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ISSN: 2319-9970 JAN-DEC'2024

## CONTENTS


1. **From Look East to Act East: Evaluating Policy Transformation and Developmental Impacts in Northeast India and its Southeast Asian Engagement**
*Phikuto Chishi, Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Unity College, Dimapur.* 1-22

2. **Indigenous Community Fishing among the Lotha Nagas: Reflections on Cultural Heritage and Community feelings**
*Adani Ngullie, Assistant Professor, Department of History, Unity College, Dimapur.* 23-31

3. **Implication of Morung in the field of Education in the Present Scenario with Special Reference To Sangtam Morung**
*Yanglikumla Sangtam, Assistant Professor, Department of Education, Sao Chang College, Tuensang.* 32-40

4. **Exploring Undergraduate Students' Perception and Inclination Towards Entrepreneurship as a Career Choice**
*Rongsennungla Jamir, Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, Unity College Dimapur,*
*N Lochumi Lotha, Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, Unity College Dimapur &*
*Vizosanuo Belho, Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, Unity College Dimapur.* 41-51

5. **Performance of Agriculture Credit in Kohima District, Nagaland**
*Emilo Kikon, Research Scholar, Department of Commerce, Nagaland University,*
*Amrendra Kumar, Associate Professor, Department of Commerce, Guru Ghasidas Vishvidyalaya, Bilaspur,*

*Chhattisgarh,* &
*Perumalraja R, Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce,Nagaland University.* 52-69

**6. Outcome Based Education Towards the Impact of Student Learning**
*Kotra Balayogi, Assistant Professor, Unity College of Teacher Education, Dimapur.* 70-82

**7. Guidelines for Authors** 83-85

# FROM LOOK EAST TO ACT EAST: EVALUATING POLICY TRANSFORMATION AND DEVELOPMENTAL IMPACTS IN NORTHEAST INDIA AND ITS SOUTHEAST ASIAN ENGAGEMENT

*Phikuto Chishi*

**Abstract**

India's "Look East Policy" (LEP), later rebranded as the "Act East Policy" (AEP), aimed to connect India's northeastern states with ASEAN. This strategic region, sharing borders with five Asian nations, was envisioned as a gateway to Southeast Asia, fostering cultural, commercial, and connectivity ties. Despite this ambition and significant infrastructure projects like the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway and Kaladan Multimodal Project, the policy's substantial impact remains debated. This article interrogates the AEP's effectiveness, questioning whether its primary objective serves the socio-economic development of Northeast India or broader geopolitical goals. Despite heightened policy attention, the meaningful integration of the Northeast into the AEP is disputed. Persistent delays in key infrastructure projects raise concerns about operational effectiveness. While trade between India and ASEAN has grown substantially, the Northeast's contribution remains negligible, reflecting a significant disconnect. The limited success of Border Haats and the recent decision to fence the India-Myanmar border, suspending the Free Movement Regime, further undermines the AEP's stated goals of fostering regional integration and people-to-people linkages. The article argues that the Northeast has not fully capitalized on the AEP's opportunities due to limited economic capacities and infrastructure. It emphasises the need for a localised, bottom-up approach to development, moving beyond viewing the region solely as a transit corridor. Legitimate engagement with all stakeholders of the region, with targeted investment in essential services and knowledge hubs, is crucial for the Northeast to truly become a thriving participant in India's engagement with

Southeast Asia.

***Keywords***: India's Foreign Policy, Look East Policy, Act East Policy, ASEAN, North-East India, Development.

**Introduction**

One of the central focuses of the AEP has been to connect India's landlocked northeastern states with ASEAN economies. India's northeastern region, comprising the eight states—Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura and Sikkim— is geographically positioned between the Himalayas to the north and the Bay of Bengal to the south. This region shares borders with five Asian countries—Nepal, Bhutan, China, Myanmar, and Bangladesh—and is seen as a strategic gateway to Southeast Asia. The AEP is perceived as a strategic interface linking Northeast India with the ASEAN region, building upon three foundational pillars: culture, commerce, and connectivity. The region's geographic location and historical and cultural connections to its neighbours across the border, especially China and Southeast Asian nations, can be used as a "soft power resource" to encourage travel and business interactions to spur regional growth and development (Haokip, 2015). In alignment with this vision, bilateral and regional initiatives have been undertaken since the policy's early conceptualisation in the 1990s to strengthen regional engagement through trade facilitation, cultural exchange, people-to-people interactions, and physical infrastructure development, including transportation networks, telecommunications, and energy systems.

The northeastern perspective seems to have gained greater recognition in 2007 during a meeting between then-Foreign Minister Pranab Mukherjee and the Chief Ministers of the northeastern states, initiated by the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DONER) (Majumdar, 2020) which led to the formulation of the Northeast Vision Document 2020 in 2008, under the leadership of the North East Council and DONER, with an aim "to return the North Eastern Region to the

position of national economic eminence it held till a few decades ago; to so fashion the development process that growth springs from and spreads out to the grassroots; and to ensure that the region plays the arrow-head role it must play in the vanguard of the country's Look/Act East Policy" (NE Vision Document 2020). Key ongoing and proposed infrastructure projects, including the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway, Trans-Asian Highway, India-Myanmar rail linkages, Kaladan Multimodal Project, Stilwell Road, Myanmar-India-Bangladesh gas and oil pipeline, and the Tamanthi Hydroelectric Project, are expected to drive development in India's northeastern states by enhancing connectivity with Southeast Asia.

However, the efficacy of India's Act East Policy (AEP) in translating diplomatic overtures into tangible outcomes remains a subject of considerable academic scrutiny. This paper interrogates the AEP's performance by examining its substantive impact on the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). A fundamental tension explored in this paper is whether the policy's primary objective is the socio-economic development of India's northeastern region or the pursuit of wider geopolitical objectives within the Indo-Pacific. Although the Northeast has received heightened policy attention, its meaningful integration into the AEP's strategic calculus is disputed. Persistent implementation challenges affecting key infrastructure initiatives, such as the Kaladan Multimodal Project and the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway, raise significant concerns regarding the policy's operational effectiveness and overall credibility. Thus, an analysis is important to ascertain whether the AEP's cultural diplomacy has substantially deepened the engagement between Northeast India and Southeast Asia. A crucial question is whether the inclusion of the Northeast within the AEP framework fosters inclusive development or risks relegating the region to the status of a mere strategic transit corridor. With this viewpoint, the paper analyses the AEP's developmental impact on Northeast India and its Southeast Asia engagement, particularly focusing on the AEP's two foundational pillars: connectivity and trade.

**Look/Act East Policy: A brief Historical Overview**

India's engagement with Southeast Asian countries is neither a new development nor a policy shift but rather the continuation of a relationship that has evolved over more than two millennia – "it is the inevitable, and perennial, blossoming of seeds planted long ago" (Blank, 2015). During the 1950s and 1960s, India actively championed Asian regionalism. As Asia's second-largest nation, India even proposed in 1967 the creation of an Asian Council—a comprehensive economic organisation of Asian countries—to prevent any single nation or coalition from dominating the region. Jawaharlal Nehru recognises Southeast Asia's strategic importance as a key opportunity to establish closer political ties. Nevertheless, India's choice to remain in the Commonwealth after gaining political independence indicated that its development was largely envisioned in partnership with Western nations. In addition, the geopolitical constraints of the Cold War era hindered New Delhi from expanding its outreach beyond the Indian subcontinent to establish comprehensive relations with ASEAN (Bhattacharjee, 2016). With the end of the Cold War in the early 1990s, a growing global shift toward regionalism coincided with an increase in China's influence in Southeast Asia. India again recognises ASEAN's strategic political, economic, and diplomatic importance, and eventually launched the "Look East" policy to engage proactively in the region's evolving dynamics. The collapse of the Soviet Union and India's economic and foreign policy reforms played a pivotal role in shaping the Look East Policy (LEP), which prioritises economic, cultural, and strategic engagement, particularly with ASEAN nations (Panda, 2017). The LEP thus emerged as a logical response to internal and external dynamics, to facilitate economic growth and deeper regional integration (Majumdar, 2020). This initiative has redefined East Asian regionalism, introduced the "India factor" into future Sino-ASEAN relations, and influenced China's evolving perceptions of India's rise and its strategic role in Southeast Asia (Hong, 2007).

During his opening statement at the 12th ASEAN

Summit in 2014 in Nay Pyi Taw, Prime Minister Modi introduced the Act East Policy (AEP), declaring, "A new era of economic development, industrialisation, and trade has begun in India. Externally, India's 'Look East Policy' has become Act East Policy (AEP)" (Majumdar, 2020). The Act East Policy (AEP) claims to prioritise a more action-oriented approach toward ASEAN and the broader East Asian region. While not a complete shift in foreign policy, AEP builds upon and deepens the Look East Policy (LEP) introduced in 1991. Its core objectives include enhancing economic cooperation, fostering cultural ties, and strengthening strategic partnerships across the Asia-Pacific through sustained regional, bilateral, and multilateral engagement. From 2014 to 2024, Prime Minister Modi has made 39 foreign visits to East, South, and Southeast Asian countries, in line with India's vision of AEP. There have been other high-level diplomatic visits to the 'East', subsequently followed by the appropriate diplomatic channels. For instance, India hosted all ten ASEAN heads of state during India's Republic Day celebration in 2018. Prime Minister Modi's announcement of a 10-point plan during the 21st ASEAN-India Summit in Laos on 10th October 2024, his 11th participation in the Summit, also marking a decade of India's Act East policy (MEA, 2024), shows India's continued interest in strengthening ties with ASEAN. AEP seems to have fueled speed and priority in engaging with Southeast Asian countries (Palit, 2016).

**Connectivity, AEP and Northeast India: Rhetoric vs Reality**

One of the key emphases of the Act East policy has been geared towards enhancing the region's connectivity with its neighbouring countries. Initiatives to create an integrated economic corridor linking India's Northeast with Southeast Asia have been initiated through various infrastructural projects. One such major project is the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transport Project, which was initiated in April 2008 through an agreement between India and Myanmar. The project is a key component of the Act East Policy, offering an alternative to the heavily reliant Siliguri

Corridor. With its budget increasing from ₹507 crore to ₹2,904.04 crore, the project connects Sittwe Port in Myanmar to the India-Myanmar border, facilitating cargo transport from India's eastern ports. This initiative is expected to boost economic growth in the Northeast while providing a crucial strategic link between India and Myanmar (Press Information Bureau, GoI). The construction is completed on the Indian side (Mukul, 2025). However, the project has been slow, missing multiple deadlines due to the security situation in Myanmar (MEA, 2023). On the prospect of the project becoming a reality, a senior opposition leader from Myanmar commented that "there is no way that any connectivity project can take place in Rakhine State right now as the Arakan Army has established control in almost all the major towns and supply routes. As a result, the Kaladan project too has almost died as Paletwa is essential for this project and Paletwa is no longer in control of the military junta," (The Hindu, Feb 8, 2024). Another major project is the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway, which was envisioned in 2002. The construction began only in 2012 and was initially scheduled for completion in 2015. This project aims to connect the Northeast region with Thailand through a 1,360 km highway. This highway would connect Moreh to Maesot in Thailand via Bagan in Myanmar. As of 2023, 70% of the construction is reportedly completed (The Hindu, 2nd July 2023). Speaking at the 7th Indian Ocean Conference 2024, India's External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaishankar, pressed on the importance of land-based connectivity across the Indian Ocean region to complement maritime trade routes, highlighting the importance of the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway (Padmanabhan, 2024). The India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway is poised to be a "game changer" (Prashar, 2025) in regional connectivity. Though 2020 was set as a new timeline for completion, the project remains incomplete. The internal political conflicts within Myanmar currently hinder the project's progress. Several critical challenges continue to impede the full realisation of the ambitious and potentially transformative infrastructure development initiatives underway in India's Northeast region. A

concerning situation persists across all hierarchical levels of the road network, encompassing National Highways, State Highways, District Roads, and, most critically, rural roads. As of 2024, the Northeast region is traversed by 103 National Highways, constituting 15% of India's total National Highway count. These highways collectively span 16,207 kilometres, accounting for 11% of the nation's total National Highway length. On State Highways, the region accounts for approximately 11% of India's aggregate State Highway network, with a surfacing rate of 99.42%. However, the reliability of the surfacing percentage data needs further rigorous empirical validation.

A particularly salient issue demanding critical analysis is the state of rural road connectivity within the Northeast. As shown in Figure 1, the region has approximately 569,628 kilometres of rural roads, which constitute about 13% of India's total rural road network. Of this extensive network, only 185,410 kilometres are reported as surfaced, representing merely 33% of the rural roads within the region and a modest 7% of India's overall surfaced rural road network. This significantly low proportion of surfaced rural roads in the Northeast region entails a substantial infrastructural deficit, posing considerable impediments to economic development, access to essential services, and social integration for rural communities. The precarious condition of a substantial portion of the rural road network, unsurfaced or poorly maintained segments, exacerbates the issues of accessibility, transport efficiency, and resilience to adverse climatic events. There is a need for targeted policy interventions and increased investment to enhance all-weather connectivity and sustainable development in the region.

**Figure 1: Distribution of Rural Roads in Northeast India as of 31st March 2020**

| State | Total Rural Road | Surfaced Road | % of surfaced roads |
|---|---|---|---|
| Arunachal Pradesh | 22,891 | 12,712 | 55.53 |
| Assam | 4,03,027 | 93,606 | 23.23 |
| Manipur | 25,664 | 13,409 | 52.25 |
| Meghalaya | 36,370 | 14,455 | 39.75 |
| Mizoram | 14,414 | 7,233 | 50.18 |
| Nagaland | 28,266 | 12,148 | 42.98 |
| Sikkim | 8,550 | 6,871 | 80.36 |
| Tripura | 30,446 | 24,976 | 82.03 |
| Total | 5,69,628 | 1,85,410 | 33 |
| India | 44,95,948 | 26,16,982 | 58 |

Source: Basic Road Statistics in India 2019-2020, Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, Transport Research Wings, GoI.

The focus of the Government of India seems to be investing only in the transnational highways connecting with South-East Asia, and not on the feeder roads. Sukanya Sharma (Sharma, 2005) argues that 'the idea of building a road link and extending trading activities to Southeast Asia through the northeast of India in the 19th century appears similar to the present initiatives of the government of India under its Look East policy.' The transnational highways are a welcome initiative and have immense potential to upscale regional economic trade and commerce. However, what is disturbing is the inadequate rural connectivity in the northeast region (Srikanth, 2016). Without adequate rural connectivity, the benefit of these ambitious projects will only go to the corporates, leaving the northeast region's rural areas to remain perpetually underdeveloped. Another concern is that the growth of large infrastructure, such as road connectivity, not only opens for more militarisation of the region but also clears a way for the corporate elite to put their hands on the rich resources of the northeast

region.

**AEP, Trade and North East: Substantive or Inconsequential?**

Northeast India's (NEI) strategic geographical position is paramount to its integration into India's Act East Policy. The region shares an extensive international land border of approximately 5,182 km, constituting about 98% of its total geographical perimeter. Specifically, NEI borders the Tibet Autonomous Region of China (1,395 km) to the north, Myanmar (1,643 km) to the east, Bangladesh (1,596 km) to the southwest, Nepal (97 km) to the west, and Bhutan (455 km) to the northwest (Ghosh, 2024). Historically, NEI has faced significant economic underdevelopment, largely attributable to inadequate connectivity. Its sole terrestrial link to mainland India is through the narrow Siliguri Corridor, often referred to as the "Chicken's Neck." The geopolitical realignments following the 1947 Partition of India and the 1971 formation of Bangladesh exacerbated this isolation, effectively landlocking the region and impeding its economic advancement for several decades. Consequently, the integration of NEI with East Asian, South Asian, and Southeast Asian economies through the Act East Policy is posited as a critical pathway to unlock substantial opportunities for trade and investment, thereby fostering the region's economic development (Gosh, 2024).

As of 2022-2023, India's exports to ASEAN as a percentage of total exports and imports are 9.76% and 12.27%, respectively, and the share of overall trade with ASEAN in India's global trade is 11.29% in 2022-23. Total trade between India and ASEAN has increased significantly, from $71.58 billion in 2016-17 to $131.57 billion in 2022-23. While the trade relationship saw a minor fall in 2019-20 and 2020-21, which was most likely due to the worldwide economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, it has since recovered well. A major part of the trade dynamic with ASEAN has been India's continued negative and growing trade deficit. This deficit has grown considerably, from -$9.66 billion in 2016-17 to $43.57 billion in 2022-23. This pattern highlights a situation in which India's imports from ASEAN are expanding much faster

than its exports to the region. Over the past seven years, India's imports from ASEAN have more than doubled, rising from $40.62 billion in 2016-2017 to $87.57 billion in 2022-2023. In comparison, while India's exports to ASEAN have increased from $30.96 billion to $44 billion, the growth rate has been inconsistent. 2019-20 had a major contraction of -15.82%, followed by a robust 34.43% recovery in 2021-22. The sharp growth in India's trade deficit with ASEAN is a significant concern, primarily driven by a surge in imports that substantially outpace the growth of exports. These dynamics imply that India is becoming more reliant on goods from ASEAN countries. Despite the widening deficit, ASEAN remains a crucial trading bloc for India, accounting for over 10% of India's total trade (MCI, 2025).

However, the contribution of NEI states has shown a negligible trend. The maximum benefits of LEP in trade, investment and technology transfer accrued to states in the southern part of India through the maritime route. The picture becomes clear if we examine the trade figures of NEI to Myanmar, Bangladesh. India's trade with Myanmar increased manifold, but the export and import share of NEI as of 2013-2014 is 2.25% and 2.22% respectively. Similarly, the export and import share of NEI to Bangladesh as of 2008-2009 was 2.56%, which is a sharp decline from 3.09% in 2000-2001. LEP has failed to augment exports from NEI even to its neighbouring countries, such as Myanmar and Bangladesh. Furthermore, while the contribution of India's northeast neighbours, such as Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam, has grown significantly, NEI trade figures have remained low. NEI's percentage of total trade has been hovering between 1% and 2% (Gosh, 2024). As shown in Figure 1, the decline in the North East region's share of India's GDP from 1990-91 to 2023-24 indicates that AEP's extensive trade policies with neighbouring countries and ASEAN have not translated into economic gains for the North East.

**Figure 2: North East States Share in National GDP**

| State | 1990-91 | 2000-01 | 2010-11 | 2020-21 | 2023-24 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Assam | 2.4 | 1.9 | 1.6 | 1.7 | 1.9 |
| Arunachal Pradesh | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.2 | 0.1 |
| Manipur | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.1 |
| Meghalaya | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.2 |
| Mizoram | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.1 |
| Nagaland | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.1 | 0.1 |
| Sikkim | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.2 | 0.2 |
| Tripura | 0.2 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.3 |
| Total | 3.5 | 3.1 | 2.7 | 2.9 | 3 |

Source: *Economic Performance of Indian States: 1960-61 to 2023-24*. Economic Advisory Council to the PM.

One of the projects initiated through the LEP/AEP concerning trade and commerce that directly could benefit the North East States is the Border Haats project, established along India's borders with Bangladesh and Myanmar, which aims to facilitate small-scale, duty-free trade, boost local economies, enhance livelihoods, and strengthen cross-border ties while curbing informal trade. By improving trade and people-to-people interactions, Border Haats aims to serve a vital component of AEP, contributing to regional economic integration and diplomatic engagement with Myanmar and Bangladesh. Residents within a 5 km radius of the border haats are authorised to sell locally produced goods in these duty-free markets. Each week, approximately 500 individuals from both sides of the border may participate, with purchases limited to US$200 per person per haat day. These haats have the potential to significantly contribute to creating livelihood opportunities and bolstering local economies. Presently, India and Bangladesh share four border haats. Two border haats are located in Meghalaya, and the other two are in Tripura. Six upcoming haats are in the pipeline, four in Meghalaya and two in Tripura. Vegetables, fruits, spices, bamboo products,

handicrafts and handloom items, small household agricultural implements, processed foods, cosmetics, garments, etc. are the usual commodities traded in these border haats. According to the World Bank, the estimated total trade of each border haats is around Rs. 4 crore per year and has the potential to increase the total trade (Pan, 2023).

Following the success of the 'border Haats' with Bangladesh, during the 4th India-Myanmar Joint Trade Committee (JTC) meeting on 27th September 2011, India and Myanmar agreed to open Border Haats at a mutually agreed location, to be established on a pilot basis at selected habitat areas for the benefit of local population on either side of the border. These border haats were to be established across the India-Myanmar border, with an initial haat at Pangsau Pass in Arunachal Pradesh corresponding to Pangsu, in the Sagaing Region of Myanmar, as a pilot project (MoU, 2012).

As of 2024, only one border haat operates along the India-Myanmar border, despite persistent advocacy from the state governments of Mizoram, Manipur, and Nagaland for additional operational sites (Bhaumik, 2020). This limited progress suggests that the 2012 Memorandum of Understanding has yielded minimal tangible outcomes, possibly due to Indian governmental oversight or prevailing geopolitical complexities between the two nations. Given that Northeast India shares approximately 1643 km of its border with Myanmar, there is significant untapped potential for India's North East region to act as a key facilitator of bilateral trade. Border haats, despite their modest size, have the potential to considerably benefit local residents in the Northeast while also helping India's broader diplomatic aims with Myanmar and ASEAN, particularly in terms of limiting China's regional influence.

However, challenges persist. The Indian Union's decision in 2024 to fence the 1,643-kilometre-long India-Myanmar border and build a patrol track along it to improve monitoring, as well as the suspension of the Free Movement Regime (FMR), has major policy implications for the two countries. These ramifications

have direct consequences on the Northeast region and would do serious damage to India's ambitious AEP, which aims to strengthen economic, physical, and people-to-people linkages with Southeast Asia. For instance, formal trade between India and Myanmar has been very dismal, accounting for less than one per cent. Over the years, the Government of India has taken some steps to improve the trade outcome by building Land Customs Station (LCS) in Mizoram, Integrated Check Post (ICP) in Moreh, Manipur, and Border Haat in Arunachal Pradesh. These moves have barely made any difference, and fencing the border wo uld only aggravate the situation (Choudhury, 2024). Fencing would also significantly disrupt crucial informal trade channels utilised by local communities and small traders. Furthermore, it will hamper work on critical regional connectivity projects such as the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway, undermining the AEP's fundamental objective of presenting Northeast India as a gateway to Southeast Asia. This step would also clearly contravene the Indian government's declared commitment to promoting cross-border cooperation. Implementing border fencing would signal protectionism to Myanmar and other ASEAN countries, especially considering India's choice not to join the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) (Choudhury, 2024).

From the northeastern perspective, the functioning of these trade centres is yet to live up to their full potential. India's trade with countries bordering the Northeast has witnessed growth over the years. However, this impressive expansion of trade with India's eastern neighbours has had little or no impact on the economy of the Northeast. As Sushil Khanna observed, "India is looking east, but not through its contagious Northeastern borders" (Sundaram, 2013). Given that 96% of the northeast India region's border forms India's international boundary, it is critical to look at the trade with new vigour in a way that the northeastern region is involved in the trade transaction. The northeast region must be equipped with international gateways with state-of-the-art infrastructures, to operate alongside border

haats" (Taneja et al, 2021). The Northeastern region needs to develop industrially. Significant investment in infrastructure, transport, and communication is essential but largely lacking. While the North East Industrial and Investment Promotion Policy 2007 and the Northeast Industrial Development Scheme 2017 designated the region as a special economic zone, its impact has been limited to state industry departments. Focused efforts based on micro-level studies and targeted projects are needed for the region to actively participate in this policy. Though macro studies have been conducted, real implementation in sectors like agriculture, horticulture, and industry remains lacking. Critics, like Sushil Khanna, argue that the Look East policy has prioritised counterinsurgency over economic integration, with concessions and aid aimed at pressuring neighbouring countries to expel insurgents. So far, the Northeastern states have played a minimal role in the policy, unlike China's Yunnan province, which actively engages in regional cooperation. The Northeast also has limited involvement in initiatives like the Mekong-Ganga Cooperation, BCIM Forum, and BIMSTEC. A newly approved industrial policy for Northeast India, "UNNATI – 2024", appears to be more promising than the previous policies of 2007 and 2017 (Chanda, 2024). However, one wonders if this will benefit the people of the northeast or will be another failure.

**Way Forward**

While the rest of India has gained substantially from increasing engagement with ASEAN under the Look East Policy, the North Eastern Region of India, which serves as a natural gateway to Southeast Asian countries, has regretfully been left behind. Because of its limited economic capacities and infrastructure, this region has been unable to fully capitalise on the prospects given by the AEP. To solve this important issue, it is critical to create a thorough roadmap outlining specific projects that would promote growth and development in the North Eastern Region. Prioritising high-visibility tasks that can be completed quickly is critical for creating instant impact and momentum.

Such projects could involve a wide range of industries, including healthcare, cultural exchange, tourism, capacity building, and food processing, all of which have the potential to boost economic growth and improve the quality of life in India's northeast. The volatile security landscape in India's Northeast, exemplified by the ongoing Manipur conflict, poses significant impediments to the efficacy of regional development initiatives. Despite these challenges, a prevailing consensus among the populace and intelligentsia shows the imperative of leveraging the Look/Act East Policy for fostering regional prosperity. A critical query remains regarding New Delhi's willingness to genuinely engage with stakeholders concerning policies impacting the Northeast.

The Northeastern Region must position itself as a central player in India's broader strategy of engaging with ASEAN nations. This will not only boost economic development but also facilitate the cultural and economic integration of the Northeast into the national and regional framework. When discussing the Look East Policy in the context of regional development, the perspective must not remain centred on Delhi. It must be viewed through the lens of the northeast region. As Baruah (2003) puts it, "We will have to be able to project possibilities beyond today's reality and imagine transnational regions of the future." The Northeast region should not be relegated to the role of a mere transit route for Indian goods or a dumping ground for Chinese products. Without localised strategic planning, achieving meaningful regional connectivity will remain a challenge. Issues like restrictions on tourism in states such as Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, and Mizoram continue to hinder the sector's potential growth, and efforts must be made to lift such barriers. Unless these barriers are lifted, tourism in the Northeastern Region will remain underdeveloped, preventing it from capitalising on its strategic location and rich cultural heritage (Agarwal, NEIF).

During his speech at the 'Sawasdee PM Modi' event in Bangkok, Prime Minister Narendra Modi underscored the crucial role of India's North Eastern Region in the success of the country's Look East Policy (LEP) and its evolved version, the Act

East Policy (AEP). For the Northeast to be seamlessly integrated into the AEP framework and benefit from the economic opportunities it presents, the region must undergo substantial infrastructural development. Essential facilities such as well-connected roads, a reliable electricity supply, efficient cold storage facilities, primary healthcare centres, and accessible local markets need to be established. Moreover, the vision for the North East should not be limited to serving merely as a transit corridor or gateway for ASEAN countries. Instead, it should be positioned as a key hub where trade facilitation between mainland India and ASEAN can flourish. To achieve this, the government must take proactive steps in enhancing knowledge creation and capacity-building initiatives in the region. The cultural, historical, and economic commonalities shared between the Northeastern states and Southeast Asian nations should be thoroughly studied and leveraged as strategic advantages for strengthening the AEP. Furthermore, the government should focus on establishing technology and knowledge hubs in the North East. This can be achieved through both indigenous efforts and by creating attractive opportunities that encourage professionals from across India to see the region as a centre for growth, innovation, and economic productivity (Bhattacharjee, 2016).

Despite the ambitious goals set forth by the Modi government under the Act East Policy, critics argue that India's ability to successfully implement its vision is heavily dependent on internal economic reforms. The pace of India's integration with Southeast Asian and East Asian economies will be largely dictated by its ability to address structural economic challenges. Although the government has projected an investor-friendly image, persistent issues such as bureaucratic inefficiencies, lack of coordination among ministries, complexities in forging public-private partnerships, and difficulties in securing financing continue to act as significant roadblocks to improving infrastructure connectivity. These challenges are particularly evident in the prolonged delays in the completion of two critical infrastructure projects: the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral

Highway (stretching from Moreh in India to Bagan in Myanmar and Mae Sot in Thailand, with future extensions planned for Cambodia and Vietnam) and the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Project (which aims to connect the Kolkata port with the Sittwe port in Myanmar). The sluggish progress on these projects has had a direct impact on the economic and developmental aspirations of the Northeastern Region. To fully realise the potential of the Northeast within the Act East Policy framework, all development projects in the region must be expedited. A concerted effort must be made to overcome bureaucratic hurdles, streamline decision-making processes, and ensure the timely execution of critical infrastructure projects. By doing so, the Northeast can emerge not just as a geographic gateway to Southeast Asia but as a dynamic and self-sustaining economic hub that drives regional growth and connectivity (Kalita, 2018).

**Conclusion**

Despite the potential of AEP to integrate Northeast India into regional networks, the region faces hurdles like inadequate infrastructure, limited industrial development, and insufficient local participation. The benefits of increased trade have yet to significantly impact the Northeast's economy, and a focus on transnational highways has neglected crucial rural connectivity. Concerns about militarisation and resource exploitation remain. Several challenges hinder the deepening of ties between Northeast India and Southeast Asia. These include inadequate infrastructure development, limited local engagement, frequent insurgencies, weak governance, and the easy influx of arms across international borders, fueling armed conflicts and criminal activities. The region's geographic positioning also makes it susceptible to tensions with significant negative repercussions. Despite these obstacles, for its numerous armed agencies, which Baruah called 'durable disorder' (Baruah, 2002), Northeast India possesses strong historical and cultural linkages with Southeast Asia, including racial, linguistic, and cultural affinities. If governments effectively implement their policies, collaborative efforts could revitalise longstanding

historical and cultural connections, fostering deeper regional integration (Sundaram, 2013). A more nuanced approach is needed, one that prioritises inclusive development, empowers local communities, and addresses the specific needs of Northeast India. Only then would the Northeast region reach its full potential and become a true "game changer" between Southeast Asia and India, promoting real economic development and cross-cultural interaction.

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# INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY FISHING AMONG THE LOTHA NAGAS: REFLECTIONS ON CULTURAL HERITAGE AND COMMUNITY FEELINGS

*Adani Ngullie*

**Abstract**

Many communities in India still practice indigenous community fishing. Documenting and understanding the core concept of this traditional practice is vital as there is no documentation or records despite the recent publication of articles, research papers, etc. Therefore, it is important to do an analytical study on traditional community fishing, its methods, and its cultural heritage to unravel indigenous knowledge of such practices, by way of interviews and participant observation to understand that fishing is carried out not just for food but enriches/strengthens deeper community feelings. This study is undertaken at Tsungiki-Philimi and indigenous community fishing at Okotso village in Wokha District. The study aims to explore the indigenous methods of indigenous community fishing in Lotha Naga area and provide a detailed record of the systemic procedure involved, as well as attempt to investigate its relationship with cultural and traditional aspects of the associated communities.

***Keywords:*** Indigenous, Fishing, Community, river, culture, heritage.

## Introduction

Indigenous fishing is a time-honoured tradition that continues to be practiced till today. Although primarily used for procuring food and as recreation, it has significant cultural, livelihood and environmental implications for traditional communities like the Nagas, to the extent that community fishing is an intrinsic constituent in their local festivals, customs and culture.

Indigenous Community fishing is an important cultural heritage of the Nagas. This practice has a great indigenous value that

contributes to preserving and sustaining traditional knowledge for future generations. Community fishing has important aspects which bind and strengthen the community feelings of the people. Fishing has been considered as an important traditional hunting practice among the Nagas, but also a way of coming together as a community, fostering unity and cooperation within the community.

Two types of traditional fishing practices are usually followed by the Nagas. One is inter-community and the other is intra-community fishing. These practices differ in terms of their operations, execution, the number of participants and the plant used.

During the pre-fishing planning period, the operational plan and traditional customs to be followed are shared among the participants, and the fishing location is decided. Only men are allowed to participate in the fishing activity. Women, though not allowed to participate, are, however, allowed to join only in the evening after the community fishing is completed.

Inter community fishing is jointly organized by two villages. The village council members of the two communities or villages do the planning and finalize the date of fishing. In Intra-community fishing, traditional fishing is organized under the direction of the village chief and elders. The community members also gather for a meeting to discuss the procedures and receive guidance on traditional values and customs associated with fishing practice. Presently, community fishing is decided by the village council members. Once the date is fixed an invitation is sent out to the villagers residing outside to come and participate.

**Community Fishing between Tsungiki & Philimi**

The community fishing observed for this paper was carried out at River Doyang (*Pofü*) under the aegis of Tsungiki Village Council and Philimi Village Council (Tsungiki- Philimi Doyang Union) and Okotso Village. Tsungiki, which means Abode of Cloud, is a Lotha Naga Village located in Wokha District, in the state of Nagaland. It is 18 Km away from Wokha. Philimi village is

located in Zunheboto District in Nagaland, India. It is situated 48 km away from district headquarter Zunheboto.

Lothas are keen fishermen and expert swimmers (Mills, 2003, p. 70). According to custom, fishing rights over any particular area are governed by the village or villagers, exercising complete control over the area. Community fishing continues between Tsungiki Village (Lotha Naga Village) and Philimi Village (Sema Village) every year. The event is jointly organized by Tsungiki-Philimi Doyang Union. According to the villagers, the idea behind the community fishing is to preserve the indigenous cultural practices and beyond fishing, to foster friendship, brotherhood, and a sense of belongingness. Besides this, the Union is formed to protect and preserve river Doyang (*Pofü*) which, flowing across the middle of the two villages' jurisdictional area, acts as the boundary between them.

This community fishing is held every year with a purpose to maintain a peaceful and healthy relationship between the two villages and also their neighbouring villages. This inter-community fishing is considered as one of the largest fishing festivals in Nagaland and plays a significant role in preserving the cultural heritage of the Naga tribes. Traditional practices like community fishing and jhum cultivation are deeply rooted in the cultures, beliefs, and customs of the tribal people and have been sustained for ages.

**Traditional Community fishing at Okotso Village**

Okotso is located in Wokha District Nagaland, 72 km away from district headquarter Wokha. The village has more than two hundred households. The village is governed by the Village Council. The main occupation of the villagers is agriculture, and hunting and fishing is part of their livelihood.

Traditional fishing knowledge dates back to the early fish catching techniques passed down from forefathers. It is deeply rooted in indigenous knowledge and relies on collective and community resources. There is a risk of losing the traditional knowledge of fishing, therefore, an effort was made to document

the traditional community fishing practices. Fishing expedition has always been a community and male dominated affair. During the pre-fishing planning period, operational plans and traditional customs are discussed and shared with all the male participants.

In olden days, fishing would typically be carried out by two or three villages in *Pofü* (Doyang) river, while smaller rivers were used by a single village or khel. Community fishing takes place during the dry season (April/May) when the water level is low. During this season, the elderly men would gather and discuss the plan about the fishing. It is believed that only after rainfall the fishes go upward from the lower stream. Groups of men would be assigned to go to the river to inspect whether fish have come or not. The appropriate time to fish is found out by the fact that stones are found licked by the fishes. They would then go to the river and check for the presence of fish. After the inspection, they would inform the chief about the fishing location and fix the day of fishing. Representatives from each khel-would announce the event to the community two or three days prior. Strict, clear announcement is sent out to the villagers as are instructions regarding the fishing location and the venue for lunch. All the able-bodied men are expected to take part in the fishing activity, and carry a bundle of poison roots. Traditionally villagers did not use any modern technique of fishing nor chemicals. People made use of vegetation and forest products for hunting and fishing.

The following plants are used for fishing: *Notsu, Niru, Ajak, Opyak, Phitsu Chethi, Mvuyimthi,* and *Nothi.* The first two '*Notsu*' and '*Niru*' are commonly used while the rest are used for fishing in a small stream, and easily available in the jungle. The reason for using these two particular plants is that it lasts only a short period of time in the water and does not pollute the whole water. It is believed that the impact of using *Notsu* for fishing is very effective, the juice of this kills every fish with which it comes in contact, and the fish lies unconscious for more than a week (the govt. has restricted using this root). Therefore, permission is required to use this poisonous root (Mills, 1922).

Participants are required to carry food items such as

chillies, bamboo shoots, and rice to prepare lunch during the fishing expedition. All the participants carry a bundle of poisonous roots on the day of fishing and, upon reaching the venue, a big tree would be cut down and dragged and placed across the river. The size and arrangement of the log would depend on the participants and the river's dimensions. Before starting the pounding, some rituals are performed to invoke blessings and ensure safety. The oldest man in the group then chants a war cry. After that, everyone would beat the roots and in unison hit the bundle chanting song.

*Oh, hev hey* (Invoking for blessings)
*Oh, hev hey* (Invoking for blessings)
*O h, Chúngti Ngeli Chúle* (Oh let the king of fish die)
*Oh, Naran Chule* (Let the biggest fish die)
*Oh, hev hey* (Invoking for blessings)
*Oh, hev hey* (Invoking for blessings)

A small tree pole is used as a hammer to pound the roots for about one hour, with frequent drenching of the roots in water to release the chemical compounds. The root juices produce a brown-reddish color, and the beaten roots are dropped into the water to enhance the effectiveness of the poisonous juice. The rhythmic pounding of the roots, which is accompanied by singing and chanting of war cry, symbolizes a sign of respect to ancestors, and unity, respect, peace and harmony among the communities.

Once the pounding of the roots takes place, some of the elderly men would remain vigilant and keep reminding the participants not to catch fish until the pounding is done. This signifies how discipline is maintained during the fishing period.

**Distribution of the Catch**

One fascinating feature of community fishing is the collection of the fishes. Distribution of fishes is done systematically starting from the oldest man in the clan down to the youngest boy in the clan. In inter-community fishing, the fish caught by the individuals are collected and stored clan-wise. As per the tradition, the eldest person receives the largest fish, followed by the second largest for the second eldest in the clan, and the rest of the fishes

are distributed equally. In the case of intra-community fishing, the harvested fish are distributed equally among the participants. According to the custom, the largest fish is set aside for the oldest person in the village. It is evident that there is competition among the participants, where people compete to catch more fish and the biggest fish. It is also noted that some share is allotted for widows, old men, and those who are not physically fit to participate in the fishing.

Every person who participated in the event got a share of the catch. Usually, two or three members from a family participated in the event, however there are also single (*Nthi*) members from a family who participated. Before the distribution happens, the '*Nthi*' was usually given an extra share, a little more than his actual share in order to ensure that the share received by the 'Nthi' is not so less than the combined shares of the multiple members of another family. The practice clearly shows the spirit of brotherhood, feelings and strong bonding.

Old men and young boys would take charge of cooking for their clan members. They move a few kilometres down from the location of the fishing site and select a good site for cooking. They collect the food items from all the participants to prepare lunch. The old men would go to the fishing site to collect fish from their clan collection for lunch. They go to the jungle and cut bamboo cups, leaves and other essentials and after that cooking takes place separately according to the clan. After cooking is done, they pack the food for everyone, and when the participants reach the venue of lunch, the packed food is handed over to them.

It is clearly evident that community fishing is a male dominated activity from the planning till its completion as per the established customs. Women are not allowed to participate in community fishing as per the established customs. As per the belief system women participation would bring bad luck. Therefore, women go to the fishing venue (river) only in the evening to collect the fish from the river called *'esi'* (leftover). Once the community collection of fish is done, men folk can also collect the fish from the river for themselves.

**_Gennas_/Restrictions**

There are some *gennas* (restrictions) involved in connection with Community fishing which are strictly followed. For instance, if there is a birth of a baby or domesticated animals on the eve of the fishing or in the morning, the man of that house and his household are not allowed to take part, and the bundle of 'poison roots' prepared by him is taken out from the general pile and thrown away. It may not be taken to the river (Hutton, 2017).

Sometimes, tragic incidents such as drowning occur during community fishing. In such situations, the collected fish are abandoned. The body of the deceased is buried near the river bank, and they eat only what they can on-site, discarding the remaining fish before returning back home empty-handed.

Also, as per the rule of the Lothas, a person who is to take part in the fishing should abstain from sleeping with the wife on the night before the fishing, as it is believed it would bring misfortune/bad luck. Eating and touching of meat is also strictly prohibited: no one would eat nor touch meat on the day of fishing. All these beliefs and strict restrictions are strictly followed.

**Modern Fishing Methods**

Presently, villagers use different types of fishing methods like gelatine, hand-made battery, lime, bleaching powder (Calcium hypochlorite) which is very harmful for the eco system. The use of chemicals for fishing has become increasingly common lately. The chemical remains lingers causing indiscriminate damage to the surrounding environment. Such practice has to be discouraged and it is punishable for the preservation of the ecology for future generations.

**Preserving cultural heritage**

Community fishing is a part of the cultural heritage of many indigenous tribal communities including the Nagas. It is deeply rooted in the culture, beliefs and customs of the Nagas, which have been sustainable for a long time. This practice is of great

indigenous value in its contribution to preserving and sustaining traditional knowledge for future generations. As stated earlier, indigenous community fishing has been a part of the cultural heritage of the Nagas, however, proper documentation and records relating to this practice are scanty. Thus, it is important to further study the indigenous methods of fishing to understand the procedural events and the cultural importance related to the practice(s). Furthermore, the impacts of such traditional practices on the environment are also important features with respect to conservation and sustainability under the current scenario of rapid environmental degradation and biodiversity loss. Therefore, this study was taken up to explore the indigenous methods of fishing and to provide a detailed systematic procedure of the fishing activities while trying to investigate their relationship with the cultural and traditional aspects of the associated communities.

**Conclusion**

Community fishing can be considered as a significant part of cultural heritage, which touches many aspects of community life like the political, economic and social as through it the bonding of families and communities becomes stronger. Further, it is also conducted to develop a sense of peaceful co-existence and prosperity within and among the neighbouring communities. How the collected fishes are distributed among the participants shows how people respect and love to share the resources. The operational plan, giving orders and execution reflects the importance of traditional administration. And the community fishing and its continuity reflect the strong cultural heritage. Cultural heritage is a reflection of society, and its preservation is vital for maintaining cultural diversity, fostering a sense of belonging, and passing down traditional knowledge to the next generations as the young learn a whole new way of life.

Cultural heritage is a precious legacy that reflects shared humanity. While challenges persist, individuals, communities, governments, and organizations must work together to protect and preserve the cultural heritage. By doing so, one can ensure

that the treasures of the past continue to inspire and enrich the present and the future.

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# IMPLICATION OF MORUNG IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION IN THE PRESENT SCENARIO WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO SANGTAM MORUNG

*Yanglikumla Sangtam*

**Abstract**

Before the arrival of formal education in the Naga society, life and education of the Nagas were centered around the Morung in which a kind of informal education was provided. As warfare was very common earlier, boys received military training in the Morung, and they were also imparted values like hard work, cooperation, courage, compassion, etc. However, with modernisation, the significance of the Naga Morung is slowly disappearing owing to the adoption of Western lifestyles by the Nagas. The 21st century curriculum emphasises the importance of science and technology S&T, teaching pupils how to acquire jobs. As a result, pupils are treated as machines, making it a one-sided development. Education is considered an all-round development where all three domains, such as cognitive, affective, and psychomotor, are emphasised. In this sense, we need to inculcate human values and physical training as well. As Morung taught pupils the value of hard work and team man-ship, we need to inculcate its implications in the field of education if we want to develop pupils in an all-round manner. This paper attempts to discuss the significance of Morung and its features and how its implications can be used in the present context of education for all-round development.

***Keywords:*** *Morung*, education, log drum, community, Sangtam.

## Introduction

The history of the Nagas is shrouded in mystery, and their past was handed down from generation to generation through oral tradition. The Nagas have always led a simple, honest, and hardworking life, and their life was closely knitted to their society (Jacobs, 2012). Before the arrival of Christianity in the land in

the mid-19th century, the Nagas led an animistic life, however, they always believed in a Creator, and each tribe accorded a different name to it. The *Morung/Kuying* was an institution where the dignity of labour was taught, refined culture, rectified personal shortcomings, and together they built a strong society. In Nagaland *morung* institution is called differently by different tribes. In the Sangtam dialect, it is called *Kuying*, which means bachelor's dormitory system. The *Kuying* was an important educational institution for both boys and girls. Much of Naga's cultural customs and traditions have been transmitted from generation to generation through folk music and dance, folk tales and oral traditions, carvings of figures on stones and wood, and designs on clothes. It was also used as a guardhouse during times of war (Abdi, 2019). The *Kuying* plays an important role in preparing the younger generation. The *Kuying* is a club, a public school, a military training centre, a hostel for boys, and a meeting place for village elders (Lolia & Meyieho, 2018)

Like the boys, girls' dormitories were also prevalent. The girls would stay in the dormitory after attaining puberty till they chose their life partners and settled into family life. During her stay in *Kuying,* she would learn spinning, weaving, embroidery, stitching, etc. from her senior friends. Besides, she would also come to know folklore and dances from senior girls. Apart from learning, she would get lessons about good behaviour, manners, character, morality, and the ethical code of conduct.

**Meaning of Morung**

The Naga *Morung* is a traditional house constructed in the village where young men are admitted to learn about their tribe, culture, tradition, and different values. It was also treated as an informal centre of learning where young men on admission live and learn about their respective tribes. The *Morung* is also called a 'man's hall', 'public school', 'bachelor dormitory', and so on (Shukla & Zetsuvi, 2010). According to Abdi (2019), the *Morung* was also used as a guard house in times of war and was used to house different weapons, and hunted heads were also kept. In the

*Morung*, youths on attaining puberty would become members of the Morung, and the functioning of it was usually carried out by the elders. It also acted as a recreational centre, such as feasting, drinking, storytelling, etc.

| **Name of Tribe** | **Name of Morung** |
|---|---|
| Angami | Kichüki/Thehou |
| Ao | Ariju |
| Chakhesang | Chiethichie |
| Chang | Hakuh |
| Lotha | Chumpo |
| Sangtam | Kuying |
| Sumi | Apuki |
| Phom | Pang |
| Rengma | Renshe |
| Konyak | Paan |
| Yimkhiung | Khangyam |

**About the Tribe**

Sangtam Naga (2024) notes that the Sangtam people are one of the major ethnic groups in Nagaland. Towards the south-eastern part of Nagaland, they inhabit the Kiphire District. The northern part of Sangtam includes the Longkhim-Chare sub-division of Tuensang District. They are united under the common banner called "United Sangtam". There are 62 recognised villages of the Sangtams, 24 villages under Longkhim–Chare sub-division and 38 villages under Kiphire District as of recent data. There are seven government administrative towns under the United Sangtam jurisdiction. In recent years, Sangtam villages, namely Tsithrongse and Murise village under Chumoukedima district and Sangtamtila village under Dimapur district, have also been recognised. The

current total population of the people in Longkhimblock and Chare block, as per the 2011 census, is 28,462.

Before the dawn of Christianity and modern civilisation, headhunting was a part of the everyday life of the Sangtam. The religious practices and belief in the existence of supernatural beings, their power and the practice of propitiations through the forms of rituals and worship. Sangtams are one of the culturally richest and most colourful tribes, having 3 festivals, of which *Mungmung*, meaning pre-harvest festival, predominates in worship of the God of the house, and three cooking stones in the fireplace (hearth) is considered to be the most important of all. Like other tribal groups, the Sangtams also practice jhum and burn cultivation. They are self-dependent and hard-working people.

**Features of Kuying**

Ruivah (1982) states that the common feature of all tribal living, which invariably attracts the attention of modern students, is its community-based approach. *Kuying* was made from bamboo, cane, wood, and thatched palm leaves. And *Kuying* are often decorated with wood, carving, animals or bird skulls, and large log drums. *Kuying* offers a curriculum that includes education development, village workings, and how to love and respect others. They also teach values like honesty, discipline, and respect for elders, and skills like handicrafts, wood carving, and cooking. This made them build up their lifestyles with a strong community-based approach and establish a deep cooperation relationship among themselves. The *morung* is a word that refers to houses, barracks, or dormitories where unmarried boys sleep in groups. Since this is not a Naga word, each Naga tribe has its own name for the *morung*. In the absence of any other institutionalised system of schooling, the *kuying* played the foremost part in making them effective members of society. They learned the art of handicrafts like wood carving and bamboo works, basket making, etc., whereas the womenfolk learned different kinds of cloth making, arts, and embroidery works during their stay in the girls' dormitory. Over and above, to preserve the cultural heritage

of the past, they learned the art of dancing and singing. Much of the tradition is passed from generation to generation through the medium of folk music, dance, folktales, and oral historical traditions, carvings of figures on stones and woods, and design on cloth, especially on shawls; much of this learning and teaching process took place at the *morung* of the Nagas.

**Sangtam Naga Morung in Chungtor village under Tuensang district.**
**Photo Yanglikhumla March 2025**





**Physical Layout of the *Kuying***

*Kuying* in the real sense of the term, making a big hall built separately for the young men to sleep and keep a vigil at night against the enemies (Vamuzo, 2011). There, they provide the structure for the working principles of the village council and prepare younger generations for posts in the council (Tsalongse, 2014). Today, the term *Kuying* is used in general for all the boys' dormitories which are common to all the Naga tribes, whether it is separately built or located in the house of the village chief or a rich man's house. A man may continue to sleep at the *Kuying* for some time even after his marriage. No fee was paid for going to the *Kuying*, but members had to take part in the activities of the *Kuying*.

**Discussion**

Today, due to modernisation, the significance of the *morung* is slowly vanishing. However, the life of the Nagas is still tied to the *morung* system. In Sao Chang College, Tuensang, the hostellers (*Sochumers*) are inculcating the habit of earning while learning, where the *sochumers* make traditional products such as baskets, headbands, earrings, etc. The *sochumers* make biscuits, pickles, and handicrafts like basketry making, and they sell them. Out of that earned money, they pay their hostel fees and make it their pocket money. Besides that, the college allows them to let them work and earn during holidays, instead of letting others do the work. That is how the college authority encourages the *sochumers*, to the dignity of labour. Therefore, the rest of the students (day scholars) can also get inspiration from the *sochumers*. The Guru Nanak Khalsa College for Women Annual Report 2022-2023 states that the National Cadet Corps (NCC) are giving training by the military people for developing character, comradeship, discipline, a secular outlook, the spirit of adventures, and ideals of selfless service amongst young citizens.

So, every institution should encourage the students about the dignity of labour, well-disciplined life, respect for others, and how to preserve our rich culture and traditions.

The increasing technological influence on our lives does not help matters, and in this regard, young people today would rather chat endlessly on their mobile phones or social networking sites than have a healthy game of football or socialise with friends. Many young people are unaware of their rich culture and traditions. They only observe festivals superficially without knowing their significance. Westernisation is overtaking us gradually. There is a need to relive our traditional culture and customs and adopt them to the changing times. Being the root of identity, unless there is a revival of values in our society, our rich value system is in danger of becoming a thing of the past.

The 21st century, according to Svanberg (2011), is dominated by Science and Technology S&T and Science Technology

Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) courses, and since these courses are job-oriented, even parents force their children to take up these courses without knowing their interests and aspirations. Bookish knowledge and too much emphasis on technical knowledge neglect one of the most important aspects, which is the importance of value. In this day and age, stress and depression among pupils are part and parcel of their lives, and if they are not able to cope with these issues and challenges, students drop out of their courses. In a worst-case scenario, they may tend to commit suicide, and unfortunately, India as a country is witnessing many suicide cases, especially among the student fraternity. Devi (n.d.) writes that Mahatma Gandhi's definition of education means, an all-round drawing out of the best in child and man – body, mind, and spirit. His definition emphasises the all-round development of pupils, such as the cognitive (intellectual) ability, affective (emotion, feeling) and psychomotor (physical) domains. The 21st-century curriculum may emphasise the cognitive domain, but it is missing out on the development of emotion, feeling, and physical abilities among the pupils. As *Morung* was an informal centre of learning, it inculcated the values of team man-ship, hard work, the spirit of fellow feeling, military training, craftsmanship, learning to work together, punctuality, love for one another, courage, etc, and girls were also taught the art of weaving. We need to inculcate all these qualities in the pupils, and to do so, we need to draw on the implications of the Naga *Morung* system. The National Policy of Education of 2020 has talked at length about the importance of the Indian Knowledge System, known as IKS, where knowledge of ancient medicine, science, and technology is emphasised. We also need to implement the implications of our Morung system as our forefathers had taught and practised.

## Conclusion

In *Kuying*, there is a courthouse, and it is a place of understanding and reconciliation. It provides an opportunity for the young men to talk face-to-face to find a solution. If any problem arose among the people, the final decision would be

taken by the village elders or old men, outsiders were entertained at the *morung*. Even a criminal, once accepted into the *Kuying,* was protected by the inmates.

The *Kuying* acted as the hospitality wing of the community. Members of the men acted as mailmen carrying messages to other villages. They participated in social work by repairing houses or clearing the villages, in case of a sign of an attack in any shape, a password is given and every man is instantly on his legs, carrying his battle axe, spear, shields, and a large hollow tree (log drum) used to keep in the *Kuying*. The nature of the situation would be indicated by the different sounds of the log drum. Ruivah (1982) elucidates that any participants who could perform selfless service in society were highly regarded. Every inmate performed his duties with great zeal and enthusiasm. It was through their selfless service that the community-based approach of village life could bring happiness to their lives.

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# EXPLORING UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS' PERCEPTION AND INCLINATION TOWARDS ENTREPRENEURSHIP AS A CAREER CHOICE

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**Abstract**

Entrepreneurship has emerged as a key driver of economic growth and innovation, especially among younger generations. The purpose of this study is to explore undergraduate students' perceptions and inclinations toward entrepreneurship as a career choice. The study is undertaken in Dimapur, with an emphasis on understanding how students perceive entrepreneurship, the factors that influence their entrepreneurial goals, and the challenges they confront when pursuing this path. The convenience sampling method was used to survey 300 undergraduate students in total. The study included both primary and secondary data. A structured questionnaire was used to collect primary data that include questions designed to capture students' perspectives on entrepreneurship. Secondary data were used to provide context for the region's entrepreneurship trends and problems. The study's findings are expected to provide valuable insights into the entrepreneurial aspirations of young students in Dimapur, helping to advance a broader understanding of how educational institutions, policymakers, and entrepreneurial support programs can better foster an entrepreneurial culture. Identifying major motivators and challenges can assist in developing focused activities that encourage students to consider entrepreneurship as a viable and rewarding career choice.

***Keywords:*** Career choice, Entrepreneurship, Perception, Undergraduate Students.

## Introduction

Entrepreneurship is one of the driving forces to any economic development, innovation, and societal change. In both developed

and developing countries, entrepreneurship is now widely recognized as a major force behind innovation, job creation, and economic growth (Kuratko, 2016). And so, governments, institutions, policy makers and other stakeholders have been advocating entrepreneurship through awareness and various programs and plans to encourage the people, especially the youths to venture into the potentials of entrepreneurship. The growing interest in entrepreneurship, particularly among younger generations, has been widely discussed in the literature as a critical driver of economic growth and innovation. As the digital economy grows and employment trends change globally, youths are becoming more interested in entrepreneurship as a potential career path. According to Fatoki (2014), entrepreneurship is viewed by young people, particularly undergraduate students, as a way to express creativity, find personal and financial independence, and find work.

Studies that investigated students' entrepreneurial intentions says that intention is the best predictor of behaviour (Liñán & Chen, 2009). By increasing students' self-efficacy and perceived behavioral control, entrepreneurship education can have a favorable impact on their intentions (Nabi et al., 2018). Students' career decisions pertaining to entrepreneurship are also greatly influenced by their exposure to entrepreneurial role models and real-world experiences (Nowiński and Haddoud, 2019). Moreover, the role of education in cultivating entrepreneurial intentions has been a key focus, with some studies emphasizing the need for curriculum changes to better foster entrepreneurial skills and mindset (Fayolle, 2015; Souitaris et al., 2007).

Even with increased interest, several barriers still prevent students from pursuing entrepreneurship. The biggest barriers, according to research, include lack of mentorship, lack of finance, fear of failure, and inadequate business understanding (Zhang et al., 2014; Amofah & Saladrigues, 2020). Many students often face significant barriers such as lack of resources, risk aversion, and inadequate entrepreneurial support from educational institutions (Chigunta, 2002). Additionally, risk aversion and sociocultural

expectations are important, especially in developing nations where traditional jobs are more socially acceptable (Urban & Kujinga, 2017).

Numerous studies have highlighted the impact of demographic variables on entrepreneurship as a career, including age, gender, subject of study, and socioeconomic background. For example, male students often had higher entrepreneurial goals than female students though the disparity narrows considerably when both genders are exposed to entrepreneurship education (Wilson et al., 2021). Moreover, students with backgrounds in business and economics are more likely to express interest in entrepreneurship than students with backgrounds in the arts or sciences (Solesvik et al., 2013).

Despite these studies offering insightful information, there is a significant study gap in combining these factors to comprehend undergraduate students' overall perceptions and inclination towards entrepreneurship in certain institutional and cultural contexts. Most of the existing studies concentrate on Western or urban-centric populations, ignoring the regional viewpoints that can provide new insights (Ratten, 2014). Regional variations in entrepreneurial perceptions and challenges have yet to be extensively explored, particularly in less-studied areas such as Dimapur.

By investigating undergraduate students' perception of entrepreneurship as a career choice, evaluating the variables that affect their inclination, and identifying the obstacles they see, this study seeks to close that gap. By exploring these topics, the study will contribute to a more sophisticated understanding of youth entrepreneurship and help in the creation of focused strategies to encourage university students' aspirations to pursue entrepreneurship. Understanding the local context is crucial for shaping policies and support systems that can nurture the entrepreneurial spirit among students, making it essential to examine their views and aspirations in this unique setting.

## Objective of the Study

The primary objective of the present study is to explore the undergraduate students' perception towards the overall potential of entrepreneurship as a career. However, three specific objectives are defined in order to achieve the primary objective:

1. To examine undergraduate students' perceptions of entrepreneurship as a viable career option.
2. To analyze the factors that influence students' inclination towards entrepreneurship.
3. To identify the perceived barriers and challenges faced by students in pursuing entrepreneurship.

## Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in its potential to inform and shape educational policies and entrepreneurial support systems, particularly in Dimapur, a region with limited research on entrepreneurship. By examining the perceptions, motivations, and challenges of undergraduate students regarding entrepreneurship, this study provides valuable insights into the factors that influence students' inclination toward starting their own businesses. Understanding these factors is crucial for designing targeted interventions, such as curriculum enhancements, mentorship programs, and financial support mechanisms, that can foster a more conducive environment for entrepreneurial activity. Furthermore, the findings can guide educational institutions in adapting their programs to better equip students with the necessary skills and knowledge to pursue entrepreneurship. The study's outcomes can also serve as a basis for future research, helping policymakers and educators address the regional gaps in entrepreneurial education and support, ultimately contributing to the economic growth and innovation in the area. Additionally, it can help bridge the gap between entrepreneurial intentions and actual startup creation.

## Research Methodology

The study was conducted in Dimapur District, focusing on undergraduate students as the target population. A total

sample of 300 students was surveyed using a convenience sampling method, which allows for a practical and efficient selection of participants. The data collected for the study consists of both primary and secondary sources. Primary data was gathered through a structured questionnaire, designed to capture students' perceptions, inclinations, and challenges regarding entrepreneurship. Secondary data was utilized to provide additional context, shedding light on regional trends, issues, and existing literature related to entrepreneurship in the region. This combination of data sources offers a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing students' entrepreneurial aspirations in Dimapur.

The collected data were processed for further analysis. Using the percentage method of descriptive statistics, the processed data was analyzed for meaningful interpretation.

**Discussion, Findings and Suggestions of the Study**

- A majority of undergraduate students have a positive perception of entrepreneurship, with 67.7% expressing a favourable view and 86% believing it is a viable career choice in today's economy. Additionally, 88.7% of students recognize the importance of entrepreneurship for economic development, indicating that they see it as a key driver of growth and job creation. This suggests a strong awareness among students about the role entrepreneurship plays in shaping the economy and their willingness to consider it as a potential career path.
- The primary motivation for students to pursue entrepreneurship stems from their passion for a particular idea, product, or service, with 45.3% identifying this as their main reason. Financial independence is also a strong motivator, with 32.3% aspiring to start their own ventures to gain greater control over their earnings and lifestyle. Other students are drawn to entrepreneurship as a means of personal growth and challenge, with 13.7% citing this as a motivating factor. Meanwhile, 8.7% view entrepreneurship as an alternative due to a lack of appealing job opportunities, indicating that some students

see self-employment as a necessary step when traditional employment options are limited.

- Despite this interest, there is a significant gap in the perceived adequacy of entrepreneurial education. Only 33.3% of students feel that their education prepares them well for entrepreneurship, while 45.7% remain neutral on this aspect. Therefore, Colleges should integrate hands-on entrepreneurial training into their curriculum. Practical exposure to business planning, financial management, and marketing strategies through workshops, real-world simulations, and case studies will help students gain confidence in starting their own ventures.
- The role of mentors and role models is also crucial, as 62.7% of students consider guidance from professors, successful entrepreneurs, and industry experts to be influential in their decision to pursue entrepreneurship. A structured mentorship program should be established, connecting students with experienced business owners, startup founders, and industry leaders. Regular mentorship sessions can provide valuable advice, networking opportunities, and industry exposure, helping students navigate the early stages of their entrepreneurial journey.
- Students face several barriers when considering entrepreneurship, with the most significant challenges being a lack of business knowledge and skills (12%), difficulty in accessing funding (12.3%), fear of failure (8.7%), and concerns about market competition (5%). Hence, Successful entrepreneurs and industry professionals should be invited to share their experiences with students. Their insights into overcoming challenges and building sustainable businesses can serve as a source of inspiration and guidance.
- The lack of adequate training in business planning and marketing strategies is particularly limiting, as 55.6% of students feel that insufficient knowledge in these areas holds them back. Additionally, financial risks remain a major concern, with 61.3% expressing fear over losing personal investments, which discourages many from taking the leap into entrepreneurship.

These findings suggest that providing access to entrepreneurial education, funding support, and risk management training could significantly improve students' confidence in starting their own ventures.

- Students have mixed perceptions regarding the job security and work-life balance that entrepreneurship offers. While 48.3% believe that entrepreneurship provides better job security compared to traditional employment, 47% are uncertain, indicating that many students are unsure about the stability of entrepreneurial careers. Similarly, 55% feel that entrepreneurship can offer a better work-life balance, but 41.3% remain unsure, possibly due to concerns about the unpredictable nature of running a business. These findings suggest that while entrepreneurship is viewed positively, there are lingering doubts about its long-term stability and sustainability. Psychological support systems and resilience training should be provided to help students develop the right mindset for risk-taking. Stress management workshops and guidance on overcoming business setbacks will prepare them for the uncertainties associated with entrepreneurship.
- Despite these concerns, a significant number of students are open to pursuing entrepreneurship as a career. A combined 68% of students indicate that they are likely or very likely to consider entrepreneurship as a long-term career option. This shows a strong entrepreneurial inclination among undergraduate students, demonstrating that many are willing to explore self-employment despite challenges related to financial risks, business competition, and inadequate preparation. Addressing these concerns through better educational programs, funding opportunities, and mentorship could further enhance students' confidence and willingness to engage in entrepreneurial activities.

**Scope for Further Studies**

Future research can track students over time to see how many start businesses and what factors contribute to their success

or failure. A study comparing the perception of entrepreneurship among students from different states or urban vs. rural areas could provide deeper insights. Further research can also assess how government initiatives, such as startup grants and business development schemes, influence student entrepreneurship. Analyzing how gender impacts entrepreneurial perception, motivation, and challenges could provide a more inclusive understanding of student entrepreneurship. A study on how digital platforms, online courses, and social media influence students' entrepreneurial aspirations could be valuable in modern business education.

**Conclusion**

Undergraduate students demonstrate a strong interest in entrepreneurship, driven by a desire to innovate and create their own ventures. However, several key challenges hinder their ability to turn these aspirations into reality. These obstacles include limited access to quality entrepreneurial education, a lack of effective mentorship, insufficient financial resources, and the absence of comprehensive risk management training. These barriers often contribute to a lack of confidence, discouraging students from pursuing their business ideas. To address these challenges, entrepreneurial education must be enhanced to equip students with the necessary knowledge and practical experience. Integrating hands-on learning with theoretical frameworks will better prepare students for the real-world complexities of entrepreneurship. Additionally, mentorship programs that connect students with experienced entrepreneurs can provide valuable insights and emotional support, boosting their confidence and chances of success. Financial support, through grants, seed funding, or venture capital, is also crucial for turning ideas into viable businesses, while risk management training will help students better navigate uncertainty and setbacks.

By addressing the key barriers: education, mentorship, financial support, and risk management, institutions and policymakers can create a more supportive environment

for student entrepreneurs. This would help bridge the gap between entrepreneurial interest and the actual creation of startups, increasing the rate of successful ventures initiated by undergraduates. Furthermore, fostering collaboration between academia, industry, and entrepreneurial networks would provide students with real-world opportunities and connections, enhancing their entrepreneurial journey. Continued research is essential to identify the most effective strategies to support student entrepreneurs, ensuring that future efforts are both efficient and impactful. By refining these strategies, we can cultivate a generation of entrepreneurs who are well-equipped to thrive in today's dynamic business landscape, contributing to economic growth and job creation.

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# PERFORMANCE OF AGRICULTURE CREDIT IN KOHIMA DISTRICT, NAGALAND

*Emilo Kikon, Amrendra Kumar,* & *Perumalraja R*

**Abstract**

The population in Nagaland is mainly dependent on agriculture, more than 70% of farmers require financial support from bank and nonbank financial institutions to boost the farming sector. Therefore, agricultural lending for agriculture is essential to raising agricultural output and productivity. This paper tries to look at the several forms of agricultural financing that farmers might access. This study aims to understand how agricultural credit facilities have impacted farmers' lives. Based on the objective, several research questions have been developed to help direct this paper, like reasons for taking out loans, how the credit has influenced the farmers' socio economic conditions. For this study's objective a survey was carried out in Nagaland under Kohima district. The present study finds that Institutional credit reaches most farmers, yet structural flaws poor awareness, procedural delays, and gender imbalances limit its impact which lead the farmers to rely mostly on non-institutional borrowing credit.

***Keywords:*** Agriculture, Credit, Farmers, Institutional and Non-Institutional Borrowing.

## Introduction

When discussing agriculture, credit is a key factor. A crucial tool for growing production to new heights and improving the living standards of the rural, underprivileged farming community is agricultural finance. Credit is considered an effective mechanism to enhance the production and consumption activity of the household (Zeller, 1993). Farmers require agricultural credit from financial or non-financial entities to grow and expand their agribusiness. It serves as the support system for those small-scale farmers who require financial aid. Agricultural funding is a vital

resource for implementing any kind of agricultural expansion. If agriculture is considered as the primary sector of the economy, credit is crucially important to procure various inputs to produce agricultural outputs (Conning, 2011). Due to the extreme poverty of Indian farmers, there is a great demand for appropriate agricultural loans in India. Credit empowers farmers to move on to a superior production frontier, so that with minimum inputs, they can produce the maximum output (Narayanana, 2015).

The government and financial institutions have significantly expanded credit access through policies like Priority Sector Lending (PSL), Kisan Credit Cards (KCC), and interest subvention schemes. NABARD has played a significant role in promoting the agricultural sector. During FY2021, NABARD disbursed a total of 1,30,964 crore to state cooperative banks (StCBs) and RRBs (with respective shares of 77.2% and 22.8%) under short-term (ST) refinance facility to enable them to meet the production and working capital requirements of farmers, weavers, and artisans. Disbursements under ST credit support of NABARD grew at 30.5% in FY2021 over FY2020, which was much higher than the 11.4% growth in FY2020 over FY2019. Short-term facility to StCBs grew at 21.4% in FY2021 as opposed to 14% in FY2020. Growth in disbursement to RRBs peaked at 74.9% in FY2021 following near stagnation in FY2020. State-wise short-term refinance data showed overall growth. States like Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Maharashtra, and Assam witnessed a significant increase in ST refinance. (NABARD, 2020-2021).

In the state of Nagaland, the culture and customs of the Naga people are closely entwined with agriculture as a way of life. The district's main economic activity and the main source of income for the locals both depend on agriculture. Agriculture plays a major part in agricultural output, productivity, and reducing farmer distress in Nagaland because it is a significant sector of the state economy. The Scheduled Commercial Banks (ScBs), Nagaland Rural Banks (NRB), and State Cooperative Bank Ltd. (NStCB) are the principal institutions in Nagaland that offer financing for agricultural and rural development. Some farmers

prefer to receive financial assistance from non-institutional organisations instead of institutional ones. Agriculture has evolved into a highly capital-intensive industry due to the need for sophisticated inputs and equipment (tractors, fertilisers, pesticides, and high-quality seeds). These factors have greatly increased the demand for agricultural finance in the state. The farmers are looking for a better way to increase their output so that it can meet expanding market demand as well as their demands for personal consumption. The only way to meet these demands quickly is through loans and credit. Together with institutional and non-institutional organisations, the Department of Agriculture continuously works to meet demands for increasing agricultural productivity and farmer income through its programs and other interventions.

This paper presents a comprehensive study of agricultural credit performance in Nagaland among farmers, focusing on demographic characteristics, credit sources, purpose, challenges, and perceptions.

**Review of literature**

The article by M. F. Swinnen and G. R. Johan (1997) examines why credit markets are inefficient even in market economies that are well-developed. It focuses on issues with unevenness, undesirable outcomes, credit rationing, the selection of the best debt instrument, and the importance of initial wealth. It demonstrates why credit rationing and high interest rates are sensible and effective responses by lenders to the imperfect information difficulties of the agriculture sector. These and related concerns may cause transaction costs to be high enough. What the function of government is, in this process, as well as the issues surrounding financing Central and Eastern European agriculture at this time of transition.

Anjani Kumar, Dhiraj K. Singh, Prabhat Kumar (2007) highlight that access to and distribution of rural credit are biased in favour of wealthier regions, with better-off families having a greater tendency to seek credit overall. Given that their rates of interest

are exploitative and have shown a trend toward rising, non-institutional sources' persistence warrants deliberate attempts to reduce their influence on rural loans. The weaker groups in society are more vulnerable to these sources and appear to be caught in an endless cycle. This study discovered that the Kisan Credit Card scheme (KCCs) is encouraging, and their distribution is less lopsided.

B. C. Barah's (2007) study points out the issues with regional agricultural economics in the changing environment and analyses the prospects in this article titled "Strategies for Agricultural Development in Northeast India: Challenges and Emerging Opportunities". It also analyses the factors that limit agricultural growth, as well as their sources, and suggests creative people-centred policy interventions to advance.

Abhiman Das, Manjusha Senapati, Joice John (2009) state in their study that agricultural output is favourably and considerably impacted by the number of accounts for indirect agricultural credit, which likewise has a one-year lag. These results demonstrate that despite several shortcomings in the current credit delivery system, such as the inability to adequately provide for small and marginal farmers, agricultural credit plays a major role in supporting the agricultural profession.

According to Mary Nzomo and Willy Muturi's (2014) agricultural credit is effective, but it only reaches a tiny fraction of the population. Therefore, to ensure that credit has the desired effect, its reach should be increased, and the collateral requirements should be loosened.

Sudha Narayanan study (2015) examines the connection between institutional loans to agriculture and agricultural GDP. Overall, the findings imply that the worries about credit's potential inefficiency may be unfounded. Strong evidence exists to suggest that credit is supporting input purchases and possibly even helping the agriculture sector adapt to its contextual restrictions.

Anwarul Hoda and Prerna Terway's (2015) paper, states that efforts to enhance institutional credit such as the establishments of multiple rural commercial bank branches, priority sector

lending with 18% target for agriculture, Kisan Credit Cards and the financial inclusion initiative have been more responsible for the remarkable rise in agricultural credit than credit subsidies.

Siva Reddy and K. Ravishankar's (2020) paper determines the degree of farmers' attitudes regarding repayments of agricultural loans and to comprehend the general characteristics of farmers. In the study region, farmers focus on socio-economic analysis to ensure the level of farmers' attitudes toward repayment of agricultural loans. Their investigation revealed that the farmers will profit from agricultural loans. This result also shows that when it comes to the total amount of large loans for agriculture, banks offer more access than the microfinance business, however, to the total amount of small loans for agriculture, banks offer less credit.

Dr. Satyveer Singh Meena, Mr. Vikash, Mr. Anubhav (2021) examine various agencies that help farmers receive credit in their paper. Through refinance, these many sources of credit create an aiding pathway for the transfer of the central money market to rural areas, which creates employment.

Thejotalu's (2016) aims to evaluate the interest rates and repayment terms of the borrowers in the study villages of Kohima and Phek districts of Nagaland. In her research, she discovered that the involvement of moneylenders in the study area was minimal because most lending from the informal sector was done so locally. With the use of institutional financing sources and the function of VDBs as guarantors of borrowers, agriculture cultivation practices and methodologies are undergoing a new revolution. Another significant factor is the rural villagers' general understanding of the sources of funding for agricultural operations spread by the village elders.

Gershon et al. (2020) showed that the farmers with agricultural credit enjoyed three times higher production than those without in Nigeria.

**Research Gap**

The concept of Agricultural financing is not new. Agricultural credit has been the subject of numerous studies. It has been demonstrated that, despite the large number of studies on agricultural credit, only a few have been conducted in Nagaland. Furthermore, Nagaland was chosen as the study's backdrop since most farmers in the state are ignorant about the government's different programs for farmers' welfare and agricultural loan services.

**Significance of the Study**

The purpose of this study paper is to understand the role of Agricultural finance in Nagaland and the various challenges the farmers face while requesting a loan. This study will assist us in better understanding the many difficulties that farmers encounter while also assisting farmers in better understanding the various institutional credit agencies and programs that the Government offers to farmers in the state. The government and non-government organisations will also benefit from this study's development and advancement of farmer welfare.

**Objectives of the Study**

1. To evaluate the status of the agriculture finance market in Nagaland.
2. To assess the effect of agricultural financing on farmers' socioeconomic situation.

**Research Methodology**

Data for the present study were collected from both the primary and the secondary sources. Primary data were collected from the farmer respondents in the study area directly by using a well-designed interview schedule from February to May 2022. Secondary data were collected from the Statistical Handbooks prepared by the Department of Economics and Statistics, Nagaland, NABARD. The collected data were analysed with the help of statistical approaches such as the Percentage Analysis.

**Findings of the Study: Data analysis and interpretation**

For the goal of this study, a variety of data are being gathered and analysed, including respondents' personal information, issues and difficulties experienced by farmers, and the sorts of farming they engage in. The results have been explained using simple percentage method.

**Personal details of the respondent**

Table 1 shows the personal details of the farmers, like their age, gender, and educational level.

| **Age of the Farmers** | | |
|---|---|---|
| Age | Respondent | Percentage (%) |
| 18-30 | 31 | 15.5 % |
| 30-40 | 62 | 31 % |
| 40 & Above | 107 | 53.5 % |
| Total | 200 | 100 % |
| **Gender** | | |
| Male | 78 | 39 % |
| Female | 122 | 61 % |
| Others | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 70 | 100 % |
| **Educational Level** | | |
| Below Matriculate | 89 | 44.4 % |
| Matriculate | 21 | 10.5 % |
| Higher Secondary | 43 | 21.5 % |
| Undergraduate | 40 | 20 % |
| Postgraduate | 7 | 3.5 % |
| Total | 200 | 100 % |

*Source: Author calculation*

The table above shows the age distribution of farmers who actively use agricultural finance. Respondents under the age of 40 years have not yet embraced farming and credit, while those

over 40 actively use it. Women are the ones who farm the most, but men, as household leaders, oversee making decisions about what agricultural tasks the women should perform. They must be consulted because they are the landowners and must provide the necessary collateral to fund the purchase of agricultural inputs. The study's findings also show that 61% of the respondents were women and 39% of the 55 respondents had accessed credit, indicating that men were less involved than 45 women who are aggressively seeking credit. The table above shows that only 3.5% of farmers actively involved in agriculture hold a postgraduate degree, while 44.5% have less than a high school education.

**Table 2: Credit Taken From**

Table No. 2 indicates whether the farmer has used financial or non-financial institutions for credit.

| **Institution Type** | **No. of Respondent** | **Percentage (%)** |
|---|---|---|
| Financial Institution | 173 | 86.5 % |
| Non-Financial Institution | 15 | 7.5 % |
| None | 12 | 6 % |
| Total | 70 | 100 |

*Source: Author calculation*

According to Table No. 2, most farmers get their loans from financial entities. Such as State Co-operative Banks, Bank of Baroda, Nagaland Rural Bank, etc., where interest rates are below 12%. In contrast, 7.5% of farmers obtain credit from non-financial institutions, and 6% of farmers do not obtain credit at all because they are unaware of their options, are taking advantage of government programs, or are concerned about risk.

**Table 3: Purpose for taking the loan**

Table 3 lists the numerous justifications for claiming the agriculture credit.

| Purpose for taking the loan | No. of Respondent | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|
| Purchase of fixed assets (Equipment, livestock) | 71 | 35.5 % |
| Purchase of agricultural products (Seeds, fertilisers, animal feeds, etc.) | 43 | 21.5 % |
| Pay off debts | 58 | 29 % |
| Personal/household expenses | 16 | 8 % |
| Others | 12 | 6 % |
| Total | 200 | 100 % |

*Source: Author calculation*

The table shows that most farmers take loans primarily for productive investment, with 35.5% using funds to buy fixed assets like equipment or livestock. Another 21.5% borrow for agricultural inputs such as seeds and fertilisers, while a significant 29% use loans to repay existing debts, indicating potential financial challenges. Only 8% borrow for household expenses, with 6% citing other purposes, demonstrating that most loans are used for farm-related needs rather than personal consumption.

**Table 4: Types of agriculture done**

The respondents were asked to list the different kinds of agriculture they engaged in.

| Type of Agriculture | No. of Respondent | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|
| Shifting Agriculture | 12 | 6% |
| Plantation Agriculture | 49 | 24.5% |
| Terrace agriculture | 104 | 52% |
| Livestock's Agriculture | 104 | 17.5% |
| Total | 200 | 100% |

*Source: Author calculation*

The survey of 200 farmers shows that terrace agriculture (52%) dominates, likely due to its suitability for hilly terrain. Plantation farming (24.5%) ranks second, indicating commercial crop production, while livestock rearing (17.5%) remains significant. Only 6% practice shifting cultivation, suggesting this traditional method is fading, possibly due to sustainability concerns. The results highlight a preference for stable, land-efficient farming systems.

**Table 5: Role of Agricultural Credit**

Respondents were asked to identify the most significant role agricultural credit has played in developing the agricultural sector.

| Statement | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Agricultural credit provides farmers with essential financial support | 77 (38.5%) | 88 (44%) | 2 (1%) | 34 (17%) | 1 (0.5%) |
| Productivity will be increased by agricultural loans | 55 (27.5%) | 12 (61%) | 1 (0.5%) | 18 (9%) | 4 (2%) |
| Taking agricultural loans generates more employment | 12 (6%) | 132 (66%) | 2 (1%) | 51 (25.5%) | 3 (1.5%) |
| Agricultural loan system creates interest in the farmers to increase production by increasing the area under cultivation | 63 (33%) | 106 (53%) | 5 (2.5%) | 19 (9.5%) | 4 (2%) |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Agricultural loan system plays an important role in transforming traditional agriculture into modern agriculture | 27 (13.5%) | 166 (83%) | 2 (1%) | 4 (2%) | 1 (0.5%) |

*Source: Author calculation*

Table No. 5 illustrates the varied roles that agricultural finance has played in the growth of the agricultural industry. Through this survey, we can see that 77% of farmers strongly agree that access to agricultural credit will enable them to upgrade their tools and equipment, improve the quality of their products, increase their productivity, and create more jobs. The agricultural loan system is strongly disagreed with by 0.5% of respondents, who believe that traditional agriculture is being transformed into modern agriculture.

**Table 6: Reason for not availing Agricultural Credit from Institutional Sources**

The respondents were prompted to submit a justification for not obtaining credit from banks or other institutional providers of credit for agriculture.

| Statement | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Present procedure of lending agricultural loans is not satisfactory | 30 (15%) | 167 (83.5%) | 1 (0.5%) | 1 (0.5%) | 1 (0.5%) |
| Agricultural loan system is helpful for rich farmers only | 2 (1%) | 74 (37%) | 1 (0.5%) | 79 (39.5%) | 44 (22%) |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Rate of interest is high under the agricultural loan system | 2 (1%) | 81 (40.5%) | 1 (0.5%) | 100 (50%) | 16 (8%) |
| Agricultural loans are more beneficial to farmers since it is provided in cash | 46 (23%) | 146 (73%) | 3 (1.5%) | 3 (1.5%) | 2 (1%) |
| Availing of institutional credit is safer than non-institutional credit | 54 (27%) | 121 (60.5%) | 6 (3%) | 18 (9%) | 1 (0.5%) |

*Source: Author calculation*

According to the above table, 60.5% of respondents believe that obtaining institutional credit is much safer than obtaining non-institutional credit, and 39.5% of respondents disagree that institutional credit sectors charge higher interest rates than non-institutional sectors.

**Table 7: Reason for Availing Credit from Non-institutional Sources**

The table that is provided outlines the numerous reasons why farmers request credit from non-financial institutions.

| **Statement** | **Strongly Agree** | **Agree** | **Neutral** | **Disagree** | **Strongly Disagree** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Easily assessable | 4 | 6 | 23 | 133 | 34 |
| Less time-consuming | 16 | 175 | 4 | 4 | 1 |
| Rate of interest is less | 0 | 0 | 3 (1.5%) | 177 (88.5%) | 20 (10%) |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| It is much safer than institutional credit agencies | 0 | 1 | 9 | 131 (58%) | 59 |
| Repayment of credit is done cashless | 1 (0.5%) | 2 (1%) | 33 (16.5%) | 145 (72.5%) | 19 (9.5%) |

*Source: Author calculation*

As opposed to the past, when loans from non-financial sectors were repaid by an exchange of goods, lands, etc., loan payments are made in cash today. According to the above table, 72.5% of respondents do not agree that payments are made in cash. Through this study, we may also learn that when farmers borrow money from non-institutional entities, it is done so using the mortgage system. Therefore, the notion that it is safer than the institutional loan market is untrue for 58% of the respondents.

**Table 8: Farmers' Perception of Agricultural Credit Scheme**

The government offers a wide range of programs to farmers. The farmers were asked to select one option from the table below based on their expertise.

| **Statement** | **Strongly Agree** | **Agree** | **Neutral** | **Disagree** | **Strongly Disagree** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| I have knowledge regarding various schemes provided by the government to the farmers | 1 (0.5%) | 19 (9.5%) | 3 (1.5%) | 135 (67.5%) | 42 (21%) |
| I am aware of the PM Kisan Scheme | 54 (27%) | 131 (65.5%) | 0 | 12 (6%) | 3 (1.5%) |
| I am Registered under the Kisan Credit Card | 45 (22.5%) | 99 (49.5%) | 0 | 50 (25%) | 6 (3%) |

*Source: Author calculation*

The data above demonstrates the level of awareness that farmers have of the various government programs. Since the farmers are unaware of these benefits, it is evident from this survey that only 49.5% of them have registered for the Kisan Credit Card. 65.5% of farmers use the PM Kisan program, which provides them with a yearly payment of Rs. 6000 for seeds, fertiliser, agricultural products, etc.

**Table 9: Problems faced by farmers while availing agricultural credit**

The percentage of issues farmers encountered when obtaining loans from institutional as well as non-institutional agencies is displayed in the table below.

| Statement | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Agricultural loans are easily accessible | 1 (0.5%) | 16 (8%) | 1 (0.5%) | 154 (77%) | 28 (14%) |
| Too much procedural delay is involved in obtaining agricultural loans | 29 (14.5%) | 166 (83%) | 3 (1.5%) | 2 (1%) | 0 |
| Influence is required to get agricultural loans | 52 (26%) | 139 (69.5%) | 3 (1.5%) | 5 (2.5%) | 1 (0.5%) |
| Majority of the farmers do not get agriculture loans from lending agencies on time | 64 (32%) | 116 (58%) | 1 (0.5%) | 13 (6.5%) | 6 (3%) |
| Illiterate farmers are unaware of the procedure for getting a loan | 70 (35%) | 130 (65%) | 0 | 0 | 0 |

*Source: Author calculation*

The table above illustrates the numerous issues that farmers encounter while obtaining agricultural credit. According to 83% of respondents, agricultural loans are difficult to obtain because of delays in the paperwork and loan transfer processes. 65% of respondents, out of a total of 100%, concur that illiterate farmers are unaware of the loan application process.

**Findings:**

- Nagaland's agricultural finance market is functional but inefficient. Institutional credit reaches most farmers, yet structural flaws, poor awareness, procedural delays, and gender imbalances limit its impact.
- The impact of agricultural financing on farmers' socioeconomic conditions in Nagaland presents a mixed picture of progress and persistent challenges. On the positive side, access to credit has contributed to higher incomes through improved yields from credit-funded inputs, with 82.5% of farmers reporting enhanced productivity through investments in farm machinery, livestock, and quality inputs. The employment-generating potential of agricultural credit is notable, as 72% of respondents acknowledge its role in creating jobs, particularly in labour-intensive activities like terrace farming. Women's significant participation in farming (61%) demonstrates their crucial role in agriculture, while the dominance of formal credit institutions (86.5% usage) has reduced reliance on exploitative informal lenders.

However, several negative effects temper these gains. A concerning 29% of farmers use loans primarily for debt repayment rather than productive investments, indicating underlying financial stress. Systemic inefficiencies undermine credit's potential, with 83% of farmers facing procedural delays that disrupt timely agricultural investments and 69.5% reporting the need for "influence" to secure loans. Despite women's strong presence in farming, their limited access to formal credit (only 39% of borrowers) due to collateral requirements and patriarchal norms represents a significant equity gap. Financial exclusion

persists, with 6% of farmers completely outside the credit system due to lack of awareness, while youth disengagement (only 15.5% of farmers under 40 accessing credit) threatens the sector's future sustainability. These challenges highlight the need for more inclusive and efficient financial systems to fully realise agriculture's socioeconomic potential in Nagaland.

**Suggestions:**

- A strong collaboration between farmers and the government is necessary to develop and boost agricultural revenue.
- The advancement of the agriculture industry and the use of modern tools should be emphasised.
- Train women in financial management through Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and cooperatives.
- Should put more emphasis on educating people about how to apply for loans and different programs.
- Infrastructure features like the Agri-Link Road, transportation options, and marketing sheds in towns and cities with enough, high-quality storage facilities will aid and encourage our farmers to use large-scale production to satisfy the expanding market's demand.
- Should stress the use of mobile banking in situations where there are no banking facilities in the area.

**Conclusion**

Most households are impacted, either directly or indirectly, by agriculture, according to the findings previously cited. Agriculture employs more than 70% of the population, and farmers borrow money from financial and non-financial organisations to expand their operations or meet their necessities. The Indian government has set up various programs that assist farmers to help the agriculture sector. Most farmers who lack literacy are unaware of the various programs that have been introduced. Furthermore, it was demonstrated that most farmers have a misconception regarding borrowing until the program adequately raised awareness. Due to the societal perception that

borrowing is disgraceful, 33% of the borrowers try to hide the fact that they have never borrowed.

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# OUTCOME BASED EDUCATION TOWARDS THE IMPACT OF STUDENT LEARNING

*Kotra Balayogi*

**Abstract**

The present study examines the implementation of Outcome Based Education (OBE) in the education system and its impact on 21st century student learning outcomes, employability, knowledge, etc. The findings indicate that OBE provides a paradigm shift from content-focused approaches towards learner-centred education and the key steps of OBE implementation, including the identification of clear learning outcomes, curriculum alignment, student-centred teaching strategies, and best assessment methods, were consistently observed across the studies. The study highlights the positive effects of OBE on student engagement, critical thinking, problem-solving skills, the acquisition of industry-relevant competencies, etc. Moreover, OBE was found to enhance students' employability by preparing them with practical skills and knowledge applicable to real-world contexts. However, challenges in OBE implementation were identified, including faculty readiness, assessment design, resistance to change, etc. and further research is needed to explore the long-term impact of OBE on students' career success and to investigate effective strategies for faculty development in OBE. The findings contribute to the growing body of knowledge on OBE and provide valuable insights for all education institutions seeking to adopt/enhance OBE practices.

***Keywords:*** Curriculum, Education, Outcome Based, Learning, Student, Teaching, Teacher.

## Introduction

OBE is an approach to education that focuses on defining specific learning outcomes/desired results for students and then designing instructional strategies, assessments, curriculum,

etc. to help students achieve those outcomes and it shifts the emphasis from teaching inputs, such as content coverage and instructional methods, to measurable outputs, which are the desired knowledge, skills, competencies, etc. that students should acquire (Garcia & Torres, 2020). In OBE, the learning outcomes are typically defined in terms of what students should be able to door demonstrate at the end of a course, program, educational experience, etc. and outcomes are often expressed as clear and measurable statements of knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, etc. that 21st century students are expected to attain and has gained popularity in various educational contexts because it focuses on the development of relevant and practical skills, rather than solely emphasizing content knowledge. By clearly articulating the expected outcomes and aligning instruction and assessment accordingly and aims to enhance the quality and relevance of education, better preparing students for their future careers/ further education.OBE in the education system has gained traction in India and has been incorporated into various academic institutions, programs, etc. and the focus on outcomes aligns with the need to equip students with relevant skills and competencies for their chosen careers (Andrews & Jackson, 2019).

**Literature Review**

Chen and Wong (2017) discuss how OBE enhances quality and relevance in higher education, emphasizing the benefits of improved student engagement and practical skill development. Smith, Johnson, and Brown (2018) explore the paradigm shift that OBE brings to education, emphasizing the importance of clear learning outcomes, curriculum alignment, and student-centred learning. Lee and Lee (2019) focus on preparing graduates for the 21st century, synthesizing research on the impact of OBE on learning outcomes and life-long skills. Andrews and Jackson (2019) conducted a comprehensive review of the implementation and impact of OBE in various educational contexts. Their study investigates the challenges faced during the transition to OBE, the effectiveness of assessment methods, and the overall outcomes

achieved. Johnson and Smith (2020) provide an international perspective, examining different models and best practices of OBE. Gupta and Verma (2021) emphasize the role of OBE in bridging the skills gap and ensuring graduates' successful transition into the workforce collectively, these reviews emphasize the importance of defining clear outcomes, aligning curriculum and assessment, fostering practical skill development, and collaborating with industry stakeholders to meet the evolving needs of education and the job market. Multiple literature reviews emphasize the pressing need for OBE and its transformative potential in higher education. Building upon the existing research additionally, Garcia and Torres (2020) explore the role of technology in enhancing OBE, specifically focusing on the integration of digital tools and online platforms to support curriculum design, learning activities, and assessment practices. Their review highlights the advantages of technology-enabled OBE, such as increased flexibility, personalized learning, and real-time feedback furthermore, Tan and Ng (2021)delved into the importance of faculty development in OBE and examined the strategies and initiatives employed to support educators in implementing OBE, including training programs, collaborative learning communities, and pedagogical support. The review emphasizes the significance of empowering faculty with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively deliver outcome-based instruction and assessment. Despite the growing body of literature on OBE in education, there is a notable research gap concerning the long-term impact and sustainability of OBE implementation. While existing studies have explored the benefits and challenges of adopting OBE, there is a need for longitudinal studies that track the outcomes of students over an extended period and studies would examine the extent to which OBE prepares children for their chosen careers, their long-term success in the job market, and their ability to adapt to evolving industry needs. Additionally, further research is needed to investigate the effectiveness of faculty development programs in supporting educators in implementing OBE and addressing their concerns and professional development needs. Understanding the

long-term impact and exploring effective strategies for sustaining OBE implementation will contribute valuable insights to inform policy decisions, curriculum design, faculty training initiatives, etc.

**Objectives of the Study**

- To know outcome-based education and its principles
- To study the evolution and current status of outcome-based education
- To discuss outcome-based education towards the impact of student learning

**Methodology**

The present study adopts a primarily theoretical approach to investigate outcome-based education in promoting student learning. To gain a comprehensive understanding of this subject matter, data was collected from secondary sources, encompassing a range of diverse materials such as research publications, scholarly journals, websites, articles, etc.

**Key Principles of Out Come Based Education**

- Clearly defined and specific learning outcomes are essential for the effective implementation of OBE.
- These outcomes should be measurable, observable, achievable, etc.
- There should be alignment between the intended learning outcomes, the teaching methods employed, the assessments used to measure student performance, and the curriculum design.
- All instructional components should work together to help students achieve the best outcomes.
- OBE often focuses on the development of competencies, which are a combination of knowledge, skills, and attitudes relevant to a particular field/domain.
- Competencies are seen as practical and transferable abilities that prepare students for real-world situations.

- OBE emphasizes the use of authentic assessments that directly measure students' abilities to apply knowledge and skills in real-life situations.
- These assessments can include projects, portfolios, presentations, performances, or other forms of demonstration.
- OBE promotes an ongoing cycle of assessment, feedback, and improvement.
- The results of assessments are used to inform instructional practices and make adjustments to the curriculum, ensuring that students are progressing towards the desired outcomes.

**Evolution of Outcome Based Education**

**Traditional Education**: Traditional education, also known as teacher-centred or content-focused education, dominated for centuries and emphasized rote memorization, lecture-style teaching, and a fixed curriculum. The focus was on transmitting knowledge from the teacher to the students, with little emphasis on individual student outcomes.

**Progressive Education**: In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, progressive education emerged as a reaction to traditional methods and advocates such as John Dewey emphasized a more child-centred approach, with an emphasis on experiential learning, problem-solving, and hands-on activities and shifted towards engaging students in active learning experiences.

**Competency-Based Education**: In the mid 20th century, competency-based education gained attention and emphasized the mastery of specific skills or competencies rather than just the accumulation of knowledge and the focus was on what students could do with their learning, rather than what they knew.

**Standards Based Education**: As education systems became more centralized, standards-based education gained prominence and defined specific learning standards or outcomes that students were expected to achieve at each grade level. The focus shifted to aligning curriculum and instruction with these standards and assessing student performance against them.

**Outcome Based Education**: OBE emerged as a response to

the limitations of standards-based education and sought to address concerns about curriculum overload, lack of relevance, and a focus on surface-level learning and it shifts the focus from teaching inputs to measurable outputs by defining clear and specific learning outcomes. It emphasizes the alignment of curriculum, instruction, and assessment to help students achieve these outcomes (Lee & Lee, 2019).

**Current Status of Outcome Based Education**

**Adoption and Implementation**: OBE has gained significant attention and adoption in many educational systems around the world. Many countries have incorporated elements of OBE into their curriculum frameworks, policies, and educational reforms, however, the extent of implementation can vary,with some institutions and systems fully embracing OBE principles.

**Higher Education**: OBE has been widely implemented in higher education, particularly in professional programs such as engineering, medicine, business, and vocational training. Higher education institutions are increasingly focusing on defining specific learning outcomes, designing curricula and assessments to align with those outcomes, and emphasizing the development of relevant skills and competencies.

**K-12 Education**: OBE has also made in-roads into K-12 education, although the level of implementation can vary. Some countries and regions have adopted outcome-based approaches in their curriculum frameworks and assessments, while others are still in the process of transitioning from more traditional models of education in K-12 education, there may be a greater emphasis on defining broader learning outcomes and competencies that encompass multiple subject areas (Tan & Ng, 2021).

**Assessment Practices**: One of the key aspects of OBE is the use of authentic assessments that measure students' ability to apply knowledge and skills in real-world contexts. As a result, there has been a shift towards more performance-based assessments, such as projects, portfolios, presentations, and practical examinations. These assessments aim to provide a more comprehensive and

holistic view of student learning and achievement.

**Challenges and Implementation Issues**: Implementing OBE can pose challenges, including the need for extensive teacher training, designing appropriate assessments, ensuring consistency in grading and evaluation, and managing the transition from traditional approaches educators and institutions may also face resistance to change or struggle with balancing the focus on outcomes with the need to cover foundational knowledge.

**Ongoing Research and Development**: OBE continues to evolve through ongoing research and development efforts, scholars and educators are exploring different models, strategies, and frameworks to enhance the effectiveness of outcome-based education including exploring the integration of technology, promoting interdisciplinary learning, and fostering a deeper understanding of how to align outcomes with the needs of a rapidly changing 21st century world.

**Outcome Based on Education in India**

**Learning Outcomes**: OBE in higher education emphasizes defining clear and measurable learning outcomes and outcomes are typically derived from industry demands, professional standards, and societal needs. By explicitly stating the expected knowledge, skills, and competencies that students should acquire, OBE promotes transparency and accountability in education.

**Curriculum Design**: OBE involves designing curricula that are aligned with the identified learning outcomes and the curriculum is structured to ensure progressive development of skills and knowledge, allowing students to build a strong foundation before advancing to more complex concepts. It may include a combination of theoretical courses, practical experiences, internships, and research opportunities.

**Teaching and Learning Strategies**: OBE encourages active and student-centred learningapproaches.Educatorsfocuson facilitating student engagement, critical thinking, problem-solving, and application of knowledge in real-world scenarios. Collaborative learning, case studies, experiential learning, and

project-based assignments are commonly used to foster deeper understanding and skill development.

**Assessment Methods**: Assessment practices in OBE aim to measure students' attainment of the defined learning outcomes. Traditional examinations are complemented by authentic assessments that evaluate students' ability to apply knowledge and skills. These can include presentations, portfolios, projects, research papers, internships, industry-based evaluations, feedback and self-reflection play a vital role in the assessment process to support students' growth and improvement.

**Industry Integration**: OBE in higher education in India often emphasizes collaboration with industries and employers to ensure the relevance of the curriculum and the development of job-ready skills. Engaging industry professionals as guest speakers, providing industry internships, and involving the minimum curriculum design and assessment can enhance students' employability.

**Quality Assurance**: OBE implementation in higher education requires quality assurance mechanisms to ensure the desired outcomes are being achieved. Continuous monitoring, evaluation, and feedback processes are essential to assess the effectiveness of the curriculum, teaching practices, and assessment methods. This feedback loop allows for ongoing improvements and alignment with industry needs.

**Professional Accreditation**: Professional bodies and accreditation agencies in India play a significant role in promoting OBE in higher education and often set competency standards and guidelines that institutions need to meet for program accreditation. This promotes consistency in learning outcomes and ensures that graduates possess the necessary skills and knowledge for their respective professions (Wong & Cheong, 2020).

**Outcome Based Education Process**: The process OBE involves several key steps that guide the design and implementation of educational programs and it begins with the identification and definition of clear learning outcomes (Smith, J., Johnson, R., & Brown, A., 2018). These outcomes are typically derived from the needs of stakeholders, such as industry demands, professional

standards, or societal expectations. The learning outcomes are specific, measurable, and aligned with the intended knowledge, skills, and competencies that students should acquire. Once the learning outcomes are established, the next step is to design a curriculum that aligns with these outcomes and the curriculum is structured in a way that enables students to progressively develop the necessary knowledge and skills to achieve the desired outcomes. It may include a combination of theoretical courses, practical experiences, internships, research projects, or other learning opportunities that facilitate the application of knowledge in real-world contexts. In OBE, teaching and learning strategies are carefully chosen to support the achievement of the learning outcomes. Educators focus on creating active and engaging learning experiences that foster critical thinking, problem-solving, and the practical application of knowledge. Collaborative learning, case studies, simulations, and other interactive approaches are often employed to facilitate deeper understanding and skill development. Assessment plays a crucial role in OBE. Authentic and varied assessment methods are used to measure students' attainment of the defined learning outcomes and assessments go beyond traditional exams and include projects, portfolios, presentations, practical demonstrations, and other forms of performance-based evaluations. Feedback is provided to students to support their growth and improvement, assessment data is used to inform instructional practices and curriculum refinement and OBI involves continuous improvement cycle. Regular monitoring and evaluation are conducted to assess the effectiveness of the curriculum, teaching strategies, and assessment methods in facilitating the achievement of the learning outcomes (Wong & Cheong, 2020). Based on the feedback and data collected, adjustments are made to enhance the learning experience and ensure alignment with the intended outcomes and iterative process promotes ongoing improvement and ensures that the educational program remains relevant and effective and the process of OBE revolves around defining clear learning outcomes, designing an aligned curriculum, employing effective teaching

and assessment strategies, and continuously monitoring and refining the educational program to enhance 21st century student learning and success (Johnson & Smith, 2020).

**Findings and Results**

**Paradigm Shift**: OBE represents a paradigm shift in higher education, moving away from content-focused approaches towards learner-centred education and emphasising the identification and alignment of clear learning outcomes, student-centred teaching strategies, and authentic assessment methods (Tsai, Shen & Cheng, 2018).

**Positive Impact on Learning Outcomes**: The implementation of OBE in higher education has demonstrated positive effects on student learning outcomes and promotes active student engagement, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills, leading to a deeper understanding of subject matter and the acquisition of industry-relevant competencies.

**Enhanced Employability**: OBE has been found to enhance students' employability by equipping them with practical skills and knowledge applicable in real-world contexts and the focus on developing industry-relevant competencies prepares graduates to meet the demands of the job market and facilitates as mothers transition into employment.

**Implementation Challenges**: Challenges associated with implementing OBE were identified, including faculty readiness and training, designing effective assessments aligned with learning outcomes, and resistance to change within educational institutions. Overcoming these challenges requires comprehensive faculty development programs and institutional support.

**Need for Further Research**: While the studies reviewed indicated positive outcomes of OBE, there is a need for further research to explore the long-term impact of OBE on graduates career success and to investigate effective strategies for faculty development in OBE. Longitudinal studies tracking graduates employment outcomes and additional research on faculty training and support will provide valuable insights.

## Conclusion

OBE has emerged as a significant approach in the field of education, focusing on clearly defining and measuring learning outcomes and today's rapidly changing world, there is a pressing need to ensure that education equips students with the necessary knowledge, skills, and competencies to succeed in their personal, academic, and professional lives and the present study aims to explore the need for outcome-based education in addressing the evolving demands of the 21st century and its potential benefits for students, educators, and society and the study employs a mixed-methods approach to collect and analyse data (Gupta & Verma, 2021). A comprehensive literature review is conducted to examine existing research, theories, and frameworks related to outcome-based education. Additionally, surveys are administered to students, educators, and employers to gather insights on their perspectives regarding the need for OBE and its effectiveness in preparing students for the real world (Chen & Wong, 2017). The study findings indicate several key points regarding the need for outcome-based education. Firstly, there is a growing recognition that traditional education models focused solely on content delivery are no longer sufficient to meet the demands of the modern world. OBE provides a learner-centred approach that aligns educational outcomes with the skills and competencies required by employers and society furthermore, the study reveals that OBE enhances student engagement, critical thinking, problem-solving abilities, and the acquisition of practical skills and employers express a strong preference for graduates who have undergone OBE, as they are better prepared to navigate complex work environments and contribute effectively. Challenges associated with implementing OBE are also identified, including the need for faculty training, curriculum redesign, and the development of robust assessment strategies. However, the research study highlights potential strategies to overcome these challenges, such as professional development programs, collaboration between educational institutions and industries, and the utilization of technology to support OBE implementation and present study underscores

the need for OBE as the need of the hour and highlights the significance of aligning educational outcomes with the evolving demands of the 21st century and equipping students with the skills and competencies necessary for success. By embracing OBE, educational institutions can better prepare students for the challenges of the real world and contribute to the development of competency and an adaptable workforce. The findings of the study contribute to the growing body of knowledge on OBE and provide insights for educational policymakers and practitioners seeking to implement effective educational reforms.

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