distance education mode.
- Alumni resources need to be tapped as an opportunity for generating endowments etc. through their emotional bond with the Alma Mater and for raising dedicated facilities providing them visibility on the campus.
- Conversion of all IQAC processes web enabled for getting on-line data and feedback.
- Involvement of outside agencies to performs SWOT to get objective assessment of quality assurance before going towards next reaccreditation process.
- Conduct awareness programs in the form of workshops, seminars and group discussions about implementation of quality needs

Threats:

- Absence of monitoring, accountability and responsibility.
- Lackadaisical approach to computerization with no comprehensive MIS and dedicated manpower at the University level.
- Disinterest/lack of motivation among the non-teaching employees.
- Dwindling manpower for main key wings of University such as examination wing, support staff in departments and technical manpower.

- Entry of Private Universities with better infrastructure leading to intense competition encroaching upon the catchment area of students traditionally belonging to Himachal Pradesh University.
- Disinterest of the bureaucrats/politicians towards higher educational institutions.
- Malafide academic practices in private Universities putting Public Universities to disadvantage.
- Universities carry negative public perception.
- Biggest threat is negative attitude and indifference in academic and administrative governance at levels with a does not matter mindset.
- Too much individual dependent system, lack of institutionalization of governance.
- University suffers from Institutional memory loss.
- Indifference towards the needs of IQAC to have a permanent e-processed vital data of the various units of the University from time to time

b) Research innovation efforts.

Strengths:

- All Science Departments have DST FIST and UGC SAP programmes running for the last one decade with visible impact on their increased research output and improved infrastructure facilities.
- University is part of UGC e-resources network through inflibnet and has access to e-journals and resources on 24x7 basis.
- University is part of UGC inflibnet *Shodh Ganga* and *Shodh Gangotri* portals for uploading M. Phil and Ph. D. synopsis, thesis and dissertations.
- Apart from central library number of Departments have departmental libraries (English, Chemistry, HPUBS, UIIT, Regional Centre Dharamshala, ICDEOL, UCBS, HPU Centre for Evening Studies).
- All science and technology departments have computer Laboratories and specialized laboratories for high end research.
- There is a functional University Science Instrumentation Centre (USIC).
- All the departments have global approach in terms of linkages for research.
- A very good number of students qualify for JRF, NET, SET and the availability of students for Ph. D. programmes is for more what different department can absorb at the current faculty strength with a UGC rider that not more than eight Ph.D. students can be registered with a faculty member at any given point of time.
- Most faculty members in science departments have inter disciplinary, intra and inter University collaborations supported by research publications.
- Most of the science departments have funding for research activities from national and international funding agencies. (DRDO, CSIR, UGC, DST, ICMR).
- Arts and languages departments receive funding from agencies like ICSSR and through linkages with foreign collaboration such as with Canada and Australia.
- Number of departments have established functional subject societies to encourage subject based interactions by organizing seminars conferences etc. on regular basis providing opportunities for networking and research collaborations.

- Faculty across all disciplines are encouraged to participate in national and international seminars on frontier areas of current interest. In the last five years all the faculty members who applied for attending international seminars/conferences with an accepted paper presentation were supported with 50% airfare, full registration and local DA.
- University has good credibility and reputation among students peer groups with established credentials for research.
- University brings out regularly its University New Letter (*Him Shikhar*). It also has Inter Disciplinary Research Journal of Himachal Pradesh University and HPU Business School has its own journal called Shimla Management Journal. University has funded manuscripts for publication by the faculty in niche areas of specialization.
- Some of the departments have a unique existence and are pioneers in their respective areas such as:
 - Department of Visual Arts.
 - Institute of Integrated Himalayan Studies (IIHS).
 - Tribal study centre
 - Population research centre
 - Agro economics research centre
 - Department of Buddhist studies.
 - Department of Foreign Languages.
 - Women Study Centre.
- Faculty is publishing its research articles in peer reviewed journals with high impact factor. Impact factor analysis provided by Infilbnet is attached to provide a comprehension view. (**Appendix-**).
- University has undertaken academic activities to broaden dialogue among stakeholders through
 - Regular holding of topical seminars/conference both at national or international level.
 - Holding of annual foundation day celebrations.
 - Initiation of University lecture series by eminent scholars, statesman and visitors from abroad.
- In the last 3 years faculty has been motivated to write projects from various funding agencies. 70 such projects are under active consideration of the funding agencies.
- University has through its faculty mentored many academic programmes by providing consultancy and intellectual resources.

Weaknesses:

- Very small number of Departments have departmental libraries with e-connectivity, which is a felt need particularly by researchers.
- Departments feel financial resource crunch and this is a big stumbling block in introducing innovations impacting quality.
- No University research grants are available for different departments.
- Research scholars do not have adequate space in some departments to sit down and work.
- Library books are not adequately maintained on the stacks with dust piling on the books and torn books require binding

Opportunities:

- Opportunity to bring dormant linkages to outside world to life by invigorating
 - University-Industry linkages
 - Establishment of a placement and training cell with full time placement officer.
- Generating geographic specific trained manpower for
 - Tourism industry
 - Foreign language interpreters (Japanese, Chinese)
 - Courses in pahari, pali, prakrit, manuscripts logy and epigraphy
 - NGO's for mountain sustainability
 - Community work and engagement
 - Study of Himalayan communities
 - Study of traditional technologies
 - Cultural and environment studies of Western Himalayas
- Opening of windows of University with the outside world through MOU's, mentoring programmes, research collaborations, national and international programs, linkages with University.
- University with a very dedicated and well recognised faculty with publication in peer reviewed can start research centres and incubation centre in the area of
 - Bio-Technology
 - Nano-Science
 - Polymer Science
 - Nuclear Technology
 - Information Technology and Computer Science
 - Instrumentation
 - Bio-Informatics

-Computational Material Science

-Science Education and Research

These will help faculty to do high impact research and develop patentable technologies and facilities to train high end manpower.

- Opportunities are waiting for innovation in teaching and learning through subject based education research with focus on learning outcomes, objectives and goals.
- Departments like HPUBS, UIIT, Bio-Technology, Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics and Statistics, IIHS, Sociology, Yoga, Psychology and Geography departments can provide project based consultancy to industry entrepreneurs and other clients.
- Opportunity to have at least one smart classroom in each department/institute connected to National Knowledge Network for video conferencing, webinars, discussion meetings, online case studies and bearing of lectures to stake holders on regular basis.
- Opportunity to take up private/public participation to fund innovative/incubation programs of the University.
- Opportunity to provide extension services for mental and physical health.

Threats:

- Stiff competition from national institutes such as IIT, IIIT, NIT, Central University of Himachal Pradesh, National law schools/universities.

c) Academic & Examination Reforms

Strengths:

- Admissions in all faculties for various UG and PG programmes is held through entrance examinations to attract merit based students with reservations for SC/ST/OBC students to provide equity & access.
- University has revised its UG syllabi in all subjects in CBCS mode after a rigorous exercise by involving stake holders in the form of working groups, workshops and discussions before approval by statutory bodies such as Board of Studies, susceptible faculty and academic council.
- All departments have modern ICT tools such as LCD projectors, Laptops etc. to use these for class room instruction, conduct of seminars, conferences etc.
- The number of students seeking admissions always outnumber the number of available seats.
- All professional departments HPUBS, UIIT, Computer Science Department, Institute of Vocational studies have a placement cell. Number of high end firms MNC's visit under the aegis of these cells to recruit students with average placement of 60%.
- All professional departments have alumni linkages through their respective student associations
- Syllabi in various courses are in conformity with statutory national regulatory bodies such as Bar council of India, All India Council for Technical Education, UGC Model syllabi, Phamasetion Council of India, Medical Council of India, Homeopathic Council of India.
- Regular revision of syllabi is undertaken in a participative mode with due approval by statutory bodies.
- University has the oldest Distance Education Program in the University, which has from this year introduced special admission at a highly subsidized fee for SC/ST/OBC and girl students.

Weaknesses:

- There is no centralized placement cell and majority of the students from other than professional courses are left to fend themselves on their own.
- Students of Performing Arts and Visual Arts have inadequate studies facilities indulge in much needs practice for these courses.

- Not all registered Ph.D. students are getting fellowship for pursuing their degree with low number of fellowship for researchers.
- There is no dedicated cluster of class rooms, examination hall, seminar/conference/convention halls in available to meet diverse and rising needs of academic stake holders and take care of the RUSA goals to achieve higher GER and meet equity commitments.
- Most of the equipments in teaching laboratories are outdated, which need upgradation.
- New teaching programmes get started without adequate preparation for staff and proper budget.
- There is lack of e-resources for distance learners.
- Distance education learners do not receive reading materials well-in-time.
- No provision for providing reading materials to distance learners via internet.
- Affiliation system puts lot of strain on constrained resources of the system.
- Distance education program requires massive intervention of ICT to make access to distance learners online with delivery of content online on 24 X 7 basis.
- Massive initiative needed for creation on online resources for distance learners with the introduction of Massively Open Online Courses (MOOC).

Opportunities:

- With changing market trends there are ample opportunities to start new degree certificate, diploma and other programs particularly towards vocationalization to make students employable.
- There are opportunities waiting for starting special programs for in-service learners like executive development programs, disaster management programs, areas in social work, ICT short term courses etc.
- Opportunity to continue with examination and academic reforms with more empowerment and autonomy to teachers in the matter of choosing syllabi, assessment and evaluation.

Threats:

- Low priority to meet regulations of regulatory bodies such as NCTE, AICTE, BCI, MCT, PCI, etc.
- Inadequacy of infrastructure for implementation of academic reforms.
- Absence of some courses at Under-Graduate level is threatening some PG departments with closure because of non-availability of quality intake.
- Disinterest of students towards basic sciences and traditional arts subject.
- Future job insecurity because of lack of placement efforts.
- Unemployment among the passed out graduates.
- Lack of vocational courses/community college on the campus.

d) Status of faculty positions

Strengths:

- Available faculty in the University is highly qualified with Ph.D. degrees and well established research programs individually and at the department and institutional levels

Weaknesses:

- Biggest weakness which has been highlighted is the non-availability of adequate teaching Faculty as per the current academic and research needs of different departments. Each department is running much below the sanctioned strength. The number of faculty members in each department has been decreasing which has become further acute with fast rate of superannuation of senior faculty members. Currently there are 449 created position of Professors, Associate Professors and Assistant Professors respectively out of which 231 positions are lying vacant. University has initiated recruitment process but after conduct of interviews the appointment stage is subjudice.
- University has further initiated process for fulfilling 37 number of seats lately.
- Non availability of faculty this is leading to extreme teaching loads leaving no time to the faculty for indulging in focused research. Stop gap arrangement in the form of guest faculty/contract faculty is depriving students of quality faculty.
- University lacks technical staff to man vital facilities in key areas of academic activities such as:
 - University Science Instrumentation Centre(USIC)
 - Library
 - Computer Centre
 - Management of Computer Network
 - University Faculty House

There is an absence of minimum critical number of trained manpower required to keep these facilities running to the satisfaction of students, researcher, teachers and support staff leading to frustration and lack of motivation.

- Recruitment of teaching faculty as per sanctioned strength is the most pressing need. There is a need to give further impetus to the academic and educational reforms without further delay.
- Merit should be the sole criteria for recruitment for different categories of applicants to teaching positions

Opportunities:

- Opportunities to bring adjunct and guest faculty as visiting fellows/professors.

Threats:

- Vacant faculty positions and declining number of teachers because of high rate of superannuation.
- Some of the Departments like Hindi, Sociology, Journalism have been left with single or two teachers and may lead to closure of these departments.
- Non-availability of full-time dedicated placement officer.

e) Equity, access & gender sensitization

Weaknesses:

- All the Departments and Institutes feel non availability of adequate academic spaces with small class rooms and laboratories as key constraining factor. This act as an impediment in increasing Gross Enrollment Ratio(GER).
- Providing decent boarding and lodging facility for students, faculty and visitors in the absence of a good well equipped faculty guest house is also a discouraging factor in establishing linkages. Though faculty tries to compensate this with on-line linkages.
- University operates in a remote and inaccessible geographical terrain to manage its affiliating institutions inhibiting it from introducing much needed academic reforms.
- The two most crucial cells(SC/ST Cell and Statistical Cell) have no qualified manpower to handle vital statistics of the University which are needed for planned interventions and for fetching funds form funding agencies.
- Lack of adequate security staff leading to pilferage toilet accessories making toilet facilities non-functional.
- University though located in hills with long winter does not have central heating facilities in key areas such as Library Buildings are not designed to have passive solar heating leading to inhospitable work environment.
- The buildings are not user friendly for people with different abilities.
- The University should have class room cum seminar Hall cum multipurpose Halls clusters to meet the challenge of increasing GER and to carry forward access and equity agenda.
- Adequate funds be provided to make each building user friendly for people with different abilities.
- Because of geographical constraints limited sports facilities are available on the campus.
- With increasing student strength, Library is not able to support students services such as reading rooms, stacking space and storage facility, which are bursting at the seams.

Opportunities:

- Through National Vocational Educational Qualitative Framework (NVEQF) opportunity is there to develop skill based courses for B.Voc. and M.Voc. programs to enhance employability of students.
- Opportunity to bring focused approach in strengthening equity and access across all stake holders of the University.

Threats:

- Lack of security makes the campus unsafe.
- Lack of safe rooms for female students in the form of common rooms.