UNIVERSITY OF MADRAS

INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE CELL (IQAC)

Administrative Feedback 2016-17

About University of Madras

University of Madras is one of the three affiliating institutions established by the British in 1857. The University was organised on the model of London University. It takes pride in being the mother to all Universities in South India. The enactment of the Madras University Act, 1923 greatly encouraged the research and teaching functions of the University. Keeping in line with the motto of this great institution 'Doctrina Vim Promovet Insitam' which means Learning Promotes one's own innate knowledge, the University has been striving to deliver quality higher education to the masses for the past 164 years. Keep furtherance of knowledge in various disciplines and subjects as its primary goal, the University with 73 Departments offers Post Graduate courses as well as research and development activities through Post-Doctoral (D.Sc./D.Litt./LLD), Doctoral and M.Phil. degrees to the students. The prime objectives of the University are to encourage and support continuously: (a) socially relevant education, (b) improvement of the quality of education and (c) an equitable access to all sections of the society to higher education.

The University under the capable leadership of the Vice-Chancellor supported by the Syndicate, Senate, Academic Council and the faculty of the Departments take holistic decisions and actions bearing in mind its primary goal. The mission and vision statements are framed such as to remain accountable to all the stake holders including the students, teachers, employees, employers, alumni, the society as a whole and the Government. The Vision statements of the University are

- To inculcate values of Equality, Unity and Justice.
- To make our education relevant and excellent.
- To promote educational programmes in various disciplines of knowledge with synergistic interaction with society and industry.

- To contribute to the advancement of knowledge through research, publication and disseminations.
- To provide leadership in higher education by imparting quality and socially relevant knowledge.
- To develop aptitudes and skills of students to equip them to face the challenges and needs of fast changing society.
- To give greater opportunity to women in order to prepare them to be effective leaders.
- To make students to be conscious of their duty to the country and to fellow human beings.

University of Madras is one of the top ranked Universities in India. To maintain the quality standards and to carry out periodic checks to the education system, the University Authorities conduct the Academic Audits, Student Feedbacks and so on every year through the Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC), for the Students, Research Scholars, Faculty and Administrative Staff. This periodic internal assessment helps in updating the Syllabus/curriculum on a timely basis and also addresses any shortcomings in the academic process. During the year 2016-17 the IQAC audit and feedback mechanism was carried out using questionnaires in the print format. The feedback data was analysed and the results are discussed in the following sections.

The subsequent section details about the IQAC and its functions at the University of Madras.

About IQAC

The National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) proposes that all accredited institutions must establish Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) as a post-accreditation quality sustenance measure. Since, quality enhancement is a continuous process; the IQAC is a part of the institution's system and work towards realization of the goals of quality enhancement and sustenance. The prime task of the IQAC is to develop a system for conscious, consistent and catalytic improvement in the overall performance of institutions.

In line with the NAAC mandate, the University of Madras has established IQAC with effect from 01.07.2005. The University has been accredited by NAAC with 5-star status in 2000 followed up the IInd and IIIrd Cycle with 'A' grade in 2007 and 2014 respectively.

The IQAC plays a vital role in the re-accreditation process, as the cell reviews the quality of education in the University in following ways:

➤ **Conduct of Academic Audit:**

The IQAC conducts academic audit for all the University Departments, by inviting subject experts from other Universities/Institutions to review the syllabus, question paper and answer scripts of the students of the respective Department. The report submitted by the expert is placed before the IQAC Advisory Committee and the same also placed before the Syndicate. Following which, as per the recommendation of the Syndicate, the report submitted by the experts will be sent to the Heads of the concerned Departments for further action.

➤ **Feedback Mechanism:**

The IQAC being at the helm of maintaining Quality at the University has a robust feedback mechanism in place. Feedback is collected from all stakeholders including Students, Scholars, Faculty, Administrative Staff, Employers and Alumni. Feedback is collected in the form of questionnaires. The questions are designed to quantitatively assess the performance and quality indicators of the process and infrastructure at the University. The periodic feedback assessment helps to maintain quality and foster a healthy environment between the stakeholders. The feedback is based on 5-point scale. This feedback is again scrutinized and placed before the IQAC Advisory Committee and the same is placed before the Syndicate. Subsequently the scrutinized feedback is sent to all faculty through the Heads of the Departments.

➤ **Annual Quality Assurance Report**

As per the direction of NAAC, the Annual Quality Assurance Report (AQAR) must be submitted according to the prescribed format every year. The AQAR consists of the data of the University for the academic year, which includes details of academic activity, research activity, financial resources, publications details and etc. IQAC prepares the report diligently.

➤ **Career Advancement Scheme (CAS) for faculty:**

IQAC provides supports the promotion activities of faculty in various cadres under Career Advancement Scheme, by screening applications according to the API (Academic Performance Indicators) guidelines provided by the UGC.

> **Capacity Building Activities:**

From time to time, the IQAC conducts programmes for faculty regarding promotion under CAS. It also conducts programmes for IQAC Coordinators and Principals of affiliated colleges as well as for faculty members of the Departments of the University.

All the reports prepared by the Cell are scrutinised by the IQAC Advisory Committee and the same is placed before the Syndicate. Thus, the IQAC ensures the quality of the institution is maintained and helps for the betterment of the students. University of Madras adheres to the NAAC mandate and the IQAC team coordinates and tenaciously works to uphold the quality at the University level.

Scope of IQAC

The major aim of IQAC is to ensure quality at the university level, the IQAC team collects feedback from various stakeholders including Students, Faculty, Administrative Staff, Employers and Alumni. The feedback is collected using various questionnaires designed to assess the performance based on a Likert scale. The significance of IQAC, University of Madras are listed below:

- IQAC at the University of Madras acts as the nodal agency to ensure quality teaching, research and extension activities.
- It enhances adoption and dissemination of best practices.
- It warrants periodic conduct of academic and administrative audit and its follow up.
- Builds an organised system of documentation and internal communication.
- Enhances dynamic changes to quality improvement and assists in decision making for the University Departments.

Limitations

1. Although IQAC attempts to collect data from all sectors, there are certain limitations to the survey that is carried out. Some of the limitations are listed below:
2. Since the survey is not mandatory, hence achieving 100% participation from all stakeholders is not possible.
3. The questions are designed as closed response rating scales, hence the analysis is more quantitative in nature.

4. The rating scale is prone to subjective evaluation and hence sometimes provides unreliable results.
5. The rating scale questionnaire may not reveal accurate results.

Methodology

The methodology adopted to determine the quality includes data collection using questionnaire and data analysis using appropriate techniques. The IQAC collects data from all stakeholders to analyse the performance and to ensure quality for all University Departments/Centres. There are separate questionnaires that are prepared to analyse the performance and effectiveness of the various stakeholders. Each questionnaire is thoughtfully prepared to quantitatively assess the quality indicators. The questionnaires are closed ended responsive, which provides the respondent to choose from the best possible options to reveal their thoughts and feelings. The options are on a 5-point rating scale, similar to a Likert scale that ranges from 1-5 as defined below:

1- Poor 2- Average 3-Good 4-Very good 5- Excellent

The questionnaire helps to measure the satisfaction levels and acts as an input measure to make necessary changes towards improvement of academic activities at the University. The various questionnaires are analysed and the results are documented and discussed in the forthcoming sections.

Analysis:

University of Madras works with the support of several staff members and workers. While the teaching faculty form the backbone of the university, the supporting staff - administrative staff and technical assistants contribute to the efficient and smooth running of the University. Management of a University is complex tasks which cannot be done without administrator help at each level. Administrative staff never get the glory or fame, but without them, workplaces are doomed to inefficiency and stagnation. Quality administrators make the difference in how effectively others do their jobs. They provide support and confront the endless stream of behind-the-scenes tasks that make any organisation function effectively. The University of Madras take great pride in the administrative team who are the pillars of support to the day to day functioning of the institution.

A detailed analysis of the feedback collected from the Administrative and Technical Staff is presented in this section. The questionnaire to assess the Administration and Technical Staff

Feedback for the academic year 2016-17 consists of 15 closed ended questions on a 5-point scale of rating from 1 representing 'Poor' to 5 representing 'Excellent'. The analysis of these 15 questions has been presented and discussed further.

1. Relationship between Teaching and Administrative Staff

The University of Madras boasts of a very friendly relationship between the teaching faculty and administrative staff. This is clearly indicated in the below figure 1, which visually represents that nearly 70% (33% Excellent and 33% Agree)of the administrative staff share a friendly relationship with the teaching faculty. It is heartening to notice that none of the administrative staff disagree with the statement that the relationship between teaching and administrative staff is friendly. Only a good relationship between the teaching and administrative staff can ensure the smooth functioning of the day to day activities of the University.
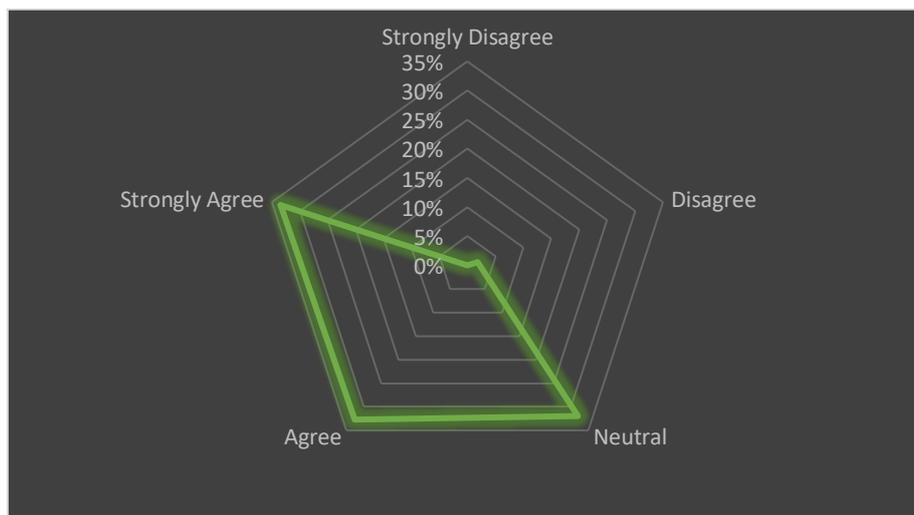
Figure i: Relationship between Teaching and Administrative Staff is friendly

2. Supportive work environment

More than 70% of the staff agree that the University offers a supportive work environment. Only less than 4% disagree with the statement while 26% are neutral to the statement. This statement attempts to rate the conducive work environment at the University for the administrative staff. It is a well-known and accepted fact that effective work can be done only in efficient work environments. The University strives to provide the best facilities to its administrative staff by ways of improved lighting, better seating, periodic breaks, assistance of tabulators, and so on. The administrative staff are the third wheel of the University who help to keep the University activities on track.
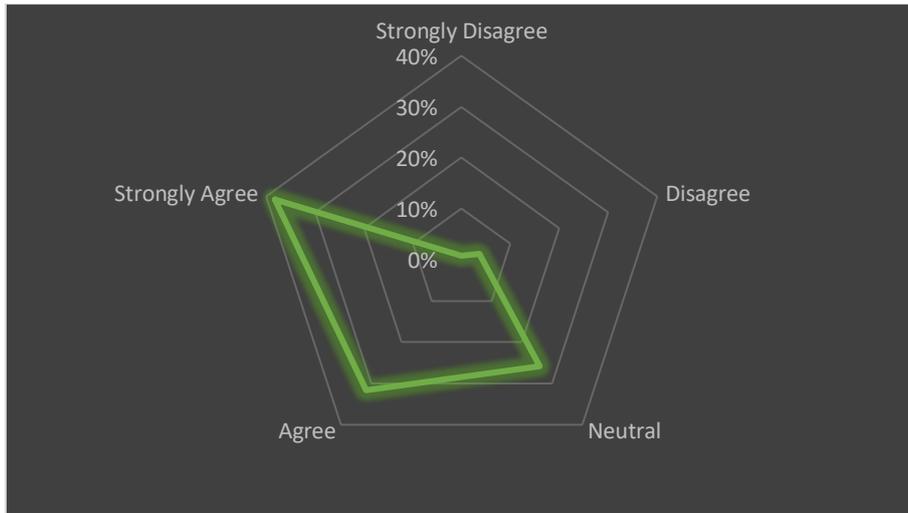
Figure ii: Administration supports the work environment

3. Professional development

Time to time improvement and capacity building activities are conducted by the University to help the staff cope up with their daily duties. Although the University organises such capacity building programmes through UGC-HRDC, Campus Director Office and various other camps; sometimes due to lack of adequate staff the administrative staff are unable to attend and partake in such events. The below figure confirms this as we can see that majority of the respondents are neutral to the statement. Only 20 % Excellent to this, while 31% agree to the statement. This explains the skew in the graph. This calls for more arrangements to be made by the university authorities to arrange and encourage the administrative staff for capacity building and professional development programmes.
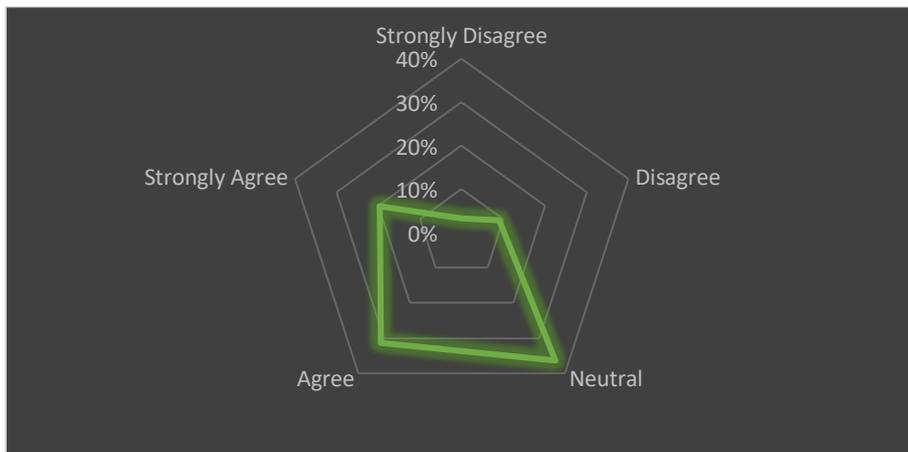
Figure iii: Professional development training to improve efficiency of staff

4. Internet Facility

Availability of Internet through LAN as well as Wi-Fi is key to effective work environment. More than 35% of the respondents strongly feel that the Internet facility is adequate, while 33% agree to this statement. There are about 25% of respondents who are neutral in their perception and 5% who feel that the facility is inadequate. The University is in process of providing access to Internet through Wi-Fi and leased lines in all of the four campuses on 24x7 basis.
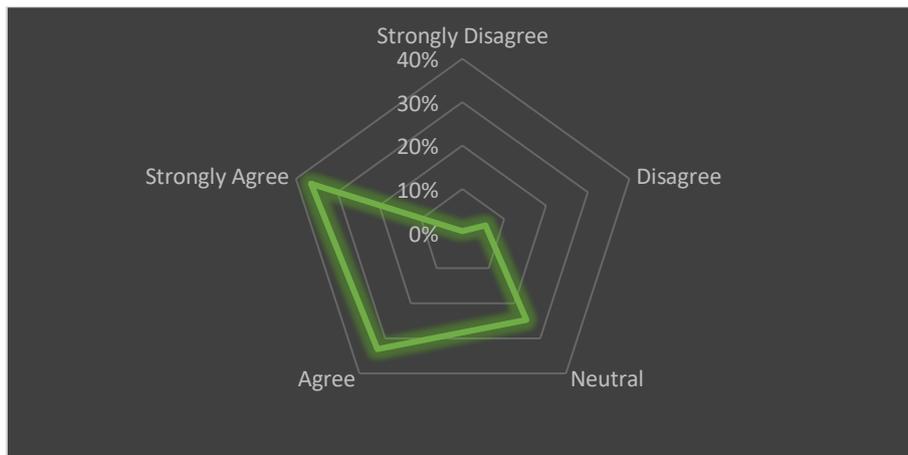
Figure iv: Availability of Internet facilities

5. E-governance in administration

E-governance is incorporating the use of ICTs in organizational administration. It strengthens and supports the administrative staff in taking care of routines. It establishes a democratic process in place and relieves the administrative staff of repeated manual labour. More than 50% of the University Staff Excellent to the implementation of e-governance in administrative activities of the University. Less than 5% disagree, whereas 29% maintain a neutral stand. It is the norm in this tech savvy world to adopt ICT skills through e-governance to manage the everyday routines in a large institution like the University.
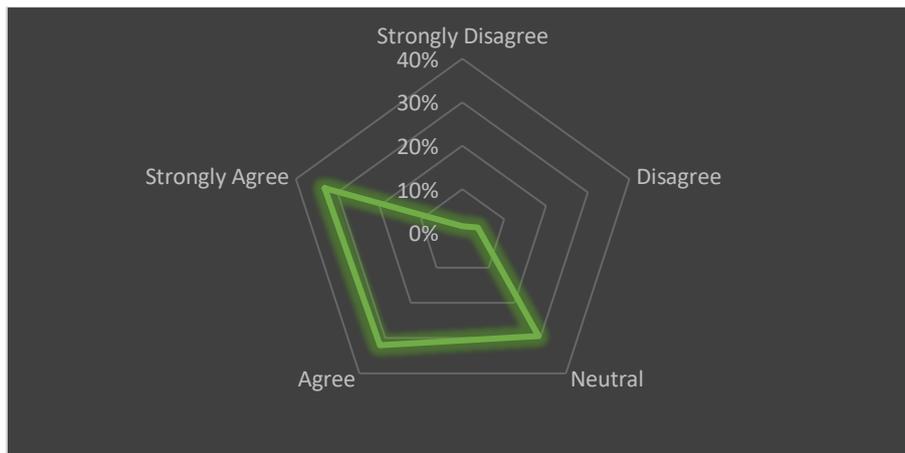
Figure v: E-governance in administration

6. Disable friendly environment

Being a government institution, it is imperative that the environment should be inclusive for all employees. The next statement determines if the environment is accessible to persons with disabilities. Again, as the figure indicates more than 50% of the staff agree that the university environment is accessible and conducive to persons with disabilities. Nearly 8% disagree with the statement, as they feel that the environment could be more accessible and disable friendly. There are ramps and rest rooms that are friendly to all the physically challenged persons. There are 31% of the respondents who neither agree nor disagree with the facilities.
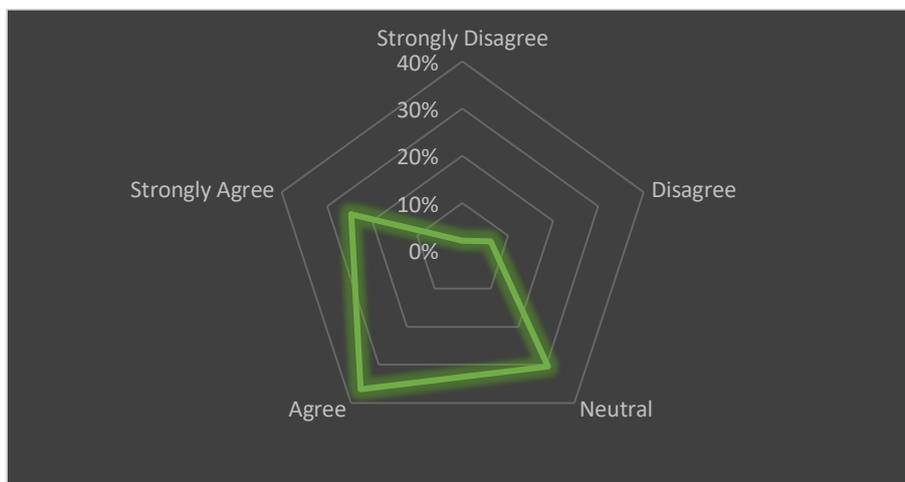
Figure vi: Environment is disable friendly

7. Common rooms for Women

The common rooms for women staff are not adequate to the ratio of the women staff at the University. Only 30% of the staff agree to the facilities at the Work environment. Nearly 20% of the staff strongly disagree to the common room facilities at the University. The reason

could be attributed to poor maintenance, inadequate number of rest rooms, water supply, poor lighting and so on. There have been renovations to the rest rooms that have been carried out on timely basis. The maintenance should be carried out at regular intervals which will help to maintain the quality of the common rooms. More than 45% of the administrative staff are neutral to the statement.
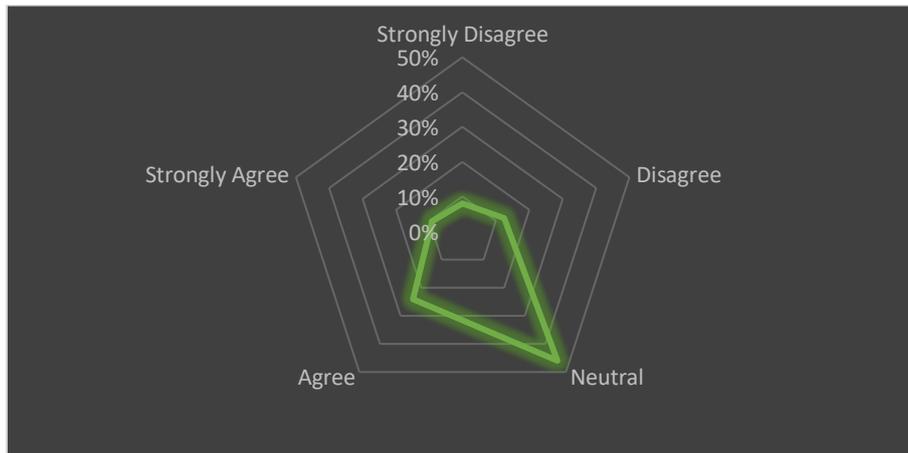

Figure vii: Common rooms for Women

8. Timely promotions

The University has a very good system of providing timely appraisal and promotions to the working staff. 36% of the staff are neutral to the statement of giving promotion according to the norms. 50% of the staff agree to the promotion norms at the university, while nearly 14% feel that it is not the case. Timely promotions act as good motivators at the work environment. The promotion based decisions are taken with various aspects in consideration; however, they contribute towards the holistic development of the employee as well as the organisation.
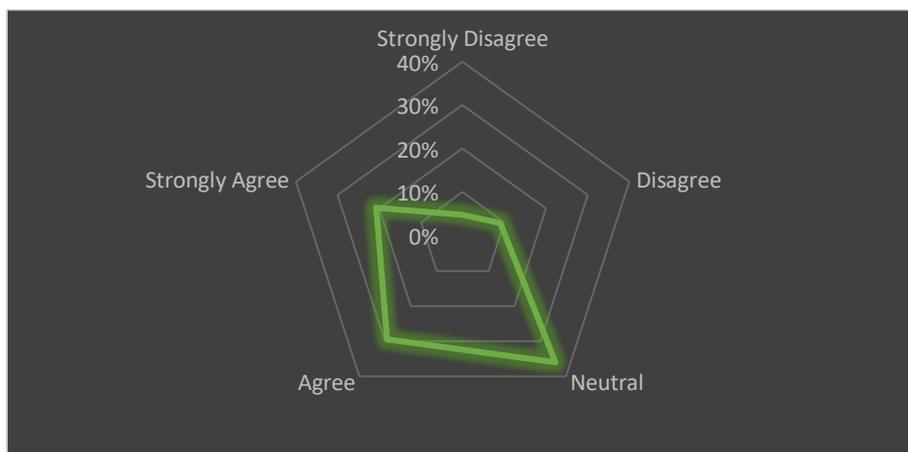

Figure viii: Timely promotions

9. Grievance Redressal

No administration can claim to be accountable, responsive and user-friendly unless it has established an efficient and effective grievance redress mechanism. Grievance redressal includes receipt of complaints and taking effective action towards the complaints received. More than 50% of the staff agree with the statement while 31% give a neutral reply. Nearly 10 % of the respondent strongly disagree with the given statement. The model of grievance redressal at the University comprises of a committee including senior faculty and senior staff members and hence the complaints are well received and well represented. Any valuable suggestions / recommendations are accepted. The quality of the working of the university administration can be gauged through its grievance redressal mechanism.
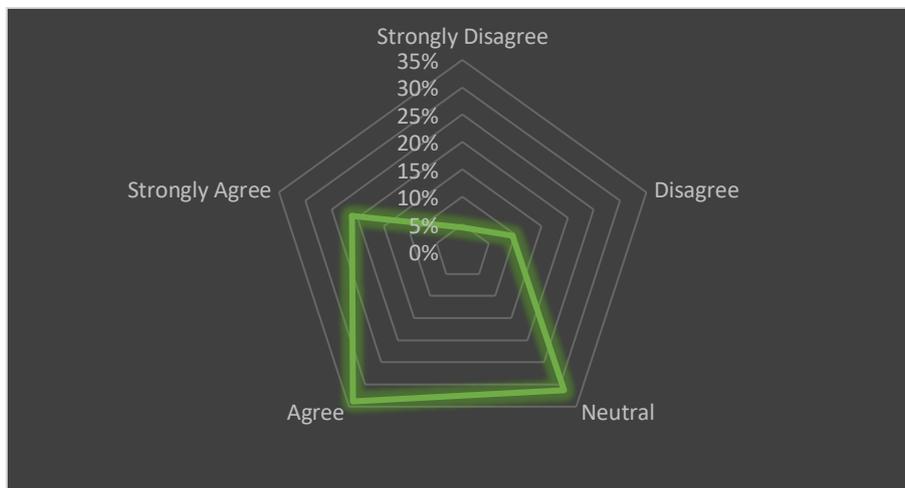
Figure ix: Grievance Redressal

10. Equal Opportunities

The University boasts of a very inclusive environment and equal opportunities are provided to staff irrespective of any considerations. This establishes an equal and secular ground at the institution of higher education. More than 50% of the staff (26% Excellent and 28% agree) accepts to the notion of equal opportunities at the work place, while 9% disagree and 3% strongly disagree to the statement. 34% are neutral to the statement.
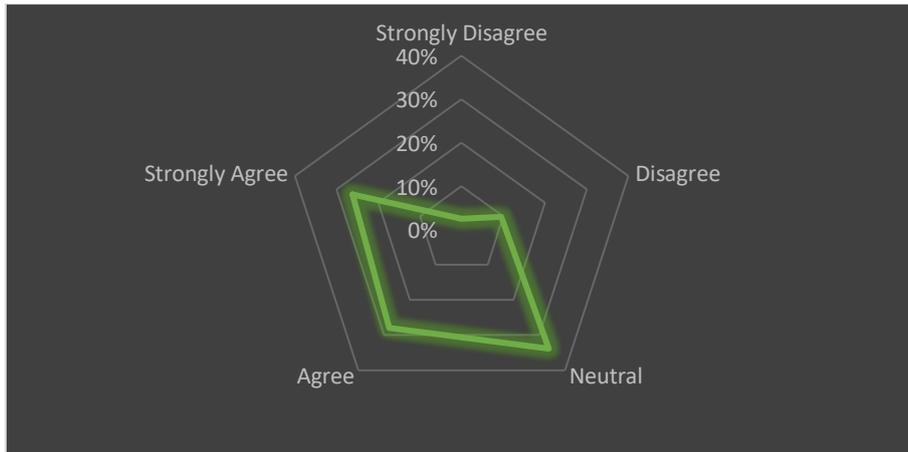
Figure x: Equal Opportunities for all staff

11. Computer Facilities

Computer facilities are vital to any organisation in the information era. Only 25 % Excellent to the availability of computer facilities at the work place, while 34% agree to the statement. There seem to be 34 % responses who are neutral to the availability of ample computers at the administrative desks, while 7% disagree with the ICT facilities made available to them. The reason could be attributed to not constantly updating the ICT equipment at the University due to financial constraints.
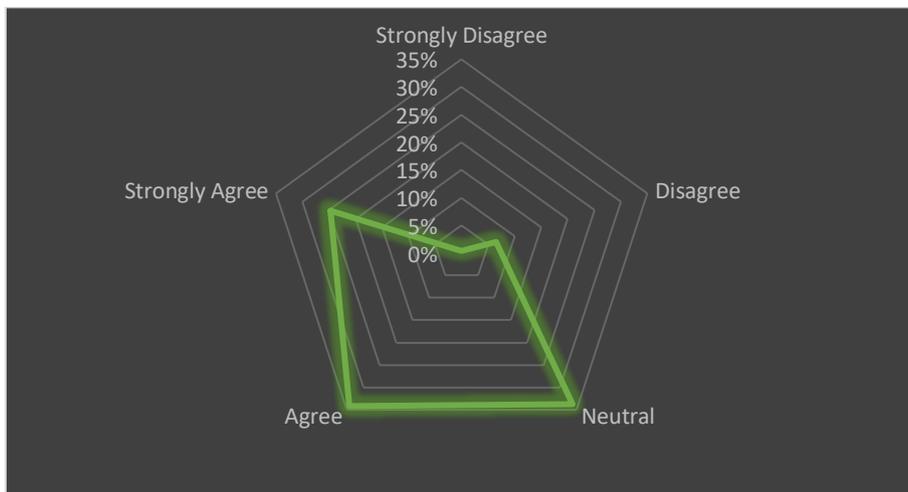

Figure xi: Computer Facilities

12. Parking Facilities

The parking facility is a boon to any employee working at an institution. The figure indicates that less than 10% disagree with the parking facilities available at the University. There is

ample space and special parking corners marked for the staff which enables the staff to park their vehicles within the University campus. This is clearly observed through the figure which points to a combined 56% who agree to the parking facilities for the Staff at the university. There are about 36% who have responded in in the neutral, which indicates that they may not make use of the facility.
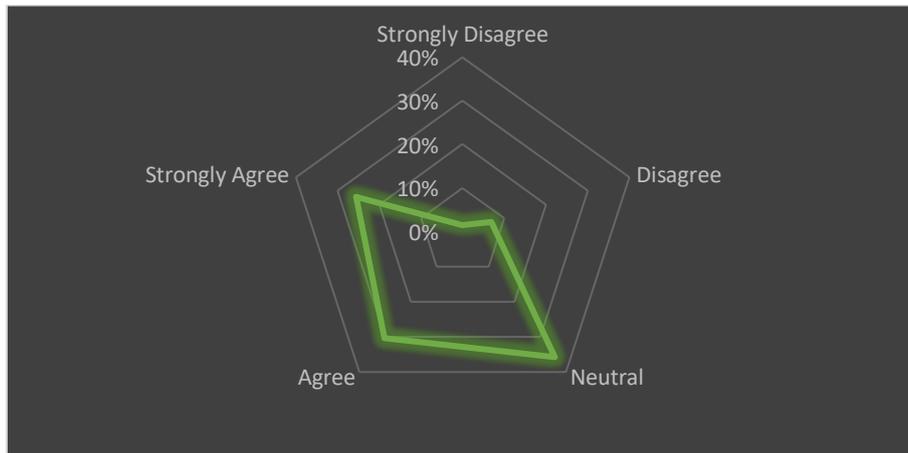

Figure xii: Parking Facilities

13. Rest room facilities

The rest room facility is one that cannot be ignored as the staff spend most of their active time at work. The analysis of the feedback received indicates that there is a need to improve the rest room facilities at the University. Nearly 26% of the staff disagree with the rest room facilities at the University. A combined of 33% agree to the availability of rest room facilities. 41% of the respondents are neutral.
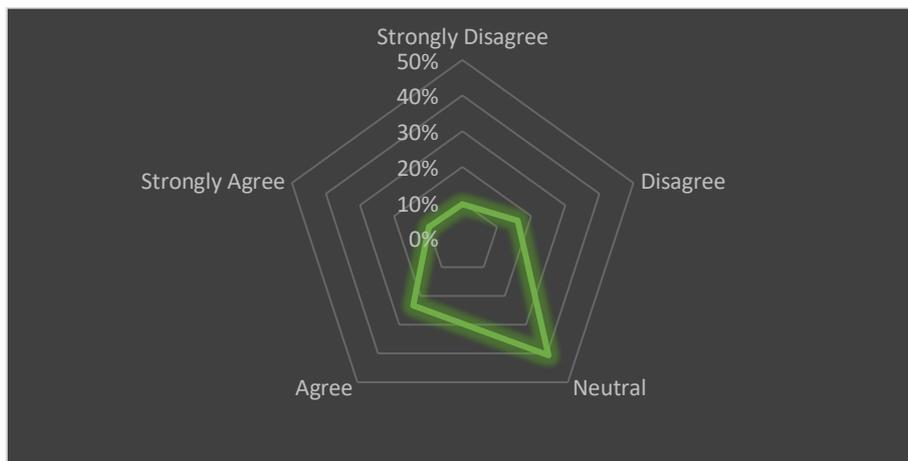

Figure xiii: Rest room facilities

14. Team Work & Cooperation

'Espirit de corps' as Henry Fayol says is key to develop a sense of belonging to the organisation. It is clearly observed from the figure that nearly 40% of the staff Excellent and nearly 30% agree to the concept of working together as a team. The mission and vision of the University of Madras can be achieved only if the staff are united together and work as a team to achieve the goal. the responses to this statement indicate that there is a strong bond among the staff of the university. This union is the strength behind the success of this old and prestigious university.
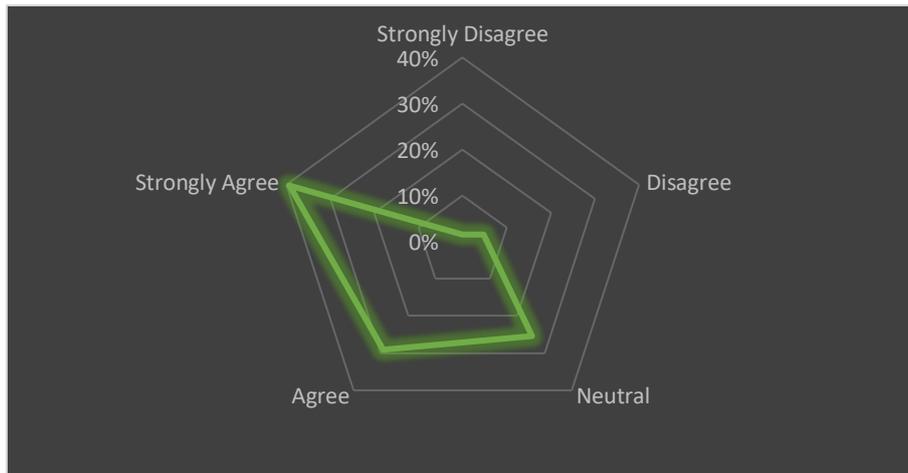

Figure xiv: Team Work and Cooperation

15. Physical, Emotional and Social Welfare

The University takes great care to ensure the physical, emotional and social welfare of the administrative and technical staff. The staff celebrate staff day and are part of all celebrations at the University. The responses received indicate that majority of the staff 59% (30% agree and 29% Excellent) to this statement. This indicates that the university staff are cared for and feel secure at the work environment. 32% are neutral in their responses and less than 10% disagree with the statement.
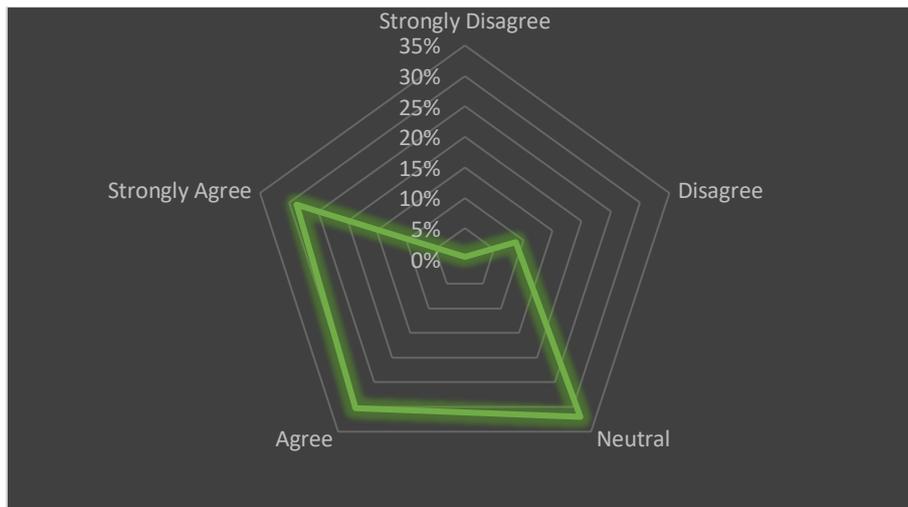
Figure xv: Physical, Emotional and Social Welfare

Conclusion:

The feedback data collected for the year 2016-17 from the administrative staff and technical staff consisted of 15 closed end questions with a rating scale ranging from Excellent to Poor. The responses indicate that the teaching staff are happy with the existing infrastructure and resources. The staff rate the ICT facilities as excellent. The excellent responses to the agreement on team work also indicate that the staff are ready to work together in unison and harmony towards achieving the greater objective of the University.