

FOSTERING GREEN PRACTICES TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT

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Abstract

Be eco-friendly and ensuring sustainable practices is the need of the hour, institutions should build an ecosystem to make the stakeholders environmentally conscious and have a sustainable mindset. This paper is an attempt to foster green practices towards sustainable environment.

Keywords: *Fostering, Green, Sustainable Environment*



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Introduction:

Saving our planet, lifting people out of poverty, advancing economic growth... these are one and the same fight. We must connect the dots between climate change, water scarcity, energy shortages, global health, food security and women's empowerment. Solutions to one problem must be solutions for all. – Ban Ki-moon

PCER Chembur believes and practices sustainable development in all the endeavours. The Sustainable Practices Policy (SPP) is the guide for the use of available resources for the events, activities and developments at the college. SPP objective is to develop, implement, promote, and lead environment friendly activities at PCER Chembur. This policy aims to usher in a

cultural shift towards ecologically sustainable behaviours by instilling the habit of environmentally responsible praxis and instilling a desire to conserve our environment.

Objectives:

1. To plan to reduce the amount of waste generated.
2. To plan to reduce generating waste that reaches the landfills.
3. To plan segregation process so as to reach wastes to recyclers.
4. To make the energy consumption of college more efficient.
5. To encourage awareness campaigns and promote greener attitudes through physical displays and educational curriculum.

Conduct of the activity: The activities conducted aimed to:

- Ensure waste management be done in a responsible manner.
- Reduce waste generation at source and focus on reuse and recycling.
- Disposal of waste in a cost effective manner.
- Sustainable Practice Committee to be responsible for Waste management.
- Participate in Swachh Abhiyaan Programmes
- Adhere to the policy of MGNCRE on Swachhta Action Plan.
- Organise seminar and expert talk on waste management and Swachhta action plan. .
- Ensure the safe handling and storage of waste in the college.
- Provide appropriate training and code of conduct for staff, students and other stakeholders on Waste management issues.

Cleanliness: PCER's commitment to cleaner, greener environment is visible through range of initiatives. At the community level the institution has conducted clean up drives at Juhu Beach and Navi Mumbai mangroves. At the college and campus level, Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan was held. PCER has received the Swachhta Action Plan Certificate from Mahatma Gandhi National Council of Rural Education.

Sanitation: Segregation of the waste is done in the campus premises, with two dustbins are kept on each floor labelled as 'Wet Waste and Dry Waste. The wet waste goes to the dumping pit in the college campus. The manure generated in the dumping pit then goes to the plants in the campus. Dry waste in the campus is given to the waste collection department of Greater Mumbai Municipal Corporation. Cleanliness of toilets, classroom, campus is mandatory. During Covid protocols, sanitizers were kept in every floor and entrance. Regular cleaning of toilets is done, the floor supervisor keeps a check on the same. Surprise visit/ check is done to maintain clean and healthy habits.

Green cover: Apart from primary cleanliness and sanitation efforts, the institute is also committed to promoting sustainable habits by promoting cloth bags through bag making competitions along with other efforts to maintain a plastic free environment. The objective of the competition was to encourage self- reliance through sustainable practices by creating wealth from waste. An Exhibition cum Sale was held to promote eco-friendly stationery. Street plays on sensitizing the students and community to a pollution free environment have been held.

Pollution free healthy environment: Through the Vocational Education Nai Talim Experiential Learning (VENTEL) initiative, the college conducts a variety of sessions and activities. Sessions for school students on kitchen gardening, sanitation and hygiene are conducted as outreach activities to the wider school community. These sessions were conducted for the school students to make them aware of better cleanliness habits as well as to develop an appreciation and interest for sustainable environmental practices. Students conduct street plays around the local community areas, railway stations etc to create awareness on a range of issues. Creation of a pollution free environment is one of the themes of the street plays conducted by students as part of the environmental awareness campaigns undertaken. Poster and Slogan competitions on the same have been conducted to sensitize students on environmental issues. Quizzes on days like Ocean Day and Environment Day provide a platform for students to display as well as deepen their understanding of the environment problems and their solutions. Nai Talim week, held around Gandhi Jayanti in October, is another key event on the PCER academic calendar. It includes a variety of activities, sessions, workshops aligned towards Gandhian philosophy. It emphasizes that the future depends on what you do today. A session on waste segregation was conducted through a detailed activity and gave students an understanding of dry and wet waste. This week also includes efforts to maintain and practise Swachh Bharat on a daily basis in order to ensure a pollution free healthy environment.

Objective of the study:

To foster green practices towards sustainable environment.

Sample: F.Y. B.Ed and S.Y.B.Ed students of PCER, Chembur. There were 200 students involved in the study.

Findings of the study:

PCER has conducted various activities in its endeavour to leverage the local environment, locational knowledge and resources, community practices and challenges. The institution has SDG (Sustainable Development Goals) as its overall theme for all activities:

Local Environment such as beach cleaning drive after the Ganesh Chaturthi festival conducted by DNA Eco Ganesh, Mangrove cleaning in collaboration with the Mangrove Marshalls for the removal of plastic and non- biodegradable waste. A Swachh Abhiyaan programme was conducted where student teachers participated in cleaning the campus premises, conducting cleanliness and hygiene session for practice teaching school students. The institution has focused on several community and social issues and conducted activities to sensitize the student teachers and the community reach out to the less privileged in society and to contribute in different ways to the welfare of the society. The student teachers conducted lessons for learners through NASEOH, Access Life, Navjeevan Centre. A value- added course on Inclusive Education was conducted to sensitize and creating awareness of inclusive practices among students and community Several activities were conducted in collaboration with Soroptimist Welfare Association such as Jumble Sale, Fistful of Grains, Recipe Contest for a social cause, donate a meal drive and other fund- raising drives amounting to Rs.4,00,000/-, the proceeds of which go towards community kitchens, procuring food, grocery, stationery, masks, etc. The institution participated and encouraged its staff for the vaccination drive for Covid-19 organized by M E S campus wise. The institution organized a Corona Women Warriors Award with Lions Club of Mumbai Ghatkopar Galaxy and Leo Club of Ghatkopar Galaxy in recognition of the achievements of women during the pandemic lockdown period.

Locational Knowledge: The institution organized a value-added course on Human Values to promote sustainable living practices among the students. The institution has endeavored to spread awareness on the environmental issues through a Poster competition on sustainable living, cloth bag making competition, exhibition of eco-friendly products, online quizzes on environment, food for wellness and ocean day, Environment Day, Water Day celebrations etc. Sessions, webinars by different experts focusing on role of teachers, new approaches, tools, resources they can use and challenges they face in today's changing times due to the pandemic and the online educational process Various sessions, webinars, seminar, online quizzes, street plays, videos, short movies prepared by student teachers were conducted on highlighting important issues such as gender equality, human trafficking, human rights, social wellness, physical wellness.

Community practices: A book on Decoding SDGs for the classroom was published by the Alumni of the institution. The institution has leveraged the locational knowledge and resources to a great extent by organizing expert talk sessions on Good Health and Wellbeing, Mental Health, Menstrual Health and Hygiene, Nutrition, Diet for Wellness, Overcoming Stress and Anxiety, Awareness of Diseases such as Cancer, Aids etc by medical practitioners and other experts. A value-added course on Yoga was conducted where sessions were conducted on different yoga asanas, meditation etc to inculcate health and wellness practices among the student teachers and the community.

Conclusion:

We won't have a society if we destroy the environment. – Margaret Mead

Education in Mahatma Gandhi's view encompassed physical, spiritual and intellectual growth of students. It should give not merely the three R'S and some skills to students to earn their livelihood but also help them to become healthy and happy individuals who understand their place and roles in the society, country, nation and the world and contribute to its growth. Student teachers are prospective teachers who will be absorbed in various schools and will touch the lives of millions of children.

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