

Best Practice 1

Title of the Best Practice: Plantation and Beautification

The Goal: The objective of this project is to clean and beautify the campus and its adjacent areas.

The Context:

Due to continuous construction works, our college gets strewn with debris. Pieces of discarded planks, broken bricks, concrete chunks, plastic bags, torn tarps and sundry had turned the premises quite dirty. The garden we have within the walls of the main college building was quite affected by the dirt and debris. The NSS unit along with our library staff had taken the initiative to clean and beautify the campus.

The Practice:

The NSS unit along with the library staff issued a notice seeking help from the students to clean the campus and dispose of the garbage properly. A group of 10 students along with 17 students from the NSS unit gathered at the college garden at 12 PM. They started by separating the constructional debris and the plastic waste in two heaps. Then some of them took the torn out tarps and sacks to fill them up with the garbage and disposed of them behind the college in the dump yard. Then they planted saplings, under the supervision of the NSS nodal officer and our librarian, in the garden. NCC unit of our college has also extended their helping hands time and again to clean the campus.

After they were done in the garden, the group approached the cycle shed and planted some saplings there, then they planted some more in front of Rajat Jayanti Bhaban.

Evidence of Success:

The garden and its adjacent areas look prim and proper, hygienic, and, most importantly, plastic free. The targeted areas are free of debris. This sets an example for the rest of the students and hopefully, in the near future, we will be able to make our campus plastic free.

Limitations:

In order to execute this project on a larger scale, adequate funds are required. Although the saplings are cheap and with a little monetary help can be grown in the college premises, the fences, in comparison, cost five or six times more than that. If a larger scale project is ever undertaken where we decide to take the students on the levees of the main river, we need to provide with their travel expenses as well as refreshments. Since there is no financial support for such social works, the project might come to a standstill in near future.

The only matter that requires immediate attention is issuing a ban on single use plastic goods. The students must be given instructions to avoid using plastic bags and containers. To spread awareness, a workshop has to be organised and more such programmes must be held. A proper funding system needs to be set up for this very purpose.

Best Practice 2

Title of the Best Practice: Skill Development Courses in Colleges for Better Employability including Self-Employment through Self Financing. *Speakers: Dr. Subir Moitra, Associate Professor-in-Economics, Heramba Chandra College, and Rabisankar Dasgupta, NABARD.*

The Context and the Practice:

The Employability Issue in Higher Education in India

- For decades, lack of employment opportunities and underemployment of educated masses has been an important issue in Indian labour market.
- Interestingly, during contemporary times it is also being reported that industry/service is not finding 'employable workforce'.

Three types of qualities considered important for the employability of a job seeker:

1. Key technical and academic skills specific to the job which is obtained from academic curriculum mainly.
2. Process skills including problem solving capacity, decision making, planning and delegating, ethical sensitivity, understanding business and its commercial interests, ability to work with persons from different regional, cultural and religion backgrounds, prioritizing, team work, and negotiating.
3. Personal qualities like self-confidence, self-control, self-esteem, social skills, honesty, integrity, adaptability, flexibility, willingness to learn, emotional intelligence, stress tolerance, punctuality, efficiency and reflectiveness.

As per Quality Mandate issued by UGC on 4th June, 2018 approved by the Commission in its 532nd meeting held on 24.05.18, all Higher Educational Institutions(HEIs) shall strive to achieve the following objectives by 2022:

1. "Improve the graduate outcomes for the students, so that at least 50% of them secure access to employment/self-employment or engage themselves in pursuit of higher education."
2. "Promote link of the students with the society/industry such that at least 2/3rd of the students engage in socially productive activities during their period of study in the institutions."

Keeping this in mind, need of the hour for HEIs are to:

- To introduce certain career-oriented/job-oriented courses to supplement university prescribed academic courses without or with the financial support of the Government.
- These courses may range from certificate to diploma, short-term to long-term courses and totally knowledge-based to completely skill oriented courses.
- Even courses of preparatory nature for facilitating entry of students to higher level courses as well as job can also be introduced.

He mentioned self-financed Courses for which no Government Funding is available:

- Certificate/Diploma Course in Photo Editing
- Certificate/Diploma Course in Video Editing
- Certificate/Diploma Course in Web Design
- Certificate/Diploma Course in Cyber Bangla
- Certificate/Diploma Course in Income Tax and GST
- Certificate/Diploma Course in Costume Design and Fashion
- Certificate/Diploma Course in Beautician Training
- Certificate/Diploma Course in Fashion Jewellery
- Certificate/Diploma Course in Customer Relationship Management
- Certificate/Diploma Course in Tally and Investment Management
- Certificate/Diploma Course in Tourism and Travel Management
- Certificate/Diploma Course in Logistics and Supply-Chain Management
- Certificate/Diploma Course in Retail Management
- Certificate/Diploma Course in Foreign Trade Practices and Management (FTM)
- Certificate/Diploma Course in Entrepreneurship Development

- Certificate/Preparatory Course in Mathematics for Competitive Examination
- Certificate/Preparatory Course in English for Competitive Examination
- Certificate/Preparatory Course in English Writing
- Preparatory Course for School Services Examination (S.S.C/Kendriya Vidyalaya)
- Preparatory Course in Civil Services Examination (P.S.C)

He suggested that to develop infrastructure for these courses, RUSA Fund can be used. Moreover, he mentioned some courses if a third party is involved for conducting the courses, the college may also get a part of the revenue (revenue-sharing). For some courses, he opined that limited government assistance may be available from central/state governments, banks etc.

As per his suggestion, courses for which Government Funding may be available are Courses may be so designed that funds may be available under:

- National Skills Qualification Framework: Deen Dayal Upadhyay Centres for Knowledge Acquisition and Upgradation of Skilled Human Abilities and Livelihood (KAUSHAL)
- Coaching for Entry into Services/NET/SET for SC/ST/OBC(NCL) and Minority Community Students
- Swami Vivekananda Swanirbhar Karmasangsthan Prakalpa (SVSKP). Chairman of this SVSKP is from our Howrah district.
- Commercial Banks
- Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF)
- National Medicinal Plants Board (NMPB) under AYUSH.

Session ended with interaction with students. Few students clarified about the difference between normal University courses and job-oriented courses.

Few of them asked about the details of specific courses. Speaker clarified all queries of each student satisfactorily. This workshop is very enriching for a rural college like ours. Two hundred thirty two students participated in the Skill Development seminar.

Rabisankar Dasgupta from NABARD, then, elucidated the idea of self financing to the students, showing them exactly how many ways one can sustain their vocational and diploma courses by carefully investing their money in the bank and figuring out alternate sources of income.

Evidence of Success:

During the programme, feedback sheets were handed out to the participants. We were extremely pleased to see that almost all the feedback was positive and the participants were thrilled to have taken part in this interactive session.

Limitations:

Lack of infrastructure is our main constraint. We could not, in time, install the necessary devices for a powerpoint presentation. Also we don't have ample space to accommodate such large scale participation. Budgetary restraints come next. Providing the participants with some refreshments may turn out to be expensive.