

**Table 2.** Impact Factor of *Current Science* (1990–1999)

Year	Impact Factor
1999	0.567
1998	0.515
1997	0.376
1996	0.364
1995	0.292
1994	0.271
1993	0.376
1992	0.253
1991	0.126
1990	0.076

Source: *Journal Citation Reports* (JCR), ISI, Philadelphia, USA.

(1422) and *Indian Journal of Chemistry A* (1382), and 15 journals published more than 100 articles during 1999 (Table 1).

It is indeed creditable that *Current Science* is slowly approaching the magic IF figure of 1.000, it being just 0.076 in 1990 (Table 2).

The *JCR on CD-ROM – 1999 Science Edition* covered a total of 5550 scientific journals, including 47 from India, *Annual Review of Immunology* being the top-ranking journal in terms of IF (47.564). The coverage of Indian journals in the *JCR on CD-ROM – 1995–1998 Science*

*Edition* was as follows: 42 Indian journals out of a total of 4623 in 1995, 38 of 4779 in 1996, 37 of 4963 in 1997 and 51 of 5467 in 1998.

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## A case for History and Philosophy of Science in Indian universities

Indian universities have failed to establish full-fledged departments of History and Philosophy of Science. Indians were the forerunners in the field of Astronomy and Mathematics. There are at least half a dozen centres of research in Europe and America, which specialize in oriental studies, but hardly any in Indian universities. What are the reasons for this neglect?

We have a National Commission on History of Science to promote education and research in Indian universities. It was set up jointly by University Grants Commission (UGC) and Indian National Science Academy (INSA), New Delhi under the guidance of D. S. Kothari. A national workshop was held in September 1974 at INSA, New Delhi to prepare a draft proposal for implementation of History of Science programme in Indian universities. As a consequence, some half a dozen universities started teaching History of Science courses at various levels. The prominent among them were Delhi University, Aligarh Muslim University, BITS Pilani, Guru Nanak Dev University and Panjab University. This experiment failed after a few years, as there was neither demand for this course nor support from UGC or INSA for providing infrastructure to the universities.

INSA had a one-man cell to carry on History of Science programme in India under the National Commission. It brings out *Indian Journal of History of Science* with contributions from historians of science from both India and abroad. It highlights the Indian contribution in science and technology to the world civilization. Research projects are offered by INSA to Indian scholars and some financial support is provided to publish their reports. But there is no concerted effort made to set up chairs in some universities to promote teaching and research. INSA has published more than a dozen volumes on various aspects of Indian History of Science and Technology. Jamia Hamdard, New Delhi also brings out a *Journal Studies in History of Medicine and Science* and published some treatises on the ancient system of medicine. The Indian Society for History of Mathematics has been quite active and brings out its journal *Ganita-Bharti*, *Bulletin of Indian Society of History of Mathematics*. During 1974, Indian Association for History and Philosophy of Science (IAHPS) came into existence with V. R. Shastri as its founder general secretary. It organized some meetings at ISCA venues as an annual ritual, but failed to make an impact.

In my view, History and Philosophy of Science is an important area of knowledge, which needs to be promoted as an academic discipline in our colleges and universities. From my experience as a teacher of science, the students are quite responsive and evince a keen interest in the topic when its history is narrated as introduction to a topic. It adds flavour to the otherwise dull and drab routine teaching based on abstract mathematics. Philosophy of Science is a topic for serious students only and the response was lukewarm. History and Philosophy of Science should be introduced as an interdisciplinary course for students of science and humanities. It will broaden the vision of non-science students and create a scientific temper in young minds. A case for introduction of these topics in academic curricula of Indian universities should be prepared by the National Commission on History of Science.

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