Empowering Minds, Transforming Lives...

BHARATA MATA SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

BHARATA MATA COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), THRIKKAKARA

"THE COMMUNIQUE"

NEWS LETTER OF BHARATA MATA SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

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The Communiqué is the monthly newsletter of Bharata Mata School of Social Work, created by MSW students as a student-led initiative. It highlights the extension and outreach activities of the institution, the achievements of the department and students, and reflections from students. The newsletter also provides a summary of important day observances, seminars, webinars, and faculty development programs (FDPs) conducted in the previous month. Through this initiative, we aim to share updates, celebrate accomplishments, and keep everyone informed about the dynamic activities of our school.

UNARVU - ARIKE PALLIATIVE CARE WORKSHOP



The Bharata Mata School of Social Work, organized Arike Palliative Care Awareness Workshop on 9th September 2025 at the BMSSW Management Hall. The session was conducted from 1:30 pm to 3:30 pm as part of the academic orientation and field exposure for First Year BSW students. The workshop was facilitated by two resource persons: Mr. Donal Marshal, Chief Networking Officer, Arike Palliative Care, and Mr. Karik Mohan K.S., Social Worker, Arike Palliative Care.

The workshop was an enriching learning experience that sensitized the First Year BSW students to the values of compassion and service, while also equipping them with a Government-recognized certification that adds value to the social work trainee's academic growth and future professional practice in social work.

WORKSHOP ON ACADEMIC WRITING



On 10th September 2025, a workshop on Academic Writing was held from 1:45 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., facilitated by Dr. Nidhin K.P, Junior Research Associate, Labour Market Research Facility, School of Management and Labour Studies, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai.

The facilitator highlighted the value of effective communication, drawing distinctions between written and oral forms, and explained how both are essential for academic growth. He introduced the rhetorical principles of pathos, logos, and ethos, making students realize that academic writing is not just about presenting facts, but also about engaging emotions, logic, and credibility.

GENDER AUDIT SEMINAR



The Bharata Mata School of Social Work, Bharata Mata College, Thrikkakara, organized a Skill Development Workshop on Gender Audit on 19th September 2025, in collaboration with The Gender Park, Calicut. The session was led by two distinguished resource persons: Dr. Divya Kodoth, Resource Person, Gender Park, Calicut, and Dr. Peeja Rajan, Kerala State Coordinator, UN Women. Second Year BSW students participated in the workshop, gaining practical exposure and valuable insights into gender audit practices. The workshop, held from 10:30 AM to 4:30 PM, provided an in-depth understanding of gender audit as a tool for assessing gender mainstreaming in organizations and institutions.

The workshop consisted of two parts. The morning session provided an orientation on gender audit, highlighting its importance and application in educational institutions. The resource persons explained how gender audits serve as a tool to promote inclusivity, ensure equal opportunities, and identify institutional gaps. In the afternoon, participants engaged in interactive group activities, including the preparation of a sample gender audit report and its presentation within groups. These activities encouraged teamwork, critical thinking, and practical exposure to the audit process. The workshop concluded with an individual assessment to measure participants' understanding of gender audit, ensuring that the key concepts were clearly grasped and could be applied in their respective contexts. Overall, the workshop served as a valuable platform for fostering awareness and strengthening commitment towards building a more gender-inclusive society.

ARIKE PALLIATIVE CARE FIELD EXPOSURE

As part of the trainee's community practical, the First Year BSW students of Bharata Mata School of Social Work visited the Arike Palliative Care Unit. A total of 16 students participated in the program. The trainees were divided into groups and accompanied the palliative care team during home visits to patients. During these visits, the students interacted with patients and their families, observed the care process, and gained first-hand experience of how the palliative care team functions in the community.

This field exposure gave students valuable insights into the role of social workers in palliative care, particularly in offering emotional support, advocacy, and resource mobilization. The experience helped them connect classroom learning with real-life practice and deepened their sense of empathy, responsibility, and commitment towards vulnerable populations.

OSADARI: BSW RURAL SENSITIZATION CAMP

The BSW First Semester students of Bharata Mata School of Social Work organized a five-day Rural Sensitization Camp at Poolakkal, Mananthavadi, Wayanad, in association with the Gothradeepam Aadivasi Grandhalayam, from 21st to 25th September 2025. The camp turned out to be a beautiful, enriching, and memorable experience for all the students.

The Rural Sensitization Camp in Wayanad featured five days of enriching activities, including cultural programs, tribal interactions, NGO sessions, environmental initiatives, and trekking. Students explored Wayanad's geography, ecology, and heritage through sessions, community engagement, and field visits, gaining deeper insight into rural life, sustainability, and indigenous traditions.

The camp was truly a lifetime memorable and enriching experience for the BSW students, fostering a deeper understanding of rural realities and tribal cultures. It not only strengthened their bond with the community but also broadened their perspectives as budding social workers. The collective spirit of learning, service, and cultural exchange made OSADARI 2025 a remarkable chapter in their academic journey.



On the second day, the students worked on creating a vegetable garden at Nehru U.P. School, Valliyoorkkavu. Later, an interactive session on Wild Animals and Wayanad was led by Mr. Muneer Tholppetti, followed by cultural programs and an evaluation meeting. The third day offered the rare opportunity to interact with Padmasree Cheruvayal Raman (Ramettan), who shared his wisdom about the rich heritage of farming and Kurichya traditions. In the evening, students attended a vibrant session where representatives of Rawla, Paniya, and Kurichya tribes explained their cultural and linguistic diversities, accompanied by traditional tribal songs and performances such as Muram Kali, Drama, and Villadichan Paattu.

On the fourth day, the students visited the Kurichya Illam, met the tribal head (Mooppan), and learned about Illam traditions, Kaavu, weapons, food culture, and farming practices. Later, sessions were led by representatives of NGOs including Totem NGO, Keystone Foundation, and Mahila Samakyam Society, who also invited the students for internships. The evening was marked by cultural programs like Bhoothappattu, street dramas, dances, and songs, culminating in a lively campfire.

The final day included a trekking expedition to Muneeshwaran Kunnu, where Forest Officer Mr. James explained its history and ecological significance. After a meaningful trekking experience, students engaged in cleaning the library and surroundings. The camp concluded with an official valedictory function and evaluation, after which students returned to the campus.

LIFE SKILL TRAINING BY BSW STUDENTS

The Second Year BSW students of Bharatha Mata School of Social Work conducted a Life Skills Training Programme for school students at Naipunya School, Thrikkakkara. The program commenced with an orientation session conducted by the school principal, providing guidance on class management and session planning. A total of 18 students participated. Following the orientation, the students divided into pairs and entered the classrooms. The sessions began with ice-breaking activities to create a friendly and engaging atmosphere.

As interaction increased, each team conducted activities focusing on specific life skills such as creative thinking, communication, decision-making, and problem-solving. These activities encouraged active participation and practical application of the skills.

The session concluded with reflections from both the BSW students and school children, allowing them to share their experiences and learning outcomes. This exercise helped the students enhance their facilitation skills and practical social work competencies while promoting life skills development among the sixth-grade students. Overall, the program provided valuable hands-on experience in conducting life skills sessions, fostering engagement, creativity, and communication among the school children.



IN SOLIDARITY WE RESIST: OUR FIGHT, OUR RIGHT INTERNATIONAL SAFE ABORTION DAY OBSERVANCE



The Bharata Mata School of Social Work, in collaboration with Common Health, organized a half day program on 26th September 2025 to observe International Safe Abortion Day. The event, titled “In Solidarity We Resist: Our Fight, Our Right!”, was conducted at the BMSSW Seminar Hall from 2:30 PM to 4:30 PM. The participants were Second Year BSW students. The expert talk was delivered by Dr. Jithesh Veetilakath, MBBS, MPH, Epidemiologist and Public Health Specialist, who also serves as Deputy Director of Health Services and Executive Director of the State Health Systems Resource Centre, Kerala.

MSW THIRD SEMESTER SPECIALISATION BASED INTERNSHIP

The MSW students of the 2024–26 batch successfully completed their third semester specialization-based internship in September across 14 reputed NGOs and hospitals in India. The internship provided students with valuable practical exposure and insights into various areas of social work. Through their active participation in field activities, they strengthened their professional skills and deepened their understanding of community service and social development practices

Internship Experience at Snehasadan, Mumbai



Snehasadan, Mumbai, provides shelter and education for homeless and destitute children. MSW trainees Angel Varghese and Ananya Jose observed children's behavioural patterns and promoted positive growth through art therapy sessions. The activity "Bubbling" helped children express emotions and reflect on personal experiences. The internship gave trainees valuable exposure to child welfare practices and the importance of emotional care and rehabilitation.

Internship Experience at Karunya Trust, Mumbai

Karunya Trust, Mumbai, supports marginalized communities through education, healthcare, and livelihood programs. Trainees Hima Krishnan K. P., Aleeta Godfrey, and Emy Mary George worked with the Gyansathi Project, teaching spoken English, computer skills, and adult literacy. They also conducted mock interviews and supported community health initiatives. The experience provided deep insights into urban poverty and strengthened their understanding of social development practices.

Internship Experience at Rajasthan Samgrah Kalyan Sansthan (RSKS), Ajmer

RSKS, Ajmer, works for women's rights, education, and rural development. MSW trainees Muneera Asharaf, Nikhila K. S., and Alen Shilson organized a six-day life skill camp for children and youth at Bhantwa village. The camp focused on communication, self-awareness, and decision-making skills. The internship helped trainees understand rural development challenges and the importance of empowering communities through participatory learning.



Internship Experience at BluePoint Org., Kerala

BluePoint Org, Kochi, promotes child rights and juvenile justice through rehabilitation and counselling. Trainee Maria Annechien Boonstoppel participated in casework, group sessions, and home visits with children in conflict with the law. She also observed court proceedings and community programs. The internship enhanced her understanding of child protection, rehabilitation processes, and the role of social workers in juvenile justice systems.



MSW THIRD SEMESTER SPECIALISATION BASED INTERNSHIP

Internship Experience at Butterflies, New Delhi

Butterflies, New Delhi, works for children in street situations. Trainees Aksa Antony and Anjaly A conducted awareness sessions at the Chandni Chowk contact point. Aksa discussed child rights, while Anjaly taught hygiene and proper handwashing techniques. The sessions were interactive and engaging. The experience helped trainees understand child rights education and the importance of empowering vulnerable children through awareness and participation.



Internship Experience at Father Muller's Hospital, Mangaluru

Father Muller's Hospital, Mangaluru, is known for quality healthcare and training. Trainees Arundhathi Regi and Navya Saji conducted awareness sessions in the De-addiction Ward on "Alcoholism – A Treatable Disease" and "Feelings of Alcoholics." The sessions helped patients understand recovery as a process. The internship emphasized empathy and emotional support, deepening trainees' understanding of medical social work and rehabilitation.



Internship Experience at St. John's Medical College Hospital, Bengaluru

St. John's Medical College Hospital offers advanced healthcare and training. Trainees Devika Santhosh and Sneha Suresh worked in Oncology, Haematology, and Nephrology departments, learning about patient care and health services. They also organized recreational activities for elderly residents at the Geriatric Centre. The internship provided hands-on experience in hospital social work and the importance of holistic care for patients and elders.



Internship Experience at SNEHA, Mumbai

The Society for Nutrition, Education & Health Action (SNEHA), Mumbai, focuses on women's and children's health in urban settlements. Trainees participated in the Adopted Anganwadi Project, conducted casework, home visits, and health campaigns. They supported mothers of malnourished children and promoted hygiene awareness. The internship enhanced their understanding of community health, collaboration, and empowerment for sustainable social change**.**



MSW THIRD SEMESTER SPECIALISATION BASED INTERNSHIP

Internship Experience at New Beginning Psychiatric and De-Addiction Hospital, Pondicherry

New Beginning Psychiatric and De-Addiction Hospital, Pondicherry, provides mental health and rehabilitation services. Trainees Reshma Alton and Nandana V. S. participated in case studies, counseling, and group therapy sessions. They used psychological tools like BPRS, HAM-A, and HAM-D to assess patients. The internship strengthened their counseling, empathy, and clinical skills, offering deep insights into psychiatric social work and patient recovery.



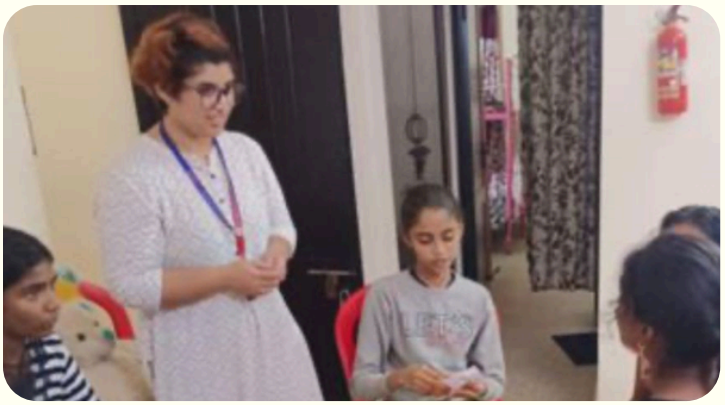
Internship Experience at Goonj, Delhi

Goonj, Delhi, focuses on rural development and resource optimization. Trainees Aakash P. R. and Anandhu R. worked in units like Medicinal, Library, and School-to-School (S2S). They organized materials for communities and conducted field visits. The experience enhanced their knowledge of community assessment, logistics, and project management. The internship promoted adaptability, teamwork, and dignity-driven approaches to social development.



Internship Experience at Prime Trust and Janani Home for Girls, Pondicherry

Prime Trust and Janani Home for Girls, Pondicherry, focus on child and women welfare. Trainee Ann Chrisswie Crillin conducted life skill sessions based on the WHO framework, promoting self-awareness and stress management among girls. She also organized activities like “One Wish” and “Island Survival.” The internship improved her communication and leadership skills while enhancing her understanding of institutional child care.



Internship Experience at Rajagiri Hospital, Aluva

Rajagiri Hospital, Aluva, is a leading medical institution promoting holistic healthcare. Trainees Deena Davis and Sebin Kurian worked in the MICU and Emergency Department, providing counseling and emotional support to patients and families. The experience highlighted the social worker’s role in bridging communication between patients and healthcare staff. The internship strengthened their professional competence in medical social work.



Internship Experience at Chetanalaya, Delhi

Chetanalaya, Delhi, empowers marginalized communities through education and livelihood programs. Trainees Fathimathu Sharafiya, Athulya Unnikrishnan, and Jomon M worked in Kalyanpuri, teaching children basic subjects and organizing environmental awareness activities. The experience deepened their understanding of urban poverty and community participation. The internship developed their teaching, communication, and planning skills while reinforcing the value of education in social transformation.





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ACADEMIC REFLECTIONS

UNSUNG HEROES:
THE TRUE POWER OF VOLUNTEERS

Every day, we do countless things, some for ourselves, some seemingly for others. But pause for a moment, how many of those actions truly make a difference in someone else's life? And what does it mean to genuinely give back to your community? For me, the answer has been revealed through volunteering.

In my journey as a social work trainee, one truth has stood out: volunteers are the heartbeat of community development. They may not carry professional degrees, yet they bring something equally powerful: compassion, lived experiences, and a deep understanding of their communities. They are not outsiders stepping in; they are the bridge connecting families, neighbourhoods, and organizations.

Volunteers extend the reach of social work in ways that formal systems often cannot. They touch lives at the grassroots, fostering trust, building networks, and strengthening the very fabric of communities. Even small acts, guiding a child with homework, supporting a family through a health crisis, or raising awareness about local issues, create ripples of change that grow far beyond the individual.

Yet, their path is not without challenges. Many volunteers come from the same marginalized communities they serve, facing poverty, limited resources, and a lack of formal training. At times, their work is undervalued, and ethical dilemmas like confidentiality or role boundaries can make their journey harder. These realities remind us that volunteers need support, guidance, and recognition to turn their efforts into lasting impact.

I have witnessed how social workers can empower volunteers through training, supervision, and clear guidance. Simple steps like role clarification, skill development, and appreciation programs strengthen both confidence and effectiveness. When policies, NGOs, and community collaborations back their efforts, volunteers' contributions become sustainable and transformative.

One story that stayed with me is of a Mahila Arogya Samiti member who lost her husband to tuberculosis. Instead of letting grief silence her, she transformed her pain into action raising awareness about health issues and supporting other families.

Her courage reminded me that volunteers are not just helpers; they are leaders who turn personal struggles into collective empowerment.

Volunteers may not always be in the spotlight, but they create waves of positive change. They build resilience, extend services to the unreached, and uplift entire communities. The essence of volunteerism is not in doing a lot it is in giving with purpose, even if it is small, for the benefit of others.

Reading this, ask yourself: Am I noticing the opportunities to make a difference, however small, in the lives around me? Volunteerism is not just a role it is a mindset, a commitment to creating positive change wherever we can. And once you embrace it, you become one of the unsung heroes of your own community.



Angel Varghese
MSW 2nd Year

SHELTER HOMES FOR DIVORCED WOMEN: A SOCIAL WORK APPROACH

Divorce, while legally recognized as a means of ending a marriage, often leaves women vulnerable to social, economic, and emotional challenges. In many parts of India, divorced women face stigma, financial instability, and exclusion from family and community networks. For women with limited resources, shelter homes provide not just physical safety but also a space for rebuilding lives with dignity. Social work, rooted in principles of empowerment and social justice, plays a vital role in ensuring that shelter homes become transformative spaces rather than just temporary accommodations.

Challenges Faced by Divorced Women

Divorced women frequently encounter multiple forms of marginalization. Social stigma and cultural taboos may lead to isolation, where families refuse support and communities attach labels of dishonor. Financial dependence on former spouses, lack of employable skills, and absence of housing options make survival particularly difficult. Many women also face psychological trauma arising from marital conflict, domestic violence, or custody battles. Furthermore, children of divorced women often share these struggles, making it essential that interventions extend beyond just providing shelter.

Role of Social Work in Shelter Homes

Social workers in shelter homes adopt holistic approaches to address the varied needs of divorced women. Casework and counseling services help women process trauma, rebuild self-esteem, and regain confidence in their ability to live

Shelter homes for divorced women, when supported by professional social work practices, become more than just spaces of refuge—they become centers of empowerment and transformation.

Collaborations and Policy Advocacy

Collaboration between shelter homes, NGOs, government departments, and local communities is crucial. Social workers often act as facilitators in linking women to resources such as microfinance programs, housing subsidies, and self-help groups. Partnerships with legal aid cells ensure that women are aware of their rights related to property, custody, and maintenance. At a systemic level, social workers advocate for stronger policies to protect divorced women from discrimination and to ensure shelter homes are adequately funded, staffed, and monitored.

Positive Outcomes and Social Transformation

Well-structured social work interventions in shelter homes have been shown to empower divorced women to reclaim their identity and autonomy. With economic independence and psychosocial support, women gain the confidence to reintegrate into society with dignity. Shelter homes also serve as awareness platforms, challenging prevailing stereotypes and promoting acceptance of diverse family structures. The empowerment of divorced women has broader implications: it reshapes community attitudes, strengthens children's futures, and promotes gender equality within society.

Conclusion

Shelter homes for divorced women, when supported by professional social work practices, become more than just spaces of refuge—they become centers of empowerment and transformation. By addressing stigma, building capacities, and advocating for systemic reforms, social work ensures that divorced women are not defined by their marital status but by their potential to lead independent, dignified lives. In this way, shelter homes act as stepping stones towards a more inclusive and equitable society.



Navya Saji
MSW 2nd Year

BHARATA MATA COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS)

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