

Best Practices

Best Practice – 1

Title

Collaboration - the key tool for knowledge sharing and research in the academia

Objectives

- To widen the learning experience of the stakeholders beyond the syllabi
- To generate concrete outcomes to contribute to research and society

Context

Collaborative ventures explore the various dimensions of knowledge sharing. Seethalakshmi Ramaswami College has collaborated with other higher educational institutions like universities, peer colleges, research centres of national and international standards, to carry out academic activities such as internships, projects, industrial visits, field visits and to facilitate innovative research to benefit the students, research scholars and faculty members. The institution has organised a considerable number of collaborative seminars at the international, national and regional levels, as they are one of the effective platforms for knowledge sharing and help scholars and students to stay updated in their fields of study. The faculty members of SRC acted as resource persons in various collaborative programmes in the numerous sectors, which have highly benefited from their able expertise. Many scholars from the global scenario were invited to contribute to the knowledge sharing initiatives of the institution.

The Practice

Collaboration

The institution has collaborated with academicians, industrial experts to develop the skill sets of students - ranging from communication skills to employability skills. Students were also trained under internal collaborative activities between the departments of the institution. Some of the external collaborations are with Organisation for Industrial, Spiritual and Cultural Advancement (OISCA International) Japan, Marian College, Kerala, Krishnamacharya Yoga Mandiram, Chennai, Sai Karuna Mission Global, Mumbai, Bio Field Technology, Pune, Dolphin Special School, Trichy, Government Schools in and around Tiruchirappalli district and Seagull Training and Study Centre, Trichy. The highly qualified and competent faculty members of the institution have offered consultancy services to many organizations. A few of the beneficiaries are teachers from schools and secondary educational organizations, administrators and teachers of special schools, employees in Small and Large Scale Industries, urban and rural women interested in entrepreneurial ventures. The faculty members also offer consultancy services to business organizations, training cum coaching centres.

Evidence of Success

Internal and external collaborations are initiatives that have helped in bridging the gap between institution and industry and considerably initiated knowledge sharing and high-end resource sharing. The institution has tried to make maximum utilization of the advantages of the online platform and to minimize the limitations and challenges of the current situation at the same time. The long term strategic partnerships between the college and the other organizations have helped our institution (i) to establish a network of human resources (ii) to develop an academic environment (iii) to produce a student community with potential to excel (iv) to successfully engage in technology transfer (v) to promote innovation and (vi) to contribute towards women's employability and empowerment. The feedback received from the beneficiaries of all the collaborative activities, stand testimony to the success of this practice.

Problems encountered and resources required

The difference in the time zones for conducting international collaborative activities, the availability of resource persons, the cultural and organizational differences and the myriad ethical practices of the collaborating organizations, were the initial challenges that were faced at the outset of establishing collaborative ventures and offering consultancy services. These challenges were duly overcome in due course.

Notes

Through collaborative ventures, the institution has identified potential resources available both in the external and internal environment, to establish team work, to train stakeholders in the skill sets, to efficiently undertake measures for self-reliance, to disseminate knowledge and information and thereby to contribute to research & development and societal upliftment. This can further pave way for enriching consultancy services of the institution.

Best Practice – 2

Title

Reach through Outreach (RTOR) programme

Objectives

- To initiate community building for self-sustenance in the adopted villages
- To contribute to nation building through self-reliant initiatives for rural development

Context

The Reach through Outreach (RTOR) programme of SRC aims at creating a self - sustainable environment in the five villages adopted by the institution namely Sirumayangudi, Manakkal, Mettupatti, Agalanganallur and Athikudi of Tiruchirappalli district, Tamil Nadu. The programme serves the people of the adopted villages with the objectives of imparting essential skills to the people, by offering training courses to young girls and women, creating awareness on healthy and hygienic practices among rural women and children, imparting vocational training to rural youth, increasing literacy rate by giving basic training in reading and writing skills in the vernacular and English language and thereby create a self-reliant and self-sustainable rural India.

The Practice

The RTOR programme was exceptionally successful during the pandemic times, as the institution was able to support the adopted villages in innumerable ways. The faculty, staff and student volunteers of each and every department of both the Aided and Self-financed sections of the institution visited the adopted villages in batches, and carried out timely relief measures by strictly complying with the standard operating procedure for COVID -19. The activities under the programme were successful due to the complete support and funding of the college management.

COVID -19 Relief Measures

Face masks, hand wash and sanitizers were distributed to the families in the five adopted villages. Grocery kits were distributed to the people below poverty line during the lockdown. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) kits were donated to the Dean of the Government Hospital, Tiruchirappalli, for the use of the doctors serving there. Pamphlets on safety measures and healthy eating practices for building natural immunity were distributed to the villagers. Awareness programmes on safety measures to be followed during pandemic were conducted. Villagers were taught to use pulse oximeters and digital thermometers. The school students were taught the healthy practices such as the importance of washing hands with soap, wearing masks, maintaining social distance and keeping their environment clean to maintain personal and environmental hygiene. Precautionary measures to prevent the spread of Corona virus were also explained.

Teach to Transform

Villagers were taught to make online transactions, informed about co-operative loan schemes and government schemes for farmers. Young girls and women were taught to download applications like Kaavalan SOS for ensuring their personal safety. Students were informed about the ways to procure e-resources. Women were taught the importance of consuming a balanced diet, the need to exercise and the benefits of breast feeding. Anthropometric measurements of school children were taken and compared with the standard normal range and the children's parents were educated on the same. Importance of global warming and need for environmental protection were explained to the villagers. Social skills, communication skills, leadership skills, analytical skills, managerial skills were taught to students. Health issues of women and children were discussed and suggestions were given to overcome these issues.

Support to Sustain

Techniques for vermicomposting which include collection of organic wastes, preparation of pre-digested food, and inoculation of earthworms, harvesting and packaging were demonstrated to the villagers. The adverse effects of using chemical based fertilizers and pesticides were explained. The villagers were trained to prepare hair oil, face pack, hair wash powder, tooth powder and seed balls. Free saplings and seed balls were distributed. Tree plantation was carried out in the villages. The unemployed youth of the villages were given awareness on self-employment opportunities and the available Government schemes.

Evidence of Success

The people of the five adopted villages enjoyed the benefits of the outreach initiatives of the institution and look forward for the same. The Panchayat Presidents and Vice-Presidents extended fullest co-operation and support for the activities conducted under the RTOR programme of SRC and having been pleased with the services rendered by the institution, they honoured the institution with shields as a token of appreciation.

Problems encountered and resources required

The fear of the pandemic was the initial problem encountered before and after the imposed lockdown during the COVID -19 period. The enthusiasm and interest evinced by the faculty, staff and students to offer relief measures to the people of the adopted villages helped the institution in successfully implementing the programme in the villages. As ample funding was provided by the SRC management, the institution was able to carry out a complete and fulfilling social outreach programme.

Notes

The philanthropic and altruistic policies adopted by the management have helped the SRC team to carry out its RTOR programme successfully.