

Best Practice 1

‘Pirannal Madhuram Librarikku’ (Donating a book to the library on Birthday)

College has started a unique practice of students and staff donating a book to the Library as part of their birthday celebrations. Each donation is recognized by entering the donor’s name and signature on the front page of the new book and the librarian reciprocates him/her with a gift.

Objectives of the Practice

1. To create an emotional attachment to the library among the teachers and students.
2. To celebrate the birthday in an academic and innovative way.
3. To inculcate a habit of giving gifts instead of receiving on birthdays.
4. To inculcate reading habit among students
5. To provide access to good books to the students of our college.
6. ‘To double your joy share it with someone.’
7. Enrichment of the library.

Context

As mentioned above our college is located in a backward area of Kasaragod District of Kerala. Most of the students come to this college from villages and are not financially sound. Instead of spending huge amount for cakes and celebrations, we have introduced this healthy practice of donating a book.

Secondly, this practice of donating books enabled our students to open a new vista to the world of books. Students on their birthday will at least go in search of books to a book store. And browsing of books will unknowingly generate an interest in him/her regarding books. This interest in due course of time will instil a passion for books. Donation of books helps our library to maintain a high profile, and new books for all of our students to enjoy.

Practice

On the birthday a student approaches the librarian and express his/her willingness to donate a book. The Librarian accompanies the student to the principal. The Principal along with the Head of the department proceeds to the classroom of the birthday of the boy/girl. In the presence of all the students in the class, Principal receives the book from the student and it is handed over to the Librarian. The Librarian through the Principal in turn honour the student by giving a nominal gift. The Librarian gets the Signature of the student on the front page of the book. This practice has enabled to enrich the library. This healthy practice enabled our students to channelize their energy to a creative field. The photos of the event are displayed on the college notice board and shared in the WhatsApp groups; thereby the self -esteem of the donor is boosted and it encourages others to emulate the act.

The birthdays of teachers and their family members are celebrated in this manner by contributing books to the library. The teacher who celebrates his or her birthday is honored in the staff meeting by the Principal.

Evidence of Success

1. The healthy practice has enabled the students to adopt a positive and creative way of celebrating their birthdays.
2. Students have learnt the art of giving selflessly.
3. Reading habits and a passion for books have been enhanced.
4. The library has got enriched with good quality contemporary books.
5. This practice is becoming popular and spreading rapidly in the campus.

The problems encountered and the resources required

1. Since the college is situated in a remote rural area, the accessibility of getting good books is difficult.
2. Most of the students are from economically backward families, hence finding finance to purchase books is a challenge.

Best Practice 2

FINE : It is an innovative practice of group learning under the name FINE, '**A friend In Need of Education**'. Though group learning is not new, it has been evolved into a new pattern called FINE.

Objectives of the Practice

- To strengthen the knowledge of weaker students in subjects area where they lag behind the average students.
- To provide a strong foundation to the weaker students for further academic activities.
- To bring the weaker students to the necessary level to pursue higher studies in order to reduce failure and dropout rates.
- To raise the academic skills and linguistic proficiency of weaker students.

The Context

The College is located in the rural backward area of Kasaragod district of Kerala. Most of the students pursuing their higher education in the college are hailing from the villages. There is a definite disparity in the quality of education imparted from rural schools and urban schools. This reflects in their grasping and expressing capacity. Another factor working adversely to the students is the fact that most of them have parents with minimum education. Owing to these reasons failure and dropout rates are on the higher side.

Some students may not cope with the curriculum designed for the average students. Undoubtedly they need extra coaching in the college in order to bring them to the expected standard. They need extra coaching and personal attention for achieving good results. Therefore FINE in different subjects is envisaged.

PRACTICE

FINE: It is a form of group learning to improve the subject and language proficiency of weaker students. It is a series of formal and informal gatherings often conducted at leisure times under the leadership of advanced students to extend a helping hand to a few of his/her friends in the matter of education.

The FINE is managed under the mentoring system prevailing in the college. The mentor coordinates the activities of FINE in which the expertise of advanced students is enhanced and the weaker students are uplifted.

Identification of weaker students:

The following methods are implemented for the identification of weaker students:

- Diagnostic test identifies advanced, average and weak students.
- Performance of students in monthly and unit tests.
- Frequent interaction with students.
- Percentage of pass in the University Examinations.
- Interaction with parents.

FINE, the whole programme, becomes more appealing and effective. The dropout rate was effectively reduced and pass percentage was subsequently increased. Thus, it becomes one of our best practices in letter and spirit.

We follow a separate time frame for the FINE classes, without affecting the general timetable of the college. The tentative timings are from 9.00 am to 10.00 am and from 3.45 pm to 4.45 pm and free hours are also utilised. However, flexibility is permitted in conducting FINE sessions as per the convenience of the beneficiaries. A few advanced learners are in charge of a group of six or seven students. The group regularly conducts discussion sessions in which there is maximum scope for exchange and enhancement of the knowledge base of each student.

Evidence of Success

FINE sessions during last five years are remarkable

1. The academic standards of the weaker students are improved considerably and it succeeds in bring them to the level of average students. This is evident from the fact that more number of weaker students who attended the FINE sessions got through their final examinations successfully.
2. The language proficiency of the weaker students is also improved and this is verified in the mentoring sessions.

3. The dropout rate among the weaker students who have undergone FINE session is negligible. Most of the students who appeared for entrance test conducted by various Universities for admission into PG courses got selected with good ranks. “Progressions to Higher Studies” an objective of Practice is also achieved.
4. Initiate and promote human relations and skill development of students

Problems Encountered and Resources Required

Problems

1. The identification of weaker students in the beginning of the academic year often becomes inaccurate. The students newly admitted require some time for normalization and to perform better.
2. It is obvious that the time frame to conduct FINE sessions is not sufficient to incorporate the entire course.

Resources required

1. Enhancement of library facility: At present only two books can be borrowed by a student. It is suggested that weaker students may be permitted to get an additional book from the library.
2. Upgradation of the language lab. Updating the existing software and adding of new equipments are essential to improve the quality of the programme.

Best Practice 3

Micro farming

Title of the practice: Micro farming

Goals

1. To inculcate the habit of cultivation of vegetables, food items and herbs among the students and neighboring community of the college.
2. It's a productive farming on a smaller scale.
3. To cultivate crops that grow quickly in small places especially salad green and herbs.
4. Less investment and manageable by ordinary farmers.

5. To maintain the health of the soil: Students volunteers regularly plant nitrogen fixing legumes like beans to bring nutrients back to the soil.
6. Farmers can sell their products directly to the local markets.

Context

Kerala State is considered to be a consumer state. People of this generation have ignored the need of being self-dependent at least for their kitchen. Vegetables for this state are traded in from nearby states where lots of harmful pesticides and chemicals are sprayed into plants. So people in the state do get affected by cancer and other diseases. In order to procure fresh green vegetables, the NSS unit of the College has envisaged a new venture called micro farming in a small village called Kallar, where the college is situated. The main aim of this venture is to promote health and wellness and to procure fresh green vegetables.

Practice

The NSS students of St Pius X College termed this project as micro farming. Students cultivated 2 cents of land for each household. Thus NSS students implemented micro farming in three acres of land since 2013-14 and it has become one of the best practices of the college. The NSS volunteers provided organic manures and cow dung for the households. Like a Midas touch micro farming got fame in and around the Rustics of Rajapuram. Passion for fresh green vegetables instilled fresh energy in them. Now the word micro farming has become very popular in the village of Kallar. They become self-sufficient in producing green vegetables, chemical free vegetables and generating steady income.

Evidence of Success

The venture micro farming initiated by NSS volunteers was a good success.

1. A wise man once said “The secret to happiness is low expectations.” The same goes for micro farming. The farmers are self-content with their yield.
2. Micro farming became an occupation for the people of Kallar. 15 minutes a day gardening strategy empowered them to do something every day.
3. The villagers started planting vegetables, what they love to eat.
4. Farmers started getting income from their ventures, and it became a motivation for them.

5. Micro farming (Love for green vegetables) became a pass in for the rustics of Kallar village.

Problems encountered

1. Pests and diseases significantly affect production of micro farming.
2. Low price for vegetables when they sell in the local market.

Best Practice 4

DigLit (Digital Literacy)

The context that required the initiation of the practice

The Digital Divide is a serious issue that marks a threat to people in rural areas. Some of the causes for this problem are lack of e- education and lack of skills. Our College is situated in a rural area and many people here especially women are in need of digital literacy. The Department of Computer Science of St. Pius Tenth College, therefore has been conducting the 'DigLit' programme since 2016, with the aim of empowering and enhancing digital literacy of people belonging to different fields in the vicinity of the College.

Objectives of the Practice

1. To augment the digital knowledge of people residing in the proximity of the College.
2. To promote e- literacy among people who lack digital knowledge in Kallar Grama Panchayath

Practices

A digital training programme for the women in Kallar Grama Panchayath titled "Naari Ki Shakthi" was conducted in November 2016. As an initial process, training was given to women belonging to ward 2 of Kallar Grama Panchayath, in which the College is located. Around 50 women, including the ward member attended the classes."Digital India", a digital training programme was conducted for all ward members of Kallar Panchayath on 10th February 2018. All the ward members including the President and Vice President attended the classes. An e- literacy programme for National Health Mission Nurses of Kasaragod district was held on 14th January 2019. Around 50 members of the NHM Nurses participated

in the programme. Another digital training programme was held on 13th February 2019 for Palliative Care Nurses of Kasargod district.

Resources required

1. Computer
2. Internet
3. Projector

Evidence of Success

The effort made by the Computer Science department was a great success.

1. Members of the Panchayath opined that they find it easy now to manage things when they go to offices.
2. Number of women who does online shopping and internet banking in Kallar Panchayath increased.
3. The National Health Mission Nurses created common face book and whatsApp account for the purpose of communication of official matters.

Problems Encountered

1. Since the people who participated in the programme were not very good at English language, it was difficult for them initially to manage the keyboard.
2. They were not familiar with symbols like @, % etc.