

Towards Social Commitment

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Abstract-

The Department of Lifelong Learning and Extension (previously the Department of Adult, Continuing Education and Extension) is an academic Department in University of Pune which has been established and promoted through two principles i.e. Social Commitment (envisaged by the University of Pune) and Extension (dimension adopted by the University Grants Commission).

Several people -oriented and socially useful activities are conducted by the Department with the help of individuals and organisations within and outside Universities spectrum. The Department conducts different activities to promote ' Extension ' in higher education.

Key words- UGC, University, College, Extension, Higher Education.

About University of Pune – The University of Pune is the state university in Maharashtra state. This university has been founded with following objectives, - To study the culture of people residing in local in local communities . -To strengthen the language of local people . - To educate the people. These objectives are the mirror of the University of ' social committment .'This noble principle added with ' Extension ' dimension adopted by the University (UGC), which is looked upon as the highest and apex organisation of higher education in India. These two principles (Social Committment and Extension) are instrumental for genesis and development of the Department of Adult, Continuing Education in University of Pune.

The UGC declared its policy in 1977 in which the concept 'Extension' has been specified. In this precious policy statement the UGC it is stated as follows (University Grants Commission-1977, Policy Statement);

" If the University system has to discharge adequately its responsibility to the entire Educational system and to the society as a whole, it must assume Extension as the important responsibility and give it the same status as Research and teaching. This is a new and extremely significant area which should be developed on the basis of priority...All Universities and colleges should develop close relationship of mutual services and support with their local communities, and all students and teachers must be involved in such programmes as an integral part of their education "

*Journey of 'Extension' in University of Pune (University of Pune, Department of Adult, Continuing Education and Extension-2008-09, Annual Report pp.iii-vii) - The University of Pune responded to the UGC and started Continuing Education programme in the year 1972 with the objectives of social awakening and sensitisation as well as imparting the need based courses to different groups in society. A Centre of Continuing Education was established and programmes were organised through it at University level, college level and at community level. Following are some broad areas of Continuing Education programme (CEP); -Skill Development Courses. - Courses for Income Generation. - In service training programmes. - Hobby Courses. -Programmes for social awareness. -Programmes for enrichment in particular field. - Programmes for interaction of Community with students from university and colleges. The CEP strengthened the ties between university -colleges and the society. Various activities of CEP became very much popular as they benefited different sections of society. The historic UGC policy of 1977 which directed the Higher Education for social orientation could help the University of Pune in marching towards socially and community useful activities. The University of Pune had visualized them since its inception (1948). The Government of India introduced an ambitious and nation wide programme for people's education namely 'National Adult Education Programme (NAEP) in 1978-79. Spreading of social Awareness, imparting functional skills and imparting Literacy to the illiterates were three objectives visualized by NAEP. An appeal was made to three machineries for implementation of this programme- i.e. government agency, non-government organisations (NGOs)/ voluntarily agencies (V/As) and institutions in Higher Education (universities and colleges). The university of Pune actively involved in implementation of NAEP. This programme received success and became popular.

The involvement of people in it was massive. It also succeeded in getting the involvement of student volunteers on large scale. The University of Pune conducted one thousand Adult Education Centres each year ,which benefited more than thirty thousand illiterates. The Department of Adult, Continuing Education and Extension was established by the directives of the UGC in 1983. Gradually the nature of Adult Education programme got changed according to UGC guidelines. However, the Department was always at the forefront in implementing Adult Education programme on massive scale in rural, tribal and urban areas. The scope of the programme got widened and it became a movement of committed youth for spread of literacy with social transformation. Several success stories of social enlightenment and mass awareness came up. Both press and electronic media highlighted some of the endeavours. Village development project was added. The Coady International Institute from Canada assisted it. Comprehensive Village development programmes were organised at different colleges.

Two other programmes were added i.e. planning forum(PF) and population Education club programme(PEC). The objective of PF was to acquaint the students with the planning process from home to nation. PEC programme aimed at sensitising the students regarding growth of population and the imbalance in resource utilisation. The UGC bestowed the responsibility of Population Education Resource Centre (PERC) on the Department. It was expected from the PERC to provide academic resource support to PECs in Maharashtra state(excluding Mumbai) .In 1989-90, as per the directions of the UGC, the Department Integrated follows Extension programmes under one umbrella, -Adult Education(A.E.), - Continuing Education (C.E.), - Population Education (PEC). Jana Shiksha Nilayams(JSN) were set up as 'Community Centres '. This activity was linked to AE, CE and PE. Mass Programme for Functional Literacy (MPFL) was another innovative programme which was undertaken by the Department. Existing centre-based Adult Education programme was supported by the MPFL. The Approach of MPFL was ' each one teach one/ group '. According to the national policy , Total Literacy Campaign (TLC) was implemented throughout the nation. Pune District (rural) TLC was one of the initial programme. The Department not only involved in this programme but evolved different modalities for environment building, imparting Literacy, Literacy supportive activities, learners' evaluation, post-literacy programmes etc. Youth from University and colleges participated in this mass campaign for Literacy with full vigour. The

Department sought assistance from other Departments in the University, colleges and individuals too. The Department involved in other TLC programmes too. Besides UGC programmes, the Department implements other programmes with the help of government departments, Non-Government Organisations and some Voluntary Agencies. With the assistance and suggestions of University of Pune the Department started some innovative programmes on following broad areas,

- National Integration. - Senior citizens. - Unorganised Workers. - Women Empowerment. - Non-Government organisations - Tribal Development. - Minority Education. - Youth Education.
- Employment and Entrepreneurship. - Counselling. In the 11 th five year plan, the UGC directed the Department to organise activities with Lifelong Learning Approach (University Grants Commission-2007-2012, Guidelines on Lifelong Learning and Extension, New Delhi). This approach emphasises on learning rather than Education (which existed previously). The programmes and the activities/ methods to carry out these programmes are as follows;
- Adult Education and spread of Literacy. - Continuing Education programmes. - Population Education programmes.
- planning Forum.
- Jana Shiksha Nilayam.
- Various Extension programs.
- Legal Literacy.
- Village Development program.
- National Integration.
- Employment and Entrepreneurship.
- Counselling. - Lifelong Learning Programmes. Activities/ Methods:
- Training Camps.
- Programme Planning Meetings.
- Execution of Activities. K

- Awareness campaigns including rallies.

- Get-together.

- Material Development.

(Audio-Visual, print, computer based electronic)

- Non- Government Organisation.

- Unorganised workers.

- Women Empowerment.

- Senior Citizens.

- Life Skill Literacy Programme.

-Tribal Development.

-Minority Education.

- Youth Education.

-employment and Entrepreneurship.

- Councelling.

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- Lifelong Learning Programmes .Activities/ Methods:

-Training Camps.

- Programme Planning Meetings.

- Execution of Activities.

- Research.

- Awareness Campaigns including rallies.

-Get - together.

- Material Development (Audio-Visual, print computer based, electronic) .
- Publication.
- Extension Lectures.
- Lecture Series.
- Councelling and Consulting.
- Review meetings.
- Promotion of Research.
- Seminars ,Conferences, Panel Dissussions, Synopsis.
- Reserch Methodology Programmes.
- Group discussion.
- Exhibitions and Documentations.
- Screening of films,slides and video.
- Street plays, role plays.
- Varios competitions.
- Observance of important days.
- Faculty Development Programmes.

What is Extension?

It is old but innovative process which is not only attractive but can strengthen the entire Higher Education .

Extension can be described as imparting and disseminating knowledge as well as resources through crossing the conventional boundaries in higher education. One can simplify this concept as follows, Any subject can be taught in a specific class(in a University or in a college)as per

prescribed syllabus prepared by particular academic body in a prescribed manner. It can be called as teaching. The same subject can be taught to another group/s(whether it may be from same organisation or outside).For that different methodologies need to be adopted based on the requirements of target population and the mission. We can call it as- Extension. Some features of Extension:

- 1.Extension activities are flexible. They can be moulded as per requirements of target population. Rigidity is not found in them.
- 2 .Non- formality is also prominent characteristic of Extension activities. Though such activities are run by some institutions, certain forms are removed as per needs.
- 3.Simplicity in framing the activities and executing is observed .
- 4.It is strictly seen that such activities are meaningful so far target population is concerned.
- 5.Such activities should be relevant to life . 6.these activities are based on the needs of target population and not by convenience of the institution/ Organization.

References:

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- 2.University of Pune, Department of Adult, Continuing Education and Extension (2008-09),Annual Report, pp.iii- vii.
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