

## Best Practice - I

Title of the Practice:

NSS - Not Me But You

Objective of the Practice:

Holistic development - The College and the Community - Hand in Hand

It was thought that deeply entrenched as the college is in its community, any development of the college must necessarily mean development also of the community it is a part of. Just as the college aspires to be the torch bearer of academic development in the region, similarly it was felt that the college needs to provide other kinds of support also to the community - mostly social in nature.

The Context:

The college is located in a rural corner of Purba Medinipur (PS: Sutahata, PO: Chaitanyapur), a scheduled caste region with a low socio-economic profile. And for people here, the primary goal has always been surmounting adverse social conditions. Under these circumstances, it was felt that the college needs to be by the side of the community in its myriad needs. It was felt that along with achieving cutting edge academic excellence, we also need to be a socially responsible institution. Just as the motto of the college "Be Man and Make Man" attests to the fact that the college puts a lot of importance to maintaining value standards, similarly by setting up 4 NSS Units under the stewardship of 4 Programme Officers, the college brings across its commitment to society, its social face.

The Practice:

The NSS Units of the college have distinguished themselves by taking social responsibility to new standards. In the Covid-19 situation it has become the leader as far as academic social responsibility is concerned both among colleges in the Purba Medinipur district and also among those under Vidyasagar University. Especially, under the leadership of Prof. Pranab Kr. Jana, Programme Officer, Unit IV, the NSS Units have distinguished themselves in their Covid combat role among the community. Some of their activities are as follows:

1. Building social awareness by putting up posters in our college, hostel premises and in the nearby villages
2. Spreading awareness by organizing small community level programmes, posting videos in college Facebook page etc.
3. Preparing food and distributing it among the community
4. Helping migrant labourers and farmers in harvesting the paddy crop

5. Distribution of masks, hand sanitizers and liquid soaps to the needy
6. Financially helping the needy, like monetarily assisting a cancer patient and our college canteen staff who were out of work and in dire straits due to the extended lockdown

Other than coming to the forefront in the Covid-19 situation, the NSS Units have also been carrying out all its regular activities like participating in different environmental and health drive programmes that include organizing Blood Donation camps, taking part in clean and healthy atmosphere drives, healthy sanitary movements, pure drinking water campaigns etc. A few NSS activities in the session 2019-20 are itemized as follows:

1. Organizing a special survey at adopted villages during July - October 2019
2. Celebration of Independence Day on 15.08.19
3. Celebration of Constitution Day on 26.11.2019, culminating in Ambedkar Jayanti on 14th April, 2020
4. Observance of World AIDS Day on 01.12.19
5. Observance of World Environment Day on 05.6.2020, tree plantation campaign from 6th June, 2020 to 12th June, 2020
6. Celebration of International Yoga Day on 21.06.2020 by organizing a Webinar

#### Evidence of Success:

The evidence of success is in the many ways the NSS Units of the college have been feted and honoured, especially Prof. Pranab Kr. Jana, Programme Officer, Unit IV. He has been selected as the District Nodal Officer by NSS Regional Directorate, Kolkata for the sessions 2020-21 and 2021-22. He has also been selected for the Covid Warrior Award by Vidyasagar University. He is also a member of the Covid Warrior Group constituted by Vidyasagar University. Our NSS volunteer Junie Kayal has also been similarly selected for the Covid Warrior Award among the volunteers. Moreover, Prof. Pranab Kr. Jana led the NSS contingent from West Bengal comprising ten volunteers of which four were from our college to the National Integration Camp held at Bareilly. The College also has reaped benefits from the activities of Prof. Pranab Kr. Jana. Under the Swachhata Action Plan (SAP), our college was the first institution under Vidyasagar University to receive a grant of Rs. 40,000/-. And over and above all these remain the benedictions of the poor and the needy in the community serving whom has been a honour for the NSS. We remain committed to our academic social responsibility and hope to carry forward all that we have achieved thanks to the untiring efforts of Prof. Pranab Kr. Jana to even greater heights.

#### Problems Encountered and Resources Required:

The major problem was the fact that only one Unit of NSS, Unit IV could actively participate in the Covid combat role that the NSS took up post the outbreak of Covid as

the other Programme Officers located at a distance from the college with the college being in shut down mode could not mobilize their volunteers. The other problem was the scarcity of funds. The NSS would have liked to take many more initiatives but fund paucity came in their way. The teaching and nonteaching staff of the college did come up with individual contributions as did well off members of the community but such well-intentioned efforts can only supplement institutional grants not be a substitute of government largesse. We just hope that the release of funds for NSS activities will become more regular in the future.

## Best Practice - II

Title of the Practice:

Promotion of research activities among the teaching faculty

Objective of the Practice:

It was thought that the college cannot find itself left behind in research activities. As an institution of higher learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it was quite obvious that research has to be a thrust area. The objective, therefore, was to shore up our research output. That is, our locational disadvantage, situated as we are in a poor corner of Purba Medinipur, should not deter us from setting ambitious research targets.

The Context:

As appointments in colleges in West Bengal take place through a centralized West Bengal College Service Commission, the talent that colleges in West Bengal draw upon is more or less comparable academically. That being so, it was thought that why will our college not be able to come up with research activities comparable to the more renowned colleges, the quality of the faculty being more or less same. We knew we are behind in infrastructural facilities along with the fact that we did not have any worthwhile research culture as such in the college in comparison to the older colleges and those located in urban centres but we felt that our sheer zeal and energy should more than compensate these failings of ours. And what went in our favour is that we have presently a very young faculty, for example 50 percent of our faculty has been recruited in the last five years and are hence less than 40 years of age. And also with the arrival of stringent CAS norms, publication or research activity has become a sort of given to progress in one's professional academic career. Teachers will, therefore, pursue research for their own personal benefit.

The Practice:

The college took upon itself the responsibility to encourage the teachers, both young and experienced, to pursue research interests. So for pursuing their research the college

provides them research ambience, necessary library, laboratory facilities etc. Teachers are also encouraged to participate in different national and international seminars, conferences and to apply for different research projects, both major and minor from different funding agencies, to publish articles in reputed national/international journals and arrange seminars and conferences, to make associations with research communities thereby widening the scope of their research work and collaboration. The IQAC of the college has fixed publication targets for the faculty to achieve in the next three years. Both in publications in UGC CARE listed journals and also publications in edited volumes/books/conference proceedings (National and International) the IQAC has set targets for the faculty to achieve. This setting of targets is surely very ambitious in nature but the college IQAC feels that along with the need to garner API points for CAS promotion, this target setting will spur the teachers into serious research activity.

The following are the major practices related to the promotion of research activities in the college:

1. Regular meeting of the Research Cell to monitor the research activities done by college faculty.
2. Encouraging the teachers to apply for different research projects, both Major and Minor from reputed national funding agencies like UGC, DBT, DSTSERB etc. through the college Research Cell and in collaboration with university and nearby research institutes.
3. Encouraging the faculty members to publish their research articles in journals of national and international repute (UGC CARE listed) and books from reputed publication houses.
4. Upgrading the laboratories and libraries.
5. Encouraging the teachers to attend different seminars / workshops / Refresher Courses to enrich their knowledge.
6. Organizing seminars and workshops relating to modern trends of multidisciplinary research.
7. Reimbursing the registration fees of teachers attending and presenting papers in national/international seminars (Maximum amount Rs. 500/- per year).

Evidence of Success:

We are in the early stages of this promotional process and the process till now has not yielded tangible results. We are, however, hopeful that in a few years we will have results to show for our efforts. Research, surely, as we all know is not an overnight activity and it takes time for the results to arrive. But there are early indications of success, for example, at present among 33 full time faculties there are 22 PhDs. Though some of them may have entered college with PhD, yet in the last seven years, ten of the serving full time faculties have been awarded the doctorate degree. However, as far as research

publications are concerned, we are still to pick up pace. For example, total number of research articles published in UGC CARE listed journals during 2019-20 stands at 2. Other than this, there are 3 prestigious publications in national and international journals and 2 in edited volumes in the last one year. As far as paper-presentations in seminars are concerned, there are 9 paper-presentations in national and international seminars in the same period. The total combined output surely is not much to write about but we are confident that the steps we have taken will ensure a far better yield in the coming years.

#### Problems Encountered and Resources Required:

With research the main roadblock was the lack of research infrastructure, the college not having well developed laboratory facilities that could support advanced research. Moreover, an occasional problem was the attitude among some who are still to adjust themselves to the changed times where publish or perish has become a kind of byword in academic circles. The IQAC stepped in here and we are confident that we will be able to oversee attitudinal change among those still sceptical, and make everyone in the college believe in the importance of advanced research and not get deterred by our myriad shortcomings.