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From the Desk of the Chief Editor

It is with much pleasure that the Mizoram Educational Journal has brought out the September 2025 issue. In the present issue, researchers in the field of education have shared their research findings resulting in a total of ten research articles with data gathered from different parts of India. The topics are varied and range from ramifications of policy changes through NEP 2020 to refugee education within the state of Mizoram.

Cordilia Vanlalhmangaihi and F. Lalrinzuali investigated how co-curricular activities have contributed to the development of essential values while also preserving and celebrating the rich Mizo cultural heritage. Their research findings revealed that most schools lacked activities that focussed on cultural promotion while most of the available activities stressed mainly on value inculcation. The study reiterated the need for educational policies that emphasized culturally relevant co-curricular programs, which shall have the potential to enhance both individual character and cultural continuity in a rapidly modernizing society.

Ignes R. Lalmuanpuii and Nitu Kaur studied the global shift from traditional classroom instruction to online teaching brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, with synchronous modalities of delivery emerging as the main educational approach in Mizoram. This study highlighted the difficulties with recommendations while examining postgraduate teachers' experiences with synchronous online teaching during the epidemic. Results showed that while teachers demonstrated adaptability in transitioning to online teaching, the process was hindered by persistent technological challenges, inadequate digital infrastructure, and a lack of training, particularly in rural areas

Lalremsangi and Sian Lalchhandami conducted a study on the teaching practice of Mizo subject teachers for the development of writing skills of their students. The data collected from 70 Mizo subject teachers teaching in various schools in Mizoram affiliated to Mizoram Board of School Education (MBSE) and Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) revealed some interesting facts like 50% of Mizo subject teachers from MBSE and CBSE gave importance on all of the development of the sub-skills of language such as grammar and vocabulary, organisation of text and building and expression of ideas and argument. However, regarding the strategy adopted for development of writing skill, only less than half of the sample teachers could explain and instruct the correct format based on different types of writing activities.

Laldinsangi Renthlei, along with Nithiya Amirtham S examined the perceptions of diverse groups of college students regarding access and equity in higher education in Mizoram. Their total sample comprised of 1277 college students who were selected through

purposive sampling. Their findings revealed that both the stream of study in college and the medium of instruction in school significantly influenced college students' perceptions of access and equity in higher education in Mizoram.

Mita Banerjee and Pranay Pandey explored the integration of Indian Knowledge Systems into higher education, assessing its current incorporation, barriers to inclusion, and potential benefits for academic rigor, cultural diversity, and interdisciplinary learning. They found that while fields like Ayurveda, Yoga, and Sanskrit have gained institutional support, others such as Vedic mathematics and Indian philosophy remain underrepresented. Challenges include societal perceptions, curriculum rigidity, and institutional resistance. Their study showed the need for policy reforms, faculty training, and innovative pedagogical approaches to bridge traditional and modern knowledge systems.

Laltlanzauvi Kawlni and Ellie Lallianpuii analysed the status and institutional preparedness among colleges of Mizoram in adopting NEP 2020, drawing on data from questionnaires administered to NEP Coordinators and supplemented by interviews with administrators, faculty and students. Their findings revealed progress in areas such as value-added and skill enhancement courses, as well as the introduction of multidisciplinary curricula. However, they also noticed that significant barriers remained, including faculty shortages, infrastructural limitations, financial constraints, administrative delays and uneven awareness or capacity-building efforts. The study highlights the need for clearer guidelines, faculty development initiatives, infrastructural support and collaborative strategies to ensure uniform and effective implementation of NEP 2020 in the state. These insights have great contribution to the understanding of localized challenges of educational reforms in Mizoram.

Zorinpuia Sailo and Lynda Zohmingliani made a general inspection of the impact of holistic learning through multidisciplinary education in undergraduate colleges and highlighted how it is being put into practice in Mizoram. They recorded the changes happening in colleges and the difficulties faced while using this new method in higher education in India. They discovered that, through the introduction to a range of subjects, students could enhance their ability to think critically, innovatively and adapt effectively to the changes happening in their academic environment.

Pakbom Koyu and Muttu Vemula tested the awareness of inclusive education among higher secondary school teachers in Itanagar and Naharlagun, Arunachal Pradesh, within the context of the National Education Policy 2020. Data gathered from a sample of 80 higher secondary school revealed that nearly half of the selected samples had an average awareness about inclusive education with male teachers demonstrating slightly higher awareness than female teachers. The study highlighted a critical need for targeted professional development to enhance teachers' understanding and implementation of inclusive education practices. The findings underscored the importance of tailored training programs and policy adjustments

to address the specific challenges faced by educators in this diverse and geographically challenging region.

Lalramengmawia and Kabita Kumari, in their research on the self-efficacy of Chin refugee children residing in Champhai district. Among 60 refugee children who were in the age group 12-14 years studying in Holy Cross School, Champhai, was found that most of the refugee children had an average level of self-efficacy, this was followed some children having a low level, and there were only a few children who had high level of self-efficacy. Further, girls had a higher level of self-efficacy against their boy counterparts.

V. Vanlalruati and C. Chalthanmawii studied the perspectives of college students with regards to artificial intelligence and human rights. The results showed that most students (73%) had a general, but not particularly deep, understanding of these issues. Female students had noticeably more defined perspectives on the topic than their male peers. While students' fields of study didn't create a huge statistical difference in their views, a clear ranking in the strength of their opinions was found, with B.A. students holding the strongest views and B.Sc. students having the least defined ones. The findings of the study showed that students were aware of AI's significant influence, but they required necessary knowledge to pilot its ethical complicatedness.

All these articles have revealed the importance of sound policy changes in education and the urgent need to follow strict implementation processes in different parts of the nation in the drive to make India a place of educational and developmental growth hub. It is the hope of the Editorial board that readers may enjoy reading these articles and gain more knowledge in the field of education.

Lynda Zohmingliani
Chief Editor

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Promotion of Values and Cultural Preservation through Co-Curricular Activities in Mizoram

Cordilia Vanlalhmangaihi*
F. Lalrinzuali**

Abstract

In Mizoram, cultural identity and community values play a significant role, schools serve not only as centers of academic learning but also as vital spaces for cultural transmission and character formation. Hence, this paper explores the co-curricular activities available in the Secondary Schools of Lawngtlai and Champhai Districts and their role in promoting values and preserving cultural heritage in Mizoram.This study following a qualitative approach investigating how co-curricular activities contribute to the development of essential values while also preserving and celebrating the rich Mizo cultural heritage. The findings reveal that most schools lack activities focusing on cultural promotion while most of the available activities stress mainly on value inculcation. The study emphasises the need for educational policies that emphasize culturally relevant co-curricular programs, which have the potential to enhance both individual character and cultural continuity in a rapidly modernizing society.

Keywords: *Values, Culture, Co-curricular Activities, Cultural Preservation, Holistic Development*

Introduction

In an era of rapid globalization and cultural blending, preserving cultural identity and instilling core values in younger generations has become a huge priority for educators and communities. Schools, as primary institutions for shaping future citizens, hold a unique role in this area, particularly in regions rich in cultural diversity. Education serves as a powerful tool for nurturing values and preserving cultural

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heritage, particularly in multicultural societies. Secondary schools play a crucial role in shaping students' character and instilling a sense of cultural identity. In the districts of Champhai and Lawngtlai in Mizoram, India, where diverse ethnic groups and rich cultural traditions coexist, the education system holds a unique responsibility to promote values that uphold social harmony and respect for heritage. Within this context, co-curricular activities emerge as a vital channel for cultural preservation and value-based education. Co-curricular activities help develop students' holistic development and assist in developing critical skills and abilities to be successful and happy in 21st Century life and workplaces. Therefore, the importance of co-curricular activities is immense during school and college education (Sarkar,2024). A teacher's contribution towards fostering genuine values is a challenging task in view of the stifling academic pressure he usually faces in his job. Still, co-curricular activities should be made an integral part of curriculum (Venkataswamy, 2017).

Co-curricular activities, which complement academic learning, encompass a range of practices such as music, dance, sports, debates, art, and community service etc that offer students opportunities to engage deeply with their culture and values. Culture and value-based co-curricular activities expose students to different cultures and traditions. This way, they expand their cultural awareness and respect (Cole, 2023). Through activities like indigenous dance, traditional crafts, local sports, and cultural festivals, students can explore, experience, and embrace the cultural richness of their heritage. These activities provide a dynamic space for students to experience and embody traditions while developing essential life skills, including teamwork, empathy, leadership, and civic responsibility. In regions like Champhai and Lawngtlai, where students' backgrounds and values are closely tied to local culture, such activities can be instrumental in both promoting positive values and preserving cultural heritage. Some co-curricular activities can deepen learners' understanding of their cultural heritage. Events like drama, folk songs and dances, exhibitions, and religious observances are good opportunities for students to learn about their culture better. This encourages global cohesion while enhancing an awareness of one's own national identity as well (Unis Hanoi).

The purpose of this research is to explore the types of co-curricular activities which are present in the schools and their effectiveness in fostering values and preserving cultural heritage in the secondary schools of Champhai and Lawngtlai districts. This study aims to understand how various co-curricular programs contribute to student's character development, cultural awareness, and appreciation of their heritage. By analysing the practices, challenges, and outcomes associated with co-curricular activities in these districts, this research seeks to highlight the ways in which schools can integrate value education and cultural preservation into

the educational experience, ultimately contributing to a more inclusive and culturally enriched learning environment.

Rationale of the Study

With the growing globalization and modernization traditional cultures, values, and identities of nations around the world face impacts. This has brought new opportunities and challenges for the preservation and transmission of culture and values, particularly for indigenous and rural communities. Co-curricular activities, such as traditional arts, sports, literature, and community-based projects etc play a key role in this process by strengthening cultural awareness, and imparting ethical values to the younger generation. This study examines the type of co-curricular activities which are present and their roles in promoting values and preserving cultural heritage among secondary school students in Champhai and Lawngtlai districts. With globalization and modernization our traditional values and identities are being defied and there is an urgent need to reinforce cultural pride and ethical foundations among younger generations. By investigating how these activities are integrated into the school curriculum, this study aims to provide insights into enhancing cultural education and value transmission, which are essential for sustaining cultural identity and strengthening social bonds.

Research Questions

1) What are the types of co-curricular activities practiced for value inculcation in Secondary Schools of Champhai District?
2) What are the types of co-curricular activities practiced for value inculcation in Secondary Schools of Lawngtlai District?
3) What are the types of co-curricular activities practiced for Cultural Preservation in Secondary Schools of Champhai District?
4) What are the types of co-curricular activities practiced for Cultural Preservation in Secondary Schools of Lawngtlai District?

Objectives of the Study

1) To find out the types of co-curricular activities which are practiced for value inculcation in the Secondary Schools of Champhai District
2) To find out the types of co-curricular activities which are practiced for value inculcation in the Secondary Schools of Lawngtlai District
3) To find out the types of co-curricular activities which are employed for cultural preservation in the Secondary Schools of Champhai District
4) To find out the types of co-curricular activities which are employed for cultural preservation in the Secondary Schools of Lawngtlai District
5) To give recommendation based on the results of the study

Methodology of the Study

Research Approach- The study follows Descriptive Survey Method and is Qualitative in nature.

Sample- The study follows Stratified Random Sampling Method for drawing the sample and the sample consists of six schools. Three from the district of Champhai and three from Lawngtlai District

Tool of the study- For the present study Check List was used by interviewing the headmasters of the schools.

Findings

Objective 1:

The following table shows the kind of co-curricular activities which are used for value inculcation in the Secondary Schools of Champhai. The schools are represented as A, B, and C

Table 1

Co-curricular activities for promotion of values

Sl no	Items	A	B	C
1.	Social Service	✓	✓	✓
2.	Seminars and Workshops		✓	
3.	Cleanliness Drive	✓	✓	✓
4.	Work Education (eg gardening etc)	✓	✓	
5.	Debate and discussion	✓	✓	
6.	NCC, NSS		✓	
7.	Scouts and Guides			
8.	Arts and Crafts	✓	✓	
9.	Library Class	✓	✓	
10.	Gospel Crusades			
11.	Blood Donation		✓	
12.	Services during Calamities			
13.	Awarding prizes (eg- student of the year)		✓	
14.	Different Student Clubs	✓	✓	
15.	Sports	✓	✓	✓

	Morning Assemblies:	✓	✓	✓
16.	Morning Prayers	✓	✓	✓
	Oath pledge	✓	✓	✓
17.	Field Trips/ Excursions	✓	✓	✓
18.	Participatory program- dance, drama	✓	✓	✓
19.	Mentoring needy students		✓	
20.	Physical Exercise	✓	✓	
21.	Creative Writing- poetry, stories etc		✓	
22.	Singing	✓	✓	✓
23.	Painting	✓	✓	✓
24.	Quiz	✓	✓	✓
25.	Charity Events		✓	

Interpretation:

The table reveals Champhai's strong commitment to value-based education through different activities.

Activities like Social Service, Cleanliness Drives, Sports, Morning Assemblies (including prayers and pledges), Field Trips, and Different Participatory Programs, Singing, Painting and Quiz are common across all schools. These activities promote essential values like community service, teamwork, patriotism, environmental awareness, cultural appreciation, and intellectual curiosity.

Certain schools place emphasis on activities like Work Education (gardening), Debate and Discussion, Arts and Crafts, Library Class, Student Clubs, and Physical Exercise. These activities foster creativity, responsibility, and academic involvement, contributing to well-rounded character development in students.

One school offers activities such as Seminars and Workshops, NCC/NSS, Blood Donation, Awards (like Student of the Year), Mentoring for Needy Students, Creative Writing (poetry, stories), and Charity Events. These activities help build a sense of community, responsibility, and personal growth.

Activities like Scouts and Guides, Gospel Crusades, and Services During Calamities are not currently included in the programs at any school in Champhai. Adding these could broaden the range of value-based education opportunities.

Objective 2:

The following table shows the kind of co-curricular activities which are used for value inculcation in the Secondary schools of Lawngtlai. The schools are represented as D, E, and F

Table 2

Co-Curricular Activities for promotion of values

Sl no	Items	D	E	F
1.	Social Service	✓	✓	✓
2.	Seminars and Workshops		✓	✓
3.	Cleanliness Drive		✓	✓
4.	Work Education (eg gardening etc)	✓	✓	
5.	Debate and discussion	✓		
6.	NCC, NSS			✓
7.	Scouts and Guides			
8.	Arts and Crafts			
9.	Library Class		✓	
10.	Gospel Crusades			
11.	Blood Donation	✓		
12.	Services during Calamities	✓		
13.	Awarding prizes (eg- student of the year)	✓		✓
14.	Different Student Clubs		✓	✓
15.	Sports	✓	✓	✓
	Morning Assemblies:	✓	✓	
16.	Morning Prayers			✓
	Oath pledge	✓		
17.	Field Trips/ Excursions		✓	
18.	Participatory program- dance, drama	✓	✓	✓
19.	Mentoring needy students			✓
20.	Physical Exercise	✓	✓	✓
21.	Creative Writing- poetry, stories etc	✓		✓
22.	Singing	✓	✓	✓
23.	Painting	✓	✓	

24.	Quiz	✓	✓
25.	Charity Events		

Interpretation:

Activities such as Social Service, Sports, Morning Assemblies (including prayers and oath taking), Participatory Programs (dance, drama), Singing, and Physical Exercise are common in all the schools. These activities help promote values like community service, teamwork, discipline, cultural appreciation, and physical well-being across the district.

Schools such as D and E focus on Work Education (such as gardening), Cleanliness Drives, and Painting, reinforcing environmental awareness, creativity, and a hands-on approach to learning. Seminars and Workshops as well as student clubs are also available in Schools E and F, encouraging academic engagement and personal growth. D and F schools encourages students by recognizing their achievement by awarding prizes and promotes creativity and self-expression through creative writings.

School D offers activities that promote civic engagement like Blood Donation, Services During Calamities, and School E offers Library Classes and Field trips which provide additional academic support and curiosity. School F offers NCC/NSS and Mentoring Needy Students which help develop leadership skills, discipline, and peer support.

Activities, such as Arts and Crafts, Scouts and Guides, Gospel Crusades, and Charity Events, are not currently included in any schools in Lawngtlai.

Objective 3:

The following table shows the kind of co-curricular activities which are used for Cultural Preservation in the secondary schools of Champhai. The schools are represented as A, B, and C.

Table3

Co-Curricular Activities for Promotion of Culture

Sl no	ITEM	A	B	C
1.	Field Trips (visiting historical sites, museums etc)	✓	✓	✓
2.	Folkdance/ Hnam lam	✓	✓	✓
3.	Cultural Games		✓	

4.	Folksongs		✓	✓
5.	Cultural Functions		✓	
6.	Celebrating Cultural Festival		✓	
7.	Cultural Exhibitions		✓	
8.	Work Experience (eg. Buh thlei etc)	✓	✓	
9.	Social Service	✓	✓	✓
10.	Seminars/ Workshops		✓	
11.	Crafts work		✓	✓
12.	Weaving		✓	
13.	Debate and Discussions	✓	✓	
14.	Essay/Article Writing	✓	✓	✓
15.	Cultural Clubs		✓	
16.	Dramas and Plays	✓	✓	
17.	Painting/Drawing	✓	✓	✓
18.	Creative Writing- Story, Poetry,Article,essay,	✓	✓	✓
19.	Song composition		✓	
20.	Culture related Quiz Competition		✓	
21.	Fancy Dress		✓	✓
22.	Dance and Music Competitions		✓	✓
23.	Hnatlang	✓	✓	✓
24.	Pawnto			
25.	Mizo incheina hak ni (traditional attire day)		✓	

Interpretation:

All the three schools participate in Field Trips (to historical sites and museums), Folkdance, Social Service, Debate and Discussions, Essay/Article Writing, Painting/ Drawing, and Creative Writing (including stories, poetry, and essays). These activities collectively promote connection with their roots, cultural awareness, creativity, and social responsibility among students.

School A focuses on Work Experience, Debate and Discussions, Dramas and Plays. These activities reflect an emphasis on community engagement, practical learning experiences, and enhancing public speaking and performance skills.

School B shows a great performance participating in almost all of the activities except Pawnto. Present activities include Cultural Functions and Celebrating Cultural Festivals Cultural Clubs, Cultural Exhibitions, Seminars and Workshops, Weaving, Song Composition, Culture related Quiz Competitions, Mizo incheina hak ni, which are not present in other schools. These activities promote a strong sense of community and cultural identity, emphasizing community involvement and cultural celebration, creating an environment where students can connect with their heritage through active participation and creates awareness for the needs of cultural appreciation and preservation.

School C includes activities like Folksongs, Craftswork, Fancy Dress and Dance and Music Competition these activities promote opportunities to showcase the culture and creates opportunities for cultural engagement.

Objective 4:

The following table shows the kind of co-curricular activities which are used for cultural preservation in the secondary schools of Lawngtlai. The schools are represented as D, E and F

Table4

Co-Curricular Activities for Promotion of Culture

Sl no	ITEM	A	B	C
1.	Field Trips (visiting historical sites, museums etc)	✓	✓	✓
2.	Folkdance/ Hnam lam	✓	✓	✓
3.	Cultural Games		✓	
4.	Folksongs		✓	✓
5.	Cultural Functions		✓	
6.	Celebrating Cultural Festival		✓	
7.	Cultural Exhibitions		✓	
8.	Work Experience (eg. Buh thlei etc)	✓	✓	
9.	Social Service	✓	✓	✓
10.	Seminars/ Workshops		✓	
11.	Crafts work		✓	✓
12.	Weaving		✓	
13.	Debate and Discussions	✓	✓	
14.	Essay/Article Writing	✓	✓	✓

15.	Cultural Clubs		✓	
16.	Dramas and Plays	✓	✓	
17.	Painting/Drawing	✓	✓	✓
18.	Creative Writing- Story, Poetry,Article,essay,	✓	✓	✓
19.	Song composition		✓	
20.	Culture related Quiz Competition		✓	
21.	Fancy Dress		✓	✓
22.	Dance and Music Competitions		✓	✓
23.	Hnatlang	✓	✓	✓
24.	Pawnto			
25.	Mizo incheina hak ni (traditional attire day)		✓	

Interpretation:

Painting/Drawing is offered at all three schools which highlights a focus on artistic expression and celebrate cultural beauty

Social Service and Debate and Discussion are present in both D and F indicating a shared emphasis on community involvement and service as well as cultural engagement through public speaking. B and C offers Fancy Dress which celebrates and displays the cultural attire. Hnatlang and Mizo incheina hak ni are available in A and B demonstrating a commitment to social engagement and community service and celebration of local culture.

In School A Essay/Article Writing, and culture related Quiz competitions are present. These activities focus on written expression and fosters cultural knowledge. School B offers Creative Writing which emphasizing written cultural preservation. Folkdance, Folksong and Seminars/ Workshops are present in school C, these activities showcase a focus on traditional Mizo music and dance and suggest structured programs related to culture.

Recommendations

1) Though Champhai shows great performance in most of the value inculcated activities. Activities such as Scouts and Guides, NCC/NSS which instils teamwork, leadership and essential life skills and Services during calamities and Charity Events which would provide students with opportunities to develop empathy, compassion, and a sense of duty towards others as well as activities

which promotes morality and faith such as Gospel Crusade should be worked on and given more focus.

2) Just as the District of Champhai, Lawngtlai District also needs stress on activities such as Scouts and Guides, Gospel Crusade and Charity Events. The district also lacks the presence of Arts and Crafts which would promote creativity, artistic expression, craftsmanship and enhance their cognitive and fine motor skills. By adding these activities, Lawngtlai schools can offer a more comprehensive and holistic experience, emphasizing creativity, leadership, faith, and community involvement and foster strong moral values.

3) Champhai has rich cultural co-curricular activities. However, work must be done on creating cultural clubs in all the schools which would make it easier to transmit and learn different cultural dances and folksongs as well as celebrate different cultural functions. This will allow students to explore cultural topics within their curriculum, it will also enhance their understanding and appreciation of their cultural identity.

4) Schools in Lawngtlai District needs much work and focus on cultural related activities. Field trips to different Historical sites can help students develop a bond with their cultural heritage by providing them with firsthand experiences and foster a sense of cultural identity. Organizing cultural games encourage participants to engage with traditional customs and practices in a fun and interactive way. Work experience and crafts work enhances their practical skills while deepening their understanding and appreciation of traditional practices and values. Cultural clubs can serve as platforms for students to actively engage with their heritage, encouraging the exploration and celebration of cultural traditions through various activities and events. By implementing these activities, the schools can foster a richer cultural environment, and promote the preservation of local traditions and values.

Discussion and Conclusion

From the findings of the present study the districts of Champhai and Lawngtlai have shown good performance in their co- curricular activities regarding value inculcation and efforts have been made in this area. The Secondary Schools in Champhai district demonstrate a well-organized and effective approach to instil values through co-curricular activities. The active participation in important activities ensures that all students develop fundamental values making Champhai's approach holistic and impactful in fostering well-rounded, value-oriented students. Schools in Lawngtlai offer a wide variety of activities that promote personal, academic, and

civic values. Incorporating more diverse activities, like Charity Work and Scouts and Guides, NCC/NSS, Arts and Crafts etc, could further support students' development and enhance value-oriented learning.

The Secondary Schools of Champhai by offering a diverse range of co-curricular activities foster an environment where students can explore their cultural heritage, engage in community service, and develop creativity and critical thinking skills. This not only helps in preserving cultural practices but also equips students with essential life skills. Regarding the district of Lawngtlai, though some activities are present regarding cultural preservation it is desirable that more cultural related activities as well as culture related games be practiced as further expansion of cultural and community-based programs would further enrich student's educational experiences and strengthen their cultural identity.

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Challenges and Insights from Teachers on Online Teaching: A Qualitative Analysis

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Abstract

An unprecedented global shift from traditional classroom instruction to online teaching was brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, with synchronous modalities of delivery emerging as the main educational approach in Mizoram. This study highlights the difficulties with recommendations while examining postgraduate teachers' experiences with synchronous online teaching during the epidemic. A qualitative data collected through open-ended questionnaire questions their experiences with online teaching. Results show that while teachers demonstrated adaptability in transitioning to online teaching, the process was hindered by persistent technological challenges, inadequate digital infrastructure, and a lack of training, particularly in rural areas. Pedagogical adjustments were necessary but often difficult due to reduced student engagement, limited feedback, and the absence of non-verbal cues. Teachers faced increased workloads, time-management struggles, and emotional strain, compounded by isolation and the blurred boundaries between personal and professional life.

Keywords: *Teacher experiences, Synchronous Online Learning, COVID-19 Pandemic*

Introduction

The swift shift to online teaching especially during the COVID-19 pandemic transformed education globally, offering continuity but also exposing significant challenges. Teachers frequently encountered issues like unstable internet access, weakened engagement, and diminished classroom interaction barriers that amplified concerns around motivation, interaction dynamics, and technological readiness (Roa

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et al., 2024: Fernando, Luis & Luis, (2025). In the Indian context, disparities in access to gadgets further exacerbated these problems, varying levels of digital literacy, and socio-economic differences between urban and rural learners. Understanding teachers lived experiences in navigating these challenges is critical for informing policy decisions, enhancing online pedagogy, and ensuring equitable access to quality education (Roa et al., 2024).

Objectives of the Research

1. To explore the problems faced by teachers during synchronous online teaching process.
2. To propose solutions for overcoming the challenges encountered in the synchronous online teaching process.

Research Methodology

The purpose of this qualitative study using an open-ended questionnaire is to investigate Mizoram teachers' experiences with synchronous online teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic. For the purpose of the study, Disproportionate Stratified Random Sampling was employed where different departments of Mizoram University (MZU) and Institute of Chartered Financial Analysts of India (ICFAI), Aizawl, Mizoram served as strata.

Findings related to Objective No. 1: To explore the problems faced by teachers during synchronous online teaching process.

A. Challenges faced by teachers during synchronous online teaching process:

Following is the analysis of teachers' response for open ended items of the questionnaire:

1. What is that one thing that you dislike about online teaching?

Teachers dislike several aspects of online teaching which were - internet issues on both sides (teacher and student) and difficulties in ensuring students' attention due to connectivity problems. Teacher struggle to gauge students' understanding and manage their behavior effectively due to lack of physical interaction which limits eye contact and classroom control. When students turn off their cameras, teachers cannot observe their reactions, making it harder to assess engagement. Rapid feedback is challenging, and body language cues are lost, making it difficult to determine if students truly comprehend the material. Student participation is often minimal, with many remaining idle and insincere. Online teaching tends to be one-way communication, as students do not engage actively. Distractions from family

members further hinder focus, making lessons feel monotonous. Communication barriers affect learning, making online teaching resemble distance education with minimal student interaction, ultimately reducing its effectiveness.

2. What is that one major problem you faced with students from rural origin?

Teachers face several challenges when working with students from rural areas which include frequent power cuts and internet connectivity issues on the students' end, as well as limited access to essential resources such as high-end mobile phones, Wi-Fi, laptops, and stable internet connections. Rural students often experience more network disruptions during online classes, leading to difficulties in learning. Additionally, there is a noticeable disparity in digital literacy, with some students lacking the necessary training and familiarity with online platforms. A lack of interest in online learning further compounds the issue. Moreover, language barriers arise as some students struggle with English, which could have been clarified in their local language in a physical classroom setting.

3. What are the easiest to handle online teaching-learning platforms used by you?

The most user-friendly online teaching-learning platforms reported by teachers include Google Meet, which allows easy access to upload study materials where students can download based on their internet availability, WhatsApp is convenient for clarifications and discussions and Zoom is ideal for teaching. Other widely used platforms include Google Classroom, Google Drive and Telegram.

4. Mention one major problem you encounter due to only virtual presence of students in classes?

Teachers face several challenges due to the virtual presence of students in online classes. These include internet issues, minimal interaction causing students to feel shy or hesitant to ask questions, and difficulty in assessing students' understanding. Building personal connections is nearly impossible, and teachers cannot verify if students are genuinely attending. The absence of facial expressions and body language reduces engagement, making it hard to gauge attentiveness. Identifying students is difficult, and many lack motivation, concentration, and classroom etiquette. Power cuts, background noise, multitasking during lessons, insincerity, and widespread cheating in online assessments further hinder effective teaching. Additionally, online teaching lacks the dynamic, interactive nature of traditional classrooms.

5. What is one major challenge in teaching online classes?

Major challenge in teaching online classes reported by teachers are as follows - difficulty in capturing students' attention, lack of technical equipment, and frequent

connectivity disruptions. Limited student-teacher communication and insufficient student responses make engagement challenging, often resulting in one-way teaching. Teachers struggle to assess student attentiveness, as many are unwilling to participate. Unfamiliarity with technology reduces student interest, and unequal internet access creates learning disparities. Interactive sessions are often missing, and delivering practical knowledge requires more effort than offline teaching. Additional issues include lack of study materials, inadequate online infrastructure, power cuts, and exhaustion from prolonged screen time. Teachers also find it difficult to address individual student needs. However, some educators have adapted to the system by adopting a more motivational approach.

6. What is the major lack in student's performance as a result of online learning?

Major lack in student's performance as a result of online learning reported by teachers are as follows - Connectivity issues hinder focus, and students struggle with in-depth understanding, especially in technical subjects like programming. Online exams are taken less seriously and are often ineffective. Student interaction has declined, with many unwilling to engage with teachers or respond to questions. Poor time management, lack of resources, and ethical concerns in academic performance further impact learning. Creativity and manners are lacking, along with issues like late attendance and reduced self-motivation. Many students neglect acquiring knowledge, affecting their dedication and seriousness. Shy and introverted students struggle to clarify doubts, leading to superficial learning. Additionally, sincere students often go unrecognized, while less dedicated learners pass easily.

7. What is the most essential online etiquette to be followed by the student in online learning according to you?

The most essential online etiquette to be followed by the student in online learning as reported by teachers are as follows - students should always respond to questions or discussions initiated by teachers, even with a simple answer like "yes" or "no," as it contributes to engagement. Knowing when to participate and when to listen is crucial, along with maintaining active involvement in discussions. To minimize disruptions, students should keep their cameras on, face the screen as much as possible, and mute their microphones during lectures and attend classes in a quiet, vacant room. Students should prepare themselves in advance on the topic to be covered enhances comprehension. Prompt responses or feedback when asked by the teacher are essential. Silent attendance is expected, as unintentional activation of audio or video can disrupt the class. Punctuality is important, and students should avoid interrupting or disturbing the teacher while they are delivering the lecture.

Maintaining classroom decorum, focusing on key concepts, and staying attentive are vital. Additionally, students should dress appropriately, and ensure a stable internet connection for uninterrupted participation.

8. If you have suffered with any health issues while teaching in online classes please specify it and do you have any suggestion to overcome it in online classes?

Teachers face various health issues while conducting online classes, including throat irritation, headaches, migraines, back and neck pain, wrist pain, and eye strain due to prolonged screen exposure. Continuous sitting for long hours also leads to backaches and tailbone pain. Teaching for extended periods, often exceeding six hours a day, results in mental exhaustion and fatigue.

To mitigate these issues, teachers suggest keeping sufficient water to relieve throat irritation, taking short breaks during classes, and informing students about health concerns. Breaking sessions into smaller intervals can also help reduce strain and improve overall well-being.

B. Thematic analysis of teachers' experiences with online instruction during the COVID-19 epidemic

Teachers' experiences with online instruction during the COVID-19 epidemic were conveyed by a number of recurrent themes that emerged from the questionnaire data's thematic analysis. These themes are presented below.

1. Technological Preparedness and Accessibility

Teachers reported varying levels of familiarity with online platforms at the onset of the pandemic. While some adapted quickly to tools such as Google Meet, Zoom, and WhatsApp for classroom interaction, others struggled with the lack of technical training. Unstable internet connections, power outages, and the absence of adequate digital devices posed significant challenges, especially in rural areas. These limitations disrupted class continuity and hampered effective delivery of lessons.

2. Pedagogical Adjustments

Making the transition from conventional in-person techniques to a purely online mode required teachers to redesign lesson plans, adopt digital resources, and modify teaching strategies. Many acknowledged difficulty in assessing students' comprehension due to limited feedback mechanisms and the absence of non-verbal cues. Some attempted innovative approaches, including recorded lectures and interactive quizzes, but noted that these required extra preparation time.

3. Student Engagement and Participation

Maintaining active student engagement emerged as one of the most challenging aspects. Teachers observed reduced participation, especially from students lacking stable internet or conducive home environments for learning. Distractions at home, camera-off tendencies, and reluctance to speak during class were common, leading to reduced interaction and limited collaborative learning.

4. Workload and Time Management

Teachers indicated that online teaching increased their workload due to the need to prepare digital materials, troubleshoot technical issues, and follow up individually with students. Balancing professional responsibilities with personal obligations at home proved difficult for many teachers.

5. Emotional and Professional Well-being

Many teachers experienced feelings of isolation, fatigue, and stress during prolonged exposure to screen and prolonged periods of online teaching. The absence of in-person interaction with colleagues and students negatively affected morale. However, some expressed that overcoming these challenges enhanced their adaptability, digital literacy, and resilience as educators.

6. Challenges in Teaching Students from Rural Areas

Teachers noted that children in rural areas had restricted access to gadgets like computers, smartphones, and Wi-Fi, frequent power outages, and inadequate internet connectivity. Participation was hampered by many people's low levels of digital literacy and inexperience with online platforms. A lack of interest in online learning and language barriers, particularly the difficulty of understanding English without the option for local language clarification, further affected engagement. These factors combined to widen the learning gap between rural and urban students.

7. Essential Online Etiquette for Students

Teachers emphasized that students should actively engage by responding to questions and participating in discussions while knowing when to listen. Keeping cameras on, facing the screen, muting microphones during lectures, and attending from a quiet environment were considered crucial to minimize disruptions. Preparation before class, punctuality, and maintaining classroom decorum were highlighted as key to effective learning. Teachers also stressed the importance of appropriate dress, stable internet connectivity, and avoiding interruptions during lectures.

8. Problems in Online Examinations

Teachers observed that students often approached online exams with less seriousness, leading to compromised assessment quality. Issues included superficial preparation, reliance on unfair means, and lack of genuine effort. Connectivity problems disrupted test-taking, and the absence of strict monitoring reduced accountability. As a result, online examinations were seen as less effective in accurately evaluating student knowledge and skills.

9. Technological Issues

Teachers reported that frequent internet connectivity problems, coupled with limited access to essential digital devices such as laptops, high-end smartphones, or stable Wi-Fi, significantly disrupt the flow of online classes. In addition to resulting in missed classes and delays, these technological limitations also make it more difficult for students to access course materials, engage fully in class, and turn in assignments on time.

10. Parental Disruptions

It was also observed that many students face frequent interruptions from family members while attending online classes at home. Such disturbances break the students' concentration, cause them to miss important parts of the lecture, and make it difficult to maintain a focused learning environment. This lack of a dedicated, quiet study space ultimately diminishes engagement and overall academic performance.

11. Language Barriers in Online Learning

Teachers reported that language barriers posed a significant challenge in the online learning environment. Some students struggled to comprehend lessons delivered in English, leading to gaps in understanding and reduced participation. Teachers noted that, in a physical classroom, such difficulties could have been addressed more effectively through immediate clarification in the students' local language, which is harder to facilitate in virtual settings.

Findings related to Objective No.2: To propose solutions for overcoming the challenges encountered in the synchronous online teaching process.

The major challenges encountered by teachers and their proposed solutions for overcoming the challenges encountered in the synchronous online teaching process are highlighted below:

TABLE. 1

Challenges faced by teachers during online teaching and their suggestions

Sl. No.	Challenges	Suggestions / Solutions
1	**Technological Preparedness and Accessibility –** Teachers had varying familiarity with online platforms; unstable internet, power outages, and lack of devices disrupted classes.	Provide structured digital training for teachers; supply devices to under-resourced schools; improve rural internet infrastructure; offer recorded sessions for students who miss classes.
2	**Pedagogical Adjustments –** Difficulty in adapting lesson plans and assessing students without non-verbal cues.	Use interactive tools like polls, quizzes, and breakout rooms; incorporate formative assessments; encourage use of recorded lectures for reinforcement.
3	**Student Engagement and Participation –** Reduced interaction, camera-off tendencies, and distractions at home.	Implement engagement policies (camera-on rule); introduce small-group activities to sustain attention.
4	**Workload and Time Management –** Extra time required for material preparation and follow-up with students.	Provide collaborative lesson planning support; reduce non-essential administrative tasks; offer time management workshops.
5	**Emotional and Professional Well-being –** Feelings of isolation, stress, and fatigue from prolonged screen time.	Organize peer-support groups; schedule regular breaks; promote blended teaching models when possible.
6	**Challenges in Teaching Rural Students –** Poor connectivity, lack of devices, low digital literacy, and language barriers.	Set up community learning hubs with internet access; provide bilingual resources; train students in basic digital skills.
7	**Essential Online Etiquette for Students –** Lack of punctuality, camera-off habits, inappropriate dress, and noise disruptions.	Conduct online orientation on etiquette; enforce classroom rules; encourage parents to support a distraction-free study space.

8	**Problems in Online Examinations –** Superficial preparation, unfair means, lack of monitoring, and connectivity issues.	Use proctoring software; design application-based questions; split large exams into smaller timed segments; provide mock tests.
9	**Technological Issues –** Frequent internet disruptions and lack of devices for students.	Provide affordable data packages for students; set up school-managed device loan schemes; maintain offline-accessible resources such as recorded lessons and PDFs.
10	**Parental Disruptions –** Frequent interruptions at home during class.	Educate parents on the importance of uninterrupted learning through Parents-Teachers Association (PTA) meetings; suggest creating a dedicated quiet corner for online classes.
11	**Language Barriers -** Students face difficulty understanding lessons delivered in English.	-Use bilingual explanations, combining English with the local language. -Provide supplementary study materials or summaries in the local language. -Encourage students to ask questions in either language to ensure clarity and understanding.

Summary of Findings

The findings show that the shift to online learning brought diverse challenges and adaptations for teachers. Technological preparedness varied, some adapted quickly to platforms like Google Meet and Zoom, while others lacked training. Poor internet, frequent power outages, and limited devices, especially in rural areas, disrupted lessons.

Teachers redesigned lesson plans, tried to engage students in the most practical way, but still problems surfaced. Overall, technological, pedagogical, social, and emotional challenges collectively shaped the effectiveness of online education during the pandemic.

Conclusion and Implication

The findings reveal that while teachers demonstrated adaptability in transitioning to online teaching, the process was hindered by persistent technological challenges, inadequate digital infrastructure, and a lack of training, particularly in rural areas. Pedagogical adjustments were necessary but often difficult due to reduced student engagement, limited feedback, and the absence of non-verbal cues. Teachers faced increased workloads, time-management struggles, and emotional strain, compounded by isolation and the blurred boundaries between personal and professional life. Rural students were disproportionately disadvantaged by poor connectivity, device shortages, low digital literacy, and language barriers, widening the educational gap. Assessment quality was weakened by problems with online exams, such as absenteeism and poor student attitudes. Language barriers in online learning reduce comprehension and engagement, but bilingual teaching, local-language materials, and flexible questioning can improve understanding and participation. Furthermore, frequent disruptions from parents and home environments, along with the need for better online etiquette, highlighted the importance of structured, distraction-free learning spaces. These challenges collectively indicate that while online education offers flexibility, its effectiveness depends heavily on technological readiness, student discipline, and strong institutional support.

However, it is important to note that teachers' technological skills can improve over time through proper training and continuous professional development. With structured workshops, hands-on practice, and exposure to various digital tools, teachers can gradually build confidence and competence in using ICT. Ongoing support, peer collaboration, and institutional encouragement further enhance their ability to integrate technology effectively into teaching, ultimately making online instruction more engaging and impactful.

Furthermore, online teaching-learning remains a crucial and relevant aspect of education, as emphasized in UGC Guidelines and NEP 2020, which promote digital platforms and blended learning to enhance access and quality in higher education.

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Development of Writing Skill: A Study on the Teaching Practices of High School Mizo Subject Teachers in Mizoram

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Abstract

The development of writing skills holds a critical position in Mizo language pedagogy, forming the essential foundation for effective communication. This article highlights the teaching practice of Mizo subject teachers for the development of writing skills of their students. The data were collected from 70 Mizo subject teachers teaching in various schools in Mizoram affiliated to Mizoram Board of School Education (MBSE) and Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE). It was found that 50% of Mizo subject teachers from MBSE and CBSE gave importance on all of the development of the sub-skills of language such as grammar and vocabulary, organisation of text (introduction, body and conclusion) and building and expression of ideas and argument (clarity and content).With regard to the strategy adopted for development of writing skill, 43.54% of MBSE teachers and 37.5% of CBSE teachers explain and instruct correct format based on different types of writing activities. It was also discovered that 48.38% of teachers from MBSE and 50% of teachers from CBSE gave exercises such as summarizing lessons (written), preparation of their own notes, written assignment on given topics (essay, articles, critical analysis) and creative writing exercises (story writing, poetry writing, paragraph writing) for the development of the writing skill of the students.

Keywords: *Writing skill, teaching practices, Mizo subject teachers, Mizoram Board of School Education (MBSE), Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE)*

Introduction

Writing is recognized as one of the four fundamental language skills and is frequently regarded as the most challenging to master. At its most basic level,

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writing involves the transcription of spoken sounds into written symbols. However, this mechanical act represents only the initial phase of a far more complex process. Effective writing demands the integration of numerous subordinate skills. In speaking, the listener is present before us and thus, we can observe his/her reaction and modify our speech accordingly. But in writing, since the reader is not present before us, there is no instant interaction and feedback, and thus we are not in a position to clarify our ideas beyond what we have written. This absence requires that the writer exercise greater independent precision in constructing grammatically sound sentences and organizing ideas into a logically sequenced and clear structure. Therefore, achieving clarity, accuracy, and explicit meaning depends entirely on the writer's ability to anticipate the reader's needs within the text itself.

Rationale of the study

Mizo is the mother tongue or first language for majority of the secondary school students in Mizoram. However, they often struggle to express their learned knowledge or personal opinions effectively in written form in Mizo. The strong emphasis on knowledge of English language has led to neglect in learning of Mizo language both at home and in schools. This eventually leads to students not being fluent enough in their use of Mizo language both as a means of communication and also as a school subject.

Proficiency in language includes equal mastery of all the four language skills i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. While many students may have mastery in the three sub-skills i.e. listening, speaking and reading, the importance of having a good writing skill cannot be overlooked. Effective writing is an essential skill for clear and precise communication regardless of a person's proficiency in the verbal communication skill. Therefore, the teaching practices employed by Mizo subject teachers for the development of the students' writing skill play a crucial role in their academic achievement as well as for their lifelong success. Furthermore, a review of existing literatures reveal a significant gap, as no specific research has been conducted in this area. Therefore, it is important to investigate the teaching practices that Mizo subject teachers in Mizoram employ to develop their students' writing skill.

Review of Related Literature

Moradian and Rahmatian (2016) carried out a study on "The Study of the Development of Writing Skill in the Textbooks of the Action-Oriented Approach, a Case of Iranian Learners of FFL". The paper analysed the written competence and corpus of Iranian learners of French at two levels (A1 and A2). The data were collected in a quantified and qualified manner with auto evaluation grids and

narrative text writing to analyze the action-oriented approach textbooks' efficiency in writing. Basically the approach of the three manuals, Alter ego, Echo and Connexions advantaging of the implicit approach grammar teaching, calls into question their effectiveness regard to the written skill. The Alter ego manual is less effective in the teaching of writing skills and in return the Echo manual is more. This difference was especially remarkable about the Content of written productions of three groups of learners. In the Iranian context that we are the only inductive approach does not meet the student needs who are used to learn the traditional manner grammar.

Akinkurolere and Mohammed (2020) conducted a study on "The Development of Writing Skills through Conceptual Writing". The study was to examine the development of writing skills through conceptual writing among students of English language in Kampala District Uganda. The main findings were that, generally, the level of English writing skills was relatively low among English language students in secondary schools of the Division because the students had not mastered the art of conceptual writing. It was concluded that essay writing, as potential conceptual writing education strategies, were significantly predictive but not practically-oriented.

Delango (2021) carried out a study on "The Practice of Teaching Writing Skills Using the Process Approach: The Case of Three Selected Secondary Schools in Wolaita Zone, Ofa Woreda". The findings of the study revealed that though majority of grade ten English teachers used to plan and introduce their students writing lessons, help and assist them, encourage them to practice taking notes, make them brain storm, plan and structure their writing tasks, translate their ideas in to texts, suggest them to improve the contents, organizations, and vocabulary of the writing activities. Most importantly, the English teachers never encourage and motivate their students to follow the stages of process writing and never given enough time to pass through all the stages of process writing. They never encourage their creativity and critical thinking skills, and develop an argument to define the structure of their writing. Finally, the researcher recommended on the basis of the above findings so as to improve the practices of teaching writing skills using the most important practical alternative approach, process-oriented approach.

Vicol et al. (2024) studied "A Quasi-Experimental Study on the Development of Creative Writing Skills in Primary School Students". The research results have shown that creative writing skills are developing in young school-age students. Also, it was found that there are significant differences in the students from the experimental group, compared to the students in the control group, at the level of the nine components of creative writing skills.

Objectives of the study

1. To identify the preference of high school Mizo subject teachers on the different sub-skills of language for development of the students' writing skill.
2. To find out and compare the teaching strategies adopted by the high school Mizo subject teachers under CBSE and MBSE for development of the students' writing skill.
3. To find out and compare the type of exercises given by the high school Mizo subject teachers under CBSE and MBSE for development of the students' writing skill.

Methodology

Descriptive survey method was employed to study the teaching practices of high school Mizo subject teachers in Mizoram for the development of the students' writing skill.

Population and Sample

The population included all the teachers teaching Mizo subject in various schools in Mizoram affiliated to Mizoram Board of School Education (MBSE) and Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE)

Simple random sampling method was used to select 6 districts namely - Aizawl, Lunglei, Champhai, Mamit, Kolasib, and Serchhip. Further, 70 schools (62 from MBSE and 8 from CBSE) were proportionately identified using cluster random sampling and all the teachers taking Mizo subject from these schools were selected as sample for the present study.

Tool used for data collection

Data was collected using a questionnaire developed by the investigator for Mizo subject teachers to find out their teaching practices for development of the students' writing skill. The content was validated by a group of experts before sending it out to the respondents.

Statistical technique used

For the present study, simple percentage was used for analyzing the data.

Analysis and interpretation

The collected data were analyzed and interpreted based on the following objectives:

Objective No 1: To identify the preference of high school Mizo subject teachers on the different sub-skills of language for development of the students' writing skill.

The language sub-skill that is practiced and given most importance by high school Mizo subject teachers in their classrooms for development of the students' writing skill are shown in Table No. 1 below:

Table 1

Preference of high school Mizo subject teachers on the different sub-skills of language

Sub skills	CBSE	MBSE
Grammar and vocabulary	2(25%)	13(20.96%)
Organisation of text (Introduction, body and conclusion)	1(12.5%)	11(17.74%)
Building and expression of ideas and argument (Clarity and content)	1(12.5%)	7(11.29%)
All of the above	4(50%)	31(50%)
None of the above	-	-
Total	**8**	**62**

Among the 8 Mizo subject teachers from schools under CBSE, 2 teachers (25%) gave importance on grammar and vocabulary. One teacher (12.5%) stressed on the organization of written content, (introduction, body, and conclusion) while another teacher (12.5%) emphasized on building and expression of ideas and argument (clarity and content). The remaining 4 teachers (50%) claimed that they considered all of these aspects while teaching writing skill.

Similarly, out of 62 Mizo subject teachers from schools under MBSE, 13 teachers (20.96%) gave importance to grammar and vocabulary, 11 teachers (17.74%) emphasized text organization, and 7 teachers (11.29%) focused on building and expression of ideas and argument (clarity and content). A total of 31 teachers (50%) reported incorporating all of the above criteria in their teaching.

Objective No 2: To find out and compare the teaching strategies adopted by the high school Mizo subject teachers under CBSE and MBSE for development of the students' writing skill.

Result of the study to find out the various teaching strategies adopted by the high school Mizo subject teachers under CBSE and MBSE for development of the students' writing skill are shown in Table No. 2 below:

Table 2

Teaching strategies adopted by high school Mizo subject teachers for the development of students' writing skill

Teaching Strategy	CBSE	MBSE
Explain and instruct correct format based on different types of writing activities	3(37.5%)	27(43.54%)
Provide variety of texts to students to acquaint them with different writing style	2(25%)	1(1.61%)
Teach students on how to prepare drafts and edit written works before finalisation of writing task	-	7(11.29%)
Introduce different types of exercises for practise in the classroom	1(12.5%)	8(12.90%)
All of the above	2(25%)	19(30.64%)
None of the above	-	-
Total	**8**	**62**

Table No. 2 reveals that out of 8 Mizo subject teachers from schools under CBSE, 3 teachers (37.5%) reported that they provide explicit instruction on appropriate formatting for various types of writing tasks. Two teachers (25%) indicated that they expose students to diverse text types to familiarize them with different writing styles. None of the teachers reported guiding students through the drafting and editing process prior to finalizing their written work. One teacher (12.5%) incorporated a range of writing exercises into classroom practice, while 2 teachers (25%) stated that they employed all of the aforementioned strategies to enhance writing proficiency.

Out of 62 Mizo subject teachers from schools under MBSE, 27 teachers (43.54%) emphasized teaching correct formatting aligned with different writing tasks. Only 1 teacher (1.61%) reported using varied text samples to expose students to different writing styles. Instruction on drafting and editing prior to final submission was provided by 7 teachers (11.29%), while 8 teachers (12.90%) introduced a variety of practice exercises in the classroom. A total of 19 teachers (30.64%) reported implementing all of these strategies to support the development of students' writing skills.

Objective No 3: To find out and compare the type of exercises given by the high school Mizo subject teachers under CBSE and MBSE for development of the students' writing skill.

Result of the study to find out the type of exercises given by the high school Mizo subject teachers under CBSE and MBSE for development of the students' writing skill are shown in Table No. 3

Table 3

Exercises given by high school Mizo subject teachers for development of the students' writing skill

Types of writing exercises	CBSE	MBSE
Summarize lessons (written)	-	3(4.83%)
Prepare their own notes	-	12(19.35%)
Write assignment on given topics (essay, articles, critical analysis)	1(12.5%)	12(19.35%)
Write assignment for development of creative writing skill (story writing, poetry writing, paragraph writing)	3(37.5%)	5(8.06%)
All of the above	4(50%)	30(48.38%)
None of the above	-	
Total	**8**	**62**

Table No. 3 reveals that none of the 8 Mizo subject teachers from schools under CBSE reported assigning tasks that required students to summarize lessons in written form or to prepare their own notes. However, 1 teacher (12.5%) assigned written tasks such as essays, articles, or critical analyses. Creative writing assignments including story writing, poetry composition, and paragraph development were utilized by 3 teachers (37.5%). Additionally, 4 teachers (50%) indicated that they employed all of the aforementioned strategies as part of their writing instruction.

Among the 62 Mizo subject teachers from schools under MBSE, 3 teachers (4.83%) encouraged students to write summaries of the lessons, and 12 teachers (19.35%) asked students to prepare their own notes. Another 12 teachers (19.35%) reported assigning written work focused on analytical or expository writing, such as essays or article writing. Creative writing tasks were assigned by 5 teachers (8.06%), while 30 teachers (48.38%) incorporated all of these activities into their teaching practices to support the development of students' writing skills.

Findings

1. Findings revealed that 50 percent of teachers gave importance on all of the sub-skills of language such as grammar and vocabulary, organisation of text

(Introduction, body and conclusion) and building and expression of ideas and argument (Clarity and content).

2. For strategy of teaching writing, 43.54 percent of Mizo subject teachers from schools under MBSE and 37.5 percent Mizo subject teachers from schools under CBSE reported that they explain and instruct correct format based on different types of writing activities while 1.61 percent of teachers from schools under MBSE provide variety of texts to students to acquaint them with different writing style and no teacher from schools under CBSE teach students on how to prepare drafts and edit written works before finalisation of writing task.
3. Teachers i.e. 48.38 percent from schools under MBSE and 50 percent of teachers from schools under CBSE teachers gave all of the exercises mentioned such as summarization of lessons (written), preparing own notes, writing assignments on given topics (essay, articles, critical analysis) and writing assignments for development of creative writing skill (story writing, poetry writing, paragraph writing).

Discussion

Based on the findings of the study, it is clear that teachers are actively working to help students improve their writing skills by focusing on key areas like proper grammar, strong vocabulary, and well-structured essays with a clear beginning, middle, and end. Many teachers taught writing skill using explanation technique and also made sure to teach the correct format for different types of writing assignments and assign a variety of exercises such as summarising, note making, essays, and creative writing tasks to give students maximum practice for the development of their writing skills. However, provision of variety of texts to students to acquaint them with different writing styles, preparation of drafts and editing of written works before finalisation of writing task were strategies that was least applied by the teachers based on their responses.

In order to develop the writing skill of students, mere explanation and instruction of correct format of writing is not sufficient. Providing the students with the model drafts, correcting and editing their works proved to be more beneficial for the development of their writing skill. It is therefore suggested that teachers provide examples of different writing styles and emphasize the importance of drafting and editing before submitting their final work. Although the need to complete the syllabus in a limited time may restrict the time for introducing various activities in the classroom, encouraging frequent writing practices as class activity as well as home assignments would help students improve and develop the essential skills leading to greater confidence and competence in writing.

Conclusion

Learning to write well is difficult but it is the most crucial skill when it comes to language. The study showed that many of the high school Mizo subject teachers are trying hard to teach important basics like grammar and vocabulary, organisation of text and building and expression of ideas and argument. However, some of the teachers are missing two key steps which are giving good examples of different writing styles and, most importantly, teaching them how to write drafts and edit their work. Since the reader is not there to ask questions, these steps are crucial for making writing clear and easy to understand. Thus, teachers need to focus more on the writing process itself and not just focus only on the final product and then, students will be more fluent in writing skill.

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Perceptions of College Students from Diverse Groups Towards Access and Equity in Higher Education in Mizoram

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Abstract

The study aims to examine the perceptions of diverse groups of college students regarding access and equity in higher education in Mizoram. The population of the present study comprises all students enrolled in the colleges of Mizoram affiliated with Mizoram University. The total sample comprises 1277 college students who were selected through purposive sampling. The diverse groups considered for the present study include gender, stream of study in college, geographical location, social category, and medium of instruction in school. Statistical techniques such as the t-test and one-way ANOVA were used to analyse the data. The findings revealed that both the stream of study in college and the medium of instruction in school significantly influenced college students' perceptions of access and equity in higher education in Mizoram.

Keywords: *Access, Equity, Perceptions, Higher Education, Mizoram.*

Introduction

Higher education is vital for individual, social, and economic progress. However, a gap remains in higher education about access and equity. For decades many educational policies and commissions have defined access to education not just as the physical availability of educational institutions but as an inclusive system that provides adequate infrastructure, financial assistance, and a flexible curriculum tailored to the needs of diverse learners from all sections of society (Kothari Commission, 1966; University Grants Commission [UGC], 2007; Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha

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Abhiyan [RUSA], 2020; National Education Policy [NEP], 2020). Equity is defined as "the quality of being fair and impartial" (Oxford English Dictionary, n.d.). In the educational context, equity refers to the fairness in ensuring educational rights of all, irrespective of religion, ethnicity, socio-economic status, geographic location, and gender. To promote equity, the University Grants Commission (UGC) has placed strong emphasis on enhancing participation of Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), Minorities, Other Backward Classes (OBCs), Persons with Disabilities (PWDs), and women in higher education (NITI for States, n.d.; RUSA, 2023). These definitions emphasise the need to remove barriers in higher education and create an equitable system for all. The present study will focus on the higher education scenario in Mizoram.

Regarding Higher Education, Mizoram was introduced to it with the establishment of Aijal College in 1958. Initially, it offered intermediate courses in arts; the college later expanded to offer bachelor's degrees in science, commerce, and arts. It was renamed Pachhunga Memorial Government College in 1965 and then to Pachhunga College in 1977, in honour of Mr. Pachhunga, a prominent businessman and politician who served as the chief patron of the college. In 1979, it became Pachhunga University College (PUC)when North Eastern Hill University (NEHU) included it as one of its constituent colleges. However, it was transferred to Mizoram University (MZU) in 2001 as its only constituent college. As of 2022, according to the report of the Mizoram University, College Development Council, 2022, there are 40 affiliated colleges under Mizoram University (Mizoram University, n.d.; Pachhunga University College, n.d.). Consequently, MZU, with its 40 affiliated colleges and PUC, functions as the major source of Higher Education in Mizoram.

Therefore, to have a complete view of the higher education landscape of Mizoram, systematic data is needed on access and equity in higher education from the perspective of students from diverse social categories, such as gender, stream of study in college, geographical location, social categories, and medium of instruction in school. These data will hence provide an understanding of the various issues of access and equity, which will be beneficial for the harmonious development of the educational system.

Methodology

The present study adopted a quantitative approach and employed a descriptive research design. The diverse groups considered in the study included gender (male/female), stream of study in college (arts/science/commerce), geographical location (rural/semi-urban/urban), social category (ST/SC/OBC), and medium of instruction in school (Class X).

Population and Sample

The population comprises all college students who are enrolled in the colleges of Mizoram affiliated with Mizoram University. A purposive sampling technique was adopted, and a total of 1277 college students were selected as the sample for the present study.

Tools used:

The present study used a self-developed survey questionnaire on access and equity in higher education in Mizoram as a primary tool for collecting data.

Data Collection:

The researcher was able to administer and collect the survey questionnaires from 1277 college students with the help of the Principal, teaching and non-teaching staff of the respective colleges.

Procedure

To study the perceptions of college students from diverse groups towards access and equity in higher education in Mizoram, the survey questionnaires, which had been administered to the samples, were then collected. Information from all the collected questionnaires was then coded, entered and scored in a Google Sheet. The data were then analysed using an independent-samples t-test and one-way ANOVA in SPSS.

Objectives of the study

1. To analyse the perceptions of students on access and equity in higher education in Mizoram.
2. To examine the perceptions of male and female students towards access and equity in higher education in Mizoram.
3. To evaluate the differences in perceptions of access and equity in higher education in Mizoram among students from various social categories.
4. To investigate the differences in perceptions of access and equity in higher education in Mizoram among students from various streams of study.
5. To identify the differences in perceptions of access and equity in higher education in Mizoram among students from different geographical locations.
6. To examine the relationship between the medium of instruction at school and students' perceptions of access and equity in higher education in Mizoram.

Null Hypotheses

1. H01: There are no significant differences in the perceptions of male and female students towards access and equity in higher education in Mizoram.
2. H02: There are no significant differences in perceptions of access and equity in higher education in Mizoram among students from various social categories.
3. H03: There are no significant differences in the perceptions of access and equity in higher education in Mizoram among students from various streams of study.
4. H04: There are no significant differences in perceptions of access and equity in higher education in Mizoram among students from different geographical locations.
5. H05: There is no significant relationship between the medium of instruction at school and students' perceptions of access and equity in higher education in Mizoram.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

Objective-wise analysis and interpretation of data for the present study are as follows:

Objective 1: To analyse the perceptions of students on access and equity in higher education in Mizoram.

The perceptions of students on access and equity in higher education in Mizoram were studied using descriptive statistics such as the mean, median, mode, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis. The analysis was done in SPSS, and the findings are presented in Table I.

Table 1

Descriptive statistics of students' perceptions on access and equity in higher education in Mizoram.

	Access	Equity
N	1277	1277
Mean	140.58	155.54
Std. Error of Mean	0.36108	0.42671
Median	140.0	155.0
Mode	139.0	154.0
Std. Deviation	12.903	15.249

Variance	166.496	232.518
Skewness	0.549	-0.061
Std. Error of Skewness	0.068	0.068
Kurtosis	1.964	0.249
Std. Error of Kurtosis	0.137	0.137
Range	104.00	97.00
Minimum	102.00	104.00
Maximum	206.00	201.00

Table 1 shows that there is little variation in the mean, median and mode values for both access and equity. Additionally, the skewness and kurtosis values are acceptable for both access and equity, indicating that the data are normally distributed, as illustrated in Figures 1 and 2.

Figure 1

Histogram showing students' perceptions of access in higher education in Mizoram.

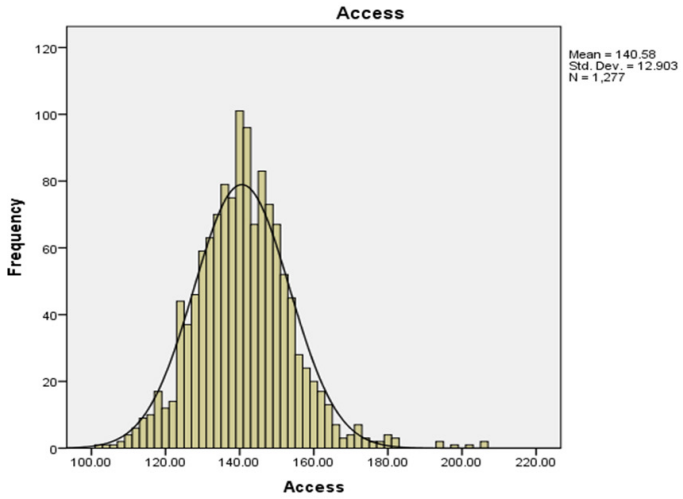
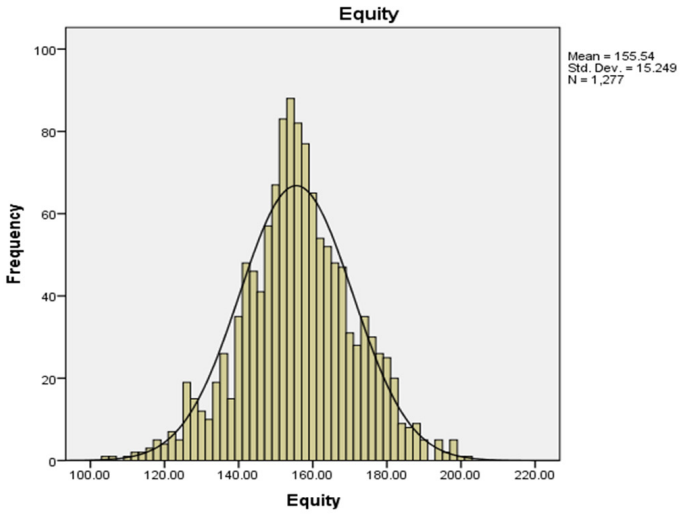


Figure 2

Histogram showing students' perceptions of equity in higher education in Mizoram.



Objective 2: **To examine the perceptions of male and female students towards access** and equity in higher education in Mizoram.

For this objective, an independent sample t-test was used to examine the perceptions of male and female students towards access and equity in higher education in Mizoram. The findings are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Perceptions of male and female students towards access and equity in higher education in Mizoram.

Variables	Gender	N	M	SD	SEM	C.V.
Access	Male	658	141	13	0.5	0.331
	Female	619	140	12.5	0.5	
Equity	Male	658	155	16	0.6	0.666
	Female	619	156	15	0.6	

Note. M-Mean, SD-Standard Deviation, SEM-Standard Error Mean, C.V.-Calculated Value.

Table 2 presents the analysis of a gender-wise perception of college students on access and equity, using an independent sample t-test. For access, the male students had a mean (M) = 141 and standard deviation (SD) =13, while female students had

M = 140 and SD=12.5, with calculated value (C.V.) = 0.331, which indicates no significant difference. For equity, the male students had a M =155, and SD =16, while the female students had M=156, and SD=15, with C.V. = 0.666, which indicates no significant difference. Therefore, the Null Hypothesis "H01: There are no significant differences in the perceptions of male and female students towards access and equity in higher education in Mizoram", is accepted.

Objective 3: To evaluate the differences in perceptions of access and equity in higher education in Mizoram among students from various social categories.

For this objective, descriptive statistics and one-way ANOVA were used to study the perceptions of access and equity in higher education in Mizoram among students from various social categories. The findings are presented in Tables 3 and 4.

Table 3

Descriptive Analysis of perceptions of access and equity in higher education in Mizoram among students from various social categories.

Variables	Social Category of College Students	N	M	SD	SE
Access	ST	1254	140.6	13.0	0.4
	SC	18	139.7	8.4	2.0
	OBC	5	140.8	8.7	3.9
	Total	1277	140.6	12.9	0.4
Equity	ST	1254	155.6	15.3	0.4
	SC	18	149.6	13.8	3.2
	OBC	5	155.2	14.1	6.3
	Total	1277	155.5	15.2	0.4

Note. N-Total number of students, M-Mean, ST-Schedule Tribe, SC-Schedule Caste, OBC-Other Backwards Classes, SD-Standard Deviation, SE-Standard Error.

Table 3 shows a descriptive analysis of college students' perceptions on access and equity in higher education in Mizoram based on their social category, such as ST, SC and OBC. The respective means for the access scores of college students from the various social categories are ST (M=40.6), SC(M=139.7), and OBC(M=140.8). There is a minimal difference in their mean value, and the total mean value for access is M=40.6 with SD=12.9. The respective means for the equity scores of college students from the various social categories are ST(M=155.6), SC(M=149.6), and OBC(M=155.2). There is a minimal difference in their mean value, and the total mean value for equity is M=155.5 with SD=15.2.

Table 4

Perceptions of access and equity in higher education in Mizoram among students from various social categories.

Variables	Sources of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P
Access	Between Groups	13.6	2	6.8	0.041	0.960
	Within Groups	212435.7	1274	166.7		
	Total	212449.3	1276			
Equity	Between Groups	642.8	2	321.4	1.383	0.251
	Within Groups	296050.4	1274	232.4		
	Total	296693.2	1276			

Note. df-Degree of Freedom, SS-Sum of Squares, MS-Mean Square, F-ANOVA Value.

Table 4 shows the result of one-way ANOVA (Analysis of Variance), which was conducted to examine significant differences in the perceptions of access and equity among college students of Mizoram based on their social categories (ST, SC, OBC). The ANOVA table reveals that there are no statistically significant differences in the category-wise perceptions of college students for both access and equity scores. This aligns with the descriptive analysis in Table 3. Hence, the null hypothesis, "H02: There are no significant differences in perceptions of access and equity in higher education in Mizoram among students from various social categories", is accepted.

Objective 4: To investigate the differences in perceptions of access and equity in higher education in Mizoram among students from various streams of study.

For this objective, one-way ANOVA was used to study the perceptions of access and equity in higher education in Mizoram among students from various streams of study. The findings are presented in Table 5.

Table 5

Perceptions of access and equity in higher education in Mizoram among students from various streams of study.

Variables	Sources of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	p
Access	Between Groups	1739.249	2	869.625	5.258	0.05
	Within Groups	210710.092	1274	165.393		
	Total	212449.341	1276			

	Between Groups	6195.736	2	3097.868	13.586	0.01
Equity	Within Groups	290497.437	1274	228.020		
	Total	296693.173	1276			

Note. df-Degree of Freedom, SS-Sum of Squares, MS-Mean Square, F-ANOVA Value.

Table 5 displays the analysis result of one-way ANOVA that was run to compare the mean score of college students' perceptions on access and equity based on their stream of study (Arts, Science, and Commerce). The ANOVA table reveals that there are, in fact a statistically significant differences in the perceptions of college students based on their stream of study for both access and equity scores. Hence, the null hypothesis, "H03: There are no significant differences in the perceptions of access and equity in higher education in Mizoram among students from various streams of study", is rejected.

Objective 5: To identify the differences in perceptions of access and equity in higher education in Mizoram among students from different geographical locations.

For this objective, one-way ANOVA was used to study the perceptions of access and equity in higher education in Mizoram among students from different geographical locations. The findings are presented in Table 6.

Table 6

Perceptions of access and equity in higher education in Mizoram among students from different geographical locations.

Variables	Sources of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	p
	Between Groups	813.852	2	406.926	2.450	0.087
Access	Within Groups	211635.488	1274	166.119		
	Total	212449.341	1276			
	Between Groups	702.730	2	351.365	1.512	0.221
Equity	Within Groups	295990.443	1274	232.332		
	Total	296693.173	1276			

Note. df-Degree of Freedom, SS-Sum of Squares, MS-Mean Square, F-ANOVA Value.

Table 6 shows the one-way ANOVA result of college students' perceptions on access and equity in higher education in Mizoram based on their geographical location (urban, rural, and semi-urban). The ANOVA table reveals that there are, in fact, no statistically significant differences in the perceptions of college students

based on their geographical location for both access and equity scores. Hence, the null hypothesis "H04: There are no significant differences in perceptions of access and equity in higher education in Mizoram among students from different geographical locations" is accepted.

Objective 6: To examine the relationship between the medium of instruction at school and students' perceptions of access and equity in higher education in Mizoram.

For this objective, one-way ANOVA was used to study the Relationship between the medium of instruction at school and students' perceptions of access and equity in higher education. The findings are presented in Table 7.

Table 7

Relationship between the medium of instruction at school and students' perceptions of access and equity in higher education in Mizoram.

Variables	Sources of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	p
Access	Between Groups	294.712	2	147.356	0.885	0.413
	Within Groups	212154.629	1274	166.526		
	Total	212449.341	1276			
Equity	Between Groups	7834.705	2	3917.352	17.277	0.001
	Within Groups	288858.468	1274	226.733		
	Total	296693.173	1276			

Note. df-Degree of Freedom, SS-Sum of Squares, MS-Mean Square, F-ANOVA Value.

Table 7 shows the one-way ANOVA result of college students' perceptions on access and equity in higher education in Mizoram based on the medium of instruction in school (medium of instruction at class X). The analysis indicated that there is no statistically significant difference in access scores (F=0.885, not significant). This indicated that the perceptions of college students on access in higher education in Mizoram are not influenced by the medium of instruction in school. However, the analysis indicated that there was a statistically significant difference in equity scores (F=17.277, $p<0.001$), meaning the differences occurring due to chance are less than 0.1%. This means that the perceptions of college students on equity in higher education in Mizoram are significantly influenced by their medium of instruction in school. Hence, the null hypothesis, "H05: There is no significant relationship between the medium of instruction at school and students' perceptions of access and equity in higher education in Mizoram", is partially rejected, and it is proven that the college

students' perceptions of equity in higher education in Mizoram are significantly influenced by their medium of instruction in school.

Discussion and Conclusion

The findings indicated no gender-based differences in the perceptions of college students on access and equity in higher education in Mizoram. This reveals that the education system in higher education in Mizoram does not practise any form of partiality. Additionally, factors such as gender, social category, and geographical location are not barriers to access and equity in higher education in Mizoram. These findings strongly align with Article 29(2) of the Constitution of India," No citizen shall be denied admission into any educational institution maintained by the State or receiving aid out of State funds on grounds only of religion, race, caste, language or any of them" (Government of India, 1950).

In contrast, the stream of studies in college and the medium of instruction in schools have influenced college students' perceptions of access and equity in higher education in Mizoram. Since English is the medium of instruction in college, students with limited English language proficiency may face problems in their education. Moreover, colleges in Mizoram primarily offer mainstream subjects with a lack of vocational courses and an overall rigid curriculum. Consequently, some students may select a course not based on their interest but rather for the sake of the prevailing social trend, since, availability of colleges does not imply accessibility and equity.

The implementation of the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020, Ministry of Education, 2020) aims to address this issue by reducing course segregation and adopting a multidisciplinary approach to education, providing students with more diverse courses that align with their aptitude. This policy has the potential to bring a paradigm shift to the higher education landscape of Mizoram, making it more diversified and democratic, addressing challenges related to access and equity.

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Promoting Indian Knowledge Systems in Higher Education: A Pathway

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Abstract

Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) encompass a diverse body of traditional wisdom, scientific principles, and cultural practices rooted in ancient Indian texts. This study explores the integration of IKS into higher education, assessing its current incorporation, barriers to inclusion, and potential benefits for academic rigor, cultural diversity, and interdisciplinary learning. While fields like Ayurveda, Yoga, and Sanskrit have gained institutional support, others such as Vedic mathematics and Indian philosophy remain underrepresented. Challenges include societal perceptions, curriculum rigidity, and institutional resistance. The study highlights the need for policy reforms, faculty training, and innovative pedagogical approaches to bridge traditional and modern knowledge systems. By incorporating IKS into mainstream curricula, higher education can foster holistic learning, promote sustainability, and contribute to global knowledge exchange.

Keywords: *Indian Knowledge Systems, Interdisciplinary Learning, Cultural Diversity, Policy Integration*

Introduction

Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) refer to the diverse and rich body of traditional wisdom, philosophies, scientific principles, arts, and cultural practices that have developed over millennia in the Indian subcontinent. IKS, deeply rooted in ancient texts like the Vedas, Upanishads, and Puranas, spans a wide range of disciplines, including mathematics, astronomy, medicine, art, literature, and spiritual practices

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(Chakravarti, 2020). Key philosophical schools, such as Vedanta, Nyaya, and Yoga, shaped intellectual thought not only in India but also influenced global philosophical discourse. In the realm of science and technology, IKS includes contributions like the concept of zero, the development of Ayurveda, and ancient architectural principles embedded in temple construction. Furthermore, cultural practices like traditional music, dance forms (e.g., Bharatanatyam and Kathak), and crafts exemplify the scope of IKS, revealing an interconnection between knowledge, culture, and the environment (Bhattacharya, 2018). In today's globalized and rapidly changing world, the relevance of IKS has become more pronounced as contemporary societies face challenges like environmental degradation, health crises, and the erosion of cultural identities. Indian Knowledge Systems, with their emphasis on sustainable living, holistic health (as seen in Ayurveda and Yoga), and community-based wisdom, offer alternative solutions to these modern dilemmas. For example, the Indian concept of "Jugaad"—a creative or resourceful solution—has gained recognition worldwide as a model for innovation (Gupta, 2016). Furthermore, in the field of education, the holistic approach of IKS, which nurtures intellectual, emotional, and spiritual growth, is increasingly seen as a remedy to the often fragmented nature of modern Western education systems that prioritize technical and analytical learning over well-rounded development (Nair, 2022). Moreover, the principles of IKS also foster inclusivity, ethical governance, and sustainable development, all of which align with the goals of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). By bridging traditional wisdom with modern scientific knowledge, IKS can play a key role in global dialogues surrounding climate change, biodiversity conservation, and health (Nair, 2022).

Despite this growing recognition, a significant gap persists in the structured inclusion of Indian Knowledge Systems within mainstream higher education curricula. IKS remains underrepresented in academic institutions, often relegated to niche departments or optional modules rather than being integrated as a core component of interdisciplinary learning. This disconnect limits students' access to indigenous frameworks of knowledge that are highly relevant to addressing current global and local challenges.

Integrating Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) into higher education goes beyond preserving heritage; it enhances contemporary academic frameworks. Modern higher education increasingly values interdisciplinary learning, and IKS supports this by emphasizing interconnectedness, balance, and holistic approaches to knowledge. Incorporating IKS into curricula can foster a comprehensive understanding across disciplines, from social to natural sciences, while introducing innovative methodologies for inquiry and problem-solving (Sharma, 2017). Moreover, incorporating IKS into higher education can foster innovation by promoting critical

thinking that harmonizes tradition with modernity. This can lead to the creation of new educational models that empower students to approach challenges from multiple perspectives, fostering creativity and adaptability. Embedding IKS in education is crucial for promoting cultural diversity and inclusion, ensuring that students are not only exposed to Western knowledge paradigms but also to indigenous worldviews, which can empower marginalized voices (Patel, 2021).

The integration of IKS in higher education is essential for preserving the cultural and intellectual heritage of India while offering contemporary education systems alternative frameworks for fostering well-rounded, innovative, and globally conscious citizens. This approach can empower students to engage with the world from a perspective that values both ancient wisdom and modern progress.

Historical Context of Indian Knowledge Systems

Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) represent a civilizational legacy rooted in thousands of years of intellectual, spiritual, and cultural development. Scholars have noted that IKS encompass a vast array of disciplines—including mathematics, astronomy, philosophy, medicine, linguistics, arts, and architecture—interconnected through holistic and context-sensitive frameworks (Rao, 2010). These systems evolved organically within institutions such as Gurukuls, Takshashila, and Nalanda, embodying a unique pedagogical philosophy that emphasized experiential learning, ethical grounding, and spiritual elevation. However, as researchers like Altbach (1971) and Kumar (2005) argue, colonial interventions led to the systematic marginalization and devaluation of these indigenous systems, resulting in a rupture of continuity and academic disengagement.

Ancient Indian Education Systems:

Scholars like Michel Danino (2011) emphasize that education in ancient India was not merely about the acquisition of knowledge but was fundamentally aimed at character building and realization of the self (Atman). The Gurukul system, often cited in pedagogical studies (Ranganathan, 2007), promoted direct transmission of knowledge through close teacher-disciple relationships, fostering cognitive as well as emotional and spiritual development. The curriculum included a wide array of subjects—from Vedic literature and mathematics to music and martial arts—tailored to individual aptitudes, a feature modern scholars view as an early form of personalized learning (Mukherjee, 2013).

Takshashila, regarded by scholars like Radha Kumud Mookerji (1919) as one of the earliest universities in the world, offered instruction in disciplines like law,

astronomy, medicine, and political science. Jivaka, the physician of the Buddha, and Chanakya, the author of Arthashastra, are products of this institution, showcasing its multidisciplinary excellence. Similarly, Nalanda University, often cited by Amartya Sen (2005), functioned as a global center of learning, drawing scholars from as far as China, Korea, and Central Asia. The intellectual climate at Nalanda fostered critical inquiry, debate, and the synthesis of Buddhist, Hindu, and Jain thought systems.

Key Contributions of Indian Knowledge Systems:

Researchers such as George Gheverghese Joseph (2011) assert that India's contributions to mathematics were foundational to global mathematical development. The concept of zero, the decimal system, and early algebraic techniques emerged from texts like Aryabhata's Āryabhaṭīya and Brahmagupta's Brahmasphutasiddhanta. Joseph challenges the Eurocentric narrative of mathematical history, underscoring the transmission of Indian mathematical ideas to the Islamic world and eventually to Renaissance Europe.

In astronomy, the insights of Indian scholars were remarkably advanced for their time. Aryabhata's proposition of Earth's axial rotation and accurate calculation of eclipses prefigured later Western discoveries. As S. Balachandra Rao (1994) argues, Indian astronomers developed a unique synthesis of observational techniques and theoretical modeling, blending empirical rigor with metaphysical insight.

Indian philosophy offers one of the most diverse and rigorous intellectual traditions globally. Scholars such as B.K. Matilal (1986) have examined how classical Indian systems like Nyaya and Mimamsa developed complex theories of logic, semantics, and epistemology long before their Western counterparts. Matilal's comparative philosophy approach highlights how Indian thinkers engaged with questions of perception, inference, and language with analytical precision akin to that of Aristotle or Kant. The Vedanta tradition, particularly the non-dualist (Advaita) philosophy articulated by Adi Shankaracharya, continues to be studied for its ontological depth and spiritual resonance. Researchers in comparative religion and consciousness studies have increasingly drawn from these texts to explore the nature of self, reality, and cognition (Deutsch, 1973).

Modern medical historians like Dominik Wujastyk (2003) emphasize that Ayurveda was not just a medical system but a comprehensive health science that integrated dietetics, surgery, psychiatry, and preventive care. The Charaka Samhita and Sushruta Samhita represent some of the most detailed ancient medical treatises in world history, including descriptions of surgical techniques such as rhinoplasty and cataract removal. Contemporary scholars of integrative medicine recognize

the continuing relevance of Ayurvedic principles in holistic health paradigms and wellness practices.

Indian aesthetics, codified in Bharata's Natya Shastra, represents an early and elaborate theory of performance arts. Scholars like Kapila Vatsyayan (1997) argue that Indian classical dance, drama, and music were not merely performative forms but expressions of spiritual and philosophical truths. The concept of rasa, or aesthetic experience, as elaborated in these texts, has influenced global discussions on emotion, empathy, and artistic cognition.

Decline and Loss of Prominence:

The decline of Indian Knowledge Systems is often examined through the lens of epistemic colonization. Scholars like Gauri Viswanathan (1989) and Partha Chatterjee (1993) argue that British educational policies systematically devalued indigenous knowledge to impose a Western rationalist epistemology. The introduction of English as the medium of instruction and the Macaulay Minute (1835) are frequently cited as turning points in this cultural dislocation.

Traditional institutions such as Nalanda and Vikramashila were destroyed during invasions, but the colonial imposition of a Eurocentric curriculum created what Dipesh Chakrabarty (2000) calls a "history without a subject"—one that excluded native ways of knowing. Sanskrit and Prakrit texts were sidelined, and indigenous sciences were dismissed as "unscientific" or "mythological."

The marginalization extended to indigenous languages and modes of oral transmission, which further hindered the preservation of IKS. As Pandey (2003) notes, the colonial model aimed to produce clerks and intermediaries rather than thinkers, severing the link between education and cultural identity.

In recent decades, there has been a resurgence of interest in Indian Knowledge Systems, both within India and internationally. Researchers like V. N. Jha (2010) and Michel Danino (2011) advocate for the integration of IKS into mainstream education, particularly through interdisciplinary research centers, curriculum reform, and digital archiving of classical texts.

Fields such as Vedic Mathematics, Yoga Therapy, Ayurgenomics, and Comparative Philosophy are experiencing renewed scholarly engagement. The National Education Policy 2020 explicitly emphasizes the promotion of IKS, calling for their systematic documentation, validation, and pedagogical integration. Nevertheless, as Raghavan (2021) cautions, the revival must avoid romanticization and instead adopt a critical, evidence-based approach that distinguishes between

tradition and dogma, and between historically grounded knowledge and mythological belief.

Indian Knowledge Systems, when viewed through the lens of contemporary scholarship, offer not just a glimpse into the past but a framework for future knowledge creation. They represent an alternative epistemology—holistic, integrative, and deeply humanistic. Reviving IKS requires not only curriculum reform but a broader epistemic shift that values indigenous wisdom on par with modern scientific paradigms. As more scholars engage with these systems critically and contextually, IKS can reclaim their rightful place in the global intellectual heritage.

Research Questions of the Study

The research questions of this study aim to explore the integration of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) within higher education. They are designed to examine the current status, identify key challenges, assess potential academic and societal benefits, and recommend effective strategies for incorporating IKS into curricula and research. This structured inquiry provides a comprehensive foundation for addressing the future of IKS in academia.

- What is the current level of integration of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) in higher education curricula and academic research?
- What are the primary challenges that hinder the inclusion of IKS in higher education institutions?
- What are the potential academic and societal benefits of integrating IKS into higher education programs?
- What strategies can be recommended to higher education institutions, policymakers, and educators for the promotion and inclusion of IKS in their curricula and research agendas?

These questions provide a structured approach to understanding the current status, challenges, benefits, and potential solutions for promoting Indian Knowledge Systems in higher education.

Research Objectives of the Study

The integration of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) into higher education offers a unique opportunity to enrich contemporary learning with indigenous wisdom. While India's educational landscape is increasingly globalized, the need to preserve and promote its traditional knowledge systems remains paramount. This study aims to explore pathways for promoting IKS in higher education institutions, bridging the

gap between modern and traditional knowledge frameworks.

- To evaluate the extent to which Indian Knowledge Systems are currently incorporated into university curricula and academic research across various disciplines.
- To explore the barriers to the inclusion of IKS in mainstream higher education, including societal perceptions, curriculum limitations, and institutional resistance.
- To investigate how the inclusion of IKS can enhance academic rigor, cultural diversity, and interdisciplinary learning, particularly in fields like medicine, philosophy, and the arts.
- To propose practical strategies for higher education institutions, policymakers, and educators to effectively incorporate IKS, ensuring a balanced and inclusive curriculum that respects both traditional and modern knowledge systems.

This study provides a comprehensive understanding of the potential for integrating Indian Knowledge Systems into higher education. It aims to offer actionable insights and strategies for fostering a more inclusive and holistic approach to education, ensuring that India's rich intellectual heritage is preserved, celebrated, and effectively utilized in contemporary academic contexts.

Methodology of the Study

This study employs a qualitative research methodology, with document analysis serving as the primary method for data collection and interpretation. The focus is on examining a wide range of existing documents—such as policy papers, academic publications, curriculum frameworks, government reports, and institutional guidelines—pertaining to Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) and their integration within higher education in India. The objective is to critically investigate how IKS is currently perceived, incorporated, or overlooked within academic institutions and to identify viable strategies for its meaningful promotion. By analyzing both historical and contemporary documents, the study aims to uncover key insights into the opportunities, challenges, and institutional dynamics involved in embedding indigenous knowledge traditions within modern educational frameworks. Document analysis offers a rich, contextual understanding of the evolving discourse on IKS, especially in light of recent educational reforms such as the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. This approach allows for the systematic identification of patterns, themes, contradictions, and gaps across multiple sources. Special attention is given to the roles of policymakers, educators, and scholars in shaping the narrative

and implementation of IKS in higher education. Through this methodological lens, the study not only captures diverse perspectives but also facilitates a deeper understanding of the structural and epistemological shifts required to accommodate traditional knowledge systems in mainstream academia. Ultimately, this research seeks to advocate for a more inclusive and pluralistic educational paradigm—one that recognizes the enduring relevance of IKS alongside contemporary global knowledge systems.

Objective-wise Analysis and Interpretation

Objective 1: To evaluate the extent to which Indian Knowledge Systems are currently incorporated into university curricula and academic research across various disciplines.

The incorporation of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) into university curricula and academic research has gained momentum in recent years, particularly following policy initiatives such as the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which emphasizes a holistic and multidisciplinary approach to education (MHRD, 2020). However, the extent of integration varies across disciplines, institutions, and research domains. While certain fields such as Ayurveda, Yoga, and Sanskrit have long been associated with higher education, other traditional disciplines such as Vedic mathematics, ancient metallurgical sciences, and Indian philosophical traditions are still in the nascent stages of academic integration.

In the field of medicine and health sciences, Ayurveda, Siddha, and Yoga have seen a significant boost in academic research and institutional support. Universities like Banaras Hindu University (BHU) and Gujarat Ayurved University have dedicated faculties for Ayurvedic studies, and research collaborations between All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA) and institutions such as IIT-Delhi reflect growing interdisciplinary engagement (Sharma & Tewari, 2021). Similarly, Yoga has been integrated into curricula in physical education and psychology programs, with the Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga playing a key role in standardizing education and research (Balkrishna et al., 2020).

In mathematics and sciences, efforts have been made to integrate ancient Indian contributions, such as the works of Aryabhata and Bhaskara, into mainstream mathematical studies. Vedic mathematics is being introduced in select institutions as an alternative pedagogical approach (Ramasubramanian, 2019). However, its integration into core university curricula remains limited, often restricted to elective courses or specialized research projects.

In philosophy and social sciences, universities have introduced courses on

Indian epistemology, ethics, and governance based on texts like the Arthashastra and Upanishads. Institutions such as Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) and Indian Institute of Advanced Studies (IIAS) have established research centers focused on Indian intellectual traditions (Mukherjee, 2022). Nevertheless, a major challenge remains in balancing traditional knowledge with contemporary academic frameworks, ensuring rigorous methodologies in research.

Despite these advancements, the broader integration of IKS into mainstream curricula faces challenges such as lack of standardized content, modern pedagogical adaptation, and interdisciplinary engagement. Increased funding, policy incentives, and faculty training are essential for ensuring the meaningful incorporation of IKS across disciplines. Future research must focus on developing structured curricula that bridge the gap between traditional Indian knowledge and contemporary global academic standards.

Objective 2: To explore the barriers to the inclusion of IKS in mainstream higher education, including societal perceptions, curriculum limitations, and institutional resistance.

The inclusion of the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) in mainstream higher education faces multiple barriers, including societal perceptions, curriculum limitations, and institutional resistance. One of the primary challenges is the perception that IKS lacks scientific rigor and is incompatible with modern academic disciplines. This notion, rooted in colonial education policies, continues to influence public and institutional attitudes, leading to its marginalization in higher education (Patwardhan, 2020). Furthermore, the existing curriculum in universities is heavily influenced by Western frameworks, leaving little room for indigenous knowledge. The rigid compartmentalization of subjects and a lack of interdisciplinary approaches further hinder the integration of IKS (Ranganathan, 2021). Institutional resistance to integrating Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) arises from a shortage of trained faculty, insufficient research funding, and bureaucratic inertia that favors conventional academic structures over indigenous knowledge (Gupta, 2019). Many universities hesitate to adopt IKS due to concerns about its credibility, standardization, and compatibility with global education systems (Krishna, 2022). Although policy initiatives like the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 emphasize the importance of incorporating IKS into education, implementation remains slow due to logistical and ideological challenges (Menon & Sarkar, 2021). Overcoming these obstacles requires a fundamental shift in educational policies, faculty training, and interdisciplinary approaches that acknowledge the value of traditional knowledge systems. Raising awareness to address societal biases and developing a structured framework for IKS integration can further enhance its acceptance and legitimacy in academia (Joshi,

2023). Without these efforts, the potential of IKS to advance sustainable development, holistic education, and cultural preservation may remain untapped.

Objective 3: To investigate how the inclusion of IKS can enhance academic rigor, cultural diversity, and interdisciplinary learning, particularly in fields like medicine, philosophy, and the arts.

The integration of the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) into mainstream academia has the potential to significantly enhance academic rigor, cultural diversity, and interdisciplinary learning, particularly in disciplines such as medicine, philosophy, and the arts. Rooted in millennia of empirical knowledge, philosophical inquiry, and artistic expression, IKS provides a holistic framework that complements modern scientific methods while offering diverse epistemological perspectives (Rao, 2021).

In medicine, for example, Ayurveda—an ancient Indian system of healing—emphasizes a preventive and individualized approach to health, focusing on the balance of bodily humors (doshas) and the interdependence of mind and body (Mukherjee et al., 2017). The inclusion of Ayurvedic principles in contemporary medical research has already yielded promising results in areas like herbal medicine, gut microbiome studies, and holistic wellness (Patwardhan, 2020). By integrating Ayurvedic diagnostics and treatment approaches alongside modern biomedical techniques, scholars can foster a more comprehensive understanding of health and disease, thereby enhancing academic rigor in medical education and research.

Similarly, Indian philosophical traditions such as Vedanta, Nyaya, and Buddhism offer intricate logical frameworks that contribute to critical thinking and interdisciplinary discourse. Nyaya, for instance, provides a structured method of reasoning and debate that aligns with contemporary epistemology and logic (Ganeri, 2001). The study of these traditions can enrich contemporary philosophy, cognitive science, and artificial intelligence research by introducing alternative models of consciousness and cognition (Matilal, 1986). The incorporation of these perspectives not only fosters intellectual diversity but also enhances the analytical depth of philosophical and scientific inquiry.

In the arts, traditional Indian aesthetic theories, such as Rasa theory in classical dance, drama, and music, provide profound insights into human emotion and artistic expression. The Natya Shastra, an ancient treatise on dramaturgy, delineates a sophisticated framework for storytelling, emotional engagement, and audience experience that remains relevant in contemporary performance studies and media arts (Pollock, 2016). By engaging with such indigenous artistic traditions, students and scholars can cultivate a more nuanced understanding of cross-cultural aesthetics, thereby enriching interdisciplinary learning.

Furthermore, the inclusion of IKS promotes cultural diversity within academic curricula, offering students exposure to non-Western systems of knowledge that have historically been marginalized. This shift aligns with global efforts to decolonize education and recognize diverse intellectual traditions (Sundar, 2019). Universities that integrate IKS into their pedagogical models not only broaden students' intellectual horizons but also create opportunities for collaborative research across disciplines.

Embedding IKS into academia enhances scholarly rigor, fosters cultural diversity, and facilitates interdisciplinary learning. Its integration in medicine, philosophy, and the arts allows for a more holistic, pluralistic approach to education and research, ultimately contributing to a more inclusive and enriched intellectual landscape.

Objective 4: To propose practical strategies for higher education institutions, policymakers, and educators to effectively incorporate IKS, ensuring a balanced and inclusive curriculum that respects both traditional and modern knowledge systems.

Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) encompass a vast repository of indigenous knowledge, including traditional sciences, arts, literature, medicine, and philosophy, developed over millennia (Rao, 2021). Integrating IKS into higher education can foster a more inclusive and holistic learning environment, bridging the gap between modern scientific advancements and traditional wisdom (Kapoor & Sharma, 2022).

- Policy Reforms and Institutional Framework: Policymakers must develop structured guidelines for integrating IKS within existing higher education frameworks. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 already emphasizes the inclusion of indigenous knowledge, advocating for multidisciplinary education that combines traditional and modern disciplines (MHRD, 2020). Institutions should establish dedicated centers for IKS research, enabling documentation, preservation, and innovative applications of traditional knowledge (Joshi, 2023). Additionally, universities can introduce elective and mandatory courses on IKS across disciplines such as Ayurveda in medical education, Vedic mathematics in engineering, and ethical philosophies in humanities (Raman, 2021).
- Curriculum Design and Pedagogical Innovations: A balanced curriculum should integrate IKS into mainstream subjects rather than treating it as an isolated component. This can be achieved through case studies, comparative analyses, and practical applications (Sharma & Gupta, 2023). For instance, environmental studies can incorporate traditional ecological knowledge, showcasing sustainable practices used in Indian agriculture (Kumar & Patel, 2022). Pedagogical innovations such as experiential learning, storytelling, and interdisciplinary approaches can help students engage with IKS in a meaningful way (Mishra, 2021). Digital platforms and MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) can further aid in disseminating IKS-based knowledge globally (Singh, 2023).

- Faculty Development and Research Incentives: A major challenge in incorporating IKS is the lack of trained educators proficient in both traditional and modern knowledge systems (Rao, 2021). Higher education institutions should conduct faculty development programs and workshops, fostering collaboration between scholars of IKS and contemporary academics (Kapoor & Sharma, 2022). Research grants and funding should be allocated for interdisciplinary studies, encouraging innovations that merge traditional knowledge with modern scientific advancements (Joshi, 2023). Collaborative projects with indigenous communities can ensure the authenticity and practical relevance of IKS research (Mishra, 2021).
- Community Engagement and Industry Collaboration: IKS should not be limited to academic discourse but should be linked to real-world applications (Sharma & Gupta, 2023). Universities can partner with local artisans, Ayurvedic practitioners, and traditional knowledge holders to provide hands-on learning experiences (Kumar & Patel, 2022). Industry collaborations can help translate IKS research into viable products and solutions, such as herbal medicines, sustainable textiles, and renewable energy innovations (Singh, 2023). Community-led initiatives can further support the preservation and dynamic evolution of IKS (Raman, 2021).

The integration of IKS into higher education requires a multi-faceted approach involving policy reforms, curriculum redesign, faculty training, research incentives, and community engagement. A balanced and inclusive education system that respects both traditional and modern knowledge will not only preserve India's rich intellectual heritage but also contribute to innovative, sustainable, and holistic development (MHRD, 2020). By fostering collaborations between academia, policymakers, industry, and indigenous communities, Indian Knowledge Systems can become an integral part of contemporary education, enhancing cultural pride and global knowledge exchange.

Discussion of the Study

The study highlights the growing recognition of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) in higher education, emphasizing their potential to enhance academic rigor, cultural diversity, and interdisciplinary learning. Despite policy initiatives like the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, the integration of IKS remains uneven across disciplines, with fields like Ayurveda, Yoga, and Sanskrit receiving more institutional support than areas like Vedic mathematics, ancient metallurgical sciences, and Indian philosophical traditions. While progress has been made in select universities and research centers, challenges such as societal perceptions, curriculum rigidity, and institutional resistance hinder wider adoption.

A key finding of the study is the need for structured policy interventions, faculty development programs, and innovative pedagogical approaches to bridge the gap between traditional and modern knowledge systems. The incorporation of IKS in subjects like medicine, philosophy, and the arts demonstrates its relevance in contemporary education. For instance, Ayurveda's holistic approach to health aligns with modern biomedical research, while Indian philosophical traditions offer valuable insights for cognitive science and ethics. Indian aesthetic theories contribute to cross-cultural perspectives in the arts, enriching academic discourse.

Addressing barriers to IKS integration requires a shift in educational frameworks, fostering interdisciplinary collaboration and industry partnerships. Universities must actively engage with traditional knowledge holders and research institutions to ensure authenticity and application-oriented learning. By incorporating IKS into mainstream curricula, higher education institutions can contribute to decolonizing knowledge systems, promoting cultural pride, and ensuring a more inclusive and holistic academic environment.

Conclusion

Promoting Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) in higher education is a crucial step toward creating a balanced and inclusive academic environment that values both traditional and modern knowledge. While policy initiatives like NEP 2020 have laid the groundwork, effective implementation requires structured curricula, faculty training, interdisciplinary research, and community engagement. The integration of IKS in fields such as medicine, philosophy, and the arts highlights its relevance and potential to enhance academic rigor and cultural diversity. Challenges such as societal biases, curriculum limitations, and institutional resistance must be addressed through awareness programs, research funding, and policy reforms. By fostering collaborations between academia, industry, and indigenous communities, universities can bridge the gap between traditional wisdom and contemporary scientific advancements. A holistic approach to IKS integration will not only preserve India's rich intellectual heritage but also contribute to global knowledge exchange, sustainability, and innovation in higher education.

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Implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 in Colleges of Mizoram: Status, Challenges, and Way Forward

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Abstract

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 represents a major reform in India's higher education system, aiming to promote flexibility, skill development, digital integration, and multidisciplinary learning. For Mizoram, a geographically remote and resource-constrained state, the implementation of NEP 2020 carries both opportunities and challenges. This study examines the current status and institutional preparedness of Mizoram colleges in adopting NEP 2020, drawing on data from questionnaires administered to NEP Coordinators and supplemented by interviews with administrators, faculty and students. Findings reveal progress in areas such as value-added and skill enhancement courses, as well as the introduction of multidisciplinary curricula. However, significant barriers remain, including faculty shortages, infrastructural limitations, financial constraints, administrative delays and uneven awareness or capacity-building efforts. The study highlights the need for clearer guidelines, faculty development initiatives, infrastructural support and collaborative strategies to ensure uniform and effective implementation of NEP 2020 in the state. These insights contribute to understanding the localized challenges of educational reform in Mizoram.

Keywords: *NEP 2020, Higher Education, Mizoram, Implementation, Challenges.*

Introduction

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 is India's first education policy of the 21st century, approved by the Union Cabinet on 29 July 2020. It replaces the National Policy on Education, 1986, with a vision of transforming India's education system to meet the needs of the rapidly changing national and global landscape. The

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policy emphasizes flexibility, inclusivity, and holistic development, introducing major reforms such as multidisciplinary learning, value-added and skill-based courses, digital integration, the Academic Bank of Credits (ABC), and the Multiple Entry and Exit System (MEES). In 2023, the Curriculum and Credit Framework for Undergraduate Programmes (CCFUGP) was formally adopted by many universities across India, including Mizoram University, marking a critical step toward implementing NEP 2020 provisions.

In Mizoram, higher education is influenced by tribal cultural values, regional constraints, and aspirations for academic growth. However, as a geographically remote and resource-constrained state with limited digital infrastructure, Mizoram faces unique challenges in adopting NEP 2020. The appointment of NEP Coordinators in colleges plays a pivotal role in bridging the gap between national policy and local implementation.

This study examines the status, challenges, and support needs of Mizoram's colleges in implementing NEP 2020, providing insights into institutional preparedness, infrastructural gaps, faculty readiness and opportunities for improvement.

Overview of Higher Education in Mizoram

Mizoram currently has 29 affiliated general degree colleges under Mizoram University and one constituent college. Of these, eight colleges are managed by private or Church bodies, while the rest are government-run. Most institutions offer general undergraduate programmes only with few colleges incorporating professional courses too. Opportunities for postgraduate study and research remain limited. Furthermore, many colleges operate in semi-urban or rural settings, which significantly impacts infrastructural development and digital readiness.

Table 1: List of General Degree Colleges affiliated to Mizoram University and its constituent college

Sl. No	Name of Institution
1	Govt. Aizawl College
2	Govt. Aizawl North College
3	Govt. Aizawl West College
4	Govt. Champhai College
5	Govt. Hnahthial College
6	Govt. Hrangbana College
7	Govt. J.Buana College

8	Govt. J. Thankima College
9	Govt. Johnson College
10	Govt. Kamalanagar College
11	Govt. Khawzawl College
12	Govt. Kolasib College
13	Govt. Lawngtlai College
14	Govt. Mamit College
15	Govt. Saiha College
16	Govt. Saitual College
17	Govt. Serchhip College
18	Govt. T. Romana College
19	Govt. Zawlnuam College
20	Govt. Zirtiri Res. Sc. College
21	Lunglei Govt. College
22	HATIM
23	Helen Lowry College
24	Mizoram Christian College
25	Aizawl City College
26	Divine Mercy College
27	Faith College
28	Kapthangi College
29	Kawnpui College
30	Pachhunga University College (Constituent College)

Rationale of the Study

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 represents one of the most comprehensive reforms in India's education sector, seeking to reshape higher education into a more flexible, multidisciplinary and inclusive system. While the policy is nationally driven, its effectiveness ultimately depends on how it is interpreted and implemented within diverse regional contexts.

Mizoram, being a geographically remote and resource-constrained state, faces unique challenges in higher education. Most of its colleges are located in semi-urban and rural areas with limited infrastructural facilities, inadequate digital resources and faculty shortages. At the same time, the state's rich cultural heritage, strong

community-based values and aspirations for upward mobility create fertile ground for policy-driven transformation.

Since Mizoram University and affiliated colleges began aligning their curricula with the Curriculum and Credit Framework for Undergraduate Programme (CCFUGP) in 2023, understanding the preparedness, challenges and support requirements of institutions has become crucial. NEP Coordinators, faculty and administrators play an instrumental role in translating policy into practice, but there is limited empirical research that documents their experiences, institutional capacities, and the systemic barriers encountered during implementation.

By addressing these gaps, this study will provide a ground-level perspective on how NEP 2020 is being implemented in Mizoram colleges by identifying structural, financial and pedagogical challenges that hinder effective adoption of reforms. Moreover, by documenting the status, challenges and support needs of colleges in Mizoram in implementing NEP 2020, the findings will provide evidence-based insights to guide policymakers, Mizoram University and state-level higher education authorities in framing policies, issuing clearer guidelines, strengthen support mechanisms and allocating resources for smoother implementation of NEP 2020. Ultimately, this study seeks to bridge the gap between policy intent and institutional practice, enabling higher education in Mizoram to become more inclusive, future-ready and responsive to local needs.

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the status of NEP 2020 implementation in Mizoram colleges.
2. To identify challenges faced by institutions in the implementation of NEP 2020.
3. To suggest suggestions for effective implementation of NEP 2020 in Mizoram colleges.

Research Design and Methodology

Research Design

The study follows a descriptive survey design combined with an analytical approach, using both primary and secondary data.

- Primary Data: Semi-structured interviews with officials from the State's Directorate of Higher & Technical Education, college administrators, faculty members and students; questionnaires administered to NEP Coordinators in colleges.

- Secondary Data: Policy documents, UGC guidelines, Mizoram University directives, reports from the Directorate of Higher & Technical Education (Mizoram), and institutional websites, prospectuses and magazines.

Population and Sample

The study population comprised all general degree colleges affiliated with Mizoram University. A purposive sampling method was used to take responses from designated NEP Coordinators from colleges of Mizoram and to ensure representation from government officials, students and faculty across arts, science, commerce and professional colleges.

Tools and Techniques of Data Collection

A structured questionnaire with four sections (institutional profile, implementation status, challenges, and support required) and semi-structured interviews with stakeholders constitute the primary tools.

For collection of data, questionnaires were distributed through online platforms to designated NEP Coordinators of the colleges, supplemented by in-person semi-structured interviews with state education officials, college faculties and students. Confidentiality and informed consent were ensured throughout.

Data Analysis

The data collected were thematically analyzed to identify the status and the recurring challenges of the implementation of NEP 2020 in the colleges of Mizoram and recommendations for its smooth functioning.

Major Findings

1. Status of NEP 2020 Implementation in Mizoram Colleges

Following the UGC's notification of the Curriculum and Credit Framework for Undergraduate Programme (CCFUP) in December 2022, Mizoram University issued Guidelines for Implementation of NEP 2020 in Undergraduate Programmes and functions from the academic session July 2023 in the HEIs/colleges of Mizoram.

The following key observations are made in the different areas of implementation:

- Major and Minor Courses: In alignment with the Curriculum and Credit Framework for Undergraduate Programmes (CCFUGP) prescribed by Mizoram University, the introduction of Major and Minor courses has been successfully implemented across colleges in Mizoram. Since this structure is a mandatory requirement for all affiliating colleges, its adoption has been uniform, marking

one of the more successful aspects of NEP 2020 implementation in Mizoram. This will ensure in-depth specialization in a chosen subject as well as allow students to broaden their academic exposure by opting for interdisciplinary or skill-based courses.

- Value Added Course: Value-added courses were introduced and mandated for students of 1st semester up to the 4thsemester in all colleges as per the CCFUGP guidelines. This will help instil in the students, positive attitude as well as common outlook on life as these courses contains certain bodies of knowledge essential for all students irrespective of their individual differences.
- Skill Enhancement Courses: The introduction of Skill Enhancement Courses (SECs), as mandated by the CCFUGP, has been uniformly adopted across all colleges in Mizoram. These courses are studied in 2nd, 3rd and 4th semester. However, the options available to students vary significantly between institutions. While some colleges provide a limited range of SECs or, no options at all, others are able to offer a wider variety of courses.
- Ability Enhancement Courses (AECs): Ability Enhancement Courses (AECs), focusing on Modern Indian Language (MIL) and English, have been implemented across Mizoram colleges in accordance with the CCFUGP. In Mizoram, colleges have adopted these courses with varying degrees of emphasis, but their inclusion remains a mandatory requirement to ensure competency in language and communication, which is central to the holistic approach of NEP 2020.
- Multidisciplinary Curriculum: A very positive advantage of the NEP 2020 curriculum is the introduction of multidisciplinary curriculum which is designed to broaden students' intellectual experience and promote liberal arts and science education. The provision has been formally integrated in the curriculum and has been implemented in all colleges but reveals disparities. Flexibility in course selection varies significantly across institutions due to limited subjects, streams of study and inadequate teaching faculty.
- Academic Bank of Credits (ABC): Implementation remains in early stages, limited by digital readiness and the requirement of an Aadhaar ID. Some students, including those refugees from Myanmar or from families with religious objections, are unable to obtain Aadhaar, restricting full adoption.
- Multiple Entry/Exit System (MEES): In line with UGC guidelines (2021), Mizoram University has formally adopted the provision for multiple entry and exit options within undergraduate programmes, allowing students to re-enter in odd semesters and exit after completing even semesters with the required

credits. However, in practice, the system remains largely at the recognition stage. Colleges are awaiting clearer operational guidelines regarding procedures, credit transfers, and administrative mechanisms to ensure smooth implementation. As a result, while MEES exists in principle, its practical rollout across Mizoram colleges is still pending.

- Faculty Development: Faculty training and orientation initiatives have been undertaken primarily under the auspices of the University Grants Commission (UGC) and Mizoram University. In addition, several colleges have organized sensitization and orientation programmes focusing on NEP 2020 and the newly introduced curricular framework. Nonetheless, the frequency and consistency of these initiatives remain uneven. Within the two years since implementation began, some colleges have conducted only a single programme, whereas others have organized multiple sessions, reflecting disparities in institutional commitment and resource availability.

2. Challenges in the Implementation of NEP 2020 in Mizoram Colleges

- Skill Enhancement Courses: There are differences amongst the colleges in introducing number of skill enhancement courses for students, leading to some students having more varieties and options depending on the institutions they attend to. This may be due to the lack of or inadequacy of funds for employment of skill teachers and for procurement of tools and equipment in fulfilling the requirements in various skill enhancement courses. This lack of uniformity reflects disparities in institutional resources, availability of qualified faculty, and administrative prioritization, which in turn influences students' access to diverse skill-oriented learning opportunities.
- Multidisciplinary Courses: Although the CCFUGP mandates that students complete three introductory-level multidisciplinary courses, effective implementation has been constrained by structural challenges. Most colleges in Mizoram face a shortage of qualified faculty, limited subjects and streams of study. As a result, many colleges struggle to provide students with diverse options, restricting the intended multidisciplinary exposure envisioned by NEP 2020, undermining the policy's aim of providing broad-based, flexible and liberal education. This disparity across institutions reflects systemic limitations that continue to hinder the full realization of the multidisciplinary vision.
- Infrastructural Limitations: Many colleges in Mizoram continue to face significant infrastructural gaps, particularly in terms of digital readiness and teaching-learning resources. Constraints such as inadequate classrooms, laboratories, and physical spaces hinder the smooth conduct of newly introduced

courses under NEP 2020. While some colleges report moderate preparedness for digital learning, persistent challenges such as poor internet connectivity, insufficient ICT facilities, and lack of e-content development remain pressing concerns. These infrastructural limitations restrict the effective delivery of the courses, most particularly skill enhancement and multidisciplinary courses.

- Faculty Shortage and Resistance to Change: The successful implementation of NEP 2020 in Mizoram is constrained by a shortage of qualified faculty across disciplines, particularly in specialized and skill-based areas. This shortage not only limits the range of courses that colleges can offer but also places an additional workload on existing faculty, thereby affecting teaching quality. Alongside quantitative gaps, qualitative challenges emerge in the form of resistance to pedagogical reform. Many faculty members remain hesitant to adopt learner-centric, multidisciplinary, and technology-integrated approaches, preferring conventional lecture-based methods. Such reluctance often stems from limited exposure to new pedagogical models, inadequate training opportunities, and apprehension about adapting to digital platforms. Together, faculty shortage and resistance to change pose a dual challenge that significantly slows the pace of educational transformation envisioned under NEP 2020.
- Financial Constraints: Budgetary limitations remain one of the most critical barriers to effective NEP 2020 implementation in Mizoram colleges. The redesign of curricula, particularly the introduction of new courses such as skill enhancement requires substantial financial investment in human and material resources that most institutions cannot afford. In addition, the procurement of modern technology, establishment of digital learning facilities, and organization of regular faculty training programs demand sustained funding support. Without adequate financial assistance, colleges struggle to bridge the gap between policy directives and practical implementation, thereby limiting the scope and quality of educational reforms.
- Constraints in Offering 4-Year UG Degree (Honours with Research): Most colleges in Mizoram face critical gaps in meeting the criteria to offer 4-Year UG Degree (Honours with Research) as per UGC's Curriculum and Credit Framework for Undergraduate Programmes (CCFUGP). The acute shortage of regular faculty, particularly those eligible to supervise doctoral research, alongside limited research infrastructure, makes it difficult for colleges to introduce this programme. As a result, the implementation of the 4-Year UG Degree with a research component remains highly constrained across the state.

- Administrative Delays: A recurrent challenge in the implementation of NEP 2020 in Mizoram colleges is the lack of clarity and delay in receiving operational guidelines from regulatory bodies. While Mizoram University has issued directives for the adoption of the new Curriculum and Credit Framework, many institutions report that detailed instructions remain insufficiently communicated. These gaps create uncertainty for administrators and faculty, slowing the pace of curriculum redesign and institutional planning. Furthermore, the absence of timely circulars or comprehensive handbooks leads to inconsistent interpretations of policy provisions across colleges. Such administrative delays not only hinder smooth implementation but also contribute to uneven preparedness, create confusion among faculty and students, hinder curriculum redesign, and contribute to uneven implementation of NEP 2020 across colleges.
- Capacity-Building Gaps: Awareness of NEP 2020 among both faculty and students remains limited, creating a significant barrier to effective implementation. Training and orientation programmes have been organized primarily under the auspices of the UGC and Mizoram University, but participation is often restricted to a few representatives from each institution. While some colleges have conducted their own sensitization sessions, the frequency and scope of these initiatives are uneven, ranging from a single programme in two years to multiple sessions in others. Moreover, faculty disengagement, often stemming from unfamiliarity with the policy framework, has further slowed progress. These inconsistencies highlight disparities in institutional priorities, administrative commitment, and resource allocation. Without systematic capacity-building efforts, both faculty preparedness and student awareness will remain inadequate, undermining the NEP's vision of fostering academic flexibility, skill development, and holistic learning.

3. Suggestions for effective implementation of NEP 2020 in Mizoram colleges

1) Policy Awareness Drives: Regular seminars and workshops must be organized to sensitize all stakeholders, viz. students, faculty and administrators about NEP 2020's objectives, provisions, strategies and implementation roadmap.

2) Addressing Faculty Shortage: The shortage of qualified and trained faculty is a critical barrier to implementing NEP 2020 in Mizoram. To overcome this, the state and institutions should expedite faculty recruitment through transparent and timely selection processes; introduce incentives to attract qualified professionals to teach skilled courses and multidisciplinary courses in colleges and promote adjunct and visiting faculty models in partnership with universities and experts.

3) Capacity Building: Continuous professional development must be offered through faculty development programs (FDPs), leadership training for administrators, and digital skill enhancement to align with the multidisciplinary and learner-centric model of NEP.

4) Collaborative Models: Partnerships between colleges, Mizoram University, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and ed-tech platforms must be promoted to support academic reform, content development and technology adoption.

5) Infrastructure Development: Leveraging state and central schemes (RUSA, UGC) and state schemes for upgrading college facilities like digital classrooms, laboratories, libraries and student support systems.

6) Introduction of AI course: For enhancement of students' employability and future vocations, there is a great felt need for the introduction of various AI courses in the regular curriculum and orientation courses on AI for teaching faculty to meet the present and future needs.

Conclusion

The adoption of NEP 2020 in Mizoram colleges marks a transformative step for higher education in the state though it is at a formative stage. While commendable progress has been made in introducing value-added courses, skill enhancement modules and multidisciplinary learning, challenges remain in infrastructure, faculty capacity and equitable access to resources. This study, by drawing on the perspectives of primary stakeholders, highlights institutional realities on the ground and offers insights that can inform policymakers, Mizoram University, and state authorities in providing targeted support. Addressing barriers through enhanced policy clarity, faculty development, infrastructure investment and context-specific planning is essential to ensure equity, inclusiveness and effective implementation. Strengthening NEP implementation in Mizoram is not only vital for achieving national educational goals but also for ensuring equitable access to quality higher education in the Northeast region.

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Multidisciplinary Approach in Higher Education: An Overview

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Abstract

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 marks a transformative shift in India's educational landscape advocating for a multidisciplinary and holistic approach into higher education. By exploring a range of subjects, students can enhance their ability to think critically, innovatively and adapt effectively. Multidisciplinary approach has made several changes into the curriculum and this shift in curriculum equips students to explore and understand diverse fields such as vocational education, value education and language skills aiming to develop critical thinking, creativity and holistic understanding. It shifts from rote learning and rigid subject boundaries to promoting a multidisciplinary approach where students can explore diverse fields and disciplines such as arts, sciences and vocational skills. This paper explores the impact of holistic learning through multidisciplinary education in undergraduate colleges and highlights how it is being put into practice in Mizoram and the changes happening in colleges and the difficulties faced while using this new method in higher education in India.

Keywords: *National Education Policy 2020, multidisciplinary, holistic learning, higher education.*

Introduction

A groundbreaking reform in the Indian education system where the National Education Policy 2020 was introduced which reshapes the structure of curriculum to improve the quality of the future Indian education. This policy placed importance on holistic and multidisciplinary learning. Acknowledging the constraints in education,

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the policy advocates a flexible, interdisciplinary model that empowers students to engage with subjects covering science, arts, commerce, vocational studies etc. By breaking down traditional boundaries between fields; the policy promotes innovation which helps students build their analytical thinking skills and most importantly gives importance to vocational education where practical learning happens. This will prepare individuals to be skilled and useful in the future.

Introducing multidisciplinary programs in higher education; colleges and universities are encouraged to break free from traditional academic boundaries. By offering multidisciplinary courses, students can blend their passions like pairing physics with music or economics with environmental studies which resulted into meaningful learning experiences. Multidisciplinary learning highlights learning of various topics from diverse disciplines (Park & Son, 2010).

Multidisciplinary learning prepares students for the real world where problems are rarely limited to a single field. By learning to approach issues from different angles, students build adaptability. This way, education becomes more relevant, practical, and connected to the challenges of modern life.

Why Multidisciplinary Approach in Higher Education?

India has embraced holistic and multidisciplinary learning since ancient times as seen in ancient centers of education like Takshashila and Nalanda. These institutions reflect a deep understanding of how different fields of knowledge like science, mathematics, vocational training or soft skills are interconnected. Reviving this inclusive and well-rounded model is not just about honouring the past; it is about preparing students for the complex, dynamic world in the 21st century. (NEP 2020, 11.1)

As mentioned earlier, colleges and universities are being encouraged to move beyond traditional subject limits by offering multidisciplinary programs which let students combine different interests creating richer and more meaningful learning experiences. When students mix subjects of their interest, they become more engaged in their studies. It allows them to see connections between different fields and use their knowledge in creative ways. For example, someone studying both technology and design can develop innovative solutions that are not only functional but also visually appealing.

The main aim of this approach is not just about boosting job prospects; it is about shaping curiosity, creativity and thoughtful individuals. It strives to make learning relevant and meaningful to students recognizing that each and every individual is unique and learns best when their interests, strengths and needs are addressed.

Multidisciplinary Approach in Colleges of Mizoram

In Mizoram, multidisciplinary approach has been integrated into the curriculum from 2023 and this have made several changes into the syllabus and in the teaching learning process. For postgraduate students, 170 multidisciplinary courses have been introduced giving them the opportunity to gain broad knowledge across different subjects. However, in undergraduate courses; major, minor, multidisciplinary, ability/ skill enhancement course and value education are compulsory papers to be taken up by a student. Disciplinary major and interdisciplinary major courses are sets of core subjects where students can choose from both within their own field of study and from other disciplines. Each department is required to offer at least one disciplinary major course every semester. Disciplinary minor and interdisciplinary minor courses are collections of elective subjects where students can select their choice based on their interests. These minor courses are offered by different departments in each semester depending on the department's capacity and resources (Guidelines for Implementation of NEP 2020: Multiple Entry and Exit in Academic Programmes offered in Mizoram University, 2021). Besides these major and minor courses, multidisciplinary courses and two other courses have been added up into the syllabus of undergraduate. To get a brief detail on the course structure and to highlight the courses offered in science, arts and commerce; models have been taken from Philosophy (Arts stream) and Botany (Science stream) syllabus as shown in the table.

Semester	Course Code	Course Name	Credits
I	BOT100 (Major)	Phycology & Mycolocy	4
	BOT101 (Minor)	Economic Botany	4
		[Minor course from other discipline]	4
	BOT110 (MDC)	Plants & Environment	3
	ENG/MIZ/ HIN150	AEC: Language and Communication Skill	3
	VAC100	Value Added Course (Universal Human Values)	2
			20

(Course structure of Philosophy & Botany)

The table above outlines the undergraduate syllabus designed in accordance with the NEP 2020 for colleges affiliated with Mizoram University showcasing a wide range of subject choices. In first semester, an Ability Enhancement Course have been included focusing on language and communication skills. Based on the resources available at each college, students were offered English, Mizo or Hindi. Language

and communication skills play a crucial role in the success of multidisciplinary learning where students undertaking this course have better insights into effective communication and express their ideas clearly. Incorporating language and communication into the curriculum is essential for developing well-rounded students. It enhances their ability to articulate ideas effectively and boosts their confidence while engaging with others whether in academic or everyday life. When students can communicate effectively, they are better prepared to understand complex topics.

Semester	Course Category	Course Code	Course Name	Credits
I	Major 1	PHL100 Major 1	Epistemology and Metaphysics	4
	Major 2/ Minor	PHL101 Major 2/ Minor	Economic Botany	4
			One Minor course from other streams/ subjects	4
	Multidisciplinary	PHL110 (MDC)	MDC: Introduction to Mizo Language	3
	Ability Enhancement Course	AEC	ENG150: Communication Skill MIZ150: Introduction to Mizo Language HIN150:Devanagaree Lipi	3
	Value Added Course	VAC100	Value Added Course (Universal Human Values)	2
				20

The policy also places strong emphasis on value-based education as a core component of holistic learning nurturing not just academic excellence but also the moral and ethical development of students. Value Added Courses (VAC) have also been incorporated into the curriculum allowing students to engage in the process of valuing others and supporting individuals while also encouraging self-investigation and self-exploration. The integration of value education will help students gain a deeper understanding of their true nature and fosters a sense of inner harmony.

Significance of Multidisciplinary Approach

A significant impact on the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 is that the policy emphasizes vocational education, skill development and multidisciplinary learning which enhance students critical thinking, creativity and problem-solving. It ensures that all students have access to high-quality learning experiences. (Mallik, 2023)

Multidisciplinary curriculum enables teachers to experiment with creative teaching strategies, incorporate new technologies and work alongside peers from various academic disciplines. (Upadhyay, 2024)

The National Education Policy 2020 brings a lasting and positive transformation into India's higher educational system. The policy stresses the need for society to evolve by integrating new skill sets. Promoting a multidisciplinary and holistic approach encourages students to think critically and make connections across different fields, thereby driving research and innovation. The flexible curriculum structure offers students a range of challenges and opportunities, supporting their academic and professional development. (Shanmugapriya and Pavithra, 2024)

The significance in implementing multidisciplinary approach is that the flexible curriculum gives students a variety of subject options to choose and emphasis is laid on vocational education and skill development which enhance students' creativity. It enables teachers to incorporate creative teaching strategies and collaborate with teachers from various academic disciplines. Besides, students drive their interest into research and innovation.

Challenges in implementing multidisciplinary approach

The policy proposes that by 2035, every district shall have at least one large multidisciplinary Higher Education Institution (HEI) located within or nearby. This means that all higher education institutions will transition into multidisciplinary institutions, each with a minimum enrolment of 3,000 students.

To double the Gross Enrolment Ratio in Higher Education by 2035, India would need to establish new universities frequently for the next 10 years. Consistently achieving this pace is undoubtedly a significant and demanding challenge. (Chhablani, 2024)

Financial support for higher education from both the government and society is insufficient and steadily declining. Many colleges set up in rural areas struggle to remain viable, face low enrolment and suffer from very poor infrastructure and facilities which are usually run by just a few teachers. (Hossain& Mondal, 2019)

Singh (2023) aimed to conduct a study to gather insights into the perceived challenges of using multidisciplinary approaches and the obstacles to interdisciplinary collaboration. The study also sought to explore the experiences and perspectives of a selected group of faculty members and administrators. He then conducted a mixed-method study involving faculty members and administrators from various disciplines across higher educational institutions. The research findings highlight several challenges associated with the implementation of multidisciplinary approach in higher education which are:

i. Strict departmental rules and limited resources make it difficult for different departments to work together.

ii. Teachers find it difficult to connect ideas from different subjects and create a well-organized program.

iii. Students sometimes get confused by too many course choices and find it hard to understand complex topics from multiple subjects, which can lead to frustration.

iv. There are no clear systems in place to support or reward teachers for working across different disciplines, which adds to their challenges.

A study conducted by Baidya (2025) also revealed that students find it challenging to comprehend and adjust to the updated curriculum and credit system. The institutional infrastructure, faculty support, learning environment and administrative assistance were found to be inadequate. Though students view the opportunities provided by these courses positively, their engagement with the course structure and active participation appear to be limited. The findings also highlight the importance of clear and timely guidelines to ensure the smooth implementation of multidisciplinary courses.

One of the major challenges in implementing multidisciplinary approach is the declining of financial support from the government, poor infrastructure, weak institutional management and low enrolment in rural colleges. Other obstacles include limited resources and absence of support from other disciplines. Teachers often struggle to integrate content from various subjects effectively. Students find the broad and complex range of course options overwhelming leading to confusion and lack of engagement. Furthermore, adapting to the revised curriculum and credit system is difficult for student's insufficient faculty support and lack of administrative guidance. Although students recognize the potential benefits of multidisciplinary courses, their overall participation remains limited.

Conclusion

Multidisciplinary approach does bring sudden changes which requires adaptation to teachers as well as students. Students do favour opting for courses other than their streams but it requires adaption to the changes which affect their academic performance. There is urgent need for clear policies, financial support especially in rural areas and better institutional coordination to ensure the successful implementation of multidisciplinary education in India.

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A Study on the Awareness Level of Inclusive Education among Higher Secondary School Teachers in Itanagar and Naharlagun town

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Abstract

This study explores the awareness of inclusive education among higher secondary school teachers in Itanagar and Naharlagun, Arunachal Pradesh, within the context of the National Education Policy 2020. Inclusive education aims to integrate students with diverse abilities into mainstream classrooms, ensuring equitable access to quality education for all. Despite policy frameworks emphasizing this approach, practical implementation remains challenging, particularly in regions with unique socio-cultural and geographic contexts like Arunachal Pradesh. The research employed a descriptive survey method, using the "Teacher Awareness Survey about Inclusive Education" (STATIC) to assess teachers' understanding and attitudes towards inclusive education. The sample consisted of 80 higher secondary school teachers selected through stratified random sampling. Key findings indicate a varied level of awareness among teachers: approximately 26.3% have low awareness, 48.8% have moderate awareness, and 25% exhibit high awareness. Gender-based analysis reveals a statistically significant difference, with male teachers demonstrating slightly higher awareness than female teachers. However, no significant differences were found based on subject background or years of experience. The study highlights a critical need for targeted professional development to enhance teachers' understanding and implementation of inclusive education practices.

Key Words: *Inclusive Education, Awareness, Higher Secondary School, Teachers*

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Introduction

The concept of "inclusion" in education emphasizes integrating all students, regardless of their abilities or disabilities, into general education settings. Originating from the idea of inherent human dignity, inclusion focuses on creating school cultures that celebrate diversity and accommodate various needs. Corbett (2001) notes that true inclusion involves more than just placing students with special needs into regular classrooms; it requires a commitment to actively embrace and support differences within a welcoming environment.

The National Policy on Education (1986) and the Program of Action (1992) highlight the importance of integrating children with special needs into mainstream education to ensure they can grow and thrive alongside their peers. Inclusive education aims to provide equal opportunities for all children, utilizing flexible education systems that adapt to diverse learning needs.

Effective inclusion involves using strategies like peer instruction and cooperative learning, supported by appropriate resources and a zero-rejection philosophy. This approach ensures that no student is excluded based on disability and that all students receive quality education in their local schools.

In recent years, inclusive education has emerged as a transformative approach to educational reform, emphasizing the integration of students with diverse needs into mainstream classrooms. This philosophy aligns with global efforts to foster educational environments where every learner, regardless of their abilities or background, has access to quality education. In the context of India, inclusive education is not just a policy directive but a crucial step towards ensuring equity and diversity in the educational landscape. This is particularly significant in regions like Arunachal Pradesh, where the intersection of varied cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic factors creates a unique educational milieu.

Arunachal Pradesh, a northeastern state of India, is distinguished by its rich tapestry of indigenous communities and its challenging geographical terrain. The state's educational system operates within this complex context, presenting both opportunities and obstacles for implementing inclusive education. The presence of diverse ethnic groups, coupled with infrastructural limitations, necessitates a tailored approach to inclusive education that considers local realities. Higher secondary school teachers in Arunachal Pradesh are pivotal in translating the principles of inclusive education into practice. Their awareness and understanding of inclusive education are critical to the successful implementation of policies aimed at integrating students with varying needs into the mainstream classroom. However, there is a significant gap in understanding how well-equipped these educators are to handle the diverse needs of their students, given the unique challenges they face.

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Self-Efficacy of Chin Refugee Children in Champhai District

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Abstract

The present study is an attempt to examine the self-efficacy of Chin refugee children residing in Champhai district. The study was conducted on 60 refugee children who were in the age group 12-14 years studying in Holy Cross School, Champhai. The findings of the study show that most of the refugee children had an average level of self-efficacy, this was followed some children having a low level, and there were only a few children who had high level of self-efficacy. Further, the results of the gender based comparison of self-efficacy reveals that girls had a higher level of self-efficacy against their boy counterparts. The findings of gender wise comparison across the five dimensions of self-efficacy reveal that the boys and girls did not differ significantly in educational, social and physical dimensions; whereas in the remaining two dimensions, i.e. emotional and linguistic dimensions, significant difference was found between both the genders.

Keywords: *Self-efficacy, wellbeing, motivation, refugee children*

Introduction

Self-efficacy is one of the important aspects of psychological wellbeing and it basically entails positive emotion and a sense of confidence in one's state of being. It does not imply an inherent quality or trait that an individual possesses nor one's actual capacity in accomplishing any given task. Rather it is a belief in one's ability to perform any task which may or may not bear the outcome one expects in the actual performance. A positive sense of self-efficacy reflects confidence in one's capacity to succeed in any given situations or fulfilling a task. Self-efficacy has

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different dimensions and each individual's level of self-efficacy may vary in different situations. In this sense, self-efficacy is not a general trait and is shaped by one's experiences, social persuasion, observing other's performances and physiological states under normal circumstances.

According to Bandura, self-efficacy is "…people's beliefs in their capabilities to produce desired effects by their own action" (as cited in Maddux 2009, p. 336). He further states that,

> Self-efficacy beliefs and expectations refer to a person's perception that he or she has the skill and capacity to undertake a particular action or task. Self-efficacy beliefs are an integral component of social cognitive theory (1986), which provides a framework for analyzing human thought, motivation and action. (as cited in Bartimote-Aufflick et al. 2015, p. 1-2)

In other words, an individual's thought, motivation and action are determined by one's perception about their ability or inability to accomplish any given task. In this sense, an individual's success or failure is also greatly dependent on one's sense of self-efficacy. This is an indication that a positive sense of self-efficacy or belief in their own capabilities becomes really significant for an individual to become successful in life.

On the other hand, the lack of positive sense of self-efficacy can be detrimental for an individual's holistic personal growth and development. For instance, it has been denoted that, "…lack of self-efficacy can inhibit students' ability to perform tasks…" (Freudenberg et al. 2010, p. 480) and that eventually leads to "…less persistence and lower achievement" (Schunk 1982, p. 92) in an individual. In order to deal with any type of insecurity, a positive sense of self-efficacy to deal with the danger becomes really significant, and this is even more so in the case of refugee children.

The present study endeavours to examine the self-efficacy of the Chin refugee children in Mizoram. These refugee children who have migrated to Mizoram as a result of violence and conflict inter home country, i.e. Myanmar, are unable to return to their native country. After experiencing the tumultuous time while fleeing their homeland and adjusting to a new environment, it remains to be seen the level of self-efficacy. Since refugee children are a vulnerable group, understanding their psychological or mental stance becomes really significant, and uncovering their self-efficacy status is one of the ways to achieve that goal. By looking into their self-efficacy status, one will come to the understanding about how the refugee children cope with new challenges and personal insecurity posed by their refugeehood and how it impacts their psychological growth and development.

Theoretical Framework

Bandura has highlighted the four major determinants of self-efficacy for an individual along with a few other contributing factors; these are (as cited in Bijl & Shortridge-Baggett 2001, p. 4-7):

1. Mastery of Experiences

This is the strongest of the determinants because it relies on one's own experience. A successful past experience becomes an influencing factor for the upcoming performances. Based on his past success or failure, an individual tends to either have a positive or negative sense of self- efficacy.

2. Vicarious Experience

Seeing another person successfully completing a task can boost the confidence in another person observing the act. This happens when the individual identifies with the other person or sees the other person as a role model. Through observation, the individual passes a positive judgement about his own capabilities or his own sense of self-efficacy. .

3. Verbal Persuasion

When an individual is provided with the right kind of suggestion, advice or instruction, the concerned individual will have confidence in his capabilities that enhances his sense of self-efficacy. In other words, positive feedback enhances self-confidence while negative one discourages the individual about his own capabilities.

4. Physiological Information

When engaging in tasks that require physical and emotional strength, if the presence of "tension, anxiety and depression", are "interpret[ted] fatigue, pain, hypoglycaemia as indicators of low physical efficacy" (Bijl & Shortridge-Baggett 2001, p. 5), it becomes negative factors. However, if the physical or emotional reactions are regarded as a sign of readiness, it can boost one's sense of self-efficacy.

5. Other Sources

Strecher et al. have listed certain personality traits or factors such as self-esteem, self- confidence and hardiness which they call locus of control (as cited Van der Bijl and Shortridge- Baggett 2001, p. 6). In other words, some people are endowed with a strong personality trait while others are not. One's personality trait is seen as one of the influencing factors of self-efficacy.

These become the important sources through which an individual forms a judgement about their capabilities as well as their sense of self-efficacy. The same

theoretical framework is used for the present study in analyzing the self-efficacy of the Chin refugee children.

Rationale of the Study

Refugee children are prone to certain mental issues including stress, anxiety, depression, maladjustment, frustration, loneliness, and complexity, among many. These negative emotional or psychological traits are often linked with a sense of low self-efficacy in individuals. The refugee children being vulnerable due to forced displacement and unfamiliar surroundings, their personal growth and development is likely to be hindered. In addition, a sudden change is likely to affect their sense of self-efficacy in different ways. The inability to communicate in the language of the host country with their neighbours and classmates, learning new subjects in school, inability to understand the medium of instruction in school, adapting to new culture, are all deeply felt by the refugee children. A sense of motivation, personal wellbeing and satisfaction are largely determined by one's level of self-efficacy at any given task. Similarly, one's performance, goal and success in life are also greatly influenced by one's sense of self-efficacy. Therefore, it becomes really significant to understand the mental stances of the refugee children by examining their sense of self-efficacy at various instances in order to provide the required assistance to the refugee children for improving their general sense of wellbeing.

Review of Literature

Al Issa (2024) reported that traumatic experiences were linked to self-efficacy among the Palestinian refugee children. In some cases, these negative experiences induced resilience against the general expectation as indicated by the findings of the study. It was concluded that since boys were exposed to more trauma, their resilience was likely to be higher than girls of the same age group. The study listed out certain factors that influenced self-efficacy among the refugee children including gender, size of the household and academic grades.

Chastwek et al. (2021) argued from their study that many of the behavioural problems in refugee children, who had arrived in Germany, are likely the outcome of teachers' negative perception towards them. Due to lack of professional competence on the part of the teachers, the refugee children are often subject to stereotyping and associated with certain psychological or behavioural issues. The study highlighted that the teachers' sense of self-efficacy or professional competence needs to be carefully examined. This is important for interpreting mental health or psychological assessments of refugee children including their sense of self-efficacy.

Alharbi (2018) conducted a study to find out the self-efficacy level of Syrian refugee children. The findings indicated that those refugee children residing outside

the refugee camps showed a higher level of self-efficacy in comparison to their fellow refugee children living outside the camp. It was also found that the self-efficacy level was moderate for those outside the camp. The findings of the study were attributed to the relatively better living conditions of the refugee children outside the camps at home, school and outside. It was also concluded that these refugee children had a negative view towards themselves when comparing themselves to the normal children.

Tip et al. (2020) affirmed the significance of self-efficacy in the context of the refugee children through their study. The basic premise for this conclusion is that rebuilding self-efficacy in refugee children as well as refugees is has an indirect positive outcome in the long run as in employment, language proficiency, cultural understanding, and social capital. This becomes an important determining factor that reduces the chance of developing anxiety and stress in the refugees. With this positive sense of self-efficacy, they are equipped to have a control over their physical and emotional states in their day to day life as refugees.

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference between boys and girls in terms of their self-efficacy.
2. There is no significant difference between boys and girls in the different dimensions of self- efficacy.

Objectives of the Study

1. To find out the level of self-efficacy of the Chin refugee children in Champhai district.
2. To find out the level of self-efficacy of Chin refugee children based on gender.
3. To find out the levels of self-efficacy of Chin refugee children across the different dimensions of self-efficacy.
4. To determine the difference between boys and girls with regards to their self-efficacy across the dimensions.

Methodology

The study uses the descriptive survey design. Hence, the primary data was collected from the refugee children using Self-Efficacy Scale constructed by the researcher. The data was analysed with the help of descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation and ‘t’ test.

Sampling Technique

For the present study, random sampling technique was adopted for data collection. Out of 150 refugee students studying in Holy Cross School, 60 students aged between 12-14 years were randomly selected for the present study.

Findings of the Study

The major findings of the study are given in the following:

Objective 1: To find out the level of self-efficacy of the Chin refugee children in Champhai district

The first objective aims to find out the level of self-efficacy among Chin refugee children in Mizoram. For achieving the first objective of the study, self-efficacy tool having twenty nine statements developed by the researcher was used for data collection. The calculated scores are shown using percentages in the following table.

Table 1 Self-Efficacy of Chin refugee children in percentages

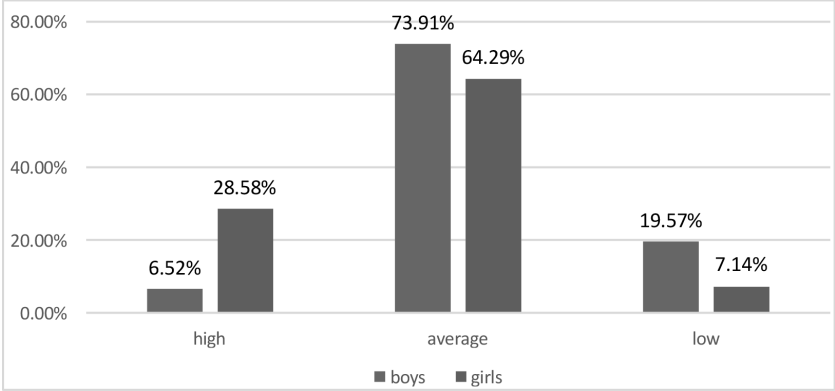
Level	No.(%) of Children	Mean	SD
High	8 (13.33%)	101.30	10.550
Average	42 (70%)		
Low	10 (16.67%)		

From the above Table 1, it can be seen that there are 42 (70%) children having an average level, followed by 10 (16.67%) children with a low level, and this was followed by 8 (13.33%) children with a high level of self-efficacy. It can also be observed that the mean value for self-efficacy is 101.30, and the standard deviation is 10.550 respectively.

Objective 2: To find out the level of self-efficacy of Chin refugee children based on gender

The second objective aims to investigate the level of self-efficacy of Chin refugee children based on gender.

Figure 1 Students' level in self-efficacy based on gender



Based on the above Figure 1, it can be seen that out of 46 boys, there were 34 (73.91%) boys having an average level in self-efficacy, followed by nine (19.57%) boys who had low level of self- efficacy and only 3 (6.52%) boys displayed high level of self-efficacy. On the other hand, out of 14 girls, there were 9 (64.29%) girls having an average level of self-efficacy, followed by 4 (28.57%) girls who had high level, and only 1 (7.14%) girl showed low level of self-efficacy.

Table 2 Gender difference in self-efficacy

The descriptive analysis of the data reveals Theresa difference between the boys and girls in terms of their self-efficacy, it remains to be seen whether the observed difference is statistically significant or not. Hence, using the t test, the data was analysed to find the statistical difference between both the genders. The results of the t test are given below:

Group	N	Mean	SD	MD	t-value	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Sig. level
Boys	46	99.43	9.467	-7.994	-2.601	58	.021	Significant
Girls	14	107.43	11.921					

As it can be observed from the Table 2, the mean value for boys is 99.43, and the standard deviation is 9.467, whereas, the mean value for girls is 107.43 and the standard deviation is 11.921. The 't' value is -2.601 and the p value is 0.21 which is lower than 0.05 which indicates that there is a significant difference in the self-efficacy of children based on their gender. Therefore, the null hypothesis H0: There is no significant difference between boys and girls in their level of self-efficacy, is rejected. The comparison of the mean values for boys and girls indicate that girls displayed a better level of self-efficacy in comparison to their boy counterparts.

Objective 3: To explore the level of self-efficacy of Chin refugee children across dimensions

The third objective aims to find out the level of self-efficacy of the refugee children across dimensions. Self-efficacy has twenty nine (29) statements in total which are divided into five dimensions, namely: educational having five statements; social having eight statements; emotional having six statements; linguistics having four; and physical having six statements. The calculated scores for each dimension are shown using percentages in the following tables

Table 3 Students' levels of self-efficacy in different dimensions

Dimensions	High	Average	Low	Mean	SD
Educational	7 (11.67%)	47 (78.33%)	6 (10%)	16.55	2.90
Society	6 (10%)	49 (81.67%)	5 (8.33%)	26.65	5.05
Emotional	9 (15%)	47 (78.33%)	4 (6.67%)	20.85	3.517
Linguistic	5 (8.33%)	50 (83.33%)	5 (8.33%)	14.38	2.15
Physical	7 (11.67%)	48 (80%)	5 (8.33%)	22.63	2.72

As it can be seen from the Table 3, in the educational dimension, out of 60 children, there are 47 (78.33%) children having an average level, with 7 (11.67%) with a high level and 6 (10%) with a low level. The mean value is 16.55, and the standard deviation is 2.90 respectively in educational dimension.

In the society dimension, out of 60 children, there are 49 (81.67%) children having an average level, with 6 (10%) having a high level with 5 (8.33%) having a low level in society dimension. The mean value is 26.65, and the standard deviation is 5.05 respectively in society dimension.

The emotional dimension, there were 47 (78.33%) children having an average level, followed by 9 (15%) children having a high level, and this was followed by 4 (6.67%) children having a low level in emotional dimension. The mean value is 20.85, and the standard deviation is 3.517 respectively in this dimension.

In the linguistic dimension, it can be seen that there are 50 (83.33%) children having an average level, with 5 (8.33%) children each having high and low levels in linguistic dimension. The mean value is 14.38, and the standard deviation is 2.15 in linguistic dimension.

The physical dimension, it can be observed that there are 48 (80%) children having an average level, followed by 7 (11.67%) having a high level and there were 5 (8.33%) having a low level in physical dimension. The mean value is 22.63 and the standard deviation is 2.72 respectively. The above table reveals that most of the

children had average self-efficacy in all the dimensions, however, many students (10%) were found to have low self-efficacy in educational dimension compared to other dimensions. Further, compared to all dimensions, many children (15%) were found to have high self-efficacy in emotional dimension.

Objective 4: To determine the difference between boys and girls in their level of self-efficacy level based on the dimensions

The fourth objective aims to investigate the level of self-efficacy of the refugee children across the dimensions based on gender. The gender-wise scores of the students in self-efficacy across the dimensions are given in the following tables.

Students' level in educational dimension based on gender

The calculated scores of the students in educational dimension based on gender are given in the following tables.

Table 4 Comparison of students' level in educational dimension based on gender

Group	N	Mean	SD	MD	t-value	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Sig. level
Boys	46	16.48	2.865	-.307	-.345	58	.731	N/S
Girls	14	16.79	3.093					

As per the Table 4, the mean value for boys is 16.48 and the standard deviation is 2.865; and for girls the mean value is 16.79 and the standard deviation is 3.093. The calculated 't' value is -.345 and the p value is 0.731which is >0.05, indicating that there is no significant difference in the educational dimension based on gender. Therefore, the null hypothesis H0: There no significant difference in educational dimension based on gender, is accepted.

Students' level in society dimension based on gender

The calculated scores of the students' self-efficacy in social dimension based on gender are given in the following tables.

Table 5 Comparison of students' level in society dimension based on gender

Group	N	Mean	SD	MD	t-value	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Sig. level
Boys	46	26.30	5.236	-.481	-.960	58	.341	N/S
Girls	14	27.79	4.371					

Based on the above Table 5, the mean value for boys is 26.30 and the standard deviation is 5.236; and for girls the mean value is 27.79 and the standard deviation is

4.371 respectively. The calculated 't' value is -.960 and the p value is 0.341 >0.05 p value, and therefore the null hypothesis H0: There is no significant difference in the society dimension based on gender, is accepted.

Students' level in emotional dimension based on gender

The calculated scores of the students in home dimension based on gender are given in the following tables.

Table 6 Comparison of students' level in emotional dimension based on gender

Group	N	Mean	SD	MD	t-value	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Sig. level
Boys	46	20.52	2.588	-2.407	-2.734	58	.008	Significant
Girls	14	22.93	3.731					

As per the Table 6, the mean value for boys is 20.52 and the standard deviation is 2.588; for girls the mean value is 22.93 and the standard deviation is 3.731 respectively. The calculated 't' value is -2.734 and the p value is 0.008 which is <0.05 , indicating that there is a significant difference in the emotional dimension based on gender. Therefore the null hypothesis H0: There is no significant difference in the emotional dimension based on gender, is rejected. The alternate hypothesis, i.e., H1: There is a significant difference in the emotional dimension based on gender, is accepted. The comparison of the mean values between boys and girls shows that girls have a higher level in emotional dimension against their boy counterparts.

Students' level in linguistic dimension based on gender

The calculated scores of the students in linguistic dimension based on gender are given in the following tables.

Table 7 Comparison of students' level in linguistic dimension based on gender

Group	N	Mean	SD	MD	t-value	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Sig. level
Boys	46	13.78	1.712	-2.575	-4.530	58	.000	Significant
Girls	14	16.36	2.307					

Analysis

As per the Table 7, the mean value for boys is 13.78 and the standard deviation is 1.712; for girls, the mean value is 16.36 and the standard deviation is 2.307 respectively. The calculated 't' value is -4.530 and the p value is 0.000 <0.05, indicating that there is a significant difference between boys and girls in linguistic dimension.

Therefore the null hypothesis i.e. H0: There is a significant difference in the linguistic dimension, is rejected. The alternate hypothesis, i.e. There is a significant difference in the linguistic dimension based on gender, is accepted. The comparison of the mean values between boys and girls shows that girls have a higher level than their boy counterparts in linguistic dimension.

Students' level in physical dimension based on gender

The calculated scores of the students in physical dimension based on gender are given in the following tables.

Table 8 Comparison of Students' level in physical dimension based on gender

Group	N	Mean	SD	MD	t-value	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Sig. level
Boys	46	22.35	2.415	-1.224	-1.486	58	.143	N/S
Girls	14	23.57	3.502					

Analysis

From Table 8, it can be observed that the mean value for boys is 22.35 and the standard deviation is 2.415. For girls, the mean value is 23.57 and the standard deviation is 3.502. The calculated 't' value is -1.486 and the p value is 0.143 which is >0.05 , indicating that there is no significant difference between boys and girls in this dimension. Therefore, the null hypothesis H0: There is no significant difference in the physical dimension based on gender, is accepted.

Major Findings and Discussions

The major findings of the study are given under:

1. Majority of the refugee children (70%) had an average level, followed by children (16.67%) having a low level and there were a few (13.33%) children having a low level of self-efficacy.
2. Girls were found to have a higher level of self-efficacy than boys.
3. Most of the children had average self-efficacy in all the dimensions, however, many students (10%) were found to have low self-efficacy in educational dimension compared to other dimensions. Further, compared to all dimensions, many children (15%) were found to have high self-efficacy in emotional dimension.
4. Boys and girls did not differ significantly in educational, social and physical dimensions; whereas in the remaining two dimensions, i.e. emotional and

linguistic dimensions, significant difference was found between both the genders.

The findings of the present study indicate that the self-efficacy level of most of the Chin refugee children in Champhai district were average. As Bandura has noted, a successful experience (Kudo & Mori 2015, p. 15) and the absence of negative experiences such as bullying, criticism and failure in their relationship with others kept these refugee children resilient. It can also be attributed to verbal persuasion which is often cited to be a relevant source of self-efficacy (van Dinther et al., 2011, p. 105). In this sense, refugees in general have often received positive encouragement and support from the locals, teachers and friends in different situations. The general experience of refugees is characterised by positive social interactions and this explains their relatively normal level of self- efficacy. Although self-efficacy is subjective and varies from person to person, yet in the case of the Chin refugees or refugee children by "giving them a sense of security lead to social inclusion" (Altinay et al. 2023, p. 7). In other words, the sympathy received by the refugees at the hands of the locals has improved their sense of wellbeing, self-concept and hence has positively impacted their self-efficacy. The influence of gender on self-efficacy, not only in the case of refugees, is a highly subjective matter and may vary based on the contexts. For instance, the present tool aimed to find out the self-efficacy level using a tool having five dimensions. As the results of the finding indicate, the differences between boys and girls became more prominent in two of the dimensions, i.e. emotional and linguistic. This is in line with the previous studies that stated that "Females displayed higher language arts self-efficacy than males" (Huang 2013, p.1); and also, "Women being better on emotional intelligence score…deals with managing and expressing emotions…which is one of the major strengths for women (Khurana et al 2022, p. 70). This is an indication that there have been instances where female display better control over emotion as well as mastery in any given language. However, gender influence on self-efficacy is much more complex than it is generally assumed to be and therefore further studies may be required to understand this complex relationship.

Conclusion

The study examines the self-efficacy level of Chin refugee children in Champhai district. The major findings indicate that majority of the refugee displayed a relatively normal level of self- efficacy. In gender based comparison, girls were found to have a better self-efficacy in comparison to their boy counterparts. It can be concluded that the refugee children, despite their vulnerable status due to forced migration, are not necessarily susceptible to negative emotions. One's sense of self- efficacy is highly a personal matter and is shaped by one's unique experiences to a great extent. The

refugees, when dealt with positivity and trust, thereby providing them with a sense of security at societal levels, are likely to maintain a sense of personal wellbeing and positive self-efficacy.

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AI and Human Rights: A Study of College Students' Perspectives

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Abstract

As artificial intelligence (AI) becomes a bigger part of our daily lives, it is raising serious questions about how it affects our fundamental rights. Things like algorithmic bias and data privacy are no longer just tech jargon – they're real concerns. We wanted to find out what college students, a group that will be at the forefront of this change, think about the complex relationship between AI and human rights. To get our answers, a test was conducted among 245 students from different academic backgrounds and genders. The data was analyzed to see how much they knew about the topic and hoe their opinions differed.

The results showed that most students (73%) have a general, but not particularly deep, understanding of these issues. However, some interesting differences were found. Female students had noticeably more defined perspectives on the topic than their male peers. While students' fields of study didn't create a huge statistical difference in their views, but a clear ranking in the strength of their opinions was found, with B.A. students holding the strongest views and B.Sc. students having the least defined ones. The findings of the study showed critical gaps, i.e., students are aware of AI's significant influence, but they require necessary knowledge to pilot its ethical complicatedness. It also focused on educating them about the challenges of AI and on preparing them to shape a more responsible future with it.

Keywords: *Artificial Intelligence, Human Rights, College Students, Perspectives, Algorithmic Bias*

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Introduction

The influence of artificial intelligence (AI) on human rights has become a critical topic of discussion as AI becomes more and more integrated into daily life. The capacity of AI to process enormous volumes of data and make choices automatically has sparked worries about discrimination, justice, and privacy.

The widespread integration of artificial intelligence stands as a pivotal development of the modern era. Despite its consideration potential to benefit fields such as transportation, education, and healthcare, AI's increasing prevalence necessitates an examination of its implications for human rights. The underlying algorithms, far from being neutral, are constructed from data and premises that may intentionally or unintentionally encode and worsen existing societal prejudices. Consequently, a crucial international discourse has emerged, focusing on challenges including discriminatory algorithms, privacy rights, freedom of expression, and mechanisms for accountability.

This paper provides a comprehensive examination f a study investigating the attitudes of college students – a key demographic that will influence and experience the future of AI – regarding the complex interplay between artificial intelligence and human rights. The analysis of their awareness and understanding yields valuable insights into the next generation's outlook on the ethical implications presented by AI advancements The analytical framework is designed not merely to capture the broad spectrum of student perspective but also to discern the impact of demographic variables – namely gender and academic discipline – on these viewpoints. This study aims to advance the comprehension of AI's human implications and to illuminate critical areas requiring educational and policy interventions to safeguard a human –centric trajectory for technological progress.

Review of Related Literature

Artificial intelligence is becoming a bigger part of our lives every day, and a lot of smart people are asking a crucial question: how does this technology affect our human rights? It is a complex issue because AI is not just one thing – it is a tool with two very different sides.

On one hand, AI can be a powerful force for good. Think about how it could revolutionize things like education, healthcare, and even the way governments work, making them more efficient and accessible for everyone.

On the other hand, there's a real danger. The biggest worry is what's known as algorithmic bias. Imagine an AI system trained on data from the past. If that data

reflects old prejudices – like a history of discrimination in hiring or lending – the AI won't just learn those biases, it might even make them worse. This could lead to unfair outcomes in critical areas like getting a job, securing a loan, or even being sentenced by the justice system.

This is why there is a global call for greater transparency and accountability. Organizations like UNESCO are stepping up, creating ethical guidelines that emphasize principles like fairness and non-discrimination.

Ultimately, for us to navigate this new world, we all need to be part of the conversation – to get better at understanding AI's ethical implications. This is not just a job for experts or tech companies; it is a shared responsibility. We need better public education and clear rules that is in charge of making sure AI is developed and used responsibly.

Objectives

(i) To study the level of AI and human rights perspective on college students

(ii) To compare the perspective of AI and human rights among college students with reference to their stream of study

(iii) To compare the perspective of AI and human rights among college students with reference to their gender

Hypothesis

(i) There is no significant difference on the perspective of AI and Human Rights among college students with reference to their gender

(ii) There is no significant difference on the perspective of AI and Human Rights among college students with reference to their stream of study

Methodology

A descriptive research design method was employed to analyze the perspective of college students on AI and human rights. A structured questionnaire was administered and a quantitative method was approached for the study. The questionnaire was divided into 5 dimensions – Individual Awareness and Perception, Ethical Principles & Values, Governance & Responsibility, Societal Impact & Trust, and the Future of AI and Human Agency.

Data Collection and Analysis

- Tools used: The researchers used a self-developed tools consisting of 27 items, which were divided in 5 different dimensions. A Likert scale was used to measure students' perspective on AI and human rights.
- Sampling technique: 245 students were selected based on a purposive sampling method. The sample consists of students from different discipline B.A. (96), B.Sc. (33), B.Com. (54) and BCA (62); in which 149 were female and 69 were male college students.
- Statistical Analysis: Both descriptive and inferential tests were used to perform for analyzing the data. Statistical techniques like –
    - o Z-scores – to categorize each students perspective providing a detailed view on the distribution of awareness and perception among the students as High ($z>1$), Average ($-1 < z \leq 1$) and Low ($z<1$).
    - o One-way ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) – to determine a significant difference in the perspective of AI and human rights among the different stream of study.
    - o Kruskal-Wallis Test – to study a pair-wise comparison on different discipline in order to identify the rank order of the perspective of AI and human rights based on their mean rank.
    - o Chi-Square Test – to assess the relationship between a students' gender and their perspective on AI and human rights, determining of the observed differences were statistically significant.

Analysis and interpretation of the study was done in accordance with the objectives.

(i) To study the level of AI and Human Rights Perspective on College Students in different dimensions z-scores was employed, i.e. High ($z>1$), Average ($-1 < z \leq 1$) and Low ($z<1$)

Table 1: Levels of AI and Human Rights Perspective on College Students in different dimensions

Dimensions	Category	Responses in number	Responses in percentage
Individual Awareness and Perception	High	29	12
	Average	179	73
	Low	37	15

Ethical Principles & Values	High	44	18
	Average	169	69
	Low	32	13
Governance & Responsibility	High	25	10
	Average	163	67
	Low	57	23
Societal Impact & Trust	High	63	26
	Average	138	56
	Low	44	18
Future of AI & Human Agency	High	51	21
	Average	143	58
		51	21

Among the 245 college students, most (73%) have a moderate understanding of how AI relates to human rights. Most students have an average understanding of AI and its societal impact, with their knowledge being neither high nor very low. A small percentage (15%) has very limited awareness, while a slightly larger group of students (12%) has a strong grasp of the topic. These results highlight the need for broader educational efforts, as a deeper understanding of AI's implications is not yet widespread.

A large majority (69%) of the college students has a moderate level of concern and understanding about AI ethics. While they are generallt aware of issues like bias, their ethical framework isn't fully developed. The remaining respondents are split between two groups: a highly engaged minority (18%) with strong opinions on Ai's potential to worsen social inequality, and a small group (13%) with less-developed ethical views who are not as concerned about AI bias. Overall, the results show that while most people are not indifferent to AI ethics, they also lack specialized knowledge. The large average group is a key audience for future education and discussions on AI governance, while the smaller high-scoring group represents a vocal minority.

Most of the 245 respondents have a moderate view on AI governance, though a significant minority shows very low awareness. The largest group, representing 67% (163 people), has an average understanding and believes that both governments and tech companies should share responsibility, but their knowledge of existing policies is limited. A key finding is that 23% (57 people) of the respondents have low awareness, indicating they are largely disengaged from the policy debates on AI. This group is often unaware of the risks of technologies like facial recognition and holds undefined views on who should be held accountable. In contrast, a small group of 10% (25 people) is highly aware and has strong opinions on governance and accountability.

Among the 245 college students, 56% hold a moderate view on AI's impact, seeing both its potential benefits and risks. However, the remaining opinions are quite divided. A notable student (26%) is highly optimistic, believing AI will lead to positive outcomes like new jobs and a fairer society. In contrast, 18% are more pessimistic, expressing low trust and significant concern about potential harms like job losses and increased inequality. This polarization suggests that student's views on AI's societal effects are clearly split between those who are hopeful and those who are skeptical.

A little over half (58% or 143 college students) have a moderate perspective on the future of AI. They believe that AI education is important and that students have a role to play in it. However, the remaining 42% are almost evenly split between two opposing viewpoints. A group of 21% (51 people) is highly engaged and optimistic, believing that students have a critical role in shaping AI's future and that AI education should be a priority. In contrast, another group of 21% (51 people) holds an equally strong but opposite, disengaged perspective. They may not see AI education as important or believe students have a significant role to play. This near-perfect split highlights a distinct polarization of views on the future of AI.

(ii) To compare the perspective of AI and Human Rights among college students with reference to their stream of study, One-way ANOVA was used.

Ho: There is no significant difference on the perspective of AI and Human Rights among college students with reference to their stream of study

Table 2: Comparison on the perspective of AI and Human Rights among college students with reference to their stream of study

Source of Variation	Sum of squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.8898	3	,633	.020	.996
Within Groups	7722.813	241	32.045		
Total	7724.719	244			

College students' perspectives on AI and human rights don't significantly differ based on their field of study. The statistical analysis showed a high p-value (0.996) and a very low F-statistic (0.020), meaning there's no strong evidence to suggest that students in different academic streams like BA, B.Sc., B.Com, or BCA have different opinions on this topic. Essentially, what a student studies doesn't predict their views on AI and human rights. Therefore, the null hypothesis 'There is no significant difference on the perspective of AI and Human Rights among college students with reference to their stream of study' is rejected.

Pair-wise comparison was done using Kruskal-Wallis Test to identify the order of perspectives rank on AI and Human Rights among college students with reference to their stream of study.

Table 3: Mean Rank and Mean Order on perspectives of AI and Human Rights among college students with reference to their stream of study

Stream of study	N - 245	Mean rank	Mean Order
B.A.	96	124.86	1
B.Sc.	33	119.15	4
B.Com.	54	121.70	3
BCA	62	123.29	2

College students' views on AI and human rights vary depending on their academic stream, with a clear hierarchy emerging from the study. BA students hold the most prominent and strongly-defined perspectives on the topic. They are followed by BCA students, then B.Com. students, and finally B.Sc. students, who have the least defined viewpoints.

(iii) To compare the perspective of AI and Human Rights among college students with reference to their gender, Chi-Square was used.

Ho: There is no significant difference on the perspective of AI and Human Rights among college students with reference to their gender.

Table 4: Comparison on the perspective of AI and Human Rights among college students with reference to their gender

Group	N	Mean Rank	Mean	SD	df	p value	Decision
Female	149	148.38	50.85	5.627	20	.000	Reject the Ho / Significant
Male	96	83.61					

Female and male college students have significantly different perspectives on AI and human rights. This conclusion is supported by a very low p-value (0.000), which indicates the difference isn't due to chance. The data shows that female students have a higher mean rank (148.38) compared to their male counterparts (83.61), suggesting they hold a more distinct or prominent viewpoint on the topic. Therefore, the null hypothesis 'There is no significant difference on the perspective of AI and Human Rights among college students with reference to their gender' is rejected.

Discussion

This study aimed to understand what college students – a crucial generation shaping out future – think about the complex relationship between artificial intelligence

and human rights. The results paint a clear picture: while students are generally aware of the issues, they are not deeply engaged yet. This suggests a significant gap in their readiness for the AI-driven world we're moving into.

The most consistent finding across the board is the dominance of what we've called the 'moderate middle'. About two-thirds of students have an average, rather undeveloped understanding of how AI affects society. They know about basic issues like bias but lack a deeper ethical framework or knowledge of how AI is being governed.

Student's view on AI are actually quite divided – on one side, there are a highly optimistic and engaged minority who are excited to help guide AI's future. On the other hand, there are a disengaged and more pessimistic group that is less aware of the issues but highly concerned about risks like inequality. This divide presents a huge challenge for anyone making policy. How do you create educational programs and regulations that ease the fears of the sceptics, use the energy of the optimists, and bring everyone in the middle up to speed? The fact that people can't even agree on the importance of AI education shows just how difficult it is to find common ground.

Interestingly, the study found that what a student majors in does not matter when it comes to their views on AI and human rights. Whether they are studying computer science, humanities, or business, they all see AI's ethical implications as a universal concern, not one confined t a specific field.

In stark contrast, gender emerged as a very significant factor. Female students hold a much more distinct and prominent viewpoint on AI and human rights than their male counterparts. This could be because women are more often aware of how issues like algorithmic bias and surveillance disproportionately affect marginalized groups, including women themselves. This finding strongly suggests that we must include diverse voices, especially those of women, in the development and regulation of AI to ensure it is fair and equitable for everyone.

Conclusion

The study reveals that while college students generally possess a moderate level of awareness regarding AI's relationship with human rights, there are significant differences based on gender and a clear hierarchy in perspective strength by academic stream. While the overall opinions are not statistically different across academic streams, the prominence of these perspectives varies, with B.A. students showing the strongest views and B.Sc. students the least defined. Gender, however, emerged as a significant factor, with female students holding a more prominent perspective than their male counterparts. These findings highlight a critical need for targeted

educational initiatives to deepen students' understanding of AI ethics and governance, particularly for those with low awareness, to ensure a more informed and engaged future generation.

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