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A step forward



Special Arrangement Improving research

The International Centre for Multidisciplinary Research at Stella Maris, Chennai, believes that collaboration among researchers can accomplish a lot.

Students and faculty interested in research across disciplines can now fulfil their academic aspirations, thanks to the International Centre for Multidisciplinary Research (ICMR), recently launched at Stella Maris College. The centre, while seeking to ensure research output of an international standard, intends to work on new methodologies in making discoveries across disciplines.

Renuka Rajarathnam, director of ICMR, says, “We are looking at improving our existing research strength and take it forward. We want to have that edge. And the centre is multidisciplinary because today it is all about mergers and collaborations. Such integrated force will enable us to excel in research, development and innovation.”

“Today’s knowledge landscape has altered dramatically and there is a powerful drive and need for multidisciplinary research,” she says.

At ICMR, an interdisciplinary approach is a step towards multidisciplinary enquiry. Through simple collaboration, researchers from different disciplines can accomplish more by teaming.

As the vice principal Dr. Bernadine Mary Joseph points out, “We are looking at possible connections across disciplines. For example, a literature student who takes up Dalit literature needs to collaborate with the sociology department.” The college introduces students to interdisciplinary subjects even at the undergraduate level. “We give research-oriented assignments to our students and thereby motivate them into the research path,” Dr. Joseph says.

Rebecca Devaprasad, assistant professor in economics who is working on her PhD, says that the ICMR has enlarged her scope of research as the centre has tie-ups with foreign universities.

Some of her students studying in overseas universities help in networking and knowledge sharing. “I find such a set-up immensely beneficial as there are periodical seminars on research methodology taking place. This is a useful resource centre for researchers,” says D. Himabindu, associate professor in economics, who is researching “household saving and investment in India.”

College principal Dr. Sr Jasintha Quadras says, “Internationalisation of research and innovation has become the key academic goal in higher education. We are open to research collaborations, partnerships and networks with national and international research institutions to strengthen our research capacity.”

The ICMR also focuses on women empowerment. The centre will also create an integrated community of researchers, providing an intellectually and creatively stimulating culture on the campus.