

## ATTITUDES AND ORIENTATIONS OF RESEARCH SCHOLARS IN BANGALORE UNIVERSITY

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### ABSTRACT

The present study focused on Attitudes and orientations of Research scholars in Bangalore University is an empirical inquiry into the social realities pertaining to research students in academic profession, focusing specifically on the attitudes and orientations and work aspirations. It seeks to probe empirically into the extent, determinants and implications of achievement among this emerging professional group in the context of contemporary Indian society. The area of study has been confined to Bangalore University. The sample of 350 research scholars was chosen. They tend either to be less satisfied (36.2 percent) or highly satisfied (39.5 percent) with a relatively smaller proportion (24.3 percent) being less definite with a sense of satisfaction or dissatisfaction, that is exhibiting a moderate degree of satisfaction. The proportion of those with low commitment is as low as 16 (15.8) percent among those with low educational grades whereas, the corresponding proportion is as high as 28 (27.8) percent among those with higher educational grades. Further, much against what could be expected, the orientations do not vary significantly with several background and contextual variables except in case of stage of research, work satisfaction and commitment level. However, they appear to be less than happy about their own progress of research and its outcome requiring us to take a second look at the state of affairs.

**Key Words:** Attitudes; Orientations; Research Scholar; work satisfaction.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The present study entitled “Attitudes and orientations of Research scholars in Bangalore University” is an empirical inquiry into the social realities pertaining to research students in academic profession, focusing specifically on the attitudes and orientations and work aspirations among the research scholars in Bangalore University of the Karnataka State. It seeks to probe empirically into the extent, determinants and implications of achievement among this emerging professional group in the context of contemporary Indian society. In view of its focus, scope and perspective of approach, it could be taken as a treatise in sociology of education and professions, which is emerging as a leading branch and dominant area of sociological specialization, dealing with interactions and interfacing between higher education and social structure. Education as a process and social institution has come to occupy a place of primacy and importance and is accorded priority and privilege that was un-thought and unheard of a few decades ago. It is, hence, but natural that the branch that seeks to focus empirically upon the structure, functioning, determinants and consequences of this process has come to be viewed as of important applied and policy implications, elevating Sociology to the status of a scientific enterprise with research output from this branch being viewed as of high practical utility.

## 2. OBJECTIVES

To examine the attitudes, orientations, work satisfactions and commitments of the research scholars towards various components of the academic (research) milieu.

## 3. METHODOLOGY

The universe of the present study consists of attitudes and orientations of research scholars. The area of study has been confined to Bangalore University. The sample of 350 research scholars was chosen. In all there were 722 research scholars in Bangalore University perusing their doctoral studies. The major tool of collection of primary data has been interview schedule. The Study such as the present one requires both primary and secondary data to realize the objectives proposed. Aspirations and achievement have to be obtained in person employing tools of primary data collection.

## 4.1 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Attitudes and orientations of the Research scholars

The present study seeks to probe empirically into the dispositions attitudes and orientations of the Research Scholars and in doing so it focuses on the work satisfaction, commitment to research work and attitudes towards various components of their academic milieu as well as the types of orientations they have toward the research career ascertained in terms of what is it that they value most about academic endeavor they are pursuing. Such dispositions, attitudes and orientations are considered as significant in view of their implications for the quality of research outcome and the output. Just as in case of any work organization, the attitudes, orientations, job satisfaction and commitment can be of significant consequence for the quality and the quality of its products, it is assumed that, these aspects of research scholars can have significant bearing on the pace, quality and quantity of research output on the one hand and the career patterns of Research Scholars on the other. Any sociological study on an occupational or professional group or professionals in the making cannot afford to ignore these attitudinal aspects, dimensions or traits pertaining to the section of society being focused upon and in tune with this sociological tradition, an attempt is made in this chapter to analyze and interpret these issues.

#### 4.2 Work Satisfaction

To begin with, the satisfaction the Research Scholars derive from the research work they carry out is sought to be focused upon. It is similar to the job satisfaction, among the employees of an organization or professionals pursuing a professional practice. In the literature on industrial sociology, industrial psychology, organizational behavior and management, it is theorized and stated that the satisfaction or pleasure one derives from the work has significant positive implications for performance, quality and quantity of production, commitment one exhibits towards the organization or profession and the level of the morale of the workforce at large.

**Table-1: Work Satisfaction and Age**

Work Satisfaction	Age		Total
	Young	Elder	
Low	50 (28.9)	64 (36.2)	114 (32.6)
Moderate	72	43	115

	(41.6)	(24.3)	(32.8)
High	51 (29.5)	70 (39.5)	121 (34.6)
<b>Total</b>	<b>173</b> <b>(100.0)</b>	<b>177</b> <b>(100.0)</b>	<b>350</b> <b>(100.0)</b>

$X^2 = 11.97$  ; d.f. = 2 ; C = 0.182 ; Significant at 0.01 level.

The data seem to indicate that, those in higher age group have more clear conception of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with research work. They tend either to be less satisfied (36.2 percent) or highly satisfied (39.5 percent) with a relatively smaller proportion (24.3 percent) being less definite with a sense of satisfaction or dissatisfaction, that is exhibiting a moderate degree of satisfaction. On the other hand it appears that those coming from younger age groups are yet to have clearer sense of satisfaction and dissatisfaction with the research work they are carrying out. It may be so that, those who are in the younger age group could be with shorter span of research career and yet to form more coherent and definite opinion regarding their experience, with nearly half of them (41.6 percent) having moderate sense of satisfaction. They may be yet to experience the nuances of research act that could provide them with more definite experiences of satisfactions and dissatisfactions. The association between work satisfaction and age was significant at 0.01 levels with 'C' value being 0.182.

**Table-2: Work Satisfaction and Student Status**

Work Satisfaction	Student Status			Total
	UGC and Other funding agencies	Self Financing	University Fellowship	
Low	23 (42.6)	25 (23.8)	66 (34.5)	114 (32.6)
Moderate	13 (24.1)	48 (45.7)	54 (28.3)	115 (32.8)
High	18 (33.3)	32 (30.5)	71 (37.2)	121 (34.6)

<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b> (100.0)	<b>105</b> (100.0)	<b>191</b> (100.0)	<b>350</b> (100.0)
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$X^2 = 13.05$ ; d.f. = 4 ; C = 0.189 ; Significant at 0.02 level.

It is normally assumed that those working with assistance from funding agencies that have to clear a national level test are the ones with better research aptitude and hence ought to derive greater satisfaction from the research work they carry out. However, such an association may be indicating, again, to a lag between their expectations of facilities and the actual situations they find themselves in. On the other hand, those who are pursuing research with their own resources may also be viewed as those having genuine interest in research and could be found with lower expectations from the institutions they work with and as such tend to be more often moderately satisfied with their work (45.7 percent) than are those working with funding from agencies (24.1 percent) and university fellowship (28.3 percent). It is further significant to note that the proportion of those with high work satisfaction is highest among the scholars working with university fellowship (37.2 percent) followed by those with support from national agencies (33.3 percent) and those supporting research on their own (30.5 percent).

**Table-3: Work Satisfaction and Enrollment Status**

Work Satisfaction	Enrollment Status		Total
	Full time	Part time	
Low	105 (35.3)	09 (17.0)	114 (32.6)
Moderate	100 (33.7)	15 (28.3)	115 (32.8)
High	92 (31.0)	29 (54.7)	121 (34.6)
<b>Total</b>	<b>297</b> (100.0)	<b>53</b> (100.0)	<b>350</b> (100.0)

$X^2 = 7.39$  ; d.f.= 2 ; C = 0.144 ; Significant at 0.02 level.

It is a common place observation supported by common sense that, those who have taken to research as a full time endeavor could be those having greater commitment and seriousness about research with part timers taking it as an add on work and not a primary preoccupation. It

may also be stated that those who are full time researchers ought to be pursuing with single-minded devotion and undivided attention and more concerned about completing their research and as such ought to derive greater satisfaction from the work they have chosen to carry out as prime concern. The data, however, indicate to a situation contrary to this assumption. It may be observed from the table that, the proportion of those deriving higher work satisfaction is as high as 55 (54.7) percent among the part timers as compared to 31 percent among those pursuing research on full time basis. Similarly the proportion of those deriving low satisfaction from research work is as high as 35 (35.3) percent with the corresponding proportion among part timers being less than half this figure (17 percent). As we know that the proportion of those pursuing doctoral research on part time basis is always less than one fifth of the total number of research scholars at any time and the main trend is toward working for research degree as a fulltime scholar.

**Table-4: Work Satisfaction and Stage of Research Work**

Work Satisfaction	Stage of Research Work			Total
	Initial	Advanced	Final	
Low	62 (33.3)	41 (36.3)	11 (21.6)	114 (32.6)
Moderate	84 (45.2)	18 (15.9)	13 (25.5)	115 (32.8)
High	40 (21.5)	54 (47.8)	27 (52.9)	121 (34.6)
<b>Total</b>	<b>186</b> <b>(100.0)</b>	<b>113</b> <b>(100.0)</b>	<b>51</b> <b>(100.0)</b>	<b>350</b> <b>(100.0)</b>

$X^2 = 41.55$ ; d.f. = 4 ; C = 0.326 ; Significant at 0.01 level.

A very strong positive association between the level of work satisfaction and stage of research can be observed from the Table 4. The data indicate that satisfaction with research work increases considerably with every successive stage of research. The proportion of those with high work satisfaction is as low as 22 (21.5) percent among those who are in the initial stage of research and the proportion more than doubles (47.8 percent) among those who are in the advanced stage of research, reaching as high a proportion as 53 (52.9) percent among those who are in the final stage of their research. Similarly the proportion of those with low level of work

satisfaction decreases with advancement in stage of research. It is as high as one third (33.3 percent) among those who are in initial stage and decreases to 22 (21.6) percent among those who are in the final stages of research, with those in the advanced stage of research, for the reasons stated in the earlier chapter, have the highest proportion (36.3 percent). The association between the level of work satisfaction and stage of research was found to be significantly associated at 0.01 levels with 'c' value being considerably higher at 0.326. Lastly, the data indicate that the level of work satisfaction could be influenced by the guide scholar relationship (GSR).

**Table-5: Work Satisfaction and Guide-Scholar Relationship**

Work Satisfaction	Guide Scholar Relationship			Total
	Strained	Neutral	Cordial	
Low	4 (100.0)	45 (34.6)	65 (30.1)	114 (32.6)
Moderate	-	45 (34.6)	70 (32.4)	115 (32.8)
High	-	40 (30.8)	81 (37.5)	121 (34.6)
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b> <b>(100.0)</b>	<b>130</b> <b>(100.0)</b>	<b>216</b> <b>(100.0)</b>	<b>350</b> <b>(100.0)</b>

$X^2 = 10.07$ ; d.f.=4 ; C= 0.167, Significant at 0.05 level.

It is quite natural to expect that in the absence of cordial relationships between the guide and scholar, which could result in frustration for the scholars, the work satisfaction is less likely to be higher. The data presented in the table seem to support this assumption as all those who have strained relationships with their guides have low work satisfaction and the proportion of those with low work satisfaction decreases with increasing cordiality between the guide and the scholar. Among those with moderate GSR that proportion about one third (34.6 percent), it further decreased to 30 (30.1) percent among those with cordial GSR. Similarly, none of those with strained GSR had high work satisfaction, which increased to 31 (30.8) percent among those with neutral GSR and increases further to 38 (37.5) percent among those with cordial GSR.

### 4.3 Commitment

Just as work satisfaction, commitment is another positive dimension of work process and such has been dealt with in all studies relating to performance of work. Research as an activity, just like any activity with a purpose or goal requires commitment for its successful completion. Commitment, as a trait of a person, is viewed in literature on sociology of occupations and professions, sociology of work and sociology of industry as representing the seriousness with which an individual approaches one's work, vocation, profession or a task. It speaks of the bond between the person and the process of work one performs. As such, a higher degree of commitment is looked upon as a positive value in the world of work or for that matter any activity, it could even be sport, religion, ideology and institutions.

**Table-6: Commitment and Educational Grade**

Commitment	Educational Grade		Total
	Low	High	
Low	19 (15.8)	64 (27.8)	83 (23.7)
Moderate	51 (42.5)	81 (35.2)	132 (37.7)
High	50 (41.7)	85 (37.0)	135 (38.6)
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b> <b>(100.0)</b>	<b>230</b> <b>(100.0)</b>	<b>350</b> <b>(100.0)</b>

$X^2 = 6.35$  ; d.f. = 2 ; C = 0.133 ; Significant at 0.05 level.

It is normally assumed that those with higher educational grades owing to their being better academically equipped and intellectually endowed, tend to exhibit greater commitment to research that requires these capabilities. It is also further assumed that they are the persons who could have thought of pursuing research at a much earlier stage in academic life, which could breed a stronger commitment to a research career. But the data presented in the table seem to be indicating to a different logic altogether. The proportion of those with low commitment is as low as 16 (15.8) percent among those with low educational grades whereas, the corresponding proportion is as high as 28 (27.8) percent among those with higher educational grades. Conversely, the proportion of those with higher commitment is higher (41.7 percent) among those

with lower educational grades as compared to those with higher educational grades (37 percent), suggesting that higher educational grades do not guarantee a higher degree of commitment to a research career and on the contrary, lower educational grades could possibly have this effect, as supported by a statistically significant negative association between the two at 0.05 level.

**Table-7: Commitment and Guide Scholar Relationship**

Commitment	Guide Scholar Relationship			Total
	Strained	Neutral	Cordial	
Low	4 (100.0)	32 (24.6)	47 (21.8)	83 (23.7)
Moderate	-	39 (30.0)	93 (43.0)	132 (37.7)
High	-	59 (45.4)	76 (35.2)	135 (38.6)
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b> <b>(100.0)</b>	<b>130</b> <b>(100.0)</b>	<b>216</b> <b>(100.0)</b>	<b>350</b> <b>(100.0)</b>

$X^2 = 19.15$ ; d.f.=4 ; C = 228 ; significant at 0.01 level.

Just as in the case of work satisfaction it may be observed that all those who have strained relations with their guides have low level of commitment of research work. The proportion of those having high degree of commitment increases to 45 (45.4) percent among those with neutral GSR and it remains quite high at 35 (35.2) percent among those having cordial relationships. It may thus be stated that, what breeds higher levels of commitment to research work is neither strained nor cordial relations but neutral relations between guide and the students. It may mean that too much of cordiality and too much of hostility between guide and the student could have detrimental implications for GSR and as such, the guides and students need to maintain good working relations that are neither characterized by too much of familiarity nor too much of formality. In support of such important implication of GSR for the level of commitment to research work, the association between the two was found to be statistically significant at 0.01 level with 'C' value being quite high at 0.228. It is further interesting to note that the level of commitment to research work varies significantly with the stage of research.

Table-8: Commitment and Stage of Research Work

Commitment	Stage of Research Work			Total
	Initial	Advanced	Final	
Low	50 (26.9)	24 (21.3)	9 (17.7)	83 (23.7)
Moderate	58 (31.2)	44 (38.9)	30 (58.8)	132 (37.7)
High	78 (41.9)	45 (39.8)	12 (23.5)	135 (38.6)
<b>Total</b>	<b>186</b> <b>(100.0)</b>	<b>113</b> <b>(100.0)</b>	<b>51</b> <b>(100.0)</b>	<b>350</b> <b>(100.0)</b>

$X^2 = 13.63$ ; d.f.=4 ; C = 0.194 ; significant at 0.01 level.

Quite contrary to what is expected and what was found with regard to the work satisfaction, the analysis indicates to a negative association between the level of commitment and the stage of research. It may be observed from the table that the proportion of those with high degree of commitment is as high as 42 (41.9) percent among those who are in the initial stage of research, which decreases to 40 (39.8) percent among those who are in advanced stage of research and it further decreases to 23 (23.5) percent among those who are in the final stage of research. This may be contrary to what is generally expected that is, the level of commitment ought to increase with successive stage of progress in research. The negative association between the level of commitment and stage of research was statistically significant at 0.01 level with 'C' value being higher at 0.194.

#### 4.4 Attitudes

It is expected that the research scholars once in research could be developing opinions and attitudes toward various components of their academic context. These attitudes in turn could be determining their dispositions and responses to the persons and situations they come in contact with during their research career. These attitudes could be toward the research itself or towards research guides, the facilities they come to be provided with and the activities they tend to engage themselves with.

The Research Scholars appeared to be having a very strong favorable opinion toward a career or employment and even at the cost of their research career. The data indicate that about one half (50.57 percent) of the research scholars had, at the time of conducting the interview, actually applied for a job indicating that they consider job as more important than research, as even research degree itself is being pursued primarily to get hold of a job or improve their employment potential. Exactly similar proportion (50.57 percent) of the research scholars stated that, given an opportunity, they would accept a regular employment rather than continue with research. Another 13 (12.86) percent of them were rather undecided about the same with only about one third (36.57 percent) of the Research Scholars being in favor of continuing with their research despite being offered a permanent or regular employment. It is further significant to note that a still higher proportion (57.14 percent) of the Research Scholars were of the opinion that, one should pursue research after being employed and another 15 (15.14) percent were rather undecided about the issue. As such, the data seem to suggest strongly that the Research Scholars have an employment orientation stronger than their research orientation

#### 4.5. Orientations

Orientations are assumed to be determining an individual's disposition toward a vocation, or profession or an activity. As such, orientations are believed to be conditioning an individual's perspective to approach a vocation or an important assignment. In the sociological study of orientations, in the context of a vocation or in pursuit of an objective or a goal, the expectations of the persons under study are focused upon. It is different from orientation to a discipline. Professionals are oriented to the knowledge, skills, aptitudes, ethics, methods and techniques of a profession during an orientation course, like academic orientation, professional orientation, management orientation or legal orientation and the like. But, before joining a profession, individuals tend to have certain expectations from the prospective profession, or the profession they want to pursue, like money, wealth, status, recognition, power, service, welfare and sometimes the expectations are the intrinsic satisfaction or sense of achievement or accomplishment they derive from engaging in an activity.

**Table-9: Orientations and Rural Urban Background**

Orientations	Rural Urban Background	Total
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	Rural	Urban	
Ideological	55 (22.3)	12 (11.7)	67 (19.1)
Intrinsic	91 (36.8)	36 (34.9)	127 (36.3)
Instrumental	101 (40.9)	55 (53.4)	156 (44.6)
<b>Total</b>	<b>247</b> <b>(100.0)</b>	<b>103</b> <b>(100.0)</b>	<b>350</b> <b>(100.0)</b>

$X^2 = 6.88$  ; d.f. = 2 ; C = 0.139, Significant at 0.05 level.

It may be observed from the table, that true to the general way of life and approach, the Research Scholars from urban background tend to be more instrumental in their orientations (53.4 percent) than their rural counterparts. On the other hand, the proportion of those who are ideologically orientated is twice as much among Research Scholars from rural background (22.3 percent) than it is among those from urban background (11.7 percent). The association between the orientation and rural urban background is statistically being significant at 0.05 level. Similar trend could also be observed with regard to the social origin of the respondents with those coming from lower social origin being more prone to be ideologically oriented (20.4 percent) than those with higher social origin (17.1 percent). Further, owing to their socio-economic status constraining them to strive for a steady income through employment, those from low social origin were relatively more prone to be instrumentally oriented than those from higher social origin with better socio-economic status. It may also be observed that, those from higher social origin tend to value the intrinsic satisfaction they derive from recognition, appreciation from research they do than do those from lower social origin. Further a significant association was found between orientations and the stage of research.

**Table-10: Orientations and Stage of Research Work**

Orientations	Stage of Research Work			Total
	Initial	Advanced	Final	
Ideological	29	21	17	67

	(15.6)	(18.6)	(33.3)	(19.1)
Intrinsic	73 (39.2)	32 (28.3)	22 (43.2)	127 (36.3)
Instrumental	84 (45.2)	60 (53.1)	12 (23.5)	156 (44.6)
<b>Total</b>	<b>186</b> <b>(100.0)</b>	<b>113</b> <b>(100.0)</b>	<b>51</b> <b>(100.0)</b>	<b>350</b> <b>(100.0)</b>

$X^2 = 16.61$ ; d.f.=4 ; C = 0.213 Significant at 0.01 level.

It may be observed from the table that the proportion of those with ideological orientations increases with every successive stage of research it increases from 16 (15.6) percent among those in initial stage to 19 (18.6) percent among those in advanced stage and it further increases to 33 (33.3) percent among those in the final stage. Similarly, the proportion of those who are instrumentally oriented decreases from 45 (45.2) percent among those in initial stages to half this proportion (23.5 percent) among those in final stage. It may thus be stated that as one passes from initial stages to the advanced, one becomes, more ideological and less instrumental. However, no such significant association was found with regard to the guide scholars' relationship. The data indicate that all those who had strained relationships with their guides had intrinsic orientations. That it is more likely to have strained relations if one takes to research with intrinsic considerations, that those who take to research with instrumental considerations, who tend to maintain cordial relationships with their guides.

**Table -11: Orientations and Work Satisfaction**

Orientations	Work Satisfaction			Total
	Low	Moderate	High	
Ideological	31 (27.2)	15 (13.1)	21 (17.3)	67 (19.1)
Intrinsic	38 (33.3)	49 (42.6)	40 (33.1)	127 (36.3)
Instrumental	45 (39.5)	51 (44.3)	60 (49.6)	156 (44.6)

<b>Total</b>	<b>114</b> (100.0)	<b>115</b> (100.0)	<b>121</b> (100.0)	<b>350</b> (100.0)
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$X^2 = 9.53$ ; d.f.= 4 ; C = 0.162 Significant at 0.05 level.

It may be observed that those who are more prone to be satisfied are those who pursue research for instrumental considerations. The highest proportion of those with high work satisfaction are those with instrumental orientations (49.6 percent) the corresponding proportion is 44 (44.3) percent among those who have moderate satisfaction and 40 (39.5) percent among those with low work satisfaction. It may thus be stated that those who take to research with ideological orientations tend to be less satisfied with their work as it is difficult to realize such orientations tend to lead to disappointment with the progress and outcome of their research and on the other hand, those who are instrumentally oriented, with material considerations tend to derive more satisfaction with their work owing to the progress in research being increasingly promising with regard to opportunities. However, with regard to the commitment, the orientations were found to be associated significantly in an expected pattern.

**Table-12: Orientations and Commitment**

Orientations	Commitment			Total
	Low	Moderate	High	
Ideological	20 (24.1)	13 (9.9)	34 (25.2)	67 (19.1)
Intrinsic	22 (26.5)	39 (29.5)	66 (48.9)	127 (36.3)
Instrumental	41 (49.4)	80 (60.6)	35 (25.9)	156 (44.6)
<b>Total</b>	<b>83</b> (100.0)	<b>132</b> (100.0)	<b>135</b> (100.0)	<b>350</b> (100.0)

$X^2 = 37.92$ ; d.f. = 4 ; C = 0.313, Significant at 0.01 level.

It is logically assumed that, those who are ideologically and intrinsically driven to take to research exhibit a stronger commitment to pursue their goals than do those who have been driven by materialistic considerations. It is observed from the data that the proportion of those with high commitment is as high as 52 (52.0) percent among those who are intrinsically oriented and 51

(50.7) percent among those who are ideologically oriented. However, this proportion is incomparably low (22.4 percent) among those who are instrumentally oriented. It is further observed that, the proportion of those with low commitment is lower (17.3 percent) among those with intrinsic orientations.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The attitudes orientations of the Research Scholars it may be stated that as expected in the light of the earlier findings, it is the Research Scholars are primarily guided by instrumental orientations in pursuit of a research career followed by intrinsic orientations and those who are ideologically oriented representing a small minority. Further, much against what could be expected, the orientations do not vary significantly with several background and contextual variables except in case of stage of research, work satisfaction and commitment level. The research scholars from urban background tend to be more materialistic and hence instrumentally oriented than their rural counterparts. Similar association could also be found with regard to the commitment, work satisfaction, stage of research and span of research career in view of which, orientations of the student scholars could be considered as important in determining various other related aspects of research process. Since research is required to be socially oriented a dose of ideology and intrinsic considerations that render than less materialist could be induced during the course of instruction at post-graduation as well as through orientation courses, specially designed and organized to meet this requirement. With regard to the general attitudes of the scholars towards various aspects of their research life, it may be stated that the expectations of the students could be seen as largely or mostly met, although, the general view that scholars end up mostly doing the personal work of guides appears to be empirically supported. An overwhelming majority of the research scholars are satisfied with the guidance they receive. Further, even they are quite happy with the facilities they are provided and the infrastructure they can have at their disposal. However, they appear to be less than happy about their own progress of research and its outcome requiring us to take a second look at the state of affairs.

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