



Research Policy

Madhya Pradesh Bhoj (Open) University, Bhopal

1. Preamble

Research and development is the core of an institution of higher education. It is the basis for knowledge creation within and across disciplines. It helps to keep knowledge contextual and relevant to the needs of the society and the nation. Research is significant for academic sustainability and development in a globally connected world with changing dynamics. A university's research competence ensures its knowledge-driven growth. Academic research directly contributes to the quality of teaching and learning processes and their outcomes, benefiting the students, the society and the nation.

Why are HEIs lacking in research?

Various studies notified the various reasons why HEIs are not competent in doing and/or facilitating research. Some of the common reasons are:

1. The inadequate focus of HEIs on academic research
2. Poor or insufficient infrastructure, including faculty shortages and ill-equipped libraries
3. Incompetent faculties(/missing academic and research skills)
4. Lack of academic exposure to administrative positions
5. Faculties lack industrial/professional exposure
6. Insufficient linkages between academics and industries
7. Poor governance - lack of accountability, transparency, and professionalism
8. Lack of an encouraging academic environment in most of HEIs/Universities

Section 1: Definitions

- 1.1 **University:** It refers to Madhya Pradesh Bhoj (Open) University (MPBOU), Bhopal.
- 1.2 **Research:** According to Merriam-Webster, "investigation or experimentation aimed at the discovery and interpretation of facts, revision of accepted theories or laws in the light of new facts, or practical application of such new or revised theories or laws."
- 1.3 **Award:** An award is the amount/consideration received primarily to recognize exceptional scholarly/academic contribution in the concerned area of study.
- 1.4 **Fellowship:** A fellowship is financial support provided to candidates to pursue their studies or complete their research. It is generally a merit-based award by an internal or external agency.
- 1.5 **Intellectual Property Rights:** The legal rights granted to the inventor/creator to protect his/her invention/creation for certain duration.

- 1.5 Publication:** As per the Copyright Act, 1957, "*publication* means making a work available to the public by issue of copies or by communicating the work to the public."

Section 2: Policy Statement and Declaration

2.1 The Statement

The university is committed to serve the learning communities through recognized and professionally relevant research and research facilitation. Ethical standards will be followed in all professional relationships and endeavours in the execution of research.

2.2 Objectives

This research policy aims to establish a research environment that facilitates academic staff, research scholars, doctoral scholars, and postgraduate research students to perform their research. This policy guides research and the integrity of scholarly inquiry at the university. The objectives of the policy are as follows:

1. To promote socially responsible research and intellectual capital throughout the university's academic disciplines.
2. To ensure integrity, ethics, and quality standards in research.
3. To promote ease of doing research on socially and economically feasible areas of regional, national and/or international importance.
4. To promote research on existing and emerging areas of ODL to improve the quality of higher education through ODL mode.
5. To enter into and maintain academic relationships through collaborative and exchange research programs, nationally and internationally.
6. To develop and promote the research capacity of the teachers, research scholars, and students of the university through different grants and programs.
7. To integrate research with teaching with the help of instructional research.
8. To incentivize society with intellectual capital.

2.3 The Scope

- To promote research at the regional and/or state level and link the work to national and/or global perspectives.
- To address critical socio-economic problems of India through collaborative research.
- To advance research across disciplines and schools of thought.
- To promote quality and ethics in the conduct of research across disciplines.

2.4 Declaration

This policy sets out the responsibilities of the university to promote, support and regulate research activities across disciplines and schools of thought involving faculty, research scholars, scientists, academic associates, and students.

Section 3: Activities under the Research Policy

3.1 Promotion of Research

- 3.1.1** MPBOU shall encourage the teachers, administrators, librarians, research scholars, and students to do research.

- 3.1.2 MPBOU shall provide financial support based on the availability of funds or the nature and significance of the research proposals.
- 3.1.3 MPBOU shall allocate funds to provide financial assistance and grants for conducting Minor Research Projects and travel grants for attending seminars/conferences/workshops within the country and abroad. All provisions for grants and financial assistance shall be governed by the existing University Rules.
- 3.1.4 MPBOU shall promote capacity building initiatives by providing facilities for human resources development, incentives to the departments/employees for doing research, organizing conferences/workshops/seminars, and publishing research in the high impact journals of international repute.
- 3.1.5 MPBOU shall encourage its faculty to publish their research in high impact journals, books and conference proceedings.
- 3.1.6 MPBOU shall encourage its faculty to strive for research projects from national and international funding agencies, industries, and NGOs.
- 3.1.7 High impact outcome-based research as per the UGC norms shall be one of the main criteria for the recruitment and promotion of faculty.
- 3.1.8 MPBOU shall encourage its faculty members to pursue Post-Doctoral research, national and international collaborative research projects and fellowships by providing study leave.
- 3.1.9 MPBOU shall organize training programs/workshops on research methodology and other related aspects.

3.2 Necessary Infrastructure

The university provides the necessary infrastructure, including technological tools, access to research databases, a library containing books and reputed journals, and academic mentoring.

3.3 Doctoral and Post-Doctoral Programs

The university shall offer doctoral programs (Ph.D. /D. Lit. /D. Sc.) and allocate an appropriate budget for research facilities, including research grants, research fellowships and scholarships in all its institutions/schools/centres.

3.4 Participation in Conferences/Workshops

The university shall encourage its faculty and research scholars to attend international and national conferences and workshops as per funding available to them from the university and/or external agencies.

3.5 Publication of Papers/Articles in Journals, Monographs, and Books

Publication of research papers/articles in the journals having academic relevance and reputation is significant to the academic effectiveness and reputation of the university. Faculty members and scholars shall be expected to publish research papers in refereed journals recognized by the UGC, monographs and books.

3.6 Training and Development for Research and Publications

The university shall organize training programs/workshops on identified research areas, research methodology, and publications.

3.7 Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs)/Copyrights

The university will ensure compliance with relevant National IPR/Copyright laws and regulatory considerations.

3.8 Collaborative Research Projects

Faculty members and scholars shall be expected to engage in collaborative research with the prominent institutions of the nation and/or abroad. The university will enter into MoUs with prominent research institutions of the nation and/or abroad to conduct research jointly in the areas of common interest.

3.9 Consultancy Research Projects

- 3.9.1 The university allows its faculty members to serve as consultants and engage in consultancy projects.
- 3.9.2 Faculty members serving as consultants are to abide by the values and vision of the university throughout the duration of the research project.
- 3.9.3 Cost-sharing commitments must be implemented per the university rules or individual project basis.
- 3.9.4 All intellectual property rights shall be shared with the university.
- 3.9.5 All the outcomes and publications of the project explicitly acknowledge the university.
- 3.9.6 All the research projects will abide by the university rules.

3.10 Awards/Fellowships

The university shall offer the scheme of "Award(s)" and "Fellowships" in order to promote research or recognize the academic/research contribution under various/specified disciplines.

Section 4: Ethics and Integrity

4.1 Academic Integrity in Research

The University expects all its members—academic and non-academic staff, research scholars/fellows, students, and those who are not members but conducting research using University facilities or funding for their research—to comply with the standards set for academic integrity and ethics throughout in the execution of their research. Therefore, they will have to ensure the compliance with the following:

- a. They must be honest in proposing, conducting, and reporting research.
- b. They must ensure the accuracy of the research methodology, data and results.
- c. All the contributions of others should be acknowledged adequately.
- d. They must familiarize themselves with best research practices and standards of academic integrity.
- e. They will have to obey the legal obligations required by statutory and regulatory authorities/institutions.
- f. They should fulfil the ethical and legal requirements specified by the statutory and regulatory authorities (i.e., UGC and the University).
- g. They will have to ensure the rights and integrity of those involved in the research.

- h. They will have to ethically manage any conflict of interest and report to the concerned authority.

4.2 Rights of the Researchers/Scholars

The teaching and academic research community should enjoy academic freedom in order to achieve academic success. Researchers will be free to select the subjects/topics for research in their areas of interest. MPBOU guarantees the freedom researchers/research scholars need to carry out their research effectively.

However, it will be a matter of consideration for the Research Development Committee (RDC) of the university to evaluate the relevance of the proposals. Researchers' rights come with certain responsibilities too. The research they carry out should be purposeful and valuable to society. Researchers/scholars will not allow their rights to be stripped.

The research methodology used by the researchers/scholars shall not violate established professional code of conduct and ethics and affect the health (mental and physical), safety and privacy and personal rights of people.

Section 5: Implementation of the Policy

MPBOU shall implement and ensure the compliance of the research policy and activities expressed in it through the following considerations:

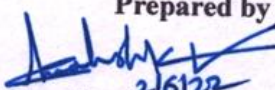
- 5.1 Research Development Committee (RDC) shall deal with all academic and/or developmental aspects of the university's research activities.
- 5.2 The Departmental Research Committee (DRC) of schools/institutions/centres shall manage the Doctoral Research activities in their areas of study.
- 5.3 RDC and DRCs will be responsible for ensuring compliance with all the regulatory requirements of Doctoral Research Programs, as specified by the University Grant Commission (UGC).
- 5.4 For Major/Minor Research Projects, faculty members/researchers/scholars shall prepare a proposal(s) and will submit it to the RDC of the university. Based on the recommendations of RDC, the university shall grant financial assistance to its faculty members/researchers/scholars. Therefore, the university shall allocate adequate finance in its budget every year.
- 5.5 For Major Research Projects, the university will provide all infrastructural facilitation required for conducting the research. The university shall be liable to monitor the progress of Major Research Projects funded by an external agency, maintain its accounts and submit the utilization certificate as per the requirement of the funding agency.
- 5.6 For collaborative research projects, the university shall form a review committee to explore the possibilities of having such collaborative or joint research projects.
- 5.7 The university shall constitute a screening committee to select the candidate(s) for the Award and Fellowship based on the candidate's research/academic contribution.
- 5.8 The university rules shall be followed while providing financial assistance or travel grants to the university's faculty members/officers/researchers to participate in the national and/or international seminar/conference/workshop. It shall be a matter of consideration for the screening committee constituted by the university.
- 5.9 The university will maintain records of the publications of its faculty members/researchers/scholars, promote these research publications, and appreciate

the faculty members/researchers/scholars for their contribution to research. For this, the university can constitute a feasible mechanism.

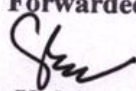
Section 6: Review of the Policy

The university's Research Policy shall be subject to review and necessary changes from time to time.


Prepared by


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Dr. Chandan Maheshkar
Sr. Consultant, CIQA
MPBOU, Bhopal

Forwarded by


Dr. Sandeep Kulshreshtha
Director, CIQA
MPBOU, Bhopal

Approved by


Dr. Jayant Sonwalkar
Vice-Chancellor
MPBOU, Bhopal

Prof. (Dr.) Jayant Sonwalkar
Vice Chancellor
M.P. Bhoj (Open) University
Bhopal (M.P.)

Abbreviations

D.Lit.	Doctor of Letters
D.Sc.	Doctor of Science
DRC	Departmental Research Committee
HEIs	Higher Education Institutes
IPRs	Intellectual Property Rights
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
ODL	Open and Distance Learning
Ph.D.	Doctor of Philosophy
RDC	Research Development Committee
UGC	University Grant Commission