

An analysis on the humiliations faced by doctoral degree holders with reference to state run universities

Lubna Suraiya

Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, Loyola College, Vettavalam, Tiruvannamalai, Tamil Nadu, India

Abstract

Doctoral studying is at the essential of academic practices. Higher education in India is amassed and highly besmirched. The passion for being awarded as Doctorate has become a fusion-fashion strategy. New universities are upcoming which a matter of proudness is on the other hand, it is a wretched state that the quality of education is also declining. Some universities in India propose even higher degree of D.Sc. There is also the custom that some universities are offering honorary degrees of PhD and D.Litt. The supremacy of all institutions of advanced education and academes is bestowed upon University Grants Commission. IIMS do grant FPM which is equivalent to PhD. Successful studying of Ph. D education is a multifarious matter. Although Ph. D students are in high count, some never finish neither are allowed to complete. At the mercy of guides to earn their degrees, many scholars have to do whatever it takes to keep them in good humour, pushing substantive research to the backseat. This is the real situation happening with almost all research scholars in India. This paper throw lights on the problems faced by doctoral candidates during their course of doctoral education.

Keywords: higher education, doctorate, UGC, IIMS and FPM

Introduction: statement of the problem

There is a real need to establish a harmonious relationship between the research scholars and Guide which in turn requires a lot of drastic change in the Indian educational pattern. Assisting to improve by producing quality thesis and keeping in mind the contribution to society can empower, excel and enlighten the problems identified to act as a change-agent by creating awareness and finding the feasible solution to the problem.

Objectives

The study has the following objectives.

1. To identify the factors motivating Ph. D Research Scholars to undertake the Doctoral Studies.
2. To analyze various problems encountered by Ph. D Research Scholars

Review of literature

Mohit Kumar Chauhan was found hanging from the ceiling of his hostel room on CUR campus on Friday evening, shortly after a meeting of research scholars with the vice-chancellor. The parents have filed an FIR against the research guide saying she had been harassing him which led him to take the extreme step. The family said the FIR named the research guide Vidyottama Jain, Head of Department of Mathematics D.C Sharma and Dean (research) Aditya Gupta. Ajmer SP Nitin Deep Blaggan told The Indian Express. It also alleges inaction on the part of VC A.K Pujari. This is the second FIR against faculty members at CUR in less than a month. Earlier in January, Dalit PhD scholar Umesh Kumar had filed an FIR-through a court order-against the VC and seven other faculty members.

In pursuit of higher education and qualifications, there should be a mutual exchange of knowledge and ideas. With reference to the news, 'NEHU research scholar alleges harassment' (ST April, 24th 2014) which is said to be

tantamount to academic highhandedness of the concerned department in the University. The reports also says that there have been instances of similar situations occurring though those have not yet surfaced. In this situation, the scholars are always at the receiving end and it affects their emotional/mental condition. Many student/scholars have left the University or the pursuit of a PhD. For a PhD student, the time spent during the course is often frustrating, financially draining and an emotional strain. Completing a Ph. D takes perseverance (an average of 5-7 years) since the students encounter several problems each day they depend on their guides or supervisors for support, encouragement, guide and advice. But on many occasions (as reported in your paper) teachers/supervisors who harass the lady scholars/scholars are least bothered. Rarely have the errant teachers been punished, thereby encouraging them to continue with these old habits. NEHU is not alone; these problems plague the academia and research laboratories in India. Recently, petitions were sought to fight against the harassment faced by PhD students in CDRI, Lucknow. Last year, the VC of JNU, New Delhi suspended a teacher (Prof. K.R Nayar, who was faculty of Centre of Social Medicine and Community Health) who was involved in harassing a girl student. Those involved in harassing/molesting lady scholars in NEHU must be dealt with in the same way. Though the University Grants Commission (UGC), New Delhi, issued notice video no. F.4-6/2011(CCM) dated 29/07/2011 as checkpoints to oversee conduct in higher education against harassments/discriminations towards students; the situation remains more or less the same and needs attention.

An M. Phil research student of Presidency College has accused a professor of sexual harassment. The 24-year-old woman student, who is doing a research project at the college, said B. Subramanian, head of the history department, grabbed her arm and pushed her outside his room on Thursday, when she went to enquire about her results. "Two

days ago, I got to know that I had cleared all my subjects. But today, I was informed that I had failed by five marks in one subject. When I asked the Prof. about it, he yelled at me, and then forcibly pushed me out,” said the student, who has registered a case against the professor under the Tamil Nadu Prohibition of Harassment of Women Act at an all-women’s police station on Anna Salai. According to the student, the professor has been giving her a hard time ever since she applied for her M.Phil. “He uses double entendres and makes demeaning references. Many students have faced this but have not come out in the open,” she said. The alleged rape attempt on a PhD scholar from Sambalpur University has brought to the fore various kinds of exploitation these scholars face. Such harassment is routine in state universities, feel both teachers and students.

Hypothesis

Following Null hypotheses were formulated for the study. There is no significant relationship between the motivational factors to undergo Ph. D and the problems faced by Ph. D Research Scholars.

Methodology

Pilot study was conducted. Cronbach’s Alpha holds 0.88 for testing the reliability of the questionnaire. The researcher used interview schedule as the data collection tool. The data was collected from on-going research scholars and as well from the recently awarded candidates. The present study is based on Simple Random Sampling method. The researcher had chosen 3 state universities of different districts of Tamil Nadu. The sample size (n = 60) is determined by using Morgan Table. The research was carried out by using both primary data and secondary data.

Research gap

Based on previous literature it is found that there are numerous studies conducted on problems based on research scholars but lacks in the quantitative method of accuracy and is theoretical in nature. This was the research gap identified by the researcher and furthermore made the researcher to go by the study knowing that though problems are encountered yet scholars show keen interest in doing Ph. D in the current scenario. Hence the present study is an endeavor to fill the gap.

Application of tools

Factors motivating Ph. D Scholars to go for Doctoral Education

Factor analysis is used. The KMO value of sampling adequacy is high 0.733. The Bartlett test rejects the null hypothesis ie, the variables are not related as the approximate Chi-square value 81.304 at degrees of freedom which is significant at 1 percent level of significance. Thus factor analysis may be considered as an appropriate technique. Principal Component Factor Analysis with Varimax rotation was conducted to assess the underlying structure for 7 items of various factors motivating Ph. D Research Scholars to undergo the doctoral degree is listed in Table 2.

Table 1: Total Variance Explained

Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1.382	24.622	24.622	1.574	14.107	14.107
1.451	10.865	35.487	1.997	13.511	27.618
1.666	11.519	47.006	1.523	14.383	42.001
1.020	13.677	60.683	1.305	14.025	56.026

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

It is shown from the above table that 4 factors can be extracted together which account for accounting 4 variables. Hence these 4 variables are summated to 4 factors by losing 43.974% of data.

Table 2: Factor Loadings and Extraction for the Rotated Factors on Ph. D Research Scholars to undertake the Doctoral Studies

S.No	Variables	Communalities			
		1	2	3	4
1.	Passion in teaching curriculum	.431	1.38	1.22	.569
2.	Contribution to society	.235	.333	.319	.215
3.	As per UGC norms	.859	.667	.621	.852
4.	Expecting high salaried scale	.965	.985	.528	.635
5.	Uncertainty regarding new regulations	.523	.639	.678	.421
6.	To avail guide ship and guiding students	.547	.217	.856	.789
7.	Pre-fix labelling as Dr. or name sake degree	.502	.596	.340	.453

Table 3: Factor Loadings and Extraction for the Rotated Factors on problems encountered by Ph. D Research Scholars

S.No	Variables	Communalities			
		1	2	3	4
1	Sexual Abuse and Harassment	.831	1.23	-.084	.532
2	Expecting fringe benefits and monetary terms	1.693	.674	.429	.801
3	Overburdening as a part of responsibility	-.332	-.428	.750	-.625
4	Espionage of minor project/ Coercion to include name of the guide for publications	.654	.127	.191	.552
	Eigen Values	2.435	1.780	1.622	
	% of Variance	15.338	18.341	1.509	

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

- a. Rotation converged in 4 iterations.
- b. Loadings >|0.5| are selected which is shaded

Table 4: Consolidation ANOVA Table

Variables	Age	Religion	Gender	Locality	
Intimidating sexual favours	3.896*	0.125	5.369*	0.258	0.699
Stalking	0.799 *	1.207	5.969	0.369	1.236*
Bullying	0.381	0.414	2.891	0.789	3.215*
Demanding timely fringe benefits	0.265	1.104	2.414	1.258	2.448*
Direct monetary charge	0.186	0.718	3.687*	2.158	2.543
Misusing research candidates for private/ domestic use	0.293	1.207	6.378*	2.693	3.258
Espionage for minor projects	0.706	0.114	1.749	3.589*	1.963
Not guiding but expects to include name for publications	1.058	1.504	1.987*	4.258	1.879
Low quality of thesis produced and outsourced	0.634	0.682	2.578	2.888*	0.879

Source: Computed Data

* Significant at 5% level

Findings based on motivating factors for Ph. D research scholars to undertake doctoral degrees

It is observed from the above Table 2 that among 7 variables the highest prioritized element for scholars to undertake Ph. D is for high scale of salary accounting to (0.985) followed by the UGC regulations (.859) that have been prescribed. Another variable that is notably seen is the matter of pride to avail guide ship from the approved recognized and prestigious universities (856) to show the quantity of thesis guided. Quality is preferred least. There is also a fear of uncertainty in rules and nomenclatures in framing the policies and due to this reason some scholars want to finish their Ph. D in advance (.678). There is an equal contribution of holding passion towards teaching curriculum which has considerably reduced but on the other hand it is found that few scholars want to get a doctorate degree just for name sake or would like to be called by prefixing their names as Doctorates (.678). There are few scholars who would like to contribute their thesis for the wellbeing of the society and identify the real problems and wants to present a feasible solution to the problems (0.333).

Findings related to the problems encountered by ph. D research scholars

Among the various factors problems encountered by research scholars of state run universities "Harassment Activities" such as Intimidating sexual favours, stalking and bullying are the major problems faced by the doctoral; research scholars. As far as the "Monetary Aspect" is concerned it is to be noted that direct charging of money from the guide is observed high. The factor labelling as "Over Burdening" gives a clear picture that the Ph. D candidates are misused to carry out the personal work of the Guide at large. In terms of "Calibre" low quality of Ph. D holders are produced as the Guide themselves do not possess adequate knowledge for guiding and much of the thesis are outsourced.

Suggestions

For universities

1. Research Centers of Universities must chart out clearly to disseminate information in regard to Ph. D bureaucracies which are highly lacking and are unresponsive.
2. Grievances cell needs to be active and need to take appropriate course of an action.
3. Unethical code of demeanor should be avoided and if ruptured shall be punishable as per Indian Penal Code.
4. Guides listed by university if indulged in any immoral act shall pursue cancellation for life.

5. Application of tools must be introduced as a curriculum so as to avoid outsourcing and bring originality in the content.

For government

The University Grants Commission of is a statutory body under Ministry of Human Resource Development is highly responsible for maintaining the standards of higher education.

1. The UGC panel must provide clean chit as De-Recognized University and Non-approval status by UGC for any malpractice indulged or if breach the norms.
2. The Higher Education Commission must chart out the plan to conduct and clear CARE (Certificate of Acquaintance for Research Eligibility) Examinations to obtain the approval of guideship.
3. The outsourcing PH. D thesis agencies or DTP centers must be banned and should be sentenced for life.
4. Restricting the number of candidature for the guide will not be a burdensome rather will help in improving the quality of thesis which is the need of the hour.

For guide and scholars

1. Every Guide and Research Scholar must aim at high academic profile.
2. To stabilize the innovative teaching profession involving unexplored and challenging titles can be chosen by the candidature.
3. Every Guide must believe that they are producing efficient and effective candidates under them.
4. Mutual agreement and consent is significantly important between guide and research scholars.

Conclusion

It is very true that education plays a vital role in every human life. But it is also astonishing that the same education which is liable for enhancing in creating awareness, brings limelight the insights of various aspects of society also thrashes by keeping mum, lethargy and transforming educated to uneducated, in the sense that though the individual is educated yet remains silent and bears all the violent tortures insensibly just for a mere degree, rather in real scenario it should be vice-e-versa and must raise voice against all odd happenings. Besides all these everybody encompasses for Ph. D and search keenly for a better human being to carry out their doctoral degrees. But every human being fail to realize that rather than looking out for good individual, search within is more relevant by being noble, humble, humanitarian and

adding more meaningful to their lives by preserving their image.

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