

Society of Our Lady of Grace Convent

Pushpanjali College of Education, Vasai

Best Practices for 2020-21

Best Practice One

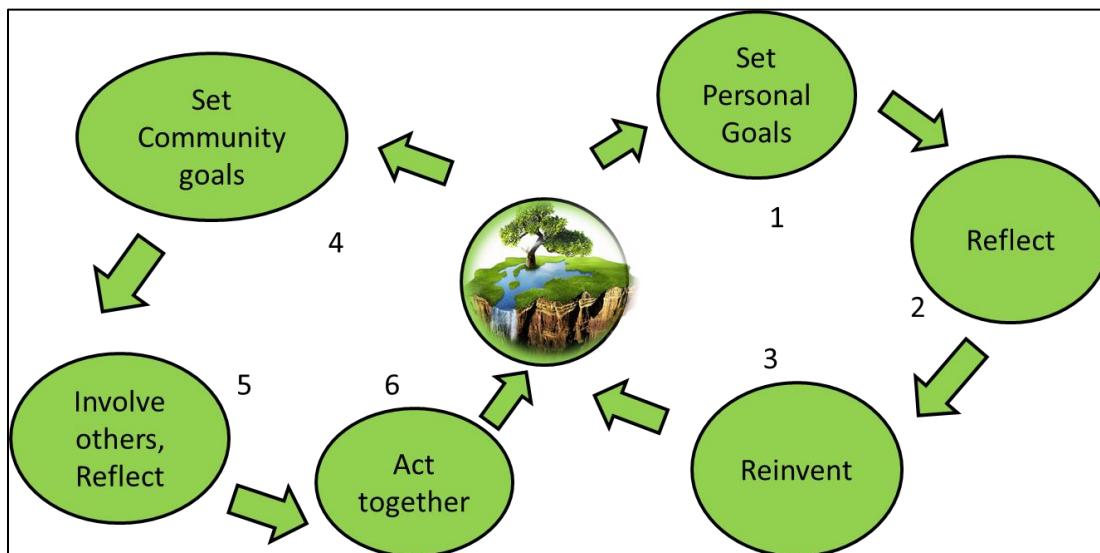
1. Title of the Practice: Nurture Nature Secure Your Future

2 The context that required initiation of the practice: Pushpanjali College of Education is situated in Vasai, a verdant land where farming and fishing are traditional occupations. Economy and Environment are closely related. Environment issues like plastic pollution, degradation of soil and urban sprawl are adversely impacting the local economy. Hence the practice ‘Nurture Nature, Secure Your future’ is adopted.

3. Objectives of the practice:

- (i) To Develop a sense of responsibility towards a clean and green environment through the teaching- learning process
- (ii) To Promote environmental education through cross disciplinary connections
- (iii) To Develop a problem solving attitude with respect to pertinent issues related to environment
- (iv) To Promote Capacity Building to become stewards of the environment.

4. The Practice: : The best practice ‘Nurture Nature, Secure Your Future’ is guided by the twin philosophy of Reflection and Action.



With this guiding philosophy, the student teachers of Pushpanjali College of Education and their mentoring faculty analyse each lesson being taught and try to integrate relevant action for sustainable development. This may be done through discussion or problem solving. During the internship lessons, student teachers demonstrate making of products or they demonstrate a process that can help to lead to an environment that is less polluted. Life style changes like ‘waste sorting’, ‘Use of the Rs Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Renew, Refuse’, ‘Don’t panic, go organic’ ‘Refusing one time use plastic’ are advocated.

The practice ‘Nurture Nature, Secure Your Future’ is relevant and meaningful because as mentioned earlier the traditional occupations of Vasai are farming and fishing. The overuse of plastic is causing a problem to fishing as marine pollution is on the rise. Rapid urbanization is taking a toll on the soil quality. To revive the soil quality, traditional methods like composting are advocated. This also helps to manage household waste in a wise manner. Instead of throwing away waste, it is better to examine if it can be repaired, renewed, recycled or repurposed. Eg left over pieces from window panes were recycled to make a lamp. Used T-shirts can be converted to shopping bags, thus abstaining from us of plastic bags. Instead of mats made of synthetic material ecofriendly mats from coconut palms are made. Thus by reducing use of plastic we are ensuring that it does not get into our farms and into the sea.

Despite our efforts to reduce the use of plastic, there are times plastic enters into our homes in the form of packaging material. These are things we may not be able to control or we may not be able to recycle as an individual. In such a case, the college collaborates with an NGO Dhyaas Foundation. Plastic material from one’s own house and from the neighbourhood is collected, cleaned and deposited at the NGO’s designated centres. The NGO forwards this for recycling and converting to plastic bricks.

Action research is an important aspect of the B.Ed curriculum. In 2020-21, 15 students undertook an action research on the topic ‘Sustainable practices in waste management’. Each student identified ten households and oriented them regarding sustainable practices in dealing with household waste. Thus the best practice ‘Nurture Nature, Secure Your Future’ was extrapolated beyond the college and taken into the community. The results brought a lot of satisfaction as 150 households made life style changes that would help in having a less polluted environment.

The best practice ‘Nurture Nature, Secure Your Future’ focuses on VENTEL (Vocational Education, Nai Talim and Experiential Learning). The Vocational Education aspect of emphasizes productive work with economic value to build entrepreneurship and employability. Organically produced vegetables from one’s kitchen garden, ornamental potted plants and naturally made pesticides are sure to be of economic value. Similarly making decorative articles, articles like shopping bags and doormats from recycled old clothes are also saleable. Nai Talim and Experiential Learning are duly emphasized as there is learning by doing, cross disciplinary connections are incorporated and students can pursue crafts of their interest.

5. Obstacles faced and strategies adopted to overcome them: Due to the pandemic situation the outdoor movements were restricted and hence actual demonstration in the classroom could not be done. This was overcome by creating a video of the demonstration and showing the entire process through the video. In a way this was beneficial as finer aspects or close-ups of the process of production could be shown better. Also these videos could be sent to multiple recipients. Those who needed to review the process could view the videos multiple times. One more challenge faced was that at times student-teachers lacked the technical know-how to make a product. In such a case they referred to websites or conferred with peers and experts. Collaboration with the NGO Dhaayas was beneficial as handling or recycling plastic waste was not possible at an individual level.

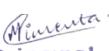
6. Impact of the practice: The practice has been beneficial to multiple stakeholders like student-teachers, internship schools and the community at large.

- i. The practice has helped to make life style changes through the use of the Rs like Reduce, Recycle, Reuse, Refuse, Renew
- ii. It has helped to reach out to students during internship lessons and to the community through action research thus promoting civic responsibilities.
- iii. It has helped to reduce plastic pollution by collaborating with the NGO Dhyaas Foundation
- iv. Student-teachers have implemented eco-friendly solutions to agricultural issues and emphasized this through lessons
- v. The Nai Talim approach and Experiential Learning is used in all pedagogy subjects. Thus the cross disciplinary approach is integrated making learning holistic and interesting.
- vi. The practice is helping student-teachers to become stewards of the environment. This may take some time to achieve but nonetheless is the ultimate aim of the practice ‘Nurture Nature, Secure Your Future’.

7. Resources required

Human Resources: Manager, Principal, Students, faculty, resource persons,

Non-human resources: ICT facilities, material for making products


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Best Practice Two

1. **Title of the Best Practice:** AMRIT Approach for showcasing Indian Culture
2. **The context that required initiation of the practice:** Our Indian culture offers many avenues to have a healthy life following basic principles of eco-friendliness and sustainability. Living in a globalized world, one is often attracted by the glamour of the other countries but sadly may be distanced from one's own culture. The best practice entitled 'AMRIT approach for showcasing Indian culture' is an attempt to get back to our roots and discover the treasure we hold within ourselves. Mahatma Gandhi said 'A nation's culture resides in the heart and soul of its people.' This best practice, therefore, aims at reawakening our heart and soul to appreciate the richness of our culture through VENTEL activities.
3. **Objectives of the Practice:**
 - i. To revive Indigenous technical knowledge practices and disseminate information about the same
 - ii. To appreciate India's vast heritage
 - iii. To promote Indian culture

4. The Practice:

The best practice makes use of the five step approach entitled as the AMRIT Approach.

Analyse: Analyse the context, explore our rich culture

Make & Model: Make the product, model it out to a small group

Reach Out: Reach out to peers, internship schools & community

Integrate: Integrate life style changes in self

Transform : Transform self and society

The AMRIT approach consists of the following steps:

1. **Analyse:** Here the topic being taught is analysed with respect to its context and background in light of the Indian culture. For example: while teaching a lesson on the

North Eastern states of India, the teacher explored various aspects of the North Eastern culture. While teaching about ‘Hygiene’ in Science, the teacher studied various plants like neem, aloevera and tulsi that can be used to make soaps and sanitisers.

2. **Make and Model:** In the make and model stage, the teacher demonstrates the process of making the product. Demonstrations are shown to students through videos where each step is explained and close ups can be included. In some cases, it may not be a product that is depicted but it could be something unique to Indian culture such as yogasanas. While modeling the procedure, students are encouraged to practice the same along with the teacher thus adding the element of personal experience.
3. **Reach Out:** This stage refers to sharing our knowledge and skills with others. It includes sharing it with peers that is the B.Ed classmates, sharing with internship schools and if possible also with the community around us. For example, teaching yoga to the teacher community has helped many to deal with the health issues that emerged due to increased screen time.
4. **Integrate:** This step of the best practice refers to making the learning part of ourselves. When the learning is integrated into one’s daily routine it becomes part of our personality. For example, appreciating Indian art will encourage us to subscribe to products made by our artisans thus helping local economy. If the products meet required standards then they can be sold and help students to earn.
5. **Transform:** Transform refers to ushering desirable changes in attitudes and behavior. Respect for culture, appreciation of India art, going back to our roots and appreciating practices like Yoga and Ayurveda will bring personal as well as community benefits. The practice can help to transform the face of rural India where many arts often go unnoticed. Revival of dying arts and emphasis on indigenous technical knowledge are very essential as once this knowledge is lost it will be difficult to resuscitate.

For the above described model, we have chosen activities pertaining to Indian art, Indian cuisine, festival decorations and indigenous technical knowledge practices. Internship lessons offer a good platform to explore a topic from the point of view of Indian perspective. Student-teachers try to identify a product or a process that is closely linked with the topic being taught and integrate the same in the lesson thus adding to Experiential Learning. In the near future we plan to take this endeavour a step ahead by promoting the revival and upkeep of *bavkhals* which are water bodies traditionally used to store water. We also plan to study local fauna and document their medicinal benefits as it is part of localized knowledge.

VENTEL related objectives are always addressed as the products prepared such as edibles can be sold to others. The artistic products created are also of economic value. Using indigenous process like low cost water filter, herbal soaps and sanitisers have much demand as they are free from harmful chemicals. Thus the vocational aspect is well covered through this best practice. Since all these activities involve learning by doing they offer constructivist learning experiences. The

learning experiences touch cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains making learning truly holistic.

5.Challenges faced if any: We have not encountered any challenges as such with this practice as culture is part of our lives. In case we felt that there was some information needed to carry out the VENTEL activity, we would refer the web or consult someone. One challenge we visualize when we use these activities in school is that students are easily influenced by western culture and hence they may at times need to be convinced of the long term benefits of adopting our traditional practices.

6.Impact of the Practice: A survey was conducted to find the response of student-teachers towards Nai Talim activities. It was seen that 70% strongly agree and 30% agree that Nai Talim activities foster innovativeness. 100% respondents agree that these activities generate interests among learners. 80% strongly agree and 20% agree that Nai Talim activities help to correlate theory with practical aspects and there is the joy of creating something new. Using the AMRIT approach to understand our past legacy and promote it in form of VENTEL Activities enriched the student teachers as they valued the richness of Indian culture. VENTEL activities are an interesting mode to spread the our rich heritage. Pursuing our arts, exploring our indigenous traditional knowledge and finding solutions based on our legacy will help to keep young students nurture useful hobbies. All this will surely lead to holistic development of children

7. Resources required

Human Resources: Students, Faculty, experts if needed for special advice

Non-human Resources: material for making various products, ICT to disseminate information, documents on traditional practices.


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