

IITGn students turn teachers for rural kids

Around 30 students of the institute compile videos, audios & images from the internet to teach on a given subject

Niyati Parikh-Deshpande

@niyati_shantanu

It is a known fact that activity-based learning with the help of technology helps in better understanding of academic subjects and concepts. On similar lines, the students of the Indian Institute of Technology, Gandhinagar (IITGn) are making efforts to teach the children of government schools in villages of Palaj and Basan, which are located right next to the campus. Around 30 students from the institute who have been a part of the education and teaching outreach programme, take help of technology and compile videos, audios, images and other material from the internet to teach a given subject to the village children.

This is done as a part of the Unnat Bharat Abhiyan, which is an initiative by the Ministry of Human Resource & Development (MHRD), which enables higher educational institutes to contribute towards sustainable rural development.

"The idea is to help the children learn and understand better. When we carried out a survey at village schools, we found that there is a gap between their class/ grade and their actual understanding. We have therefore used technology to aid better and effective learning among these kids," said Jasbirkaur Thadani, an IITGn faculty who coordinates for teaching and outreach activities at Palaj and Basan villages.



An audiovisual session being held for kids at village schools (Inset: One of the volunteers teaches mathematics)

WHAT IS UNNAT BHARAT ABHIYAN?

The Unnat Bharat Abhiyan is an initiative by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), which enables higher educational institutions to work with the people of rural India in identifying development challenges and evolving appropriate solutions for sustainable growth. It also aims to create a virtuous cycle between society and an inclusive academic system by providing knowledge and practices for emerging professions.

Manjot Singh, a final year chemical engineering student at the institute said, "We have been teaching students of Class VI, VII and VIII and our focus is on English, Maths, Science and Personality Development. It took us a while to build a rapport with the kids but once it happened,

they themselves approach us for their subjects of interest or even to learn topics which they find difficult to understand."

In fact, the students have been extra careful in selecting videos and tutorials, because the medium of education is Gujarati. Children find it difficult to grasp

if it is English, they said.

In addition to the formal subjects, IITGn students also engage the kids towards sport activities such as cricket and volleyball. They don't just play with the children but also explain the rules of the game to them.

“The students at IITGn have appeared for several competitive exams and therefore have learnt short cuts and tricks in mathematics. They have been incorporating these techniques along with the audio-visual resources so that children can be taught in an effective manner.”

JASBIRKAUR THADANI, coordinator for outreach activities



“We refer to GSEB textbooks and find videos from the internet, especially for concepts of Science and Maths. We elaborate upon details and ask questions to keep them engaged and to know how well they have grasped the concepts.”

MANJOT SINGH, final year chemical engg student