

BEST PRACTICES 2021-22

Best Practice I

Title of the practice: ICT Enhanced Learning

Objectives of the Practice

1. To maintain flexibility and responsiveness to changing environments and prepare students for future workplaces.
2. To know and imbibe new teaching and evaluation methods using technology.
3. To improve the quality of education with the latest ICT-enhanced teaching-learning practices.
4. To foster creativity and innovation with the help of technology in the classroom.
5. To harness technology for more effective student-teacher interaction and collaboration among students.

The Context

This digital era has changed the way students communicate, network, access information and learn. The internet has become a reservoir of information, with a wealth of learning materials in almost every subject. The easy access to knowledge and the increasing use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) has galvanized the teaching-learning process in India. ICT enhanced learning and evaluation methods not only make learning more effective, but also prepare the students to compete in the global economy by being part of a skilled workforce. It facilitates social mobility by enhancing learning experiences and providing new sets of skills. In this context, ICT enhanced learning, Wi-Fi enabled classes with projectors and upskilled faculty is the need of the hour.

The Practice

Wi-Fi enabled campus, LCD projection facility in every classroom, well equipped Auditorium and Audio-visual room help the faculty to deliver interactive lectures and demonstrations through PowerPoint presentations, e-modules, learning videos, tutorials and online quizzes. Separate Computer Laboratories are provided for students of each programme – BCom, BBA, IMCom and PGDM. Students are registered on official Class WhatsApp groups administered by the faculty members to enable active communication. BBA students are provided with laptops to enable group learning and participation in activities. The institute has adopted and utilized ICT tools and pedagogies seamlessly over the years and has brought a significant positive impact on the teaching-learning process.

An automated library complete with all barcoded acquisitions using ILMS Software NewGenLib EEv3.2 provides computerized cataloging, check-in, and check-out of books. E-resources include Inflightnet (N-List) and J-Gate (Social and Management Sciences), CMIE (Economic Outlook) and CMIE Prowess. Twelve browsing stations have been made available to enhance student learning on campus. A database of question papers is available on the college website for student reference. The OPAC system installed in the college library provides easy access to data regarding availability of books. All library acquisitions are barcoded. Printing of barcodes and spine labels is carried out inhouse with the barcode printer or QR code printer. Remote access is available to these databases. The library is ready to implement ILMS KOHA with KOHA software installed and book catalogue and students' data migrated.

During the Covid-19 pandemic phase, teachers upskilled themselves and adapted efficiently to online communication platforms like Zoom video conferencing, Google Meet and Microsoft Teams, as well as online evaluation tools like Testmoz and video recording software like OBS Software. Faculty members have been provided with personal Laptops. Technological platforms such as Google Classroom, One-Note and WhatsApp were used to share reading material, feedback and evaluation. Proctored online exams were conducted for admission to the IMCom program through SpeedExam software.

The institution tied-up with 'IBM Skills Build' to offer over 7000 free online courses to students. Value-added courses on Tally, Business Analytics, Digital Marketing, Photoshop, Corel Draw have been conducted for students through the Dempo Skill Development Centre.

Lecture plans, student attendance and results uploaded on the IAIMS portal provided easy access to the students. During the pandemic, the Semester End Assessment was also conducted in the online mode and through the use of Google Classroom. Faculty members created E-content in the 4-Quadrant based MOOC format (DISHTAVO).

Evidence of Success

1. Effective and extensive use of ICT tools and methods of teaching and learning through enabled classrooms and platforms like Google Suite and WhatsApp.
2. Enhanced library resources, with student integrations and e-access to publications, journals and study materials.
3. Successful conduct of online classes during the pandemic period. Access to online materials and courses that allowed students to broaden their scope of learning.
4. Effective conduct of Intra Semester Assessments through Testmoz and online exams through Google Classroom.
5. Teachers' active participation in DISHTAVO and successful creation of quality teaching content and video-modules which can be accessed online and used in the classrooms.

Problems Encountered and Resources Required

1. Internet connectivity at students' homes was a big constraint during the pandemic period
2. Occasional power-cuts and internet connectivity issues hampered the smooth conduct of online classes.
3. The online mode of teaching restricted two-way interaction and active participation by students, as students frequently kept their cameras and audio devices off, making it difficult to monitor the efficacy of instruction and obtain feedback.

Best Practice II

Title of the practice: Community Outreach

Objectives of the practice

1. To sensitize students towards the needs of the community and to nurture healthy and compassionate citizens.

2. To conduct workshops and train students who, in turn, would share the acquired knowledge with members of the community.
3. To imbibe the value of social consciousness through awareness programmes.
4. To cultivate compassion and respect for community members through various outreach activities.
5. To empower and create community members who are self-reliant, and promote employability.

Context

Community-based learning combines traditional classroom instruction with community service to enhance the learning of the students and promote civic participation. In keeping with the vision of 'transforming individuals for a better society' the institution places great emphasis on community improvement and engagement. The community outreach initiatives connect academic programs with community service so that students, faculty and community partners can forge linkages between theory and practice, knowledge and action and the resources of the institution towards community development.

The skills that are honed through outreach activities are social skills, empathy, critical thinking and problem solving, leadership, self-reliance, salesmanship and emotional intelligence. It is through community outreach that the welfare of any society benefits and moves forward towards a progressive future. Since students are the future of the nation, it is important that they understand the ground reality, strive to improve their surroundings and help uplift members of the community through small yet impactful endeavors.

The Practice

Through the regular conduct of outreach activities in accordance with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the institute constantly engages students in order to create awareness, nurture empathy and understand the ground reality of basic needs, health and education of the community. It is through such exposure that students develop a sense of responsibility and belonging towards a community.

The following programmes have been carried out as a part of community outreach:

- The institute adheres to the age-old tradition of visiting old age homes. Students spend quality time with the inmates and make them feel cared for. They contribute towards and distribute essential items like bedsheets, towels, cups and saucers, soaps and eatables.
- In keeping with the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 3) of Good Health and Well Being, initiatives such as the 'Make a Mask' campaign and 'Stay fit Stay healthy', were the preventive measures which were carried out to tackle the spread of Covid 19. Besides this, an initiative titled 'Eat Fruits' campaign in association with NGOs (Sethu and Sangath) was organized for slum children to create awareness about the benefits of eating fruits.
- Regular conduct of Blood donation camps in association with Government and Private Blood Banks provide easy accessibility and adequate supply of safe quality blood collected from voluntary blood donors to those in need.

- Under the banner of the 'Clean India Programme', the institute carries out cleanliness drives, plastic-free campaigns, beach cleaning drives, and E-waste collection drives, aimed at spreading awareness and environment consciousness among the community. With the objective of reducing, reusing and recycling plastic, water dispensers and bird feeders from PET bottles have been created and placed in and around the campus. Workshops the art of decoupage and on reusing plastic to make crochet items were held to create awareness on alternate and effective use of plastic.
- Fostering entrepreneurship through initiatives such as *Udyojika: A Retail Mela for Women*, the institution has succeeded in providing self-employment training, promoting women's empowerment and boosting the confidence of local women vendors to scale up their small businesses. Beekeeping training for agriculturists and lay people was initiated to promote self-employment and they were made aware about the schemes available to venture into low-cost lucrative business opportunities.
- The institute is quick to respond in the event of unfortunate natural calamities. For instance, a Relief material for Kerala flood victims, such as soaps, sanitary napkins and biscuits were collected and handed over to the All Goa Malayalee Association, Goa.
- The institution empowers rural youth and fulfils the Sustainable Development Goal (SD4) of Quality Education by conducting educational programmes through activities such as yoga, one-act plays, quizzes and talks on topics like personality development, benefits of hand washing, ill-effects of alcohol, drug addiction and health issues.
- To inculcate values that promote the importance of sustainable development, the MTTM department of the institute has initiated the *Eco-Kshatriya Club*. The club provides training on composting domestic waste and sensitizes the community on the importance of waste management.

Evidence of Success

1. The visit to the old age home leaves inmates feeling loved, wanted and cared for. The students who visit the old age home are overcome with compassion and respect, and have learned valuable lessons of the basic principles of humanity.
2. During the last five years, a total of 222 units of blood have been collected and donated to blood banks.
3. To tackle the spread of Covid 19, student volunteers stitched 465 cloth face masks, distributed them among family and friends, and created photo collages demonstrating fitness activities.
4. Plastic-free initiatives were carried out through the distribution of 325 cloth bags and 153 paper bags. These and other initiatives have created environmental consciousness within the community.
5. Entrepreneurship initiatives have boosted the morale of the community members. Some of the women beneficiaries have launched their business operations on a larger scale. Through the feedback of beneficiaries, the institute has decided to organize more business-oriented activities annually.

6. Social consciousness was created among students through the donation of necessary items to the victims of floods in Kerala.
7. Eco Kshatriya club is continuously engaged in educating villagers on segregation of domestic waste.

Problems Encountered and Resources Required

- Getting in touch with villagers and convincing them to participate in activities has been a challenge.
- Scheduling of activities and programmes are often hindered by time-constraints or inability to align the timings of the different stakeholders involved, thereby hampering the conduct of such useful activities.
- Faculty members sometimes lack the required experience to take forward community outreach activities and/or find it difficult to monitor such activities.
- Difficulty in assessing the extent to which the programmes may have enabled the community members to become self-reliant and employable.