



Maharaja's College, Ernakulam

(A Government Autonomous College)

Kochi - 682 011, Kerala

Affiliated to Mahatma Gandhi University

Centre of Excellence under Govt. of Kerala

Identified by UGC as College with Potential for Excellence

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INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE CELL

Maharaja's College, Ernakulam

Best Practice

Best Practice 1: Gender Specific Programmes

The gender specific programmes of Maharaja's College envision a holistic gender specific approach in education and campus community life. The campus has always been to the fore in following an inclusive approach to address the needs of the students from the excluded and the disadvantaged communities irrespective of sex, color, cast and wealth.

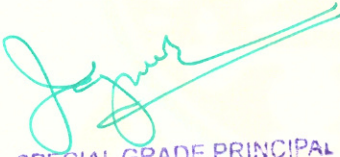
Objectives:

- To promote gender specific approach and gender equity in all walks of campus life.
- To prepare ground for voicing the issues of students from transgender community and address their basic needs.
- To introduce gender empowerment programme with the primary emphasis to transgender community.
- To enhance the safety and wellbeing of the transgender community in the college.

The Context:

Maharaja's college is on track to develop gender specific approach among the campus fraternity so that a young generation can be brought up without any stigmas of discrimination based on the gender or sex of an individual. Maharaja's college can proudly claim as the first college in Kerala to welcome the transgender students. In all institutions, the transgender community face stigmas and discrimination. The antagonistic attitude of the society forces the transgender to discontinue their education resulting in high dropout ratio. The college, in view of shortage of their attendance in classes, initiated to identify their key issues and to bring them back to education and extra-curricular activities.




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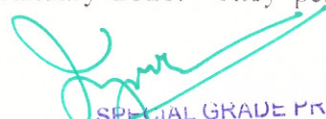
The Practice

1. Awareness talks: Women Cell in the college organises awareness programmes and lecture sessions to spark on the ways to attain gender empowerment in the society. It prepared a platform for expressing grievances and unpleasant experiences that transgender students encounter in the society. The transgender students addressed the students of 18 departments separately under the auspices of Women Cell. These programmes served as an eye opener to students, teachers and staff to acquaint with the hard realities of their life.
2. Lecture series: A series of lectures were organised to orient the campus community make the college a comfortable hub for them.
3. International Transgender Day Celebrations: The 20th of November was made memorable by honouring victims, celebrating transgender success and raising awareness of worldwide discrimination faced by them
4. Seminar: A National Seminar was organized to bring in diverse people and different issues among the transgender community to a common platform. With the enthusiastic participation of NGOs and activists, the seminar discussed issues related to human rights, law, social exclusion etc. and suggest ways to redress these issues.
5. International Transgender Day Celebrations: The 20th of November was made memorable by honouring victims, celebrating transgender success and raising awareness of worldwide discrimination faced by them.
6. Women Cell decided to celebrate a particular day in the academic year exclusively of transgender community.
7. Staff and all student functionaries celebrated International Women's day by organising Rallies, exhibitions and discussions on March 8th 2021

Evidence of Success

1. The continuing discussions could a great extent help to inculcate an gender neutral approach among the campus community. The community became aware of removing the social stigmas imposed on the transgender community.
2. Generally, the financial background of transgender students is poor and they struggle to meet means of livelihood and coerced to discontinue their courses. In this context, Women Cell under the sponsorship of some teacher offered lunch to these students in free of cost with the intention to sustain them in the campus life.
3. Maharajas under the auspices of Women Cell, Student Union and Dhwayah (Transgender movement) opened its doors to conduct a cultural programme exclusively of transgenders under the banner *Pride Maharaja's* during the month of January 2020. They performed




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dances, songs, skit, fashion show, etc. and captured the entire audience. Preparatory work to *Pride Maharajas* raised their interaction with the campus and elevated their status.

4. Using PTA fund, the college constructed unigender toilet block and it was a novel concept in campus life of Kerala and it greatly helped to inculcate the spirit of gender neutrality.

Best Practice 2

Student for Change: Capabilities to Community Empowerment-

Students with immense capabilities look for change and they can be put to the benefits of the society. Our college missions to explore the capabilities of student force for empowering the society for change.

Objectives:

1. To nurture the holistic development of students by exploring their capabilities and actively involving in community services for the progress of the disadvantaged and underprivileged sections.
2. To develop eco-friendly attitude among students for preserving natural resources and clean environment.
3. To empower the local community by improving quality of their life forging change
4. To educate the community to lead clean and plastic free life and 'avoid unsustainable practices'.
5. To cultivate a sense of compassion to the disabled.

Context

Maharaja's college imbibes the spirit of expressing opinions and extend whole-hearted support in all endeavours that lead to empowerment and change. The holistic development of a student is incomplete so long as he or she keeps away from the society. The students hailing from nuclear families of diverse background seldom get opportunities to acquaint with the real world and the society. Maharajas College, a hub of students from diverse backgrounds, find it necessary to provide opportunities to make the students to learn life beyond contours of syllabus so that students can gain transferable resources and skills.

The Practice

Students themselves engage in cleaning campus and removing waste from the campus. The students prepared cardboard pen boxes and installed at staff room and class rooms, office




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rooms and other college premises. Now the campus community have a regular practice of disposing pens to the pen boxes and the amount of litter was considerably reduced.

Numerous **blood donation groups** that donate blood to the General Hospital, Government Medical College, Ernakulam and private hospitals function among the students under the leadership of College Union and various student organisations. Moreover many student organisations conduct blood donation camps in the college.

Food packets are collected and distributed at the General Hospital, Ernakulam once a week by various student organizations through programmes such as Patheyam (Way Ahead), Pothichoru (Food from Home), which instil the priceless values of sharing and caring among the students.

Students popularised the use of LED bulbs within the campus and local community. A survey was conducted in nearby village and they replaced incandescent bulbs by LED bulbs and declared that village as Filament Free Village. They popularised use of organic products and sustainable practices in the campus and campus.

The proportion of differently abled students in the campus is 1:50. The campus community assists every differently abled student with utmost care and pleasure. The scribe club in the college helps the differently-abled students in accessing notes and materials and writing exams. The college has set up ramps, toilets with support features, digital library for them. Assistive laptops and software, e-books and e-journals are provided to them

Evidence of success

1. The involvement in diverse activities help themselves to develop their knowledge and dexterity in different contexts. These initiatives help to sensitise them about how people around the campus live and how they perceive the college.
2. The college could create a congenial environment for accommodating differently abled students in academics, arts and student politics.
3. Gender specific studies are included in the curriculum of social sciences and humanities.
4. The campus inculcates the spirit of volunteering that makes them to stand with freedom to express for the cause of justice and integrity.

The alumni of the college occupies significant posts in all the social, cultural and political spheres.



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