

# **Mahatma Gandhi College**

## **Kesavadasapuram, Thiruvananthapuram**

### **Kerala**

#### **Best Practice: 1**

##### *Samvedana Sadhaka*

It represents a unique group within our college community embodying social responsibility, good citizenship, friendliness, and environmental respect. This collective strives to create a positive impact by actively engaging in various initiatives that contribute to the well-being of both the college and the broader community. Through their commitment to compassion and responsibility. *Samvedana Sadhaka* is promoting a harmonious and socially conscious environment.

#### **Objectives:**

- To foster environmental awareness and responsibility among college students.
- To inculcate environmentally friendly habits in students.
- To increase awareness about the importance of ecosystem and biodiversity in their surroundings.
- To promote pro-environmental behavior within the college community.
- To foster a sense of social responsibility and civic sense in students.
- To encourage pro-social behavior in students through community engagement initiatives.
- To foster an understanding of the diverse needs of fellow beings, particularly those with disabilities.
- To encourage students to actively contribute to community welfare by helping the needy.

#### **The Context**

Mahatma Gandhi College prioritizes a holistic approach to education, extending beyond mere academic pursuits. Inspired by Gandhian philosophy, the institution recognizes the importance of nurturing well-mannered individuals. This practice delves into the college's commitment to fostering a deeper connection with nature, instilling empathy for fellow beings, and cultivating a profound understanding of societal needs.

In response to the pressing need for environmental consciousness and social responsibility, the college initiated the Practice of *Samvedana Sadhaka*. Recognizing that students play a pivotal role in shaping a sustainable future, this initiative aims to create a holistic understanding of environmental issues and social dynamics. The context underscores the importance of nurturing environmentally friendly habits, instilling awareness about nature, and fostering pro-environmental and pro-social behaviors. By emphasizing sharing habits, aiding the needy, and understanding the diverse needs of fellow beings, and seeks to mold students into responsible and empathetic citizens.

## The Practice

- The Practice of *Samvedana Sadhaka* was commenced in the academic year 2018-2019 with the aim of fostering environmental awareness and social responsibility in students.
- In 2018-2019, a butterfly garden was established by the Department of Zoology, providing students with a hands-on opportunity to understand nature intimately. By establishing a butterfly garden, the institution promotes values of environmental stewardship and conservation, instilling principles in the college community. It creates environmental awareness, holistic development of individuals and fostering a campus culture deeply rooted in nature appreciation.
- In 2018, Kerala faced the most disastrous flood in 90 years, students along with NCC and NSS engaged in rescue and philanthropic activities, displaying a keen sense of civic duty. Shyam Kumar S S received certificate for his exemplary volunteering activities in the aftermath of Kerala flood 2018. The certificate is signed by Minister of Tourism and District Collector, Government of Kerala.
- In 2019, the Botany Department focused on educating students about medicinal plants by exhibiting them to the student community. The department also incorporated QR codes to label all campus trees so that it helps other student to know the details about it by merely scanning the code. With easy access to information, students were encouraged to adopt eco-friendly practice, contributing to a more sustainable and environmentally conscious campus culture. The integration of QR codes enhanced technological literacy among students. Students embraced the use of technology for educational purposes, aligning with modern learning trends.
- Various departments participated in tree plantation initiatives, contributing to environmental sustainability.
- In 2020-21, when COVID pandemic hits the world, NSS volunteers and NCC cadets served as health and safety warriors for the community. Anakha S and other students actively volunteered in the COVID vaccination drive, earning appreciation from the District Disaster Management.
- In 2021-22, Students actively participated in cleanliness drives, contributing to the Swachh Bharath mission by cleaning beaches, college surroundings, and engaging in various community-oriented activities. The NSS unit adopted a village, organized numerous altruistic activities there.
- In 2022-23, Naval NCC wing cadets learned Braille language and created greeting cards for visually impaired children, gained recognition from the Indian Armed Forces on Twitter. The Naval NCC wing received the Best Institution Award from the unit acknowledging their exceptional contribution. College launched a waste management initiative, focusing on vermicomposting. The college's commitment to environmental responsibility is evident in this effort, contributing to both waste reduction and the creation of valuable compost for greener surroundings.
- From 2018 till date college has organized several food donation drives, blood donation, extended help to the needy, and many more activities.

- The Practice of *Samvedana Sadhaka* has evolved over the years, not only focusing on making students environmentally friendly but also instilling a strong sense of social responsibility.

#### **Evidence of Success**

- Charity and philanthropic activities have positively impacted a wide range of people across various strata of the society.
- Participation in the activities has witnessed a significant surge, indicating growing enthusiasm and commitment among the college community.
- Engagement in philanthropy has led to heightened awareness and knowledge about the local environment, fostering a sense of responsibility towards it.
- The campus has become greener than ever, reflecting the positive impact of environmental initiatives.
- Involving students in activities also ensures participation from their families and thereby the activities have gone beyond the walls of the college campus.
- Certificates and trophy received by the college serve as tangible evidence of the success of this Practice. The synergy between environmental, charity, philanthropic, initiatives at the college has not only positively impacted individuals but has also transformed the campus into a hub of awareness, engagement, and recognition.

#### **Problems encountered and resources required:**

- Butterfly garden initiated in 2018, was affected by Kerala flood and disruptions due to Covid in 2020, despite setbacks, the garden was replanted, showcasing resilience.
- QR Code labeling initiated in 2019, disrupted by COVID, restarted by the end of 2021. The financial resources for the QR code were covered from the annual funds of PTA.
- Tree Plantation Drive was hindered by flood and Covid, impacting the overall success of the drive.
- Food donation drive was conducted with household supplies from staff and students.
- Philanthropic funds were managed from the personal savings of teachers and students.
- Vermicomposting at college faces challenges due to insufficient funds and other constraints. The success of this eco-friendly initiative is hindered by financial limitations and various factors, highlighting the need for additional resources and support to ensure the proper functioning of the waste management project.
- Pandemic acted as a blessing in disguise. The pandemic prompted unity and initiative, strengthening the collective resolve of the college community.

## **Best Practice: 2**

### *Praghyan*

Praghyan is an innovative academic process deeply committed to the enhancement of knowledge. Steeped in a holistic educational approach, It provides an environment conducive to academic excellence. It encourages innovative methods of learning, fostering critical thinking abilities and promoting collaboration across different disciplines, providing students with a well-rounded educational experience. The skills and knowledge gained through Praghyan prepare students for the future, ensuring they can adapt to new challenges and excel in their chosen fields.

#### **Objectives:**

- To realize the vision of empowerment through knowledge grounded in Gandhian philosophy.
- To enhance knowledge to the underprivileged and marginalized students.
- To nurture research aptitude in students through exposure to diverse academic activities.
- To instill critical reasoning in students alongside a profound sense of moral, civic, and social responsibilities.
- To enhance students creative, convergent, and divergent thinking and develop problem solving skills.

#### **The Context**

Mahatma Gandhi College is steadfast in enhancing student knowledge, prioritizing a curriculum that extends beyond traditional boundaries for comprehensive learning. Acknowledging the value of current issues, the institution prioritizes updating knowledge to align with contemporary trends. To achieve this, programs organized by individual departments are accessible to all students, fostering a shared learning experience. Seminars and open discussions serve as platforms to boost self-esteem and diminish social inhibitions, creating an environment conducive to holistic development. These events also facilitate direct interactions between students and eminent personalities, offering invaluable insights beyond traditional classroom learning. The institution's emphasis on staying current and fostering open dialogue underscores its dedication to providing a dynamic and enriched educational experience.

#### **The Practice**

Praghyan, initiated in the academic year 2018, serves as a testament to the college's progressive approach to education. With a focus on knowledge enhancement. The institution demonstrates a commitment to providing students with a well-rounded and enriching educational experience through a variety of initiatives. Various departments actively engage in organizing seminars featuring Alumni who are experts in their fields, offering students insights beyond the confines

of the curriculum. The institution also recognizes the importance of national and international celebrations as educational tools, allowing students to grasp the significance of diverse elements.

Understanding the pivotal role of career development, the institution conducts regular programs religiously to equip students with necessary skills and knowledge for their professional journey. This includes coaching classes tailored for competitive exams, with specialized guidance for graduate aiming for entrance examinations after college hours.

Moreover, the institution mandates the inclusion of vital topics such as Research Methods, IPR, and Entrepreneurship in the curriculum. This ensures that students not only excel academically but also gain practical insights crucial for real world applications. The Annual Research Conference organized by the institution stands as a testament to the commitment to fostering academic excellence and encouraging students to engage in research pursuits.

Departments extend their impact beyond college boundaries through initiatives like the open lab for school students by the Department of Chemistry. This program sparks interest in chemistry among school students by exposing them to practical experiments. Similarly, the Department of Physics organizes the Syam Vigyan program, where students deliver talks in various scientific fields under faculty supervision. These initiatives showcase the intuition's dedication to nurturing a passion for science and encouraging students to explore diverse aspects of their disciplines.

The Department of Commerce takes a unique approach with its Comtalk initiative, transcending the traditional boundaries of commerce. This initiative enables students to broaden their understanding of commerce-related subjects and explore inter disciplinary connections.

The institution actively promotes interdisciplinary learning, allowing students from different departments to learn about various disciplines. The Botany Department, for instance, introduces students to several medicinal plants, fostering an appreciation for the botanical sciences in health care.

Departments like Psychology and Sociology priorities community engagement, regularly interacting with the public to gain insights into societal dynamics. This engagement reflects a commitment to instilling in students a deep understanding of the people and societies they will impact in their future endeavors.

Amidst the challenges posed by the pandemic, faculty members swiftly adapted to technology., transforming the classroom platform into a vital space. The institution organized international webinars during this period, providing students with opportunities to interact with eminent personalities and stay connected to global trends.

## **Evidence of Success**

The transformative impact of Praghyan is evident, students have flourished academically. Engaging in various intercollege quiz competitions, students not only showcased their intellectual prowess but also earned accolades with prizes. Notably, without social inhibition displayed in presenting papers at research forums highlights the college's success in fostering a confident academic environment.

Guidance across diverse fields has been instrumental in aiding students to make well-informed career choices. The incorporation of peer teaching methodologies has proven motivational, fostering a collaborative learning environment that goes beyond traditional classroom settings.

The Annual Research Conference organized by the college plays a pivotal role in broadening students' perspectives. It provides insights into upcoming areas of study and diverse angles on singular ideas, enriching their academic journey.

Verbal feedback from students serves as a resounding endorsement of the success achieved. This positive response underscores the effectiveness of the college's initiatives in elevating students' knowledge, confidence, and overall academic experience.

**Problems encountered and resources required:**

- The existing syllabus lacks academic flexibility, limiting students' exploration and adaptability.
- Semester system poses difficulties in coordinating student participation.
- Geographical constraints during the initial stages of Praghyan impede speaker availability.
- Financial shortages hinder the provision of remuneration for resource persons.
- Limited availability of halls poses challenges in conducting seminars simultaneously.
- Occasional internet connectivity issues can hinder virtual events and communication.

Despite these challenges, addressing these concerns will be crucial for creating a more adaptable and student friendly academic environment. Collaborative efforts and innovative solutions are essential to overcome these obstacles and enhance the overall academic experience for students.