



international association for

religious freedom

belief with integrity

Human Rights Education Workshop
Held at
**Arulanandar College, Karumathur,
Madurai, Tamilnadu**
On 26 & 27 July, 2013



Participants with Facilitator, Guests and College Officials.

REPORT

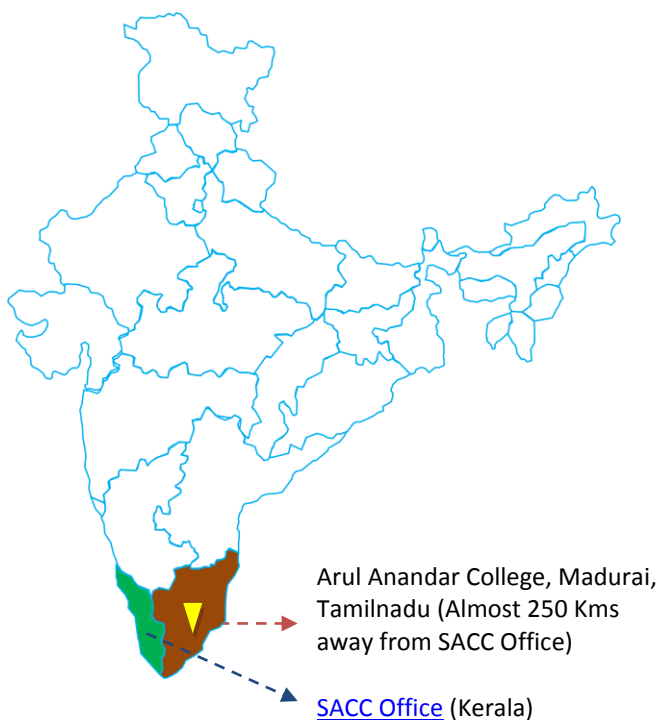
Facilitator: Dr. G. Rajaram

At a Glance

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Venue | : Arulanandar College, Karumathur, Madurai, Tamilnadu |
| Date | : 26-27 July, 2013 |
| Facilitators | : Dr. G. Rajaram |
| Number of Participants | : 34 |
| Gender Balance | : Male-21, Female-13 |
| Age Group | : 18-26 |
| Religious Representation | : Hinduism-21, Christianity- 12 & Unitarianism-1 |

Introduction

Karumathur is a Rural village, situated on NH 49A, very close to Madurai city towards, Theni, a District Head Quarter close to western Ghats. It is surrounded by many villages, where economically weaker sections of people live. Their main occupation is farming and mostly depends upon rain for their cultivation. The dominated community is 'Kallar' and mostly follows Hindu religious faith. Christians are very few in the area. They live very peacefully and no religious conflict reported in the recent past. However, the town is often appearing in headlines of leading Newspapers for the reported killing of Girl Child at the infant stage and communal conflicts between upper and lower caste. Therefore through Arulanandar College the area was chosen to conduct HRE programme



Arul Anandar College (AAC), a religious minority Institution run by the Jesuit Madurai Province of the Society of Jesus, is a rural College situated in a village named Karumathur, Madurai District. The College started in the year 1970, was then called De La Salle College. In 1973 the College, handed over to the Jesuit Madurai Province, was renamed as Arul Anandar College, after St. John Britto a Jesuit Missionary from Lisbon.

The College which started initially with just three degree courses viz., Economics, Mathematics and Philosophy is now offering a number of under-graduate, post-graduate and research programs. The Institution now offers seven UG courses and three PG courses as Aided-courses, five UG courses and three PG courses, MCA, M. Phil., in economics under self-financed category. Apart from these research programs leading to doctoral degree are also offered by the Department of Rural development Science and Economics.



In June 1987 the college became autonomous, and in that process became one of the youngest Colleges to seek autonomy. With autonomy granted to the College, the Institution is growing further both in academic and extension activities. Though the college is run by Christian Society, most of the students belong to Hindu religion, which promotes interfaith harmony and coexistence.

Main Aim

- Sensitize people about the rights of freedom of religion and belief.
- Promote Religious Harmony and Peace in backward state of India.

Objective

Minimize socio-cultural and political conflict, violence and tension from the society. Eliminate all form of intolerance, humiliation and hatred through exchange of dialogue among different faith groups.

Timeline

Two days program - On 26 and 27 July, 2013 from morning 90:30 am to 05:30 pm

Session outline

26 July 13

1st Session at 09:30 am to 01:00pm)

- Inauguration
- Greetings from the facilitator for joining this learning / action process.
- Introduction of participants and ice-breaking and the expectation.
- Identifying their concerns about intolerance, religious discrimination and Conflict-sharing and categorizing their concerns.
- Social purposes, learning goal, social goal of this HRE workshop proposing goal for social change to overcome obstacles to religious Freedom.
- Sharing goals.
- Thinking about action.
- Film show 1st time and responses after the show.

2nd Session (02:00pm to 05:30 pm)

- Reading, acknowledging, and clarifying – Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).
- The declaration on the Elimination of all forms of intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief (DIDRB).
- Majors Human Rights Treaties
- Relate the goals of the participants to the rights describe in the UDHR and DIDRB

27 July 2013

3rd Session (09:30 am to 01:00 pm)

- Film show –'Rita's Choices'
- Responding the film - awakening their awareness
- Inquiry about injustice
- Analyses the injustice within a Human Rights framework.
- Alternative views and application of HR to prevent such injustices

- Applying HR (DIDRB) what actions may be undertaken

4th Session

- Review – Rita’s Choices on the light of DIDRB and the said goal
- Film Show – ‘Sacred Grove’
- Responding the film - awakening their awareness
- Inquiry about multiple injustice
- Analyses the injustice within a Human Rights framework.
- Alternative views and application of HR to prevent such injustices
- Action to be undertaken

5th Session (2.00 pm to 5.30 pm)

- Review of Sacred Grove on the light of said goal
- Film show – ‘Where is Home’
- Responding the film - awakening their awareness
- Inquiry about multiple injustice
- Analyses the inter-religious injustice within a Human Rights framework.
- Alternative views and application of HR to prevent such injustices
- Action to be undertaken

6th Session

- Reviewing their concern and goals
- Recommending actions
- Planning action for social change
- Strategic planning for action

Methodology

Group works-discussions, lectures, case studies, Audio visual learning and group report presentation.

Issues rose

Hatred, humiliation, intolerance, Religious and caste conflicts, Rights to freedom of religion and belief.

Assumptions

Lower caste Hindu and upper caste Hindus live in this area. In rural and remote villages still hatred exists among these sects. Sometimes they fight each other and communal tension prevails over the area, therefore this issue raised in the discussion.

Risk factors

Little tension and risks are found in the area in regards to their communal feelings and violation of Human rights.

Expected learning outcomes

Short-term

Participants changed their mind set up and oriented and motivated to accept the freedom of religion and beliefs as important Human rights.

Long-term

All sorts of social violence, conflicts and tension will be resolved.

Resources Required

- Cooperation and man power support from the local organization
- Teaching and training materials like pad, pen, LCD, DVD player, flip charts, marker pen etc.

Language Problem

There was no language problem (English and Tamil are used).

Location

Arulanandar College, Karumathur, Madurai, Tamilnadu.

Have you already had contact with the Institute?

Yes

Why have you chosen this community/ target group?

It is presumed, tension and misunderstanding present among the young generation of this locality, that's why it is chosen.

How did you ensure the balance of gender, ages etc?

Originally 40 Participants were selected to represent Hindu, Islam and Christian religious sectors. But due to preoccupation and other commitments 21 Male and 13 female students joined the program and age group between 18 to 26 years.

What steps have you undertaken in order to lessen the tension between the participants from different faith groups?

I inspired and insisted participants to maintain peace and to be calm and patience during discussion. They were allowed to start open and free discussion instead of loud voice.

Did you have ice-breaking/team building activities?

Yes

Which faith traditions attended the program?

Hindus and Christians

How many people from each faith attended the program?

21 from Hinduism, 12 from Christianity and 1 from Unitarianism

Name of Potential Mediator





Dr. Jothi Rajan

Comments by Facilitator

Facilitator observed that after the ice breaking session, the participants have shown great interest in the programme. They discussed the local issues. There were few participants from other states like Karnataka, Kerala and Jharkand, as they stay in the hostel and pursue their studies in the college. Some Nuns and brothers have also participated and hence the group tasks were taken very seriously and they exchanged their ideas and experience among fellow participants. One female participant

during the discussion mentioned that she is staying in a village close to the college and her native place is about 400 km away. She expressed that as she did not belong to the area, she is not allowed to express her views on few local customs. She felt that her freedom of expression is curtailed as she is not from that local area. Most of the participants felt that the programme must be for 3 days.

Participants' Feedback (Selected)

| | |
|---|---|
|  | <p>Kiruthika (F), 19, Hindu I glad to be a part of human rights education workshop. Interestingly all sessions were from the reality of human life. The formation of certain rights and privileges will work for the well fare of every member of society in spite of his/her external background. The program was really a motivating one and knowledgeable. Thanks to all.</p> |
|  | <p>Clint Clery Varghese (M), 19, Unitarian I have heard about human rights but did not know in detail about the same. But by attending the seminar I'm exposed to basic human rights and its importance. I'm very glad that I could be a part of the program. All sessions, methodology employed and group discussions, films etc were fine. In fact, it was a mind blowing experience and produced lots of energy within us. Thanks to IARF.</p> |
|  | <p>M. Muthazhagu (F), 20, Hindu The opportunity to attend the human rights education workshop was really a privilege for us. Seeing goodness in others and respecting others is virtue which has to be maintained in life. The two day workshop really opened our eyes to see discriminations in and around society and ways to tackle them. Thanks a lot for this program.</p> |
|  | <p>A. Dias Menson Raju (M), 20, Christian It was for the first time attending a workshop on human rights. Facilitator explained all sessions in detail and we were able to follow him easily. The insights we got from the workshop will really work within us and in society, eventually resulting in human rights protection and harmony. Thanks to college authority and facilitator for organizing this program.</p> |

Click the link to view Photos

<http://www.iarfsacc.org/media/photos/index.php?cat=126>