

# Comparative Study of AI Readiness in Daily Academic Practices and IKS Integration across Government and Private Colleges

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## **ABSTRACT**

The rapid integration of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) into higher education has significantly altered student learning behaviors. AI tools offer potential benefits for efficiency and personalization, but there is a growing concern regarding the "digital divide" between students in resource-rich private institutions and state-funded government colleges. This disparity challenges foundational ethos of Indian Knowledge System (IKS) specifically with principle of 'Vidya Daan' (gift of knowledge) which advocates for the equitable dissemination of learning resources across all societal strata. We have found that existing literature largely focuses on AI adoption in engineering, medical and elite institutions. There is a critical lack of comparative data regarding how institutional infrastructure influences AI awareness and day-to-day application in Tier-III cities. We have made an attempt to understand these disparities during the present study, which is essential for formulating inclusive educational policies. Present research contextualizing within IKS highlights importance of uplifting up to last person to ensuring that modern technological advancements do not bypass students in the hinterlands. We have used quantitative and cross-sectional research design with 200 sample. We have selected samples using a stratified random sampling method to ensure equal representation of students from both government and private colleges. Data was collected using structured questionnaire focusing on AI literacy, frequency of usage, and ethical perceptions. The data revealed a significant disparity in AI adoption. Results indicated that 77.56% of private college students frequently utilize AI tools for academic tasks, compared to only 45.26% of government college students. Whereas private college students primarily used AI for content generation and coding, government college students utilized these tools mainly for basic concept clarification and translation. Furthermore, 54.83% of government students reported a lack of institutional training as a primary barrier to effective AI usage. Our study is limited by its reliance on self-reported data, which may introduce response bias. Additionally, the geographical scope was restricted to Bilaspur district (Tier-II), which may limit the generalizability of findings to other regions. These findings suggest an urgent need for government institutions to upgrade digital infrastructure and integrate AI literacy workshops into their curriculum. Future research could focus on longitudinal studies to measure the long-term impact of AI dependency on students critical thinking skills across different socioeconomic demographics. This long-term view aligns with IKS goal of cultivating 'Viveka'

(discernment) to ensure that students retain their cognitive independence and do not become passive consumers of algorithmic outputs.

**Keywords:** Generative AI, Digital Divide, Academic Integrity, Higher Education, Student Awareness.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

India's education system is currently experiencing a significant shift from the historical colonial rote-learning model toward a student-centred, holistic ecosystem (Thankachan, 2024). The National Education Policy (NEP) replaced NEP-1986 with a new vision to create a knowledge-based economy and provide 21<sup>st</sup> Century Education (Majumdar and Changder, 2025). The NEP also addresses four key areas that were not adequately addressed in previous policies namely multi-disciplinary education, foundation and basic skills, relevance of education to the 21st century needs of students in India, making India a global knowledge superpower (Abhijeet et al., 2025) and creating new learning environment. The NEP 2020 constitutes a fundamental initiative to recognise and support Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) while simultaneously preparing students for global competition (Khandekar et al., 2025). The NEP represents a convergence of two disparate areas, IKS and Artificial Intelligence(AI), as a national effort to enhance higher education opportunities across India (Jolly and Kaur 2025; Khandekar et al., 2025). Over the years, higher education institutions have neglected their own indigenous legacy of knowledge IKS.

The NEP intends to integrate IKS into all aspects of education. IKS consists of an extensive collection of ancient wisdom that forms the basis for many fields, including mathematics, medicine, and even art (Nikam, 2025). Therefore, it is not just a historical study of these subjects, but also a guide to implementing their foundational principles to solve problems in the present day and future. The integration of IKS into the formal curriculum of higher education institutions has been facilitated through the support of elite regulatory agencies such as the University Grants Commission (UGC) and All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) (Acharya, 2024). UGC encourages universities to develop courses that combine modern science and ancient Indian sciences, resulting in a greater sense of pride in one's culture and a greater awareness of the importance of being "rooted" in one's culture among students, as well as developing intellectual capital through combining these two different forms of knowledge.

Indian universities are also pursuing a parallel course of aggressively pursuing AI which is being leveraged in higher education to enhance personalization of learning, automate administration, and enhance research capabilities (Panchal, 2025). AI tools are enabling students and teachers to assess gaps in student learning in real time and subsequently employ the adaptive learning approaches called for in the National Educational Policy 2020 (Mishra, 2025). In addition, the National Educational Technology Forum (NETF), as mandated in NEP 2020, is being established to create a forum for sharing ideas on the use of technology to support

learning, assess student learning, plan for the future, and provide administrative support (Dalal, 2023). The combination IKS and AI represents one of the most exciting aspects of the current development of education in India. In particular, there is a strong likelihood that AI will be a powerful force for maintaining and growing IKS. The use of advanced natural language processing (NLP) technologies will enable researchers worldwide to access thousands of ancient Sanskrit, Pali, and Tamil texts by converting them into electronic form Shingarwade and Velukar 2025). The Success of This Integration Depends on the Regulatory Bodies in India. The IKS-AI Integration will be carried out successfully by India's top-tier regulatory bodies, UGC and AICTE, as they have created guidelines to prevent institutions from isolating IKS and AI from one another.

The rapid proliferation of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has fundamentally altered the educational landscape, transforming how students access information and complete academic tasks. As higher education shifts towards digital integration, it is critical to understand if this transition is equitable. There is a pressing need to assess whether students across different socio-economic strata, specifically those in government versus private institutions, are equally equipped to leverage these tools. Understanding these usage patterns is essential for policymakers and educators to bridge potential digital divides and ensure that AI serves as a tool for empowerment rather than exclusion.

## **Review of Related Literature**

We must look at recent data to understand urgency of this study. The recent data reinforces this urgency. It shows that both globally and nationally, AI has been embraced in India with increasing speed. The Stanford AI Index report (2025) indicates that the Indian government has made a commitment of \$1.25 billion to boost its AI initiatives. Compared to the rest of the world, India is relatively high in its penetration of AI skills. Approximately 44 million students are enrolled in about 1,100 universities and 45,000 colleges across a wide variety of institutions (central, state, deemed, public and private) (Jamunadevi et al., 2025). According to Jamunadevi et al. (2025), the number of higher education institutions adopting and using technology in the Teaching–Learning domain has continued to rise in 2023–24. Using AI technology (e.g. intelligent classrooms, adaptive learning systems and plagiarism detection software) at least 64% of higher education institutions have adopted AI tools to support the Teaching–Learning process. Furthermore, they cite that approximately 38% of higher education institutions have begun to use AI tools in the Student Support (e.g. chatbots, AI-based counselling, performance monitoring systems) for the purposes of providing support to their students.

Based on Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) annual report, published in 2023, nearly 90% of all youngsters in India own a smartphone, and they all have the skills necessary to utilize their devices properly. Males (43.7%) are more than twice as likely to have their an individualised smartphone than females (19.8%). Female youth are at a disadvantage to their male counterparts, as they are less likely to be proficient in the use of a smartphone or computers than their male counterparts. A significant portion of Indian youth (66.66%) report using their smartphone for some type of educational purpose, including watching educational

videos and solving academic problems or sharing notes with others, at least once during the specified reference period. 75% of the youth not currently enrolled in school also report using their smartphones for educational purposes in the same reference timeframe. The impact that AI technology has on Indian students can only be accurately measured when analysed through Indian Knowledge System (IKS). Indian education methods provide rich insight into how we learn and the process by which we gain knowledge.

Bhandari (2021) has explored difference between "esoteric" ("para") and "exoteric" ("apara") forms of knowledge in the Mundaka Upanishad (a part of the ancient Indian texts known as the "Veda"). He regards Vedic knowledge to be exoteric and based on the performance of sacrificial rituals to achieve success in a worldly context; he considers the Upanishad to be the beginning of a new era of spiritual thought and philosophy known as Vedanta. Through the use of a descriptive and exploratory approach, Bhandari (2021) has also described how these two types of epistemology are applicable and relevant to modern teaching concepts and the development of modern pedagogical practices. Sharma (2025) was examined an ancient Advaitic concept known as *nididhyasana* (deep contemplation) as it appears in the Brhadaranyaka Upanishad, and how this can be applied to modern-day philosophical counseling. He is proposing that *nididhyasana* be viewed as a manner of "existential assimilation," which can help connect the gap between metaphysical truths and how we navigate our practical day-to-day existence, and he suggests a shift in focus away from problem solving to ontological grounding in a therapeutic context.

AI disrupts the traditional learning cycle, enabling students to avoid engaging in *Manana*. By requesting an assignment be developed for themselves by ChatGPT, students bypass any opportunity to reflect upon the material being studied. Without the opportunity to engage in this reflective practice (*Manana*), there cannot be any *Nididhyasana*. The student will have a very shallow understanding of the topic being studied. Therefore, current research aims to investigate whether students are using AI for support as a tool to promote reflection (e.g., test for comprehension) or utilizing AI solely for the resolution of a given problem (e.g., obtaining a final answer). According to Gawande & Hassan (2023), the Nyaya school of Indian philosophy distinguishes between different *Pramanas* or sources of knowledge. The two "sources" are *Pratyaksha* (direct knowledge through perception) and *Anumana* (indirect knowledge through reasoning or inference). Based upon the *Pramana* of *Shabda* (the testimony of others), we would categorize AI as a source of knowledge. However AI is prone to create false or misleading material, while at other times it may provide what is perceived to be valid or true. When utilizing AI, students must develop the capacity to discern between factual information provided by AI systems versus hallucinations or incorrect responses generated by these same systems. The need for students to develop sufficient intelligence (*Buddhi*) so that they can independently evaluate the output of AI provides substantial reason for continued investment in preserving the human intellect. Students need to be aware that AI is now available and must exercise discernment when using it, as the human intellect continues to thrive.

## Research Gap

A review of the existing literature regarding AI in education reveals a distinct focus on specific sectors, primarily centering on engineering institutions, medical colleges, and elite or resource-rich institutions. Consequently, there is a critical lack of comparative studies that address the realities of students in Tier-II and Tier-III city contexts. Furthermore, current research offers a limited understanding of how infrastructure availability specifically drives AI awareness and daily usage patterns outside of these elite circles. We have also noted a lack of AI integration with IKS with respect to undergraduate students of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)

## Problem Statement

Despite the ubiquity of AI tools like Chat GPT and Gemini, empirical data regarding their actual integration into the daily workflows of Indian students remains fragmented. It is currently unclear whether students possess genuine "AI literacy" or are merely using these tools for superficial assistance. Furthermore, the disparity in infrastructure and exposure between government and private colleges may be creating an invisible gap in technological proficiency. This study seeks to quantify these differences to provide a clear picture of the current academic ecosystem.

## Objectives

The present study aims to conduct a **comparative analysis between Government and Private institutions** with reference to Artificial Intelligence (AI) literacy, awareness, adoption, and its integration with Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS). The specific objectives of the study are:

1. **To examine the relationship between the level of AI literacy and the degree of dependence on AI tools for routine academic tasks among students of Government and Private institutions.**
2. **To compare the level of AI readiness, proficiency, and awareness among students studying in Government colleges and Private colleges.**
3. **To analyze the influence of institutional infrastructure and exposure on the patterns of AI adoption in students' daily academic workflows in Government and Private institutions.**  
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4. **To compare the extent and nature of AI integration in Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) among students of Government and Private institutions.**

## **HYPOTHESIS**

- 1.:** There is no significant relationship between the level of AI literacy and the degree of dependence on AI tools for routine academic tasks.
- 2.:** There is no significant difference in AI readiness, proficiency, or awareness between students from private colleges and students from government colleges.
- 3.:** Institutional infrastructure and exposure do not significantly influence the patterns of AI adoption in daily student life i.e., there is no correlation between infrastructure/exposure and AI usage patterns.
- 4.:** There is no significance difference between the AI Integration in IKS among Private and Government Students.

## **Limitation of Study**

The study is limited by its reliance on self-reported responses and its restricted geographical focus on the Bilaspur district, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other regions.

## **Research Design**

The study adopted a quantitative, cross-sectional research design to empirically assess student responses at a single point in time.

## **Population**

The investigation was geographically focused on the Bilaspur district Chhattisgarh. Bilaspur is a Tier-II city, to highlight the academic reality in developing urban centers often overlooked in broader studies.

## **Sampling & Data Collection**

The sample consisted of 200 students, selected to provide a statistically relevant overview of the local higher education landscape.

To ensure a balanced and representative analysis, the study employed a stratified random sampling technique, securing equal representation from both government and private colleges. Data collection was executed using a structured questionnaire as the primary tool. The investigation specifically centered on two core focus areas viz., assessing students' AI literacy and awareness, examining the patterns of AI integration within their daily academic workflows and assessing AI Integration in IKS among Private and Govt Students. In the present study, we have a total of 18 statements, of which 3 are related to AI Literacy, 4 to AI Awareness, 5 to AI integration within their daily academic workflows, and 5 to assessing AI Integration in IKS among Private and Govt Students showed in Table no. 3.

## **Ethical considerations**

Ethical considerations were prioritized throughout the study. Informed consent was obtained from all respondents prior to data collection. Participants were explicitly assured that their responses would be kept strictly confidential and that the data would be utilized exclusively for academic research purposes.

## **Statistical analysis**

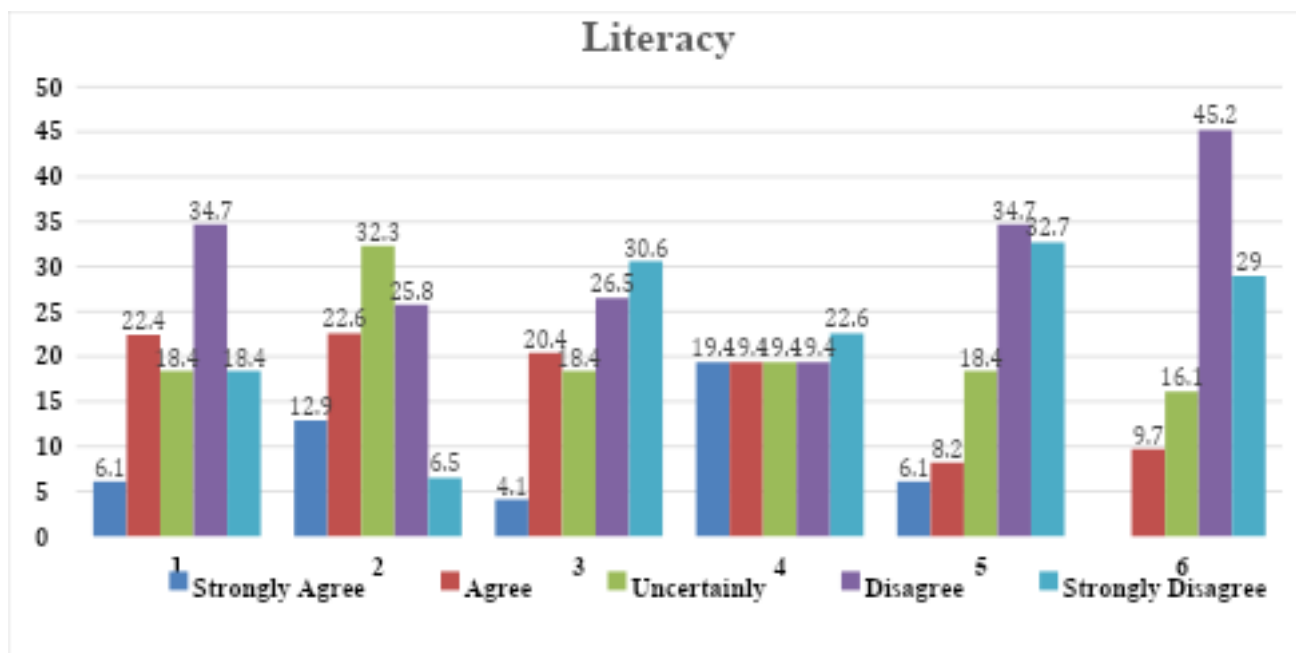
To facilitate quantitative analysis, the Likert scale responses were coded numerically, ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). t-test was done using MS-Office Excel. The analysis strictly was adhered to group sizes comprising 49 students from private institutions and 31 students from government colleges.

## **RESULTS**

We have evaluated the Level of AI Awareness and Literacy, and Patterns of AI Integration in Daily Academic Workflows among undergraduate students of Government and Private Institutions of Bilaspur District. The findings indicated clear differences between private and government college students across AI literacy, awareness, and daily academic integration. In this study, we analyze 18 statements: 3 focus on AI Literacy, 4 on AI Awareness, 5 on AI integration in daily academic workflows, and 5 on evaluating AI Integration in IKS among Private and Government students, mentioned in Table no. 3

### **Objective 1: To Evaluate the Level of Literacy**

Private college students demonstrated higher conceptual clarity regarding Generative AI tools such as ChatGPT and Gemini. A combined 53.1% of private students agreed or strongly agreed that they clearly understood AI concepts, whereas only 32.3% of government college students reported similar clarity (Fig. 1). Uncertainty was notably higher among government students (32.3%) compared to private students (18.4%). Familiarity with AI tools specifically designed for academic purposes was also higher among private college students, with 57.1% agreeing or strongly agreeing. In contrast, government college students showed a more evenly distributed response, with only 42.0% expressing agreement, indicating limited exposure and confidence. Both groups largely believed that AI tools positively contributed to academic performance. However, strong agreement was higher among private students (32.7%) compared to government students (29.0%), while disagreement was negligible among government students (0% strongly disagree), suggesting perceived usefulness despite limited access.

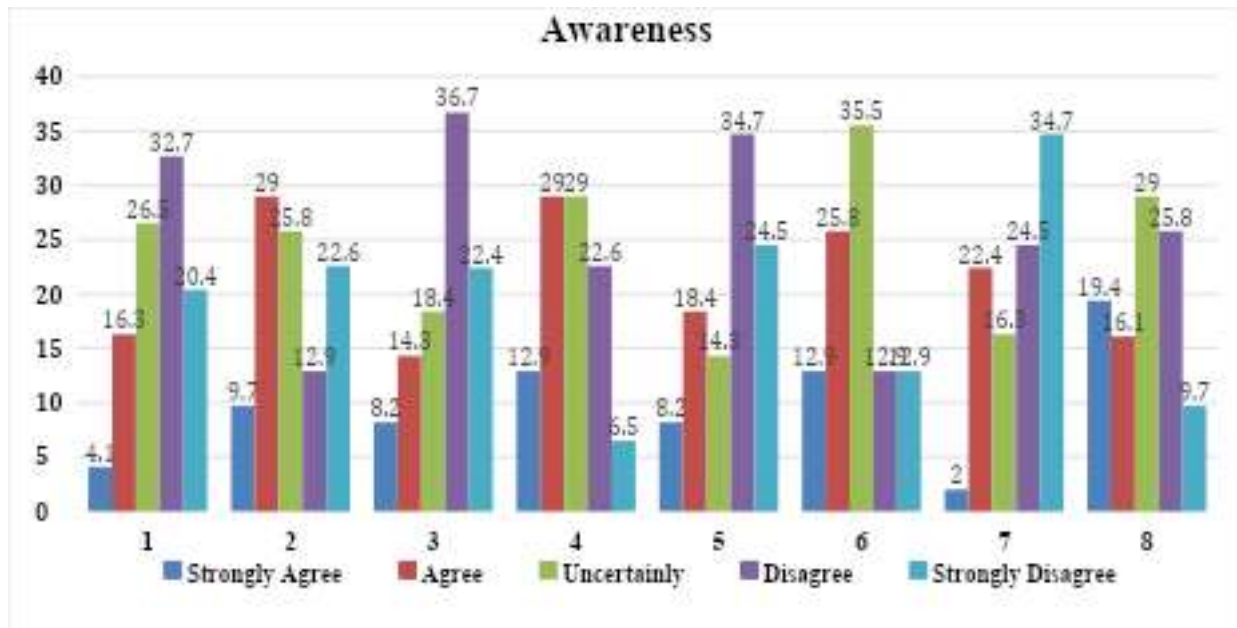


**Fig. 1: Comparative account on AI Literacy among Private and Govt Students**

### **Objective 2: To Evaluate the Level of AI Awareness**

Private college students showed greater awareness of effective prompt writing, with 53.1% agreeing or strongly agreeing, compared to only 35.5% among government students (Fig. 2). A higher proportion of government students expressed disagreement (38.7%), reflecting lower operational familiarity. Awareness of AI-generated misinformation was again higher among private students, where 59.1% acknowledged this limitation of AI tools. Government students showed lower awareness, with only 29.1% agreeing or strongly agreeing, and a higher level of uncertainty (29.0%). The use of AI to understand complex concepts was more common among private students, with 59.2% reporting agreement. In contrast, only 25.8% of government students used AI for this purpose, while 35.5% remained uncertain. Regarding future relevance, 59.2% of private students strongly believed that AI literacy was essential for their careers, whereas only 35.5% of government students shared this perception. A significant 19.4% of government students strongly disagreed, highlighting a perception gap.

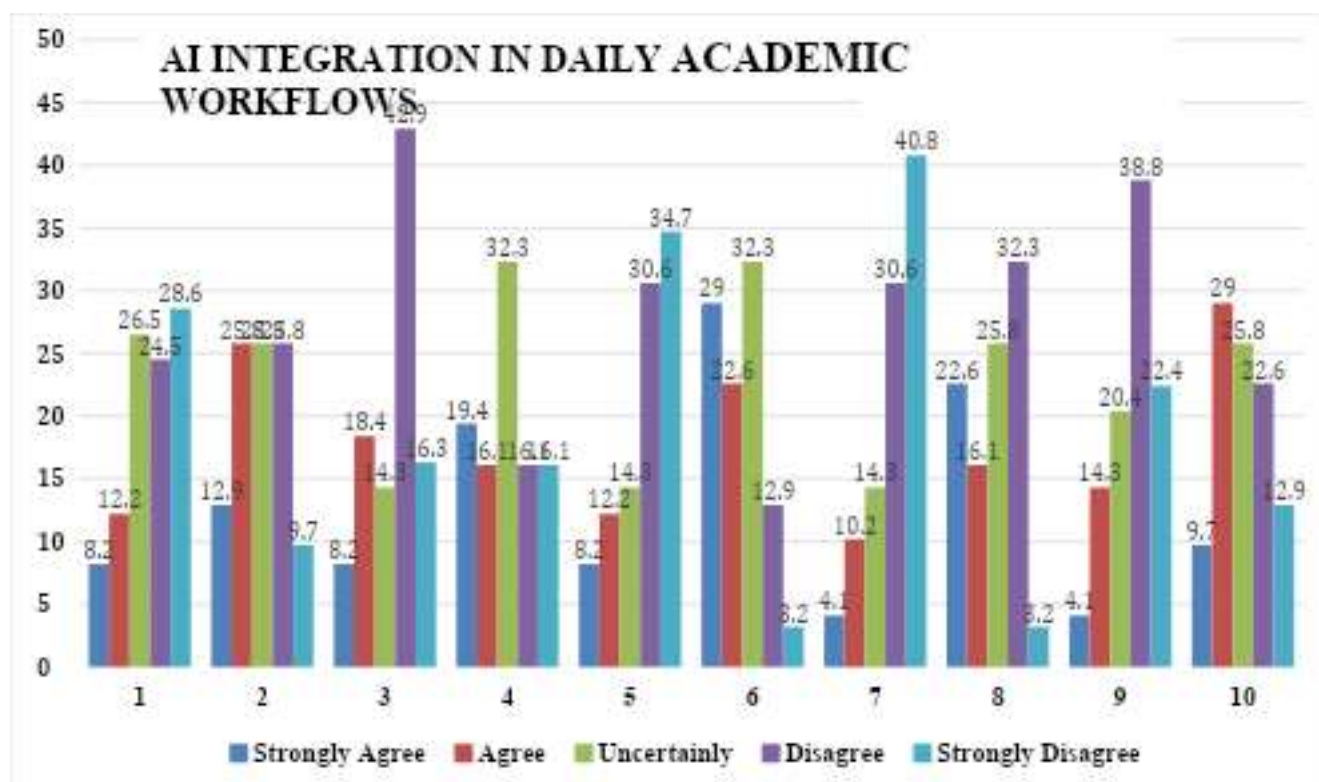




**Fig. 2: Comparative account on AI Awareness among Private and Govt Students**

### **Objective 3: To Analyze the Patterns of AI Integration in Daily Academic Workflows**

Regular use of AI tools to complete academic assignments was higher among private students (53.1%) than among government students (35.5%) (Fig. 3). Government students also showed greater disagreement (38.7%), indicating limited habitual use. Self-efficacy in learning new AI tools independently was reported by 59.2% of private students, while only 32.2% of government students expressed similar confidence. Uncertainty was substantially higher among government students (32.3%). Daily use of AI tools showed the most pronounced disparity. While 65.3% of private students reported daily usage, only 16.1% of government students did so. Nearly 29.0% of government students strongly disagreed with daily usage, indicating minimal integration. When facing difficult concepts or assignments, 71.4% of private students frequently sought AI assistance. In contrast, only 35.5% of government students reported doing so, with 22.6% strongly disagreeing. Private students also perceived AI as enhancing study efficiency, with 61.2% agreeing or strongly agreeing. Government students showed weaker agreement (35.5%) and higher disagreement (38.7%).



**Fig. 3: Comparative account on AI Integration in Daily Academic Workflows among Private and Govt Students**

## INTERPRETATION OF t-TEST

Independent samples t-tests were conducted to evaluate the differences between private and government college students across three key dimensions viz., AI Literacy, AI Awareness, and AI Integration. The t-test table of these dimensions is tabulated in Table 1.

### AI Literacy

p-value ( $p = 0.03$ ) was less than 0.05. Hence, there is a statistically significant difference between the groups. Private college students (Mean = 3.45) have higher literacy than government college students (Mean = 3.10). The Null Hypothesis is rejected.

### AI Awareness

p-value ( $p = 0.01$ ) was less than 0.05. The difference is significant. Private college students demonstrate higher awareness. The Null Hypothesis is rejected.

### AI Integration

p-value ( $p = 0.001$ ) was less than 0.05. This shows the strongest significance (lowest p-value). Private college students integrate AI into their daily workflow significantly more than government students. The Null Hypothesis is rejected.

Therefore, all three tests support Hypothesis H1 (That There is a digital divide, with private college students representing higher proficiency, awareness, and usage).

**Table 1: t-test interpretation for AI Literacy, AI Awareness and AI Integration in academics**

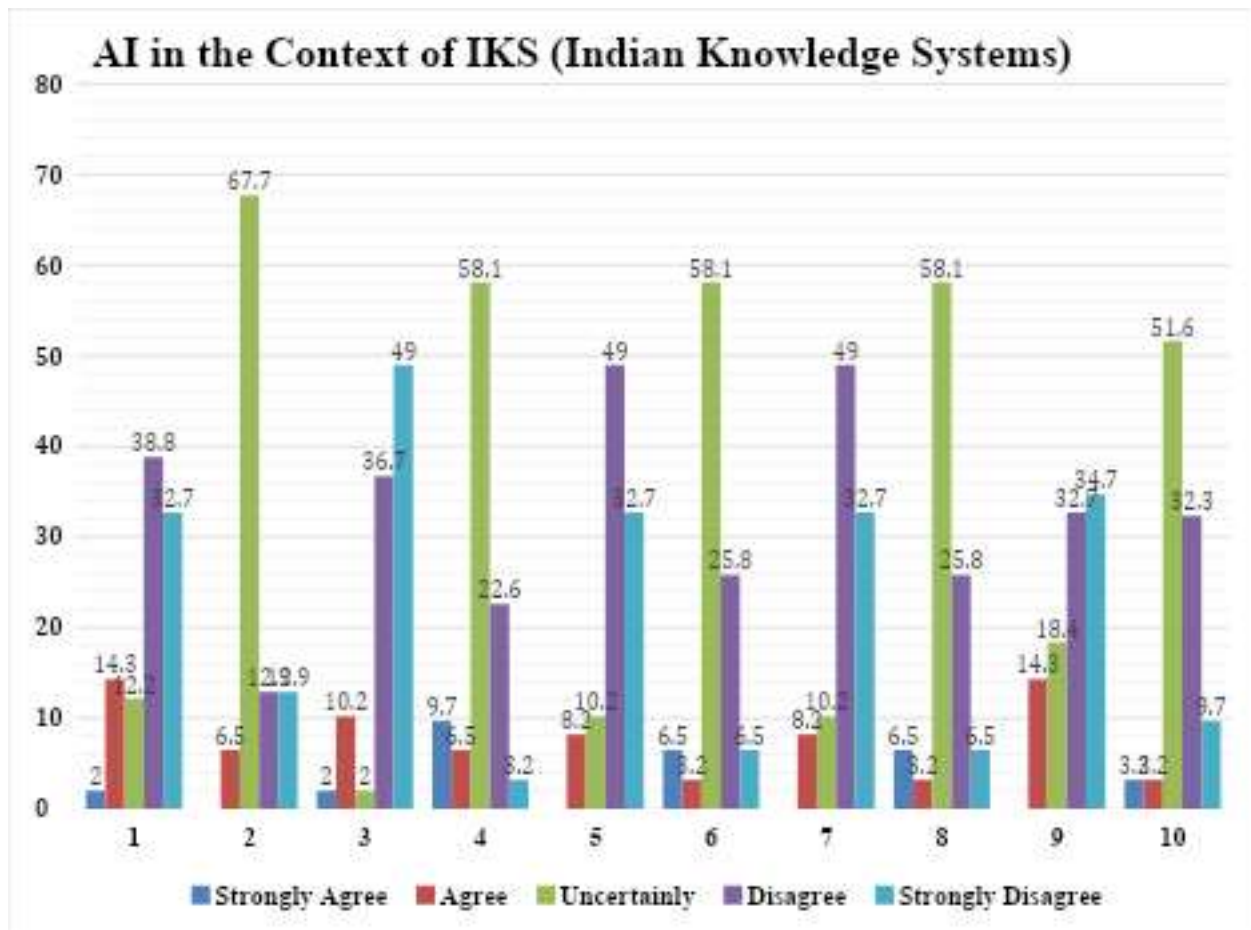
Variable	Group	N	Mean	Std. Dev	t-value	p-value	Significance	Decision (H <sub>0</sub> )	Reason
<b>AI Literacy</b>	Private Colleges	49	3.45	1.12	2.14	0.03	Significant	Reject H <sub>0</sub>	p < 0.05
	Govt. Colleges	31	3.10	1.08					
<b>AI Awareness</b>	Private Colleges	49	3.36	1.09	2.62	0.01	Significant	Reject H <sub>0</sub>	p < 0.05
	Govt. Colleges	31	2.93	1.05					
<b>AI Integration</b>	Private Colleges	49	3.58	1.14	3.41	0.001	Significant	Reject H <sub>0</sub>	p < 0.05
	Govt. Colleges	31	2.87	1.10					

#### **Objective 4: To assess AI Integration in IKS among Private and Government Students**

The study revealed a pronounced dichotomy between students in private and government colleges regarding their perspectives on the integration of artificial intelligence into the IKS. Students from private institutions demonstrated a refined level of "AI-IKS literacy," with 85.7% endorsing the utility of AI in revitalizing ancient texts and 81.7% considering it a legitimate extension of Pramanas. Meanwhile, 71.5% critically acknowledged that AI could disrupt the traditional Manana process (Fig 4). Additionally, 67.4% of private college students recognized that AI tools lack the ethical consciousness necessary for the pursuit of truth. Conversely, students from government colleges exhibited widespread uncertainty, characterized by high neutrality rates ranging from 51.6% to 67.7% across these indicators, indicating a notable gap in their exposure to the philosophical implications of advanced technology. Comparative account on AI Integration in IKS among Private and Govt Students is shown in Fig. 4.

The p-value is less than 0.05 for all five variables. This indicates a statistically significant difference between Private and Government college students. The Null Hypothesis is rejected in all cases. Private college students consistently recorded significantly higher mean scores (Range: 3.65 to 4.25) compared to Government students (Range: 2.98 to 3.18). This suggests that Private students are more decisive and generally "Agree" with statements linking AI to IKS, epistemology, and ethical challenges. The lower mean scores for Government students align with the large "Uncertain" (grey bar) percentages visible in the chart. t-Test for AI

Integration in IKS among Private and Govt Students shown in Table 2. Private students view AI as a tool for reviving IKS and expanding knowledge (Pramana), Government students remain significantly more neutral or undecided about these philosophical intersections.



**Fig. 4: Comparative account on AI Integration in IKS among Private and Govt Students**

**Table 2: t-Test for AI Integration in IKS among Private and Govt Students**

Variable	Group	N	Mean	Std. Dev	t-value	p-value	Decision
AI and Traditional Learning Disruption	Private	49	3.82	1.15	3.94	0.001	Reject H <sub>0</sub>
	Govt	31	2.98	0.92			
AI and IKS Revival	Private	49	4.25	0.98	5.87	< 0.001	Reject H <sub>0</sub>
	Govt	31	3.05	0.85			
AI as Pramana (Valid Knowledge)	Private	49	4.02	1.05	4.65	< 0.001	Reject H <sub>0</sub>
	Govt	31	3.12	0.88			
AI as Apra Vidya (Material Knowledge)	Private	49	4.10	1.02	4.81	< 0.001	Reject H <sub>0</sub>
	Govt	31	3.15	0.90			
AI & Ethical Consciousness	Private	49	3.65	1.21	2.08	0.041	Reject H <sub>0</sub>
	Govt	31	3.18	1.05			

## CONCLUSION

Outcomes showed a large and consistent divide between private college students and government college students across the three indicators of AI Literacy, Awareness, and Digital Integration of Indian Knowledge Systems. Additionally, we found a digital divide between government and private college students; moreover, we identified a need to modernize digital infrastructure in government colleges while integrating workshops on AI Literacy into coursework. Private college students demonstrated a stronger conceptual understanding of AI tools, greater confidence when using AI tools for academic purposes, and more frequent academic use of AI tools to discover and retrieve resources from IKS repositories than their government college counterparts. While government college students agreed that leveraging AI technology to preserve IKS is beneficial, they also showed greater uncertainty about the potential impacts of leveraging AI. Government college students exhibited lower levels of self-efficacy and infrequent use of AI technologies on a daily basis. We recommend further research using longitudinal study designs to examine how AI dependency impacts critical thinking over time and to ensure that AI is aligned with the same goals IKS supports; namely, promoting Viveka (Discernment) for improved IKS outcomes.

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