



Challenges and Prospects of Higher Education in Northeast India: A Comprehensive Analysis

Prem Taba, Research Scholar, Department of Mass Communication, Rajiv Gandhi University, Rono Hills, Doimukh

Abstract

India's higher education system, the world's third-largest by student enrollment, plays a pivotal role in the nation's development. This paper explores the current state of higher education in Northeast India, a region with unique challenges and opportunities. Despite historical constraints, the region has witnessed significant growth in higher education institutions. However, it faces challenges such as linguistic diversity, a shortage of vocational courses, inadequate research infrastructure, and privatization concerns. The paper discusses the importance of higher education in Northeast India for economic development, resource utilization, and cultural preservation. It highlights the need for promoting local research, reforming assessment methods, diversifying course offerings, and fostering industry-academia collaboration. Infrastructure development, faculty training, digital learning, and scholarship programs are recommended to improve access and quality. Addressing language skills, cultural exchange, and entrepreneurship support is crucial for holistic development. Alumni engagement, quality assurance mechanisms, and community involvement are also proposed as essential components of enhancing higher education in Northeast India. This paper provides valuable insights and recommendations to address the unique challenges and opportunities in the region's higher education landscape.

Keywords: India, higher education, Northeast India, challenges, opportunities, infrastructure, cultural preservation, entrepreneurship, community involvement.

Introduction

India boasts the world's third-largest higher education system in terms of student enrollment, trailing only China and the United States. This distinction is underpinned by a unique advantage that sets India apart from its Chinese counterpart: English serves as the primary language of instruction and research within Indian higher education institutions. This linguistic advantage not only facilitates international communication and collaboration but also attracts a significant number of foreign students and researchers, fostering a diverse and globally interconnected academic environment (Ahuja & Yadav, 2020).

Higher education in India encompasses a wide spectrum of studies and training activities at the tertiary level and beyond. Institutions dedicated to higher education serve three fundamental functions: the dissemination of knowledge, engagement in rigorous research and investigation, and the facilitation of various extension activities. These multifaceted objectives underscore the critical role of higher education in addressing complex societal challenges, spanning social, economic, cultural, moral, and spiritual dimensions. The significance of higher

education in the national context cannot be overstated, as it contributes substantially to the advancement and development of the nation by imparting specialized knowledge and skills to its citizens (National Education Policy, 2020).

In India, higher education is typically defined as advanced and specialized study undertaken after the successful completion of a robust foundational education, which spans at least eleven years. Higher education can manifest in various institutional forms, and nomenclature often aligns with a country's historical traditions and conventions. While universities represent a prominent category within the higher education landscape, they are not the exclusive providers of advanced education. The distinction between different types of institutions lies in the breadth and depth of their academic offerings. Universities, as exemplars of higher education, typically provide a comprehensive array of subjects, including opportunities for postgraduate studies. In contrast, other institutions may focus more narrowly on vocational courses and teacher training programs (Ahuja & Yadav, 2020; National Education Policy, 2020).

India's higher education system has experienced significant growth and evolution over the years. The country's emphasis on higher education as a means of societal progress is evident in the establishment of numerous prestigious universities and institutes, such as the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs). These institutions have gained international recognition for their excellence in education and research, attracting both domestic and international students and faculty members. Furthermore, India's commitment to higher education is reflected in its policies and initiatives aimed at expanding access to quality education, promoting research and innovation, and fostering global partnerships (Ahuja & Yadav, 2020; National Education Policy, 2020).

As India continues to invest in the growth and enhancement of its higher education system, it endeavors to meet the evolving needs of its population and the demands of a rapidly changing global landscape. The government's National Education Policy of 2020, for instance, outlines ambitious goals for the development of higher education, including the establishment of a vibrant research ecosystem, the promotion of multidisciplinary studies, and the integration of technology for enhanced learning experiences (National Education Policy, 2020).

In addition to the broader context of India's higher education system, it is essential to shed light on the unique educational scenario in Northeast India. This region, comprising eight states and often referred to as the "Seven Sisters," presents a distinctive set of challenges and opportunities within the realm of higher education. The educational challenges in the Northeastern region of India have been the subject of academic scrutiny. Scholars like K. Gopal Iyer (2015) have discussed the infrastructural constraints faced by higher education institutions in this region. Iyer highlights the need for investment in physical infrastructure and improved connectivity to facilitate the growth of higher education.

Northeast India is characterized by its rich cultural diversity and unique geographical features, including hilly terrain and remote areas. While this region is home to numerous indigenous communities, it historically faced infrastructural and accessibility constraints, which posed significant hurdles to the establishment and growth of higher education institutions. However, in recent years, concerted efforts have been made to bridge these gaps and enhance the higher education landscape in the Northeast. One of the noteworthy developments in the Northeastern higher education scenario is the establishment of new universities and institutes with a focus on addressing the region's specific needs. Researchers like M. Ralte and L. Pachuau (2018) have explored the role of North Eastern Hill University (NEHU) in Shillong as a hub for higher education and research in the region. NEHU's contribution to the educational development of Northeast India is acknowledged in their research. The establishment and growth of regional universities in the Northeast have been instrumental in expanding access to higher education. NEHU, for instance, has not only attracted students from the Northeast but has also become a center of academic excellence in the country.

Furthermore, the Indian government, in collaboration with state governments and local communities, has undertaken initiatives to promote higher education in the region. Government initiatives to promote higher

education in the Northeastern states have been documented in academic literature. The work of N. Boro and S. Kakati (2019) discusses the importance of scholarships and financial incentives in encouraging students from marginalized communities in the region to pursue higher education. They emphasize the role of such policies in enhancing access and inclusivity. These efforts aim to empower the youth of the region with the skills and knowledge needed for socio-economic development and to preserve and promote their unique cultural heritage.

Despite these positive developments, the Northeastern higher education landscape still faces challenges. Infrastructure development in the hilly and remote areas remains a priority. Additionally, there is a need for more courses and research programs that align with the region's specific needs, such as agriculture, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable development. Moreover, the linguistic and cultural diversity in the Northeast poses both opportunities and challenges. The balance between English as the medium of instruction and the preservation of indigenous languages and cultures in higher education has been a topic of academic inquiry. Academic research by J. Singh (2017) examines the challenges and opportunities associated with maintaining linguistic and cultural diversity in the higher education curriculum. Singh's work underscores the significance of incorporating local knowledge and traditions into the educational framework.

Literature Review

A study by Biswas and Nath (2019) highlighted the persistent regional disparities in higher education access within India. The Northeast region has historically lagged behind, with lower enrollment rates compared to other states. The authors emphasize the importance of improving access to higher education in this region to bridge the educational gap.

Research conducted by Baruah (2020) delves into the linguistic diversity challenge in Northeast India's higher education system. It underscores the need for universities to adopt a more inclusive approach by offering courses in multiple languages, taking into account the linguistic diversity that characterizes the region.

A study by Devi and Das (2018) critically examines the infrastructure and research facilities in universities across Northeast India. They highlight the lack of modern research infrastructure and the urgent need for investment in laboratories, libraries, and technology to foster research and innovation.

The growth of private higher education institutions in the Northeast region has been a subject of scrutiny. Research by Barman and Bhattacharya (2017) examines the impact of private institutions on accessibility, quality, and affordability. The study emphasizes the importance of regulating private institutions to ensure quality education.

The preservation of indigenous cultures is a critical aspect of higher education in Northeast India. A paper by Sharma and Deka (2019) explores the role of higher education in cultural preservation and community development. It discusses the need for curriculum integration and cultural exchange programs to maintain the region's rich cultural heritage.

Research by Gogoi and Saikia (2021) focuses on the potential for industry-academia collaboration to address employability challenges in the region. The study highlights successful models of partnerships between universities and industries that have led to skill development and job placement for graduates.

Objectives of the Study:

1. To study the significance of higher education in Northeast India, emphasizing its role in regional development, economic growth, and cultural preservation;
2. To identify and analyze the current challenges and issues facing higher education in Northeast India, including linguistic diversity, infrastructure limitations, and curriculum relevance;
3. To investigate future prospects for higher education in Northeast India, exploring potential solutions and recommendations to enhance accessibility, quality, and relevance.

Research Methodology

This study primarily utilizes secondary sources, including books, articles, journals, and websites, to gather information. The research method employed is the Descriptive Analytic method, which involves analyzing existing data and literature to provide a comprehensive overview and analysis of the subject matter.

Findings and Discussion

In the quest to comprehend the present status of higher education in North East India, it is essential to delve into historical perspectives and contemporary statistics. The higher education landscape in India has undergone a remarkable transformation since gaining independence in 1947. In the early years of independence, the nation boasted a mere 20 universities and 500 colleges, accommodating approximately 2.1 lakh students within the higher education system. Fast forward to March 31, 2018, and the scenario has evolved dramatically. According to data sourced from the AISHE (All India Survey on Higher Education) portal and the UGC (University Grants Commission) 2(f) list of Universities, India is now home to a staggering 958 degree-awarding universities and institutions, excluding prestigious institutions like IIMs. This represents an astounding 47.9-fold increase in the number of degree-awarding universities and institutes since independence.

In conjunction with this, the college landscape has also experienced exponential growth, with a current count of 41,012 colleges, encompassing affiliated, constituent, postgraduate, off-campus centers, and recognized institutions (as reported in the AISHE Report 2017-18). This translates to an astonishing 82.02-fold increase in the number of colleges over the same period. However, perhaps the most striking indicator of progress in the Indian higher education system is the student enrollment figure. As of March 31, 2018, the student enrollment in higher education has surged to a monumental 366.42 lakhs, marking a staggering 174.49-fold increase compared to the figures at the time of independence. Such a phenomenal increase in enrollment is a testament to the substantial expansion of institutions of higher learning, encompassing universities and colleges, as well as the significant augmentation in the capacity of educational programs.

The region of North East India has not been left untouched by this transformative wave in higher education. Prior to India's independence, the North East region featured a mere 16 colleges, with a majority of them concentrated in the Assam area. However, the establishment of the first university in Guwahati in 1948 marked a pivotal turning point in the region's higher education landscape. This singular institution acted as a catalyst, propelling the expansion of higher education across the entire North East region, offering education from pre-university levels up to postgraduate and doctoral programs. According to data provided by the UGC, as of March 31, 2017, North East India is home to 10 central universities, 13 state universities, 31 private universities, 1 deemed university, and a substantial count of 924 colleges. This diversified educational infrastructure has played a significant role in facilitating access to higher education for the region's residents.

Sl No	Types of University/Institutions	Number of universities/institutions as of 31.03.2018
1	Central universities	47
2	State universities	383
3	State universities (private)	295
4	Institutions established through state legislation	3
5	Institutions deemed-to-be universities	123

Central Universities in Northeast India

1. Arunachal Pradesh - Rajiv Gandhi University, Rono Hills, P.O. Doimukh, Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh - 791 112 (1985, Central w.e.f. 2007)
2. Assam - Assam University, PO: Assam University, Silchar - 788 011 (1994)
3. Assam - Tezpur University, Distt. Sonitpur, P.B.No.72, Napaam, Tezpur, Assam - 784001 (1994)
4. Manipur - Central Agricultural University, Imphal-795 004 (1993)
5. Manipur - Manipur University, Canchipur, Imphal, Manipur - 795 003 (1980, Central w.e.f. 2005)
6. Meghalaya - North Eastern Hill University, NEHU Campus, Shillong, Meghalaya - 793 022 (1973)
7. Mizoram - Mizoram University, Post Box No. 910, Aizwal, Mizoram - 796009 (2000)
8. Nagaland - Nagaland University, Campus Kohima, Headquarter Lumani, Nagaland - 797 001 (1994)
9. Tripura - Tripura University, Suryamaninagar, Agartala, Tripura - 799 130 (1987)
10. Sikkim - Sikkim University, 6th Mile, Samdur, P.O. Tadong, Gangtok, Sikkim - 737102 (2007)

Number of Universities and Colleges in North East Region by State

States	Central universities	State universities	Deemed universities	Private universities	Colleges
Assam	2	12	-	5	556
Arunachal Pradesh	1	-	1	7	31
Meghalaya	1	-	-	8	69
Mizoram	1	-	-	1	30
Manipur	2	-	-	1	90
Nagaland	1	-	-	3	30
Tripura	1	-	-	1	57
Sikkim	1	-	-	5	25

Source: UGC Annual Report, 2016-2017

The Importance of Higher Education in Northeast India

India, a nation celebrated for its "unity in diversity," boasts a remarkable tapestry of cultures, languages, and traditions. Within this vast subcontinent, the northeastern region stands out as a crucial geographical and cultural entity. Comprising eight distinct states—Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Mizoram, Manipur, Meghalaya,

Tripura, and Sikkim—the northeastern region embodies a unique blend of ethnicities, languages, and landscapes that contribute to its multifaceted character.

Despite its undeniable importance, the development of this region has been hampered by a series of challenges. One of the primary obstacles is the inadequacy of infrastructure, a concern that hampers economic growth and social development. The geographical layout, characterized by mountainous terrain and adverse climate conditions, poses significant logistical challenges, making the construction of essential transportation and communication networks a formidable task (Das et al., 2020). These geographical impediments not only hinder the region's economic progress but also affect the daily lives of its inhabitants, making access to basic services a struggle in many areas.

Another persistent issue in the northeastern region is the recurrent border clashes and ethnic tensions. These tensions have periodically erupted into violent conflicts that disrupt the peace and social fabric of the region. Various ethnic groups residing in close proximity often find themselves at odds over issues related to identity, resources, and political representation (Kumar, 2017). These conflicts not only disrupt daily life but also have long-term implications for stability and development in the region.

Nonetheless, the northeastern region possesses a wealth of natural resources and biodiversity. The region's lush forests, fertile plains, and abundant water bodies harbor a rich diversity of flora and fauna (Gogoi & Bhagawati, 2018). Additionally, the states in this region are known for their impressive literacy rates, which, in some cases, surpass the national average. This highlights the potential for human capital development and the emergence of a skilled workforce.

Several key sectors hold promise for driving economic growth in the northeastern region. The production of tea, timber, and coal has been integral to the region's economy for decades (Narzary et al., 2019). Furthermore, tourism, with its vast untapped potential, presents an opportunity for economic diversification. The region's breathtaking landscapes, cultural diversity, and unique traditions make it an attractive destination for both domestic and international tourists (Choudhury & Deka, 2020).

In addition to the traditional sectors, the region is increasingly exploring the potential of bioresources and oil as avenues for economic development. The rich biodiversity of the northeastern states offers a wide array of bioresources that can be harnessed for pharmaceuticals, agriculture, and other industries (Mishra et al., 2019). Furthermore, the region's oil reserves hold promise for energy security and revenue generation.

For the northeastern region to realize its economic potential, the role of higher education cannot be overstated. Quality higher education institutions are essential for the development of skilled human resources that can drive innovation, entrepreneurship, and sustainable development (Bhattacharjee et al., 2021). Access to quality education is a key factor in reducing regional disparities and empowering the local population to participate fully in the national and global economy. By investing in higher education infrastructure and ensuring its accessibility to the region's youth, the northeastern states can overcome resource constraints and build a strong knowledge base that empowers their people.

Challenges and Problems facing higher education in North East India

1. **Language Dilemma:** One significant hurdle to higher education in North East India is the linguistic diversity prevalent across the region. Different states have their distinct languages, making it challenging for students to access educational resources in their local tongues. As a result, many individuals are

deterred from pursuing higher education due to the unavailability of educational materials in their native languages.

2. **Shortage of Vocational Courses:** Despite the proliferation of higher education institutions in India, there is a dearth of vocational courses in the curriculum. These institutions predominantly offer traditional academic programs, neglecting the demand for practical skills and vocational training.
3. **Inadequate Research Infrastructure:** Research opportunities in North Eastern states are constrained by inadequate infrastructure and facilities, hampering the region's ability to engage in international-level research. This is exemplified by the remarkably low enrollment in Ph.D. programs in the area.
4. **Wastage and Stagnation:** The problems of wastage and stagnation persist in higher education, mirroring the issues in primary and secondary education. Contributing factors include an ineffective examination system, weak teacher-student relationships, inadequate hostel facilities, and administrative challenges. Furthermore, the high cost of higher education in North East India, driven by the prevalence of private universities, exacerbates this issue.
5. **Lack of Clear Educational Goals:** Despite an increase in student enrollment, many higher education students suffer from a lack of clear educational goals, leading to aimlessness. The absence of well-defined aims in education can result in frustration and an inability to channel their knowledge effectively.
6. **Privatization and Commercialization:** Privatization of higher education has become a growing concern in North East India, with an influx of private universities that often prioritize profit over educational quality. This commercialization can undermine the overall educational experience.
7. **Traditional Curriculum:** A core problem in India's higher education system is its heavy reliance on theoretical learning rather than practical applications. This issue extends to North East India, where curricula often lack relevance to real-world challenges.
8. **Insufficient Practical Knowledge:** The knowledge imparted through syllabi and curricula frequently fails to equip students with practical skills necessary for their careers. The gap between theoretical learning and practical applicability remains a significant concern.
9. **Teacher Dedication and Employment Conditions:** Many universities in North East India have introduced professional courses alongside traditional academic programs. However, the majority of teachers in these institutions are employed on a contractual basis with limited compensation. This precarious employment situation can negatively affect their dedication to teaching.

Suggestions to enhance Higher Education in Northeast India

Higher education in Northeast India faces unique challenges that require tailored solutions to improve the quality and relevance of academic programs. In this discussion, we explore various strategies and recommendations to address these challenges and foster holistic development in the region.

1. **Promoting Local Research and Innovation:** Encouraging research initiatives that address local issues is vital. Establishing research centers and providing grants for projects relevant to the region's socio-economic and environmental challenges can facilitate growth and innovation.

2. **Reforming Assessment Methods:** The examination system should be revamped to focus on practical application and critical thinking. Continuous assessment, project-based evaluations, and skill-oriented assessments can reduce the emphasis on rote learning.
3. **Diversifying Course Offerings:** Expanding the range of courses to include interdisciplinary programs can help students acquire a broader skill set. Combining subjects like traditional arts, computer science, and environmental studies can better align education with job market demands.
4. **Industry-Academia Collaboration:** Establishing stronger ties with industries can lead to the development of job-oriented curricula. Regular interactions with industry professionals can help students gain practical insights and enhance their employability.
5. **Infrastructure Development:** Investments in modern infrastructure, including well-equipped laboratories and libraries, are crucial for improving the overall educational experience. Government and private sector support should be solicited for these initiatives.
6. **Faculty Development and Training:** Continuous professional development programs for educators can ensure that faculty members stay updated with the latest teaching methodologies and research trends. This can lead to better classroom experiences for students.
7. **Digital Learning and Technology Integration:** The integration of technology in teaching can overcome geographical barriers and provide access to quality education. E-learning platforms, online courses, and virtual labs can be employed to reach remote areas.
8. **Scholarship Programs:** Scholarships and financial aid programs can encourage more students to pursue higher education. Targeted scholarships for underprivileged and meritorious students can boost enrollment rates.
9. **Language Skills Enhancement:** Focusing on improving English language proficiency among students can enhance their employability in the global job market. English language programs and communication skills workshops can be integrated into the curriculum.
10. **Cultural Exchange and Diversity:** Promoting cultural exchange programs with other states and countries can broaden students' horizons. This exposure can lead to a more diverse and inclusive learning environment.
11. **Support for Entrepreneurship:** Encouraging entrepreneurship through incubation centers and start-up support can create job opportunities within the region and reduce the pressure to migrate for employment.
12. **Alumni Engagement:** Leveraging the expertise and resources of alumni can strengthen institutional networks and provide valuable guidance to current students.
13. **Quality Assurance Mechanisms:** Implementing rigorous quality assurance mechanisms and accreditation processes can ensure that higher education institutions maintain high standards and transparency.
14. **Community Engagement:** Involving local communities in education planning and implementation can create a sense of ownership and relevance. Community participation can also lead to improved infrastructure and support.

Conclusion

Higher education in India, with a specific focus on the Northeastern region, plays a pivotal role in shaping the future of the nation and the development of its diverse and culturally rich communities. India's higher education system has witnessed remarkable growth, with a significant increase in the number of universities, colleges, and student enrollments since gaining independence. This expansion reflects the nation's commitment to providing access to quality education for its citizens. The Northeastern region, characterized by its geographical and cultural diversity, presents a unique set of opportunities and challenges within the realm of higher education. Despite facing infrastructural constraints, linguistic diversity, and border tensions, this region has made significant strides in expanding access to higher education. The establishment of universities and colleges, both public and private, has been instrumental in offering educational opportunities to the local population. Government initiatives, scholarships, and financial incentives have further enhanced accessibility and inclusivity in higher education.

However, challenges persist, including the need for infrastructure development, relevance of curriculum, and preservation of linguistic and cultural diversity. To address these challenges and unlock the full potential of higher education in the Northeastern region, a multi-faceted approach is required. This approach involves promoting local research and innovation, diversifying course offerings, strengthening industry-academia collaboration, and investing in infrastructure and faculty development. Additionally, the integration of technology, scholarship programs, and initiatives to enhance language skills can further enhance the quality and accessibility of higher education in the region. Furthermore, fostering a sense of community engagement, cultural exchange, and entrepreneurship can contribute to the holistic development of the Northeastern states. The active involvement of alumni and the implementation of quality assurance mechanisms will ensure that higher education institutions in the region maintain high standards and relevance.

As India continues to invest in the growth and enhancement of its higher education system, particularly in the Northeastern region, it moves closer to realizing its goal of providing quality education to all, promoting research and innovation, and fostering social and economic development. The role of higher education in the Northeast is not only about academic excellence but also about preserving and celebrating the unique cultural heritage of the region, thereby contributing to the rich tapestry of India's diversity.

References

1. Ahuja, R., & Yadav, S. (2020). Indian Higher Education: Challenges and Opportunities. *Journal of Educational Planning and Administration*, 34(4), 5-18.
2. Barman, S., & Bhattacharya, M. (2017). Impact of Private Higher Education Institutions on Accessibility and Quality in Northeast India. *Indian Journal of Education*, 32(1), 78-93.
3. Baruah, P. (2020). Linguistic Diversity and Medium of Instruction in Northeast Indian Higher Education. *Journal of Linguistics and Education*, 15(2), 211-228.
4. Biswas, A., & Nath, S. (2019). Regional Disparities in Higher Education Access: A Case Study of Northeast India. *Journal of Higher Education*, 40(3), 345-362.
5. Boro, N., & Kakati, S. (2019). Access to Higher Education for Marginalized Communities in Assam: A Study of Scholarships and Financial Incentives. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Education and Research*, 6(1), 24-29.

6. Bhattacharjee, S., Borthakur, D., & Deka, M. K. (2021). Higher Education in Northeast India: Challenges and Prospects. *International Journal of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences*, 7(1), 17-25.
7. Choudhury, M. (2009). Higher Education in North East India: The Challenge of Inclusion. *Indian Journal of Applied Research*, 9(3), 1-2.
8. Choudhury, P., & Deka, S. (2020). Tourism Potential and Challenges in North-East India. *International Journal of Research in Tourism and Hospitality (IJRTH)*, 1(1), 1-11.
9. Das, M., Saha, B., & Deka, J. (2020). Infrastructure Development in the North Eastern Region of India: Challenges and Opportunities. *International Journal of Innovative Research in Engineering & Management*, 7(5), 214-222.
10. Devi, R., & Das, A. (2018). Infrastructure and Research Facilities in Northeast Indian Universities: A Critical Analysis. *Research in Higher Education*, 25(4), 567-584.
11. Gogoi, A., & Saikia, P. (2021). Industry-Academia Collaboration for Enhancing Employability in Northeast India. *Journal of Vocational Education*, 38(2), 215-230.
12. Gogoi, R., & Bhagawati, B. (2018). Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Development in Northeast India: Challenges and Opportunities. *International Journal of Biodiversity*, 2018, 1-14.
13. Government of India. (2018). All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE).
14. Iyer, K. G. (2015). Education and Northeast India: A Bibliographic Review. *International Journal of Applied Research*, 1(13), 289-293.
15. Kumar, V. (2017). Ethnic Conflicts in North East India: Causes, Consequences, and Resolutions. *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 52(6), 847-865.
16. Mishra, S., Bhattacharjee, B., & Baruah, J. (2019). Bioresources of North East India: Potential, Utilization, and Future Prospects. *Journal of Scientific Research*, 11(3), 348-362.
17. National Education Policy. (2020). Ministry of Education, Government of India. Retrieved from [https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/NEP_Final_English.pdf](https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/NEP_Final_English.pdf).
18. Ralte, M., & Pachuau, L. (2018). North Eastern Hill University (NEHU), Shillong: A Hub for Higher Education and Research in Northeast India. *International Journal of Innovative Research and Development*, 7(9), 222-226.
19. Sharma, R., & Deka, B. (2019). Higher Education and Cultural Preservation in Northeast India. *Cultural Studies Journal*, 12(3), 411-428.
20. Singh, J. (2017). Language Diversity in Higher Education: Challenges and Opportunities in the Northeastern States of India. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 8(4), 116-122.
21. University Grants Commission (UGC). (2018). AISHE Report 2017-18.
22. University Grants Commission (UGC). (2017). Higher Education in India: Status, Challenges, and Suggestions.