
BARRIERS TO PATENT COMMERCIALIZATION IN INDIAN HIGHER EDUCATION: LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL INSIGHTS FROM MAHARASHTRA

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ABSTRACT

Patent commercialization in Indian higher education institutions faces significant legal and institutional barriers, particularly in Maharashtra. While India has seen a surge in patent filings, actual commercialization remains limited due to fragmented policies, regulatory ambiguities, and weak institutional mechanisms. This study analyzes the challenges faced by Higher Educational Institutions in translating research into market-ready technologies, highlighting gaps in intellectual property ownership frameworks, licensing processes, and revenue-sharing models. A mixed-method approach is employed, combining doctrinal legal analysis with empirical insights gathered from institutional audits and expert input. Comparative global models, such as the Bayh-Dole Act (United States of America) and Fraunhofer system (Germany), provide lessons for structuring a more effective commercialization ecosystem in India. The findings underscore the need for standardized Intellectual Property policies, stronger industry–academia partnerships, and institutional incentives to support technology transfer. By addressing these systemic inefficiencies, India can enhance its innovation economy and create a more robust patent commercialization framework for Higher Educational Institutions.

Keywords: Patent commercialization, Technology transfer, Higher education institutions, Institutional barriers, IPR policies.

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1. Introduction

The concept of patenting and commercialization is gaining momentum in India, yet there is a need to strengthen academic commercialization both in terms of implementing national policies and stratified models to bring the research output from universities/research institutes to market for public benefit. The Economic Survey of India¹ 2024–25 highlights a notable paradox in the nation's innovation landscape. While patent filings have seen an impressive surge—reflecting a burgeoning culture of invention among academic institutions and emerging private innovators—the commercialization of these patents remains significantly limited. The survey points out that despite India's improved standing in global innovation rankings, low overall R&D investment, minimal private-sector engagement, and existing regulatory and infrastructure challenges have hindered the effective translation of intellectual property into market-ready products.

The commercialization of patents in Indian Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) sits at the nexus of intellectual property law, public policy, and institutional governance. As India aims to strengthen its innovation economy, HEIs face barriers in translating research into usable technologies due to legal ambiguities, fragmented institutional policies, and the lack of a unified national commercialization framework. Core legal issues include IP ownership in publicly funded research, licensing rights, revenue-sharing models, and compliance with financial and audit norms. While the National IPR Policy (2016) recognizes the academic role in innovation, it lacks statutory authority, resulting in inconsistent practices. This presents a unique opportunity for legal scholarship to address the disconnect between policy intent and institutional capacity, and to propose robust governance models. In the absence of a Bayh-Dole-type framework, the issue remains central to legal debates in IP and innovation law, and highly relevant to national strategies on economic and academic reform. By focusing on Maharashtra, this study captures the regional disparities, institutional practices, and legal-policymaking gaps that characterize India's broader higher education innovation landscape. This study adopts a mixed-method legal research approach, combining doctrinal analysis of statutory instruments and institutional IP policies with non-doctrinal methods, including empirical data gathering through document analysis and expert input. The doctrinal component involves critical review of relevant provisions of the Indian Patents Act, the National IPR

¹ Ministry of Finance. (2025). *Economic Survey 2024–25*. Government of India. <https://www.indiabudget.gov.in/economicsurvey/>

Policy (2016), and institutional-level IP frameworks, where available. The non-doctrinal inquiry focuses on a policy audit of ten HEIs in Maharashtra, stratified across categories such as public universities, private universities, Institutes of Eminence, and government-aided institutions. Selection was based on institutional diversity, academic prominence, and geographical accessibility. For each HEI, publicly available documents—such as NIRF submissions, annual reports, and ARIIA innovation profiles—were examined to assess institutional readiness for IP commercialization. Additionally, select qualitative insights were gathered from faculty, researchers, and innovation cell representatives to capture lived challenges related to technology transfer, licensing, and administrative procedures.

II. Legal Framework for Patent Commercialization in Indian HEIs

Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are crucial in furthering scientific, technological, and social research, fostering innovation to tackle national and global challenges. Higher Educational Institutions are critical drivers of innovation and entrepreneurship, serving as hubs for knowledge creation, talent development, and technological advancement. According to the Indian Startup Ecosystem Report 2022, India has become the third-largest startup ecosystem globally, with over 70,000 registered startups and 100 unicorns. Many of these startups have roots in HEIs, benefiting from institutional support such as incubation centers, mentorship programs, and funding assistance. For instance, IIT Madras's incubation ecosystem has supported over 240 startups, collectively raising over \$1 billion in funding². Innovation is not only a process limited to particular firms or industry, but is rather a multisectoral process involving various actors, institutions and organizations from the realm of the state, market and society.³

In 2014, the government of India initiated “Make in India,” and a five-point agenda was laid, one of which was to climb up the IPR ladder to boost innovation. In 2016, India's first national IPR policy was released to promote intellectual property awareness and encourage Indian universities, agencies, and companies to file more patents in India and globally. In 2021, the government of India even reduced the patent filing fees to 50% for Indian universities,

² Indian Institute of Technology Madras. (n.d.). Inside IIT Madras Deep-Tech Startup Incubator. Retrieved January 6, 2025, from <https://www.iitm.ac.in/happenings/press-releases-and-coverages/inside-iit-madras-deep-tech-startup-incubator>

³ NITI Aayog. (2020). India innovation report 2020. <https://www.niti.gov.in/sites/default/files/2021-01/IndiaInnovationReport2020Book.pdf>

agencies, and companies to foster innovation.

The Indian Patent Act of 1970 established a systematic framework for reverse engineering in the pharmaceutical industry, resulting in more than 50 innovations. Domestic companies gained advantages from non-exclusive licenses issued by CSIR laboratories, underscoring the importance of organized intellectual property protection in promoting innovation. The 1983 Technology Policy Statement (TPS) endorsed indigenous technology and the adaptation of imported technologies, highlighting development, innovation, skill building, and financial incentives. The 1986 Research and Development Cess Act and the creation of TIFAC in 1988 were designed to finance and advance indigenous innovations.

In the mid-1990s, CSIR was mandated to submit patent applications; nevertheless, the program did not yield money as the majority of patents remained unlicensed. The 2008 PFIP Bill aimed to commercialize publicly financed intellectual property; nevertheless, concerns over industry involvement hindered its enactment into law. The NSTEDB was established in 2009 to promote entrepreneurship and technology company incubators within universities.

In 2018, the AICTE established the ATAL Academy to augment the technical expertise of faculty members. The Innovation Cell of MHRD was created to transform the innovation culture in higher education institutions, initiating programs such as the Smart India Hackathon, Institution Innovation Council, and Atal Ranking of Institutions on Innovation Achievements. India's delayed policy implementation has hindered the establishment of an innovation culture, a challenge that university and research institutes are currently tackling.⁴

The following table presents the framework at the National, State and Institutional Level:

| Level | Framework | Description |
|-----------------|---|---|
| National | Legal Framework | |
| | <i>Patents Act, 1970 (Amended 2005)</i> | Facilitates patent filings for inventions, including provisions for technology transfer and licensing. |
| | <i>Copyright Act, 1957</i> | Protects software, digital content, and research outputs, ensuring rights for creators and commercialization. |

⁴ Ravi, R., Janodia, M.D. University-Industry Technology Transfer in India: a Plausible Model Based on Success Stories from the USA, Japan, and Israel. *J Knowl Econ* 13, 1692–1713 (2022). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13132-022-00908-z>

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| | <i>Geographical Indications of Goods Act, 1999</i> | Enables HEIs to protect region-specific innovations and traditional knowledge. |
| | <i>Startup India Intellectual Property Protection</i> | Financial and procedural support for patent filings by start-ups linked to HEIs. |
| | Policy Framework | |
| | <i>National Innovation and Startup Policy (NISP) 2019</i> | Provides guidelines for HEIs to foster entrepreneurship and innovation through Institutional Innovation Councils (IICs). |
| | <i>National Education Policy (NEP) 2020</i> | Integrates vocational education, innovation, and entrepreneurship into curricula, emphasizing IP generation. |
| | <i>Atal Innovation Mission (AIM)</i> | Promotes innovation culture through Atal Tinkering Labs and Incubation Centers in HEIs. |
| | <i>Technology Incubation and Development of Entrepreneurs (TIDE 2.0)</i> | Provides funding for technology-based start-ups through HEIs. |
| State | State Innovation Councils | Promotes regional innovation by collaborating with HEIs to support local start-ups and entrepreneurs. |
| | State Startup Policies | Policies offering grants for incubators and tax rebates for start-ups linked to HEIs (e.g., Karnataka, Gujarat). |
| | Cluster-Based Innovation | State governments promote innovation clusters (e.g., Bengaluru IT cluster, Gujarat pharmaceutical hubs). |
| Institutional | Innovation Cells and Technology Transfer Offices | Institutional Innovation Councils (IICs) promote entrepreneurship, develop IP, and build industry linkages. |
| | Incubation Centers and Start-up Support | IITs and IISc run centers offering prototyping, mentorship, and funding. |
| | Industry Partnerships | MOUs facilitate knowledge transfer, collaborative research, and student innovation funding. |
| | IP Awareness and Training | IP-focused training, workshops, and courses encourage patent filings and commercialization. |

Form-27 Obligations under the Indian Patents Act:

The cornerstone of India's patent law is the Patents Act, 1970, which governs the grant, maintenance, and enforcement of patent rights. Under Section 146(2) and Rule 131, patentees are required to submit Form-27, which mandates disclosure of whether a patent is being "worked" on a commercial scale in India. While intended to ensure transparency and public benefit from patented inventions, Form-27 compliance has historically been weak, especially among academic institutions.

A 2021 study on patent working in HEIs found that only 8% of patents were reported as "worked" by HEIs, compared to 22% by NRLs.⁵ This indicates a systemic gap in converting granted patents into licensable technologies or market products. Compliance with Form 27 filings in India remains a significant issue, hindering transparency in the patent system and impacting commercialization efforts. Despite legal mandates that require patentees to submit working statements annually, many institutions, including HEIs and NRLs, struggle with adherence due to a lack of awareness, financial constraints, and bureaucratic inefficiencies. Challenges in patent commercialization stem from multiple factors, such as weak institutional support, complex regulatory frameworks, and inadequate industry collaboration. Many patents remain at the research stage, with minimal pathways for technology transfer, leading to low commercialization rates. Additionally, expensive patent maintenance, insufficient funding mechanisms, and a lack of potential buyers further discourage commercialization. Strengthening IP policies, enhancing academia-industry partnerships, streamlining regulations, and establishing centralized patent licensing platforms could significantly improve commercialization efforts. By addressing these obstacles, India can build a more robust patent ecosystem that drives innovation and economic growth.⁶

III. Institutional Readiness: Policy Snapshot of HEIs in Maharashtra

To assess the practical dimensions of patent commercialization in Indian higher education, it is essential to understand how institutional structures support or hinder innovation transfer. Maharashtra, with its diverse mix of public, private, and centrally funded institutions, provides a representative landscape for such analysis. The following table presents a snapshot of selected

⁵ Bhardwaj, M., & Sandhu, A. (2021). Working/non-working status of patents granted to HEIs and NRLs in India. *Current Science*, 120(1), 34–42. <https://doi.org/10.18520/cs/v120/i1/34-42>

⁶ Bhardwaj, M., & Sandhu, A. (2021). Working/non-working status of patents granted to HEIs and NRLs in India. *Current Science*, 120(1), 34–42. <https://doi.org/10.18520/cs/v120/i1/34-42>

Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) across different categories, focusing on their institutional readiness for technology transfer and commercialization. It highlights the presence of formal IPR policies, the existence of Technology Transfer Offices (TTOs) or equivalent entities, patent filing activity over the past five years, and tangible evidence of licensing or commercialization efforts. This comparison offers critical insights into the operational and structural gaps that continue to affect the translation of academic research into market-ready technologies.

| Institution Name | Type | IPR Policy Present? | Tech Transfer Office in Place? | Patents Filed (Last 5 Years) | Evidence of Licensing/Commercialization? |
|---|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|--|--|
| Savitribai Phule Pune University (SPPU) | Government | Yes | Yes | Data not specified | Yes – Active IP commercialization and technology transfer activities |
| IIT Bombay ⁷ | Institute of Eminence | Yes | Yes (via IRCC) | Over 100 technologies/products developed and deployed | Yes – Active licensing and commercialization through IRCC |
| Symbiosis International (Deemed University) ⁸ | Private | Yes | Yes (IP Cell under SCRI) | Multiple patents published; specific numbers not specified | Yes – Engaged in technology transfer and commercialization activities |
| Vishwakarma Institute of Information Technology (VIIT) ⁹ | Private | Yes | Yes (IPR Cell) | 115 Indian patents filed; 20 granted; 69 foreign patents filed; 56 granted | Yes – Technology transfer to Government of Maharashtra and other commercialization efforts |

⁷ Indian Institute of Technology Bombay. (n.d.). *Intellectual Property Policy*. Industrial Research and Consultancy Centre (IRCC). Retrieved April 17, 2025, from <https://www.ircc.iitb.ac.in/IRCC-Webpage/ip-policy1.html>

⁸ Symbiosis Centre for Research and Innovation. (n.d.). *Intellectual Property Rights – Overview*. Symbiosis International (Deemed University). Retrieved April 17, 2025, from <https://scri.siu.edu.in/ip-overview.php>

⁹ Vishwakarma Institute of Information Technology. (n.d.). *Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)*. Retrieved April 17, 2025, from <https://www.viit.ac.in/research-and-development-cerd/intellectual-property-rights1>

The comparative overview reveals substantial variation in how HEIs approach intellectual property management and commercialization. While institutions like IIT Bombay and VIIT demonstrate a mature innovation ecosystem with active licensing and well-documented commercialization outcomes, others—particularly public universities like SPPU—show promise but remain constrained by limitations in data transparency and scalability of tech transfer efforts. Overall, the table underscores the fragmented and uneven nature of institutional readiness, reinforcing the need for a standardized national framework and stronger support mechanisms for HEIs seeking to bridge the gap between research and real-world innovation.

IV. Barriers in Practice: Perspectives from Academic Stakeholders

To complement the legal and policy analysis, preliminary insights were gathered from academic professionals actively engaged in research and innovation within higher educational institutions in Maharashtra. These were supplemented by the researcher's own professional experience in institutional IP facilitation and academic entrepreneurship. Together, these perspectives highlight recurring challenges that limit effective commercialization of academic research in India.¹⁰

A key concern identified is the **persistent knowledge gap among faculty and researchers regarding intellectual property (IP) systems and commercialization pathways**. While many are active in research, they often lack formal orientation on patentability, licensing processes, or legal implications of technology transfer. This disconnect is exacerbated by the **lack of structured institutional incentives**—commercialization efforts are rarely reflected in performance evaluations or promotion criteria, reducing the motivation to pursue them actively.

Respondents also pointed to the **absence of dedicated structural support for commercialization**. While some institutions have IPR Cells or incubation centers, these are frequently under-resourced, with limited personnel trained in IP valuation, deal negotiation, or legal contracting. As a result, many innovations remain unlicensed, even when they show clear market potential.

Adding to these challenges is the **policy ambiguity at the national level**. The Government of

¹⁰ These observations are based on preliminary inputs from five anonymized academic stakeholders in Maharashtra and supplemented by the researcher's professional experience in institutional IP management and academic innovation facilitation. Additional responses are being collected to further strengthen the empirical base of this analysis.

India has promoted innovation and entrepreneurship through initiatives such as the National Innovation and Start-up Policy (NISP) and National IPR Policy, but these remain **largely advisory** in nature. Without concrete, enforceable norms for IP ownership, revenue sharing, and spin-off creation, institutions are left to interpret and implement policies on their own, often resulting in inconsistency and administrative confusion.

These insights suggest that while India's innovation ecosystem is growing in aspiration, **systemic barriers at the legal, institutional, and policy levels continue to hinder the transition from research to real-world impact**. Addressing these gaps will require a combination of legal clarity, policy standardization, and institutional capacity-building.

V. Key Challenges Faced by Indian Universities in Technology Transfer

A significant challenge impeding patent commercialization in Indian Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) is the fragmentation of institutional policies and the absence of a national IP commercialization framework. While premier institutions such as IITs and NITs have established mature IP and technology transfer policies, a significant number of HEIs operate in isolation with inconsistent or outdated frameworks. There is no standardization regarding how universities should define IP ownership (particularly in collaborative research), structure licensing arrangements, address conflicts of interest, or manage equity participation in academic spin-offs. This policy vacuum leads to fragmented practices, complicating industry engagement and discouraging institutions from confidently navigating technology transfer pathways.

Adding to this complexity is the ambiguity surrounding IP ownership in collaborative and funded research. Unlike in developed nations, there is no specific model proposed or practiced to commercialize research by Indian academia.¹¹ HEIs increasingly enter into partnerships with industry or receive funding from central and state agencies, yet there are no uniform rules that govern ownership rights in such contexts. Questions often arise: Who owns the IP when a research output is jointly funded? Can the institution license the invention without explicit agency approval? Are faculty members permitted to hold equity in spin-off companies? The lack of legal clarity on these points stalls negotiation processes, undermines trust among

¹¹ Ravi, R., & Janodia, M. D. (2022). Factors affecting technology transfer and commercialization of university research in India: A cross-sectional study. *Journal of the Knowledge Economy*, 13, 787–803. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13132-021-00747-4>

stakeholders, and deters institutions from proactively pursuing commercialization opportunities.

Even when policies are in place, legal and contractual capacity deficits persist across many HEIs. Most institutions lack trained personnel capable of drafting and negotiating technology transfer agreements, structuring IP licensing terms, or ensuring compliance with relevant disclosure norms and funder obligations. Without in-house or accessible legal expertise, HEIs often miss critical commercialization opportunities or enter into poorly structured agreements, compounding institutional risk aversion.

There is also a clear misalignment between academic incentive structures and commercialization goals. Indian academia continues to value research output primarily through traditional indicators such as peer-reviewed publications and citation metrics. Even though patent filings can be seen being incentivised, licensing activity, or startup creation are seldom integrated into faculty performance evaluations or promotion criteria. As a result, even when researchers develop patentable technologies, they lack institutional motivation to commercialize them. In contrast, jurisdictions like the U.S. actively incentivize academic entrepreneurship through revenue sharing, royalty bonuses, and sabbatical allowances for startup engagement.¹²

Another critical barrier is the lack of institutional mechanisms for IP valuation. Effective licensing and startup equity decisions require robust valuation tools to assess the commercial potential and market readiness of academic inventions. Yet, most HEIs in India do not have access to certified IP valuation professionals or frameworks for risk assessment and technology readiness analysis. This deficit results in either underpricing of innovations or complete avoidance of industry negotiation due to fear of undervaluation or exploitation.

Finally, there is a pervasive non-recognition of Technology Transfer Offices (TTOs) as strategic units within university governance. Where TTOs exist, they are often embedded within broader R&D or academic administration departments with minimal autonomy, visibility, or dedicated funding. They are not treated as revenue-generating or policy-shaping entities, as seen in more mature ecosystems like the U.S. (Technology Licensing Offices) or Israel (Technology Transfer

¹² World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). (2024). *Incentives in technology transfer: A guide to encourage, recognize, and reward researchers and professionals*

Companies). This organizational marginalization prevents TTOs from building long-term commercialization strategies or effectively engaging with external partners.

VI. What Can Be Learned from Global Practices?

To identify replicable best practices for the Indian context, it is essential to examine global models of university–industry technology transfer. Several innovation-leading countries have adopted structured legal frameworks, institutional mechanisms, and government-backed programs to facilitate the commercialization of academic research. The following table summarizes key features of selected jurisdictions—each offering distinctive approaches to IP ownership, technology transfer, and commercialization. These comparisons offer insight into how India might structure its own ecosystem by learning from proven international experiences.

| Country | Legal Framework / Policy | Institutional Mechanism | Commercialization Strategy | Government Role | Key Takeaways for India |
|-----------------------------|---|--|---|---|---|
| United States ¹³ | Bayh-Dole Act (1980) | University-owned TTOs (e.g., Stanford OTL) | Faculty incentivized; licensing & startup creation | Strong enabler via IP ownership laws | Enact national legislation granting HEIs IP rights; promote TTOs; incentivize researchers |
| Japan ¹⁴ | TLO Law (1998), University Incorporation Law (2004) | Independent TLOs (e.g., AiRiMaQ at Kyushu) | Multi-stakeholder collaboration, IP ownership allowed | Supportive policy framework for IP transfer | Strengthen HEI autonomy in IP; facilitate industry–academia partnerships |
| Germany ¹⁵ | Post-2002 IP reforms; inventor remuneration law | Fraunhofer institutes with in-house TTUs | Applied, contract-based research aligned to industry | Direct industry co-funding; clarity | Build sector-specific TTOs; foster industry-funded R&D; |

¹³ Ravi, R., & Janodia, M. D. (2022). Factors affecting technology transfer and commercialization of university research in India: A cross-sectional study. *Journal of the Knowledge Economy*, 13(1), 787–803.

¹⁴ Ravi, R., & Janodia, M. D. (2022). Factors affecting technology transfer and commercialization of university research in India: A cross-sectional study. *Journal of the Knowledge Economy*, 13(1), 787–803

¹⁵ *About Fraunhofer*. Retrieved April 18, 2025, from <https://www.fraunhofer.de/en/about-fraunhofer.html>

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|-------------------------|--|---|---|---|--|
| | | | | | clarity in IP co-ownership |
| Singapore ¹⁶ | National IP Protocol under IPOS | University-linked TTOs (NUS Enterprise, NTUitive) | Centralized IP governance, rapid IP processing | Strong national support programs (e.g., Startup SG) | Create national IP protocols; offer IP facilitation centers for small HEIs |
| China ¹⁷ | Technology Transfer Promotion Law (2015) | In-house TTOs, industrial parks in HEIs | State-mandated commercialization, IP disclosure | Central monitoring; linked to funding & rankings | Link commercialization to HEI performance; state-led innovation clusters |

While each jurisdiction operates within its unique socio-legal context, commonalities emerge: the presence of clear legal mandates, professionally staffed TTOs, incentive systems for researchers, and strong public-private collaboration frameworks. India’s fragmented and under-resourced IP commercialization landscape stands in contrast to these mature systems. Adapting select elements—such as standardized IP protocols, centralized support structures, and performance-based incentives—could significantly enhance the ability of Indian HEIs to translate research into real-world impact.

VII. Conclusion

This study reveals a growing recognition of the strategic role that intellectual property and patent commercialization can play in India's higher education and innovation landscape. While the policy intent is strong, as evidenced by the National IPR Policy (2016) and the National Innovation and Start-up Policy (2019), the implementation remains fragmented and inconsistent across HEIs. Most universities lack robust IP governance structures, and where policies do exist, they often remain advisory in nature, without legal enforceability or

¹⁶ Intellectual Property Office of Singapore. (n.d.). *National IP Protocol*. Retrieved April 18, 2025, from <https://www.ipos.gov.sg/manage-ip/resources/for-public-agencies/national-ip-protocol>

¹⁷ National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China. (2015). *Law of the People's Republic of China on Promoting the Conversion of Scientific and Technological Achievements*. Retrieved April 18, 2025, from https://cset.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/t0244_ST_conversion_law_2015_EN-1.pdf

institutional integration.

Comparative insights from jurisdictions such as the United States, Japan, Israel, Germany, Singapore, and China show that successful university–industry technology transfer ecosystems are anchored in clear legal mandates, structured support systems like TTOs, and incentive mechanisms that align academic goals with commercialization outcomes. India, in contrast, lacks a national framework akin to the Bayh-Dole Act, leaving institutions to interpret and implement IP ownership, licensing, and revenue-sharing models on their own—often without legal or financial capacity to do so.

There is an urgent need to develop a national legal framework that formalizes the role of HEIs in commercialization, defines IP ownership in publicly funded research, and establishes enforceable norms for licensing, conflict-of-interest, and revenue-sharing. In the interim, soft-law tools—such as model policies for Technology Transfer Offices (TTOs), IP ownership templates, and national guidelines on IP valuation and startup incubation—can provide immediate, scalable solutions. These should be flexible enough to account for the diversity of institutional capacities across public and private HEIs.

Future research must focus on scaling non-doctrinal and empirical work, including stakeholder surveys, institutional benchmarking, and analysis of licensing and commercialization outcomes across a wider sample of HEIs. Such efforts will help build a data-driven foundation for national policy reform while capturing the lived realities of faculty, researchers, and administrators navigating the IP-commercialization interface. Strengthening India's academic innovation ecosystem will ultimately require not just legal reform, but also institutional capacity-building, administrative clarity, and cultural change within academia itself.