Promoting research culture

What is the issue?

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India needs a better understanding of research culture for it to achieve its aspirations on higher education.

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How is the research culture in India?

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- A culture of research is largely missing in our institutions as faculty members **lack** collegiality and a singularity of **purpose**.
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- Most of the publications happen due to **individual initiatives** for promotional needs rather than as purposeful collective effort.
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- As, a majority of our institutions do not have any **institutional research thrust.**
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- Also, in India research is approached with **treating publication** in international journals **as the end in itself**.
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- As a result of this goal, faculty turn towards addressing unfamiliar problems of distant lands just to get promoted.
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- They tend to undermine the long term goal of building an indigenous research culture to address the problems of our society.
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- More importantly, the **traditional core** such as full-time faculty, liberal arts and scientific education, student services, the library, etc is **declining.**
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- On the other hand, periphery such as outsourcing partnerships, corporate training, vocational courses, discrete research centres, etc is continuously expanding.
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- This **expanding periphery and contracting core**, limits the institutions'

governance structures to focus on advanced goals of research, etc.
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What should be done?

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- India institutions should incorporate shared, **research-related values and practices** towards building a safe home for testing new ideas.
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- In the new competitive environment, institutions need to **define a strategy** that specifies the domain in and goals for which it will operate.
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- Moving beyond specific practices as publications, India should take up comprehensive reviews and follow-up actions to **evolve the right research culture.**
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- This can ensure a collective environment for research rather than few isolated individual researcher projects.
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- Creating **research friendly physical and administrative facilities** in organisations are essential.
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- Taking forward the government's proposal for a **single higher education regulator,** to replace the UGC and AICTE, can eliminate overlaps in jurisdictions.
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- Government playing a facilitating role instead of a regulating one could help promote a research culture that India wants at present.
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Source: BusinessLine

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