

BEST PRACTICE III

Title: Health, Hygiene and Sanitation: A Correlation

Objectives:

1. Raising awareness about personal hygiene for promotion and preservation of good health and lifestyle
2. Educating the masses about the need of safe sanitation in both urban and rural households
3. Checking a major upsurge of communicable illnesses like malaria, typhoid, diarrheal diseases, tuberculosis, etc. as well as several non-communicable diseases by communicating their causes and the methods and techniques for effecting their cure

The Context: Universal access to proper hygiene and safe sanitation is a fundamental human right. Yet, millions of people in India still lack knowledge about basic hygiene and are denied accessibility to clean and sound sanitation facilities, thereby leading to dire consequences in relation to health, healing and overall well-being. Improving sanitation and hygiene conditions for vulnerable communities can make a significant impact on public health and empower individuals to lead healthier lives. For instance, access to proper sanitation facilities reduces the spread of waterborne diseases and improves overall community health. Most importantly, availability of adequate sanitary measures enables in securing human dignity, especially for the female section of the society, enabling them to live with privacy and respect. To put it in a nutshell, improved hygiene practices lead to reduced general illnesses and increased productivity, contributing to economic development. Hence the primary agenda of our institution has been to spread knowledge and create awareness among our students about the fundamentals of hygiene and sanitation so that they can in turn contribute to the well being of our society by disseminating these ideas and ideals among the commoners.

The Practice: The outbreak of dengue fever is a menace in regions like Amtala which is located in the Naoda CD Block of Murshidabad. Each year, up to 400 million people are infected by the dengue virus worldwide, approximately 100 million people get sick from this infection and around 40,000 populace die from severe dengue. In view of this alarming social concern, the N.S.S volunteers of our college have organized dengue awareness campaigns in different areas of Amtala on several occasions during the academic session 2019-20. They have

conducted hygiene awareness sessions, empowering communities with life-saving knowledge and information, ensured basic sanitation supplies and distributed hygiene kits (mosquito nets have been delivered at regular intervals to the economically burdened families) among the socially vulnerable inhabitants of this region. They have also arranged cleanliness drives both within the college and beyond the campus (for example, on the shores of Jalangi river) to make people aware of the importance of handling waste responsibly and exemplified ways of achieving this goal as a prerequisite towards a cleaner and greener environment. The N.S.S volunteers also played a pivotal role in fostering awareness among the rural population of Amtala during the outbreak of Covid-19 by distributing masks and sanitizers among them and acquainting them with ways of combating this highly infectious disease.

There is no denying the fact that a lot of diseases can be traced back to unhygienic conditions and irresponsible waste disposal. Swachh Bharat Mission, the world's largest sanitation initiative was launched by the Prime Minister of India in 2014 to achieve an Open Defecation Free India by October 2, 2019, as a tribute to Mahatma Gandhi. To pay homage to our national hero and this governmental scheme, the college fraternity ensures regular cleanliness campaigns on the campus; facilitates cleaning of all toilets, classrooms, departments and restrooms on a daily basis; organizes awareness programmes and campaigns related to health, hygiene and sanitation; encourages the use of eco-friendly items and cautiously regulates waste generation and disposal within the college premises.

Evidence of Success: The college campus exudes the essence of collective well-being and environmental sustainability by its impeccable bearing, embellished by soothing greenery and beautiful flowers, and has encouraged students to maintain proper hygiene and sanitation practices for a healthier lifestyle and wholesome living. The stakeholders have actively participated in cleanliness programmes, planted trees, disposed waste materials in dustbins and enthusiastically attended lecture sessions on hygiene and sanitation.

Problems Encountered: There has been a positive response from all quarters to the various initiatives taken with regard to maintaining wholesome hygienic practices and sanitation measures in this academic session.

BEST PRACTICE IV

Title: “Save the Girl Child”: A Social Imperative

Objectives:

1. Explicate the difference between sex (a biological phenomenon) and gender (a cultural construct)
2. Promote gender equity and empowerment by deconstructing patriarchal ideologies.
3. Extend support to the cause of the girl child and ensure active participation in the movement for securing her rights.

Context: Gender discrimination is one of the greatest evils of our society since times immemorial. The birth of a girl child in quite a considerable number of urban and rural households is more often than not considered as a menace even today and incidents of female infanticide are still prevalent in countries like Nepal, Pakistan and India. Reports of illegal and unethical use of pre-natal diagnostic tests culminating in sex-selection abortion and female feticide even in the enlightened 21st century unravel the patriarchal preference for a male issue in our socio-cultural context. To address this grave situation and bring about a gender-neutral transformation in minds and cultures, there have been many initiatives in contemporary times. In 1995, at the World Conference on Women in Beijing, countries unanimously adopted the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action – the most progressive blueprint ever for advancing the rights of not only women but also girls. The Beijing Declaration is the first to specifically clamor for girls rights. Eventually, on December 19, 2011, United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution 66/170 to declare October 11 as the International Day of the Girl Child, in order to recognize girls rights, focus attention on the unique challenges girls face around the world and promote their empowerment and the fulfillment of their human rights. In a similar vein, our college represents the ideals of change and progress by conducting awareness campaigns in favor of the girl child during the academic session 2019-20.

The Practice: The National Girl Child Day is celebrated every year in our college in recognition of the noble initiative launched in 2008 by the Ministry of Women and Child Development in collaboration with the Government of India. This annual event serves as a reminder about the extreme inequalities girls are subjected to early in their lives and conveys the urgent need to protect their rights and preserve their dignity for a healthy societal setup.

The volunteers of N.S.S Unit have furthered this cause by collaborating with the Government Social Welfare Department and organizing a series of events like poster competitions, debates and interactive sessions between faculty members of various departments and the students of Jatindra-Rajendra Mahavidyalaya. The college administration has arranged a few awareness programmes in this regard to communicate to the students the crucial obligation to educate and enlighten the daughters of the soil. For instance, a campaign on “Beti Bachao Beti Padhao” mission has been held in our college on National Girl Child Day to inform and invoke the youth of our nation about the roles and responsibilities of the society in the mission of saving the girl child and bettering her future. The students have in turn circulated the message of these initiatives among the unlettered and uninitiated inhabitants of this community which has reaped salubrious results.

Evidence of Success: An expanding number of guardians of female students have enthusiastically lent their support to recognize the aspirations of their daughters by regularly sending them to the college, providing them requisite study materials and books and reaching out to their teachers and the college authority for checking on their progress. This is a major achievement for us in the background of a rural, financially-burdened, educationally-backward and minority-based community where girls seldom crossed the threshold of their homes. At present, the percentage of girls seeking admission in our college has exceeded the one of boys because of this exposure and encouragement.

Problems Encountered: None as such.