

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

India, in its 73 years of independence India has made impressive progress in the area of science and technology and in other sector. In the disruptive technology era education at all levels has been expanded, and the number of colleges and universities has increased several-fold after the independence. In India Department of Science and Technology (DST) was established in 1971 with the objective of promoting new areas of science and technology across the country. The DST is the nodal department for organizing, coordinating and promoting S & T activities in the country. In order to strengthen the science and technology sector and to enhance the effectiveness and availability of knowledge base in academic sector a new scheme was launched during 2000-2001 called Funds for improvement of Science and Technology (FIST). The scheme emphasizes on strengthening and imparting quality of higher education and conducting research in emerging fields of S&T.

Under the FIST scheme, from 2000-2011 for the southern Indian states namely Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Pondicherry, Andaman and Nicobar, 581 FIST projects has been sanctioned with a grant amount of Rs 41318 lakhs which accounts to 42.95% of sanctioned amount in national level and 42.75 % of national projects are awarded to southern region.

With respect to amount sanctioned to southern region, a total of 30674.9 lakhs of rupees has been spent on the equipment which accounts to the 42.50 % of national grant spent on equipment.

With an insight of finding the impact and success of the DST-FIST program and to find out its reach, it is important to evaluate the impact of FIST scheme for great interest on S&T activities in academic sector. In this connection a regional level survey has been carried out as a part of National level survey to evaluate the impact of DST-FIST program, with the objective

1. To evaluate the impact of DST FIST program on University/Departments/Centres, colleges and Institutes in terms of their academic and research outcome during 2000 to 2011.
2. To identify the best practices in terms of procedure, processes and, managerial practices among recipient organization and DST.
3. To suggest policy imperatives for strengthening the scheme.

The 581 projects were sanctioned during 2000-2011 in southern region were contacted with a specially designed questionnaire to evaluate the following research outcomes i.e., Infrastructure facilities and Equipment, Work environment, Quality of academic program, Quality of research, Awards and recognitions and International/ National collaboration. The analysis of the information collected through the survey, reveals that DST FIST is able to contribute towards the growth of S&T infrastructure development in the southern region. A total of 2620 equipment were procured and effectively utilized by both internal and external users for academic and research activities. Apart from this, a good infrastructural facility is also developed because of the DST FIST funding especially internet facilities, establishment of IPR cell, incubation centres and computation facilities and this resulted in improved working environment, improved communication, personal development opportunities and motivation for innovation among the faculty and researchers. There is a significant improvement in the research outcomes like number of research articles published, patents awarded and international collaborations etc.. DST FIST program is also instrumental in capacity building at the institutional level and able to contribute and empower all the stake holders involved in academics and researches. The infrastructure and equipment facilities created with the aid of DST-FIST funds across seven different states of southern region prove to be a good initiative to empower and nurture S&T activities and able to deliver the results.