

Zakir Husain Centre for Educational Studies

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Brief Bio:

Pradeep Kumar Choudhury is an Assistant Professor of Economics at Zakir Husain Centre for Educational Studies, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University and an Affiliate Associate at South Asia Institute, Harvard University where he was a visiting Research Fellow in 2023-24. Pradeep is also an Associate Researcher of Centre de Sciences Humaines (CSH) Delhi. He is one of the founding members of the Comparative Expertise & Research in Education (CERE) Observatory of BRICS countries of the Institute of Education, HSE University, Moscow. Pradeep's research spans the field of development economics, with a focus on education. In his work, he focuses on the measurement and explanation of educational and learning inequalities, its interaction with climate, technology, and early life decisions. Pradeep's most recent collaborative study with University of Pennsylvania and University of Copenhagen examines how in-class smartphone bans affect student outcomes in higher education in India. He also collaborated with Stanford University (USA), World Health Organisation (WHO) and UNESCO. Pradeep also received the China-India Visiting Scholar Fellow grant of the Ashoka University in 2021-22.

He graduated in Economics from University of Hyderabad and received his PhD in education economics from National University of Educational Planning and Administration, New Delhi.

Primary Academic Position:

Assistant Professor of Economics, Zakir Husain Centre for Educational Studies, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, 2015–present

Other Positions and Past Affiliations:

Associate Fellow, South Asia Institute, Harvard University, 2024–26

Associate Researcher, Centre de Sciences Humaines, Delhi, 2025–29

Visiting Research Fellow, Harvard University, 2023–24

Assistant Professor, Institute for Studies in Industrial Development, 2013–15

Research Fellow, Public Health Foundation of India, 2012–13

Education:

Post-Doctoral Fellow, South Asia Institute, Harvard University, USA, 2023-24

Ph.D., Economics of Education, National University of Educational Planning and Administration, 2013

M.A., Economics, University of Hyderabad, 2006

B.A., Economics, Fakir Mohan University, 2004

Published/Forthcoming Papers:

“Home-learning environment and cognitive and academic outcomes among children aged 4–8 years: A cross-sectional study from South India.” *Dialogues in Health*, 2025, 7: 1-9, (Co-authored). [Link](#).

“Why Do More Boys Enrol in Private Schools? Evidence From India.” *Social Change*, 2025, 55(3), 387-413. (Co-authored). [Link](#).

“School choice in rural Odisha, India: Understanding from a multi-stakeholder perspective.” *Prospects*, 2024, 54, 723–737. (Co-authored). [Link](#)

“Vocational education, skill training and self-employment: evidence from the non-farm sector in India.” *Journal of Vocational Education & Training*, 2024, 77 (4): 912-938. (Co-authored). [Link](#)

“Impacts of industrial actions, protests, strikes and lockouts by health and care workers during COVID-19 and other pandemic contexts: a systematic review.” *Hum Resour Health*, 2024, 22, 47. (Co-authored). [Link](#)

“Socioeconomic inequality in accessing professional higher education in India: New evidence from a household survey.” *The Indian Economic Journal*, 2024, OnlineFirst. (Co-authored). [Link](#)

“Student Loans in Financing Engineering Education: Some New Evidence from India”, *Journal of Educational Planning and Administration*, 2024, 38 (3): 193-216. (Co-authored).

“What drives demand for private tutoring in secondary education? Evidence from India.” *Journal of Social and Economic Development*, 2024, 26 (3): 816-839. (Co-authored). [Link](#)

“Analysing inequalities in access and household investment in market-based supplemental educational services in India: A case of post-compulsory school education in Haryana.” *Research in Post-Compulsory Education*, 2024, 29 (1): 87-116. (Co-authored). [Link](#)

“Regional and socioeconomic inequalities in access to pre-primary education in India: evidence from a recent household survey.” *International Journal of Child Care and Education Policy*, 2023, 17, 13: 1-25. (Co-authored). [Link](#)

“Neoliberalism, Compulsory Education and Compulsion to Pay: Magnitude, Patterns and Determinants of Household Expenditure in Indian Punjab.” *Review of Development and Change*, 2023, 28 (2): 245-67. (Co-authored). [Link](#)

“Policies and Practices of Managing Higher Education in India: Lessons Learned from the Pandemic Experience.” *Journal of Development Policy and Practice*, 2023, OnlineFirst. (Co-authored). [Link](#)

“Household Expenditure on Secondary Education in Haryana (India): Levels, Patterns and Determinants.” *Millennial Asia*, 2022, 14 (4): 605-35. (Co-authored). [Link](#)

“Do parental resources reduce the gender gap in math for primary school-going children? Evidence from India.” *Education 3-13*, 2022, 52 (8): 1071-1088. (Co-authored). [Link](#)

“An analysis of school shifting patterns in India: what do recent data tell us?” *Journal of Social and Economic Development*, 2022, 24 (2): 295-318. (Co-authored). [Link](#)

“How Much do Households Spend on Professional Higher Education in India? Results from a National Survey.” *Indian Journal of Human Development*, 2022, 16 (1): 77-96. (Co-authored). [Link](#)

“An Empirical Analysis of Household Expenditure on Engineering Education in Odisha.” *Millennial Asia*, 2022, 13 (3): 442-469. (Co-authored). [Link](#)

“Who all access private coaching in higher education and how much do they spend? Evidence from India.” *Journal of the Asia Pacific Economy*, 2021, 28 (4): 1433-55. (Co-authored). [Link](#)

“Do private schools really produce more learning than public schools in India? Accounting for student’s school absenteeism and the time spent on homework.” *International Journal of Educational Development*, 2021, 83, 102395. (Co-authored). [Link](#)

“Determinants of Private School Choice in India: All about the Family Backgrounds?” *Journal of School Choice*, 2020, 15(4): 576-602. (Co-authored). [Link](#)

“Computer science skills across China, India, Russia, and the United States.” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 2019, 116 (14): 6732-36. (Co-authored). [Link](#)

“Student assessment of quality of engineering education in India: evidence from a field survey.” *Quality Assurance in Education*, 27 (1): 103-26. [Link](#)

“Role of Private Sector in Medical Education and Human Resource Development for Health in India.” *Economic and Political Weekly*, 2016, 51 (3): 71-79. [Link](#)

“Growth of Engineering Education in India: Status, Issues and Challenges.” *Higher Education for the Future*, 2016, 3 (1): 93-107. [Link](#)

“Explaining the Role of Parental Education in the Regional Variation in Infant Mortality in India.” *Asia & the Pacific Policy Studies*, 2015, 2 (3): 544-572. [Link](#)

“Explaining Gender Discrimination in Employment and Earnings of Engineering Graduates in India”, *Journal of Educational Planning and Administration*, 2015, 29 (3): 225-246. [Link](#)

Work-in-Progress:

“Removing Phones from Classrooms Improves Academic Performance.” With *Alp Sungu and Andreas Bjerre-Nielsen*. [Link](#).

“Does Exposure Matter? Parent's Early Childhood Exposure to Public Schools and Choice of Private Schools.” With *Nitin Bharti and Pabitra Chowdhury*. [Link](#).

“Analysing Marital Status and Gender Wage Gap: Evidence from India.” With *Shweta Bahl and Minali Grover* (Submitted).

Books, Chapters, Working Papers and Policy Articles:

“COVID-19 and Education in India: Impact on Access, Inclusion and Learning.” 2025, Routledge, UK. (Co-edited volume). [Link](#)

“Contextualising Educational Studies in India: Research, Policy and Practices.” 2021, Routledge, UK. (Co-edited volume). [Link](#)

“Financing of Teacher Education in India.” In: Panda, Pranati (ed.), *Teacher Education Landscapes in India: Governance and Quality Management*, 2024, Routledge, UK. (Co-authored). [Link](#)

“The toll that extreme heat takes on women.” Opinion Page, *The Hindu*, July 16, 2024. (Co-authored). [Link](#)

“Data sources for higher education research in India: availability, gaps and requirements.” In: Mishra, P.K. & Pachauri, A. (eds.), *India Higher Education Report 2023: Higher Education Research*, 2025, Routledge, UK. [Link](#)

“Mind the Gap: Analysing Inequalities in Higher Education among Muslims in Uttar Pradesh.” In: Khan, A.U., Shaban, A. & Motkuri, V. (eds.), *Muslims in Uttar Pradesh: Demographic Features and Socio-Economic Inequalities*, Routledge, UK. [Link](#)

“COVID-19 and Digital Learning in Higher Education in India: Unpacking the Inequity in Students’ Experiences.” In: Bhushan, S. (ed), *The Evolving Landscape of Higher Education in India: Post-Pandemic Policies and Transformations* Springer, Singapore. (Co-authored). [Link](#)

“Unravelling the Policy-Practice Gap in Education in Post-Colonial India.” Review Essay. *Social Change*, 2024, 54(3), 433-439. (Co-authored). [Link](#)

“Envisioning the role of philanthropic and corporate social responsibility contributions to education in India.” In: Policy Insights: Models of Philanthropy in Education, NORRAG, 2024, Geneva. [Link](#)

“Gender gaps in employment preferences among university graduates in India.” In: Mishra, R.K., Kujur, S.K., Trivikram, K. (eds.), *Higher Education, Employment and Economic Development in India: Problems, Prospects, and Policies*, 2023, Routledge, UK. (Co-authored). [Link](#)

“In the Middle of Hope and Crisis: What Union Budget 2022-23 Offers for Education?” *Economic and Political Weekly*, 2022, 57 (25): 18-23. (Co-authored). [Link](#)

“Changing Face of Higher Education and Development in Asia-Pacific.” In: Lee, W.O., Brown, P., Goodwin, A.L., Green, A. (eds), *International Handbook on Education Development in Asia-Pacific*, 2022, Springer, Singapore. (Co-authored). [Link](#)

“Policies and Practices of Financing Higher Education in Asia-Pacific Countries.” In: Lee, W.O., Brown, P., Goodwin, A.L., Green, A. (eds), *International Handbook on Education Development in Asia-Pacific*, 2022, Springer, Singapore. (Co-authored). [Link](#)

“Engineering Education in India.” In: Chattopadhyay, S., Varghese, N. V. & Marginson, S. (eds), *Changing Higher Education in India*, 2021, Bloomsbury, UK. pp. 187-210. (Co-authored). [Link](#)

“Changing Landscape of Professional Higher Education in India: What Do We Know and What Do Recent Data Tell Us?” In: Mani S. & Iyer, C.G. (eds), *India’s Economy and Society: Lateral Explorations*, 2021, Springer Nature, Singapore, pp. 287-324. (Co-authored). [Link](#)

“Paradoxes and Contradictions in the Growth of Engineering Education in India: Challenges and Prospects.” Working Paper No. CSD 1/2021, Council for Social Development, 2021. (Co-authored). [Link](#)

“Expanding Education Market and Parental Choice for Secondary Schools in India: Evidence from IHDS Data.” In: Tilak, J.B.G. (ed), *Universal Secondary Education in India: Issues, Challenges and Prospects*, 2020, Springer, Singapore, pp. 113-35. [Link](#)

“Taxation and Domestic Financing of Education in India.” NORRAG Special Issue 05 on Domestic Financing: Tax and Education, 2020, pp. 34-37. [Link](#)

“Parental Choice for Schools in the Changing Context of the State and Market in India.” In: Babu, S. (ed), *Education and Public Sphere: Exploring the Structures of Mediation in Post-Colonial India*, 2020, Routledge, UK. pp. 109-128. [Link](#)

“Inequality in Access to Higher Education in India between the Poor and the Rich.” In: Haque, T. & Reddy, D.N. (eds), *Social Development Report 2018*, 2019, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, pp. 187-202. (Co-authored). [Link](#)

“Pattern and Determinants of Household Expenditure on Higher Education: Evidence from Rural Odisha.” In: Bhushan, S. (ed), *The Future of Higher Education in India*, 2019, Springer, Singapore, pp. 165-180. [Link](#)

“NEET for Medical Education: Finding a Balance.” *Economic and Political Weekly*, 2016, 51:35, 16-19. [Link](#)

Research Funding and Collaboration:

Co-founder, “Comparative Expertise & Research in Education (CERE) Observatory in BRICS Countries.” HSE University, Moscow, Russia, 2025 - [Link](#)

“Effects of Smartphone Bans on Student Outcomes.” Collaboration with University of Pennsylvania, USA; University of Copenhagen, Denmark, 2023-25. [Link](#)

“Women and science, gender inequalities in higher education and scientific careers: The examples of engineering and medicine in India.” Women and Science Chair, Dauphine-PSL University, France, 2023-25. [Link](#)

“To conduct living systematic reviews of the literature to collate evidence on priority policy areas that guide health workforce monitoring, impact assessment, and normative guidance.” World Health Organisation, 2021-22.

“Assessing and Improving the Quality of Higher Education: An International Comparative Study.” Stanford University, 2017-19.

“Effectiveness of Selected Scholarship Schemes for the Improvement in Access and Retention of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Students in Odisha.” ICSSR, 2015-17.

“Students Loan as the Alternative to Costly Higher Education: Evidence from Odisha.” UGC, 2016-19.

“Regulatory Frameworks and Accountability Mechanisms Governing Private Sector Engagement in Education in India National Coalition for Education, Delhi, 2018.

Fellowships and Recognition:

Jamnalal Kaniram Bajaj Visiting Research Fellowship, South Asia Institute, Harvard University, 2023-24

Mentor, Association for Mentoring and Inclusion (AMIE), 2024-25

Member, Board of Studies, School of Social Sciences, JNU, New Delhi, 2025-28

China-India Visiting Scholar Fellow, Ashoka University, 2021-22

Advisory Member, Delhi Knowledge Cluster, Principal Scientific Advisor (PSA) to the Government of India & IIT Delhi, 2020-24

Member, Internal Quality Assurance Cell, NIEPA, New Delhi, 2020-present

Research Guide for IAS Officer Trainees, LBSNAA, 2022-23

Expert Member, Project Appraisal Committee, DIET, Moti Bagh, Delhi, 2022-24

Expert Member, Moderation Board Meeting, IGNOU, Delhi

Invited to write a report on “Educational Status of Minorities in Karnataka.” Directorate of Minorities, Government of Karnataka, 2022-23 (report submitted)

Teaching and Research Guidance:

Courses Taught: Economic Foundations of Education, Economics of Education I & II, Quantitative Research Methods, Education in India: Social Science Perspectives (MPhil/PhD coursework, ZHCES); Social Policies & Sustainable Development (MA-Public Policy & Sustainable Development Programme, TERI); Science, Engineering and Social Responsibility (PhD coursework, DTU); Microeconomics and Macroeconomics (MA Economics, IGNOU)

Courses for the proposed MA Education programme, ZHCES, JNU, (may commence from 2026-27 academic year): Foundations of Economics of Education; Advanced Economics of Education; Economics of Higher Education; Research Methods and Techniques (Quantitative); Market, Merit and Education (Sole); Skills Development and Labour Market Dynamics in India (Sole)

PhD Thesis Adviser: Meghna Sharma (Effort or Opportunity: A Study of the Determinants of Women's Labour Market Participation in India, awarded in 2022, first placement: World Bank); Amit Kumar (Student Loans and Financing of Professional Higher Education in Delhi, awarded in 2022, first placement: Young Lives); Sadath Hussain (Muslim Students in Indian Higher Education: A Comparative Study of Two Central Universities, awarded in 2024, first placement: Rocket Learning); Biswa Ranjan Baral (Emerging School Education Market in Odisha: A Study of Household Demand and Private Provisioning, awarded in 2024, first placement: Department of Higher Education, Odisha); Meghna Khurania (Gender Inequality in Vocational Education and Labour Market: A Study in Uttar Pradesh, 2020–); Alil Payeng (Gender, Engineering Education, and the Labour Market: A Study in Assam, 2020–); Steny Rapheal (Women's Care Work, Empowerment and Intimate Partner Violence: Evidence from Kerala, India, 2021–); Ashwini Kumar Yadav (Unbundling in Higher Education: A Study of Social and Market Relevance of Massive Open Online Courses in India, 2021–); Vijay Kumar Pal (Educational Technology, Schooling and Equity: A Study of Secondary Education in Delhi, 2021–); Murli Manohar Bando (: Understanding Urban Preschooling Market in India: A Study of Ranchi, Jharkhand, 2021–); Sapan Kumar Pradhan (Essays on Temperature and Inequalities in Human Development in India, 2023–); Monika Narayan (Essays on Son Preference and Gender Dynamics in India, 2023–); Aarushee Shukla (2025–)

MPhil Dissertation Adviser: Seven students were awarded MPhil degree.

Professional Activities:

Referee: American Educational Research Journal, Journal of Development Studies, Oxford Development Studies, Population Studies, International Journal of Educational Development, Economic and Political Weekly, Educational Studies, Journal of School Choice, Asia and the Pacific Policy Studies, Journal of the Asia Pacific Economy, Millennial Asia, Social Change, Higher Education for the Future, Journal of Social and Economic Development, Indian Journal of Human Development, Indian Economic Journal

Manuscript Reviewer: Oxford University Press, Taylor & Francis (Routledge), National Book Trust (India)

Conference Paper Reviewer: International Association for Feminist Economics, American Educational Research Association, Comparative & International Education Society, Globelics, Comparative Education Society of India

Participation in International Conferences & Workshops (in person):

Global Development Network Annual Conference 2025 (Clermont-Ferrand, France)

Thrive Scientific Conference on early childhood development, Oxford Policy Management & Institute for Fiscal Studies (London, UK)

Development Studies Association (DSA) 2025 Conference, University of Bath (Bath, UK)

Keynote Speaker, XVIII International Scientific Conference 2025, HSE University (Moscow, Russia)

Invited Speaker, Women and Science Chair Annual Scientific Meeting (Dauphine-PSL University Paris, France)

Keynote Speaker, XV International Conference on Higher Education, HSE University (Moscow, Russia)

Keynote Speaker, International Summer School on Higher Education 2024, HSE University (Issyk-Kul, Kyrgyzstan)

ASSA Annual Meeting 2024 (San Antonio, TX, USA)

NBER Program on Economics of Education (Cambridge, USA)

NEUDC 2023 Conference (Harvard University, USA),

India Conference 2023 (Cornell University, USA),

5th Annual Philosophy and Theory of Higher Education Conference (University of Gdańsk, Poland)

South Asia Economic Policy Network Conference of the World Bank (Dhaka, Bangladesh)

5th AfricaLics Research Conference (University of Yaoundé II, Cameroon)

30th IAFFE Annual Conference (Graduate Institute in Geneva, Switzerland)

4th Annual Philosophy and Theory of Higher Education Conference (Uppsala University, Sweden)

5th SANEM Annual Economists' Conference (Dhaka, Bangladesh)

PEGNet Conference (German Development Institute, Germany)

Eighth Meeting of the Society for the Study of Economic Inequality (Paris School of Economics, France)

International Symposium on Ageing Policy (EIDLL, France)

African Programme on Rethinking Development Economics (Johannesburg, South Africa)

Asia Research Institute International Conference (National University of Singapore, Singapore)

14th Development Dialogue (International Institute of Social Studies, Netherlands)

Young Lives Conference (University of Oxford, UK)

50th Annual Conference of the Canadian Economics Association (University of Ottawa, Canada)

IZA/DFID Short Course on Program Evaluation (Dhaka, Bangladesh)

Summer course on Innovative Financing for Education (Central European University, Hungary)

Education and Gender (EdGe) Research Group Conference (Izmir University of Economics, Turkey)

UNESCAP and Leonard Cheshire Disability Conference (Bangkok, Thailand)

DSA and EADI Annual Conference (University of York, UK)

8th GLOBELICS International Conference (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia)