

7.2- Best practices

7.2.1- Describe at least two institutional best practices

BEST PRACTICE: 1

1. Title of the Practice: **Online Teaching and Learning in the Age of Covid-19**

When countries all over the world went into lockdown due to Covid-19, educational institutions had to follow suit. During the Covid-19 outbreak, the country was facing a major crisis in many sectors but the worst hit sector was the education sector as most of the exams got cancelled during the final assessment phase. Students and teachers had to struggle to access online resources over uninterrupted and seamless internet connection. At the same time, the country did not want to compromise students' much-desired academic progress. Hence, educational institutions adopted smart solutions to overcome the pandemic crisis by adopting the online mode of education for the remainder of the academic year.

2. Goal:

During the period of Lockdown, Netaji Satabarshiki Mahavidyalaya had set out to achieve three major goals to provide uninterrupted educational support. Here are the details:

- **Completion of Curriculum:** To engage students actively with online audio/video lectures, e-study materials, project works, online tests and assignments.
- **Extra Support for Learning:** To encourage students to join online courses, tutorial classes and online webinars.
- **Counselling:** Regular communication with the students to lessen their mental stress and to make them active in the learning process.

3. The Context:

In the wake of the crisis faced by the teachers and the students of the Colleges/Universities in India due to the global pandemic caused by the Novel Corona Virus infection, Covid-19, Netaji Satabarshiki Mahavidyalaya adapted to face the challenge of the crisis, and provide resilient academic support. An Online Teaching and Learning Strategy framework was developed to provide an active and personalized mode of education for all the students to complete the University curriculum planned for this academic session. Various teaching and learning aids, such as e-content in the form of e-books, online journals, digital library resources, multimedia documents and various online interactive learning sites have been used extensively to enhance learning skills, introduce flexibility and options to be customized to cater to all kinds of learners and to reach a large cross-section of students.

4. The Practice:

To achieve these goals the Online Teaching and Learning Strategy framework was developed which involved:

1) Methods of Teaching

Various methods were adopted for teaching different theory-based courses as well as lab-based courses by the faculty members of all the departments in the College.

- The Zoom platform is used for the optimum utilization of online mode of teaching.
- Program and course-wise WhatsApp groups were created for doubt-clearing sessions.
- College LMS is used to share notes and study materials.
- Audio lectures in mp3 files were given out.
- PPTs were prepared based on the texts and commentary lectures shared to facilitate critical explanations.

2) Engaging Students in Learning

- Providing access to course materials through the College App (NSM College) and college-based Learning Management System (LMS).
- Use of real-time text-based communication spaces such as WhatsApp and Zoom app.

3) Modes of Evaluation

- Internal evaluation conducted by the College.
- University examination conducted by the University.

4) Types of Assignments

- An individual assignment is sent through departmental emails and WhatsApp.
- The pattern of assessments was classified as objective and essay-type questions.
- Students need to upload pdf files of their handwritten answers after the completion of the examination.

5) Outcome of teaching-learning experience:

During this time of crisis, the online teaching and learning experience enabled much flexibility in issues of time and place for both teachers as well as students. Both teachers and students got the opportunity to explore new and innovative online resources. Online classroom platforms were found to be effective in giving away assignments and sharing study materials. For the laboratory courses, students got to learn about some of the advanced instruments via computer simulations.

6. Evidence of success: Online Learning encourages more productive use of time. It has greater access to experts/specialists (nationally and internationally) and learners can access these 24x7 at their own pace and time. It allows geographical reach even at rural or remote locations. It is a cost-effective technology, quite affordable, and it enhances communication between teachers and students. It can accommodate more learners at a particular time. Online class sessions can be saved on the cloud for future references. For example, class notes can be saved and distributed via the network for references by students. The digital recordings of the classes can be uploaded to the website to review later. To conduct exams, institutions may consider using online examination platforms which may help for conducting online examinations. This will prevent institutions from facing delays in their annual academic calendar for lockdown.

7. Problems encountered and resource required: Not all the students have the necessary knowledge, skill, and resources to access online resources. Learners from low-income families and disadvantaged groups are more likely to suffer during online learning as they may not afford high-speed internet connection and required technical gadgets. This widens the gap between privileged and unprivileged learners.

Netaji Satabarshiki Mahavidyalaya made a coordinated effort by providing opportunities for both teachers and students to make learning more effective and relevant for protecting the academic interest of students during the Corona Pandemic.

BEST PRACTICE: 2

1. Title of the Practice:

Resource sharing with other colleges

2. Goal: To promote cooperation among neighbouring colleges with a view to improve the quality of higher education in the region and to encourage optimum utilization of the existing facilities for the expansion of higher education. Another goal is to ensure the fulfilment of the required numbers of classes. To encourage sharing of resources and developmental opportunities and to encourage cooperation in Teaching learning, Research and Extension. Since the number of classes is much more than the number of teachers, the main purpose is to fill the gap of the classes.

3. The Context: Of late educational institutions have come together to rethink educational issues in order to cater to the students of the neighbourhood. Earlier each college used to be a

separate entity but today they are collaborating to conduct a number of activities together and sharing resources for the benefit of the academic community. Students get access to educational offerings beyond their own college, as well as through faculty collaborations across colleges. Leveraging resources to address shared challenges and opportunities faced by the member institutions is an important step in the right direction.

4. The Practice: Improving efficiencies in the education sector via the sharing of resources is currently the source of much interest and investment within India and throughout the world. Despite the development of multiple educational resource repositories worldwide, educators seldom use repositories to share materials.

5. The outcome of the practice is that the students will be able to gain knowledge from many more teachers and enrich their own knowledge. Students will be able to prepare themselves for the exams in a timely manner. The purpose of resource sharing is to teach many students simultaneously, especially in lockdown situations when offline teaching is not possible.

The principals of the concerned colleges held a meeting among themselves. The main objective of the meeting was to promote cooperation among neighbouring colleges with a view of improving the quality of higher education in our college by sharing the resources in Teaching, Learning, Research and Extension. For this meeting following colleges participated with our college:

Banipur Mahila Mahavidyalaya, Amdanga Jugal Kishore Mahavidyalaya, Sree Chaitanya College of Commerce.

It was decided at the meeting that the colleges would share resources with each other to promote cooperation among neighboring Colleges with a view of improving the quality of higher education in the region. The following colleges signed MOU i) Netaji Satabarshiki Mahavidyalaya, ii) Banipur Mahila Mahavidyalaya, iii) Amdanga Jugal Kishore Mahavidyalaya

6. Evidence of success: Banipur Mahila Mahavidyalaya and Amdanga Jugal Kishore Mahavidyalaya have agreed with our college for resource sharing and these colleges are ready to continue their efforts to develop academic subjects.

7. Problems encountered and resources required: Collaborating with institutions can be a challenge for even the most well-connected higher education institutions. In part, this is because many colleges may be too competitive and may not prefer to collaborate on all fronts.

Since students hail from marginalized and economically deprived sections, they are often hesitant and resistant to use the online or virtual platform themselves. Preserving the study materials obtained from resource sharing is also a challenge for the students.