



Activity Report

“Ubuntu” is a Nguni Bantu term meaning "humanity". It is often translated as "I am because we are," or "humanity towards others", but is often used in a more philosophical sense to mean "the belief in a universal bond of sharing that connects all humanity; namely the underprivileged children from schools as well as the Engineering students who mentor these children. The course is designed by Prof. Rukaiya Joshi, Chairperson of Center for Education in Social Sector (CEdSS), SPJIMR.

The objective of the course is to explore experiencing the joy of giving and develop a life of being a contributor as an integral part of one universe. The course aims to give experiential learning to the students of Sardar Patel College of Engineering (SPCE) by sending them to schools to help the underprivileged children learn on the selected thematic areas.

The students were sent to nearby identified aided schools in k-ward west area of Andheri west to undertake activities in below selected thematic areas:

- Inculcating civic sense
- Inculcating effective study habits
- Conducting no-plastic awareness
- Saving water and electricity
- Gender equity



Students at Verosva Welfare School

The students went in groups to the schools and taught standard 7th, 8th and 9th on each of the thematic areas for 2 to 3 hours. The students also prepared school children for competitive exams.

The Ubuntu students shared that it was really fun and an enriching experience for them to teach the underprivileged students of the school. They attended Vidya Nidhi, Versova Welfare, Shreeram Welfare and Sheth MA School in the vicinity of Bhavans campus.



Students at Vidya Nidhi school



Students at Sheth MA School



Students at Vidya Nidhi School teaching for competitive exams



Students at Shreeram Welfare School

Students also attended the Beach Cleanup activity on Saturday as per schedule setup by the environmental activist Advocate Afroz Shah at Dewachi Wadi in Versova with Prof. Rukaiya Joshi. He is known for organizing the world's largest beach clean-up project, which has grown into a movement that has inspired people around the world to clean up their surrounding environment.



Students with Mr. Afroz Shah and Prof. Rukaiya Joshi at Dewachi Wadi for Beach Cleanup Campaign



Beach Cleanup Campaign

Besides attending schools, the students also visited Bastis as an integral part of experiential learning. They visited bastis in Sagar Kutir and Nehru nagar. The theme was conducting no-plastic awareness. The students shared that, attending bastis made them to come out of their comfort zone to make a difference. To make the basti residents understand the ill-effects of plastic usage, they made use of charts, pictures and placards. The students said that although they could not make everyone understand the severity of this issue, but the positive response of the residents made this a very eye opening and satisfying experience. The next time they attend other basti for the activity; they took with them handmade paper bags and distributed it.



Ubuntu students explaining effects of plastic usage to basti residents



Ubuntu Students making paper bags for basti visit activity

The students apart from doing activity in schools and bastis, they also attended guest sessions. They attended session on the theme of effective studying habits by Dr. Nandini Diwan. She gave them the clear idea of the mindset of students and how to keep their interest in studies. She taught them ways of inculcating effective studying habits in young students using smart memory techniques.



Guest session by Dr. Nandini Diwan on Effective Studying Habits

Another guest session of which the Ubuntu students were part of was by Mr. Himanshu Patel. He was elected as the Sarpanch of Punsari village at the young age of 22. He has been the major catalyst in the development by transforming his village with multiple amenities. Mr. Himanshu's story is an example of focussing on grass-root development for the country's growth. The students shared that they were amazed and enlightened by his ideologies on creating a deep connection with people to understand their problems.



Guest session by Mr. Himanshu Patel, Sarpanch, Punsari village

Another session attended by Ubuntu students at Bhavan's campus was MAVA (Men Against Violence & Abuse), a 2 days' film festival on Gender celebrating gender diversity. There were award winning films that showcased issues faced by transgenders from societies and their families. The Ubuntu students shared that these films gave them the perspective of this issues of society which they did not know.

The students recorded and reflected all their experiences in their diary at three levels: mind, heart and action. The diary carried 20% weightage of their overall evaluation.



Reflection Diary of Ubuntu

Please find below the feedback received from the schools:

1. *"Ubuntu is a nice initiative; we would like it to continue in our institute. Interaction with the students was good. Students were taught about sincerity, manners, proper time management, and daily routine related topics. Interaction has friendly; good rapport was formed between them, as they spoke in the language of youngsters. Our students got benefitted; they learnt good habits & manners from them. Students got time away from their regular routine; learning was in a light atmosphere, with friendly young teachers. Overall a good experience for our students by your students."* – **Ms. Shilpa Talwar, Head Mistress, Versova Welfare Association H.S & J.C**
2. *"Their interaction with the students (VII, VIII & IX std) of Sheth Madhavdas Amersey High School, S.V.Road, Andheri West, Mumbai; was cordial and loving. Few of these students had never taught in their life. We were a bit cautious initially, but these students immediately had a rapport with our students. Their time management was good. The content was planned and delivered with conviction. The topics were gender sensitivity, inculcating reading habits and creating no-plastic consciousness. They reached in time for their session. Their interaction was friendly and positive. The students could connect to them very well. Few of these SPCE students as part of thanksgiving;*

expressed their views with the teaching staff. There are no weak or poor students; we need to reach out to them with love and provide opportunities for expression.”

- Ms. Sherly Pau, Principal, Sheth MA High School

3. *“It was really nice & thoughtful activity started by Ubuntu. As suggested by Rukaiya madam, the plan actually worked. Engineering students came to school like us where economically deprived section students were benefitted.”*

– Neelam Ganesh Prabhu, Principal, Vidya Nidhi School

4. *“Most of the students were on time and utilized it effectively. Our students liked it and were happy.”* – **Ms. Aruna Pandya, Principal, Shree Ram Welfare Society’s High School**

Thus the semester has ended with real sensitization of the engineering students which is evident from their submission of diaries..

