

BEST PRACTISE 2: CLAIM (COMMITTEE ON LEGAL ACADEMICS IN MARATHI)

The legal language, originally rooted in Latin, has predominantly transitioned into English. In India, our legal framework heavily draws from the English system, leading to the formulation, instruction, and examination of laws in English. Nevertheless, Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada University, as the affiliating institution, has introduced an option allowing law students to respond in the regional language, Marathi. In response to this provision, the institute has enacted an inclusive policy known as "CLAIM," which stands for "Committee on Legal Academics in Marathi." This committee is tasked with ensuring that students opting for Marathi as their medium of response are adequately supported. The primary goal of this initiative is to ensure that all students possess familiarity with legal terminology and its Marathi counterparts.

THE CONTEXT: The Marathwada region, situated in Maharashtra, is characterized by significant industrial underdevelopment. Due to its cultural, educational, and industrial backwardness, colleges in this area rarely witness campus placements. Consequently, graduates from these colleges predominantly opt for courtroom practice, often choosing lower courts such as the Court of JMFC or the District Court for their professional endeavors. Given the considerable distance to the High Court, only a few can afford to initiate their practice there.

THE OBJECTIVES OF THE PRACTISE: -

The institute outlines its vision, mission, goals, and objectives in various documents such as the prospectus, website, and citizens charter. The vision includes the concept of "Judiciam Dei," translating to "Throne of Judgment," while the mission encapsulates the principle of "Fiat Justitia, ruat coelum," meaning "Let Justice be done though heaven falls." To uphold this mission, the college has implemented a practice aimed at enhancing the proficiency of graduates in legal terminology, particularly in its local context. Graduates entering the legal profession are often perceived as lacking experience in this regard. Many students graduating with an LL.B. degree are unfamiliar with the terminology used in courts. Furthermore, the university curriculum lacks a dedicated course on Legal Language. In response, the institute has devised a plan to address this gap by introducing Marathi language courses for law students. This initiative aims to equip students with the necessary linguistic skills to understand legal concepts in both Marathi and English effectively.

THE PRACTISE: -

1. Establishment of a public group on Telegram comprising students, alumni, and students from other law colleges.
2. Daily sharing of five Latin terminologies with English and Marathi translations by Principal Dr. Vikas Khakare.
3. Procurement of books for students preferring to study law in Marathi before transitioning to English.
4. Preparation of PowerPoint slides by faculty members in both English and Marathi languages.
5. Conducting class interactions bilingually to accommodate diverse language preferences.
6. Introduction of an intra-collegiate moot court competition allowing participants to present arguments in Marathi.
7. Provision for students to write their answers in Marathi as per the guidelines of Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada University, Nanded.
8. Collective efforts aimed at fostering an inclusive learning environment conducive to engaging with legal concepts comfortably in preferred languages.

OBSTACLES FACED/ PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED: -

The faculty encountered challenges in translating laws into the local language and understanding the basic principles of law in the local language, as they themselves had not been exposed to this aspect previously. However, they swiftly overcame this obstacle through their own efforts and determination.

IMPACT OF PRACTISE/ EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS: -

The practice yielded positive results as observed through various indicators. Students actively engaged with the legal terminologies shared by using telegram, taking notes and showing increased interest in Marathi books. Additionally, there was noticeable progress among previously slow-learning students, who began grasping concepts in English and participating more actively in classroom discussions.

During the pandemic, when physical visits to the institute were restricted, students expressed a desire to enhance their knowledge of Latin and English terminologies. Responding to this need, the Principal took the initiative to create a Telegram Public Group, providing a platform for continuous learning. Since its inception, the group has been regularly sharing reading

materials, English legal words, Marathi translations, and Latin maxims, fostering ongoing education and engagement among students.

RESOURCES REQUIRED: -

o integrate slow learners into the advanced educational process, particularly those from Marathi medium backgrounds, resources were provided to facilitate their understanding of complex legal terminology. These students tended to disengage from classroom discussions due to language barriers. By offering support in comprehending legal terms with simplified meanings in the local language, their interest in the curriculum was reignited.

The resources essential for implementing this practice included:

1. A legal dictionary with Marathi translations to aid in understanding complex legal terms.
2. A comprehensive book on legal maxims to provide additional context and explanation.
3. Marathi books available in the library to support learning in the local language.
4. A platform for disseminating information, facilitating access to resources and fostering continuous learning among students.

This practice not only bridges the gap in legal terminology understanding but also empowers students, particularly those from Marathi medium backgrounds, to actively engage in legal education and practice. By addressing the needs of Marathi medium students and providing the necessary resources, the college aimed to promote inclusivity and ensure that all students could actively engage with the curriculum.