Department of Lifelong Learning & Extension (REC)
Palli Samgathana Vibhaga (PSV)
Visva-Bharati, Sriniketan

Best Practice (1)

1. Title of the Practice:

Student engagement in the extension activities.

2. Objective of the Practice:

The main objectives of the practice are-

- To provide practical exposure to the students about village environment.
- To reflect a glimpse of the socio-economic condition of the rural people before the students.
- To get exposure about the various institutions and their functioning in the village.
- To pass out the gained knowledge to the community for the overall development of the village.

3. The Context:

The Department of Lifelong Learning & Extension (Rural Extension Centre), Visva-Bharati, Sriniketan is one of the oldest departments in Sriniketan. It has been actively engaged in improving the condition of surrounding villages since its inception from 1922 through extension work. Presently, apart from regular academic programmes (M.A in Rural Management) and Ph.D Programme, the department is also carrying out extension activities which in unique and rare in the University. Huge field orientation and practical exercises boost up students to be developed as skilled, professional and experienced.

4. The Practice:

65 adopted villages act as social laboratories and knowledge hubs for the students. Each village has a Village Development Society (VDS) which is apolitical in nature. Presently maximum VDS are registered under Societies Registration Act 1956. Maximum VDS has their own building and land. They are direct involvement with primary stack holder in planning and implementation of developmental programme. At present stage, students attending field work in the adopted villages to get orientation regarding overall socio-economic condition of the village, operational procedure of different institution like Anganwari, Health sub-centre, Panchayats.

5. Evidence of Success:

The students of the department have a genuine scope to understand village community in general & exploring wide range of caste dynamics in villages. The student can identify the common problems in the field of Health, Education, Sanitation & Agriculture etc effecting villager's life and design plan & suggestions for mitigating the problems. Thus the students can develop their insight, which may help them in their future employability.

6. Problems Encountered:

Students need to be professionally more equipped to deal with the problems of the village. Specially, in the present context where the village environment is more or less politically disrupted. More and more practical exposure is needed for the student to deal with different people with varied problems along with theoretical orientation in the class room.

Best Practices (2)

1. Title of the Practice:
Broti Balak Organiation

2. Objectives of Practices:
The objectives of the programme are: -

- To develop the spirit of community services among the children through Brati organization.
- To undertake physical exercise in group in villages and to make a sound body with a sound mind of children through Brati organization.
- To develop awareness among the children and the society about the natural equilibrium and environment education.
- To develop leadership qualities among the children of Brati organization through group dynamism.

3. The Context:
Rural boys and girls between 9 and 14 years of age are mobilised into groups (like scout) and are motivated for welfare activities in their respective villages. Broti leaders *(Broti Nayak and Nayika)* are also nominated by the Village Development Societies (VDS) to run the Broti Balak organization in their respective villages and they are providing voluntary services for the community. Since inception of Sriniketan experiment, this programme is an integral part of extension activities of the Department for all round growth and development of children in adopted villages. It is not only essential for overall development of the children but was an important programme for development of leadership qualities among children for future, so that they can play active role for development of their villages.

4. The Practice:
For successful implementation of the programme 5-days physical training programme organized for the Brati leaders at Sriniketan centrally. The Brati Dal with active support of the Village Development Society (VDS) conducted *shramdan (offering labour)*, drawing competition, cultural programmes, and publication of wall magazine, craft making, and leaf collection programme of children. Drawing, Sports, Craft making competition was also organized centrally at Sriniketan for the children of Brati Dals. Ever year, a central rally with Brati Children (more than 400) was also organized on the occasion of the National Youth Day on 12th January. On the occasion of Annual festival of Sriniketan on 6th February of every year, Brati balak Organization there is an public exhibition of physical exercises and drills in Annual *Broti O Yuba Utsav*.

5. Evidence of Success:
The programme is designed for man making and character building assimilation of ideas for nation building. Broti Balak organization takes active part in '*Swaccha Bharat Avijan'* and cleanliness

programme and other extracurricular activities in adopted villages. On the basis of our observation and field work study this programme also encourages children to become the leaders of the Panchayati Raj System and in different spheres of life in future.

6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required:

To run Broti Balak organization Department needs more financial support and resources particularly manpower to run the programme. Post of a Broti Organizer of the Department is lying vacant since long time and the Department is managing the programme with the help and support of a technical expert and previous Broti leader from adopted villages.

Best Practice (3)

1. **Title of the Practice:**

Rural Library Services through voluntary effort.

2. Objectives of the Practice:

The objectives of the programme are:

- To develop regular reading habits among the village readers.
- To develop rural library as a cultural and continuing education centre.
- To develop self- reliance and self-confidence among the rural youth and students.
- To provide all updated information regarding modern and advanced science and technology among the readers of rural library.
- Retention of acquired literacy skill for the neo-literates.
- To develop rural library as a Centre for sharing, sustaining and strengthening the knowledge base of the people in general and students in particular.

3. The Context:

From inception of the Department literacy and adult education was important part of the Department. It is not only essential for overall development of the society but was an important tool to change the society. Adult Education Centres were established during the early period. In the later phase, '*Chalantikas'* (circulating library) were established with a view to provide books to villagers for exercising their acquired literacy skill. In the next phase, rural library buildings are being constructed with the help of RRRLF, Ministry of Culture to provide a permanent platform to villagers so that they can come together, especially the poor SC & ST families for development of their cognitive faculties, space for information sharing and healthy cultural exercise.

4. The Practice:

Rural Library services are one of the important services through which literacy and education movement are carried out in the villages. Apart from this, another objective of this programme is to develop rural library as an information & cultural centre in the respective villages. This programme in rural areas has been carried out through network of 38 rural libraries with an active and financial support from Raja Rammohann Roy Library Foundation (RRRLF), Kolkata. Librarians and Assistant Librarians of rural libraries have been working voluntarily since inception of the programme.

Starting with eight permanent rural libraries in 1975, presently the centre extended it up to 35 in the adjacent rural areas of Sriniketan and Santiniketan within the radius of 10-15 Kms from Sriniketan. These rural libraries at present are located in two Community Development Blocks of Bolpur Sub-Division namely Bolpur-Sriniketan and Illambazar.

Those libraries are run and manage by the Village Development Societies (VDS), a village level organisation registered under Society Registration Act 1960. Two volunteer usually nominated by the VDS who act as librarian and manage all library related affairs voluntarily.

Presently there are twelve children's libraries attached with rural libraries situated in 12 villages under its command area. These libraries are equipped with children books, Joyful learning materials, playing materials etc.

Different awareness programme/ seminar /workshop are organized time to time such as strengthening *"Swachha Bharat Avijan"* and *"Beti Bachao and Beti Padhao"* in collaboration with Govt. and non Govt. organization.

5. Evidence of Success:

Department has taken initiative for construction of library building in 27 villages with the active support of VDS and villagers in a participatory way. The villagers become the stakeholder of these initiatives as they contribute in building construction in their own villages in terms of labour, donation and collection of materials.

Each year books and furniture provided to each of the 35 rural libraries by the Department. The recurring cost of running those libraries has also been provided by the department. Those activities includes reader's meeting, monthly meeting with the librarians with the department, conducting cultural programme on different occasions, binding of soiled books etc. Total 1, 42,578 books (average 4073 books for each library) of different titles provided to the rural libraries by the Department and initiatives was taken to equip the all the rural libraries with computer/s phase by phase. Rural Libraries becoming the centre for dissemination of knowledge and information

Computers and printers are also provided to the rural libraries in order to extent computer literacy to the students and youths of villages. Internet connection the remote villages are made connected to the outer world. '*Sahitya Sabhas'* has been organized on cluster basis involving villagers, rural readers where quality writings from the readers as well as villagers has been presented and deposited in the department. Initiative has also taken to print those writings after duly compiled in form of a magazine '*SRISTHI'*

6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required:

Rapid misuse of mobile (android phone) and other electronic devices and due to impact of social media we are observing reduction of readers in rural libraries. Rural libraries is needed more computers along with internet facilities and proper digital infrastructure in villages which attract the readers to come in the library.