Krishnasamy College of Education for Women, Puducherry

Institutional Best Practices of the Year 2020-21

The Krishnasamy College of Education for Women aimed to maintain higher administrative and academic standards. Its objective of becoming a "Centre of Excellence in Teacher Education" has been achieved. It establishes a conducive teaching-learning environment with a variety of impetuses in order to help students attain academic achievement. The college has compiled a list of best practises, which includes the following:

- morning prayer assembly
- publishing the college newsletter "Krish Chronicle", academic calendar, and journal publication,
- undertaking projects,
- conducting national level workshop/seminar and awareness programs,
- doing extension activities for the society,
- promoting staff welfare schemes,
- arranging peer tutoring and remedial teaching,
- organising student council and leadership development activities,
- conducting special training programmes,
- conducting programmes for competitive examinations,
- functioning co-operative society,
- eco club, and Green gardening program, and
- organising annual sports, literary, and cultural activities.

Practice 1

1. Title of the Practice - Outreach programs to promote Inclusiveness

2. Objectives of the Practice

The primary purpose is to inculcate the values of civic responsibilities in the students by working and supporting the marginalized and deprived sections of our society. The main objectives were as follows:

- ➢ Outreach to increase awareness about relevant issues in the community
- ➢ Outreach to enhance skills in the community
- ➢ Developing beneficial networks through Outreach Programmes to reduce disparities
- ➢ Promoting civic engagement in students

3. The Context

The college is located in Manapattu of Puducherry where both the rich and the poor reside in close proximity. A need was soon felt that students should be responsible members of the society and should work on community outreach projects that aim to reduce the gaps between the mainstream and the marginalized sections of our society. The Staff Council had acknowledged the need for engaging our students in community and extension activities and with this intent the 'Social Outreach Committee' was formed. Committee also became actively involved in carrying out extension and outreach programs. The main challenge was the pandemic due to which all activities had to become online

4. The Practice

When carrying out the practice of outreach it was important to develop a system where such community work becomes a part of their student life. The entire initiative was institutionalized from association with an NGO, training of members, linkages and important members of the colony, as well as recording of daily attendance.

5. Evidence of Success

Many of the outreach activities were focused on educational camps for slum children whereas others were intended for community improvement with a focus on environment, health, and legal awareness. Our initiatives have also been covered in newspapers. Other awareness programs have also had good attendance and the COVID pandemic has not

stopped these efforts. Students of the college are not only givers but through the community activities they also reap benefits as engagement in such activities leads to academic and personal development. More and more students are getting aware about the outreach activities.

Practice 2

1. **Title of the Practice** - Online learning and COVID preparedness

2. **Objectives of the Practice**

    Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the college had to make the difficult decision to close and conduct all activities online. However, later during the year at least some activities became in the physical mode. Moreover, the year was marked by lots of uncertainties and accordingly a new practice had to emerge to adapt to this new world. The objectives of this practice were threefold:

    1) To ensure that the teaching learning practice goes on effectively in an online world during the pandemic by responding quickly and appropriately

    2) To gradually reopen the institution as per GoI guidelines so that at least some teaching takes place in the physical face to face mode

    3) To ensure COVID appropriate behaviours as well encourage pro-social behaviours in all

3. **The Context**

    There was an urgent need to rethink education as regular teaching was disrupted and the majority of the teaching learning process became online. Teachers have been forced to rethink their teaching pedagogies to accommodate online learning. Doing practical work in an online mode has been one of the most difficult obstacles. Other activities, such as internships, seminars, and field work, had to be moved online as well. Admissions and administration also became online. All these changes necessitated the acquisition of new skills in order to adapt to the changing environment. The impact on women's education was massive as many women students struggled to manage their studies with academics. Everyone has struggled with the loss of personal interaction. Research suggests that anxiety, despair, and stress have become frequent among students and employees. The college had to build the necessary infrastructure to support the online modality. The college also had to

think about how to reopen at least some educational activities while ensuring that COVID appropriate protocols are followed.

4. **The Practice**

Upgrading ICT: The entire college was made Wifi accessible with a bandwidth > 50 MBPS and all faculty were provided institutional email ids, Google meet and Zoom were extensively used to conduct online lectures, share resources and conduct internal exams and assignments.

Training for ICT skills: Since the technology is new for several teachers therefore several webinars as well as FDP were organized.

Developing innovative teaching pedagogies appropriate to online mode: Pedagogy was mainly participative with a focus on students engaging in group projects and giving PowerPoint presentations, as well as discussions and other activities. Besides online lectures, teachers used PowerPoint presentations, lecture recordings, uploading on google drive, and Audio/video aids. Google Forms were used for taking feedback, research-based activities, maintaining attendance etc. All webinars, FDPs, workshops, DU exams, outreach programmes, heritage walk, pledge sessions have been virtual and conducted through ICT. Research by teachers focused on understanding the social context of the pandemic.

Enhancing communication during lockdown: All students, faculty and other staff were in constant contact with each other through various means such as WhatsApp, emails etc. Faculty groups and student groups were created and university/college communications were immediately posted on website/ student groups/ faculty groups through WhatsApp and email. At times a small support group was created online for helping a critical member.

Developing tools for assessment: For online assignments, it was important to develop assess the originality of content.

Availability of Online library Resources: E-library resources is available in the College library.

Planning for Reopening the College for Partial Activities: The College planned in such a way to adopt COVID advisories and SOPs, COVID awareness activities, arrangements for sanitation and staggered timings by following COVID appropriate behavior. The College also ensured all safety mandates, thermos scanners, oximeter testing etc., and upgrading Wifi and other facilities for online meetings, classes and testing

5. Evidence of Success

Although the face-to-face interaction of physical classes cannot be replicated in the online approach, the college's response to the pandemic was appropriate given the circumstances. The following examples show how the college acted quickly and effectively:

1. In March 2020 itself all classes and other activities such as webinars and exams became online.

2. The feedback survey and satisfaction survey taken during the pandemic year indicated that students were quite satisfied with the online mode.

3. The examination results of the students during the above period indicate that students on the whole performed quite well.

This experience has implications for future preparedness of the college under similar circumstances if these were to arise again:

1. To ensure that ICT tools are upgraded from time to time and teachers and others stakeholders are trained in them.

2. Innovative teaching pedagogies alongside lecture methods are important.

3. Inequities in education need to be reduced by providing financial and other support.

4. College should take up the responsibility of creating awareness about COVID19.

5. Counseling and other support during such times is essential for the mental health of everyone.