

7.2 Best Practices

1. ECO-FRIENDLY CAMPUS

Eco friendly campus is an expression of commitment of the college towards environmental consciousness, commitment and conservation. Although our students are bestowed with nature bounty in plenty, even then, to make them realize the significance of it in present and future context needs to be stressed and practiced constantly.

Our founder President had been an inspiration behind this practice through his personal and spontaneous involvement. The value for judicious use of scarce resources viz. water, electricity had to be inculcated amongst the students so that they imbibe this spirit and carry home this habit of switching off lights and fans and turning off taps. Adoption of this practice at this level reflects the institutions commitment towards the present day challenges. The smoking habits of rural folks is a common but alarming situation hence the health implications associated with this habit could only be addressed through awareness among the stakeholders, particularly the students. To achieve this objective, the side effects of the smoking – active as well as passive, are highlighted by being strict on prohibition of smoking in the college premises by the outsiders as well.

The environmental challenges being posed before all of us, in present era, demand imbibing the principles of environment conservation and protection. The induction of a compulsory paper at first degree level titled Environmental Studies under the directions of apex court of India itself speaks of the significance of preserving the environment at every possible level and our institution has been an epitome of this practice since its inception. The college runs an environmental cell on campus involving students through various related activities such as tree plantation. Every year Van Mahotsav is celebrated with great enthusiasm by the college where saplings of various trees, shrubs and seasonal flowers are planted in the whole campus. The rural background of the institution with such a commitment to the environment is the unique feature of this practice. Regarding the maintenance and replacement of these plants an annual assessment is done. The name plates of major plants bearing their botanical and common names have been fixed. It helps impart the basic acquaintance with the local, seasonal and perennial plants to the stakeholders as well as the local community.

Various energy saving practices are in force by putting up placards, reminders, awareness drive and personal involvement. During college hours the students are taken around the campus for acquaintance with the plantations through N.S.S., Van-mahotsav and home

science practicals. Switching over to paper disposables from that of thermocol (a non – biodegradable product) was the result of this drive. The staff barely misuses the papers discarded, so as to set an example by practising. It encourages the students to use paper on both sides even while submitting their assignments and do not let them use plastic folders to present them. The college celebrates a cracker free diwali and a dry holi within staff and students. Since long, the college has been promoting the use of **Dustless Chalks**. Pooling of vehicles by the staff and student commuters are indicative of their concern and commitment in this direction.

To add to these initiatives, the provisions for use of sprinklers for watering, installation of solar panels in the canteen and for street lighting and a centralised switch-board to taper the misuse of electricity are in the offing.

2. CULTURAL HERITAGE

The prime goal is to inculcate a feeling of involvement among the students and the staff in the celebration of festivals like Lohri, Holi, Teej, Karva Chauth, Diwali etc. to preserve cultural sanctity through these and remain connected to cultural roots. The other goal is to provide an opportunity of bringing out the hidden skills of the students and hone them up. This practice brings the students closer to their culture, develop organizational abilities and confidence among them. In this rapidly changing society, where everyone is chasing after materialistic life, such celebrations become a necessity as they provide a platform where the participants can strengthen their ties as well as increase their capabilities/learning abilities.

The location of the girls' institution in rural belt gave impetus to the adoption of this practice. The conservative mindsets of the parents never allowed their daughters to move out of their houses in free time which led to involvement of the girls in the household chores as well as learning celebration of traditional festivals through singing, dancing, applying mehendi, rangoli making etc. This talent would have remained under-utilized, had the college not tapped the potential of the students in the form of this practice. It is worth mentioning that these festivals are celebrated without prior and professional preparations. These occasions act as grooming ground for the students resulting in better participation at higher levels.

This practice has been in force since the inception of the college and has evolved with time and has been a major unifying feature between rural and urban background of the students. The unique part of this practice is that these functions are celebrated in

traditional manner and preferably in an environment friendly manner complementing our other practice. The students of all streams look forward to actively participate in these activities as they enjoy to their maximum. Such occasions serve as a breather from their daily schedule.

To quote a few instances of festival celebration -- starting from the calendar year – first festival LOHRI falls in the month of January where a bonfire is lit and mungfali (groundnuts), popcorns and rewari (a local sweet) are offered to the fire, as per the tradition, by the staff and students followed by dances on Punjabi folk songs and bollywood numbers. Such mega group events make students more confident and add to their personalities. While celebrating HOLI, they play with dry colors only and apply different colors on their teachers and friends, again followed by folk dances. The Department of Home Science organizes mehendi competition on the eve of TEEJ and KARVA CHAUTH. DIWALI is also celebrated by lighting candles and holding various competitions such as cookery, embroidery, floor and pot decoration again under the auspices of Home Science Department. The underlying feature of this practice is that each and every celebration carries a message for the students delivered by the Principal for imbibing, preserving and passing on our conventional values, practices and ethics to the next generation.

The arrangement for the celebration of these festivals is completely handled by the students, hence, they learn leadership qualities, better decision making, time management, resource management and most importantly, it leads to an increased bonding, cooperation and interdependence among students and also with the teachers.