

## A Contingency Study of Higher Education to Make Educational Research More Relevant

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### **Abstract**

Educational research has broadly been defined as any systematic study designed to promote the development of education. It includes any activity that leads to a better understanding of educational problems and findings relevant to policy formulations and planning. The growing problems relating to education at all its stages demand more of research the problems of universalisation of elementary education vocationalisation of education, delinking degrees from of jobs, autonomy of educational institutions, and Open University system, etc pose a big challenge to educational research. Some factors are responsible for this which research is decreasing day by day: lack of research grants, proper lab facility, guidance, accuracy and relevancy of research. The study attempts the student's perception towards educational research and to give the suggestion to the university and education institution to provide better research facility and proper environment for relevant research. The sample size of the study is 150 research scholars of Maharshi Dayanand University, Rohtak. The students are boys and girl belonging to the age group of 25 to 35 years. In the present study, convenience as well as simple random sampling method is used. For the purpose of data collection, a well structured questionnaire is used. Mean and Standard deviation are used as statistical tools for analyzing the data.

**Keywords:** Research, Education, Relevance, Mean and Standard Deviation.

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### **Introduction**

Educational research has broadly been defined as any systematic study designed to promote the development of education. It includes any activity that leads to a better understanding of educational problems and findings relevant to policy formulations and planning. Its domain, according to freed N. Kerlinger is "Human behavior related to educational processes and outcomes. It is therefore social scientific and behavioral research including all phenomena related to human behavior in educational process." The growing problems relating to education at all its stages demand more of research the problems of universalisation of elementary education vocationalisation of education, delinking degrees from of jobs, autonomy of educational institutions, and Open University system, etc pose a big challenge to educational research. How far has educational research come forward to answer the question related to education is yet to be assessed very

little has been done in this direction. Educational research is in infancy stage.

There is need for concerted efforts to conduct further research in the field of educational testing -development of psychological and educational tests which are not yet available as tools of further research. Research is also needed in the field of curriculum development. The curricula at the school, college and at university level are outdated and modifications are required to make the need and aspiration of the society. Whatever research has been done is of the nature of a spade work as most of it is descriptive development of education at its various stages. As there is vast scope of educational research and very little has been done, so far it is suggested that educational research/ study centre's are set up in universities in the departments of education. These centers may look to the development of educational research exclusively as in other countries. There is an urgent need to have well equipped laboratories and sufficient research material like hardware and software available in print along with computer services in each university and research oriented institutions.

Active and lively linkage between the universities and educational and research intuitions is another necessity for the growth of research. There is also need to create sufficient funds for the publication of researches done at the universities or other institutions and their wider circulation. Further, a coordinating agency should be set up to monitor research activities in universities and periodically evaluate their quantitative and qualitative aspects. It may also establish links with the rest of the country and even other countries for promotion of educational research in India. After independence, the growth of universities in India in quantitative terms has been very rapid. During the last four decades since independence there has been a tremendous growth of higher education both in terms of institutions and of enrollment. This quantitative growth has been very rapid and accelerated as compared to the growth during the period 1857 to 1947. the universities only 03 in 1857 increased to 20 in 1947; about seven fold growths in 90 years. By 1989 there were about 165 universities as against 20 in 1947, about eight-fold growth in 42 years. By 1995 there were 210 universities functioning in India. And now in 2012-2013 there are 45 central universities, 321 state universities, 129 deemed universities and 187 private universities and so on.

#### **Attributes of A Good Educational Research**

A good research has a clear cut goal couple with a systematic plan of work and it should add to the existing knowledge of a discipline in which it is carried on. Another characteristic of a meaningful research is that it is rational, verifiable and provides good scope for further research also the research should be relevant to the needs of masses and one of practical utility. A meaningful research work helps the

government and other agencies in proper planning of the policies of the government.

The investigator/researcher should have inquisitive nature, creative and analytical frame of mind. Besides the person or the team of persons carrying on research should have patience and perseverance. The quality of the research would improve a researchers do not hesitate or feel shy to consult others who have a better knowledge of some aspects of the research work. Before the respondents are interviewed they should first be made to feel comfortable and mentally relaxed. The respondents should be given enough space for reasonable thinking and proper communication. Where the questionnaire is prepared it should be insured that the language of the question is simple and understandable easily.

#### **Review of Literature**

**Norton and Schuh (1981)** argued that "A common thread running through most types of social science research is that the output is information rather than a new or improved product." Clearly, they did not mean to imply that information is not a commodity, but that social scientists, unlike some physical scientists, do not generally directly produce new physical products other than the products needed to create and transmit information such as books, reports, computer software, and articles. Norton and Schuh also suggested a "grocery list" typology for categorizing the information through which agricultural and rural communities derive the benefits of social science research. One category is management information. This enables producers to implement initiatives that improve technical and allocate efficiency. A second category, price information, improves the accuracy of price forecasts and leads to improvements in allocate efficiency. Third, institutional information makes it possible for policymakers to make welfare enhancing changes in economic institutions or "rules of the game." Information on product and environmental quality improves the choices of households for consumption and policymakers for policy. Norton and Schuh's three other categories are nutrition information, information to aid adjustments to disequilibrium, and information to aid in the reduction of rural poverty.

**Vincent H. Smith (1988)** addressed two questions. The first is "What are the benefits of social science research?" the second is "How should they be measured?" The response to the first is that, as with research in the physical sciences, the benefits should be identified in terms of changes in economic surplus for different groups. It may be useful to use a framework that considers the incidence of the effects of social science research on firms, households, and government agencies. The response to the second question is that estimating returns to social science research using conventional econometric techniques may be particularly

difficult. Instead, it may be necessary to resort to a case study approach, but care must be taken to ensure that the cases selected for study are genuinely representative.

**Wood, Walter, and Carrington (2002)** found that social policy is concerned with a range of human needs and the social institutions created to meet these needs. The social sciences cover a wide array of complex issues and disciplines. Government activities are now centrally related to social policy and the boundaries between social, economic and science policy are blurred. Commonwealth Government expenditure on social security and welfare, health and education amounts to some 65% of total expenditure and indicates the importance and persuasiveness of social policies. The social sciences and policies are important in ensuring the maintenance and functioning of a stable society by attempting to provide a more equitable distribution of wealth and income and ensuring an understanding of governance and institutions of civil society. Universities play a key role in providing social science courses which educate graduates in the philosophy, knowledge and the new developments of social science. This enables government agencies to access skilled social scientists that are capable of developing and implementing new social science policies appropriate to meet the needs of an ever changing world.

**Khatri et al., (2012)** found that seed money for faculty members desirous of undertaking context specific research, Funds to host conferences on indigenous themes, Providing and supporting travel to conferences of organizational and industry relevance, Providing discretionary funds for research travel, appointment of researchers, procurement of aids that enable research etc. Rewarding and recognizing faculty members who evangelize locally relevant, context specific research in an effort to boost research, some Indian business schools provide monetary incentives for faculty publications based on the “category” of the journal in which they are published. However, categorization of academic journals into different grades itself is problematic. A glance at the Annual Report of Research and Publications in IIMB reveals that the institute categorizes publications into three clusters: (a) articles in prestigious journals listed in FT45, BW20, UT Dallas 24 etc, (b) refereed articles in national journals, and (c) refereed articles in international journals. Academic journals which are categorized as ‘A grade’ tend to emphasize scientific rigour rather than relevance. A research that is relevant but does not meet the criterion of scientific/methodological rigour would most probably be desk-rejected, if submitted to any of the A grade journals. It would not make it to the peer-review stage. Such a system encourages academic scholars to pursue scientifically rigorous research with little attention to relevance. Academic scholars currently seem to be pursuing such kind of research.

Shaw and Elger, (2013) a new Swiss law required that any research involving humans must aim to answer “a relevant research question”. He explained the relevance of the relevance criterion in research, analysed the Swiss and British guidelines on relevance, and proposes a framework for researchers and research ethics committee (REC) members that enabled a clearer conception of the role of relevance in research. He concluded that research must be either scientifically or societal beneficial in order to qualify as relevant, and RECs therefore cannot avoid reviewing the scientific aspects of proposed studies. Normally only scientifically relevant studies can be of benefit to society, but research of low scientific relevance can nonetheless be relevant to society if it forms part of the education of new doctors and scientists.

**Panda and Gupta b, (2014)** an academic research in the domain of management scholarship, though steeped in scientific and methodological rigour, is generally found to be of little relevance to practice. The authors of this paper have revisited the rigour-relevance debate in light of recent developments and with special reference to the management research scenario in India. The central thesis of the argument is that the gulf between rigour and relevance needs to be bridged to make academic research more relevant to business organizations and practitioners. They have offered some suggestions to enhance the relevance of academic research to practice.

**Sulkunen, P. (2014)** widely recognized that the social sciences have an important track record in the transformation of Western European countries from labor intensive agricultural economies to modern urban high-tech societies. European welfare states have particularly required a substantial input from social research. What is less well understood is that the conceptual structure, methodology, and research practice of the social sciences themselves have reflected their relevance, and that all this is rapidly changing as a consequence of the changing forms of governance. In fact, the “positivistic” period of social sciences, split into relatively rigid disciplines, was astonishingly short only from the turn of the century when the disciplinary boundaries were drawn, to the last third of the twentieth century. Anti-positivist critiques that have always accompanied social science have now become mainstream reality rather than a radical alternative. In this article, he analysed this shift in the light of the concepts of Mode 1 and

Mode 2 science developed by Gibbons, Nowotny, and others. He showed with some examples that Mode 2 science is no longer a critical challenge to mainstream positivism but an adaptation to the saturation of the ideals of modernization. Mounting demands for evidence based policy may reduce rather than increase the relevance of social science research.

## Objective

Present study focus on:

- To Study the Perception of the students towards higher educational institutional research.

## Research Design

The present research study used exploratory-cum-descriptive research design.

## Region Selected

The sample size of the study was 150 research scholar of Maharshi Dayanand University, Rohtak. Random sampling method was used during the research. A well structured questionnaire was used to make work convenience.

## Factors Used For Data Analysis

- Lack of research ability.
- Lack of knowledge and awareness in research.
- Lack of research grants.

- Lack of laboratory facility.
- Lack of proper communication between researcher and supervisor.
- Lack of diffusion of research.
- Lack of relevancy of research.
- Lack of an ecosystem that facilitates research.

## Data Collection

Data was collected from primary as well as secondary source. The data was collected from users belonging to the different age groups. A well-structured questionnaire was used for collection of data.

## Tools And Techniques Used

- Percentage
- Mean
- Standard deviation

Statement	N / %	S	SS	N	D	SD	Total	Mean	S.D.
Lack of research ability.	N	53	40	40	10	7	150	2.18	1.13
	%	35.3	26.7	26.7	6.7	4.7	100		
Lack of knowledge and awareness in research.	N	55	62	19	5	9	150	2.0	1.08
	%	36.7	41.3	12.7	3.3	6.0	100		
Lack of communication between policy makers and researchers.	N	81	54	11	0	4	150	1.64	0.84
	%	54.0	36.0	7.3	0	2.7	100		
Lack of relevancy of research.	N	35	57	47	9	2	150	2.24	0.92
	%	23.3	38.0	31.3	6.0	1.3	100		
Lack of diffusion of research.	N	33	28	43	28	18	150	2.80	1.30
	%	22.0	18.7	28.7	18.7	12.0	100		
Lack of communication between education and other academic disciplines.	N	32	25	46	32	15	150	2.82	1.26
	%	21.3	16.7	30.7	21.3	10.0	100		
Lack of management between school colleges and universities	N	22	37	30	27	34	150	3.09	1.38
	%	14.7	24.7	20.0	18.0	22.7	100		
Lack of laboratory facility.	N	24	30	39	22	35	150	3.09	1.38
	%	16.0	20.0	26.0	14.7	23.3	100		
Lack of research grants.	N	55	62	19	5	9	150	2.0	1.08
	%	36.7	41.3	12.7	3.3	6.0	100		
Lack of proper communication between researcher and supervisor.	N	53	40	40	10	7	150	2.18	1.13
	%	35.3	26.7	26.7	6.7	4.7	100		

(Satisfied= S, Strongly satisfied= S S., Neutral= N, Dissatisfied= D, Strongly Dissatisfied=S D)

## Conclusion and Suggestions to Create An Enable Ecosystem for Research

- The significance of the relationship between proper financing and the quality of educational research and teaching programmes, provision of service etc. by the universities and other institutes of learning cannot be under estimated. However, the lack of financial

planning and efficient practices being exercised in some of the Indian universities has adverse effect on the quality as well as quantum of research activity in educational institutes. There are no clear guidelines formulated for many areas regarding financial activity. This is in fact leading to havoc in the research activity and development of academics in the universities.

- It is a general observation among keen academicians and administrators that over the years, the expenditure in every section of the university, whether it is a teaching department, general administration, library, laboratories has been increasing. Also the gap between the rate of growth of recurring resources and expenditure is widening continuously. In other words the resources are not keeping pace with the outlays and are lagging behind at an ever growing rate. Under these circumstances the normal tendency on the part of the universities has been to look forward towards the government and its agencies like U.G.C, ICSSR, CSIR, DBT, ICAR, ICMR and other teaching and research financing organizations for help and ask for more and more funds particularly from the state governments for research, teaching and other activities. The state government and the central government have been contributing roughly three fourth of the recurring resources needs of the universities. Their share has been as high as 88 percent of the total recurring resources. As such, the state government and other central agencies are already over burdened in this respect; it is not judicious to expect more funds from them.
- Quality of research also differentiates one business school to other. According to Ajit Rangnekar, Dean of Indian School of Business, "We recognized research as our differentiator when we ongoing the organization".
- Business schools also need to attract faculty with research skills and aptitude and who are adequately grounded in Indian ethos and also suitably exposed to other societies and cultures.
- "Financial support for academic research in terms of business schools grants provided by industry and government helps foster a healthy climate of rigorous enquiry process that ensures best standards in scientific research being conducted.
- Effective rewards and recognition and compensation system that encourages organized and high level of enquiry in an evolved research environment."
- Collaborate with business organizations for research work, review and doctoral research programmes.
- Attract and groom academic faculty for conducting relevant and proper research and also Collaborate and setup particular agency to monitor and evaluate research.
- Journal, magazines, research methodologies that puts balanced emphasis on both methodological rigour and practical relevance (usefulness) of the contributions.
- Understand the nature of disconnect with organizational realities and be more confident and assertive.
- More over the government have explicitly told these

institutions to find for themselves and raise resources on their own to become self sustaining units. Though the fee from students' ranks second in terms of its proportionate share to the common pool of recurring resources of the university yet their contribution figure is around ten percent or so of the total recurring resources. To add to it, the proportionate contribution of fees to the total recurring revenue of the universities has been declining over the years.

- The overall position of other internal recurring resources is not better. As such there is a need to find alternative sources such that adequate resources are generated to meet the expenses of the university so as to reduce burden on the state government for financing the universities.
  - There is a need to ensure that the available funds are put to optimum use. Even the worthiest university does not know where their funds are in fact moving and are producing what results. The whole system of university financing requires a review to trace the reasons for the slow and unsatisfactory development of university education and research. In other words it becomes importable to have correct assessment of the expenditure incurred in relation to the budget estimates at any particular period of time.
- Business schools in India need to commit themselves to both research and teaching excellence. These institutes also need to identify broad areas of research and articulate their research viewpoint, focus, and extended time research schedule. This would assist in selecting ability and doctoral scholars with the right skill, ability and awareness. It is the quality of research that leads both to a provocative theory and can be translated into practice that differentiates business schools from traditional disciplinary departments and consulting firms.

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