

AN ANALYTICAL STUDY ON STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN ICSSR AND TANSCST RESEARCH INITIATIVES IN TAMIL NADU

Muthu Aravindhnan T

II MBA (Human Resource & Finance)

School of Management, Sri Krishna College of Technology, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India.

ABSTRACT

The role of research engagement is very significant for the promotion of academic excellence, innovation, and analytical skills among students studying in higher educational institutions. In this regard, the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) and Tamil Nadu State Council for Science and Technology (TANSCST) are the prominent research support systems that offer financial assistance, fellowships, and project work to promote research culture among students studying in Indian universities.

The main objective of this research is to analytically investigate the awareness and participation of students regarding the research initiatives of ICSSR and TANSCST in Tamil Nadu, particularly Coimbatore. A descriptive research methodology was used to conduct this research, and primary data was collected from 360 respondents based on a structured questionnaire developed on a five-point Likert scale.

The findings of this research indicate that faculty guidance is the major source of awareness regarding research initiatives, participation is moderate, and research engagement has a significant influence on the analytical skills of students.

The findings of this research conclude that the procedural complexities and limited mentorship hinder the effective utilization of research initiatives by the students.

Keywords: ICSSR, TANSCST, Student Research Participation, Research Awareness, Institutional Support, Academic Development.

INTRODUCTION

The dynamic change in the higher education sector highlights research-based learning as a key part of the learning process. Research involvement allows students to improve their critical thinking, analysis, and problem-solving capabilities.

The Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), formed in 1969 under the Ministry of Education, facilitates and funds social science research projects in India. The ICSSR provides fellowships, major and minor research projects, seminars, and documentation services for researchers and institutions.

Likewise, the Tamil Nadu State Council for Science and Technology (TANSCST), formed in 1984 as an autonomous body, facilitates and promotes scientific research and innovation in the state of Tamil Nadu. Under the Student Project Scheme (SPS), Young Scientist Programs, and other initiatives, TANSCST

motivates and encourages undergraduate and postgraduate students in the state to participate in research activities.

In Coimbatore, a major education centre in the state of Tamil Nadu, some key institutions include:

- Bharathiyar University
- Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham
- PSG College of Arts and Science

actively collaborate with these councils with the aim of promoting student research.

Although there are existing structures, there exists a difference between the availability and the actual participation of students. There are students who are not aware, lack mentorship, and lack the confidence to apply for the research grants. It becomes imperative, therefore, to assess the awareness, participation levels, the extent of influence, and the challenges affecting the students.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Existing research has emphasized the importance of research participation in enhancing the academic development, confidence, and preparedness of the students at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

Researchers have emphasized the importance of mentorship and encouragement by the institution as strong predictors of research participation by the students. Research has shown that students who are part of funded research projects have shown enhanced skills in analysis, research, and having a clear direction in their careers.

There are also challenges associated with research participation, including lack of awareness, complexity, lack of guidance, and availability of resources. The research culture of the institution and the faculty have also shown an impact on the level of research participation.

In the context of India, there is a lack of empirical research on the participation of the students in the initiatives of the ICSSR and TANSRST. This research aims to fill the gap.

HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

On the basis of the research objectives, the following research hypotheses have been developed:

- **H1:** Awareness of ICSSR and TANSRST programs positively influences student participation in research initiatives.
- **H2:** Institutional support and faculty mentorship have significant influence on research engagement.
- **H3:** Participation in funded research programs positively impacts the academic development of the students.
- **H4:** Procedural complexity and lack of guidance have negative impacts on participation levels.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual framework has identified awareness, institutional support, and students' effort as independent variables that influence research participation and academic development.

The moderating variables that influence research participation include a lack of mentor support, financial barriers, and time constraints, which might hinder research participation despite awareness.

Participation and Academic Development

The conceptual framework has identified research participation and academic development as dependent variables. The conceptual framework has assumed that awareness and mentor support will improve research participation and academic development.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study employed a descriptive research design in the evaluation of the awareness, participation, and challenges of ICSSR and TANSCST initiatives.

Data Collection and Sampling

The study employed a primary data collection approach through a structured questionnaire, and 360 responses were obtained from various higher education institutions in Tamil Nadu, including Coimbatore, Chennai, Madurai, and Tiruchirappalli.

A non-probability convenience sampling method was employed in the study, and a five-point Likert scale was used in the questionnaire, ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree, scored 1 to 5, respectively.

Secondary data collection was employed through academic journals, reports, and websites.

Reliability and Validity

The Cronbach's Alpha values were all greater than 0.70, thus ensuring the reliability of the tool. Content validity was ensured through the review of experts.

Data Analysis

The analysis was done using the SPSS tool. The analysis techniques used were:

- Frequency Analysis
- Descriptive Statistics
- Multiple Response Analysis

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The analysis revealed the following:

- Faculty guidance is the source of awareness.
- A large number of students have been selected for the research program after applying.
- Occasional involvement is the nature of the students' involvement.
- Institutional encouragement plays a vital role in involvement.
- Students' analytical capabilities, confidence levels, and research attitudes were improved.

The descriptive analysis revealed moderate levels of agreement on the enhancement of critical thinking ability (approximately 3.03) and the influence of financial constraints (approximately 3.10).

The major barriers to involvement were:

- Lack of awareness about the procedure
- Complexity involved in proposal writing
- Insufficient mentorship
- Academic workload

DISCUSSION

The findings of the study correlate with existing literature that emphasizes the significance of mentorship and institutional support in encouraging research participation. The involvement of the faculty is crucial in order to raise awareness and facilitate students with procedural issues.

While the students have acknowledged the advantages of research participation, the sustained participation is moderate. The institutions that encourage research culture have high levels of student participation.

The study emphasizes the significance of simplifying procedures, mentorship, and incorporating research culture in the academic curriculum.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION

The research has concluded that the initiatives taken by the ICSSR and the TANSCST are greatly contributing to the development of research orientation and academic development among the students of Tamil Nadu.

The gap in the opportunity and the utilization is still present because of the awareness level and the process. This can be improved by strengthening the institutional mechanisms, research support cells, and faculty mentorship.

By overcoming these challenges, the ICSSR and the TANSOST can enhance the research environment and foster an innovative academic culture in the higher education institutions.

REFERENCES

Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR). (Official Reports and Publications).

Tamil Nadu State Council for Science and Technology (TANSOST). (Official Schemes and Reports).

Relevant peer-reviewed literature on student research participation and research engagement in higher education.

