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## Teaching Over Research? Investigating the Lack of Research Motivation among College Faculties in Dimapur, Nagaland.

**Durga Malakar**

Ph.D. Research Scholar, Email ID: durgamalakar13@gmail.com

Department of Education, Nagaland University

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### ABSTRACT

In colleges across Nagaland, faculty members consistently prioritise teaching responsibilities over research. This study investigates the underlying factors contributing to the apparent lack of research eagerness among college faculty in the region. Data were collected through surveys and semi-structured interviews with faculty members from various private institutions. The findings reveal that high teaching workloads, inadequate institutional support, lack of research infrastructure, inadequate funding opportunities, and the absence of clear research incentives are primary deterrents to research participation. Additionally, the study highlights a general perception among faculty that research is undervalued within their institutional cultures, with promotion and appraisal systems heavily skewed toward teaching performance. The paper concludes with policy recommendations and institutional strategies aimed at fostering a balanced academic environment where both teaching and research are equally supported and valued. This research contributes to the discourse on higher education development in Northeast India and offers actionable insights for educational policymakers, administrators, and academic leaders.



## 1. Introduction

Teachers play a pivotal role in shaping the intellectual and professional landscape of society, especially in higher education. Beyond just transporting subject knowledge, teachers perform as facilitators of critical thinking, innovation, and lifelong learning. In universities and colleges, teachers are not only educators but also researchers, mentors, and contributors to the development of knowledge across disciplines. Their dual role in **teaching and research** ensures that academic instruction remains current, evidence-based, and relevant to societal needs.

In the domain of research, higher education teachers contribute by generating new knowledge by addressing real-world problems and guiding student research at various levels, such as undergraduate, postgraduate, and doctoral levels. Their scholarly work often informs policy, industry, and community practices. The 21st-century teachers are expected to adopt interdisciplinary approaches, leverage technology, and engage in incessant professional development.

Recognising their critical role, policies like the **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020** in India highlight empowering teachers with autonomy, academic freedom, and robust support systems to excel in both teaching and research. Thus, teachers in higher education serve as the backbone of a nation's intellectual and developmental progress.

## 2. Review of Related Literature

Chakraborty & Biswas (2020) conducted a study on "Motivating factors in a teacher's research and developmental activities and their impact on effective quality teaching in higher education institutions". The study was descriptive research, and a cross-sectional survey on faculty from different HEIS of West Bengal was conducted. A questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale was used to collect the primary data. The convenience sampling technique was utilised. Exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis were performed. The major findings of the research were that improved research and development activities of faculties had an enormous impact on their teaching quality.

Saini & Chaudhury (2020) conducted a study on "What drives research in higher education? In an Indian context, the study was qualitative research involving in-depth interviews via semi-structured questions for primary data collection. The study found that the encouraging factors are centred upon the individual, e.g., career growth; whereas the de-motivating factors are mainly extrinsic, e.g., mandate policy and framework.



Das (2024), in his study, attempted to examine "Factors Influencing Research Productivity in Higher Education Institutions in India". The study was done based on the primary data collected from top universities in West Bengal. A total of 303 responses were considered for this study. Data was collected from the research scholars, assistant professors, associate professors, and professors of the selected universities. A scale was formed using the factor analysis method. Among the four scales, Individual motivational factors and Institutional factors are found significant (significance at <5% level) for the growth of research publications of the institutions under investigation. The study further found, research support, academic environment are still not sufficient to influence the research activities in these universities.

Rowland (1996) attempted to study the "Relationships between teaching and research. Teaching in higher education," The study examined the views of heads of department at a British university on teaching and research by taking them as the sample. The study found that though teaching and research are considered equally valuable, research is often given a higher status. The paper explores the interconnection between teaching and research and argues that the traditional separation of the two is not enough. It concludes that integrating teaching and research more closely can enhance the quality of university education, especially when students' perspectives are valued and incorporated into both learning and research.

Brew & Boud (1995) attempted to study "Teaching and research: Establishing the vital link with learning". The paper argues that efforts to establish a clear empirical link between research activity and teaching performance have generally yielded weak correlations, largely due to differing conceptions. It suggests that the current debate is unproductive and that any meaningful connection between teaching and research lies in their shared focus on learning. Emphasising how knowledge is created and communicated is key. The link should be sought in the learning fostered by teaching and the learning that occurs through research, rather than defending existing academic structures. This perspective can better inform discussions on the role of research in higher education teaching.

### **3. Research Methodology**

This study is based on a descriptive survey method. Primary data was collected from college faculty working in 3 private colleges affiliated with Nagaland University. Data was analysed qualitatively using percentages. A self-constructed questionnaire was used for data collection. An interview schedule with semi-structured questions was also employed for primary data collection; the purposive sampling method was used for interviewing participants. A total of 108 participants, irrespective of gender, working as Assistant professors in the three sample colleges, participated in this research. 2 members from each



college were interviewed for data collection. The open-ended questions used for the interview were analysed and written in a narrative style.

#### **4. Study Objectives**

- 1. To identify the factors that influence college faculty members to prioritise teaching over research.**
2. To explore the challenges faced by college faculty in Colleges in Nagaland in accessing research opportunities and academic networks
- 3. To suggest policy measures and institutional strategies for balancing teaching and research responsibilities effectively.**

#### **5. The Concept of Teaching**

Teaching is regarded as an art and a science. As an art, it lays stress on the imaginative and artistic abilities of the teacher in creating a worthwhile situation in the classroom to enable students to learn. As a science, it sheds light on the logical, mechanical, or procedural steps to be followed to attain an effective achievement of goals. "Teaching is intimate contact between a more mature personality and a less mature one, which is designed to further the education of the latter" Morrison & Dewey (1934) expressed this concept of teaching by an equation. "Teaching is learning as selling is to buying".

Teaching is a purposeful and orderly process through which information, skills, attitudes, and values are transmitted from one individual to another, usually from a teacher to learners. It is both an art and a science which requires imagination, compassion, and communication skills as well as knowledge of pedagogical theories and strategies.

According to Gage (1963), Teaching is "a form of interpersonal influence aimed at changing the behaviour potential of another person." This definition emphasizes the purposeful and interactive nature of teaching, where the teacher not only imparts content but also influences the learner's development.

Brown (2001) views teaching as "showing or helping someone to learn how to do something, giving instructions, guiding in the study of something, providing knowledge, causing to know or understand." This broader definition highlights the teacher's role in facilitating learning rather than just delivering information.



Teaching involves planning, organising, and delivering content in a way that promotes meaningful learning. It is influenced by various factors, including the educational context, learners' needs, and societal expectations.

Kyriacou (2009). It is a dynamic process, evolving with advancements in technology, changes in educational policy, and new understandings of how learning occurs.

Teaching is both an art and a science. As an art, it emphasizes the teacher's creativity and ability to create meaningful learning experiences, while as a science, it focuses on systematic and logical methods to achieve educational goals. Morrison and Dewey (1934) described teaching as an interaction between a mature and a less mature individual aimed at fostering learning, comparing it to selling and buying. Overall, teaching is a purposeful process of transmitting knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values, requiring both creativity and pedagogical expertise.

## **6. The Concept of Research**

The application of the scientific method in the study of problems is known as research. It is a planned and methodical process of carrying on a scientific method of analysis, which leads to the finding and development of an organised body of knowledge. It is an attempt to answer a question or to determine the relationship between two or more variables. Research involves gathering new data from primary or actual sources or by using existing data for a new rationale. In the field of education, research is essential for providing useful knowledge (Koul, 2020)

### **6.1. Importance of Research**

Research is a methodical process of collecting, analysing, and interpreting information to increase our perception of a phenomenon or unravel a problem. It is vital across disciplines for advancing knowledge, informing policy, and improving practice. Research contributes to the expansion of new ideas, theories, and concepts. It helps build upon existing knowledge and facilitates innovation.

Research is essential for identifying issues, understanding their causes, and developing interventions or strategies to deal with them. It helps in formulating solutions to real-world problems. Research contributes to societal advancement by driving technological progression, improving services, and determining policies that address critical social issues. Research fosters critical thinking, analytical skills, and academic curiosity. It is a key component of higher education and lifelong learning.



## 7. Findings Based on Objectives

### 7.1. Objective 1: To identify the factors that influence college faculty members to prioritise teaching over research.

The following are the findings based on the responses given by the participants on exploring why teachers in colleges often give more time and importance to teaching their classes than to doing academic research.

1. Their main aim is teaching excellence rather than research output.
2. There is a heavy workload with limited time to conduct research.
3. Even if they are interested, there is a lack of resources and funding, as research is impossible without funding.
4. In colleges, promotions/increment is based on teachers' performance in teaching rather than publishing.
5. One of the main reasons, as given by most teachers, is that they feel underprepared for research due to ignorance about research, lack of confidence, leave policies and finance.
6. Investing for 4/5 years is difficult because working in privately run colleges, finance is a big challenge.
7. Focusing on preparing for other competitive examinations alongside teaching restricts their interest and time for research.

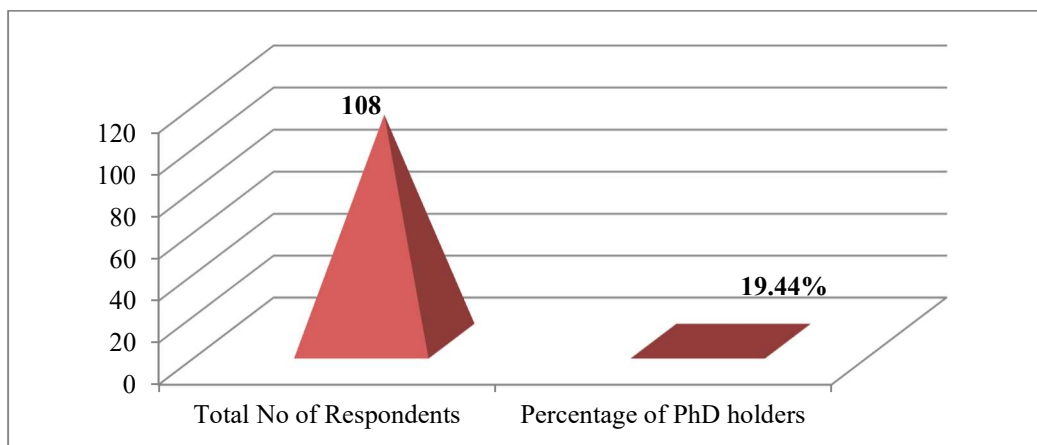


Figure No. 1 represent the percentage of PhD holders from the three sample colleges

8. The study unveiled that only 19.44% of teachers hold a doctorate in the three sample colleges.

### **7.2. Objective 2: To explore the challenges faced by college faculty in Colleges in Nagaland in accessing research opportunities and academic networks.**

The following are the responses given by the respondents on challenges faced by faculty in accessing research opportunities and academic networks:

1. Laziness and no desire to do serious academic writing are one of their main personal challenges.
2. Not prepared academically to apply to central universities for research.
3. There is no proper leave structure or paid leave for researchers, which poses a huge challenge because research involves finances.
4. Private universities are too expensive, which makes them unaffordable.
5. Colleges only encourage, but do not provide further institutional support.
6. Ignorance about academic writing and proceeding further with research publication.
7. The study exposed, only 24.00% of the participants had published research articles in various journals, and 76.00% had not published a single research article.



*Figure No. II. Research articles published by Participants.*

### **7.3. Objective 3: To suggest policy measures and institutional strategies for balancing teaching and research responsibilities effectively.**



Balancing teaching and research is a growing concern in private colleges in Nagaland, where faculty are often overburdened with teaching duties, especially with the implementation of the FYUGP (Four-Year Undergraduate Program), and have limited access to research facilities. To ensure holistic academic development and institutional growth, the following policy measures and institutional strategies are recommended:

### **By redefining the Faculty Workload Policy**

- Introduce a supplementary workload system that assigns specific time for research alongside teaching.

### **Clear Research Expectations**

- Establish clear and realistic research expectations in faculty evaluation criteria to avoid overburdening teachers while encouraging scholarly productivity.

### **Establishment of Research Cells in colleges**

- Set up Research and Development (R&D) Cells in each college to coordinate and promote research initiatives by helping in identifying funding opportunities and organising research workshops.
- Organise research methodology courses which will open up research knowledge and prospects.

### **Access to Resources**

- Develop institutional collaborations with local and national universities (e.g., Nagaland University) for shared access to research journals, laboratories, and expertise.

### **Arrange/organise Faculty Development Programs (FDPS)**

- Regularly organise FDPS and short-term courses on research methodology, academic writing, and data analysis.
- Collaborate with agencies like UGC, ICSSR, and NAAC for training support.
- Entrust a senior and experienced faculty member to mentor junior staff in publishing and applying for research grants

Incentives based on teachers' performance



- Provide financial incentives, promotions, or awards for publishing research in peer-reviewed journals.
- Allow short sabbaticals or reduced teaching loads for faculty actively engaged in research projects.
- Promote research that addresses local issues in Nagaland, linking teaching with real-world applications and societal impact.
- Provide institutional access to platforms like JSTOR, INFLIBNET, or Shodhganga to support literature review and referencing.
- Offer editorial and technical support for e-journal publication through the college research cell

## 8. Conclusion

The study highlights several aspects that drive college faculty members in Dimapur, Nagaland, to prioritise teaching over research. This study found that a strong commitment to teaching excellence remains dominant, but challenges such as excessive workload, lack of research funding, limited access to academic resources, and inadequate institutional support hamper research engagement. The data reveal a low percentage of doctoral holders and an even lower rate of research publications among faculty members. This indicates a pressing need to address organisational and other barriers.

This research uncovers that there is a gap in academic readiness and confidence among many faculty members, particularly in privately run colleges, where financial restraints and policy confines further exacerbate the problem. There is a general encouragement from colleges, but there is an absence of sustained support mechanisms, such as paid research leave, research cells, or mentorship, to enable meaningful academic inquiry.

To address these issues and foster a balanced academic ecosystem, the study recommends a sequence of institutional policies and reforms, such as redefining workload policies, establishing research and development cells, enabling access to academic networks, and providing financial incentives tied to research productivity. Institutional collaborations and regular faculty development programs are essential to building capacity and connecting prevailing gaps in research culture.

Ultimately, for colleges to evolve into centres of both teaching excellence and scholarly innovation, a deliberate and sustained effort is required. Aligning institutional structures with the dual



goals of teaching and research will not only improve faculty development but also contribute significantly to the academic and societal advancement of the state.

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