Best Practice 1

Title of the Practice
Research and publication

Objectives of the Practice
'No work is complete till the paper work and documentation is done'. Publishing the work done is its authentication and it reaches the masses.

The Practice

✶ **Research**

The Research Development Cell, set up to promote and document research activities, continued in its efforts to promote a culture of research. Information is given to the staff about new projects. This has helped them in the application process. Five faculty members are registered Ph.D. guides. Microbiology, Zoology and Life Science departments are recognised as PhD centres. Further, two members from the life Sciences Department, received grants under the Women Scientist Scheme of the Government of India, and one member, one member is working on a large collaborative project under the Department of Biotechnology of the Government of India. The RUSA grant too has been a great help, since nine research projects have been undertaken (with funding between 1 and 3 lakhs each) under its auspices.

Research projects have also been undertaken as part of the EXSP and EXAP programmes. These challenge gifted students and encourage them to push back the limits of their own capabilities, engaging with co-curricular subjects and expanding the boundaries of their knowledge and consciousness. This programme has continued in spite of the constraints of online functioning.

Students also took part in Aavishkar, an intercollegiate research festival organised by Mumbai University. Conducted online, like everything else, this annual event gave the students the opportunity to showcase their research work at a wider level. Students also participated in other inter-collegiate research events.

Staff members have participated in local, state-level, national and international webinars and conferences. Some have presented papers which have subsequently been published.

✶ **Documentation and publication**

→ **LUCID volume 1 (Staff)**

"LUCID- A Peer- Reviewed Research Journal" was planned out in the academic year 2020 – 21 and its first volume got published in March 2022. Sophia Lucid is curated as a National level Annual Peer Reviewed Multidisciplinary Research Journal of Sophia College (Autonomous), Mumbai, with a focus on the academic research from the fields of arts, humanities and sciences. As one of the main purposes of research is to inform action and help serve the realities within us and around us, Lucid proposes to undertake academic research on relevant current issues and to derive information for social action. Lucid invites researchers to rethink the existing paradigms, perspectives and compendium of knowledge within and across the disciplines of humanities, social sciences and physical sciences.

Therefore, here at Sophia College, it was decided to strengthen the journey into the untraversed terrains by arranging a platform for the world of inquiry and research.

The main theme of the journal was "The Globe on the move: Avenues for the Future". There were different sub-themes/ subtopics from disciplines such as Research, Education, Teaching-learning, Philosophy and Ethics, Religion, Spirituality, Ecology, Economics, Politics, Psychology, Sociology, language, literature, Physical sciences regarding health and hygiene. Research papers were invited from teachers across Universities, Colleges, and Research Institutes in India. Abstracts were submitted by teacher participants. The committee went through the abstracts and authors of the selected abstracts were asked to submit the entire research paper/article. From around 25 papers peer reviewed, 10 were accepted finally to be published after peer review. Two invited expert articles were also included in the volume apart from the editorial.

Keeping this in view, Lucid dawned to light on March 2022 with the first issue to address the pandemic scenario from an academic point of view and to further look into the avenues within the new normal. Hence the theme of the first issue Volume 1 of Lucid is "The Globe on the move: Avenues for the Future". The current issue contains eleven research articles varying in their discussions from 'social distancing and wearing face mask' to an invitation to a mask-less entry into the 'thresholds of the marginalised'.

It is printed publication and is available in our website under R&D Section, In-house Publications, sub section for all to access and read.

→ **Science Chronicles in Research and Investigation based education (SCRIBE) Volume 3, online (**Staff and students)

Abounding curiosity coupled with focused research/investigation is the crux of good science. In fact, documenting scientific literature and all scientific evidence in the form of records or chronicles is also its inherent feature. This journal encourages undergraduate as well as postgraduate students to nurture this curiosity and inculcate the necessary skills for scientific writing. It is an endeavour to offer a platform to share scientific thoughts, ideas and experiments and to instil and encourage the culture of science based on unbiased enquiry and systematic documentation. Along with the joy of knowledge dissemination, it is hoped that this journal may be a stepping stone for students to adopt a scientific temper. The goal is to broaden students' horizons and develop their interests in eclectic fields of science, therefore the interdisciplinary nature of this journal.

Evidence of Success

These research endeavours have created an enthusiasm among young faculty members of the college. So the number of abstracts submitted by in-house faculty members has considerably increased for the 2023 volume. Peer reviewers were also of high opinion about the standard of the article published.

Problems Encountered and Resources Required

The period of transition from covid scenario to offline teaching in between throw open a number of difficulties for the authors to deliver in time as held up by recovery activities in their own campuses.

Best Practice 2

Title of the Practice
Teaching Learning beyond the curriculum to ensure holistic development of students.

Objectives of the Practice
- To cater to the students who want to learn beyond the syllabus.
- To offer various options to enhance the various skillsets of the stakeholders

The Practice

Under the auspices of various Departments, a number of new credit courses were planned, developed and implemented.

- IQAC organized RUSA supported webinar on faculty development session - "Launching Add on courses: Key components" on 10th July 2021 for the In-house faculty. This webinar / session was organized and held in order to help and orient departments to start / launch Add-on courses. 44 staff members submitted the feedback form.
- The stakeholders of all the faculties and classes were familiarized with the practice through multiple orientation sessions. They were guided about the three categories of Add-on courses - Value added courses, Extracurricular credits and social outreach credits and the activities students need to do under these categories to avail themselves of additional credits.
- A total of 24 Add – on courses were offered to the students – 11 by the Humanities, 6 by the Science, 1 by the IT, 4 by the B.A.SCJ 1 By NSS and 1 by World Music Club.

Evidence of Success

The staff, from the trusted veterans to the newest additions to the departments, continued to do their best to make the education they were imparting to the students, meaningful, engaging, and inspiring, to help them cope with the ongoing strains of the year.

Addon courses carried out during the year: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1rwag2noVeHhRg0u5wG8kzfvgKq5SpH5R/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=108027670453837061052&rtpof=true&sd=true

Problems Encountered and Resources Required

The online mode of teaching imposed its own challenges, forcing the staff to learn not just the new technology, but also to rethink the pedagogy that they were employing.

Best Practice 3

Title of the Practice
Hybrid teaching - learning

Objectives of the Practice
Online and offline teaching- learning have their own advantages and disadvantages. Using both in a hybrid mode brings in a different rigor and the two way communication becomes interactive and effective.

The Practice
G-Suite and Google Classroom, as well as the Zoom platform continued to be the systems employed to take the educational efforts forward. Once again, the College was able to tap the goodwill of donors and invest in 46 Zoom licenses. This was particularly useful since it allowed to accommodate both the large classes in Junior College and in the Arts section of the Senior College, and also extend the classes beyond the 40 minute limit of the free Zoom. It also made it possible licensed Zoom membership available to staff and students for extra-curricular activities, and enable the use of all the services offered by Zoom (some of which are only accessible through the licensed stream). The College also launched its own YouTube channel, so that programmes that included more than 300 participants could be streamed live, and also be available for viewing at a later period. Other forms of social media like Instagram and Twitter were also tapped to facilitate connection between staff and students and between the students themselves.

The students could physically attend the classes, and sitting together with the peers and teachers in the classroom could also attend virtual sessions by eminent speakers, subject experts not only from India but from any corner of the world. This blend of bringing speakers into the classroom with live discussions enriched the teachers and learners both.

ICT Tools used for online teaching and learning:-
https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1QnDwD4nGAuzCgb_PsHxkEYxtz_JHMuBq/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=108027670453837061052&rtpof=true&sd=true

Evidence of Success

As blended model was followed even in IA along with teaching more students were able to complete their IAs. Students with difficulty to study in online mode were aided with offline measures adopted.

Problems Encountered and Resources Required

When one uses technology some or the other challenges do come up be it in the form of internet connectivity, speed etc.