Best Practice - 01

1. Title of the practice: Implementing full-fledged online teaching.

2. The context that required the initiation of the practice

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the nation went into 'total lockdown' on 15th March 2020. All educational institutions in the country were closed, and as a result classes had come to a halt. This created great problems for the students as their learning had come to a sudden halt for an indefinite period of time. It was thus the need of the hour that the classes be resumed; the solution to this problem was to make classes fully online so that students can take classes from home under existing lockdown. The act of teaching consists not only of giving knowledge to students, but also to test their intake of knowledge at intervals. Therefore, along with online teaching, online assessment also became necessary so that students' process of learning does not come to an abrupt halt.

3. Objectives of the practice

The objectives of the Practice are:

a) To maintain the continuity of learning among students of the HEI.
b) To assess the knowledge intake of the students during the pandemic.
c) To make sure that the academic pace of the students is maintained in order to prevent loss of academic-career time/year by the students.

4. The Practice

The HEI installed an online teaching-learning portal in the official college website. Professors of all Departments were soon given online ID accounts through which they can put and upload online teaching materials such as PDFs and Videos regularly. Students would then visit the College website and look for the teaching materials according to subject, Semester and so on. Along with teaching materials, Professors also posted the date, time and link of Zoom Cloud Meetings so that students can connect to these virtual Zoom classrooms by following the details posted on the online teaching section of the College Website. The flow of the teaching-learning process of the HEI was thus maintained very well through the collaboration between the administration and the staff.

After the online teaching processes and procedures had been established and run well for a good amount of time, the process of online learning evaluation was to be executed. The Professors had formed Class WhatsApp Groups for all of their respective subjects and semesters. Through these WhatsApp Groups, the Professors conducted online evaluation process. Questions and assignments were given to students and the students were given deadlines for submitting the assignments / answers to the questions. The students prepared the answers and assignments in due time and submitted them in soft copy versions such as PDFs and MS Word formats to their Class WhatsApp Groups so that teachers could go through them.

5. Obstacles faced if any and strategies adopted to overcome them

The obstacle of minor digital illiteracy was observed at the beginning of the Practice. Computers and smartphones are not comfort zones for generation(s) who did not grow up with them. However, the Professors took no time in equipping themselves with the required digital skills of conducting online teaching. With a little guidance and practice, the professors

equipped themselves with adequate competence to conduct Zoom meetings, make and share PDFs and so on. The College also provided a LMS platform for the professors to conduct their teaching-learning activity. The professors learned how to use the platform and began to upload study materials on this online teaching platform given in the College website.

Another obstacle that was faced in this Practice was the digital gap among the students of the HEI. Many students come to the College from rural areas. These areas have low network. Also, many students are financially not well off to afford a smartphone. Due to this, their attendance in online classes was wanting. The professors contacted the students and motivated them to look beyond excuses and come up with arrangements. These students used various means such as borrowing smartphones for online class hours and going to high network areas during online class hours and so on. This helped increase attendance of students up to certain measures. The College LMS also became a data centre for online teaching materials so that students who could not attend online classes in real-time can access related teaching materials at a later time when they are able.

6. Impact of the practice

The practice of online teaching bore great results for teaching as well as assessment/evaluation processes. The teaching learning process ran smoothly unhindered even during the pandemic. students received teaching materials and lessons without fail. Due to this, they performed well in their internal evaluations and examinations and came out with flying colours in their respective semester exams. The result of the students was bereft of any negative impact of the Covid 19 pandemic, all because of the online mode of teaching-learning process adopted by the College.

The students also got to academically progress without delay, as was seen where final year students such as UG batch 2017-2020 graduated in the year 2020 itself without delay.

7. Resources required

To implement the method of online teaching and evaluation, the College built a Learning Management System (LMS) in its website where professors could post their online teaching materials.

The College also saw to it that Wi-Fi with high internet speed was installed at certain rooms from where taking online classes would be possible for those that need it. The Computers of the college were also made ready for this purpose.

The smartphones of professors were also resources where they conducted online academic processes through WhatsApp, Telegram and so on. Many professors also made the use of computers for creating notes in PDF, PPT and so on. Video recording devices were also purchased and brought into use by several other professors.

Best Practice - 02

Due to Covid-19, the College campus remained closed for a long period of time. This made exercising a second Best Practice non-feasible. Therefore, the HEI had only one Best Practice for the year 2019-2020.