

Executive Summary

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Challenges (SWOC Analysis)

A. Strengths

1. The oldest social work college in the region, run by Matru Sewa Sangh, an illustrious parent organization with a rich legacy. Matru Sewa Sangh is well-known for its meaningful activities, profound social commitment and its special focus on women.
2. A proactive management which is highly encouraging, non-interfering and giving functional autonomy. In addition, there is a perfect convergence between the objectives of the parent body and the Institute.
3. Recognized as a leader in the region, that sets new benchmarks and competes with itself.
4. Attaches great significance on inculcating values and places importance on regularity and punctuality in theory classes, field work and student research work.
5. Makes use of scientific methods for evaluation of students before awarding internal marks.
6. Highly qualified Faculty (all permanent faculty members have completed their PhD). All the newly appointed faculty are NET/SET passed.
7. Highly experienced Faculty (the average experience of the permanent faculty is 24 years). As a result, the faculty is able to carry out their duties with near perfection.
8. Diversity in the faculty. Faculty drawn from different parts of the country.
9. A rich library with modern amenities and well-qualified librarian who is a PhD. Even provides internal funding for enhancement of learning resources.
10. Experienced non-teaching staff.
11. Most staff members are computer literate.
12. Excellent building with sufficient space for all activities.

13. IT-enabled educational infrastructure. Adequate IT equipment in terms of computers, wi-fi equipment, ten telephone lines with internet connection, printers, photocopiers etc.
14. Use of student-centric approaches and a range of teaching-learning methods. A number of workshops are organized and several persons of eminence are regularly invited to address students and faculty, with a view to supplement the University's Curriculum to ensure that the academic programmes and Institution's goals and objectives are integrated.
15. Diversity in the student body. The Institute attracts students from all socio-cultural backgrounds from different parts of the country. More than half its students are from socially and economically weaker sections. The gender balance of students is skewed in favour of women.
16. Values stakeholder feedback and has developed well-conceived systems for collection of feedback from students.
17. History of running field action projects. Currently there are five FAPs. Three of which receive external funding.
18. Excellent human resource in social work research (The faculty has been involved in many research projects). It is the only social work college under the University to have two UGC Major Research Projects to its credit.
19. Good academic ambience with excellent record of discipline. Attendance of students taken in each theory class. Attendance of staff recorded using biometric system.
20. Brings out a national-level peer reviewed professional journal titled "Indian Journal of Social Work & Social Sciences" (ISSN: 2322-0740).

B. Weaknesses

1. In the context of the state government's policy related to post-graduate education in affiliated colleges, the institution faces financial constraints that impact several aspects of the educational program. The Institute is unable to appoint full time faculty for its PG programmes as there is no grant-in-aid to PG programmes in Maharashtra from the Department of Higher Education, Government of Maharashtra.
2. Absence of hostel facilities to accommodate male students. The Institute therefore has to help male students from outside the city in getting accommodation in private residential facilities, which are sometimes not economically feasible.

3. There are many students who cannot afford laptops. The Institute is not able to provide them with a pool of computers which they can use for preparing their dissertations without spending a lot of money. Similarly, there is no inverter facility in the library to keep the computers working during power breakdowns.

C. Opportunities

1. In this rapidly globalizing world, there are greater opportunities for collaboration with institutions from other countries (for educational / research / action projects). The Institute has made a beginning by collaborating with Sapir College, Israel and the Australian Catholic University, in this regard.
2. The rapidly expanding city presents more opportunities for partnering /collaboration with governmental and non-governmental agencies (for educational /research /action projects). The Institute has found many new opportunities for offering consultancy in research related activities.
3. The department of Continuing Adult Education & Extension of the RTMNU presents opportunities for initiating innovative, need-based short-term educational/training programs that provide value-addition to the educational experience of the students.
4. The Institute could make use of the new rules and get the extension of a superannuated faculty member for two more years.
5. The Institute has an excellent rapport with many social development organizations in the city and therefore there are ample opportunities for field work placement of students.
6. There is an increase in academic activities like seminars/workshops/conferences – national and international – providing more opportunities for faculty and students to take part.

D. Challenges

1. Dramatic increase in the number of social work colleges in the country. (The University has 22 social work colleges affiliated to it. Maharashtra has more than 55 colleges of social work. Colleges have come up in almost all states in India). As a result, the number of students coming from other parts of Maharashtra and from states in the country is steadily declining. Thus, the overall number of students seeking admission to social work courses in the city is decreasing.

2. Proliferation of programs, especially those by institutions that are perceived to have no scruples, is leading to dilution of educational standards in order to attract students. (Field work and research component in the syllabus has been the greatest casualty).
3. A steady decline in the number of students who are serious in studies and career oriented in social work. Lack of well-paying jobs in the sector is one major reason for this trend. The result is a big challenge for the faculty to cater to the wide heterogeneity of the students in a class room in terms of various factors and still satisfy all sections.
4. Restrictive policy environment (absence of grants-in-aid by the state government to post-graduate educational programs in affiliated colleges on the one hand & absence of permission to enhance the fees on the other). Consequently, the Institute is running its post graduate programmes, both MSW and M.Phil, on self-finance mode. In the absence of grant-in-aid for PG courses, the Institute is unable to appoint faculty on permanent basis and to make payments to PG faculty at par with salaries of the UG faculty. This has a variety of consequences.
5. Superannuation of the faculty. (During the last three years, four senior faculty members have retired from the Institute). There is inordinate delay from the government side in granting approvals for recruiting new faculty. This causes additional strain on human resources, which is yet another challenge.

Future Plans:

1. Make efforts for financial sustenance of the PG Programmes.
2. Make efforts for getting replacements of retired faculty through fresh recruitments.
3. Enhance the existing IT enabled teaching-learning.
4. Undertake activities for enhancing computer literacy among students.
5. Make efforts for financial sustenance of field action projects.

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