

iEARN – An International Platform for Collaborative learning experience.



"Collaborative learning is based on the idea that learning is a naturally social act in which the participants talk among themselves (Gerlach, 1994). It is through this talk that learning occurs." iEARN is one such online collaborative platform where young people think globally about the sustainability and well being of the globe and its people. Through this platform more than 130 countries use the internet and

digital media to collaborate on several meaningful educational projects that are available for teachers and other professionals to use. The institution uses the iEARN initiative to combine student action research and collaboration on an interactive platform for new learning by student teachers and faculty

Student teachers are trained to pick activities that match their goals or learning outcomes. Interesting titles emerge through discussions with peers and faculty such as 'Creating caring responses through literature and art.', 'Developing intercultural awareness among students of std VIII,' "Creating a Sustainable outlook through Mathematics.' A coordinator from the college along with the faculty and the iEARN team from Pune, India work to train and support the student teachers in selecting the projects, placing it in an action research framework and making the interventions in a school. Student teachers are also trained to use the interactive platform and share their project outcomes on the website. The iEARN experience has the element of student–student, teacher-teacher and student–teacher collaboration in a constructivist learning environment.

The international sharing of experiences and getting responses from educators across the globe leads to a lot of learning for both, student teachers and teacher educators. There is palpable excitement every time a student reports that she had received a response to her posting from teacher far away in a different land. The initiative has resulted in a sense of satisfaction among student teachers for having shared knowledge with educators from different parts of the world and getting their feedback. It also is a step towards developing appreciation for collaborative practices and sustainable outlook in student teachers and teacher educators.

The iEARN project gave us an opportunity to work on interesting ideas. I chose 'Caring Response' as a project and integrated it with language teaching. The ideas were very well appreciated in the school.

Pinky Rai (Student teacher)

The project gave me an opportunity to work on projects related to ecology and sustainability values and as an environmentalist that really meant a lot to me. Also the skills we learnt to transform our learning to an action research project was invaluable.

Sunny Gangar (Student teacher)