

11

Seminars held with over 700 attendees in total

4

Brand new workshops

SSR's 2019 Year in Review

4

Research capability development partners

10

research projects

Season's Greetings!

Below are highlights of the year. We are thankful for your support and wish you our best for 2020.

In-Work Poverty Study

SSR is breaking ground with its newest project on in-work poverty! Funded at \$3.3 million by the Social Science Research Thematic Grant, the study aims to provide much needed understanding on the challenges faced by the young working poor in Singapore, with the aim of informing the development of more responsive policies to support them. Low wage and low-quality work intersects with education attainment and gender, and affects personal health and family life - these are just some of the aspects this project hopes to uncover. Check out our article in the SSR Snippet to find out more!

"Our research topic on the young working poor is something close to my heart. Worldwide, there is a growing problem of people working yet not earning enough, of precarious job conditions. However, programs in Singapore have targeted older workers. Thus, we hope our findings will inform policies and programs in terms of effectiveness for younger workers."

A/P Irene Y.H. Ng, Principal Investigator and Director of Social Service Research Centre



The In-Work Poverty Study team (from left to right)

Asher Goh, Dr Matthew Matthews, A/P Ho Kong Chong, A/P Vincent Chua, Shane Pereira, Dr Caroline Lim, Dr Jeanette Renema, A/P Irene Y.H. Ng, Timothy Teoh, Nurul Fadiyah Johari, Dr Ong Qiyan, Dr Neo Yu Wei

If you are interested in taking part in our Mentoring Programmes in 2020, click [here](#) for more information or [here](#) to sign up.



Implementation Research for Social Services

Complete a small-scale research project studying programme implementation with guidance from experienced mentors!

Workshop 1
~ 4 Feb 2020 ~

Workshop 2
~ 11 Feb 2020 ~

Mentoring - 6 sessions
~ 4 Feb - 28 Apr 2020 ~

Research Skills for Social Services

Learn research skills and complete a small-scale research project with guidance from experienced mentors!

Workshop 1
~ 5 Feb 2020 ~

Workshop 2
~ 11 Feb 2020 ~

Mentoring - 6 sessions
~ 5 Feb - 28 Apr 2020 ~

Research Mentoring Programmes

Since 2017, over 70 participants from various occupational backgrounds have received guidance from SSR mentors on their research projects under our Research Mentoring Programmes. In 2019, SSR launched its first run of *Implementation Research for Social Services* and offered its *Research Skills for Social Services* for the fourth time. After completing our programmes, some participants expanded or scaled-up their projects, while others shared their findings at relevant conferences.

"Our mentoring programmes don't end after the 13 weeks – as a mentor, I'm happiest when I hear about our participants continuing their projects and applying their research insights in their work."

Dr Neo Yu Wei, Research Mentor at SSR



Dr Neo Yu Wei

APRIL 17, 2019 | 9.30 AM | NUS

SSR RESEARCH SKILLS FOR SOCIAL SERVICES AND IMPLEMENTATION RESEARCH FOR SOCIAL SERVICES MENTORING PROGRAMMES

Abstracts

Click [here](#) for the abstracts from our 2019 Research Mentoring Programmes.

The Community Foundation of Singapore may provide funding for research projects that have good potential!

Study on Low-Income Households with Debt

In March this year, SSR – in collaboration with Methodist Welfare Services – published its findings from a landmark study on the effects of chronic debt on psychological functioning and decision-making. Apart from wide coverage within Singapore, this study made waves beyond our own shores – it has been cited in academic and news sites globally such as **Sputnik World**, **EurekAlert!**, and **Daily Mail** among others. The findings have also been referenced in relation to the positive impact of a billionaire’s donations given to pay off university graduates’ student loans in the **United States**. With the wide reach of these findings, SSR hopes to dispel the common misconception that the poor are and remain in debt due to personal faults.

"Our study shows that the impact of debt on the poor is psychological, not just financial. Debt impairs psychological functioning and decision-making. Being in poverty compounds these impairments. This means that even those who are extremely motivated and hardworking may be trapped in debt and poverty. This also means that the behaviours of the poor may be driven by their circumstances instead of their personality. We must address the impact of debt and poverty on psychological functioning and decision-making in our interventions for low-income families."



Dr Ong Qiyang

Dr Ong Qiyang, Lead author and Deputy Director of SSR



In the top 5% of all research outputs scored by Almetric

High Attention Score compared to outputs of the same age (99th percentile)

High Attention Score compared to outputs of the same age and source (95th percentile)

This study received an Almetric Attention Score of 243, (information extracted from [PNAS](#) on 20 November 2019).

Research Capability Development Service

"The support rendered by SSR in research capability development has been tremendously helpful. The insights shared by the SSR team reshaped some of our existing practices. We look forward to a closer partnership with SSR in the coming year."

Arthur Ling, Deputy Executive Director, Fei Yue Family Service Centre

This year, our Research Capability Development Service grew to a total number of four partners. Through our research advisory service, we work with our VWO partners to develop general research capabilities of their research staff or social workers with a research portfolio on their various projects.

We are delighted to know that our service has benefitted our partners in many different ways, and we hope to continue to grow our reach and impact through such partnerships. You may find more information on our Research Capability Development Service [here](#).

"The program helped us with our internal research capabilities and enabled us to conduct research for our organisation in order to design and develop programs to cater to the needs and wellbeing of our clients. We also managed to get the Board’s buy-in and support to formally set up an in-house research team. This team puts technical know-how into practice, such as pinning down the exact research questions for our studies. We are looking forward to further explore the techniques that we learned during the Mentoring Programme with SSR and hope the techniques help us answer our research questions more effectively."

We wish to thank Dr Qiyang, Dr Walter and Dr Yu Wei for the guidance and support and we look forward to work with you on our new research topics."

Shirley Loo, Assistant Manager, Credit Counselling Singapore



Looking ahead

In 2020, we look forward to celebrating SSR’s 5th year as we continue to grow our research partnerships, training and capability development. We look forward to your support!



Social Service Research Centre
Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences