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Corporate Social Responsibility in Management Curriculum - Stepping Stone Towards Creating Responsible Managers

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Abstract: *Background:* A vigorous and thriving development is dominant in India's pursuit for impartial, inclusive and sustainable growth. The New Companies Act, 2013 has mandate for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and it has been formally introduced now direct to the dashboard of the Boards of Indian companies.

Methods: As an MBA institution and as a faculty who stand at the cusp of academia and private industry, we wish to concentrate precisely on this aspect of CSR and recognise it not as stemming from a philanthropic impulse but from a recognition of an unequal society, where we have been privileged partially by the 'accident of birth'.

Students must be made aware of the ways in which they can and must give back to the society. Such realization must be arisen amongst all the citizens of a nation but it is the youth which needs to be informed and enthusiastic about such programs because if the leaders of tomorrow carry giving and nurturing ideas, it will gradually trickle down to the bottom of the societal pyramid. If each one can learn to give to another and support those in need, then the world would become a better place to live in.

Findings: The institute, Symbiosis Institute of Management Studies (SIMS), Pune, has successfully incorporated CSR in MBA curriculum which is a credit course since last few years. Having said this, there is still a challenge to introduce, implement and sustain the CSR work as a part of MBA curriculum due to the various challenges ranging from the student's interest, collaborating with organisations among others. In this case study the researchers will be discussing the importance of CSR to MBA students, the various challenges being faced and opportunities to make the CSR as successful implementation.

Conclusion: It has been found that the CSR has made an impact on the lives of the students who have been underdoing this activity for 30 hours as part of the curriculum.

Key words: CSR, Curriculum, MBA students, NGOs, SIMS

1. INTRODUCTION

Indian education has come a long way in last few decades in terms of inclusive education. Teaching pedagogy are no more only classroom focused, it has shifted from class to field work. Inclusiveness is not a concept limited to teaching; it is rather matter or subject of experiments. Since year 2012, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has been discussed most discussed topic among Researchers, Corporate houses, Academicians etc. The introduction of New Companies Act, 2013, has helped the CSR to be the agenda point in most of the corporate meetings, as well as among the researchers. The disclosure of CSR has been increased in Indian corporate after year 2006-2007, till that period CSR was treated as insignificant disclosure as a part of corporate governance disclosures -towards investors and general public.¹

1.1. Context

SIMS (Symbiosis Institute of Management Studies) has a club which is known as “Pranay” where the students voluntarily join this club and engage themselves into various activities concerning CSR. It was felt that there is a need to do go deeper in the CSR activities as this one odd activity does not make much difference to the objective of the CSR. This became the starting point as how the CSR activity can be made in such a way which is sustainable as well as helps the students to understand the importance of CSR. It was a deliberate decision to introduce this in the 4th Semester, just before they enter the corporate world so that they can focus on the activity which some of them might be undertaking in the company. The management was also of the opinion to “Give back to society” and nothing could have been a better than to start a CSR activity using the student as a resource in which they also learn and the management’s objective is also met.

Introduction of Corporate Social Responsibility in curriculum is a milestone for SIMS, an MBA institute. The course was introduced by keeping in mind, the very important aspect of developing future managers. The institute has not only involved faculty and students in carrying out this course as a part of curriculum but also other stakeholders. SIMS has come a long way while delivering its best efforts for not only some parts of society but also to many children who are not so privileged in terms of getting quality education and making an efforts towards clean India.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A research paper titled, “Action research as an approach to intergrading sustainability into MBA programme: an exploratory study” focussed on the Australian university. They did an extensive research on the change methodology used and the project outcomes by employing those methodologies. They also analysed the barrier which were faced while implementing this into the MBA programme. They concluded that the success of this programme was attributed mainly to the faculty participating right from the design process to the evaluation².

Another research paper titled, “Corporate social responsibility in management education: Current status in Spanish Universities found that high percentage of universities in Spain³ include CSR-related subjects in their curriculum though the way in which it is taught could be different. It can be either as specific CSR subject or as a part of the curriculum where CSR is embedded in the curriculum. They conclude that the subject is being taught by many universities but it is not fully developed as a CSR subject.

Yet another article titled, “Two approaches to curriculum development for educating for sustainability and CSR” studied the rationale and design of the corporate sustainability and CSR. They found that in most of the universities the curriculum initiatives are driven by the individual faculty rather than the university or institute. They argued that by incorporating these two subjects into the curriculum, it is possible to make the difference in the student’s learning. They have given an elaborated view of as to how different faculty and universities have brought their own pedagogy, evaluation patterns etc. into the curriculum⁴.

3. FRAMEWORK

3.1. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

CSR or Corporate Social Responsibility also called corporate conscience, corporate citizenship or sustainable responsible business. Word “Responsible Business” is a form of corporate self-regulation integrated into a business model. CSR policy functions as a self-regulatory mechanism whereby a business monitors and ensures its active compliance with the spirit of the law, ethical standards and international norms. With some models, a firm’s implementation of CSR goes beyond compliance and engages in “actions that appear to further some social good, beyond the interests of the firm and that which is required by law.

The awareness of CSR first came up in 1953 when it became an academic topic in HR Bowen’s “Social Responsibilities of the Business”. Although the idea has been around for more than half a century, there is still no clear consensus over its definition. CSR projects identified are of different types ranging from Teaching in Schools to Tree Plantation to Cleaning work to web designing/ account keeping etc. The purpose is to give the students an option to choose that CSR activity which they are suited for or having liking for. This also ensures that the students are committed as they have been allocated the work as per their preference and choice.

This is an alternative way to reach out to the different segments of the society who are not directly linked with its core activity, education. This helps and gives SIMS more visibility and SIMS is known to that section of the society which is not directly linked with its core activity.

3.2. Purpose of Education in SIMS

Social responsibility is an idea that has been of concern to mankind for many years. Over the last two decades, however, it has become of increasing concern to the business world. This has resulted in growing interaction between governments, businesses and society as a whole. In the past, businesses primarily concerned themselves with the economic results of their decisions. Corporate social responsibility is no longer defined by how much money a company contributes to charity, but by its overall involvement in activities that improve the quality of people’s lives. Corporate Responsibility has come up as a significant subject matter in the international business community and is progressively becoming a mainstream activity.

It is a field that impacts on all aspects of human existence. Professions and professionals in both advanced and emerging economies have a lot to consider in the quest to ensure that their activities do not adversely affect society or if they do; how they can best reduce the adverse impact should be of paramount importance to them in our world today. Now idea is no more of charity or philanthropic but it is beyond this, it is perceived as most planned and strategic topic or matter of today’s business.

SIMS is providing education with an objective to develop a student holistically. The whole purpose of the education and providing knowledge is not only to give a theory and produce leaders but to develop the students so that they are not only good leader, followers, entrepreneurs but also responsible human being. This is being done in SIMS in various forms such as organising events, writing articles, presenting topics in groups and all this calls for a right amount of planning, coordination and implementation.

The mission of Symbiosis International University and well as of SIMS is, “to instil sensitivity amongst the youth towards the community and environment”. Being a private university, the concern for community and environment can be regarded as the benchmark practice in the education sector.

The CSR course, which is a two credit course, strives to achieve this particular mission. This course aims to sensitize the students towards the community and environment by undertaking different projects.

This course is offered at post graduate level, to the MBA students which is part of the 4th semester credit. SIMS not only has taken effort to introduce this course in the form of a credit course, but this mission of SIU as well as of SIMS is achieved in different form. The students are SIMS make a visit to the orphanage, old age home etc. during their orientation period which is not a credit programme. This helps them to understand and realise as to how privileged they are. In addition to this, the students of SIMS also volunteer for the CSR club, known as Pranay. The CSR club is actively engaged in the activities related to the social responsibility and the students join the activity in which they are interested.

SIMS has recognised this and has taken initiatives which are in lines with the mission of the university, to make conscious efforts for the society. There are many orphanages, old age home, children of daily wage earners, and all of them live a life which is very different from our life. SIMS felt that we can make a difference in their lives by contributing a bit and which will go a long way.

The purpose of CSR course in the MBA at SIMS is to instil the sensitivity among the students towards the weaker section of the society and to give them a broader view of the society in which they live.

3.3. Responsible Management in SIMS

We the faculty and the management of SIMS is committed not only towards providing quality education but also to inculcate the values such as moral value, responsibility, etiquettes commitment among others. These things cannot be much taught in the traditional class room style and a different approach is to be taken towards this. We take conscious efforts to implant, nurture and develop these values and skill in the students of SIMS. The institute provides a platform to the students ranging from academic related cells and club to media to dance & music to social responsibility. When a student is engaged in one of this activity, he/she learns much more by doing this and this helps them to not only behave responsibly but become a good human being who is concerned.

The responsible management means a lot to the institute which does not focus only providing education but trying to develop a student holistically so that a student is able to make a difference, where the moto of SIMS is “To make a difference”. The two years in SIMS and the overall learning and development of student make him a responsible managers where he is not only responsible only to himself but also to the family in which he lives, the company in which he works, the society to which he belong and to the nation he serves.

3.4. Other courses/Activities

The institute endeavours to make the students socially responsible and we are aware of the fact that this can't be taught in a day or two. There has to be a continuous and conscious effort from both the sides of the stakeholders so as to get the desired result.

3.4.1. During orientation: The students get a feel of the CSR in the very first month of the joining of SIMS. The orientation programme of SIMS is very unique in terms of its duration, conduct, and outcome. The orientation programme lasts for approximately 15 days and towards the closure of the orientation programme, each student is taken to different NGOs such as Maher...where they spend time with orphans, old people. They play various games with them, and engage them. This gives them a real feel of the other part of the society. We have been doing this since year 2012 and the general feedback of the students is they get touched and few of them take a pledge also to give back to the society at that very moment. The children at these NGOs also get very much attached to the student that they don't leave them. We have seen many students crying at those NGOs and this make them feel as to how much privileged they are. All this cannot be taught in the class room by showing pictures or telling them about those NGOs.

3.4.2. CSR club-Pranay: We have a CSR club, known as Pranay which was instituted in the year 2005. The club engages into various activities such as cloth donation drive, spreading awareness about cancer, conducting workshop for safety of women, blood donation, along with connecting various NGOs. These NGOs are taking care of orphans, old age people to name a few.

The students of MBA join this club as soon as they start their journey of MBA, as volunteer. The Pranay club has 6 as core team members which plan and execute various activities. At the time of implementation of drive such as blood donation drive other volunteers also join not only for implementation but also for donation of blood.

Pranay engages the students round the year where the club brings the children who are underprivileged to the campus on occasion such as 26th January, 15th August, and 25th December. During these visits the children cut the cake, play various games and watch movie in the auditorium of SIMS. All this is planned, executed and implemented by a group of around 40-50 students. All this gives them a real feel of the world outside the home, institute and company. This makes them also feel that they should do a bit to make this part of the society, a better place to live in.

3.5. Profile of the Faculty and students

The entire batch of 309 students of 2013-15 was allocated different NGOs and the breakup of the same is given in table 1. The figures shows the gender wise profiles of the 2 batches which have been engaged in the CSR activity. The ratio of male to female SIMS is 1.12:1 and 1.17: 1 for the batch 2012-14 (figure 1) and 2013-15 (figure 2) respectively. This clearly shows that the CSR activity is not being pursued by a particular gender and is very common across genders.

The majority of the students who take admission in SIMS are from engineering and technology background, as given figure 3 and figure 4. The exact percentage of this is 52% and 54% respectively for the year 2012-14 and 2013-15 batches. This is followed by B.Com. and BBA. The trend has been more or

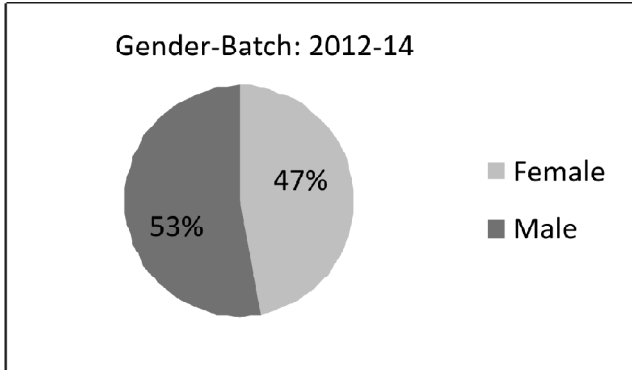


Figure 1: Gender (2102-14)

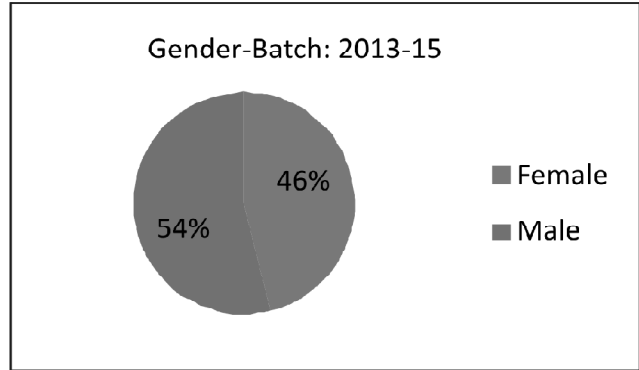


Figure 2: Gender (2103-15)

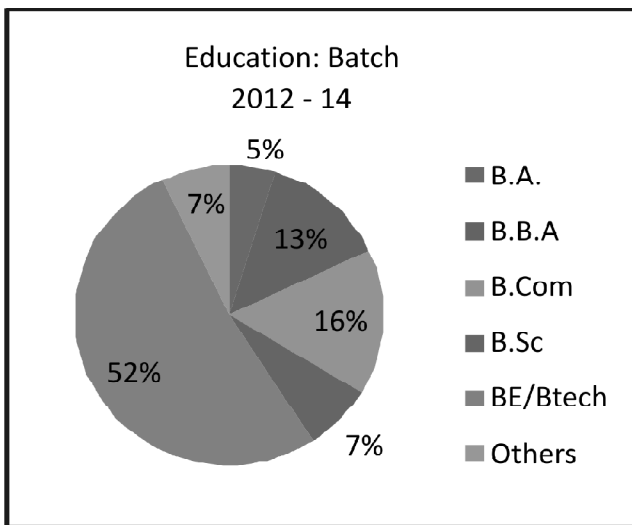


Figure 3: Education (2102-14)

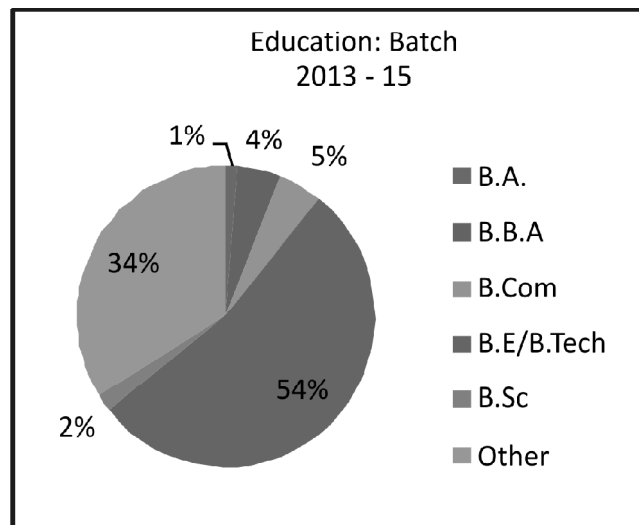


Figure 4: Education (2103-15)

less same for many years. Some of the students also come from the pharmaceutical, dental surgery, architecture to name a few. Thus the students of SIMS represent a well-diversified group of students. This diversity also helps the students not only to learn and give to society but also to learn from each other.

Faculty of SIMS has experience from different field such as marketing, operations, finance, human resource management, corporate governance, general management, communication to name a few. Each faculty is assigned a group of students to mentor for their CSR activity.

It has been observed that the female students are more willing to go the activities which are relate to the teaching, coaching, projects etc. while the male students are more inclined towards activities related to the orphanages, technical work etc. All the faculty members act as the guide/mentor for the students so based on the number of students, each faculty end up getting 10-15 students to mentor for their CSR work.

The figure 5 shows the work experience of the students who join MBA. Majority of the students who join MBA are fresher's as this is visible from above graph where 55% and 52% are fresher with 0 work experience. Very few students have work experience which is more than 36 months or 3 years, which is 4%

Table 1
Allocation of Students to NGOs, Hospital etc.

Allocation of Students- Batch 2013-15

S.No.	Organisation / NGOs.	No. of Students
1	Police Line	119
2	Range Hills	20
3	Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan	20
4	Aundh School	20
5	Ashraya	20
6	Tara Mobile Creche	20
7	Advanced Tech Services	7
8	Saavali	15
9	Aakansha	13
10	Prime Animal Care Project	4
11	Prime Media Development of NGO	6
12	Chandvad Project	4
13	Cipla	15
14	Jahagir Hospital	6
15	Connecting Burn Ward	6
16	Sassoon Hospital	14
	Total	309

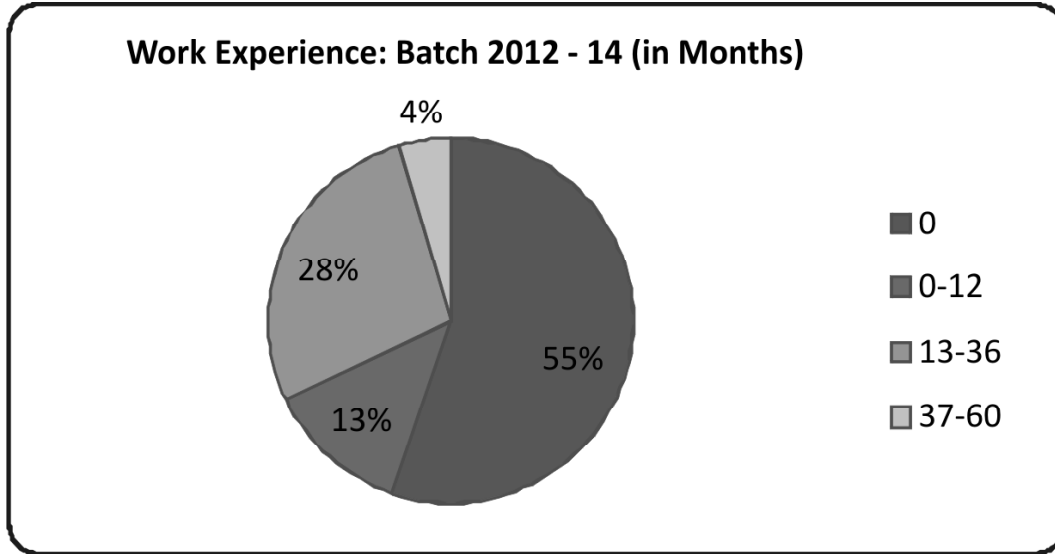


Figure 5: Work Experience of students -Batch 2012-14

in the case of both the batches. A moderate number of students join post work as they find that not much promotion opportunities are available without a master's degree or management degree. These students join MBA programme after working in a company for a period ranging from 1 month to 36 months (3 years) and this percentage is sizable portion of the total students. This is 41% in the case of batch 2013-14 and it is 44% for the batch 2013-15 (figure 6).

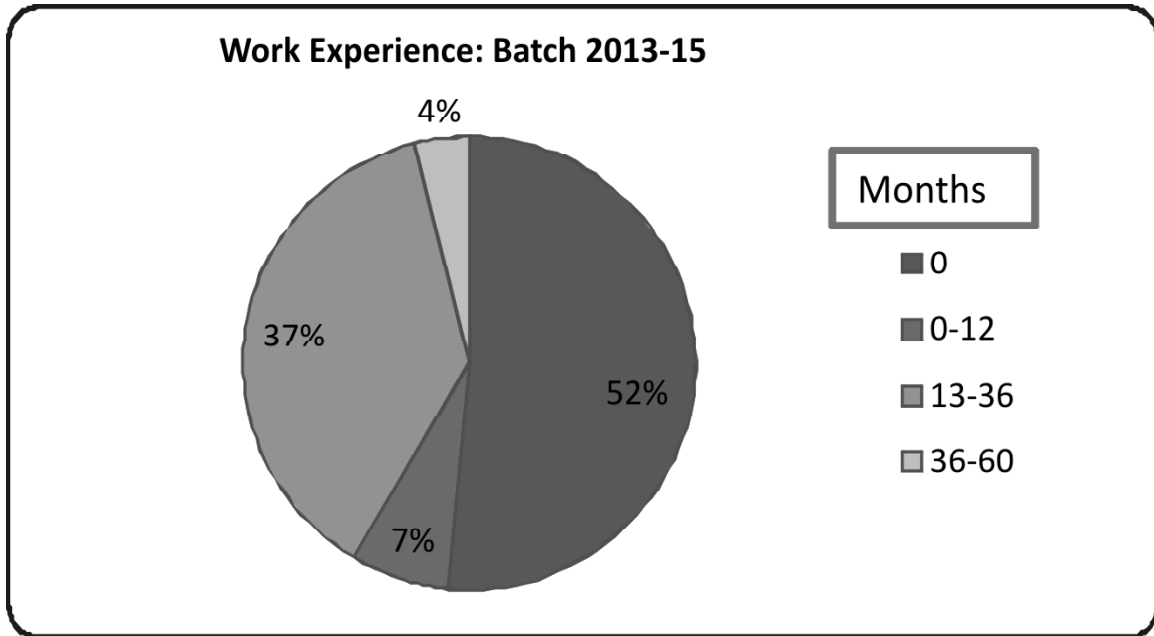


Figure 6: Work Experience of students –Batch 2013-15

The work experience of the students, going for the CSR work, help them in understanding the importance of CSR. These experienced students have seen in their respective organisation as to why CSR should be undertaken. They also understand the importance of the CSR in the wake of the new Companies Act, 2013 which mandates the spending on the CSR. This way, the work experience facilitates the start of the CSR work and these students understand themselves and are thus encouraged for it.

The gender and educational background of the students also help the students in undertaking the various CSR activities. The CSR is not an activity which is to be solely undertaken by the male, who can go the field and do the work. The gender ratio, which is approximately 50:50, gives an equal opportunity to all the students to take up this project. The institute takes due care and caution in assigning the work, NGOs, hospitals etc. based on the gender. Female students are not sent very far off places, while this may not be true in the case of male students.

The figure 7 shows the region to which the batch of 2012-14 belongs and figure 8 shows the same data for batch 2013-15. The SIMS students are an example of Unity in diversity where the students come from states such as Assam, Kerala among others. A large chunk of students come from within Maharashtra which is 24% and 27% respectively for both the batches, followed by Delhi.

3.6. Expectation of the course

SIMS expects that once the students complete this 30 hours course, they should be able to connect to the society in a better way, than they could do earlier. This should also help them to realize as to how privileged they are in comparison to others and this feeling should foster an attitude of gratefulness towards the almighty. This also brings in the compassion for the less fortunate people, living on the same planet with us.

It is also expected that the students does not only completes the course and forget it about. We continuously try to make this activity a life-learning experience where the students should be able to practise

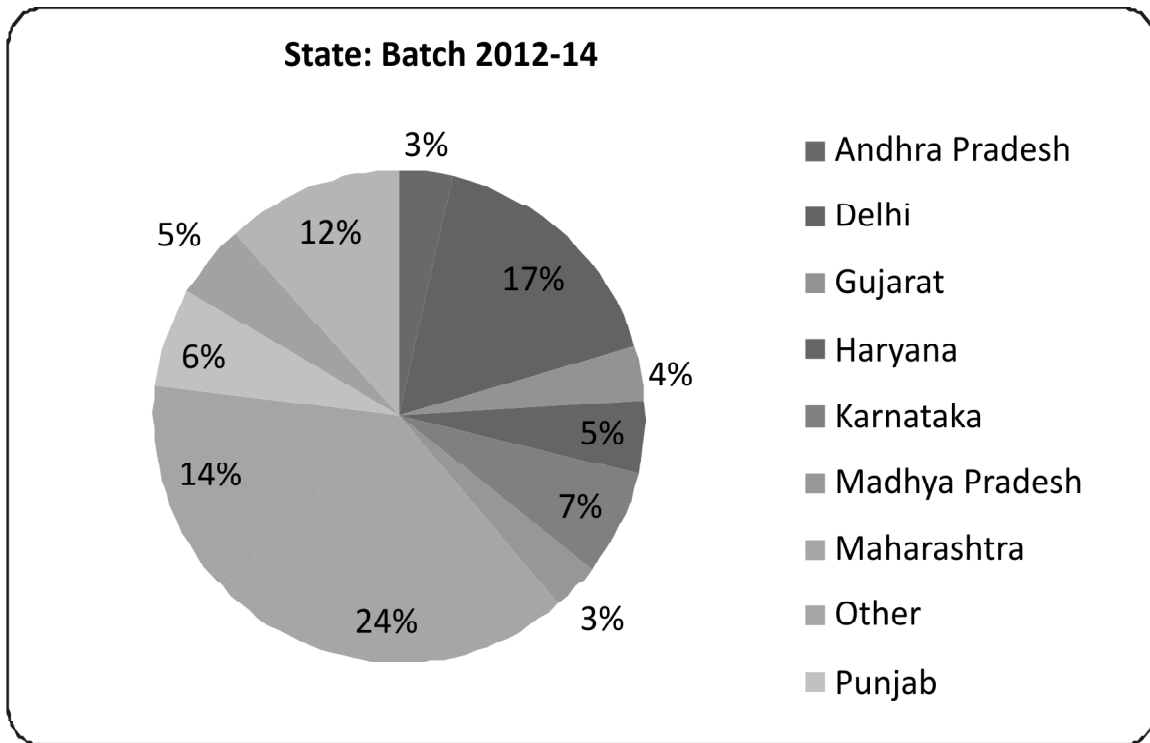


Figure 7: Native state of students – Batch 2012-14

it beyond the academics. The students should be able to become a better person by way of understanding of the hidden part of the society.

4. THE DESIGN, IMPLEMENTATION AND OUTCOMES OF THE COURSE

4.1. Objective of the course

1. To foster a sense of responsibility toward the society in which they live
2. To make the students realize as to how privileged they are
3. To help them connect with lower strata of the society

4.2. Methods and learning material used

In order to impart the knowledge and understand of the CSR work a mix of various learning methods are being used which help the student not only to complete the course but also help in terms of great learning. The students are given a complete briefing about the objectives, outcomes, methodology of the CSR right in the beginning of course and all the doubts are clarified so as to ensure that there is no ambiguity whatsoever, when the course kicks off. After the briefing session, 2 class room sessions are arranged to make them aware of the importance of the CSR in the real life as well as in the corporate life. Once this is done, the students are allowed to go the field and start their CSR work. So the entire course has a mix of class-room and field visits. The students have to meet the faculty mentor after 5, 10 and 15 visits. This is to ensure that if there is any problem either in terms of the work, distance, project that can be taken care.

Back in the institute a robust attendance system to ensure that the students physically performed all their duties and learnt the maximum from their work was in place in order to emphasize on the seriousness of this subject/activity. Few of the faculty mentors had a what's up group of the students and each student was required to take a photograph and send to the faculty as soon as he finishes the visit. This ensured that the student physically go to the organisations assigned to them and perform the duty.

4.2.1. Modality of the conduct

The CSR as a credit course was introduced in the curriculum in the year, 2013 for the batch of 2012-14. The CSR is a part of 4th semester, 2 credit courses. This course is a compulsory course where each student is required to undertake an activity of his choice, from the pool of the activities available to the college. Typically the CSR work starts as soon as the students enter the 4th semesters. The course runs along with the placement activity. The students go to the organisation, when there is no company on the campus for the placement or not related to their domain.

There is a core committee which does the following:-

- Fixing the organisation for the CSR works
- Giving the complete list of the organisations and type of work to be done, to the students
- Collecting choices from the students
- Doing the final allocation of organisation to the students
- Allocating the students to the faculty mentors
- Kick-off the project

The core committee is responsible for getting in touch with the NGOs and organisation to discuss and finalize the requirement of the CSR work.

As a generic approach to include CSR as a part of the academic programme and curriculum, we at institute, took the following steps as mentioned in figure 9 –

- **The conception of generic knowledge:** This step was well thought of stage. One can help overcome the gap between academic and practical knowledge. This can be achieved via the medium of awareness creating articles, videos and presentations emphasising on the importance of CSR and the dire need in the society for it.
- **A methodological framework** For developing knowledge capturing practitioners' experience, which integrates the notion of generic knowledge. This can be achieved via the use of cases, interview clips and inspirational lectures by people and representatives of organizations which run and/or support the CSR initiatives.
- **Execution and monitoring:** The students are asked to get in touch with the organisation/ NGOs to understand the requirement and start the work from the second week of the 4th Semester. The execution will vary from NGOs to NGOs where some of them would ask the students to create a marketing plan, while other say to teach the students and some other may ask the students to promote their Facebook page. So as per the requirement of the organisations/ NGOs works starts.

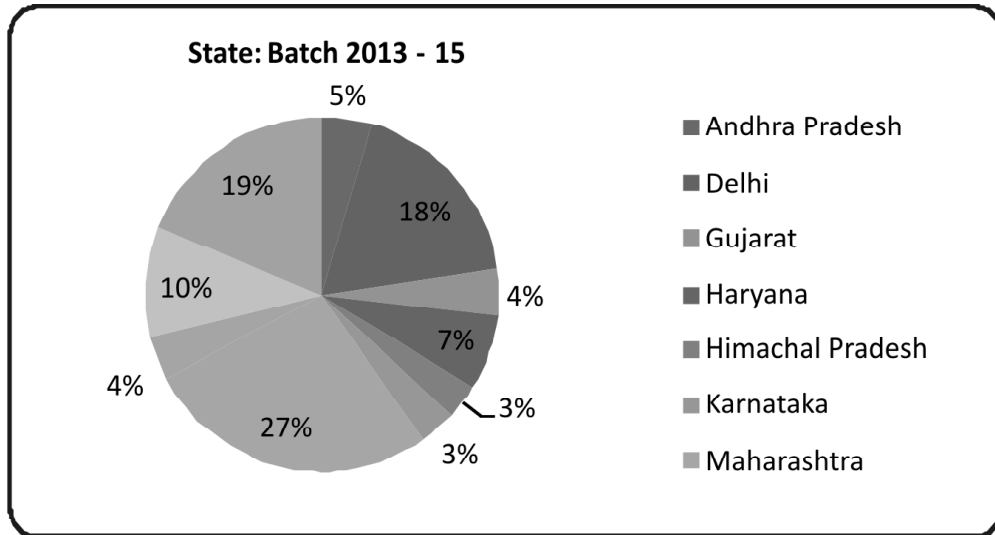


Figure 8: Native state of students – Batch 2013-15

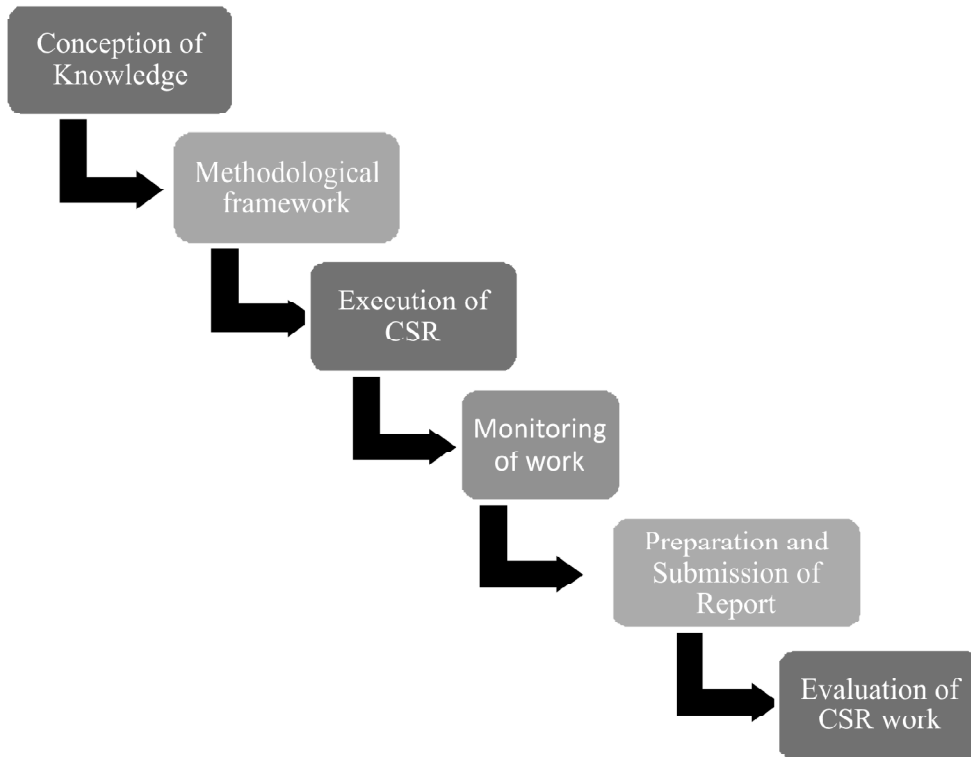


Figure 9: Steps for introducing and managing CSR in SIMS curriculum

There have been deviation in terms of the work allocation, number of hours, visits etc. which have been dealt on case to case basis so as to complete the work yet not compromising on the CSR work. As a standard, each student is required to complete 15 visits of 2 hours each, totalling up to 30 hours over a period of 2 and half month. The CSR work is an individual work, not a team

activity. The students are required to report to the faculty at regular interval so as to check the visit taking place as well as the activity taking place.

However, not all the students and organisations are same. Some of the students have a feeling that why CSR should be a credit course and they have to complete it, but the number of student of this opinion are very less. Similarly there were some organisations where the work was to be done by way of visiting hospitals, schools, orphanages but the actual work allotted was very different. In this case, SIMS won't be continuing with those organisations/NGOs in the future.

All said and done, the CSR, 2 credit courses, has been able to achieve its purpose, to instil sensitivity among the students. The students have become more sensitive to the underprivileged people, after doing this CSR and have developed a sense of feeling "Give back to the society", which is a great learning and which will be with them forever. These cases or field work can vary from institute to institute based on their curriculum, convenience and the credits they would like to provide to the course.

- **Preparation of report:** After well organised and planned field visits, important activity carried out by students which are preparation and submission of report. CSR being the part of curriculum needs systematic and well managed and guided drafting to keep a record for future reference. Faculty in-charge shares the format of report and submission guidelines which helps students to prepare proper report. Concern for environment is taken care here by avoiding pages while submitting. Most of the submissions are in soft copies which would help students and mentor to locate the work progress.

The students are required to submit:-

- Internal Report
- Final Report

Internal Report should have

- (a) This report carries certain marks and need be submitted as a soft copy to the Faculty Mentor.
- (b) Minimum one page per visit
- (c) All 15 visits need be covered in this Internal Report
- (d) This report need be submitted within ten days of completion of their final visit (15th visit)

Final Report should have

- (a) This report carries certain marks and has to be submitted as a hard copy.
- (b) Last date of submission of this report is also given to the students in advance.

Evaluation of Work

After filed visits and report submission, evaluation work is carried out by faculty mentor and panel group. This exercise makes students conscious about the work done to be presented in systematic format and defend the same in front of faculty members.

Evaluation phase makes CSR work more professional in nature. Most of the faculty members at SIMS have given positive feedback about the carried out work under SIMS curriculum as well as for VIVA and report work evaluation also.

The entire CSR project is of 2 credits, 100 marks and a logical break up of 100 marks have been done on the various parameters. These parameters includes, submission of the internal report, meeting and apprising the faculty mentor regularly, preparing and submitting the final report, viva voce.

The way it is being adopted in SIMS is based on number of factors such as total credit requirements, association with NGOs, and involvement of students and of course this will vary from institute to institute depending upon the external environment in which they operate as well as the micro environment of the institute.

4.3. Assignment of students to different organisations/activities

Faculty members are assigned as mentors to the students for any assistance during the field visit. Students were divided in the following manner among the CSR associated organisations

From a host of CSR performing institutions, a healthy mix of educational institutions work, hospital work, NGO work and Police Lines work was allotted to the students. The division of students was roughly according to the following table:-

Table 1 gives an overview of the allocation of the students to the different organisations, NGOs, hospitals etc. These also include old age home, orphanages also and type of activities performed in these organisation range from doing teaching, maintaining books, designing website, promoting their organisation to name a few. These vast arrays of activities undertaken by the students, not only gives them to test their skills in doing the CSR but also to indulge in the activity which they like the most. All this ultimately leads to the results which are many times unexpected even by the students, who are doing these activities.

5. SYMBIOSIS INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES (SIMS) - CSR PROJECTS AT A GLANCE

Following details of few organisations are listed to highlight the significance of work done during CSR field work under CSR curriculum. This gives an idea as to how these are being carried out and what is the impact of these activities on the students, and all the other stakeholders.

5.1. Organisation Name: Mata Ramabai Ambedkar Prathamik Vidyalaya, Aundh, Pune

➤ Objective

The students' endeavour through this CSR project was to create a difference in the life of these children so that not only they are able to learn English but also understand life in a different perspective. The perspective of open, free minded individuals was shared with them, giving them a new look at their own life.

➤ Methodology Used

- Students of SIMS conducted an ice breaking session with students of the school asking them to introduce themselves in English. This gave them a fair idea about the level of knowledge they have and what was the communication level.

- The students were not able to introduce themselves even with basic sentences. Hence, they focused on English speaking, pronunciations, spellings and basic sentence formation that would help them.
- In order to assess the written English abilities, they introduced a very basic grammar exercise to evaluate what can be done. The students were found to be lacking in basic grammar as well and thus the area of focus was on talking in English along with some grammar.
- Before each class, they focused on revising the previous class's work. They then continued with a dictation exercise, whereby 10-15 basic words are given to students to write their correct spelling and explain their meaning to the class. There was a lot of apprehension with students since they never spoke in front of an audience, but after a little motivation they started volunteering to get up and speak.

5.2. Organisation: Tara Creche – IBM Infocity

- Objective
 - To provide basic computer training to children staying at TMCP
 - To help out to organize the annual night camp of two days
- Methodology used

Phase1: Computer Education

- Analysis: To find out the present state of computer familiarity by conducting pre-test
- Planning: Preparing lesson plan & dividing it into number of hours
- Execution: Conducting classes through videos, & using blackboard, then providing hand on experience on computer & laptop

Phase 2: Annual Camp

- Planning of resources, & activities to be carried out during camp
- Execution of all the activities planned

6. REACTION OF STUDENTS

The students were very much hesitant to take up the CSR in the beginning as they were not confident enough that whether they will be able to perform the duties as well as little amount of reluctance was due to the fact that this is not very important. Once they started the CSR and were allocated different projects, their entire perspective about the CSR changed. The responses of the students have been collected on the CSR activity done by them, but that can't be shared due to the confidentiality of the information.

They felt so nice to teach the students and especially when the students came back to them and thanked them for imparting the knowledge, they felt very nice. They also realized that they could do this. In some of the CSR projects, they were to raise the funds for the NGOs, because of their communication and other skills. This made them feel that it is the just the start, which is difficult otherwise they were capable to do most of the activities on which they were put.

They also realised as to how privilege they are and actually thanked the institute and the faculty members to show them, the other side of the society.

7. CHALLENGES IN DESIGNING AND IMPLEMENTING THE COURSE

While implementing CSR, at SIMS we realised that there are many hurdles or challenges that we faced initially. The first and the foremost task, was to plan and tie-up with the corporates for CSR activities. Once this hurdle is crossed and we have arranged an organisation for each of the students, another set of challenges come in the due course and the important ones are:-

- (a) **Reluctance:** The students have reluctance towards the CSR activities and many a times are seen asking as to why it is part of the curriculum. They also are often heard talking that they are here to learn management, not the CSR. The example would be that student counter why do I need to go to a blind school and teach the student as I am not going to do this activity in my future, ever. This becomes difficult to take them towards CSR

They are required to be re-oriented towards the CSR by making them understand the importance of CSR in the daily life as well as from a broader perspective.

- (b) **Scheduling:** the field visits was the most difficult task faced by SIMS academics. The objective was to ensure that 30 hours of curriculum is divided in such a manner where quality and time of visit can be balanced. The scheduling of the visit has to be such that the students don't miss their classes. Presently the time table is prepared based on the availability of the teachers and this gives a little room for CSR so students have to go to NGOs or organisation either in early morning or in the afternoon. This becomes difficult to manage from their perspective as they can't miss classes nor CSR.

One can make the time table in such a manner where some of the hours are allocated only for CSR so that there is no compromise on the CSR work and the academic front.

- (c) **Language:** Most of the students were not having background of local language that is spoken i.e. Marathi. Another issue was faced specially in various schools; students did not know either English or Hindi. The mid way out was then found was to take help of video and some charts to explain the concepts and to communicate with students

- (d) **Tie-up with organisations / NGO/ School :** During CSR work , at SIMS institute faced the challenging task to accommodate more than 300 students fewer organisation and again to leverage the expectations of organisations from students and students from organisations

- (e) **Distance:** few NGOs were far from the SIMS hostels and many students had to travel from the hostels to NGOs offices or centres, considering that they had to travel at least 15 times and neither the college was going to give the conveyance nor the NGO, this was a matter of concern. Some of the NGOs like Green thumb which is working towards the preservation of water, is 15 km from SIMS. The students faced the challenge in commuting and SIMS faced the challenge in terms of budget.

- (f) **Duration:** Many NGOs are willing to tie up with SIMS but not ready to go ahead with 30 hours. Their requirement is a bit long than 30 hours but the students have the limitation as this is a part of the entire curriculum.

These are the challenges which are being faced by SIMS however; these would differ based on number of factors such as organisations/NGOs, type of students, commitment from the institute etc. There is no standard solution to the each of the challenge and one has to deal with it, on case to case basis.

8. WAYS AND MEANS TO FACE THE CHALLENGES

Since the course is being running successfully from the last two years, as an institute we have learnt as to how to face these challenges.

- The institute is now looking for the NGOs school, majorly which are nearby so that it becomes easy for the students to go and perform their CSR work. It is always not possible to do so also. In cases the institute has to go for the NGOs which are a bit far away, in that case the students have been asked to collaborate and take a shared vehicle which will be cost effective.
- The scheduling part is being managed in way that the majority of the classes are scheduled in the morning and the afternoons are kept off for few days. In this way the students can go to the organisations and complete their visit without worrying about the class and the attendance part.
- Over time, we have been able to convince the organisations that this CSR is for short term, 30 hours and not for long-term. We have been able to tie up with most of the organisation on this front, while few which did not agree, were not taken up.
- Over the time, reluctance of the students has sort of disappeared. This has happened due to two reasons:-
 - o Firstly, they are aware that CSR is part of curriculum and no amount of cribbing will have any effect, so they have to do it, if they want to complete their MBA
 - o Secondly, implementation of new companies Act, 2013, has made the job of SIMS easier as now the students are aware that the company has to spend 2% of its net profit on CSR activities and realised the importance.

9. WAY FORWARD

The CSR activity as a credit course has a long way to go in order to make a huge impact not only to the society but also to all the stakeholders who are involved in the entire process. The two year long journey has been a learning experience for the institute as well as for the students as we know now as to how to motivate the students for the same and make a difference.

The institute aims to increase the number of the organisation with which it associates itself in terms of CSR activity so as to increase the type of work and this ultimately will help the students to more options as presently the activities as well as the organisation are limited to some 30+. This will also increase the visibility of the institute as the institute will be known to those NGOs, organisation which are not a part of its value chain.

The future challenges would in the form of that some of the students might be asked to join the company early i.e. around mid-December, or early January. How these students will be completing their CSR activity? Moreover, in order to have a deeper impact, the CSR activity can be a long activity, spread

over two semesters so that the students develop a sense of commitment and responsibility toward the activity assigned to them.

The problems would always be there and the students will have to learn as to how to manage those challenges and get best out of it. The focus of the institute would be to provide a constructive and productive CSR work for all the stakeholders, despite of all the associated challenges. Managing those problems, yet producing the results, will also give the students, learning, though in a different way.

We should be dreaming of a day when the output of this CSR course is the one where the students volunteer for any CSR activity coming up to them in their life. When the CSR is being done on a regular basis, by the SIMS students, we also hope to make a mark in the NGOs, schools, hospitals, and other organisations where we carry out these activities. There are certain NGOs which are through the companies such as Infosys where the institute goes to the company and then the company engages those students in their NGOs.

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