

Criteria VII : Innovations and Best Practices

7.1 Environment Consciousness

7.1.1 - Does the Institute conduct a Green Audit of its campus and facilities?

A formal Green Audit has not been undertaken yet. However, in an effort to minimize electricity consumption, the Institute has gone in for replacement of conventional tube light fittings with energy saving CFL lamps in renovated office space, faculty rooms, toilets and for campus lighting. Further, the Institute has fitted a high-capacity solar water heater for the Girls' Hostel on campus. Periodical efforts are on to further take steps for energy conservation.

7.1.2 - What are initiatives taken by the college to make the campus eco-friendly?

- **Energy conservation**

Periodical reminders are issued to the staff members and students to remind them to conserve energy by switching off lamps and fans when not required. In an effort to minimize electricity consumption, the Institute has also gone in for replacement of conventional tubelight fittings with energy saving CFL lamps in renovated office space, faculty rooms, toilets and for campus lighting.

- **Use of renewable energy**

The Institute has fitted a high-capacity solar water heater for the Girls' Hostel on campus. With this, the consumption of electricity/ LPG for heating water for use in bathrooms has been considerably brought down, with the use of solar energy.

- **Water harvesting**

The college has not taken up specific programmes for rain water harvesting. In effort to reduce consumption of Municipal Water, the Institute has been making use of well water in toilets.

- **Check dam construction**

The Institute is located within the city and therefore there is no possibility for construction of check dam in or around the college. However, during the annual village camps organized by the Institute, check dams have been built. Such efforts also aimed at increasing awareness among rural people about the importance of water conservation and ground water replenishment.

- **Efforts for carbon neutrality**

The Institute takes printouts of only very important documents. It has also been making conscious efforts for reducing the consumption of stationery. As usually there is no power disruption, the use of portable genset has been drastically minimized.

- **Plantation**

The Institute has been periodically taking up plantation of saplings on campus. The campus today has a reasonably good green cover with **112 fully grown trees** and many small shrubs. Tree plantation programmes have been undertaken by the Institute on different occasions, on campus and during village camps.

- **Hazardous waste management**

The Institute runs only academic programmes in the discipline of social work. Therefore there is no creation of 'hazardous waste' in the Institute. The waste generated in the Institute and the Girls' Hostel is scientifically collected and disposed through municipal waste disposal system.

- **e-waste management**

The Institute does not generate e-waste worth mentioning and therefore it is not confronted with the issue of e-waste management as yet.

7.2 Innovations

7.2.1 - Give the details of innovations introduced during the last four years which have created a positive impact on the functioning of the college :

- The Institute conducts constant discussion and brainstorming sessions about innovations for improving its functioning. The innovations in functioning is has taken into account the four dimensional framework of the 'the context', 'the objectives', 'the practices', and 'the impact'. This exercise itself is an enriching exercise for the institution. An overview of the innovations introduced by the Institute during the last four years are documented in the table below:

No	Innovation	Positive impact
1	Installation of SOUL software for the library in July 2008.	It has facilitated online access of journals, books and periodicals, which has helped many students and faculty, especially in their research work.
2	'Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC)' started on 15 th of August 2009 in the library.	Facilitated browsing of books and journals and periodicals.
3	Creation of an 'Open access section' for post graduate students in the library.	Made the library more user friendly; Increased the number of students accessing books.
4	Six computer terminals were additionally installed in the Library exclusively for internet usage. Also, an exclusive broadband connection was installed in the Library which is	Free internet access to students; Increased the number of students visiting the library; More students have become internet savvy.

	open to all students, free of cost. The internet facility in the library has been upgraded with password protected Wi-Fi connectivity wef 27 th August 2012.	
5	An in-house newsletter of the Institute 'Page One' was launched, with the release of its first issue in June 2009. Back issues of 'Page One' are preserved in the Library. This is an ongoing activity.	Improved periodical documentation of all events taking place in the Institute; Enhanced dissemination of information among staff and students within the Institute; Helped in the creation of more accurate Annual Reports.
6	Inception of a new field action project called 'Community Action for Environment (CAFÉ)' in 2009. CAFÉ collaborates with the Nagpur Municipal Corporation in protecting water bodies in the city.	Helped the students of BSW II with opportunities for practical exposure in environmental education through involvement in activities aimed at protection of environment and creation of awareness about environmental issues.
7	Documentary Film Festival : With a view to promote environmental consciousness among students and to introduce the concepts of development communication and documentary film making, the Institute under the aegis of 'Community Action For Environment - CAFÉ" and the Library organized two Documentary Film Festivals on 4-5 February 2011 & 8-9 February 2012.	Provided in-depth exposure to students on environmental issues, thereby increasing their sensitivity on environment protection; Provided learning opportunities for the students in reviewing documentary films and in analyzing its contents.
8	Inception of a new field action project called 'Social Work Intervention to Promote Juvenile Justice (SWIPJJ)' in 2009. <i>(Due to lack of financial support, this project had to be closed after very successful operations after two years).</i>	Provided a laboratory for social work practicum and helped social work faculty to render professional service; It also helped in establishing linkages with police department, Rotary Club and the Dept. of Social Justice and Welfare.
9	Inception of a new field action project called 'School Social Work Programme' in 2009.	Provided a laboratory for social work practicum and helped social work faculty to render professional service; It also helped in helping students of Municipal Schools and thereby strengthening linkages with the Nagpur Municipal

		Corporation.
10	Constitution of various Boards for participatory decision making and efficient functioning of the Institute.	Enhanced smooth and efficient daily functioning of the institute; Enhanced ownership, accountability and transparency.
11	Subscription to N-List and INFLIBNET project since 2010.	Facility for free of cost access to e-resources is now available to students and faculty members.
12	Membership in International Federation of Social Workers, Alexandria, USA.	Increased visibility of the Institute in the international scene; Members of the IFSW visited the Institute and initiated joint programmes. Helped students to get an international perspective of social work practice.
13	Conducting several workshops for students, every year, on issues that are relevant in the context of social work practice with the help of experts from the field.	Helped in bringing many eminent persons in contact with the students and faculty; Helped in expanding the knowledge base and sensitivity of students on social issues and helped them in understanding various implications of social issues.

7.3 Best Practices

7.3.1 - Elaborate any two best practices in the given format at page no 98, which have contributed to the achievement of the institutional objectives and / or contributed to the quality improvement of the core activities of the college.

The institute has always demonstrated that it recognizes the importance of quality enhancement through innovative practices. The institution has made efforts to institutionalize these practices as best practices. These practices not only add value to the educational programme, they also provide a distinct identity to the quality enhancement efforts of the institution. The institution has identified the following two best practices among many others:

FIRST BEST PRACTICE

1. Title of the Practice : Research Skill & Output Enhancement Programme

2. Goal : The institute has been promoting professional training in Social work and develop a sense of civic consciousness and social responsibility among the students. The goal of the skill enhancement programme is to engage itself in a leadership role in aspects related to social work training in this region and train personnel in planning and policy making to develop a cadre of dedicated field level workers and scholarly researchers in the field of social work.

3. The Context : Under the Research Skill Enhancement Programme the institute has launched a 'Research Resources Centre (RRC)' with a mission of promoting research in social sciences through short term educational programme, workshops, consultancy and other programmes and events. The centre addresses the capacity building needs in the areas of research of students research scholars, educators and educational institutions, research supervisors, voluntary organizations, governmental organization and the corporate sector.

4. The Practice : A Board of RRC has been constituted with the Principal as its Chairperson, one senior Faculty Member as the Convener and some Faculty Members and Non-teaching staff as its members. The Board formulates action plans, proposals etc., on behalf of the RRC and oversees the overall functioning of the RRC. The Board also recommends acquisition of books and other resource material for the Library so as to enhance the RRC's resources. The RRC provides technical support to Faculty in formulating research proposals and also provides research consultancy to individuals and organizations. The RRC works in tandem with the Board of Student Research of the Institute and thereby provides human resource for conducting research workshops for students.

Research skill enhancement is addressed at three levels: 1) Level 1 - UG and PG students of the Institute; 2) Level 2 - Researchers, Field level professionals and Faculty from other Colleges; and 3) Level 3 – Research Consultancy.

The practice at Level 1 : The following phase-wise orientation in research was provided through a series of workshops conducted for students at UG and PG level, to help them carry out their research projects:

- i. Workshop on topic selection/ problem formulation.
- ii. Workshop on construction of Objectives, Hypotheses and Basic Research Questions.
- iii. Workshop on tools of data collection.
- iv. Workshop on data analysis and data processing
- v. Workshop on research report writing.
- vi. Classroom Seminar presentations by the students at each phase of the research, in the presence of panel of experts from RRC and Board of Student Research. (The Panel gives suggestions and guidance for improving each research project of students)

The practice at Level 2 : This level focused on capacity enhancement of research scholars. Two types of activities were initiated: 1) Orientation Workshops in Research Methodology for social work teachers; and 2) Short Term Certificate Course in Research Methodology. (*Some details of such activities is given in Annexure 7.3.1*).

Special features of the practice at Level 2:

- i. A broad range of themes/ topics.

- ii. Open to need based variation in content and emphasis.
- iii. Skill development orientation.
- iv. Limited seats and individual attention.
- v. Well experienced resource persons.
- vi. Access to library resources of the Institute during the programme.
- vii. Especially useful for Ph.D and M.Phil level research scholars.
- viii. Sessions scheduled after usual working hours/on holidays with flexi timing.

Teaching Methodology:

- i. Participant-centric, interactive methodologies of teaching-learning.
- ii. Focus on exercises and examples.
- iii. Encouragement to interdisciplinary orientation.
- iv. Lectures with power point presentation.

Course Contents

- i. Approaches to scientific research and research designs.
- ii. Problem formulation and writing research proposals.
- iii. Sampling methods and techniques.
- iv. Methods and tools of data collection.
- v. Data processing and analyses; Use of statistical techniques.
- vi. Writing a research report.

The practice at Level 3: This level focuses on research consultancy projects. With the active support of the RRC, the Faculty undertook collaborative research projects, field action research projects, minor research, major research etc. (*The details of such activities is given in Annexure 7.3.1*).

5. Evidence of success :

- i. Qualitative improvement in students' dissertation at MSW level.
- ii. Increase in the number of research projects, field action research projects and consultancy assignments undertaken and successfully completed.
- iii. Members of RRC were invited for research related work, for conducting research methodology workshops, and for research consultancy.
- iv. Increased number of capacity development workshops and training programmes for faculty.

6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required:

It has been noticed that although there is a great demand for short-term courses and workshops in research methodology, most of those interested are research scholars who are unable to pay the required course fee. In the absence of assured financial resources, it is difficult to sustain such academic initiatives.

Retirement of well-experienced faculty from the service of the Institute has been another major problem encountered in the session 2013-2014. The Institute is hopeful that the retired faculty will continue to help in this regard, till more faculty members gain sufficient experience and expertise.

7. Notes

It is essential to have a core team of faculty who are not only experienced but also sufficiently motivated to undertake 'Research Skill & Output Enhancement Programme' in any institution. In the absence of suitable additional remuneration, the initial enthusiasm is likely recede affecting the quality of this initiative.

There is a section of students who attend such programmes only for the sake of certificates and not for the sake of learning. While undertaking activities for capacity enhancement of research scholars, this is a factor to be borne in mind. If the segment of such students exceed a particular number, it will seriously hamper the teaching-learning process.

SECOND BEST PRACTICE

1. Title of the Practice : Institutionalized Feedback System for Evaluation of Teachers by Students.

2. Goal : The institute has been experimenting with ways and means of collecting feedback from the students in the best possible manner. The goal of the '**Feedback System for Evaluation of Teachers by Students**' is to collect student feedback which touches upon three important aspects namely class room teaching, field work supervision and research project supervision, while ensuring complete objectivity and anonymity.

3. The Context : The Institute has been keen on improving its teaching-learning processes on the basis of feedback from its stakeholders. Besides, there has been a suggestion from NAAC to have proper systems in place for evaluation of teachers by students and using such evaluation for strengthening the quality of education. The IQAC of the Institute took this matter with utmost seriousness and decided to develop an efficient feedback system.

4. The Practice : All students are required to evaluate the teachers. For this purpose the Institute has introduced a complete feedback system for evaluation of teachers by students. The Feedback System has been designed to ensure complete objectivity and anonymity. It relies on collecting feedback through student feedback surveys while ensuring adequate response rates. The following are the salient features of this practice:

1. The system that is being followed is an 'end of the course' feedback collection system, which means the students are required to provide their feedback only once at the end of the academic session.

2. While it has been made mandatory for all students to fill in the feedback form, teachers are not given the responsibility of collecting feedback from the students, so as to ensure objectivity.

3. The feedback form is bilingual containing questions in Marathi and English. All the mandatory questions in the feedback form are close-ended in nature, with pre-coded responses, and in simple language. It is not required of the students to write anything in their handwriting, unless they so desire. Students are also not required to sign the form or write their name on the form. This is to prevent identification of the students by their handwriting, signature or name. While it is the IQAC that has been mandated to gather and process feedback, the actual responsibility of collection of feedback has been vested with the Librarian. The IQAC orients the students about the feedback collection. They are informed that confidentiality issues are taken very seriously and that their identity will not be revealed to anyone.

4. The system works like this: Students are oriented about the feedback survey by the IQAC team. They explain to students the purpose of collecting feedback from them, the methods that will be utilised, and how the feedback will be analysed and how and when the findings will be considered for improving the teaching-learning trajectory. They are encouraged to reflect on their learning experience and other relevant/associated matters. Feedback collection forms are kept with the Librarian. Before the students are issued their 'hall ticket', which allows them entry into the examination centre, they are required to obtain a 'no-dues certificate' from the library. For getting this 'no-dues certificate' from the library, the students have to return all the books that they have borrowed. Besides, they also have to sit in the library, fill in the feedback form and deposit it with the Librarian. This ensures that feedback is necessarily collected from each student, ensuring his/her privacy. The Librarian collects all such forms and submits the same to the Principal, who in turn hands it over to the IQAC for processing them. Thus, the system maximizes response rates (ensures cent percent response), ensures validity, encourages commitment and maintains confidentiality. (As a rule, if less than 60% of the students are surveyed for feedback such feedback is not deemed representative and therefore is not considered reliable).

5. After the feedback forms are processed, the IQAC submits a report based on it to the Principal, suggesting measures to be undertaken for enhancement of quality.

6. Based on such report, those teachers who are given poor rating by the students are encouraged by the Principal to improve their performance.

Besides, suggestions given by the students are also considered for implementation.

Apart from the above system, the Principal also conducts unstructured 'Student Group Interviews' and FGDs with smaller groups of students and gain more insights about the Institute and the teaching-learning process.

5. Evidence of success :

- i. Feedback is collected from cent percent students during the end of every academic session.
- ii. Evaluation of every faculty member by his/her students has been made possible.
- iii. Teachers are not aware of the students who gave positive or negative rating about them, and therefore there has been no unwarranted consequences like teachers' biases in internal assessment of students etc.
- iv. Students have opined that they feel at ease while giving feedback as their identities are not revealed.
- v. The IQAC is getting complete data about perspectives of performance of teachers by students.
- vi. The Institute has been able to use feedback more in a more proactive manner.

6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required:

There is one lacunae in the system. There are some students who are not very regular in attending all the theory classes. Some of them also are not very serious about individual/group conferences conducted by the faculty in the context of field work or research work. The present system is unable to identify such students who are not competent to evaluate the performance of their teachers, as the survey forms do not require students to reveal their identity, as a measure for safeguarding confidentiality. This leads to the possibility of 'unreliable' feedback from a few 'not competent' students. However, as the number of such 'not competent' students is less than ten percent, their inputs are not likely to influence the results in a significant manner.

7. Notes

As a precondition it is required to constitute an efficient and upright IQAC for undertaking this method of feedback collection, so as to ensure objectivity and to ensure that the results are not manipulated with a view to unduly favor or reprove anyone.

8. Contact details :

Name of the Principal : Dr John Menachery

Name of the institution : Matru Sewa Sangh Institute of Social Work.
City : Nagpur
Pin code : 440010
Work phone : 0712-2234393
Website : www.mssiswngp.org
Mobile : 9028011957

>>><<