

Best Practice I

Paryavarniya Samvednansheelta: Sensitivity towards the Environment

Developing appreciation of the natural habitat is central to developing sensitive students. The violation against environment perpetrated by previous generations needs to be reversed. It is crucial that today's generation is mobilised, and their attitudes transformed. The focus of educational institutions has to be towards sensitising students to the criticality of generating a viable world ethos, inviolable biodiversity, and a green haven for tomorrow.

Goals of the Practice

The intended outcomes of '*Paryavarniya Samvednansheelta: Sensitivity towards the Environment*' are to instil environment consciousness in the students, reduce the carbon footprint on the environment, and bequeath a legacy of a sustainable environment to the future generations.

It is the constant endeavour of the college to help students understand and appreciate the linkages that can be forged between what they study about the environment and what they witness being practiced. Although we have been environmentally sensitive since our very inception, the growing urgency to address environmental concerns has necessitated that our Golden Jubilee festivities are supplemented with an ode to youth that progresses towards sustainable development.

The Context

The past few decades have been marked with rapid industrialization, alarming levels of pollution, and disconnect of human beings with their immediate environs. Our initiatives and designated green spaces in college have made our students environmentally conscious. Our campus has been conferred "The Green Campus" award in 2017, bearing testimony to the keen sensitivity of our administration, faculty and students.

The Practice

Some of the initiatives that have been undertaken by us are geared towards spreading awareness, judicious use of resources and energy conservation.

- **Energy Conservation and Use of Renewable Sources of Energy**

Saur Urja: The college building is constructed to maximize natural light in classrooms. We have also recently successfully installed solar panels that will reduce electricity bills.

- *Reduce, Reuse, Recycle:* We have undertaken several practices that address the fundamental principles of optimum resource utilization.

The energy consuming bulbs are being replaced with energy saving LED bulbs in a phased manner.

We are geared towards minimizing the use of paper. The IQAC has initiated shifting office correspondence and records to online mode.

The centralized admission and fee payment system has largely contributed towards the reduction of paper usage. All financial transactions have also shifted to electronic mode.

For more than a decade now, the college has been recycling paper and using it for sending out invites for special events. We are actively working towards reviving this practice.

We also organize e-waste collection drive, which is then sent to appropriate recycling organisations.

We are also introducing setting up of vertical gardens in reused plastic waste bottles from the college canteen, around the college boundary wall.

- ***Jagriti: Spreading Environmental Awareness***

Measures to spread awareness about environment are part and parcel of the everyday institutional life.

Celebration of *Hariyali Diwas* and organising tree plantation drives are some of our most vibrant annual activities. Invited guests are felicitated with planters instead of traditional mementos or flower bouquets.

Our Eco Club in collaboration with the Department of Environmental Science conducted a tree census in 2017 with the help of a taxonomist. Each tree carries a number, a common name and scientific genus.

Tips on eco-friendly practices that can be used at home and in college are prominently displayed in the college.

Every year students are taken to Yamuna Biodiversity Park and Aravali Biodiversity Park to help acquaint students with the rich biodiversity of our country.

Talks with environmental activists and film screenings also help students reflect on the impact of unbridled advancements in the name of development in places.

- **Efforts for Carbon Neutrality**

We maintain two lush green lawns and have a well-kept sports ground. The herbal garden comprises of *Tulsi*, Mint, *Ashwagandha*, Aloe Vera and Turmeric plants.

The college is equipped with two 10,000 litre underground tanks, which economizes the usage of water. The playground acts as a natural rain water harvesting conduit.

- **Waste Segregation and Management**

The institution practices waste segregation at the time of collection itself. The waste from canteen and garden is duly disposed-off in a pit in one corner of the college campus.

Evidence of Success

The success of the project can be gauged from the fact that the college keeps making considerable efforts to widen the ambit of the project. Another yardstick for measuring success is student participation.

Problems Encountered

Environment conservation isn't anything new but its application at the scale of an entire organization is a novel idea for the students. This challenge is tackled by the college by holding environment related events as outlined above.

Best Practice II

***Prayaas*- Towards Creating Inclusive Physical and Mental Spaces**

Goals of the Initiative

Prayaas is an initiative towards empowering students from different cultural and socio-economic backgrounds.

The college firmly believes in Tagore's conception of a fearless mind. It strives towards creating an environment:

“...where knowledge is free
and the world has not been broken up into fragments
by narrow domestic walls.”

We strive towards creating an environment that is free from physical, psychological, and financial barriers. We empower students to become change agents. Accordingly, the theme of the Golden Jubilee Year of the college is **Youth for Sustainable Development**.

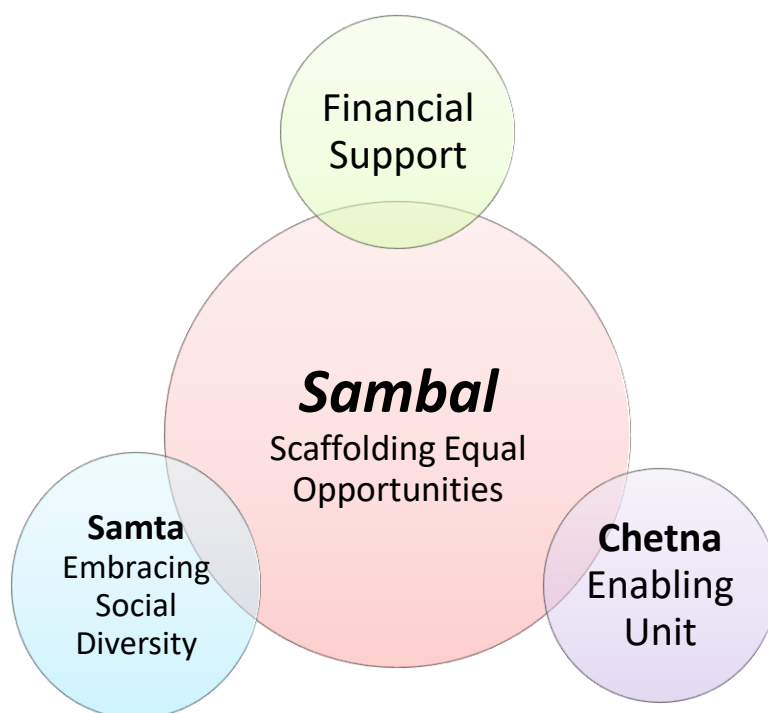
The Context

It is the responsibility of the college to ensure that every student who gains admission here explores her maximum academic and creative potential. It is only when they break the hierarchies emanating from stereotypes of caste, class, gender, and region that they will be able to ask informed questions about socio-cultural structures.

The idea of focusing on slum areas came from students. Having lived through the difficulties of urban poor locale, our students are able to empathise with the living conditions of the residential area around the college.

The Practice

Sambal: Scaffolding Equal Opportunities: Sambal is focussed on initiating a systemic process of scaffolding students and building an inclusive physical and social environment in the college. The programme works through three clear strands: financial assistance scheme, *Chetna*, the Enabling Unit of the college, and *Samta*, embracing Social Diversity.



The college provides financial aids to students who find accessing education difficult. Partial or full fee concession is granted to economically weak students and students belonging to Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribes are awarded Post-Matric Scholarships by the Directorate of Education, Delhi Administration. Students Aid Committee also provides various ad hoc grants.

The second focus in *Sambal* is on embracing diversity and removing hindrances in learning processes.

Chetna, the Enabling Unit, actively works towards ensuring that students have barrier free access to education. Developing a bank of audio books and resources, making ebooks available to students and collaborating with NSS to arrange volunteers for peer reading and learning for students with (dis)abilities are some of the regular activities of *Chetna*.

It is not just physical but psychological barriers that we aim to address through *Samta*: Embracing Social Diversity. Students from diverse regional, cultural and linguistic backgrounds are welcome in the college through special efforts of the North East Students Cell. With the specific purpose of preventing and addressing discrimination within the institution, we have set up a committee for students from Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe backgrounds.

Infrastructure: The college boasts of having one of the best infrastructural facilities in the University of Delhi in a low fee charging higher education institution..

Further, the building is equipped with ramps, tactile pathways, elevators (both in the main college building and the library), and wheel-chair friendly classrooms and restrooms that make the college a disabled friendly space.

Samavesh: Program for the Welfare and Upliftment of Slum Areas: The program was devised as an opportunity for students to realize their belief in the strength of education and initiative by intervening in real life hardships to make a tangible difference. A number of in-house workshops were conducted prior to slum visits.

Some of the key on-field activities conducted during the course of the project are listed below:

- Community Service Events at Peeragarhi Refugee Camp, PaschimVihar
- *Sab Padhein Accha, Sab Badhein Accha:* Creating awareness regarding the importance of education through organized teaching in slum areas.
- Stop Crackers, Save Environment: sensitizing people to the importance of living in harmony with natural environment.
- Stop Violence against Women: Interaction with people about addressing the problem of sexual harassment
- *SEVA* at ESI Hospital, Raja Garden: Sensitizing people about the importance of regular check-ups and good dietary habits.
- Clean India Day: Spreading awareness about cleanliness and recycling

Evidence of Success

The first measure of the success of all such projects is the holistic development of individual personality of the students. Each individual project also comes along with spontaneous, immediate as well as long-term structural results.

Problems Encountered

The college makes constant effort to counter problems that are slowing the progress of this practice. Inadequate ability of funds often restricts us from initiating more financial aid programs for deserving candidates. These problems are countered by an abundance of human resources who have a willingness to contribute in all possible ways.