



COLLEGE AUTONOMY - GS II MAINS

Q. Granting autonomy to colleges is crucial for promoting innovation, enhancing academic quality, and fostering institutional excellence. Elucidate (15 marks, 250 words)

News: *Universities must budge on college autonomy nudge*

What's in the news?

- The National Education Policy 2020 envisions a future where colleges will evolve into autonomous institutions, enhancing their capacity for innovation, self-governance, and academic freedom.

Key takeaways:

- To realise this goal, the University Grants Commission (UGC) launched a new regulation in April 2023.
- Since then, the response from colleges seeking autonomous status has been unprecedented — 590 applications.
- Granting autonomy to colleges is essential for promoting innovation, enhancing academic quality, and fostering institutional excellence.
- Autonomous colleges can tailor their curriculum to meet the evolving needs of students and industries.
- They can experiment with new teaching methodologies and research initiatives, driving the frontiers of knowledge and contributing to societal development.

NEP Recommendations for Higher Education:

- Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) to be raised to 50% by 2035, with the addition of 3.5 crore seats in higher education.
- Introduction of holistic undergraduate education with a flexible curriculum, offering multiple exit options and appropriate certification within 3 or 4 years.
- Discontinuation of M.Phil courses, making all undergraduate, postgraduate, and PhD courses interdisciplinary.
- Establishment of an Academic Bank of Credits to facilitate credit transfer.
- Creation of the National Research Foundation (NRF) to promote research culture and capacity building.
- Setting up of Multidisciplinary Education and Research Universities (MERUs) as models of multidisciplinary education.
- Formation of the Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) as a single umbrella body for higher education governance.

Significance of Granting Autonomy to Colleges:

- Promotes innovation, academic quality, and institutional excellence.
- Allows colleges to tailor curriculum and teaching methodologies to meet evolving needs.



PL RAJ IAS & IPS ACADEMY

MAKING YOU SERVE THE NATION

- Enhances institutional efficiency and fosters accountability and responsibility.
- Improves NIRF rankings, indicating enhanced academic performance and effectiveness.
- Reflects nationwide interest in autonomy, leading to transformative impact on higher education.
- Concerns in Autonomous Functioning of Colleges

Limitations Imposed by Universities on the Extent of Autonomy Granted:

- Delays in recognition of autonomy, hindering operational efficiency.
- Imposition of arbitrary fees by universities for affiliation.
- Political interference in key leadership appointments and decision-making processes.

Suggestions for Enhancing College Autonomy:

- Effective implementation of UGC regulations on autonomy by State Councils.
- Embracing trust and collaboration between universities and autonomous colleges.
- Creating a supportive environment that encourages innovation and excellence.
- Ensuring financial sustainability and independence for autonomous colleges.
- Introducing Choice-Based Credit System (CBCS) for profound education.
- Implementing College Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software for accreditation management.

Granting autonomy to colleges is crucial for promoting innovation, enhancing academic quality, and fostering institutional excellence. Effective implementation of autonomy requires collaboration among stakeholders to ensure a vibrant and dynamic higher education ecosystem.