



## Emerging Trends in Intellectual Property Rights: A Multidisciplinary Approach in Indian Education

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### Abstract

*In recent decades, the rapid expansion of technology, globalisation, digital transformation, and artificial intelligence has significantly reshaped the landscape of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR). Educational institutions, particularly in India, have evolved from traditional centres of knowledge dissemination into dynamic hubs of innovation, research, and intellectual creation. This transformation has increased the importance of protecting intellectual outputs generated within academic environments. This paper critically examines emerging trends in IPR within the context of Indian education, focusing on artificial intelligence-generated content, digital education, open educational resources, innovation ecosystems, and interdisciplinary research. It also evaluates the role of national initiatives such as the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and the National IPR Policy in strengthening intellectual property awareness and protection. The study highlights key challenges, including a lack of awareness, digital piracy, plagiarism, and inadequate institutional support, while also identifying opportunities for research commercialisation, entrepreneurship, and global collaboration. The paper concludes by proposing strategic measures to strengthen IPR integration in Indian education, aligning it with the demands of the knowledge economy and innovation-driven growth.*

**Keywords:** Intellectual Property Rights, Indian Education, Artificial Intelligence, Innovation, Copyright, Patents, NEP 2020

### 1. Introduction

The twenty-first century has witnessed unprecedented advancements in science, technology, and education, leading to a transformation in the role of educational institutions worldwide. In India, universities and colleges are increasingly becoming centres of innovation, research, and entrepreneurship. The implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has further emphasised multidisciplinary education, research promotion, and innovation-driven learning, thereby strengthening the relevance of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) in academic environments.

Intellectual Property Rights are legal protections granted to creators and innovators for their intellectual creations, including inventions, literary works, artistic expressions, designs, and technological innovations. In the Indian context, IPR has gained prominence due to the growing emphasis on research output, startup culture, and industry-academia collaboration. Institutions such as the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs), and central universities are actively contributing to patent filings, technological advancements, and the commercialisation of research.

However, the emergence of Artificial Intelligence (AI), digital learning platforms, and open knowledge systems has introduced new challenges related to ownership, originality, and ethical use of intellectual property. These developments necessitate a comprehensive understanding of IPR from a multidisciplinary perspective, particularly within the Indian educational framework. This paper aims to explore these emerging trends and analyse their implications for educational institutions in India.

## **2. Intellectual Property Rights: An Educational Perspective in India**

Intellectual Property Rights encompass a range of legal protections designed to safeguard intellectual creations. In Indian educational institutions, intellectual property includes research publications, patents, software, teaching materials, digital content, and institutional branding. These intellectual assets contribute significantly to academic reputation, innovation capacity, and economic development.

The Government of India has undertaken several initiatives to promote IPR awareness and protection. The National IPR Policy (2016) aims to create a robust intellectual property ecosystem by encouraging innovation, strengthening legal frameworks, and enhancing enforcement mechanisms. Additionally, Intellectual Property Facilitation Centres (IPFCs) have been established to assist innovators in filing patents and protecting their creations.

Universities are increasingly encouraged to establish IPR cells and incubation centres to support innovation and entrepreneurship. These institutional mechanisms play a crucial role in guiding researchers and students through the processes of patent filing, copyright registration, and commercialisation.

Common forms of intellectual property in Indian education include research publications, theses, educational software, digital platforms, patents for scientific and technological inventions, copyrighted teaching materials, institutional trademarks, and industrial designs. While protecting these intellectual assets is essential, it is equally important to ensure equitable access to knowledge, particularly in a diverse country like India, where educational inclusivity remains a priority.

## **3. Emerging Trends in Intellectual Property Rights in Indian Education**

### **3.1 Artificial Intelligence and Intellectual Property**

Artificial Intelligence is rapidly transforming the educational landscape in India. AI-powered tools are increasingly used for content generation, personalised learning, automated assessment, and

research assistance. These technologies enhance efficiency and accessibility but also raise critical questions regarding ownership, authorship, and originality.

One of the major concerns is whether AI-generated content can be considered original work and who should be recognised as its creator. Current Indian legal frameworks are still evolving to address such issues. Educational institutions must therefore develop clear guidelines for ethical AI usage, ensuring transparency, accountability, and academic integrity.

### **3.2 Digital Education and Copyright Protection**

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the adoption of digital education in India, leading to the widespread use of platforms such as SWAYAM, DIKSHA, and various university portals. While digital education has expanded access to learning, it has also raised concerns about copyright infringement and unauthorised sharing of educational content.

Educational institutions must strike a balance between protecting intellectual property and ensuring accessibility. This requires implementing robust copyright policies, digital rights management systems, and awareness programs for students and faculty.

### **3.3 Open Educational Resources (OER)**

Open Educational Resources have gained significant importance in India as they promote inclusive and affordable education. Government initiatives such as SWAYAM and the National Digital Library provide free access to high-quality learning materials, thereby reducing educational disparities.

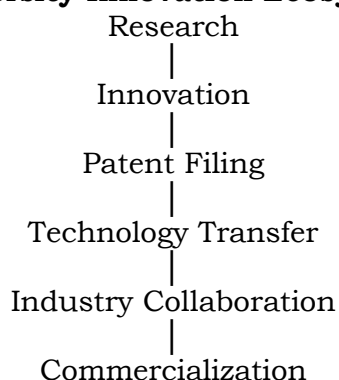
However, using OER requires a clear understanding of licensing frameworks such as Creative Commons. Proper attribution and adherence to licensing conditions are essential to maintain ethical standards and avoid legal complications.

### **3.4 Innovation and University Patent Ecosystems**

Indian universities are increasingly focusing on innovation and patent development. Institutions such as IITs and the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) have established strong research ecosystems that encourage patent filing and technology transfer. Government initiatives like Startup India and the Atal Innovation Mission have further strengthened this ecosystem.

Technology transfer offices and incubation centres play a vital role in converting research into commercially viable products. These mechanisms facilitate collaboration between academia and industry, thereby contributing to economic growth and societal development.

#### **University Innovation Ecosystem**



**Figure 1**

**4. Multidisciplinary Nature of Intellectual Property Rights:** Intellectual Property Rights are inherently multidisciplinary, spanning law, education, engineering, business, and computer science. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 emphasises multidisciplinary education, making IPR knowledge relevant across disciplines.

Each discipline contributes uniquely to the development and protection of intellectual property. For instance, education focuses on creating teaching materials; law ensures legal protection and enforcement; engineering drives technological innovation; medicine drives pharmaceutical innovation; agriculture supports plant variety protection; business facilitates commercialisation and branding; and computer science advances software and AI technologies.

This multidisciplinary approach enhances innovation and strengthens the implementation of IPR in educational institutions, enabling them to address complex challenges holistically.

**5. Challenges in Indian Educational Institutions**

Despite significant progress, several challenges hinder the effective implementation of IPR in Indian educational institutions. One of the primary issues is the lack of awareness among students and faculty regarding intellectual property laws and procedures. This often leads to unintentional violations and underutilization of available protections.

Digital piracy remains a major concern, with the widespread unauthorised sharing of books, lecture notes, and other digital content. Plagiarism is another critical issue that affects the quality and credibility of academic research. The misuse of AI tools without proper acknowledgement further complicates matters, raising ethical concerns about originality and authorship.

Additionally, many institutions lack dedicated IPR cells, legal experts, and technology transfer offices, limiting their ability to manage intellectual property effectively. Addressing these challenges requires a coordinated effort involving policy implementation, institutional support, and awareness programs.

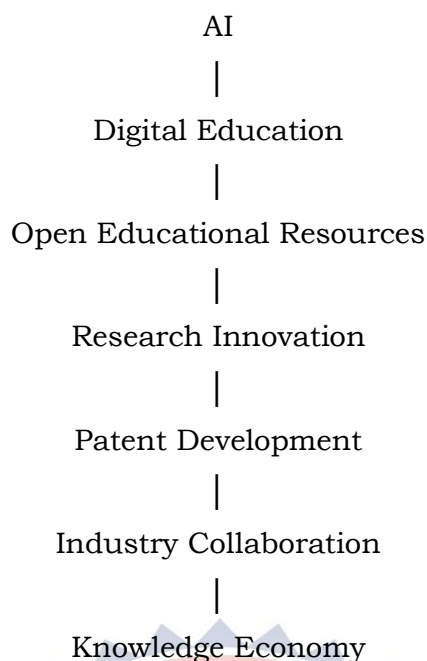
**6. Opportunities for Higher Education in India**

The evolving IPR landscape presents numerous opportunities for Indian educational institutions. Research commercialisation allows universities to generate revenue through patents, licensing agreements, and technology transfer. This not only enhances institutional sustainability but also contributes to economic development.

Entrepreneurship development is another significant opportunity, with students increasingly encouraged to transform innovative ideas into startups under initiatives such as Startup India. Strong IPR frameworks also facilitate global collaboration, enabling Indian institutions to participate in international research partnerships.

Furthermore, increased awareness of IPR fosters a culture of innovation and creativity, motivating students and faculty to engage in original research and problem-solving.

### Emerging Trends in Educational IPR



**Figure 2**

### 7. Strategies for Strengthening IPR in Indian Education

To enhance the implementation of IPR in Indian education, several strategic measures are necessary. Integrating IPR education into school and university curricula can help build awareness from an early stage. Regular workshops and training programs should be conducted for students and faculty to familiarise them with intellectual property laws and practices.

Institutions should establish dedicated IPR cells and technology transfer offices to support innovation and commercialisation. Developing clear institutional IPR policies can guide ownership, licensing, and revenue sharing. Promoting the ethical use of AI and digital tools is also essential for maintaining academic integrity.

Collaboration between academia and industry should be encouraged to facilitate knowledge exchange and innovation. Additionally, strengthening government support and policy implementation can create a more conducive environment for intellectual property development.

### 8. Future Directions

Advancements in artificial intelligence, blockchain technology, digital ownership systems, and global policy frameworks will shape the future of Intellectual Property Rights in Indian education. Emerging technologies such as blockchain can enhance transparency and security in intellectual property management, while AI can streamline patent analysis and research processes.

India must align its educational and legal systems with these developments to remain competitive in the global knowledge economy. Continuous policy updates, international collaboration, and investment in research infrastructure will be crucial in achieving this goal.

### Conclusion

Intellectual Property Rights have become an integral component of modern Indian education, closely linked with innovation, research, and economic development. This paper has explored

emerging trends, including artificial intelligence, digital education, open educational resources, and innovation ecosystems, and highlighted their impact on the educational landscape.

While significant progress has been made, challenges such as a lack of awareness, digital piracy, plagiarism, and limited institutional support continue to hinder effective implementation. Addressing these issues requires a comprehensive approach involving policy reforms, institutional initiatives, and awareness programs.

By integrating IPR education into curricula, strengthening institutional frameworks, and promoting ethical practices, Indian educational institutions can enhance their contribution to the knowledge economy. A multidisciplinary approach to IPR is essential for fostering innovation, protecting intellectual assets, and ensuring sustainable development in the rapidly evolving global landscape.

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