



Bharati College
UNIVERSITY OF DELHI

Best Practice 2

Title: “Alleviate financial barriers to education through Learn and Earn Scheme for students from underprivileged/economically backward homes”

Objective:

The goal of this scheme is to enable students who would have been otherwise left out of the advantages of higher education to acquire it with dignity. By offering part-time employment opportunities within the college or its affiliates, the program endeavours to enable the students to earn while they learn. This initiative shall not only ease the financial burden of education but also cultivates a strong work ethic and a sense of responsibility.

Context:

A successful implementation of the Earn and Learn Scheme hinges on a deep understanding of the socio-economic context, thoughtful alignment with employment opportunities, and the creation of a supportive campus culture that recognizes and celebrates diversity. Bharati college is well attuned to the socio-economic landscape of its student body. It assesses the financial challenges faced by students from underprivileged backgrounds, considering factors such as family income, access to resources, and regional economic disparities. Additionally, the college is cognizant of the prevailing job market conditions and align the Earn and Learn opportunities with industries that not only complement students' academic pursuits but also provide meaningful and sustainable employment prospects. This contextual awareness ensures that the program not only addresses immediate financial needs but also contributes to the long-term employability and career growth of participating students. By integrating these considerations, colleges can ensure that their initiatives are not only financially impactful but also culturally sensitive and tailored to the unique needs of underprivileged students.

Practice:

During the admission period, the administration noted that several parents of prospective college students lacked the necessary funds to enrol their daughters. Consequently, the institution initiated a financial assistance scheme to facilitate their admission. As the demand for such assistance increased, a need arose to formalize and regularize the process. Initial attempts involved scrutinizing the background of students and intervening with their parents, but this approach proved ineffective. Recognizing the need for a shift in orientation, the college introduced a scheme offering fee waivers and concessions, supported by contributions from staff members, well-wishers, and those associated with the college. Approximately 2000 students have benefited from this initiative.

Over time, it became apparent that some students perceived the fee waiver as an entitlement rather than a genuine need. To address this, the college introduced the Self Help Cell and the Learn and Earn Scheme. The Self Help Cell provides financial aid to needy students in



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exchange for work in various college departments. This not only empowers students financially but also offers valuable real-world experience, enhancing their skills and employability. To ensure the smooth operation of the scheme, teachers closely monitor students' contributions and the evolving requirements of different departments.

While the Self Help Cell and Earn and Learn scheme are effective options for financial assistance, the college also allows fee payment in instalments. However, misuse of the fee waiver benefit may lead to its cancellation. The success of these initiatives is evident in the increasing number of applicants seeking aid, establishing Bharati College as an accessible and pro-poor friendly institution in West Delhi. The scheme's reputation is underscored by the appreciation from parents and wards for its dignified and sophisticated administration. The college remains committed to prioritizing assistance for those with no assured source of income, as exemplified by the continued success of these practices since their inception in 2000. In the academic year 2014-15, 30 students benefited from fee instalment payments, and 35 gained from the earn and learn scheme.

Evidence of Success:

- 36 students benefitted in 2021-22 and 51 students in 2022-23 under the Fee Waiver/ Learn and Earn scheme. A sum of Rs 3,36,530 was paid to them in 2021-2022 and Rs.5,49,395 was paid in 2022-23.
- Four students from Learn and Earn working with the alumni and the GB member Mr.Lokesh Parashar for the Alumni Data preparation received Rs 8,100 in 2022-23.
- The college stepped up to help the students hit hard during the Pandemic. On 22nd October 2021 it was decided that the students whose parent/s expired due to Covid will get full fee reimbursement. One student was the beneficiary in this case. Another four students received full fee reimbursement whose parent/s had passed away not due to Covid but who were in dire circumstances due to lack of resources. Another 40 students were given 50 percent fee- waiver.
- On 29th Oct 2021, the committee recommended the names of four students from amongst the Learn and Earn/Fee Waiver scheme whose annual family income was the lowest for Ms Usha Khattar Scholarship. In 2022, 7 students were recommended for the same.
- On Dec1 2022, 10 applicants out of 27 were shortlisted to be interviewed by Mr.Ashish Jindal and his team for Manohar cum means scholarship for the first time. The Umrao Trust that funds this scholarship is run by Mr.Ashish Jindal, son of a former colleague from Bharati College. Another 11 students were recommended in 2023.
- These 2 scholarships are new to the College and is being handled by the Fee Waiver /Learn and Earn Committee.



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- 10 students were recommended for Learn and Earn in 2023 to work in the library, administration and Sports sections.

Problems encountered and resources required:

- Perpetual struggle to secure adequate financial resources. Despite the generosity of staff and well-wishers, sustaining such programs over the long term can be daunting, leading to the potential denial of assistance to deserving students due to funding constraints.
- Evolving nature of economic circumstances and job markets poses a challenge in aligning work opportunities with students' academic pursuits. Ensuring that the employment provided is both meaningful and relevant to their studies requires ongoing effort and adaptability.
- Risk of students perceiving fee waivers or financial aid as entitlements rather than necessities. This mind-set can undermine the intended purpose of the scheme, leading to misuse and potentially limiting the assistance available for those in genuine need.
- Administrative intricacies involved in coordinating work placements, monitoring students' contributions, and addressing logistical issues demand careful attention. Maintaining the balance between the academic requirements of students and the practical demands of the work component is crucial for the success of such schemes.
- Surge in the number of applicants seeking assistance after the success of this scheme. This increased demand could strain the available resources, requiring continuous efforts to expand funding sources and ensure that the scheme remains inclusive and impactful.

In essence, while these schemes are indispensable in promoting educational accessibility and empowering underprivileged students, addressing the challenges related to funding, perception, and logistical intricacies is imperative for their sustained success.

Future Plans:

Diversify Funding Sources: Explore and establish partnerships with external organizations, governmental agencies, and corporate sponsors to diversify funding sources. This can help reduce dependency on internal contributions and create a more stable financial foundation for the scheme.

Alumni Engagement: Engage with alumni networks to create a sustained source of support. Alumni who benefited from similar programs may be willing to contribute, mentor current students, or even provide job opportunities, fostering a sense of community and giving back.

Skill Matching: Enhance the alignment between students' academic pursuits and the work opportunities provided through the scheme. Regularly assess the evolving needs of industries



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and facilitate skill development programs to ensure that students are well-prepared for the job market.

Financial Literacy Programs: Impart financial literacy in students on budgeting, financial planning, and responsible use of their earnings. This empowers them to manage their finances effectively and promotes a sense of financial independence.

Monitoring and Evaluation: Establish robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess the impact of the scheme on students' academic and professional growth. Collecting feedback from both students and employers can provide insights for continuous improvement and adaptation to changing needs.

Awareness Campaigns: Conduct awareness campaigns to ensure that eligible students are aware of the scheme and its benefits. This involves collaborating with academic advisors, faculty, and career counselling services to identify and reach out to students who may benefit from the program.

Flexibility in Work Arrangements: Provide flexible work arrangements to accommodate students' academic schedules. This may involve negotiating part-time work hours during peak academic periods and increasing flexibility during breaks, ensuring that employment complements rather than hinders their educational pursuits.

Regular Review of Policies: Periodically review and update the policies governing the Earn and Learn Scheme to address any emerging challenges or changing dynamics. This includes staying informed about legal and regulatory considerations to ensure compliance.

Expand Work Opportunities: Continuously explore and expand the types of work opportunities available to students. This could involve partnerships with a wider range of departments within the institution, local businesses, or community organizations to diversify the experiential learning opportunities.

By incorporating these aspects, college shall strengthen the sustainability and impact of such schemes, creating a more supportive and empowering environment for underprivileged students.