

**Excelssior Education Society's
K.B. College of Arts and Commerce for Women, Thane**

Best Practice 1: Green Practices

Objectives:

- Educate the new generation about the importance of conserving air, water, soil, and the environment.
- Initiate eco-friendly activities for environmental protection.
- Conduct anti-plastic and anti-noise campaigns and promote E-waste management.
- Address pollution concerns and instil environmental ethics.
- Promote clean energy and sustainable energy resources.
- Conduct extensive tree plantation drives.

Context:

The planet faces severe environmental challenges, including global warming and climate change, leading to natural disasters and altered weather patterns. As a higher education institution, we play a critical role in educating students about sustainable practices that consider the environment, people, and sustainability.

The Practice:

- We prioritize environmental conservation in both academic and co-curricular activities, encouraging awareness among students and the community.
- Our academic year begins with World Environment Day, organized by the Department of Environmental Studies and the Nature Club, encouraging year-round environmental initiatives.
- Regular tree plantation activities are conducted by NSS, DLLE, and the Nature Club.
- We promote resource conservation through principles of reuse, recycling, and reduction, alongside wet and dry waste segregation.
- Canteen water is reused for watering campus plants, and age-old trees are preserved.
- We encourage paperless communication, utilizing college websites and WhatsApp groups.
- The Department of Lifelong Learning leads E-waste management activities, raising awareness through drives, paper bag distribution, and best-out-of-waste initiatives.
- NSS projects focus on electricity conservation and reusing old materials for notebooks, alongside awareness drives for environmental issues.
- Craft activities highlight reusing waste materials, and encourage creativity in making quality products.
- We host various environmental-themed competitions, such as elocution, photography, and essay writing.

Evidence of Success

Throughout the academic year, our college successfully implemented a range of environmentally focused initiatives, significantly contributing to both awareness and community engagement. The Tree Plantation Drives on July 14

and August 6, 2022, saw enthusiastic participation from students, resulting in the planting of numerous saplings across the campus, enhancing our green cover and promoting biodiversity. The celebration of **International Environment Day on June 5, 2022**, served as a vibrant platform to educate students about environmental issues, inspiring ongoing commitment to sustainability.

Our E-waste Drive from April 1 to April 30, 2023, was particularly impactful, as it encouraged students to responsibly dispose of electronic waste, fostering a culture of recycling and waste management. This initiative not only helped declutter homes but also raised awareness about the hazards of improper e-waste disposal. **The Eco-Friendly Ganesha Idol Making Workshop held on August 26, 2022**, demonstrated creativity and environmental consciousness, with students crafting idols using sustainable materials, promoting eco-friendly practices during the festival season.

Moreover, the **Awareness Drive on Ganesha Idol Immersion on August 17, 2022**, educated participants about the environmental impact of traditional idol immersion, advocating for more sustainable alternatives. **The Ozone Festival on September 16, 2022**, engaged students in discussions about air quality and climate change, further reinforcing our commitment to environmental issues. **The Awareness on Waste Segregation initiative at our NSS adopted village on January 19, 2023**, was instrumental in promoting responsible waste disposal practices within the community, encouraging villagers to participate in environmental conservation.

Lastly, the **Practical Demo Session on Homemade Compost Pit on April 25, 2023**, equipped students with valuable skills in organic waste management, empowering them to create compost from kitchen waste, thereby reducing landfill contributions. Collectively, these initiatives not only enhanced student involvement but also fostered a culture of environmental stewardship within and beyond the college, marking a successful year of green practices and community engagement.

Challenges Encountered:

- Organizing field visits is challenging due to logistical constraints.
- Language barriers among students; faculty provide support in multiple languages.
- Safety concerns during community programs; parental consent is prioritized.

Best Practice 2: Skill Development Initiatives

Objectives:

- Equip students with industry-relevant skills to enhance their competency, independence, and employability.
- Bridge the skill gap between industry expectations and the competencies of graduates.
- Prepare students to meet the challenges of the global job market with

confidence.

- Encourage entrepreneurial initiatives, innovative thinking, and problem-solving abilities among students.

Context:

In alignment with the Indian government's focus on skill development, especially in the education sector, our institution places significant importance on providing students with practical skills that align with industry demands. Many students in our institution come from economically modest backgrounds, and we strive to empower them to become valuable contributors across various sectors. The need for skill-based education is greater than ever, given the rapid changes in global markets and industries. Through carefully designed training modules, workshops, and collaborations with industry leaders, we aim to encourage self-reliance, employability, and entrepreneurial opportunities.

The Practice:

Our institution employs a multi-pronged approach to enhance student's skill sets and bridge the gap between academic learning and practical application. The following initiatives were undertaken to cater to a diverse set of students and disciplines:

1. Expert Lectures and Industry Interactions:

- A lecture on "Financial Literacy" was conducted by Bombay Stock Exchange Institute Limited, attended by 112 students. This session provided students with a foundational understanding of personal finance, savings, investment, and the stock market, helping them make informed financial decisions.

- Another expert lecture on "Unique and Unconventional Courses" was organized by Radal Infotech, attracting 185 students. The session introduced participants to non-traditional career paths, expanding their perspectives on career options in emerging fields.

2. Skill-Oriented Short Courses:

- A Tally crash course was offered to students pursuing the Bachelor of Accounting and Finance (BAF) program, benefiting 39 students. Tally is widely used in business accounting, and this course aimed to strengthen students' practical skills in managing financial transactions.

- For B.A. Economics students, a Certificate Course in Capital Markets (Investor Awareness Program) was introduced, with 18 students participating. This program provided insights into the functioning of financial markets, investor behaviour, and the importance of informed investing.

- A Bridge Course in Mathematics was initiated to help students grasp the fundamentals of mathematical concepts, attended by 105 students. This program aimed to bridge any gaps in mathematical understanding and ensure students were prepared for future academic challenges.

3. Workshops on Digital Skills:

- The Training and Placement Cell organized a hands-on workshop on Digital Marketing, which attracted 285 participants. The session covered modern marketing strategies, social media campaigns, and SEO techniques, equipping students with essential tools for the digital age.

4. Paperless Communication and Career Guidance:

- To promote sustainability and efficiency, the institution encourages paperless communication through digital platforms. Regular career guidance sessions are also organized, covering a variety of industries such as banking, finance, hospitality, and technology. These sessions help students explore different career opportunities and understand the skillsets required in various sectors.

5. Industry-Integrated Skill Development Programs:

- Collaborations with the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) and other industry partners enable students to participate in certified skill development courses. These programs enhance employability by providing hands-on training and certifications that align with industry needs.

- Annual Placement Drives are held, featuring national and multinational companies. These drives serve as a platform for students to secure job opportunities and gain real-world experience.

6. Earn-and-Learn Initiatives:

- Programs such as Annapurna and the Earn-and-Learn Scheme offer students the opportunity to develop practical skills while generating revenue. These initiatives are especially helpful for students from financially constrained backgrounds, allowing them to support their education while gaining work experience.

7. Promoting Entrepreneurship and Sustainability:

- In line with our focus on entrepreneurial development, students are encouraged to create and market eco-friendly products. These activities not only foster innovative thinking but also raise awareness about environmental sustainability.

Evidence of Success:

The various initiatives under the skill development framework have yielded positive outcomes, reflecting the effectiveness of our approach:

1. Improved Employability and Job Placements:

- The success of our annual placement drives is evident, with many students securing employment in leading national and multinational companies. Graduates have found roles in sectors ranging from finance and IT to hospitality and marketing, underscoring the relevance of our skill-focused programs.

2. Soft Skills Training for Holistic Development:

- Recognizing the importance of communication and interpersonal skills, we have conducted over 60 hours of soft skills training. These sessions, focused on areas such as teamwork, leadership, problem-solving, and effective communication, have significantly enhanced students' employability.

3. Showcasing Creative Talent:

- Add-on courses in areas like beauty therapy have given students the opportunity to explore their artistic and creative skills. These programs not only build competence in niche fields but also encourage students to think innovatively about their career paths.

4. Revenue-Generating Initiatives:

- Programs like Ananda Mela and Annapurna have been highly successful in teaching students culinary and entrepreneurial skills. Through these initiatives, students not only honed their cooking abilities but also earned income, fostering self-sufficiency and practical learning.

Challenges Faced:

While the outcomes of our skill development initiatives have been encouraging, several challenges remain:

1. Language and Communication Barriers:

- A significant number of students come from modest backgrounds and face challenges related to language and communication. To address this, the institution has initiated soft skills training and language development programs, though continuous efforts are needed to build proficiency.

2. Conservative Mindsets Toward Employment:

- Some students and their families harbour conservative attitudes towards certain career options, preferring traditional employment paths. Changing these mindsets requires ongoing career counselling sessions and exposure to non-traditional but lucrative job opportunities.

3. Family Reluctance to Support Skill-Based Learning:

- Despite the benefits of skill-based programs, some families are reluctant to allow students to participate, fearing that it may detract from their academic performance. Extensive counselling and awareness programs are conducted to help families understand the importance of holistic education that combines academic knowledge with practical skills.

Conclusion

Our institution's commitment to skill development reflects a broader vision of empowering students to thrive in a competitive and ever-evolving job market. Through expert lectures, hands-on workshops, certificate courses, and entrepreneurship initiatives, we aim to build a generation of self-reliant, competent, and innovative graduates. The challenges we encounter only reinforce the importance of our mission, and with continued efforts, we believe that our students will be well-equipped to meet the demands of the future.



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