



**UNIVERSITY OF MADRAS**  
**INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE CELL (IQAC)**  
**Research Scholar Feedback 2021-22**

**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. The recently released Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) rankings, which is a London-based higher education analytics firm has ranked University of Madras in the 541-550 band. It is ranked one among the 41 Indian Universities featured in the list and 2nd in the State of Tamil Nadu. In 2021, it was ranked at 28th position among the top 100 Universities by NIRF while it was ranked at 22nd position out of 100 in 2020. The university is ranked at 47th for the overall category by NIRF 2021. 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 address any shortcomings in the academic process. During the year 2020-21 the IQAC audit and feedback mechanism was carried out using questionnaires in the online 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 II<sup>nd</sup> and III<sup>rd</sup> Cycle with 'A' grade in 2007 and 2014 respectively.

The Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) Committee was reconstituted on 14.01.2020 and the members of the IQAC are nominated as per the guidelines of the NAAC. 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. From the academic year 2017-18 onwards, the student feedback is collected through the Online mode, prior to this the student feedback was collected through printed questionnaires for the academic years 2016-17 and 2017-18. 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 provide 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 questionnaire consists of statements to assess the quality of infrastructure and relationship between the administrative staff and the University. The options are on a 5-point rating scale, similar to a Likert scale that ranges from 1-5 as defined below:

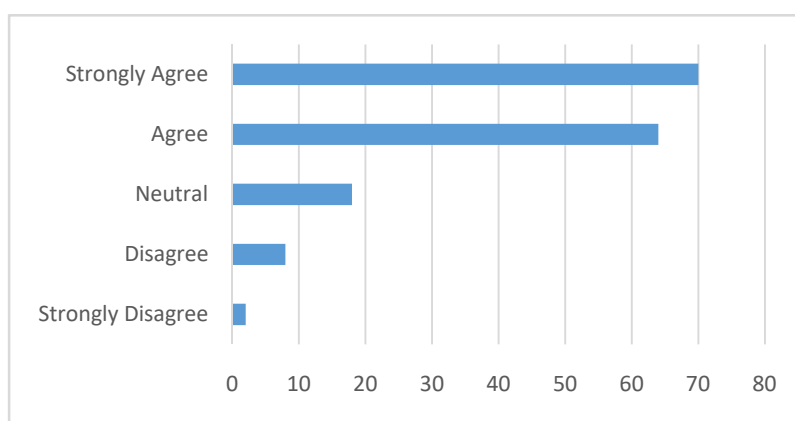
1- Strongly Disagree; 2- Disagree; 3- Neutral; 4- Agree; 5- Strongly Agree

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 – Research Scholar Feedback:**

Research and development activities contribute to the advancement of higher education and towards developing and building new solutions to the problems faced by the society. The advancement achieved through research and development contributes significantly to the academic excellence. Universities, as centers of teaching and research, they contribute towards building of the society and bring in key changes to the working environment. Faculty and students are keen to use their research to contribute to social innovation and sustainable development. The research environment determines the quality and quantity of innovations and research scholars form the backbone of any higher education institution. The University provides a conducive research environment for the scholars to work and present their research to the scientific community. Impactful research can be achieved by providing constant support, training and proper equipment and facilities to carry out research activities. The University through the IQAC mechanism constantly obtains feedback from the research scholars of the University to assess the infrastructure as well as the work /research culture at the various research departments of the University. Feedback forms are circulated through the online mode among the research scholars of the university and the responses are analysed in the forthcoming section. A total number of 11 closed end response questions were asked and the responses are obtained on a rating scale from 1- 5, 5 being strongly agree and 1 being strongly disagree. Responses from 163 research scholars from various departments from sciences, social science and physical education have been collected and analysed.

**1. Availability & Maintenance of Research facilities, ICT, Libraries, Laboratories and restrooms**



*Figure i: Availability and maintenance of research facilities - ICT, Libraries, Laboratories and restrooms*

Majority of the research scholar of the University of Madras are contented and pleased with the research infrastructure available. A favourable environment to carry research activity promotes the quality of research and enhances the research output. Nearly 70 of the

research scholars strongly agree to the research facilities such as ICT, libraries and rest room at the University. More than 60 respondents agree to the statement while 18 are neutral to it, while 4 of them disagree with the facilities.

## 2. Scholar friendly Staff & Faculty

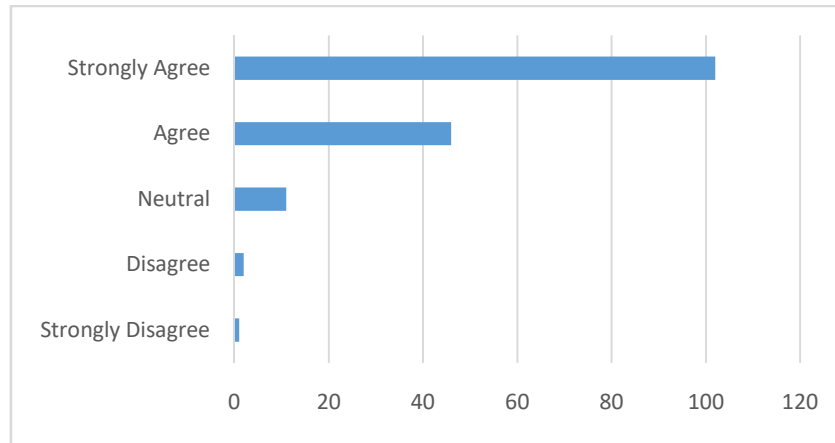


Figure ii: Head of the Department / Centre is Scholar friendly

A conducive research environment is vital for R&D activities. More than 80% of the respondents feel that the Head of the Department is friendly and approachable. This indicates a very healthy relationship between the staff and the research scholars.

## 3. Grievance redressal

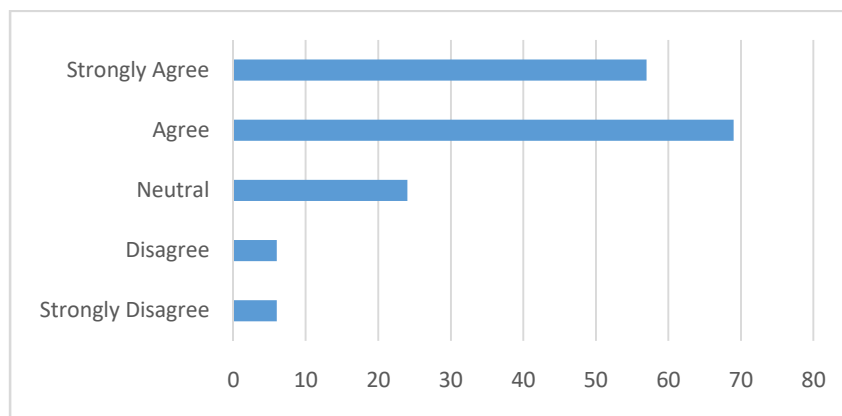


Figure iii: Grievance Redressal

Research grievances need to be addressed in order to establish a trust with the research scholars. The University has set up committees to address grievances as an initiative that helps the scholars to voice out their anxieties and issues. There is a dedicated Dean Research Office that addresses the issues of the research scholars. More than 80% of the scholars agree with the grievance redressal system at the University of Madras while 2% strongly disagree and 1% disagrees. Only 11% are neutral to the statement.

#### 4. Computer & Internet Facilities

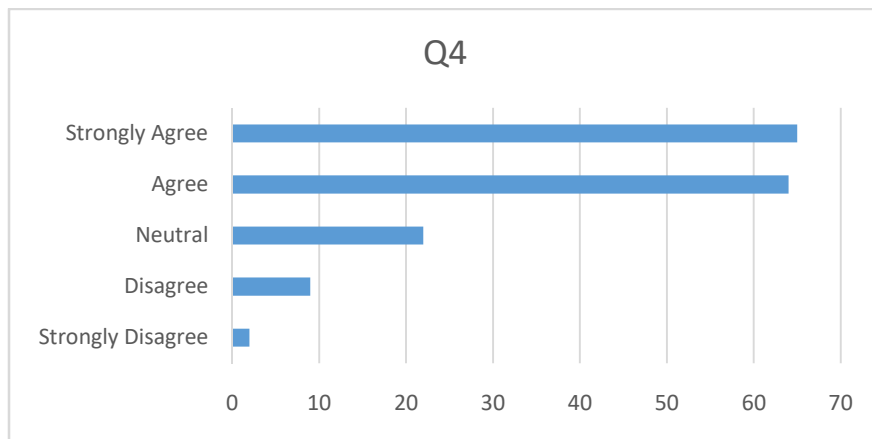


Figure iv: Computer & Internet Facilities

The University provides state of the art facilities for the research scholars to carry out their research. There are appropriate instruments and computers with LAN as well as Wifi access in campus and hostel. It can be seen from the responses that more than 90% of the respondents feel the same and only less than 10% disagree with the statement. 22 respondents are neutral to the fact.

#### 5. Availability of Textbook and Reference Books

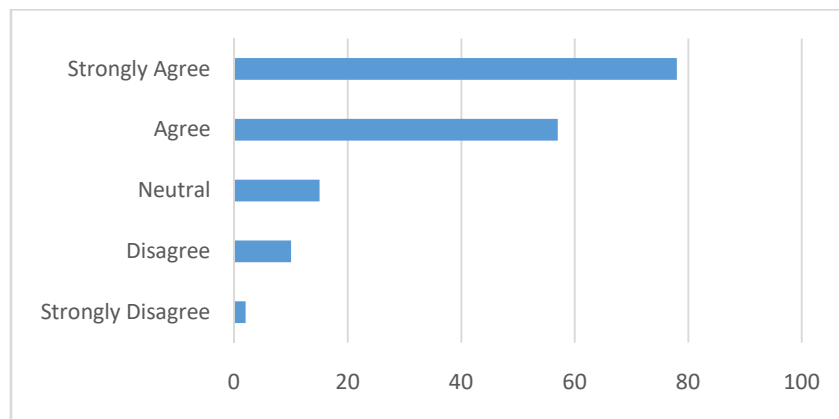


Figure v: Availability of Textbooks & Reference Sources

The university library as well as the Department libraries are well stocked and keep adding newer and current sources of information every year. The books range from Art & Humanities to Sciences and Social Sciences. Nearly 60% of the respondents agree to the availability of relevant books and reference materials in their respective research areas, while less than 20% disagree and are neutral. The University also subscribes to various E-books and provides access through the Library Website.



## 6. Availability of Databases and online resources

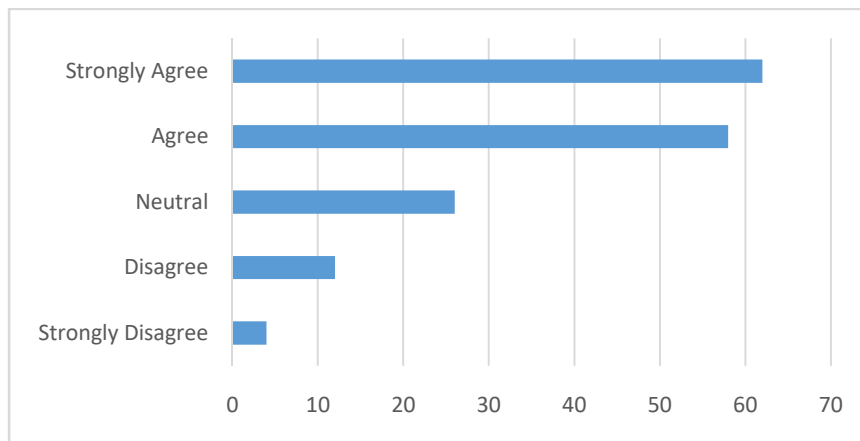


Figure vi: Database searching

More than 90% of the scholars (48% strongly agree and 37% agree) agree to the robust online resources available at the University Library. The world famous and renowned database such as WoS, Scopus and EBSCO are subscribed through the INFLIBNET facility. This indicates that the research scholars have access to pertinent research material which help them to pursue their research effectively. Less than 5% disagree with the statement.

## 7. Processing of Research Communication

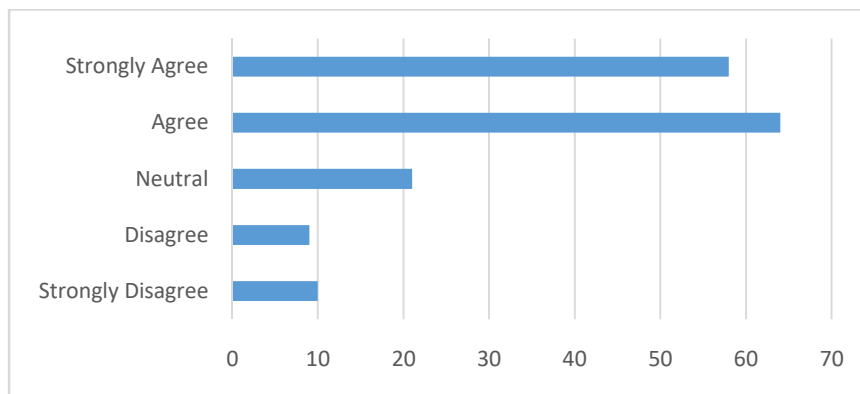


Figure vii: Processing of research communication

Judicious processing of research communication can reduce unnecessary delay in the research progress. Nearly 85% of the research scholars feel that the University has an effective system that allows for faster and streamlined processing of official communication. More than 85% agree that there is timely processing of research fellowships and documents, this is very motivating for the research scholars. It is also motivating to note that only under 5% disagree with the statement.

## 8. Support to publish research articles & file patents

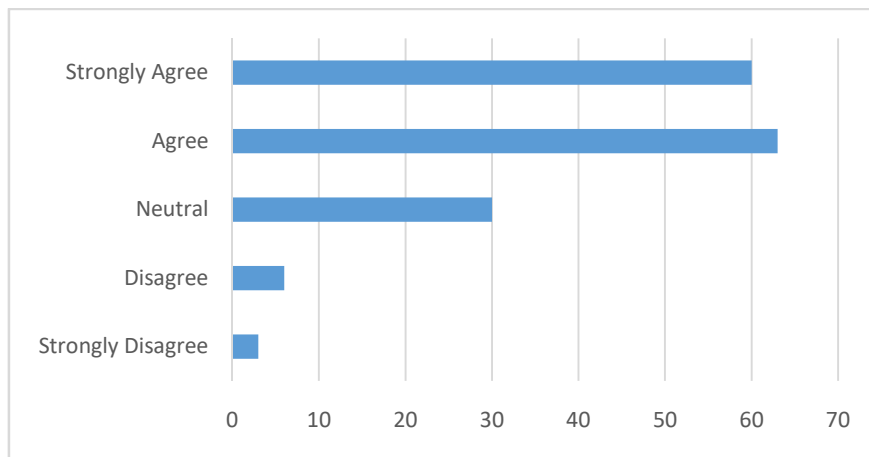


Figure viii: Support or publishing articles & filing of patents

It is observed from the above chart that more than 50% of the respondents feel that the university offers support towards publishing research in reputed and peer reviewed journals as well as in filing patents. Only 5% disagree with the statement (3% strongly disagree and 2% disagree), while 12% choose to remain neutral about the statement, which could indicate that they have not made use of the facility yet.

## 9. Consistent Ph.D procedure from Admission to Submission

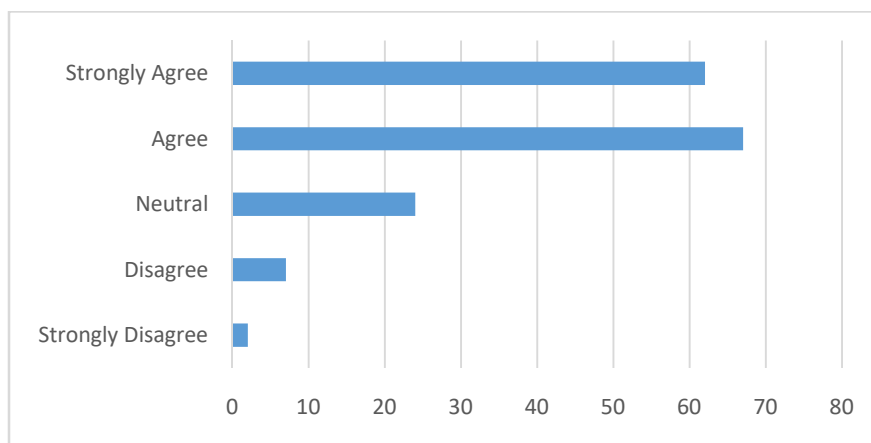


Figure ix: Consistent Ph.D procedure from admission to submission

More than 55% of the research scholars feel that the university provides a very friendly, consistent and efficient procedure right from admission to thesis submission. Keeping consistent with the previous responses 2% are unhappy and strongly disagree with the statement. Eventhough the number is negligible, the reason for the displeasure needs to be evaluated. This has been achieved by automating all procedure from admission till

submission of the doctoral thesis has been very simplified and the research scholars can track their progress through the University website.

### 10. Contribution of Doctoral Committee

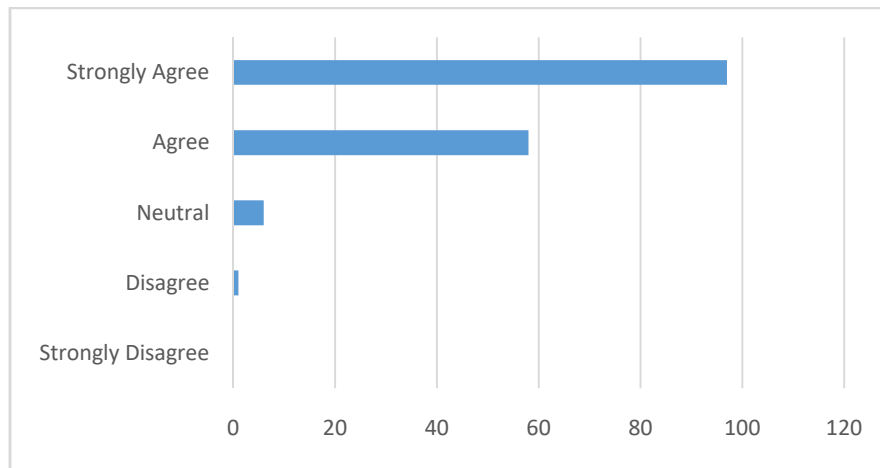


Figure x: Contribution of Doctoral/ RAC Committee

Research Advisory Committee plays an important role in shaping a good research and has to be actively involved in the progress of the research scholar. Almost all of the respondents are happy and more than 75% agree with the conduct of the research advisory committee. They are also happy with the contribution of the RAC towards progress of research.

### 11. Overall ambience for research

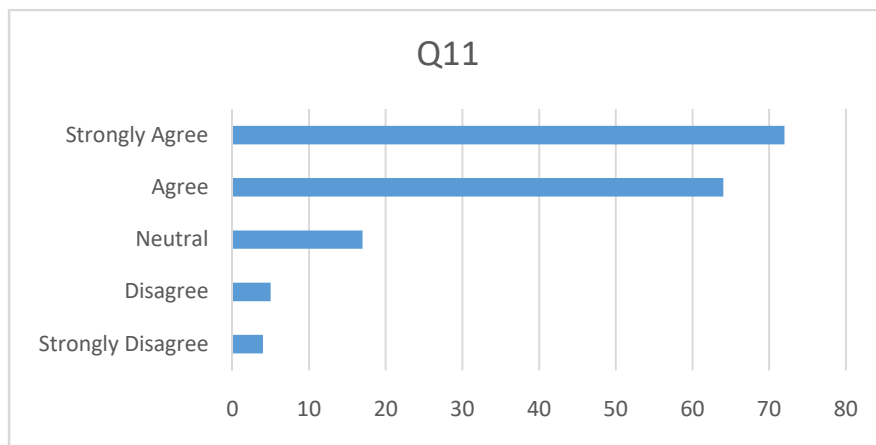


Figure xi: Overall ambience for research

The research ambience is very helpful and encouraging at the University towards pursuing research. Almost 90% of the research scholars are satisfied with the overall research ambience at the University. The respondents agree with the overall facilities available at the University that enhance research and development activities. Only 2% of the respondents disagree with the statement. This is also consistent with the responses to all the other questions.

**Conclusion:**

The feedback analysis indicates a strong and conducive research environment for pursuing research activities. The data indicates that majority of the research scholars are very happy and satisfied with the infrastructure and ICT facilities available at the University of Madras. There is concern only from 2% of the respondents. The concerns will be addressed soon by the University authorities. It is stimulating to note 90% of the research scholars are very happy with the overall ambience for research at the University. The authorities will undertake appropriate measures to maintain this satisfaction index and give the best possible amenities and conveniences to promote research at the university.