

Best Practice 1

Name of the Practice: Science orientation to schoolchildren.

1. Objective of the practice:

To provide advanced orientation about scientific devices, experiments, phenomena etc. to the schoolchildren

2. Need addressed and the context:

Many schoolchildren in the rural area are deprived of actual contact with scientific instruments and experiments due to various factors like lack of resources and trained teachers at the schools. These children can develop interest in science and adopt a scientific attitude if they are given proper orientation at the laboratories available in the college. Most of the rural schools have infrastructural limitations which can be overcome by collaboration with the college.

3. The practice:

The college teachers organized visits of schoolchildren (classes 8,9,10) to the college laboratories and acquainted them with the apparatus used in the laboratories. The life sciences laboratories have a good collection of plant and animal species. These were shown to the school students. The teachers also performed selected experiments to explain basic scientific phenomena. Two groups of students from two rural schools were benefitted by this programme organized on two occasions.

4. Evidence of success:

The schoolchildren asked various questions to the teachers regarding the experiments and the models shown to them. It was evident that their curiosity was aroused. They requested for yet another visit. Along with the students, their accompanying teachers also developed interest in the activity.

5. Resources:

The college utilized its human resources (expertise of the teachers) for this activity. The travel expenses were made by visitors. The college did not require major financial resources for this activity.

6. Problems encountered:

Care had to be taken to fit the schedule of the visits without disturbing the college activities. The supervision of the schoolchildren was mainly done by their accompanying teachers. The college did not encounter significant problems to carry out this activity.

7. Notes: The college teachers had to adopt a simpler method of demonstration and use of regional language to establish rapport with the schoolchildren.

Best Practice 2

Name of the Practice: Free soil testing for local farmers.

1. Objective of the practice:

To provide appropriate information regarding the soil to the rural small landowners.

2. Need addressed and the context:

The college is located in a non- irrigated geographical area mostly occupied by small landowners who have little access to the expertise of scholars. The college has a research center in Geography and conducts UG and PG courses in the subject Geography. The institution felt that it could carry out the analysis of the soil in adjoining areas which would add to the data at the research center and this analysis would also be utilized further to provide appropriate advice to the farmers who have meager resources.

3. The practice:

Teachers and research students of the Geography department visited different locations in the vicinity and collected soil samples from the fields of a number of small landowners. These samples were analyzed and the results were shown to the farmers. The analysis gave an idea about the composition of the soil which varied from field to field due to use of chemical fertilizers and other factors. The researchers could advice about the use of fertilizers to the farmers.

4. Evidence of success:

A number of small landowners were benefitted by the soil testing carried out at their fields. The advice for increasing the fertility was immensely useful for the cultivators of non-irrigated fields. The farmers were able to hold a meaningful interaction with the researchers and the teachers.

5. Resources:

The facilities available at the Geography Research center were used for this activity. No significant fund was needed for testing materials and equipment.

6. Problems encountered:

The visits had to be arranged in the pre-monsoon period and some of the landowners were not initially interested in the analysis results. Majority of the farmers, however, appreciated the gesture and also provided hospitality.