



**University Grants Commission's  
New Regulations for  
Doctoral Degree Programme**

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J Madegowda\*

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After Independence, the country has achieved remarkable progress in every area including education, more particularly in the area of higher education. The fact that the number of universities increased from mere 26 at the time of Independence to 757, and that of colleges from 695 to 38,056 besides 11,922 Stand Alone Institutions (2014-15) is an indication of the achievements. These achievements assume importance if one consider the constraints within which the country is functioning. However, these achievements are not adequate if one consider the demand for these services. For instance, with all these improvements, the country's Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) is only at 24.5 per cent indicating the fact that the remaining 75.5 per cent of population in the age group of 18-24 years is deprived of an opportunity to pursue their higher education.

The above fact is true even in the case of research programmes leading to M.Phil and Ph.D Degrees. On the one hand, there has been a substantial increase in the number of postgraduates who intend to pursue research programmes, and on the other, there is an inadequacy of qualified research guides/supervisors. The substantial increase in the demand for research programmes is attributable to many reasons and the most important being the attractive pay package for teaching posts in colleges and universities. However, there is no corresponding increase in the number of recognized research supervisors. This is because of almost complete ban on the fresh recruitments for the last few years. For instance, in the case of 17 state universities in Karnataka, out of 3,433 sanctioned posts, only 2,262 are filled and the remaining 1,239 are left unfilled. And the unfilled posts account for 36.5 per cent of posts sanctioned or 54.77 per cent of filled posts. Consequently, there is an increase in the demand-supply gap. However, the fact that there has been a substantial increase, in the recent years, in the number of candidates pursuing research programmes cannot be ignored. This increase is due to recognition of even the qualified teachers in the affiliated colleges as the research supervisors by the affiliating universities. It is also because of the increase in the number of candidates one can guide at a time – till recently, it was about five per Research Supervisor and now, it is eight to 10.

However, there is no uniformity in the academic and research activities among Indian universities and also in the procedure for award of research Degrees. Further, there has been a kind of dissatisfaction/ criticism about the quality of research output. Hence, the University Grants Commission (UGC) thought of some kind of uniformity in the procedure for the award of M.Phil and Ph.D. Degrees among universities to maintain at least the Minimum Standards in the Research Work and Degrees. In

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