

## Implementation and Impact of ShodhChakra in Uttar Pradesh Universities: Framework for Doctoral Research Management

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### Abstract

Effective management of doctoral research is essential for maintaining academic quality, research productivity, and institutional accountability in higher education institutions. Universities with large affiliating structures often face challenges in managing doctoral records, supervising research scholars, and maintaining accurate documentation required for accreditation and policy reporting. In states such as Uttar Pradesh, where the higher education system includes a large number of universities and affiliated colleges, the administrative management of research scholars becomes increasingly complex. ShodhChakra, developed by the Information and Library Network (INFLIBNET) Centre, provides a centralized digital platform for managing the entire lifecycle of doctoral research. This paper examines the relevance of ShodhChakra in the context of Uttar Pradesh Universities and discusses how it addresses issues related to fragmented research data, large affiliation structures, and accreditation requirements. The study highlights the potential of digital research management systems in improving research governance, administrative efficiency, and institutional research visibility.

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### 1. Introduction

Research and doctoral education constitute a fundamental component of higher education systems worldwide. Universities are expected not only to disseminate knowledge through teaching but also to contribute to the advancement of knowledge through research activities. In India, doctoral research forms an important indicator of institutional academic strength and research capacity. Regulatory frameworks such as those introduced by the University Grants Commission (UGC), as well as accreditation bodies such as NAAC and ranking systems like NIRF, increasingly require universities to maintain comprehensive and accurate records related to doctoral enrolment, research publications, and thesis outputs. However, many universities in India, particularly large affiliating universities, face challenges in managing doctoral research data due to decentralized administrative systems. Research records are often distributed across different departments and administrative units, making it difficult to maintain consistent and reliable information. This situation is particularly evident in Uttar Pradesh, which hosts one of the largest higher education systems in India. To

address these challenges, digital research management platforms have been introduced to support universities in organizing and monitoring research activities. ShodhChakra is one such initiative developed by the INFLIBNET Centre to facilitate the digital management of doctoral research processes. By integrating scholar information, supervisor records, research progress data, and thesis workflows into a centralized platform, ShodhChakra aims to improve the efficiency and transparency of research administration. This paper explores the role of ShodhChakra in addressing research management challenges within the higher education institutions of Uttar Pradesh.

### 2. Higher Education Ecosystem in Uttar Pradesh

Uttar Pradesh represents one of the largest higher education ecosystems in India in terms of institutional presence and student enrolment. According to recent higher education statistics, the state has the highest number of colleges in the country, with more than 8,000 colleges functioning under various universities. Over the past two decades, the number of universities in the state has also increased significantly,

reaching more than ninety universities across public, private, and deemed categories. This rapid expansion reflects the growing demand for higher education and the efforts of the state government to increase educational access across regions. The affiliating university model plays a dominant role in the higher education structure of Uttar Pradesh. Large universities supervise academic programmes across numerous affiliated colleges located in different districts. These institutions offer undergraduate and postgraduate programmes and often support research activities as well. Consequently, doctoral scholars may be registered under departments of the main university while conducting their research work in affiliated colleges or recognized research centres. The wide geographic spread of affiliated institutions increases the complexity of managing doctoral programmes and monitoring research activities. In addition to institutional expansion, the state contributes significantly to national higher education enrolment. A large number of postgraduate students pursue advanced studies across universities and colleges in Uttar Pradesh, which subsequently leads to a substantial number of doctoral registrations each year. Managing such large numbers of research scholars requires efficient administrative mechanisms and structured data management systems

### 3. Literature Review

Research Information Management Systems (RIMS) have become an essential component of modern higher education institutions as universities increasingly rely on digital platforms to manage scholarly outputs and doctoral research activities. Several studies highlight the importance of integrated research management systems in improving research governance, institutional transparency, and data-driven decision-making. According to the University Grants Commission, universities must maintain structured records of doctoral scholars, research publications, and thesis submissions to ensure transparency and compliance with national research regulations. Similarly, the NAAC accreditation framework places strong emphasis on documentation of research activities, including doctoral enrolment, publications, and funded research projects under Criterion III. Previous studies on research information systems indicate that digital platforms significantly improve the efficiency of research administration by integrating data from multiple institutional units. These systems help universities track scholar progress, manage supervisor assignments, and generate reports required for accreditation and ranking frameworks. Research management tools also enhance institutional visibility by providing centralized access to research outputs and academic profiles. In India, the INFLIBNET Centre has introduced several national digital initiatives to support research management and scholarly communication. Platforms such as Shodhganga for electronic theses and dissertations and ShodhChakra for doctoral research lifecycle management represent important steps toward strengthening research infrastructure in higher education institutions.

These developments highlight the growing importance of digital research management systems in improving the administration and visibility of research activities, particularly in large affiliating universities such as those in Uttar Pradesh.

### 4. Research Methodology

This study adopts a descriptive and analytical approach to examine the role of ShodhChakra in managing doctoral research activities in universities in Uttar Pradesh. The study

is based primarily on secondary data collected from government reports, institutional documents, and official information published by the INFLIBNET Centre.

Relevant data sources include AISHE reports, UGC guidelines, NAAC accreditation manuals, and documentation related to ShodhChakra. These sources were analysed to understand the structure of doctoral research management in universities and the challenges associated with decentralized administrative systems. The study further evaluates how ShodhChakra can address these challenges by providing an integrated platform for research lifecycle management.

## 5. Challenges in Doctoral Research Management

### 5.1 Fragmentation of Research Data

In many universities, doctoral research information is maintained through decentralized administrative processes. Records related to research scholars are often distributed across several administrative units including academic departments, research sections, examination branches, and institutional quality assurance cells. Each unit maintains its own documentation based on specific administrative responsibilities. Departments usually maintain records related to scholar registration and supervision, while research sections handle documentation related to research proposals, coursework completion, and progress monitoring. The examination branch manages thesis evaluation procedures and the final award of doctoral degrees. Meanwhile, accreditation cells collect research data required for institutional reporting and assessment. This fragmented system of record management frequently leads to duplication and inconsistencies in research data. Since information is stored separately by different offices, updates may not be synchronized across the institution. Publication records of research scholars may remain incomplete, and supervisor-scholar databases may contain discrepancies. Additionally, generating consolidated reports required for accreditation bodies and government agencies becomes a time-consuming process involving manual data compilation and verification.

### 5.2 Scale of the Affiliation Structure

Another major challenge arises from the large affiliating structure of universities in Uttar Pradesh. Many universities supervise hundreds of affiliated colleges located across several districts. These colleges offer postgraduate programmes and sometimes host research scholars under recognized supervisors. As a result, doctoral research activities are dispersed across a wide network of institutions rather than being confined to the main university campus. The management of research scholars across such a large network requires effective coordination between university departments and affiliated colleges. Differences in record-keeping practices and administrative procedures among institutions may lead to inconsistencies in research documentation. Some colleges maintain digital records while others rely on manual documentation systems, creating difficulties for the central university administration in collecting and verifying research information. Consequently, monitoring doctoral progress and compiling institutional research statistics becomes a complex administrative task.

## 6. Role of ShodhChakra in Addressing These Challenges

The implementation of ShodhChakra offers a practical solution to the challenges associated with fragmented research data and large affiliating structures. As a centralized digital platform for doctoral research management, ShodhChakra

integrates scholar information, supervisor profiles, research progress records, and thesis submission workflows within a single system. By consolidating information from various departments and administrative units, the platform reduces duplication and ensures consistency in research documentation. Through standardized data entry procedures, ShodhChakra allows universities to maintain a comprehensive and continuously updated database of research scholars. Administrative authorities can monitor doctoral progress in real time, track supervisor allocations, and ensure compliance with institutional and regulatory requirements. The platform also facilitates efficient communication between departments and affiliated institutions by providing a unified interface for research administration.

### 7. Benefits for Universities in Uttar Pradesh

The adoption of ShodhChakra can significantly improve research governance and administrative efficiency in universities across Uttar Pradesh. By centralizing doctoral records, universities can maintain accurate and reliable information regarding scholar enrolment, supervisor–scholar ratios, research publications, and thesis submissions. This centralized data management helps administrators make informed decisions related to research policy and academic planning. The platform also supports accreditation and ranking processes by enabling institutions to generate consolidated reports required by NAAC and other regulatory bodies. Instead of collecting information manually from multiple departments and colleges, universities can retrieve research statistics directly from the system. This reduces administrative workload and ensures greater transparency and accuracy in institutional reporting. Furthermore, the availability of structured research data enhances institutional visibility by highlighting research outputs and doctoral achievements. Universities can use such information to strengthen their research profile and demonstrate their academic contributions at regional and national levels.

### Conclusion

The effective management of doctoral research has become increasingly important in modern higher education systems. Universities must maintain accurate research records, monitor scholar progress, and generate reliable data for accreditation and policy purposes. In large affiliating university systems such as those found in Uttar Pradesh, traditional manual administrative methods are often insufficient to handle the growing scale and complexity of research activities. Digital research management platforms such as ShodhChakra provide a comprehensive solution by centralizing doctoral information and streamlining administrative processes. By integrating scholar data, supervisor records, and research workflows into a unified system, ShodhChakra enhances efficiency, transparency, and accountability in research governance. The adoption of such platforms can significantly improve the ability of universities in Uttar Pradesh to manage doctoral programmes, support research development, and meet the growing demands of institutional accreditation and national research assessment frameworks.

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