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NEP- 2020: QUALITY POLICY FOR QUALITY ACADEMIC RESEARCH

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Abstract

Knowledge creation and research are essential for building and sustaining a large and robust economy, elevating society, and inspiring a nation to reach new heights. In this regard, the Ministry of Human Resource Development of the Government of India has proposed a comprehensive National Education Policy for 2020. (NEP-2020). In the NEP-2020, Quality Academic Research advocates lifelong learning and research to prevent humans from becoming outdated in society in terms of knowledge, skills, and experience needed to live comfortably. Education and research, at any time of life, are thought to provide greater maturity and life happiness. Overall, it is a commendable and major step in the right direction, and the R&D sector in India will greatly benefit from its specific provisions pertaining to higher education and research.

Keywords: Quality Academic Research, National Education Policy, Lifelong Learning

Introduction

NEP-2020 is a comprehensive planning blueprint. It was adopted by India's Union Cabinet on July 29, 2020, and it lays out the vision for the country's future education system. This article has covered the need of quality research, objectives, principal functions and policies associated with Quality Academic Research (1).

If India is to become a leader in these sectors and fully realise the potential of its huge talent pool to once again become a leading knowledge society in the future years and decades, it will need to dramatically expand its research capacities and output across disciplines. For economic, intellectual, and societal reasons, research is more vital than ever. With the rapid changes occurring in the world today, such as climate change, population dynamics and management, biotechnology, an expanding digital marketplace, and the rise of machine learning and artificial intelligence, a vibrant research ecosystem is probably more necessary than ever.

Need of Quality Research

Despite the crucial necessity of research, according to the World Development Indicators published by the World Bank, India spends barely 0.69% of GDP on research, whereas Germany, the US, China and Japan spend 3%, 2.8%, 2% and 3.2%, respectively, of their GDP on research (). Challenges such as sanitation, quality education and healthcare, improved transportation, air quality, energy, and infrastructure will necessitate the implementation of approaches and solutions through high-quality interdisciplinary research across fields, which must be done in India and cannot simply be imported; the ability to conduct one's own research also allows a country to develop its own research (2).

Furthermore, history, art, language, and culture contribute significantly to a country's identity, upliftment, spiritual/intellectual fulfilment, and innovation, in addition to their worth in solving societal problems. As a result, research in the arts and humanities, as well as advances in the sciences and social sciences, are critical for advancement and expansion. In India, education institutions, particularly those involved in higher education, must be innovative. The best teaching and learning processes at the higher education level occur in circumstances where there is also a strong culture of research and knowledge development; conversely, most of the very best research occurs in environments where there is no strong culture of research and knowledge creation.

Research & Innovation as an Objective

Higher education that incorporates research and innovation as a major component generates new intellectual property that may be used to develop new inventive solutions. The NEP-2020 higher education plans shift the focus of higher education from information to new knowledge and innovation (3).

National Research Foundation (NRF)

A New National Research Foundation (NRF) proposed in the National Education Policy 2020, has a goal to build and pervade the "Research Culture" throughout our HEIs/universities is catalysing outstanding academic research in all subjects. The purpose of this body will be to encourage and grow research and innovation in universities and colleges across the country, as well as to support and seed research. An institution dedicated solely to research is more likely to set R&D on a path of long-term viability and



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quick expansion, thereby expanding research horizons and filling gaps. Furthermore, the NEP discusses the development of active research communities across disciplines in order to improve material and human resource efficiency. Finding peer-reviewed, competitive grant proposals from all types and streams/disciplines, as well as starting, enabling, and promoting research at HEIs, are all part of the sphere of activity (4).

An Act of Parliament will establish the National Research Foundation (NRF), giving it greater legitimacy and legal authority to support research in the country. The institution will get an annual grant of Rs 20,000 crores, or about 0.1 percent of GDP, which will be gradually enhanced over time, taking into account the degree of research development.

The NRF will, in particular, provide a consistent source of merit-based but equitable peer-reviewed research funding, assisting in the development of a research culture in the country by providing appropriate incentives for and recognition of outstanding research, as well as by spearheading major initiatives to seed and grow research at State Universities and other public institutions where research capability is currently limited. The NRF would endeavour to satisfy the research-related needs of all disciplines, including funding, research capacity building, and effective links between diverse stakeholders such as researchers, industry, and government. This institution will initially be divided into four primary divisions: science, social sciences, technology, and arts and humanities. Thus, the NRF's main purpose will be to catalyse outstanding research and promote a research-friendly climate, as well as to ensure that great research is rewarded and recognised through prizes, awards, and other means (5).

Research Funding Institutions

Institutions engaged in funding research, such as the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Department of Atomic Energy (DAE), Department of Bio-Technology (DBT), Indian Council of Agriculture Research (ICAR), Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR), and University Grants Commission (UGC), as well as private and charitable groups, will continue to fund research independently based on their objectives and requirements.

NRF's principal functions

- a) finance competitive, peer-reviewed grant proposals of all types and across all disciplines;
- b) mentoring of such institutions, and facilitate research at academic institutions, particularly at universities and colleges where research is now in its infancy;
- c) act as a link between researchers and relevant government agencies, as well as industry, so that research scholars are always aware of the most pressing national research issues, and policymakers are always aware of the most recent research breakthroughs; and so that breakthroughs can be optimally translated into policy and/or implementation.
- d) to honour exceptional research and advancement. (6)

MERU: Model Multidisciplinary Education and Research University

The NEP places a strong emphasis on a multidisciplinary approach to education in order to address the "absence of research at most universities and colleges, and transparent and competitive peer-reviewed research funding across fields." (7).

The policy includes three different types of research institutions, with Type 1 focusing on world-class research and high-quality teaching across all disciplines; Type 2 will emphasise high-quality teaching across disciplines as well as strong research contributions. and at the undergraduate level, Type 3 will focus on high-quality teaching across disciplines. All of the institutions mentioned above will be referred to as research-intensive universities (RUs), teaching universities (TUs), and autonomous degree-granting schools (ACs).

Integrated Research and Academic Programmes

Because it believes that young minds uncover feasible solutions to any problem quickly, the NEP 2020 suggests integrating research with academic programmes for youth-led innovations. With research at the forefront, a new education policy suggests that students be offered a variety of Master's degree options.

- 1. To begin, it recommends continuing with a two-year Master's programme, with the second year devoted totally to research. This programme will be available to students who have completed a three-year Bachelor's degree.
- 2. Students who complete a four-year bachelor's programme with research will be eligible for a one-year master's programme.
- 3. A five-year Bachelor's/degree Master's with research could be offered. A Master's degree or a four-year Bachelor's degree with research is required to pursue a PhD. The NEP 2020 suggests that colleges cease the present M.Phil programme, which has failed to meet its goal since its inception.



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Nalanda and Takshashila Mission

By 2030, Mission Nalanda hopes to have established at least 100 research-based universities and 500 high-quality universities. This will support research on a larger scale, make the system more inclusive, and encourage scholars and faculty to pursue their research interests and advance.

Mission Takshashila, meantime, aspires to establish at least one high-quality residential institute in or near each district in India. All public and private institutions will be universities or degree-granting autonomous colleges. This would provide each high-quality school more academic space and prestige, as well as encourage a larger commitment to research facilitation.

Faculty Productivity

The new education strategy emphasises merit-based promotions, which are based on faculty members' annual performance indicator scores, with a large amount dependent on their performance in research and publications or patents, which contribute to the organization's and country's intellectual property. As a result, each faculty member's accountability in the higher education system is based on their research productivity (8).

Publication/Patent

As part of their degree requirements, students are required to do research based on industrial internships and publish scholarly papers/own patents. IPR awareness should be imparted during their undergraduate programme so that obligatory copyright/patent can be imposed during the postgraduate phase.

Own Publication Unit

Academic research at HEIs has the goal of publishing or patenting. To do this, all universities should establish systematic digital publication units to publish high-quality research and share it with global indexing organisations. Such a university publication approach thwarts predatory publications that publish in an illegal or immoral manner.

Projects Evaluation & IPR generation

It is strongly recommended that the National Research Foundation (NRF) monitor the outcomes of the study projects it funds and establish a National Research Credit Bank (NRCB) of all NRF members who received financing in the form of an open public document for their research.

In accreditation assessment instead of giving scores for a number of projects received from NRF and other funding agencies, the accountability of the output of those projects is important in terms of IPR generation (9).

Comparison of new NEP 2020 with NEP- 1986

To make up for previous NEPs' failure to produce research output in the form of patents and scholarly articles, NEP 2020 proposes a liberal education to encourage multidisciplinary and cross-disciplinary education and research at both the undergraduate and graduate levels (10).

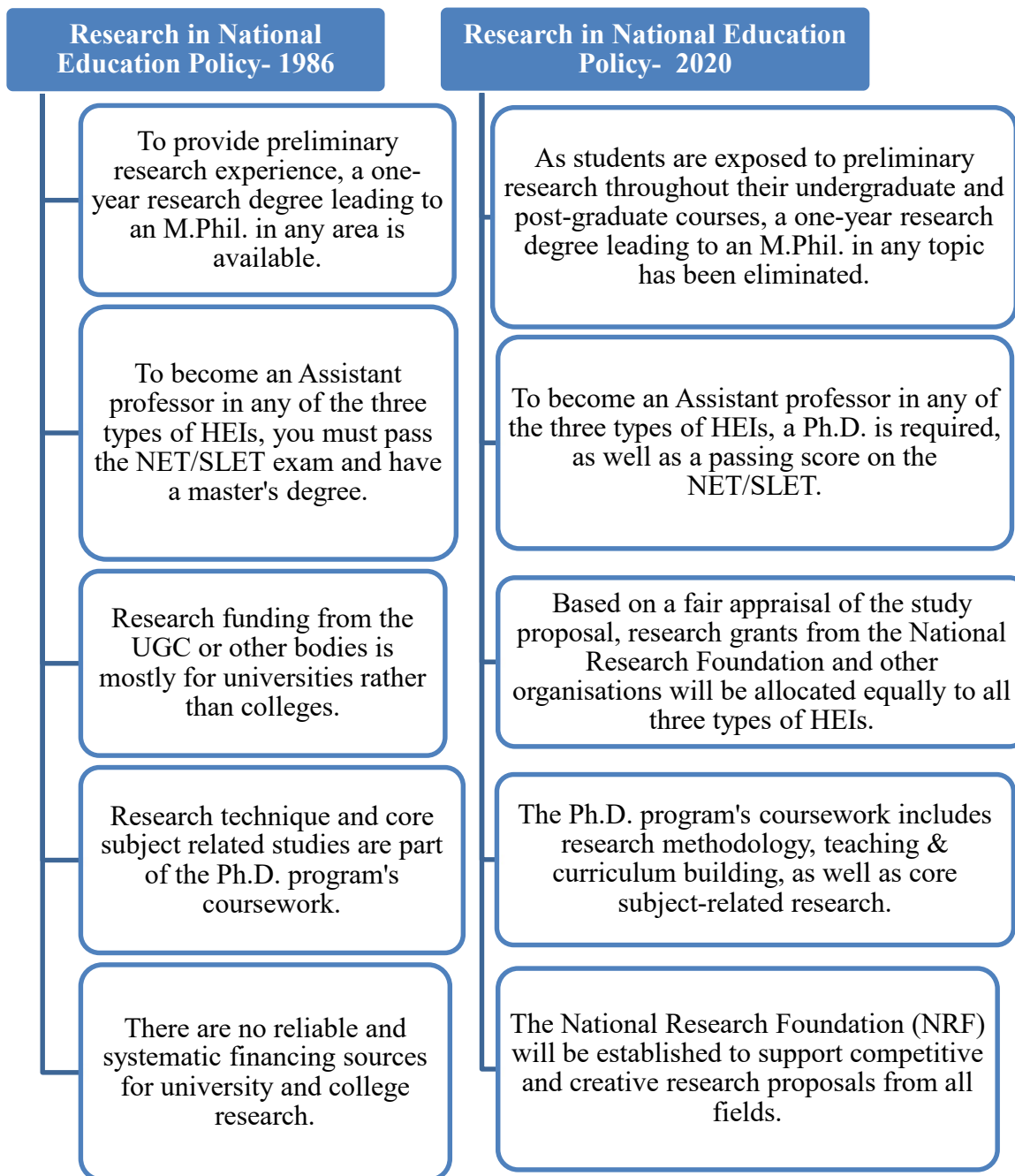


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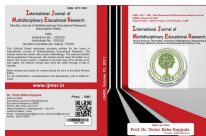
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Table 1: Comparison of the improvements of research related features of National Education policy 2020 with its previous National Education policy 1986.



Conclusion

India has a rich history of study and knowledge growth in domains ranging from science and mathematics to art and literature, phonetics and languages, medicine, and agriculture. This needs to be emphasised much more in order for India to lead research and innovation in the twenty-first century as a powerful and enlightened knowledge society and one of the most innovative nations on the planet. As a result, this Policy envisions a comprehensive approach to increasing the quality and quantity of research in India. All of these variables are critical for the establishment of a research mindset in the country. Perhaps the National Research Foundation (NRF) might inspire the younger generation to pursue careers in science and research.



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