

Best Practice: 2019-2020

Best Practice 1

Title of the Practice: People's Biodiversity Register (PBR) of Kolkata: A Case Study of Ward No 10 & 17, Kolkata Municipal Corporation Area

1.Objectives of the Practice:

As part of a study initiated in Collaboration with Kolkata Municipal Corporation and West Bengal Biodiversity Board, the Departments of Botany and Zoology have conducted sample survey of biotic resources thriving in Ward No. 10 & 17, situated within the Kolkata Corporation area.

2. The aim of the study was to:

- Document, monitor and provide information of local flora and fauna for sustainable management of local biodiversity resources.
- To assess the impact of human intervention on the biotic resources of the area.
- To develop exhaustive database of plants and animal species for the conservation of the biotic communities of this part of Kolkata.

Primary survey was conducted which involved identification of the trees, canopy measurements, height measurements, GPS survey, and also Questionnaire survey with the local people to understand the level of perception on the importance of biodiversity, their involvement in the biodiversity conservation measures, rearing of animals and so on.

3.The Context:

People's Biodiversity Register (PBR) is a register with names of species and their distribution in a given area. It is a comprehensive data base that record people's traditional knowledge and insight of the status, uses, history, ongoing changes and forces driving these changes on the biological diversity resources of their own localities. Biodiversity registers are being prepared with the help of the local people and hence referred as People's Biodiversity Register. It provides information on the current utilization patterns of biodiversity and its economic benefits to the local people.

National Biological Diversity Act of India (2002) mandates that local knowledge of biodiversity be registered in a national database, called the People's Biodiversity Register (PBR). So, one of the mandates of the Biodiversity Board is to prepare Biodiversity Registers not only by local people but also by school/college teachers and students. Preparation of Biodiversity Register is an attempt to realize the biodiversity at each Local level. Identification of biological resources and documentation is one of the prerequisites for the Register preparation which can lead to new discoveries and development of new commercial products, patenting of such products, equitable distribution of benefits, if any, and through this, paving the way for a new economic order in the country through biodiversity conservation.

Kolkata Municipal Corporation and West Bengal Biodiversity Board has started to prepare Peoples Biodiversity Register of Kolkata . In 2020, both the organizations invited the Seth Anandram Jaipuria College and other academic institutions to take part in this programme. This is a Collaborative work of the College with the West Bengal Biodiversity Board and Kolkata Municipal Corporation.

Importance of PBR

- Local knowledge that is being registered includes utilitarian uses of biodiversity such as for food, fodder, firewood, medicines used in the Ayurveda traditional medicinal system of India, as well as knowledge of traditional conservation practices such as sacred groves and sacred water bodies.
- Document, monitor and provide information for sustainable management of local biodiversity resources.
- Promote biodiversity-friendly development in the emerging process of decentralized management of natural resources.
- Establish claims of individuals and local communities over knowledge of uses of biodiversity resources, and ensure equitable benefit sharing from the use of such knowledge and resources.
- Teach environmental science and biology
- Perpetuate and promote the development of practical ecological knowledge of local communities and of traditional sciences such as Ayurveda and Unani medicine.
- The registers form a baseline data for future management strategies required for the sustainable utilization of biodiversity in a decentralized manner.
- It helps in equitable sharing of benefits arising out of commercial utilization of biodiversity resources and knowledge on their uses. The Biodiversity Register offers conservation, protection of IPR and the traditional knowledge.

4. The Practice:

Sovabazar area is located within ward No 10 and the adjacent area, Ward No. 17, which is a densely populated area of Kolkata. More than 38% of the population in this area is economically backward. Though it is thickly populated area but importance of this ward is high as it is furnished with one of the oldest royal houses in the city, Sovabazar (Shobhabazar) Rajbari, was constructed by Raja Nabakrishna Deb, a prominent aristocrat of the city; different educational and health care institutions. Primary survey was conducted which involved identification of the trees, canopy measurements, height measurements, GPS survey, and also Questionnaire survey with the local people to understand the level of perception on the importance of biodiversity, their involvement in the biodiversity conservation measures, rearing of animals and so on. The local market was also surveyed to identify the biotic commodities sold every day and their natural sources.

5. Evidence of Success:

A preliminary Report on PBR has already been submitted to the West Bengal Biodiversity Board which includes list of trees, medicinal plants, birds, small mammals, butterflies, molluscs, etc. recorded during the last one year.

6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required:

Sovabazar area is a thickly populated area with more than 38% of the population economically backward. There are several slum areas where people are very much unaware about the importance of biodiversity and at times reluctant to co-operate. Many high rise buildings are also coming up in the area destroying a major part of the biodiversity around. Further the work requires expertise and involves year round survey keeping a track record of the natural vegetation around.

Best Practice 2

Title:- Online e-content facilities on college website, Online classes using Google classroom app, ZOOM app and Google Meet app, and feedback is obtained from students on phone calls/online.

1. Goal: • To continue studies and academic activities of students during lockdown and crucial period due to Covid-19 pandemic.

2. Objective of the study:

- To maximise student's participation in online classes.
- To ensure regularity of students, so that contents are properly deliver to students as regular attendance of students is very important to understand all the topics of any subject because all the topics of a subject are related to each other.
- To maximize interactions with students as students are not able to come to college.
- To provide notes in the form e-content on college website so that each and every student can access them anywhere, anytime and whenever needed.
- The objective of taking feedback from students online to maximize participation of students in online classes and taking suggestions from students, improving interactions with students, boost up morale of students by involving them in teaching-learning process.
- To motivate faculty members in such a crucial period so that they can be utilised their time in teaching -learning process and feel good in such a pity pandemic situation rather than being disappointed and depressed.

3. The Context: The prevailing system of higher education focuses mainly on academic aspects and performance. As all the courses are professional and technical courses, continuity and regularity both are equally important to understand course contents. Due to COVID-19 pandemic, the world suffered a lot, to continue academic activities in such a pandemic situation when students and teachers both are not able to come to college and social distancing is at priority, online classes are only the solution. Thus college has started online classes using online google classroom app, WhatsApp groups, Zoom app, google meet app etc. and a link is also provided on college website to upload e-contents on regular basis so that students can obtained them from anywhere, anytime, whenever needed. To improve interactions with students and to increase involvements of students, feedback forms are made to be filled by the students on phone calls by teachers and their responses have recoded so that their suggestions are incorporated in upcoming process.

4. The Practice: To continue academic activities, first of all classes are created on Google classroom app and teachers have created their classrooms and passwords on the google classroom app. The passwords and classroom details are forwarded to all the students via sms and then all students join classes. Online link of ZOOM class is sent by all the

teachers on Google Classroom app on regular basis according to time schedule made in department. Students attend classes from their homes using mobile or laptops and teachers maintained their attendance registers. And then on regular basis, e-contents are uploaded on Google classrooms app as well as college website by all the teachers, and interactions with students can be made in Zoom app/ google meet app interactive sessions. Feedback from students are obtained by the teachers using phone calls and WhatsApp groups and google classroom app itself and suggestions are incorporated to improve quality of teaching learning process. Quiz and seminars are organised by using Google forms and zoom meetings and students submit their assignments on Google classroom app. Similarly, internal evaluations and quizzes are conducted online using Google form, ZOOM sessions and as per guidelines provided by the university and government. Daily attendance of students is recorded in attendance registers by the teachers in Zoom classes.

5.Evidence of Success:

- Uploaded e-contents are available on college website.
- Filled Feedback form students available in departments.
- Information is available on Google classroom app.
- Attendance registers are available.
- Teachers are motivated to teach online and students are motivated to attend classes as strength increased.
- Feedback of students, teachers and parents are positive.

6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required:

It is a smooth process and as regarding faculty there is no problem but slow network is an issue.