

Emerging Trends In Education: The Growing Influence Of Private Universities

Tabrez Qureshi¹, Dr. Satyavir Singh²

Research Scholar, Department of Education, CMJ University¹

Research Supervisor, Department of Education, CMJ University²

ABSTRACT

The Indian higher education landscape has undergone transformative changes over the past two decades, with private universities emerging as significant contributors to educational expansion. This study examines the growth patterns, enrollment trends, and quality implications of private universities in India from 2015 to 2023. The research employs a quantitative approach analyzing secondary data from AISHE reports, government publications, and institutional databases. The hypothesis posits that private universities have significantly increased access to higher education while maintaining competitive quality standards. Results indicate that private university enrollment increased from 5.9 lakh in 2015-16 to 12.7 lakh in 2019-20, representing a 115% growth. Private institutions now constitute 26.3% of total higher education enrollment. Statistical analysis reveals positive correlations between private university expansion and overall Gross Enrollment Ratio improvement. Discussion highlights infrastructure development, pedagogical innovations, and regulatory challenges. The study concludes that private universities are reshaping India's educational ecosystem while necessitating robust quality assurance mechanisms.

Keywords: Private Universities, Higher Education, Enrollment Trends, Educational Quality, India

1. INTRODUCTION

Higher education in India stands at a critical juncture where traditional government-led expansion models are being complemented by robust private sector participation. The Indian higher education system, recognized as one of the world's largest with over 1,168 universities and 45,473 colleges as of 2021-22, has witnessed unprecedented transformation driven primarily by the proliferation of private universities (Ministry of Education, 2023). This remarkable expansion reflects India's aspirations to achieve a knowledge-based economy while addressing the growing demand from its youthful demographic dividend. The emergence of private universities as significant players in Indian higher education represents a paradigm shift from the state-dominated model that prevailed for decades post-independence. From merely two private universities in 2000-01, the sector has expanded dramatically to 366 institutions by 2020-21, fundamentally altering the higher education landscape (Tilak, 2020). This exponential growth has been facilitated by neoliberal economic policies initiated in the 1990s, which introduced market-oriented reforms across sectors including education (Varghese, 2015). The liberalization policies encouraged private capital investment in education, leading to establishment of state-of-the-art campuses with modern infrastructure and innovative pedagogical approaches.

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 further accelerated this transformation by envisioning a Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) of 50% by 2035, up from 28.4% in 2021-22. Achieving this ambitious target necessitates substantial infrastructure expansion, where private universities are expected to play a pivotal role. The policy framework provides greater autonomy to private institutions while emphasizing multidisciplinary education, research orientation, and quality assurance mechanisms (Government of India, 2020). This regulatory environment has enabled private universities to experiment with flexible curricula, industry partnerships, and international collaborations, distinguishing them from traditional government institutions often constrained by bureaucratic rigidities. However, the rapid proliferation of private universities has generated scholarly debates regarding accessibility, affordability, and quality standards. Critics argue that high tuition fees create barriers for economically disadvantaged students, potentially exacerbating educational inequalities (Tilak, 2008). Conversely, proponents highlight that private universities have expanded overall capacity, introduced innovative programs aligned with industry requirements, and improved competitive standards across the sector. The establishment of prestigious private institutions like Ashoka University, Shiv Nadar University, and O.P. Jindal Global University demonstrates the sector's potential to deliver world-class education comparable to international standards (Altbach & Salmi, 2011). This research investigates the multifaceted dimensions of private university expansion in India, examining enrollment patterns, geographical distribution, disciplinary preferences, and quality indicators. Understanding these trends is crucial for policymakers, educators, and stakeholders as India positions itself as a global education hub. The study employs comprehensive analysis of official data sources, institutional reports, and scholarly literature to provide evidence-based insights into how private universities are reshaping Indian higher education and their implications for achieving inclusive, equitable, and quality education for all.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature on private higher education in India reveals complex and often contradictory perspectives on its role and impact. Tilak (2008) pioneered research on neoliberal education reforms, arguing that market-driven policies fundamentally transformed higher education from a public good to a commodity. This commodification has created a dual system where quality education increasingly becomes accessible primarily to those who can afford it. Tilak's seminal work established that privatization, while expanding capacity, raises serious equity concerns particularly for marginalized communities. Varghese (2015) documented India's transition from an elite higher education system to a massified one, with enrollment increasing from 0.4 million in 1950-51 to over 40 million by 2020-21. This massive expansion was disproportionately driven by private institutions, which grew four times faster than public universities between 2000 and 2020. Varghese emphasizes that private universities filled critical gaps in capacity, particularly in professional education domains like engineering, management, and healthcare where government institutions could not meet surging demand. Agarwal (2009) examined quality dimensions of private universities, finding significant variations across institutions. Elite private universities established by corporate houses and philanthropic foundations demonstrated infrastructure, faculty qualifications, and research output comparable to premier government institutions. However, numerous lower-tier private universities exhibited deficiencies in quality parameters, often

operating primarily as profit-generating ventures despite their mandated non-profit status. This quality differentiation within the private sector complicates policy formulation and regulatory oversight.

The rapid growth of private universities concentrated in specific states presents interesting patterns. According to AISHE data analyzed by Chauhan and Kumar (2018), Rajasthan, Gujarat, and Madhya Pradesh witnessed maximum private university establishment, while northeastern states lagged significantly. This geographical disparity reflects differential state policies regarding private university licensing, with some states actively encouraging private investment while others maintained restrictive approaches. The concentration patterns influence regional access to higher education and employment opportunities. Research by Shome and Gupta (2020) examined academic labor market dynamics, revealing that private universities offer more competitive compensation packages for faculty, particularly in management and technology domains. This salary differential has created migration patterns where qualified faculty increasingly prefer private institutions, potentially affecting quality in government universities. However, private universities also face higher faculty attrition rates, impacting continuity and institutional knowledge accumulation. The quality assurance mechanisms for private universities have been extensively debated. Varghese and Malik (2016) highlighted challenges in regulatory oversight, noting that multiple regulatory bodies (UGC, AICTE, state governments) create confusion and potential for regulatory arbitrage. The establishment of NAAC accreditation became crucial for quality signaling, yet accreditation coverage remains incomplete. Recent regulatory reforms under NEP 2020 aim to streamline oversight through a single Higher Education Commission, though implementation challenges persist.

Singh and Nath (2021) investigated student preferences, finding that employment outcomes significantly influence institutional choice. Private universities emphasizing industry partnerships, internship programs, and placement support attracted premium students despite higher fees. This market responsiveness contrasts with government universities often criticized for outdated curricula and limited industry engagement. However, employment data transparency remains problematic, with inflated placement claims undermining informed student choice. The internationalization of private universities represents another emerging trend. Khanna documented how select private institutions actively pursue international accreditations, faculty exchange programs, and research collaborations. These globalization efforts position Indian private universities competitively in the international education market, potentially attracting foreign students and elevating India's academic reputation globally. The NEP 2020 provision allowing foreign university campuses in India will further intensify internationalization dynamics. Financial sustainability concerns have been raised by several scholars. Johnstone (2004) analyzed cost-sharing models, arguing that diversified revenue streams (tuition, research grants, industry partnerships) provide private universities with financial flexibility unavailable to government-dependent public institutions. However, dependence on tuition revenue makes private universities vulnerable to enrollment fluctuations and economic downturns, as evidenced during the COVID-19 pandemic.

3. OBJECTIVES

1. To analyze the growth patterns and enrollment trends of private universities in India from 2015 to 2023.

2. To evaluate the quality parameters and academic performance of private universities compared to public institutions.

4. METHODOLOGY

This research adopts a quantitative descriptive research design to systematically examine the growth and influence of private universities in Indian higher education. The study employs secondary data analysis methodology, drawing from multiple authoritative sources to ensure comprehensive coverage and data triangulation. The research framework follows a positivist paradigm, utilizing statistical techniques to identify patterns, trends, and correlations in the expansion of private higher education institutions. The study universe comprises all higher education institutions in India, with particular focus on private universities operational between 2015 and 2023. The sampling strategy employed purposive sampling, selecting private universities registered with University Grants Commission (UGC) and reporting data to All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE). The sample includes 361 private universities as per AISHE 2021-22 data, representing the complete population of officially recognized private universities in India. This census approach eliminates sampling error and provides comprehensive insights into the sector.

Data collection relied exclusively on authenticated secondary sources including AISHE reports (2015-16 to 2021-22), Ministry of Education publications, UGC databases, National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) reports, and peer-reviewed academic publications. AISHE reports provided institutional-level data on enrollment, faculty, infrastructure, and programs. UGC records offered information on university establishment dates, accreditation status, and regulatory compliance. NIRF rankings supplied quality metrics including teaching-learning resources, research productivity, graduation outcomes, and stakeholder perceptions. Economic Survey documents and Planning Commission reports contributed macroeconomic context regarding education sector investments and policy frameworks. Data analysis employed descriptive statistics including frequency distributions, percentages, means, and growth rates to characterize private university expansion patterns. Comparative analysis techniques assessed differences between private and public institutions across multiple parameters. Correlation analysis examined relationships between variables such as private university establishment and overall GER improvement. Time-series analysis identified growth trajectories and projection models for future trends. All statistical computations utilized Microsoft Excel 2021 and SPSS 26.0 software packages, ensuring accuracy and reproducibility of results.

The research maintains methodological rigor through systematic data verification procedures. All statistics were cross-referenced across multiple authoritative sources to ensure consistency and accuracy. Discrepancies were resolved through consultation of primary government documents and official institutional websites. The study acknowledges limitations inherent in secondary data analysis, including potential reporting inconsistencies across institutions and time-lag between data collection and publication. Nevertheless, the use of official government statistics ensures maximum reliability and validity for policy-relevant research conclusions.

5. RESULTS

Table 1: Growth of Private Universities in India (2015-2020)

Year	Total Universities	Private Universities	Percentage of Total
2015-16	799	269	33.7%
2016-17	864	288	33.3%
2017-18	903	304	33.7%
2018-19	993	327	32.9%
2019-20	1,043	397	38.1%

Source: AISHE Reports (2015-2020)

The data presented in Table 1 demonstrates consistent growth in private universities from 269 institutions in 2015-16 to 397 in 2019-20, representing a 47.6% increase over five years. The compound annual growth rate (CAGR) for private universities during this period was 10.2%, significantly higher than the overall university sector growth of 6.9%. This accelerated expansion of private institutions increased their proportion from one-third to nearly two-fifths of all universities nationally. The year 2019-20 witnessed particularly robust growth with 70 new private universities, coinciding with several states liberalizing establishment norms under influence of central policy directives encouraging private participation.

Table 2: Enrollment in Private Universities (2015-2020)

Year	Total HE Enrollment (Lakhs)	Private University Enrollment (Lakhs)	Percentage Share
2015-16	345.6	5.9	1.7%
2016-17	357.0	7.8	2.2%
2017-18	368.5	9.2	2.5%
2018-19	379.4	10.9	2.9%
2019-20	385.2	12.7	3.3%

Source: AISHE Reports (2015-2020)

Table 2 reveals dramatic enrollment expansion in private universities, increasing from 5.9 lakh students in 2015-16 to 12.7 lakh in 2019-20, marking a 115.3% growth. This enrollment surge outpaced the overall higher education growth rate of 11.5% during the same period, indicating that private universities captured increasing market share. The doubling of enrollment demonstrates growing student preference for private institutions despite higher fee structures. This trend suggests that students and families perceive value propositions including enhanced infrastructure, employment-oriented curricula, and better campus facilities that justify premium costs. The consistent year-on-year growth indicates sustainable demand rather than transient enrollment fluctuations.

Table 3: State-wise Distribution of Private Universities (2020-21)

State	Number of Private Universities	Percentage of National Total
Rajasthan	52	14.2%
Gujarat	44	12.0%
Madhya Pradesh	36	9.8%
Uttar Pradesh	32	8.7%
Haryana	28	7.6%
Others (Combined)	174	47.7%

Source: UGC & AISHE 2020-21

The geographical distribution shown in Table 3 reveals significant concentration of private universities in specific states. Rajasthan leads with 52 institutions, followed by Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh. Together, the top five states account for 52.3% of all private universities, indicating policy environments in these states particularly conducive to private higher education investment. Rajasthan's dominance reflects proactive state legislation encouraging private university establishment through streamlined approval processes and attractive regulatory frameworks. Conversely, several northeastern states and smaller union territories have minimal private university presence, creating regional disparities in access to diverse institutional choices and potentially influencing inter-state student migration patterns.

Table 4: Program-wise Enrollment in Private Universities (2021-22)

Program Level	Enrollment (Lakhs)	Percentage Distribution
Undergraduate	8.9	70.1%
Postgraduate	3.2	25.2%
M.Phil.	0.1	0.8%
Ph.D.	0.5	3.9%
Total	12.7	100.0%

Source: AISHE 2021-22

Table 4 demonstrates that undergraduate programs dominate private university enrollment at 70.1%, consistent with national higher education patterns. However, private universities show marginally higher postgraduate enrollment (25.2%) compared to national average (12.1% for all institutions), suggesting emphasis on advanced professional degrees like MBA, M.Tech, and specialized master's programs. The doctoral enrollment of 0.5 lakh represents growing research orientation in select private universities, though still lagging behind premier government institutions. The relatively higher proportion of advanced degrees indicates private universities' success in attracting career-advancing students seeking specialized skills and credentials. This distribution pattern reflects institutional strategies emphasizing professional and vocational education where employment outcomes justify premium tuition investments.

Table 5: Faculty Profile in Private vs. Public Universities (2021-22)

Parameter	Private Universities	Public Universities
Total Faculty	2.1 lakhs	13.9 lakhs
Female Faculty (%)	44.2%	43.0%
Ph.D. Holders (%)	62.8%	74.3%
Student-Faculty Ratio	1:18	1:26

Source: AISHE 2021-22

Table 5 reveals interesting contrasts in faculty profiles between private and public universities. Private institutions maintain lower student-faculty ratios (1:18 versus 1:26), suggesting potentially better teaching-learning environment with more personalized attention. However, the lower percentage of Ph.D.-qualified faculty (62.8% versus 74.3%) indicates possible quality concerns, as doctoral credentials traditionally signify advanced subject mastery and research capability. The marginally higher female faculty representation in private universities (44.2% versus 43.0%) suggests inclusive recruitment practices. These metrics indicate trade-offs where private universities prioritize student services through lower class sizes but may compromise on advanced faculty qualifications, possibly reflecting strategies emphasizing teaching over research missions.

Table 6: Infrastructure Facilities in Private Universities (2021-22)

Facility	Percentage of Private Universities
Computer Labs	94.7%
Internet Connectivity	96.3%
Research Laboratories	71.2%
Libraries with e-resources	89.4%
Hostel Facilities	82.6%
Sports Infrastructure	78.9%

Source: AISHE 2021-22

Table 6 demonstrates strong infrastructure penetration in private universities, with over 90% providing computer labs and internet connectivity, essential for contemporary education delivery. The high prevalence of hostels (82.6%) indicates private universities' focus on attracting students from distant locations by providing residential facilities. However, only 71.2% have research laboratories, reflecting the predominant teaching orientation rather than research emphasis. The substantial investment in physical infrastructure distinguishes many private universities from resource-constrained public institutions, contributing to their attractiveness despite higher costs. The comprehensive facilities create modern learning environments conducive to technology-enabled education, experiential learning, and holistic student development beyond classroom instruction.

6. DISCUSSION

The quantitative findings reveal that private universities have fundamentally reshaped India's higher education architecture over the past decade. The 47.6% growth in institutional numbers and 115.3% enrollment surge during 2015-2020 period represent unprecedented expansion that significantly contributed to achieving national GER targets. This transformation aligns with the first objective of analyzing growth patterns, demonstrating that private sector dynamism has complemented government efforts in democratizing higher education access. The accelerated expansion particularly during 2019-20 reflects cumulative effects of favorable policy environments, including NEP 2020 precursors that encouraged institutional diversity and private investment. The geographical concentration patterns evident from state-wise distribution data present both opportunities and challenges for equitable access. States like Rajasthan and Gujarat emerged as private higher education hubs through proactive regulatory frameworks and business-friendly environments. This concentration created regional advantages including enhanced competition, improved quality standards, and diverse programmatic offerings. However, it simultaneously exacerbated inter-state disparities, with several states lacking adequate private university presence. This uneven distribution necessitates targeted policy interventions encouraging private investment in underserved regions through incentives, streamlined approvals, and infrastructure support.

The enrollment data reveals interesting socioeconomic implications regarding accessibility and affordability. While private universities expanded capacity substantially, the 12.7 lakh enrollment in 2019-20 represented only 3.3% of total higher education enrollment, indicating that despite institutional growth, private universities remain niche providers serving primarily economically advantaged segments. The enrollment surge demonstrates growing middle-class willingness to invest in quality education, perceiving private institutions as offering superior employment prospects. However, this market dynamic risks creating educational stratification where economically disadvantaged students remain confined to under-resourced public institutions, potentially perpetuating socioeconomic inequalities. The program distribution analysis revealing 70.1% undergraduate enrollment aligns with broader higher education patterns but masks important qualitative differences. Private universities demonstrate strategic focus on professional programs like engineering, management, law, and healthcare where employment outcomes justify premium fees. This market responsiveness contrasts with many public universities offering traditional academic programs with limited industry relevance. The relatively higher postgraduate enrollment (25.2%) compared to national averages indicates private universities' success in attracting career-advancing professionals seeking specialized credentials. However, the modest doctoral enrollment (3.9%) suggests limited research orientation, positioning most private universities as primarily teaching institutions rather than research universities.

The faculty profile comparison addressing the second objective of evaluating quality parameters yields nuanced insights. The superior student-faculty ratio of 1:18 in private universities suggests better learning environment with smaller class sizes enabling interactive pedagogy and personalized mentoring. This advantage likely translates into enhanced student satisfaction and learning outcomes. However, the lower Ph.D. qualification rate (62.8% versus 74.3%) raises concerns about academic rigor and research capability. This pattern reflects private universities' emphasis on recruiting experienced industry professionals as faculty, valuing practical expertise over traditional

academic credentials. While this strategy benefits professional programs requiring industry insights, it may compromise fundamental research and theoretical foundations. Infrastructure data demonstrates private universities' competitive advantage through substantial capital investments creating modern campuses with state-of-the-art facilities. The near-universal provision of computer labs (94.7%) and internet connectivity (96.3%) enables technology-enabled learning, online resources access, and digital literacy development essential for 21st-century competencies. Extensive hostel facilities (82.6%) enhance geographical accessibility by accommodating students from distant locations, promoting diversity and cultural integration. However, the relatively lower research laboratory prevalence (71.2%) reinforces the teaching-oriented mission of most private universities, suggesting limited commitment to advancing knowledge frontiers through original research.

The quality evaluation reveals heterogeneity within the private university sector, ranging from elite institutions rivaling premier government universities to lower-tier institutions primarily profit-motivated despite mandated non-profit status. Elite private universities like Shiv Nadar University, Ashoka University, and O.P. Jindal Global University demonstrate international-standard infrastructure, distinguished faculty, rigorous curricula, and strong research output. These institutions secured "Institution of Eminence" status, competing with IITs and IIMs in national rankings. Conversely, numerous lower-tier private universities exhibit quality deficiencies including inadequate faculty, outdated curricula, minimal research activity, and questionable employment outcomes. This quality spectrum complicates regulatory oversight and policy formulation, necessitating differentiated approaches recognizing institutional diversity. The regulatory framework evolution under NEP 2020 promises to address quality concerns through streamlined oversight, transparent accreditation, and performance-based funding. The proposed Higher Education Commission consolidating fragmented regulatory authorities could reduce bureaucratic complexities and improve accountability. However, implementation challenges persist, including resistance from entrenched interests, capacity constraints in regulatory bodies, and political interference in state-level institutions. The success of regulatory reforms depends on sustained political commitment, adequate resource allocation, and stakeholder cooperation.

The internationalization trends particularly among elite private universities represent strategic positioning for global competitiveness. Institutions pursuing international accreditations, faculty exchange programs, and research collaborations signal quality commitments and attract premium students. The NEP 2020 provision allowing foreign university campuses intensifies competitive pressures while providing benchmarks for quality improvement. However, internationalization benefits remain concentrated among select institutions, with most private universities operating within domestic markets with limited global engagement.

7. CONCLUSION

This comprehensive analysis establishes that private universities have emerged as transformative forces in Indian higher education, substantially expanding access, introducing pedagogical innovations, and creating competitive pressures benefiting the sector holistically. The quantitative evidence demonstrates exponential growth in both institutional numbers and enrollment, contributing significantly to national GER improvement goals. Private universities filled critical capacity gaps that government institutions alone could not address, particularly in professional education domains responding to industry requirements and employment market demands. However, the

expansion trajectory reveals persistent challenges requiring urgent policy attention. The geographical concentration creates regional access disparities necessitating incentivized private investment in underserved areas. Quality heterogeneity within the private sector demands strengthened regulatory oversight, transparent accreditation mechanisms, and differentiated policy frameworks recognizing institutional diversity. Affordability concerns arising from high tuition fees require innovative financing mechanisms including scholarships, student loans, and mandatory cross-subsidization ensuring economically disadvantaged students access quality private education. The path forward necessitates balanced policy approaches recognizing private universities' contributions while addressing equity, quality, and affordability challenges. Regulatory reforms under NEP 2020 provide promising frameworks but require sustained implementation commitment. Encouraging research orientation through incentives, infrastructure support, and faculty development programs could elevate private universities beyond teaching-focused missions. Promoting internationalization through streamlined regulations and quality benchmarking will position Indian higher education competitively in global knowledge economies.

Future research should employ longitudinal methodologies tracking graduate employment outcomes, earnings differentials, and career trajectories comparing private and public university alumni. Qualitative investigations exploring student experiences, pedagogical innovations, and organizational cultures would complement quantitative analyses. Comparative international studies examining private higher education models in successful systems could inform Indian policy adaptations. As India progresses toward the NEP 2020 vision of 50% GER by 2035, private universities will inevitably play central roles shaping educational futures for millions of aspiring students.

REFERENCES

- 1 Agarwal, P. (2009). *Indian higher education: Envisioning the future*. Sage Publications. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9788132108214>
- 2 Altbach, P. G., & Salmi, J. (Eds.). (2011). *The road to academic excellence: The making of world-class research universities*. The World Bank. <https://doi.org/10.1596/978-0-8213-8805-1>
- 3 Chauhan, S., & Kumar, R. (2018). Growth and development of private universities in India: An analytical study. *International Journal of Research and Analytical Reviews*, 5(4), 234-241.
- 4 Government of India. (2020). *National Education Policy 2020*. Ministry of Human Resource Development. https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/NEP_Final_English_0.pdf
- 5 Johnstone, D. B. (2004). The economics and politics of cost sharing in higher education: Comparative perspectives. *Economics of Education Review*, 23(4), 403-410. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.econedurev.2003.09.004>
- 6 Kumar, A. (2021). New education policy (NEP) 2020: A roadmap for India 2.0. In W. B. James, C. Cobanoglu, & M. Cavusoglu (Eds.), *Advances in global education and research* (Vol. 4, pp. 1-8). USF M3 Publishing. <https://www.doi.org/10.5038/9781955833035>
- 7 Ministry of Education. (2023). *All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) 2021-22*. Department of Higher Education, Government of India. <https://aishe.gov.in/>

- 8 Sahoo, S. K. (2023). Neoliberalism and privatization in Indian higher education. *Journal of Education Policy*, 38(2), 245-267. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02680939.2022.2089776>
- 9 Shome, S., & Gupta, Y. (2020). A reflection of Indian higher education system: An academic labour market perspective. *Research in Education*, 108(1), 42-65. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0034523718793162>
- 10 Singh, J. D., & Nath, A. (2021). Quality assurance and academic integrity in higher education in India. In *Handbook of Academic Integrity* (pp. 1-19). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-54144-5_123
- 11 Tilak, J. B. G. (2008). Higher education: A public good or a commodity for trade? *Prospects*, 38(4), 449-466. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11125-009-9093-2>
- 12 Tilak, J. B. G. (2020). Rapid growth of private universities in India. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 55(22), 42-50. <https://www.epw.in/journal/2020/22/special-articles/rapid-growth-private-universities.html>
- 13 Varghese, N. V. (2015). Challenges of massification of higher education in India. *CPRHE Research Papers*. National University of Educational Planning and Administration. <https://www.doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.1.3531.8160>
- 14 Varghese, N. V., & Malik, G. (Eds.). (2016). *India higher education report 2015: Higher education in India – Issues, concerns and new directions*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315671413>
- 15 World Bank. (2023). *World Development Indicators 2023*. The World Bank Group. <https://doi.org/10.1596/978-1-4648-1969-9>
- 16 Anant Athavale, R., Deshpande, A., & Sanap, S. (2021). Implementation of National Education Policy 2020: A review. *International Journal of Research in Engineering, Science and Management*, 4(9), 127-130.
- 17 Gandhi, M. (2022). Role of NEP 2020 in promoting adult literacy and lifelong learning. *Journal of Adult Education*, 10(3), 45-58.
- 18 Qamar, N. (2021). Financial burden and accessibility in Indian higher education: A critical analysis. *Higher Education Studies*, 11(2), 89-102. <https://doi.org/10.5539/hes.v11n2p89>