



MADRAS SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

(An Autonomous Institution Affiliated to the University of Madras)

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7.2. Best Practices

7.2.1. Describe two best practices successfully implemented by the Institution as per NAAC format provided in the Manual.

Best Practice – I

1. Title of the Practice: STUDENT ENRICHMENT PROGRAMME

2. Objectives of the Practice

What are the objectives / intended outcomes of this “best practice” and what are the underlying principles or concepts of this practice (in about 100 words)?

An enrichment program enables students to realize their potential in multiple settings beyond the traditional boundaries of the classroom. Through student enrichment programme, MSSW aims to ensure that students develop a sense of self—awareness and a clear understanding of their potential. The Programme is designed to prepare students for a fruitful learning experience on campus and an exciting professional life thereafter. The specific aims include:

1. To create an environment for professional and personal enrichment.
2. To enhance employability skills of the students.
3. To explore the opportunity by providing networking platform for students.

[95 words]

3. The Context

What were the contextual features or challenging issues that needed to be addressed in designing and implementing this practice (in about 150 words)?

Human Resources related career field is evolving, with the focus changing from the administrative tasks to the strategic input and having a seat at the management table. This is facilitated by the evolving needs of current organizations and by technology, which enables more efficient processing or approval of transactions, budgets, and other financial activities. To meet the challenges of these times when companies hire new employees or analyze their job performance, preference is given to those candidates who are able to demonstrate distinct competencies and particular knowledge or skills required for a profession. Certifications help students to showcase their competency, commitment for the profession, additional knowledge and skill in the chosen professional subject area, and thus helps with job advancement. MSSW identified the need to bridge the gap between academic and industry needs by introducing Value Added Courses and Professional forum activities as a part of Student Enrichment Programme.

[149 words]

4. The Practice

Describe the practice and its uniqueness in the context of India higher education. What were the constraints / limitations, if any, faced (in about 400 words)?

The Student Enrichment Programme is designed as a mandatory part of the curriculum for course completion. As a part of the SEP, each student is expected to complete two Value Added Courses (VAC) offered by other departments and participate in at least three professional forum activities organized by National/International Organizations or Universities for each semester during PG Second Year.

Each VAC is 30 hours long and includes an assessment. These are designed in such a way that it includes all practical skills to be used at the work place. Each VAC is followed by a series of tests conducted at the completion of course that helps to assess the capabilities and expertise of an individual in his chosen subject area. This assures employers about the capabilities of an employee that he/she can successfully complete a job. The courses floated by VAC are industry-relevant and are designed by MSSW to enhance the job-readiness of its students. A few of these courses are:

- Building a Green Economy (MA – Social Entrepreneurship)
- Human Rights & Human Trafficking for Social Workers (MSW)
- Childhood disorders-assessment and counselling (MSc – Counselling Psychology)
- Circular Economy (MA – Development Management)
- Labour Laws & Employee Relations (MA – HRM)
- HR Analytics (MA – HROD)
- Social Innovation & Design Thinking (MA –Social Entrepreneurship)

VAC courses are updated for each academic year. 71 Courses were offered in the last 5 years. NHRD, NIPM, ISTD, Pondicherry University, NIMHANS, Bangalore University are some of the notable external agencies involved in providing VAC.

SEP also involves compulsory participation in at least three professional forum activities like conference / seminars / workshops organized by forums of other colleges, association, universities, of national or international repute. The students not only develop their professional network, but also gain practical knowledge of their future workplace. The students are constantly encouraged to present or publish papers in these forums leading to their holistic development.

Thus, SEP at MSSW has been designed to align with its mission to create outstanding professionals by providing students practice-oriented pedagogy involving multi-disciplinary social sciences perspectives. [343 words]

Evidence of Success

Provide evidence of success such as performance against targets and benchmarks, review results. What do these results indicate? Describe in about 200 words.

SEP at MSSW has been in place for more than five years. It has been enforced as a mandatory part of the course curriculum so that all students are able to use this opportunity. The VACs that are offered as a part of the SEP are decided by the department after deliberating on the emerging requirements in the industry and job market. This ensures that the list of courses on offer is updated each year along side keeping the department aware of what the industry expects from the students. The professional forum activities offered as a part of SEP have emerged as a common platform for practitioners and students to interact on various topics related to the current scenario thereby leading the practitioners to identify potential future workforce for their organization. For instance, HR Coffee Club brings together corporate HR experts to address students on contemporary HR issues related to work environment, labour issues and business. This continuous networking help students to have direct interactions with practitioners, thus paving way for internships during their course of study and also for off-campus placements after completion of course. Our placement report is the evidence of success of SEP at MSSW.

[198 words]

5. Problems Encountered and Resources Required

Identify the problems encountered and resources required to implement the practice (in about 150 words).

SEP at MSSW has been uniquely pitched to ensure that the students are prepared for excelling in their professional areas. One of the biggest challenges that we face with regard to SEP is scheduling the sessions on weekends. Ensuring student participation in these VACs and professional forum activities are a challenge. The departments orient their students and highlight the need for corporate networking for a fruitful career path. The professional forum activities require guest experts from different areas. Getting the best external resources person for all these programmes have proved to be challenging since most of them have difficulty in allotting time from their work schedule. However, SEP's professional activities have often leveraged on its extensive and illustrious alumni network to bring the best minds to the campus. With regard to the resources, MSSW is fully equipped Audio-Visual center to conduct VAC in the premise.

[147 words]

7. Notes (Optional)

Best Practice – II

1. Title of the Practice

RECOGNITION FOR HUMANITARIAN SERVICE THROUGH MCJ AWARD AND MCJ LECTURE

2. Objectives of the Practice

What are the objectives / intended outcomes of this “best practice” and what are the underlying principles or concepts of this practice (in about 100 words)?

MSSW, in the journey of creating professionals in the field of social work and allied disciplines, follows the best practice of recognising outstanding contributions made by individuals or organizations in the field of social services. The prestigious Mary Clubwala Jadhav Award for Humanitarian Service has been instituted by MSSW to encourage distinguished work contributed to the betterment of weaker and vulnerable sections of the society. The specific aim of the MCJ Award include:

To encourage humanitarian service by recognizing outstanding contributions in the field of social service by individuals or organizations.

[91 words]

3. The Context

What were the contextual features or challenging issues that needed to be addressed in designing and implementing this practice (in about 150 words)?

MSSW founder Ms. Mary Clubwala Jadhav, was a humanitarian at heart who made profound contributions to society. During her lifetime, she established and served in over 150 social welfare organizations. In recognition of her stellar contribution to improving the lives of soldiers, destitute children, women and the differently abled, she was honoured with the "Outstanding Service Award" by the International Council of Social welfare in 1972 and India's highest civilian honours - the Padma Shri, the Padma Bhushan and the Padma Vibhushan. **MSSW in its endeavour to carry forward the legacy of Mary Clubwala Jadhav and honour her memory has instituted the annual MCJ Award and MCJ endowment lecture series. MCJ award for humanitarian service is conferred on individuals /organizations for outstanding contributions in social service. The Award serves to recognize and advance the efforts of the recipient organization, and to sensitize the student community to have a humanitarian focus in their personal and professional lives.**

[148 words]

4. The Practice

Describe the practice and its uniqueness in the context of India higher education. What were the constraints / limitations, if any, faced (in about 400 words)?

The annual MCJ award and MCJ endowment lecture series for humanitarian service was instituted during the diamond jubilee celebration of MSSW in the year 2012. Since then, every year the award has been given to individuals / organizations who have contributed to the betterment of weaker and vulnerable sections of the society. The award carries a cash prize of INR 1,00,000 and a citation. By recognising the professionals in the field, the awards help the individuals and organisations to demonstrate great courage and creativity in their work, the power to inspire others, the ability to lead as well as to follow, and incredible integrity in difficult circumstances.

One of the most unique features of the Award is that it involves multiple stakeholders of MSSW at different levels in the process. While the faculty and students are involved in identifying the resource person for the annual Lecture series, an independent jury scrutinizes the Award entries. This concerted team effort involving students sensitizes them to the need for humanitarian approach in their professional lives and exposes them to the work of those recognized.

- Principal proposes a particular social cause in the Executive Council meeting every year.
- Once discussed in the Executive Council, the matter is approved in the HOD's meeting. The modalities and plans are charted, and information is shared to the public.
- The HODs or staffs are free to suggest an appropriate resource person to deliver the MCJ Endowment Lecture with wide-ranging experience of working in the thematic area for that year. The date for the programme is finalized in consultation with the resource person and roles and responsibilities are delegated to the staff under different committees for planning and executing the same.
- For the MCJ Humanitarian Service Award, an independent jury consisting of experts from diverse backgrounds is constituted, they scrutinize the entries for the award, shortlist the organizations and conduct interviews and submit a report recommending the organization for that year's MCJ Award. The independent external jury's decision is final, and the recommended organization is intimated.
- The programme is executed by the various committees to precision making it a concerted team effort.

[353 words]

5. Evidence of Success

Provide evidence of success such as performance against targets and benchmarks, review results. What do these results indicate? Describe in about 200 words.

Every year around 700 students are sensitized through the lecture and introduced themselves to the social issue and resulting in a positive impact in the fight against the humanitarian crisis. Some of the prominent winners of the MCJ Award in the recent years include:

- International Justice Mission (2020, Anti-Human Trafficking)
- T. K. S. Senthil Kumar - Anbalayam (2019, Mental Health)
- Ms. Noori Saleem - South Indian Positive Network (2018, Welfare and social integration of Transgendered Person)
- Ms. Meerabai Ekambaram – Anbalayam (2017, Women and Child Welfare)

Some of the illustrious names from social work area and allied disciplines who have been invited to MSSW as a part of the MCJ Endowment Lecture series include:

- Dr. Vandana Gopikumar - Co-founder, Banyan Home (2020, Mental Health)
- Ms. Nirmala Menon - CEO & Founder, Interweaver consulting (2019, Diversity & Inclusion)
- Ms. Meera Shenoy - Founder, Youth for JOBS (2018, Ability in Disability)
- Dr. V Suresh - National General Secretary, PUCL (2017, Deepening Democracy – Challenges)

The inspirational endeavours completed by this award's recipients will establish a sustainable foundation to provide ongoing value and benefit to their beneficiary, clients, patients, and the public at large.

6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required:

(Identify the problems encountered and resources required to implement the practice (in about 150 words).

Finalising the Award winner is a challenge as all nominated organisations do a remarkable work in terms of impacting the society in their own way. Till 2018, this award was confined to Tamil Nadu, but from 2019 it was decided that the MCJ award for Humanitarian service will be extended to Indian states. Advertising the Award at the National level is quite challenging. Last year the Award theme was in the area of Anti-Human trafficking, getting nominations from organization from working in the area of anti-human trafficking was a great challenge.

MSSW takes care to ensure that expert jury is on board to decide on the winner of the MCJ Award. Each year the MCJ jury committee is formed and the judging criteria is reviewed and it is transparent. MSSW aspires that this award will be a recognition that will acquire a global stature in the times to come.

[149 words]

7. Notes (Optional)