

Nurturing Academic Skills Through Webinars

Objectives:

The Pandemic has taught us that the education system which earlier was thought non-existent with a physical space can continue to thrive and flourish in the digital domain. While physical seminars, symposiums and workshops came to a standstill in March 2020 thanks to the lockdowns, the webinars filled the void with much success. Although it has its own limitations, the webinars enabled the students to further their knowledge from the comforts of their own homes.

The Context:

Sovarani Memorial College is essentially a rural college. A huge chunk of the students comes from the backwards classes. Needless to say, most of them are first-generation learners. When the pandemic had struck, this section of students suffered the most. Being sequestered in their homes, without any access to classes, libraries, and teachers, they started falling behind more than their friends from the upper strata of the society. The need for webinars was felt by the college.

The Practice:

A total of six webinars was organized in the academic year 2020-2021. The departments that organized these are Philosophy, Sanskrit, Physics, Mathematics, Botany, and NSS. The scales of these webinars ranged from state level to international level. Delegates from West Bengal, outside of West Bengal and from abroad participated in the discussion panels as panelists.

Evidence of Success:

These webinars garnered massive interest in the students from our college. In fact, students from other colleges – even from colleges from outer states – participated in these webinars. Their active participation made all the events successful.

Limitations:

The main problem of a digital education system is lack of digital infrastructure. The issue is not local or unique to us, rather it's a nation-wide issue. Digital divide is creating a major gap in the teaching-learning method amongst the students who live in the remote areas where internet connectivity is extremely poor. Many students have told us that they have to locate themselves in odd places to gain proper connectivity. These are the students who despite these webinars were unable to avail the facilities. Another major set back is the poor financial state of the areas around our college. Many students belong to the lower income group who cannot afford more than one smartphone and data packs required for the classes as well as the webinars.

Environmental Awareness & Cleanliness Campaign

Objectives:

Purposes behind the campaign were to promote environmental awareness among the students, teachers and staff members of the college and to motivate cleanliness in the campus.

Context:

Since the college is a rural college, the institution feels obligated towards maintaining a sustainable environment. Students are sensitized about preserving nature for the future generations. The college campus has a well maintained medicinal plant garden and a number of large trees.

Practice:

The college campus was declared as a 'Plastic Free Zone' w.e.f. the World Environment Day. The students of NSS unit were directly involved in cleaning the campus and to encourage the students, teachers & staff members in order to keep the campus environment friendly by avoiding plastic use as far as practicable. In addition the college continued the tree plantation in the campus and nearby village area by the students of NSS and NCC units. Students are encouraged to come to college by bicycle.

Evidence of Success:

The campaign was successful as a large number of students, teachers and staff members participated in the activities. A good number of local people were also involved through pamphlet distribution.

Limitations:

The institution regularly carries out environment preservation programs. But a number of programs were disrupted due to the pandemic situation. Whenever the lockdown restrictions were partially lifted the students of NSS and NCC unit tried their best to carry out the activities.