

**Title: A Case Study on the Decline in B.Ed. Enrolment at Bhandarwah Campus,
University of Jammu****Ms. Neetu Parihar, Mr. Mohd Amir**

(Contractual lecturers B.Ed. Bhandarwah Campus)

Abstract:

This case study investigates the declining enrolment rates in the Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) program at Bhandarwah Campus, University of Jammu. Despite its reputation, the campus has experienced a significant decrease in student intake since the program's inception in 2015. Using data collected through semi-structured interviews with faculty, students, and administrators, as well as an analysis of enrolment records from 2015 to 2023, this study identifies key factors contributing to this decline. These factors include the emergence of new B.Ed. colleges in neighbouring districts, government policies affecting teacher recruitment, a lack of job vacancies, discrepancies in practical training, administrative changes, financial constraints, and gender-specific challenges. The study provides insights and recommendations for campus administrators and policymakers to address these challenges and improve enrolment rates.

1. Introduction: The Bachelor of Education (B. Ed) program at Bhandarwah Campus, University of Jammu, was established in 2015 with the vision of fostering a new generation of well-trained educators capable of addressing the diverse needs of the region's educational landscape. Over the years, the program has built a reputation for its comprehensive curriculum, experienced faculty, and commitment to practical training. However, despite these strengths, the program has faced a significant decline in student enrolment, particularly in the past few years.

This decline in enrolment is alarming, not only for the sustainability of the B.Ed. program at Bhandarwah Campus but also for the broader educational ecosystem that relies on a steady influx of qualified teachers. The trend of decreasing enrolment raises several questions about the factors driving students away from pursuing a career in education. It also highlights the need for a thorough examination of both external influences and internal administrative practices that may be contributing to this issue.

The present case study aims to provide a detailed analysis of the enrolment trends from 2015 to 2023, identify the underlying causes of the decline, and offer strategic recommendations to reverse this trend. The study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative data from administrative records with qualitative insights from semi-structured interviews conducted with faculty members, students, and administrative personnel.

A deeper understanding of these issues is crucial, given the critical role that teachers play in shaping the future of society. As education evolves to meet the demands of the 21st century, teacher training programs must adapt accordingly. This case study will explore how Bhandarwah Campus can enhance its B.Ed. program to remain competitive, relevant, and attractive to prospective students.

Key factors examined in this study include the emergence of new B.Ed. colleges in neighbouring districts such as Doda and Kishtwar, government policies impacting teacher recruitment, the absence of job vacancies in the teaching profession, discrepancies in practical training standards, recent administrative changes, and financial constraints faced by students. Additionally, the study will address gender-specific challenges, particularly the consistently lower enrolment of male students, and the socio-cultural perceptions influencing their career choices.

By providing a comprehensive overview of these issues and proposing actionable solutions, this study aims to assist campus administrators, policymakers, and other stakeholders in making informed decisions to revitalize the B.Ed. program at Bhaderwah Campus and ensure its long-term viability and success.

2. Methodology: The methodology for this study involved a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches to gather comprehensive data on the factors affecting B.Ed. enrolment at Bhaderwah Campus. Data collection methods included semi-structured interviews, surveys, and analysis of administrative records.

2.1. Semi-Structured Interviews: Semi-structured interviews were conducted with faculty members, students, and administrative staff at Bhaderwah Campus. These interviews aimed to gather in-depth insights into the perceived reasons for declining enrolment, administrative challenges, and suggestions for improvement. Interview questions were designed to be open-ended to allow participants to share detailed perspectives and experiences.

2.2. Surveys: During the SANGAM festival held in October 2023 at Bhaderwah Campus, surveys were distributed to 500 students to gather quantitative data on their perceptions of the B.Ed. program. The survey included questions on factors influencing their decision to enrol or not enrol in the program, their views on the quality of education and practical training, financial constraints, and awareness of new B.Ed. colleges in neighbouring districts.

2.3. Enrolment Records Analysis: Administrative records of student enrolment from 2015 to 2023 were analysed to identify trends and patterns in enrolment numbers. The records provided data on total enrolment, gender distribution, and year-wise changes. This quantitative data helped to highlight the decline in enrolment over the years and the gender-specific disparities.

2.4. Data Synthesis: The qualitative data from interviews and surveys were coded and analysed to identify common themes and recurring issues. Quantitative data from administrative records and surveys were statistically analysed to support the findings from qualitative data. This mixed-methods approach ensured a comprehensive understanding of the factors contributing to declining enrolment.

3. Data Analysis: Enrolment records from 2015 to 2023 indicate a steady decline in the number of students enrolling in the B.Ed. program. The data is summarized in Table 1 below:

Year	Total Enrolment
2015-2017	81
2016-2018	78
2017-2019	73
2018-2020	72
2019-2021	56
2020-2022	51
2021-2023	24
2022-2024	12
2023-2025	21

A detailed gender-wise enrolment analysis is presented in Table 2 below:

Year	Boys	Girls
2015-2017	26	55
2016-2018	12	66
2017-2019	04	69
2018-2020	19	53
2019-2021	04	52
2020-2022	10	41
2021-2023	02	22
2022-2024	06	06
2023-2025	07	14

4. Factors Contributing to Low Enrolment:

4.1. Emergence of New B.Ed. Colleges: The establishment of new B.Ed. colleges in Doda and Kishtwar has provided students with more accessible alternatives, thereby reducing the demand at Bhaderwah Campus. Interviewees highlighted convenience, lower travel costs, and the availability of local accommodations as primary reasons for choosing these new institutions. This increased competition has significantly affected Bhaderwah Campus's enrolment numbers.

4.2. Governmental Policies: The government's order to regularize Extension Teachers (RETs) has reduced the perceived necessity of obtaining a B.Ed. degree. This policy shift has created uncertainty among prospective students about the value and necessity of the B.Ed. qualification for securing teaching positions. Faculty interviews revealed that many potential students are opting for alternative career paths due to this uncertainty.

4.3. Lack of Vacancies: The absence of new teaching vacancies in the past decade has discouraged many from pursuing a B.Ed. degree. Interviewees expressed concerns about the limited job prospects after graduation, which has significantly impacted enrolment decisions. The stagnation in the education sector and limited recruitment drives have made the teaching profession less attractive, particularly for male students.

4.4. Discrepancies in Practical Training: Private colleges in Kashmir offering B.Ed. degrees without requiring physical attendance or practical training have attracted students looking for easier alternatives. This disparity in the quality of education and training undermines the comprehensive training provided at Bhaderwah Campus. Faculty members stressed the importance of practical training in producing competent educators, a factor that should be emphasized in promotional efforts.

4.5. Administrative Changes: Recent changes in the admission process, including the transfer of admission responsibilities to the Campus Development Council (CDC), have introduced new bureaucratic challenges. This change has led to confusion, delays, and a lack of clarity about admission procedures, discouraging potential applicants. Interviews with administrative staff revealed that streamlining these processes could help improve enrolment rates.

4.6. Financial Constraints: The high fees and lack of instalment options present significant financial barriers for many students. Interview data revealed that the inability to pay large sums upfront is a major deterrent for prospective students, particularly those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Providing financial support and flexible payment options could attract more students to the program.

4.7. Gender-Specific Challenges: Enrolment data reveals a consistent trend of lower enrolment numbers for boys compared to girls. Various reasons contribute to this disparity:

- **Employment Opportunities:** Male students perceive fewer job opportunities in the teaching profession due to limited recruitment drives and government policies.
- **Perceived Value:** Many male students view B.Ed. as a fallback option rather than a valuable qualification, leading to a lack of interest in pursuing the degree.
- **Cultural Perceptions:** Societal attitudes and cultural norms sometimes discourage males from entering the teaching profession, which is often seen as more suitable for females.

5. Recommendations:

5.1. Enhancing Program Relevance: The B.Ed. curriculum should be updated to reflect current educational practices and market needs. By integrating innovative teaching methods and addressing emerging educational trends, Bhaderwah Campus can increase the program's appeal. This could involve introducing new specializations and incorporating technology-enhanced learning techniques.

5.2. Strengthening Practical Training: To differentiate itself from other institutions, Bhaderwah Campus should emphasize practical training. Establishing partnerships with local schools can provide hands-on teaching experiences, improving students' practical skills and employability. Enhanced practical training modules will ensure that graduates are well-prepared for real-world teaching challenges.

5.3. Streamlining Administrative Processes: Efforts should be made to simplify administrative procedures and ensure transparency in the admission process. Clear

communication and efficient handling by the CDC can reduce confusion and attract more applicants. Providing comprehensive guides and support for prospective students during the application process can enhance their experience and encourage enrolment.

5.4. Financial Assistance and Scholarships: Introducing financial assistance programs, scholarships, and instalment plans can alleviate the financial burden on students. Making education more affordable will help attract a more diverse and larger student body. Collaborating with government and private organizations to fund scholarships for deserving students can also boost enrolment.

5.5. Marketing and Advertising Budget: Allocating a budget for marketing and advertising in areas like Baderwah, Doda, Kishtwar, and Balesa can significantly enhance visibility and attract more students. Utilizing local media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, local news channels, and newspapers can effectively reach potential students. Last year's efforts by the faculty to promote B.Ed. admissions through these channels, without any budget, successfully increased enrolment from 12 to 21. With proper financial support, these efforts can be expanded and optimized to achieve even better results.

5.6. Addressing Gender Disparities: To attract more male students, the campus should highlight the career prospects and importance of the teaching profession. Efforts should be made to counter cultural perceptions that deter males from pursuing a B.Ed. degree. This can be done through targeted campaigns, success stories of male teachers, and showcasing the impact of male educators in the community.

5.7. Community Engagement and Outreach: Engaging with the local community through workshops, seminars, and open houses can help build awareness about the B.Ed. program's value. Faculty and current students can participate in community events to promote the benefits of a career in education and address any misconceptions.

6. Conclusion: The decline in enrolment in the B.Ed. program at Baderwah Campus, University of Jammu, is a multifaceted issue that requires a comprehensive approach to address. By understanding and addressing the factors contributing to this decline, including competition from new colleges, government policies, lack of vacancies, practical training discrepancies, administrative challenges, financial constraints, and gender-specific challenges, the campus can develop strategies to attract and retain students. Implementing the recommended measures, such as enhancing program relevance, strengthening practical training, streamlining administrative processes, providing financial assistance, allocating a marketing budget, addressing gender disparities, and engaging with the community, can help revitalize the B.Ed. program and ensure its long-term success and sustainability.

References:

Admission Cell Records:

Baderwah Campus Admission Cell. (2024). *Admission Records*. Baderwah Campus, [University of Jammu].

Library Records:

Bhaderwah Campus Library. (2024). *Library Records*. Bhaderwah Campus, [University of Jammu].

Explanation:

1. **Admission Cell Records:**

- *Author:* (Bhaderwah Campus Admission Cell).
- *Year:* 2015-2023.
- *Bhaderwah*

2. **Library Records:**

- *Author:* (Bhaderwah Campus Library).
- *Year:* 2015-2023.
- *Location:* Bhaderwah.