



Nepali Language Education in Indian Universities: Status and Challenges

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ABSTRACT

Nepali language education in Indian universities is an important part of India's multilingual and multicultural academic tradition. Although Nepali was included in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution of India in 1992, the growth of Nepali studies in higher education has remained uneven, and is concentrated in a few regions such as Sikkim, Darjeeling, Assam and parts of the north-east. This study examines the historical development, present status, challenges and future prospects of Nepali language education in Indian universities, and considers the role of universities in sustaining linguistic identity, advancing literary scholarship and safeguarding cultural heritage. The research follows a qualitative and descriptive methodology, drawing on primary and secondary sources that include university curricula, policy documents, scholarly articles and institutional records. It identifies persistent difficulties, including weak institutional support, faculty shortages, limited research opportunities and falling enrolment. At the same time, recent reforms, notably the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and the multilingual initiatives of the University Grants Commission (UGC), open new possibilities for the field. The study concludes that firm policy implementation, sustained academic investment and technological integration are essential if Nepali is to flourish in Indian higher education.

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1. INTRODUCTION

India is a land of many tongues, and its linguistic diversity forms an essential part of the nation's social and cultural identity. The languages listed in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution are more than media of communication; they carry the historical memory, literary traditions and cultural self-understanding of the communities that speak them. Nepali is one such language. Its inclusion in the Eighth Schedule in 1992 strengthened its academic, literary and cultural standing in India and opened fresh opportunities for its study in higher education.

The Nepali-speaking population of India is concentrated mainly in Sikkim, West Bengal (particularly Darjeeling), Assam, Uttarakhand and other north-eastern regions. Nepali has thus come to be understood not merely as the language of an ethnic group but as an integral strand of India's multilingual social fabric. Its development in higher education has been gradual, marked by the establishment of departments and courses in a number of institutions. Banaras Hindu University, the University of North Bengal, Sikkim University, Gauhati University and others have promoted research in Nepali literature, linguistics, folklore, translation studies and comparative literature.

Despite constitutional recognition and institutional effort, Nepali language education continues to face serious difficulties. Inadequate infrastructure, a shortage of qualified faculty, limited research opportunities, insufficient funding and scarce digital resources remain obstacles to progress. In several institutions, declining enrolment and the limited employment prospects associated with language studies have further weakened the subject.

In recent years, the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, with its emphasis on Indian languages, multilingual education and mother-tongue-based learning, has created new openings for Nepali. Against this background, the present study, *Nepali Language Education in Indian Universities: Status and Challenges*, examines the historical development, present condition, principal challenges and future prospects of the subject.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The study of Nepali language education in Indian universities sits at the meeting point of three bodies of scholarship: work on multilingualism and language policy in India, work on language maintenance and minority-language education, and work on the history, literature and identity of the Indian Nepali (Gorkha) community. This review takes each in turn and then identifies what remains unaddressed.



Multilingualism, language policy and education in India

Indian scholarship has long treated multilingualism as the normal condition of society rather than an exception. (Khubchandani, 1983) Khubchandani describes India as a land of plural languages and plural cultures, in which communication and identity are negotiated across several languages at once. (Annamalai, 2001) Annamalai examines how the Indian state has managed this diversity through constitutional provisions, including the Eighth Schedule, and shows that recognition and the actual resources given to a language do not always go together. (Mohanty, 2006-2019) Mohanty argues that in multilingual societies of this kind, minority and tribal languages are placed at a disadvantage in education, because dominant and economically powerful languages occupy most of the school and university space. (Agnihotri, 2007) Agnihotri by contrast, argues that multilinguality should be treated as a resource in teaching rather than a problem to be managed. Taken together, these works suggest that the position of a scheduled language such as Nepali in higher education cannot be understood from its constitutional status alone.

The National Education Policy 2020 is the most recent policy statement on this question. It gives importance to multilingualism, to the use of the mother tongue or home language in the early years, and to the promotion of Indian languages, including a chapter devoted to the promotion of Indian languages, arts and culture (Government of India, 2020). The policy also calls for strengthening language departments in higher education institutions. Its implications for individual scheduled languages, however, are not spelled out, and this is where a study of a particular language such as Nepali becomes necessary.

Language maintenance and minority-language education

(Fishman, 1991) Fishman argues in *Reversing Language Shift* that the survival of a minority language depends on intergenerational transmission, and that formal institutions such as schools and universities can support, but cannot replace, use of the language in the home and community. (Skutnabb-kangas, 2016) Skutnabb-Kangas approaches the same question from the standpoint of linguistic human rights and holds that education in and through a person's own language is central to the maintenance of minority language. (UNESCO, 2003)) similarly recommends that mother-tongue instruction be supported as a general principle of education in multilingual settings. (Spolsky, 2004) Spolsky adds that a language's position is shaped by three things together: what people actually do with the language, what they believe about it, and what formal management or policy is applied to it. Applied to Nepali, this framework helps explain why formal recognition in 1992 has not by itself guaranteed enrolment, faculty or resources in university departments.

***Nepal i in India: history, literature and identity***

The linguistic classification of Nepali as an Indo-Aryan language of the Pahari group goes back to (S, 1916) Grierson, whose Linguistic Survey of India remains a standard early reference. For the Indian context, Chalmers (2003) shows in his study of the period 1914 to 1940 that Nepali-language journals, books and associations formed a public sphere in India through which a modern Nepali identity was articulated, and that the Nepali language was central to this process. (Subba, 1992) Subba places the Nepali language within the wider politics of ethnicity and the Gorkhaland movement in Darjeeling and shows how language has been linked to claims of Indian citizenship and belonging. Literary histories such as (Pradhan, 1984) and (Hutt, 1991) provide the standard introductions to Nepali literature, and are useful background for the content of university syllabi.

Constitutional recognition came when Nepali was added to the Eighth Schedule through the Constitution (Government of India, 1992) Seventy-first Amendment Act, 1992 (Government of India, 1992), alongside Konkani and Manipuri. Census data on the number of speakers of Nepali in India are published by the Registrar General and Census (General and census commissioner, India, 2011) Commissioner (2011) and give the demographic base for any discussion of the language in education.

3. RESEARCH GAP

A considerable body of work exists on Nepali language, literature, multilingualism and cultural identity in India. Yet research on Nepali language education as an institutional and academic enterprise in universities remains sparse. Far less attention has been paid to the academic condition of Nepali departments: their curricula, enrolment trends, faculty availability, research productivity, infrastructure and institutional support.

Little is also known about how educational policies, in particular NEP 2020 and the initiatives of the University Grants Commission, affect Nepali studies. While recent reforms emphasise multilingualism and the development of regional languages, their practical implications for Nepali remain inadequately examined. A further gap lies in the digital and technological dimension. Compared with the major Indian languages, little research exists on digital academic resources and online teaching of Nepali.

Finally, most existing studies are region-specific and literary in orientation, and nationwide comparative research across Indian universities is largely unavailable. This study therefore offers an analysis of the historical development, present status, institutional challenges, policy framework and future prospects of



Nepali language education in Indian universities, and contributes to wider discussions on multilingualism and regional language education in Indian higher education.

4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study pursues the following objectives:

1. To examine the historical development of Nepali language education in Indian universities.
2. To analyse the present status of Nepali language and literature departments in Indian higher education institutions.
3. To examine the major problems and challenges faced in the teaching and learning of Nepali in Indian universities.

5. METHODOLOGY

The study adopts a qualitative and descriptive methodology to examine the status, development and challenges of Nepali language education in Indian universities. It focuses on the institutional growth of Nepali studies, curriculum development, educational policy and the academic position of Nepali within Indian higher education and multilingualism.

Data were gathered from both primary and secondary sources. Secondary sources include academic journals, scholarly books, research articles, dissertations, university reports, census records, policy documents and official publications on language education and higher education in India.

In addition to documentary analysis, limited primary data were collected through informal interviews and academic conversations with university teachers, research scholars, students and others associated with Nepali departments in selected universities. These exchanges offered valuable insight into teaching conditions, enrolment trends, curricular structure, research opportunities and the wider perception of Nepali studies in higher education.

The study is situated within a socio-educational and sociolinguistic framework that draws on theories of multilingualism, language maintenance, language policy and minority language education. The data were analysed through descriptive and comparative methods, examining institutional development, academic infrastructure, faculty availability, research productivity and policy implementation. The combination of documentary sources and limited field-based observation yields a systematic and contextually grounded picture of the present status and future prospects of Nepali language education in India.



6. ANALYSIS

6.1 Historical Development of Nepali Language Education

Early recognition: Allahabad, Calcutta and Banaras

The academic study of Nepali in India began before its formal introduction into university education in Nepal itself. The University of Allahabad took the first institutional step in **1911**, recognising Nepali as a vernacular language and offering it up to the Entrance Examination level. In **1918**, the University of Calcutta recognised Nepali at the Matriculation, Intermediate (I.A.) and Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) levels. The Uttar Pradesh Board retained Nepali as a secondary and higher secondary subject until **2008**, when it was reportedly discontinued because of declining enrolment.

A further milestone was the introduction of Nepali studies at Banaras Hindu University in **1943**. Since then BHU has been associated with the teaching of Nepali language and literature, has promoted the subject far from the principal Nepali-speaking regions, and has offered opportunities for advanced research.

Assam and the north-east

The history of Nepali education in Assam is of considerable importance. Manisingh Gurung, regarded as the first Nepali B.A. graduate from the north-east, worked during the pre-independence period to secure official recognition for Nepali teaching in schools and colleges. According to Parashmani Pradhan, he made sustained appeals to the British administration in Assam, and his efforts helped establish the institutional acceptance of Nepali in the region.

Cotton College, then affiliated with the University of Calcutta, was an early centre of college-level Nepali education in Assam. In **1920**, Panjural Gurung reportedly became the first person from Assam to take a B.A. with Nepali as the mother-tongue subject, and Bishnulal Upadhyaya became the second in **1944**. After Cotton College developed into Cotton University, a one-year Postgraduate Diploma in Nepali (two semesters, 32 credits) was introduced in **2022**, and twelve students enrolled in the first batch. The programme was later discontinued for want of sufficient enrolment.

The establishment of **Gauhati University** in **1948** marked another stage in the growth of Nepali education in the north-east. The university offered an M.A. in Nepali through distance education; although that programme has reportedly been discontinued, Nepali teaching continues in colleges affiliated to the university.



Two other Assam universities are relevant but call for caution. **Dibrugarh University** (established **1965**) and **Bodoland University** (established **2009**, Kokrajhar) operate in linguistically diverse regions with long-standing Nepali-speaking communities, and Nepali has been associated with language education there, including Modern Indian Language options. The precise dates and present status of any Nepali courses offered directly by these universities or their affiliated colleges, however, need to be confirmed from official syllabi, admission notices and institutional records.

Sampurnanand Sanskrit University, Varanasi (1965)

The history of Nepali language education at **Sampurnanand Sanskrit University**, Varanasi, is an important chapter in the institutional development of Nepali in India. According to available historical accounts, the teaching of Nepali began in **1965** under the Department of Modern Languages and Linguistics. The university's curriculum was divided into compulsory subjects, Elective Group 'A' and Elective Group 'B', and Nepali was placed in Elective Group 'B'.

When teaching began in 1965, Nepali was first introduced at the Purva Madhyama and Uttara Madhyama levels, and its study at the Shastri level followed in **1966**. Before Nepali became a formal subject, Nepali-speaking students at the university were engaged almost entirely in Sanskrit education, and opportunities to study their mother tongue formally were limited.

Historical accounts indicate that the number of Nepali-speaking students rose significantly within a year or two of the subject's introduction. The university's experience also shows that the growth of Nepali language education was not confined to modern-language institutions but extended into traditional centres of Sanskrit learning.

The introduction of Nepali at Sampurnanand Sanskrit University is thus an important example of the institutional expansion of Nepali language education; the year, levels and enrolment figures nevertheless require verification through official records.

Sikkim and the eastern Himalaya

Nepali education in Sikkim gained momentum after the state became part of India in **1975**. According to historical accounts, from **1977** government schools came under the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), and Nepali was introduced as a compulsory subject up to Class VIII. English remained the medium of instruction, but Nepali continued to be widely used informally for classroom communication and comprehension.



A major institutional development came with the establishment of **Sikkim University** in **2007**, which introduced Nepali at the postgraduate level and developed opportunities for doctoral research. More recent additions to the region's higher-education landscape include Kanchenjunga State University, which lists an M.A. in Nepali in its **2024 prospectus** under the School of Languages and Literature, and Darjeeling Hills University, which grew out of a state-university initiative begun in **2018** and lists a two-year M.A. in Nepali in its **2026 admissions information**. These institutions mark the expansion of postgraduate Nepali education in the eastern Himalaya.

Summary

The historical development of Nepali language education in Indian universities is thus a long process of linguistic recognition, institutional expansion and cultural preservation. From the early recognition at Allahabad in 1911 and Calcutta in 1918 to the postgraduate and doctoral programmes of Banaras Hindu University, the University of North Bengal and Sikkim University, Nepali has gradually secured a significant place in Indian higher education, and the work of universities and colleges in Assam and the eastern Himalaya shows the geographical breadth of that growth.

6.2 Present Status of Nepali Departments

Today, Nepali language education holds an established place in India's higher-education system. Five universities offer the study of Nepali language and literature: Banaras Hindu University (BHU), the University of North Bengal (NBU), Sikkim University, Kanchenjunga State University and Darjeeling Hills University. Of these, BHU, NBU and Sikkim University provide opportunities up to the doctoral level, supporting advanced research, whereas Kanchenjunga State University and Darjeeling Hills University currently offer postgraduate education. Table 1 summarises the five institutions, and the sections that follow discuss each in turn.

Table 1. Universities offering Nepali language and literature

University	Established	Nepali teaching	Levels of study
Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi	1916	Department from 1943	Undergraduate, postgraduate, diploma, Ph.D.
University of North Bengal, Siliguri	1962	Department from 1977; M.A. from 1978	M.A.; Ph.D. (1980); M.Phil. (1997)



University	Established	Nepali teaching	Levels of study
Sikkim University, Gangtok	2007	2011	M.A. and Ph.D.
Kanchenjunga State University, Sikkim	Classes from 2018	Listed in 2024 prospectus	M.A. (intake of 40)
Darjeeling Hills University, Mungpoo	Initiative from 2018	Listed in 2026 admissions	Two-year M.A.

Banaras Hindu University (BHU), Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh

Banaras Hindu University was founded in **1916**, and its Department of Nepali is reported to have been established in **1943**. Nepali was at first taught as a foreign language; after its inclusion in the Constitution as a scheduled language in **1992**, it came to be recognised more firmly as an Indian language within the academic system. Today Nepali is taught under the Department of Indian Languages, with provision at undergraduate, postgraduate, diploma and doctoral levels.

According to the information gathered for this study, the department has two faculty members: **Prof. Diwakar Pradhan**, Head of the Department, and **Dr. Amita Thapa**, Assistant Professor. The university supports research in Nepali linguistics, literary history and literary criticism, and its location in Varanasi enables students from many linguistic and cultural backgrounds to pursue Nepali at an advanced level.

University of North Bengal (NBU), Siliguri, West Bengal

The University of North Bengal was established on **1 November 1962**. Its Department of Nepali was founded in **1977**, and postgraduate teaching began on **16 January 1978**, making NBU the first of the five universities to introduce formal postgraduate teaching in Nepali. Doctoral research followed in **1980**, and an M.Phil. programme was introduced in **1997** (its current status should be checked against the university's latest regulations). According to the information supplied, Nepali is taught in **83 colleges affiliated to the university**, which has extended access to the subject across the region.

The present faculty comprise **Prof. Sanjay Rai** (Head of the Department), **Dr. Pushkar Parajuli**, **Dr. Tshering Lepcha** and **Dr. Krishnamaya Manger** (Assistant Professors). The department contributes to postgraduate teaching, doctoral research and the study of Nepali literature, linguistics and literary criticism.

***Sikkim University, Sikkim***

Sikkim University was established in **2007**, and Nepali teaching began in **2011** with two temporary Assistant Professors and eight students. Permanent appointments in **2012** strengthened the department; the faculty history supplied for this study includes Prof. Pratap Chandra Pradhan, Dr. Kabita Lama, Dr. Pushpa Sharma, Dr. Samar Sinha, Dr. Dev Chandra Subba and Prof. Balaram Pandey, with Dr. Aruna Rai joining in **2017** to bring the team to seven. Prof. Pradhan retired in **2018** and Prof. Sharma in **2023**.

The department is currently headed by **Prof. Kabita Lama**, with **Dr. Samar Sinha, Dr. Dev Chandra Subba, Dr. Balaram Pandey** and **Dr. Aruna Rai** as faculty, supported by two guest faculty members, **Dr. Suman Bantawa** and **Dr. Suraj Gurung**. The university offers postgraduate and doctoral education in Nepali (M.Phil. teaching is mentioned in the historical information, but its current availability requires confirmation), and Nepali is also taught in **eight associated colleges**.

Kanchenjunga State University, Sikkim

Kanchenjunga State University began academic classes in **2018**, and postgraduate teaching in Nepali was initiated by **Tek Bahadur Chettri**. Its **2024 prospectus** lists an M.A. in Nepali under the School of Languages and Literature, with an indicated intake of **40 students**. At its fourth convocation on **14 March 2026**, postgraduate degrees in Nepali and other languages were reported to have been awarded, which attests to continuing postgraduate activity. The programme extends Nepali education in Sikkim by offering advanced study of the language and its literary traditions; its future will depend on qualified faculty, updated curricula, library resources and research opportunities. The available information confirms postgraduate provision only, and a doctoral programme should not be claimed without separate official confirmation.

Darjeeling Hills University (DHU), Mungpoo, West Bengal

Darjeeling Hills University is a comparatively recent institution. It originated in the Greenfield University initiative of **2018**, the relevant legislation was subsequently amended, and the institution now bears its present name. Its **2026 admissions information** lists a two-year M.A. in Nepali whose syllabus covers Nepali linguistics, poetry, literary history, short stories, novels, essays, literary theory, comparative Indian literature and translation. The programme is significant for the Darjeeling region, with its long tradition of Nepali-language literature and cultural life, because it offers advanced study of the language, its literary history and its relations with other Indian literatures.



As a young university, DHU will need to develop its academic infrastructure, including specialist faculty, library collections, research resources and scholarly collaboration. The available information confirms postgraduate education in Nepali; doctoral teaching should not be claimed without official confirmation.

Overall assessment

The five universities stand at different stages of institutional development. NBU has the longest-established dedicated department, with postgraduate teaching from **1978** and doctoral research from **1980**. BHU and Sikkim University offer important opportunities for advanced and doctoral study, while Kanchenjunga State University and Darjeeling Hills University mark the recent expansion of postgraduate Nepali education.

The mere availability of programmes, however, does not measure the strength of a department. Faculty strength, enrolment, research output, funding, library facilities and the continuity of programmes are equally important indicators, and reliable data on them would give a firmer basis for evaluating the present academic position.

6.3 Problems and Challenges

Nepali language education in India has a long tradition and has helped preserve the linguistic and cultural identity of the Indian Nepali-speaking community. Yet, despite the achievements of universities such as BHU, NBU, Sikkim University and Gauhati University in teaching, research and publication, the field faces a series of academic, institutional and socio-economic challenges.

Declining enrolment. In many universities, students increasingly choose English, Hindi or professional and employment-oriented subjects in the hope of better careers. Enrolment in Nepali departments has fallen in several institutions, and some programmes have been discontinued for want of students, which casts doubt on the long-term sustainability of the subject.

Shortage of faculty. Many departments are understaffed, and vacancies often remain unfilled for long periods. Retired professors are not promptly replaced, which harms classroom teaching, research supervision and departmental life, and some programmes are run largely by temporary or part-time teachers, which limits the quality and continuity of instruction.

Weak infrastructure and library resources. Departments frequently lack up-to-date library resources, digital archives, research journals, language laboratories and technological facilities, and they receive



limited financial support compared with larger language departments. Students and researchers struggle to obtain sufficient Nepali books, reference works, journals and research publications; many universities have no separate departmental library for Nepali, and existing collections are often small and dated.

Limited research opportunities and funding. Although some universities offer M.Phil. and Ph.D. programmes in Nepali, fellowships, research funding and publication outlets are scarce. This restrains advanced work in linguistics, translation studies, folklore, sociolinguistics and comparative literature.

Globalisation and the dominance of English. English is widely associated with employment, modernity and social mobility, and many students and parents therefore prefer English-medium education to regional and minority languages. The rising influence of Hindi and other dominant regional languages has likewise narrowed the academic space for Nepali in some regions.

Curricular limitations. In some universities Nepali syllabi are not revised regularly to meet contemporary needs. Traditional literary approaches dominate, while digital humanities, computational linguistics, translation technology, media studies and cultural studies receive little attention.

Limited policy support and regional imbalance. Although Nepali is a scheduled language, the implementation of policies for minority and regional languages is often inadequate, and financial assistance and institutional expansion for Nepali departments lag behind those for mainstream languages. Well-established departments are concentrated in Darjeeling, Sikkim and parts of Assam; elsewhere in India, opportunities to study Nepali at the higher level are limited.

Even so, Nepali departments continue to play a crucial role in sustaining the language and identity of the Indian Nepali community through seminars, literary activities, publications, cultural programmes and academic collaboration.

7. FINDINGS

The study finds that Nepali language education in India has a rich historical tradition and has played a significant part in preserving the linguistic and cultural identity of the Indian Nepali-speaking community. Historical evidence indicates that formal Nepali teaching began earlier in Indian universities than in Nepal, and that the University of Allahabad, the University of Calcutta and Banaras Hindu University contributed greatly to its early institutional development. Nepali was also introduced at Sampurnanand Sanskrit University, Varanasi, in 1965 (Shastri level from 1966), showing that its growth extended to traditional



Sanskrit institutions. Over time, Nepali studies spread to Darjeeling, Sikkim, Assam and other north-eastern states.

Nepali language and literature are presently taught in several Indian universities and affiliated colleges at undergraduate, postgraduate, diploma and research levels. The University of North Bengal, Sikkim University, Gauhati University, Dibrugarh University and Assam University have each contributed to Nepali literature, linguistics, folklore, translation studies and cultural research, as well as to the promotion of the language through teaching, seminars and publications.

The study also reveals serious challenges:

- declining enrolment, driven by a growing preference for English and employment-oriented subjects;
- shortages of qualified faculty, inadequate research funding and limited technological facilities;
- weak academic infrastructure, with many departments lacking separate libraries and sufficient Nepali books, journals, manuscripts, dictionaries and research materials;
- the influence of globalisation, modernisation and the dominance of English; and
- outdated curricula, scarce digital resources and weak policy implementation.

Despite these difficulties, Nepali departments continue to safeguard the linguistic and cultural heritage of the Indian Nepali-speaking community through academic activity, literary programmes, research and cultural initiatives.

8. CONCLUSION

Nepali language education in Indian universities has a long history and occupies an important place in the academic, linguistic and cultural landscape of India. From the early introduction of Nepali at Allahabad, Calcutta, Banaras Hindu University and Sampurnanand Sanskrit University to the establishment of specialised departments at the University of North Bengal, Sikkim University and Gauhati University, the subject has undergone significant historical and institutional development. These universities have been crucial in preserving and promoting the Nepali language, literature, folklore, linguistics and cultural identity of the Indian Nepali-speaking community.

The study also identifies major problems. Declining enrolment, a shortage of qualified faculty, inadequate research funding, weak technological and digital facilities and insufficient institutional support



remain pressing concerns. Institutional growth, moreover, remains uneven: some universities have well-established departments with advanced research provision, while others offer only limited or optional courses, and outdated curricula without modern interdisciplinary approaches have reduced the professional relevance of Nepali studies.

Even so, Nepali departments continue to play a vital role in safeguarding the linguistic and cultural heritage of the Indian Nepali community. There is, therefore, an urgent need for stronger governmental and institutional support. Updating curricula, improving library and digital resources, strengthening research facilities, recruiting qualified faculty, increasing financial assistance and introducing employment-oriented and interdisciplinary programmes are all essential. With sound academic planning and policy support, Nepali language education can continue to flourish and contribute meaningfully to India's multilingual and multicultural educational framework.

9. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The principal limitation of this study is the scarcity of reliable and authentic sources on Nepali language education in Indian universities, which prevented the research from being as extensive as intended. The lack of updated institutional records and research materials also made it difficult to collect comprehensive data. Certain historical dates, programme details and institutional histories, including the legislative and naming history of some universities in Sikkim and West Bengal, could not be verified against original official records and should be confirmed in future research.

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