Campus to Corporate Connect: Empowerment of Girl Students through the Placement Cell

This project won the 2nd Prize at the Best Educational Quality Enhancement Team (BEQET) presentation for effective implementation of a scheme and making an impact on student's placements because of the efforts of the Placement Cell. The BEQET awards were organised by the National Council for Quality Management: NCQM on 9th February 2019 at Vikhroli NCQM Centre. The team comprised of a Quality Circle made up of: Principal Dr Leena Raje, Dr Shubhangi Kulkarni, Coordinator, MCom, Dr Sarita Kasaralkar, Assistant Professor, Department of Child Development, Ms Reshma Murali, Coordinator, MA Psychology, Mr. Dattatray Gawade, Lecturer, B.Com AFI, and Ms Neha Shaikh, Lecturer, B.Com.

The Project

A sharpened focus on retention, persistence, and graduation has led our college to look for more effective ways to support student success. Our students classified as first generation learners are more likely a minority, likely to be from lower income families. Our students tend to slip through the cracks at large institutions because they don't have financial support or simply the knowledge of various opportunities meant for them. They are much less likely to reach out for help when it's necessary. Their decision to pursue higher education comes with the price of leaving their families behind. Their desire for education and upward mobility may be viewed as a rejection of their past.

They seem to experience difficulty within four distinct domains:

 1) Professional

 2) Financial

 3) Psychological

4) Academic.

Our students often see college as a way to "bring honor to their families." view their status as a source of strength. It becomes their single most important motivator to earning their degree. These students are driven and determined. They can perform academically in ways that are equal to or even better than students whose parents have earned a degree.

These students may benefit from a support group to help alleviate the internal pressure they place on themselves to succeed. Technology is a field which is constantly updating itself. in today's world with the advancement of technology and reach of people to information of the different kinds of job in which one can employ themselves has increased. with the growing options, it becomes difficult to choose a career for oneself. When it comes to choosing a career, one should have a clear

understanding of what he/she wants out of his life. Employment opportunities have increased enormously. For many students today, a career for life is no longer an option. Most of them will hold jobs with a variety of employers and move across different employment sectors through their working life. Education and experience may make one eligible to apply for a job, but to be successful in most roles, students need skills that are likely to develop over time. Some will be specific to the job, but the vast majority will be 'soft skills' that can be used in any job or employment called' employability skills'.

After the second cycle of NAAC, the Placement Cell realized that employability rate of students was drastically low.

Students who applied for jobs were expected to possess certain skills which would help them get a job. It was observed that students were finding it difficult to find jobs of their preference due to lack of confidence, weak communication and presentation skills, lack of office etiquettes and so on. This brought to the forefront the 'gap problem' i.e. gap between campus and corporate. The entire team of placement cell tried to find a solution to bridge this gap, but was unbale to come to a definite conclusion.

In 2014-2015, the Placement Cell in collaboration with Samvedna Counselling Centre organized a Career Fair on 14th March, 2015. Various experts were invited to speak on the various career opportunities available and motivate students for their future. There was not much of improvement in the percentage of placement seen.

In 2015-2016, Placement Cell took up various measures to increase the level of placement by organizing another Career Fair in collaboration with Energia Wellbeing on 29th January 2016. Stalls were put up in college campus by various organizations to enlighten students of the career opportunities after graduation. Various organizations like ICICI Bank, SOTC provided campus placement to a few students.

The data collected from the questionnaire (structured by the Placement Cell) about the view of students on career options / Training program/ higher education and the psychometric test analysis gave direction to the action plan as the report suggested that our students lacked employability skills. Various need-based lectures and workshops were arranged for the students under the SAS-CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) funded by SAS India group.

As per the report, students expressed wanting career related awareness to be built starting in the first year itself so that they can plan for what they might need to achieve by the time they graduate.

Objectives: Improving the Placements.
Sample Size:
Target group: BAFI, BMS and B.com Students

Factors contributing to poor employability:

1. Language Barrier
2. Lack of Communication
3. Lack of Motivation
4. Lack of knowledge about opportunities available
5. Gap between aspiration & reality
6. Family Pressure
7. Lack of Accountability
8. First generation learners
9. Lack of Employability Skills

Questionnaire Analysis:

In the same year, the Placement Cell had also designed a feedback form for students in order to understand student's expectation, their preference on taking up jobs as well as the skills that they need.

Edubridge MET Analysis:

There was a need to get data in terms of the aptitude the students possess for a job. Therefore, Placement Cell in collaboration with Edusharp, conducted psychometric testing on employability skills on 22nd January.

Skills Required:

To summarize our students lacked the following skills,
1. communication Skills
2. Presentation Skills
3. objection Handling
4. Problem Solving
5. negotiation
6. Decision Making
7. Time Management
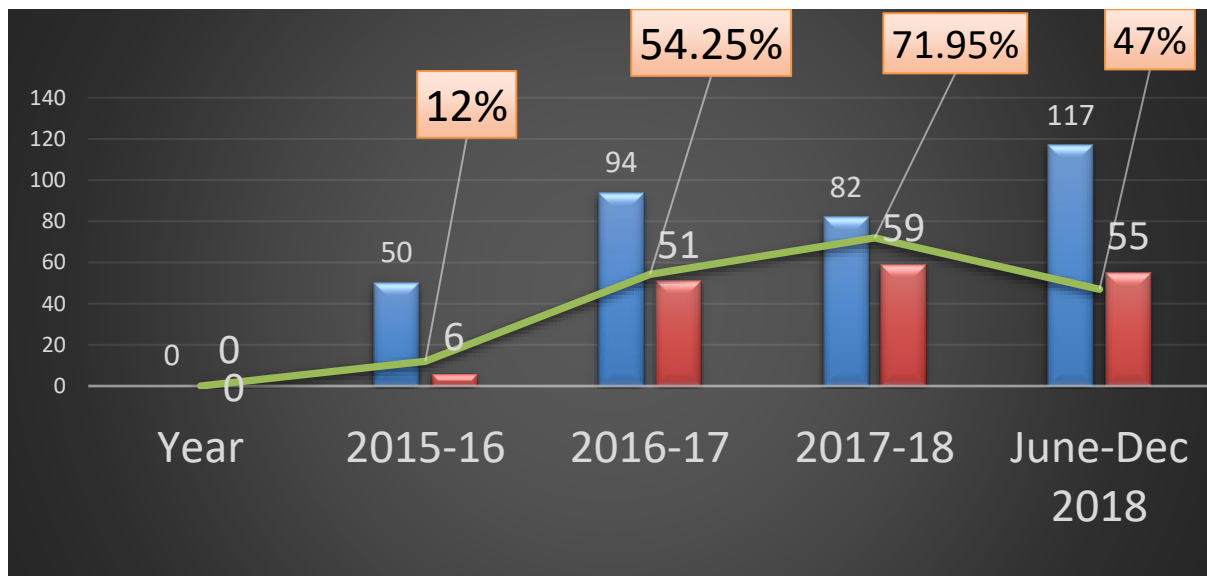8. Preparing a CV and facing an Interview

MOU with Technoserve:

The modules covered include the following topics
➢ Career Readiness
➢ understanding careers in sales
➢ Customer support
➢ Human Resource Finance & Accounts
➢ administration &Operations
➢ Mock Interview
   Communication Readiness
➢ Group Discussions

- ➢ Personal Interview
- ➢ aptitude test
- ➢ professional networking
- ➢ Vocabulary list for entry level employees

- ➢ work Readiness
- ➢ Professionalism
- ➢ Surviving the first year
- ➢ working ethically
- ➢ Performance appraisal
- ➢ email etiquettes
- ➢ working efficiently in a group
- ➢ presentation skills
- ➢ work place dynamics

Conclusion: Increase in Placement:

Placement Cell Team