

**Vivekanand Education Society's College of Arts,  
Science and Commerce (Autonomous)**

**Best Practices 2024-25**

**OE Mela – A Celebration of Interdisciplinary and Experiential Learning**

**1. Title of the Practice**

OE Mela – A Celebration of Interdisciplinary and Experiential Learning

**2. Objectives of the Practice**

- To implement NEP 2020's vision of multidisciplinary and choice-based education through Open Elective (OE) courses.
- To provide a platform for students to showcase experiential learning across diverse disciplines.
- To encourage creativity, collaboration, and peer-to-peer learning among students.
- To promote academic curiosity and self-directed learning.
- To engage external stakeholders like junior college students, fostering awareness of holistic education practices.

**3. The Context**

The introduction of Open Elective courses under NEP 2020 at VESASC emphasized flexibility and student choice. However, to ensure these academic offerings translated into actual student engagement and knowledge exchange, the college launched the OE Mela. Designed as an experiential exhibition, the Mela needed to address student involvement, interdisciplinary thinking, and the translation of theoretical knowledge into creative outputs. It was also essential to create a platform that could serve as a benchmark for innovation and inclusivity in the implementation of NEP guidelines.

**4. The Practice**

The OE Mela is organized annually by first-year students across various streams, supported by second-year students. It features stalls, activities, performances, and demonstrations that reflect the learning outcomes of Open Elective subjects, including but not limited to Basics of Stock Market, Artificial Intelligence, Financial Literacy, Understanding Stress, and Photography. Students present concepts through games, skits, and interactive visuals, making complex topics accessible and engaging. The event not only allows for creative expression but also fosters collaboration, critical thinking, and peer learning. It is open to junior college students and parents, widening its outreach and enhancing community engagement.

**5. Evidence of Success**

- Increased student participation and enthusiasm across disciplines.
- Excellent feedback from students, faculty, and visitors.
- Peer-to-peer engagement enhanced understanding and retention of concepts.
- Positive interest from junior college attendees in VESASC's academic model.

- Recognized as an innovative practice aligned with NEP 2020.
- Annual growth in OE course enrollment and interdisciplinary curiosity.

## **6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required**

- Time constraints for students to prepare high-quality interactive content alongside regular academics.
- Space limitations in setting up numerous stalls simultaneously.
- Resource needs for creative materials and logistics, which are managed by collaborative planning and departmental coordination.

## **7. Notes (Optional)**

The OE Mela serves as a model for implementing NEP's vision in a real-world academic setting. By integrating classroom learning with creativity and exhibition, it enhances student engagement and builds a dynamic educational environment. Its inclusive approach involving external students also adds to the institution's outreach and brand identity.

## **Rhythms of Triumph: Sustained Excellence in Cultural Competitions**

### **1. Title of the Practice**

Achievements in Youth Festival of University of Mumbai and Intercollegiate cultural competition.

### **2. Objectives of the Practice**

The primary objective of this practice is to **nurture, promote, and showcase cultural and artistic excellence** among students through participation in Youth Festival of University of Mumbai and intercollegiate cultural competitions. It aims to provide a platform for students to explore their potential in **literary, performing, and fine arts** while instilling confidence, teamwork, and leadership skills. The underlying principle is to ensure **holistic development** beyond academics, fostering creativity, cultural awareness, and emotional expression. Through this initiative, the institution aspires to build a vibrant community of young artists and leaders who contribute positively to both campus life and society at large.

### **3. The Context**

In today's competitive academic environment, the importance of cultural and extracurricular activities often takes a backseat. However, the challenges faced by students—such as stress, lack of creative exposure, and limited opportunities for self-expression—highlight the need for a **holistic approach to education**. The Youth Festival of University of Mumbai, popularly known as *Yuva Mahotsav*, offers a unique context where students can express their creativity, talent, and innovation.

Designing and implementing this practice required addressing issues such as balancing academics with cultural commitments, mobilizing resources for practice sessions, and motivating students to participate in a wide range of events. Additionally, competition at the intercollegiate and university levels demanded rigorous preparation, mentoring, and sustained encouragement. Despite these challenges, the practice successfully transformed the cultural fabric of the college, making students not only **winners of competitions** but also ambassadors of the institution's cultural identity.

### **4. The Practice**

For Youth festival:

At the end of the previous academic year, the institution initiates the process for university-level events through comprehensive promotion and awareness activities. This is followed by the selection of event-wise student leaders and the identification of interested participants for the Youth Festival.

Subsequently, auditions are conducted, and cultural leaders are selected through a structured process involving task management and interviews. Final selections are then made, after which the college facilitates the payment of participation fees for all events. Individual form submissions for each participant are completed and duly verified by the conveners and the Principal.

All required documents are then finalized and submitted to the university. Throughout the process, continuous motivation and guidance are provided to students to prepare them for both the zonal and final rounds of the competition. The Management and Principal demonstrates a proactive and sustained commitment to the promotion of co-curricular and cultural activities by ensuring the provision of adequate infrastructure and institutional support for various events. Qualified mentors are engaged for music training, while theatre activities are facilitated by trained instructors. Mime performances are conducted under the guidance of professional experts, and a dedicated team of specialists is appointed to provide systematic training in folk dance, thereby fostering holistic student development. Since 2019, the institution has established a consistent legacy of excellence by regularly securing prizes in both the Ms. University and Mr. University categories.

For Intercollegiate competitions:

For intercollegiate events, a structured communication platform has been established to disseminate all relevant information to students. This includes brochures of intercollegiate events, details of various competitions, and updates on upcoming opportunities. Continuous motivation is provided to encourage active student participation and achievement.

Committee members actively guide and support students by facilitating participation and formulating strategies to enhance the institution's performance and recognition. Students with the highest participation and maximum prize achievements are honoured with titles such as "Cultural King" and "Cultural Queen." Travel allowance is provided to students to support their participation in various academic and co-curricular events.

Comprehensive records of student achievements are systematically maintained, and accomplishments are regularly highlighted through social media platforms and institutional magazine publications.

## 5. Evidence of Success

Our students achieved remarkable feats:

- Participation in **119 events**, resulting in **171 achievements** across levels.
- Dominance at the **intercollegiate level with 142 wins**, coupled with **20 university-level, 2 district, 1 state, and 1 zonal success**.
- Extraordinary achievements at the **international level with 2 prizes**, highlighting our institution on a worldwide stage.

At the university level, the institution secured the First Runner-Up position in the Ms. University category and received a Consolation Prize in the Mr. University category.

The crowning glory was the recognition of **Cultural Queen Sumaiya Abdulla Khan** (23 prizes in intercollegiate events) and **Cultural King Omprakash Subrat Gacchayat** (22 prizes), who brought unmatched glory to the college.

These outcomes indicate that the practice has **successfully met its objectives** of fostering cultural brilliance, encouraging holistic development, and enhancing institutional reputation. The vibrant achievements have not only inspired students but also created a legacy of cultural excellence, positioning the college as a **cultural powerhouse within Mumbai University and beyond**.

## 6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required

While the practice yielded immense success, it was not without challenges. The foremost issue was **time management**, as students had to balance rigorous academic commitments with preparation for competitions. Limited infrastructure, such as dedicated rehearsal spaces, sometimes posed difficulties for large group practices. Financial constraints for costumes, travel, and participation fees were additional hurdles.

Another challenge was **sustaining student motivation** across multiple events, as continuous participation demanded both physical and mental resilience. Faculty mentors had to dedicate extra time, often beyond working hours, to guide and train students effectively.

The practice required resources such as **skilled trainers, rehearsal spaces, sound and stage equipment, financial support for costumes and logistics, and faculty mentoring hours**. Despite these constraints, strong institutional support and student enthusiasm ensured the sustainability and success of the initiative.

## 7. Notes (Optional)

This practice can serve as a **model for other institutions** aiming to integrate cultural excellence into mainstream academic life. The key lies in providing continuous mentoring, fostering inclusivity across disciplines, and celebrating achievements at all levels. Titles such as *Cultural King* and *Cultural Queen* can be replicated to create aspirational benchmarks among students.

By embedding cultural participation into the institutional ethos, colleges can nurture well-rounded graduates equipped with confidence, creativity, and leadership skills. Furthermore, partnerships with local cultural organizations and alumni can enhance resource availability and visibility.

Adopting this best practice not only elevates students' cultural capabilities but also strengthens the **institution's reputation** in the higher education ecosystem. The experience of our students at Yuva Mahotsav 2024-25 demonstrates that with vision, mentoring, and persistence, cultural brilliance can triumph alongside academic excellence.