Project work for UG students soon

Engineering students explain about their project work in this file photo. A similar exercise for all undergraduate students is aimed at giving them first-hand experience in observation, data collection, data analysis and report writing.

Vijesh Kamath

Bengaluru: Undergraduate students in the state could soon have a three-month project work like their engineering counterparts as part of the final semester curriculum.

A Task Group of the Karnataka Knowledge Commission (KKC) is all set to make this recommendation to the state government after a two-year pilot study.

Engineering students have a six-month project work in their final year, The Task Group co-chaired by Gayatri Saberwal, scientist and dean at the Institute of Bioinformatics and Applied Biotechnology, Bengaluru, and M R Satyanarayan Rao, former director, Jawaharlal Centre for Advanced Scientific Research, is of the view that project work at the undergraduate level for science, commerce and also arts courses will be extremely beneficial for the students.

"Project work will give undergraduate students first-hand experience in the skills of observation, data collection, data analysis and report writing. This experience, it is felt, will come in handy for the students when they take up a career," KKC member-secretary Mukund K Rao said.

It all began with Honnavar-based Malnad Progressive Education Society (MPES) submitting a proposal to KKC for a pilot study, 'Preparing undergraduate students for research training,' on making students take up projects on environmental pollutants in the Konkan belt.

The pilot study involved three batches of undergraduate students take up environmental assessment of the Konkan belt like measurement of pollution with instruments and creating a database, followed by an analysis.

Rao said after two years of the pilot study and obtaining an "experience report" from MPES, it was felt that the concept of project work could be extended to all undergraduate courses. "The project could be on anything of the students' interest - environment, quality of water being supplied by civic agencies or traffic density. The idea is to expose students to project-based learning and help them come out of the mode of passively learning from books," Rao said.

The panel will submit its recommendation to the government in the coming days.

Chief Minister H D Kumaraswamy, after an interaction with renowned scientist and KKC chairman K Kasturirangan, recently said the government would seriously consider all recommendations of the panel.

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