



“Solace”

BEST PRACTICE

at

**Women’s College, Tinsukia
(2021 – 2022)**

Best Practice – 1 [SOLACE]

1. Title of the Practice

“Solace” – an initiative to provide Special Relaxation in working Conditions for women employees during their Mensuration periods and free distribution of Sanitary Napkins to all students and staff.

2. Objectives of the Practice

The practice has been adopted as a part of the Gender Equity Policy of the college. It is well understood that women remain in a state of discomfort and despair (physiologically and emotionally) during their Mensuration periods and we believe that it is unfair to treat them on equal terms with men, during those days. As a gesture of goodwill and love towards our women employees, these special arrangements have been made by the college authority. We strongly believe that these relaxations do not incur any loss to the institution, either financially or otherwise. Instead, such gestures from the administration put them in a happy state of mind and in return they give more than 100% for the institution.

3. The Context

Contextual features that have been taken into account: The College, being a Women’s college, has the privilege of accommodating hundreds of girls every day in its campus. Moreover, there is a good number of female employees (teaching and non-teaching) in the college. Mensuration related issues are not only unpredictable, but also very disconcerting for them. We believe that the college authority, by the virtue of being the guardian of the college, should take upon itself the responsibility of providing solace to our family members at the time of their distress.

Challenges: Two minor challenges that we had to overcome were –

- 1) Minor financial burden of around Rs.2500/- in a year, which the college could afford easily.
- 2) It was necessary to sensitize all employees (male and female) and make them sympathetic towards issues related to women. It was also a challenge to make them understand the importance of Equity Initiatives.

4. The Practice

The practices that the college has been adopting since last couple of years can be depicted as follows –

- Free distribution of Sanitary Napkins to the students at the time of their needs has been a practice in the college since 2020. The facility has been extended to all female employees and teachers of the college.
- Notification regarding this was served to concerned parties. And also displayed in the college Notice Boards.
- Ms. Yashoda Chetry, a grade-IV employee of the college, has been entrusted with the responsibility of swift distribution of the same on demand.

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- The Napkins have been purchased from wholesalers and kept in the Departmental Store of the college.
- A register has been maintained by the college office to keep record of free Napkins that have been distributed to the beneficiaries.
- Notification regarding relaxation of Working Hours was served to all concerned departments viz. office, Library, Hostel etc. and all staff are sensitized regarding this.
- There is a provision of Rest Room for Women Employees that they can avail at the time of their Mensuration period, when they are in utter discomfort due to cramps etc.

Uniqueness: This practice that is in place in the college is unique as it addresses the Gender Equity Policy of the Higher Education in the best possible way. It is unique because it reflects the institution's positive attitude towards the cause of women empowerment.

Initial Constraints & Limitations: Initially the students were found to be reluctant and shy to come forward and request for a free Napkin. But after years of relentless efforts and sensitization, the students and staff (female), these days come forward without any hesitation to avail the facilities.

5. Evidence of Success

Initially there was an air of hesitance/ reluctance on the part of the beneficiaries to come forward to avail the benefits. However with passage of time and as a result of consistent sensitization and counselling from the administration, the air of shyness has disappeared and both students and employees come forward and avail the facilities without any hesitance.

From our record kept in our office there is an average use of 360 pads per year. Taking into account that, average number of "academic working day" per year is 180, the average number of "Free Sanitary Napkin" in use is $(360/180) = 2$. This is a satisfactory count over a period of one year.

6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required

Problems encountered: Little bit of problem faced at the beginning. It was due to orthodox mindset of both male and female members of the college family. Prospective female beneficiaries were reluctant to come forward due to shyness and other taboo in the society regarding Mensuration. Luckily for us this has been disappearing fast, thanks to continuous efforts of the institution in this regard.

Resources Required: Extra financial burden that has to be borne by the college was meagre and was covered well by extra resources generated by the college through various forms of house rents.

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7. Notes (Optional)

This Best Practice of our institution is in accordance with the Gender Equity Policy of the government. We believe this practice can be adopted by any institution (academic or, non-academic), which will create an atmosphere of mutual respect and caring, thereby inculcating happiness among the women counterparts. This enhances overall productivity of the institution.

Xahari



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at
Women's College, Tinsukia
(2021 - 2023)

Best Practice – 2 [Xahari (সহাৰি)]

1. Title of the Practice:

“**Xahari**” – an outreach initiative of the college undertaken as a part of the Institutional Social Responsibility.

2. Objectives of the Practice

Basic objective is to **make resources of the institution available to disadvantaged sections of the society**. “Xahari” is an initiative, which has two major schemes viz. “**Mobile Library**” and “**Computer Education at your doorsteps**”, both are created to provide services at the doorsteps of every needy institution. Of late, as a part of this mission, we have been providing free computer educations and mobile library services to *inmates of the District Jail of Tinsukia*. Our mission is to give the unfortunate *inmates* a second chance in life by equipping them with means to earn their livelihood after their jail tenure.

3. The Context

Context & Challenges:

It's always a challenge to start something, which is unheard of, before that point of time. First challenge was to convince our own staffs they were apprehensive of the fact that they may not receive positive response from their target groups. To provide services at the doorsteps needed over time work from the staff and we had to bear extra expenses for conveyances. However after tremendous responses that they received from beneficiary institutions, all the above mentioned constraints evaporated away.

Similarly our team of Xahari was a bit hesitant to go to the jail and approach the inmates (due to their preoccupations towards the jail inmates). But once they entered the jail premises and once they got love, respect and affection from the inmates, all these fear and reluctance are gone and now our team is eager than ever before to help the inmates.

4. The Practice

Two main programs covered under this Xahari initiative are – “Mobile Library” and “Free Computer Education”.

- **Mobile Library:** The mobile library of the college has more than 1000 books (mostly story books, novels, GK books, illustrated books on folktales, e-Books etc.) at its disposal. The librarian approaches institutional heads over phone and on receipt of their consent, go to the concerned institution with trunk load of books to be distributed among the students/ members of the institutions. Students choose the books that they want to read and as per their requisition, the books are given to them for a period of 15 days, for free. The institutional head takes the responsibility of safe handling and secured return of the books. In the District Jail, the Jailer receives the books to be distributed among the inmates.
- **Free Computer Education:** Our computer science department has a separate unit of 12 laptops, a sound system, a projector and other accessories, especially for the extension activities under the “Xahari”. The HoD of the department, Mr. Tapash K.Aich takes the system to the concerned institution (at present the District Jail) as per the pre declared routine (twice in a week at present) in our multi utility van and teaches the computer courses to the students/ members (inmates of the Jail) of the institution. At present 15

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(fifteen) number of jail inmates are enrolled in various computer courses (certificate and diploma) that are on offer under the *Xahari* initiative. At the end of each course, examinations will be conducted by our college at their doorsteps and on successful completion of the same, certificates will be issued by the college authority. Already District Legal Service Authority of Tinsukia has approached us for extension of our computer education to their adopted schools, which we have agreed to and very soon the DLSA also will avail benefits of our outreach programs. This free computer education program has also been made open for students of other colleges and students of other colleges (viz. Namrup College, Chabua College) have already enrolled in various computer courses offered by us.

5. Evidence of Success

Xahari has been our “**successstory**” in the field of our extension activities.

(a) **Mobile Library:** The mobile library has been providing its services in schools of the region. Lately, it has extended its services to the inmates of the district jail. It has earned popularity among the readers, as is evident from the fact that some schools request us to extend the period of lending from 15 days to one month. They also request for new books of their choice, which we are happy to oblige to.

(b) **Free Computer Education:** The drive has been gaining popularity by days. The fact that computer literacy provides immense advantage in job market, and that our facility is virtually free and we provide it at their doorsteps; have made our program attractive to aspirants. Above all, our computer programs are approved by the Dibrugarh University and one program is approved by the IIT, Mumbai. At present 15 (fifteen) numbers of Inmates of the District Jail have been enrolled to various computer courses. Similarly, 03 (three) students from *Namrup College* (district Dibrugarh) are enrolled in the Certificate course in Tally and 16 (Sixteen) members from Gwalior are enrolled in the Certificate course on FOSS (sponsored by IIT, Mumbai), under the *Xahari* initiative.

6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required

The one problem that we had to face and resolve was excess workload that our computer faculties had to bear. However they are very dedicated towards services to the society and the college acknowledges their excess workload by providing them extra remuneration for the same.

A certain amount of establishment cost and recurring costs had to be borne by the college, which was taken care of by utilizing our own resources. As per our record, the establishment and other recurring expenses that have incurred in the practice are –

- Establishment cost: Rs. 4,53,175.00
- Recurring expenditure: Rs. 6,400.00

7. Notes (Optional)

Our motto behind these best practices is that we should make our resources available to all sections of the society so that the resources are used to optimum and everyone in need can reap the benefits of knowledge sources at our disposal.

PRINCIPAL
Women’s College, Tinsukia