

VIKRAMASIMHAPURI UNIVERSITY:: BEST PRACTICE

BEST PRACTICE-2

1. Title of the Practice: “Empowering Students and Weaker sections with Employable skills through Science & Technology (ESWEST)”

2. Objectives of the Practice:

- The practice aims to enable farmers and fishing community of the region overcome their occupational challenges, and ensure them with a guaranteed income, and empower them with an improved socioeconomic status.
- To foster staff of the institution to carry out informative sessions/ training to rural area villagers, weaker sections, fishermen and farmers in the institution.
- To creation of atmosphere in the institution where social commitment becomes challenge for students through experiential learning which further helps the rural area peoples.
- To improve the basic knowledge and employability skills of students and neighbourhood coastal villagers.

3. The Context:

The University is established in the rural environment and close to east coast and it is the only source of higher education among the nearby coastal village areas. Moreover, the students are coming from rural as well as farmer background with lack of adequate knowledge.

The majority of the population of the Nellore district depends on agriculture, aquaculture and fishing activities for their livelihoods.

The farmers from rural places of coast account for the greater part of the weaker sections and fishermen population. So the institute plans to work like a process where it will output into empowering neighbourhood needy people.

University is also focusing to increase the commitment of the students towards development of farmers in coastal villages through science and technology for maximum yields in aquaculture.

The technology development informative lectures given by staff of university to increase the knowledge of students, unemployed youth as well as farmers.

4. The Practice:

The practice above mentioned is termed as **Neighbourhood Aqua Farmers & Fishermen Education (NAFFE)** in our institute. In these practice three departments along with students of institute is working intensively in different topics revealed as below.

- **Marine Biology:** Aquaculture farmers meets; Enrichment of employability skills of Fishermen in coastal villages; Earn while Learn Programme for students, Integrated Fish farming

- **Social Work:** Community development programmes; Extension activities for rural areas; Women empowerment activities.
- **Biotechnology:** Mushroom Cultivation; Vermi compost; Molecular diagnostic lab tests

For this practice, individual department wise co-coordinator is assigned at the beginning of each academic year. These coordinators decide the scope and methodology regarding the practice.

- The institute organizes the farmer's meets twice annually for rural area farmers and villagers too. Right after that the institute organizes some informative lectures for the farmers.
- During the interactive session, farmer discusses their problems with staff members.
- Meanwhile student of the institute interacts with the farmers and does the survey regarding the format given to the student which takes some information from them.
- After the survey of this information, student as well as staff members of respective departments does the analysis of the filled information.
- After the proper analysis, the staff along with some team of the students visited the needy villages regarding some informative and experiential training to the farmers.
- The area for the empowering projects/training was chosen on the basis of priority needs of the rural people.
- Vikrama Simhapuri University, a nest of scientific expertise and technocrats, has come forward to share its scientific expertise and technological resources with the rural as well as coastal folks of the region so as to make their occupations more rewarding, stable and risk-free.

The training & awareness programmes conducted for the benefit of the neighbourhood rural people in the following activities:

- Integrated Fish farming training to unemployed weaker section people
- Mushroom cultivation training to unemployed youth in rural areas
- Kitchen gardening to rural women and students
- Marine Algal culture for unemployed fishermen communities.
- Mangroves plantation & protection awareness camps to students & fishermen.
- Training of preparation of value added/dry fish products to fisher women.
- Fish & shrimp disease diagnosis in the free of cost to aqua farmers
- Conservation activities of olive ridley sea turtles in the Nellore coast.

5. Evidence of Success:

- The University initiative increases farmer's knowledge and help them to adopt practices that are profitable, environmentally sound, and contribute to quality of life.
- Nearly 800 farming households in 27 coastal villages have been benefited by Shrimp Farming practices. The positive impact created by **NAFFE** method in local villages.

- Improving farmers/fisherman skills and knowledge of new techniques and technologies and providing them with any physical resources necessary for implementation, can dramatically increase their level of productivity.
- Exposure to these skill enhancement programmes has developed the capacity of students in policy making, planning programme development, public relations and mobilization of skills.
- Student participation and experiential learning has been enhanced to a great extent along with the farmers.
- The economic status of fisher-folk in fishing activities has gone up with 15 per cent increase after proper training/awareness camps.
- Hygienic dry fish production in the coastal villages was increased upto 20 per cent after proper training programmes organized to fisher women.

6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required:

Individual counselling and guiding takes time and there was resistance from the faculty. There was difficulty in equalization of semester duration and work load because of the time consuming practice along with the holiday timings.

All its extension activities are carried out effectively only with the support of the student volunteers and teachers. However dedicated they are, they cannot involve themselves with these activities round the year. Sufficient logistic facility is required to take the volunteers and other necessary equipment to and from the beneficiary villages.

University offers educational service on a non-profit motive and it functions mainly on government grants. At times, it is difficult to take the programme further and farther since it requires resources. Support from the community and local bodies for successful implementation is needed.

7. Other information relevant for adopting/ implementing the Best Practice:

More funds flow mechanism is required to improving the number of beneficiaries and the area of coverage. What is extended as a service in the neighbourhood may be expanded to a larger region with increased financial support.

Aqua Farmers Awareness Camps in the Different coastal areas of Nellore district



Aqua Farmers Awareness Camps in the Different coastal areas of Nellore district

Experimental Aquaculture Pond facility for training to students & farmers at VSU campus



Fisherman Awareness Camps at coastal villages



Marine Algae Culture training to coastal village fishermen's along with students



Value added Sea food /Dry fish training programme to Fisher Women in Coastal villages



Awareness programme for Aqua farmers



Value added Sea food /Dry fish training programme to Fisher Women in Coastal villages



VSU Students Interacting with Fisher Women





Mushroom Cultivation



Mushroom Cultivation -Bed Preparation



Training Programme for VSU Students Regarding Mushroom Cultivation



Students and faculty interacting with fisher man/women and enquiring about the procedure to handle left over fish after sale



Awareness programme with farmers



Awareness programme with farmers