



Best Practice 2

Title of the Practice:

INCULCATING THE VALUES OF BRATACHARI MOVEMENT AMONG STUDENTS

Objectives of the Practice: Bratachari is a comprehensive programme of physical, mental, and intellectual culture based on folk traditions through physical exercise, art, dance, drama, music, singing and social service. Khejuri College periodically organizes Bratachari Camp at the Campus which is held for about ten days. Moreover, the College encourages students to practice Bratachari and display their performance at various arena.

The expected outcome

- To inculcate discipline, nationalism and universal brotherhood through practice of Bratachari
- To develop physical, mental and intellectual capacities of students through periodical organisation of Bratachari Camps
- To disseminate the message of harmony and physical culture through Bratachari performances by students

The Context: "Bratachari" can be called a social movement in the context of colonial British rule in India. In 1940, "Bratachari" was established by Gurusaday Dutta in Joka area of Thakurpukur in South-24-Parganas district of Bengal.

"Brata" signifies a solemn objective, pursued as a joyous rhythmic ritual simultaneously through an integrated use of thought, word, and physical movement. "Chari" denotes one who pursues a purpose, ideal or objective. The word "Bratachari" thus denotes one who has solemnly undertaken the duty of developing his or her life through the systematic and integrated pursuit of *bratas*.

The transformation of India in the post globalization context, has brought about accelerated change in sociocultural practices. Anomie, alienation and frustration have increasingly gripped Indian youth. As Bratachari is rooted in indigenous folk traditions of Bengal and offers a fostering of physical and mental capabilities, it is an extremely beneficial practice in the present scenario.

The Practice: According to Gurusaday Dutta, life itself should be regarded as a Brata and should be pursued as a complete whole and as an integrated ritual, inspired by a noble purpose which is at once spiritual and practical. The single Brata or solemn purpose and ritual of life is divided into five *bratas* representing a five-fold path for complete realisation of life



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which, however, must be pursued simultaneously and not in separate compartments. The five *bratas* are: *Knowledge, Labour, Truth, Unity and Joy*. Therefore, the ultimate goal of a Bratachari is the attainment of the ideal of the complete man by attaining perfection in self-development in all spheres of life– physical, mental, moral and social.

- Khejuri College encourages all College students to participate in Bratachari as it seeks to create a nationwide discipline of common citizenship irrespective of class, creed, gender or other social markers. This is to be achieved by developing an ethical disposition, physical fitness in ideal and practice, the pursuit of constructive work, an observance of the [dignity of labour](#) and a joyous community spirit through common participation in dances and songs. Through Bratachari movement, Dutta revived different martial dances like Raibenshe, Dhali and other folk songs. Thus, through exploration of indigenous cultural traditions and knowledge systems, Bratachari establishes a sense of elevated nationalism and universal brotherhood. The College encourages students to inculcate these values.
- Khejuri College periodically organizes Bratachari Camp. Many college students participate in the Camp which generally lasts for ten days. At present, experts from “Bishwa Bhuvanar Bratachari” organizes the Camp in the College premises. In the camp, not only are the students trained through physical exercises, they also engage in learning songs and dances thereby enriching their involvement in cultural and community practices. All participating students are provided Certificates at the successful completion of the Camp.
- The College encourages students to perform Bratachari in programmes held at the College campus and beyond. The College students have spread awareness about Bratachari in local schools like Baratala Gramsangha Vidyaniketan. Further, some students are teaching Bratachari to young children in their locality. This not only helps in disseminating the cherished values of Bratachari but also strengthens the bond between students and community.

Evidence of Success: Every year under the supervision of experts invited from outside, the Physical Education Department organizes Bratachari camp for the students of this college. Though it is organized by the Department of Physical Education, students from all sixteen departments are allowed to take part in the camp. In the camp both exercise and theoretical classes are organized. On the final day of the Camp, the students exhibit their skills for the entire College in a vivid Programme. For successful completion, each student is given a certificate. The success of the inculcating Bratachari among College students is reflected not only in the performances of the students but also in the enhanced discipline in the College campus. Many students also pursue to join the Army and their stint with Bratachari enables the manifestation of positive moral and patriotic values.

Problems Encountered and Resources Required: Socio-cultural scenario of rural West Bengal is rapidly changing for which it is becoming difficult to get trained Bratachari trainers. Special counseling is required to arouse interest among the students. Under the



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CBCS Curriculum, it is problematic to find time for training camp. During the college hours, accommodation of classroom for Bratachari classes is often a challenge. Moreover, the students who join the Camp are exonerated from attending regular classes and hence have to catch up with the rest of the class. In addition, the financial constraints in arranging Bratachari Camp and activities often pose a challenge and it would be helpful to receive assistance in this regard. Nevertheless, the College is determined to carry on with the organization of such Camps in the future.



S. Gupta

Principal,
Khejuri College