

## Contemplations of Extension.

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*Education aims at bringing out desired change in persons .It promotes , Understanding self- i.e. inherent strength and limitations, capabilities and potentials. Understanding the environment and culture around and getting adapted, changing or modifying; and Marching towards development. Education can be described as a process in which certain information, skills, values are imparted to individual/s as well as certain habits and attitudes are inculcated among them(Shirsath, Satish, Education of people- 1).*

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In this paper, Education and Higher education in particular is discussed specially. The responsibility of imparting and overall organising higher education lies with universities and colleges.

The report entitled, ' Education and National Development ' has been prepared by the Education Commission (1964-66). It was headed by Dr.D.S.Kothari. It has stated with emphasis that, " it is necessary to relate education with life, needs and aspirations of the people and thereby to make it a powerful instrument of social, economic and cultural transformation for realising our national goals " .Accordingly the commission has specified following aims of higher education;

- To seek and cultivate new knowledge.

-To provide the right kind of leadership in all walks of life.

- To provide society with competent men and women trained in agriculture, arts ,medicines, science and technology.
- To strive to promote equality and social justice ;and
- To foster in the teachers and students ,and through them in society in general ,the attitudes and values needed for developing the ' good life ' in individuals and society (Deshpande P.M. and others:5).

The University Grants Commission (UGC) in the year 1977,declared ' Extension ' as an important responsibility of higher education (besides conventional two i.e. teaching and research).

### **Teaching-**

Teaching is considered as an important component for instructing the learners. In higher education, it is expected that the learners should be provided with several learning situations and experiences. It includes lectures, television lessons, laboratory experiments, discussion groups, seminars and many other methods/strategies. In teaching, lecture method is seen more on large scale since olden days. Teaching is exercised mostly in formal settings.

### **Research-**

In general, research means ' the search for knowledge through objective and systematic method of finding solution to a problems (Kothari, C.R.: 1). Alike teaching, research is also an important component in higher education. However, many a times it lies in a foggy situation. Fear ,inferiority complex ,negligence, ignorance about its content & methods, non - availability of expected resources are some features for such adverse conditions. In higher education it is expected that ,the students and the teachers are exposed to higher level in concerned subjects. They should think regarding the subject/s independently and indeapth.They can search for some new / innovative aspects from the discipline/ research which consists of scholarship,attitude of invention and presentation.

### **Extension-**

As mentioned above, along with teaching and research, Extension is considered as one important dimension of higher education. In All India Conference of Adult Education (which was held at Bhopal in 1965), it was stated that, ' for closer understanding of the new tasks of our

universities we may examine their responsibilities for the education of adults in the context of a four-fold scheme of education - academic education, occupational education, education for social responsibility and liberal education...men and women in the Universities, both teachers and students, should realise their personal obligation to the community which gives them their position, which is in some ways a privileged one ,and they must return the obligation by giving a part of their time to the amelioration of the lot of the less privileged sections of the community "(Frisen ,J.K. and Dutta S. C.(ed):2-3).

Dr.Mohansing Mehta (one of the pioneers of University Extension in India) has pointed out how Extension has been incorporated in several universities in the world by different titles, methods, strategies and programmes. Former Vice- Chancellor of University of Pune and former Chairman of UGC ,Dr.Arun Nigvekar says that, " the roots of our universities lie in the society and we(university) are indebted to the society. By means of several community oriented programmes, we can reach to the people and carry out the responsibility of returning the debt to the society partially. The UGC ,in several guidelines, and through guiding letters, has made clear following aspects,

- The universities have an obligation to get involved in community development.
- Large sections of our population are denied of the legitimate socio- economic opportunities. It creates inequality.Through extension programmes, we can reduce inequality.
- We can't achieve our national goals (such as democracy, socialism and secularism)by restricting the knowledge only to few persons (who can afford the higher education ).
- The need to spread of awareness and education can be fullfilled through extension programmes.
- The universities and colleges should fullfill the learning needs of the people in community.
- These programmes are important for integration and communal harmony too.

Several academicians, experts from UGC and other educational institutes, government policy documents, representatives of people and rulers have opined to parallel of this concept. In higher education system, several experiments regarding extension were being deployed at many places. Nevertheless, it got a philosophical foundation when the UGC declared 'Extension ' as the important dimension of higher education. If it is an important dimension of higher education, every person involved in higher education can and should participate in it.Hence,there is a need to develop an accessible structure of Extension. From that point of view, this endeavour

(of editing of thoughts)is taken in hand. What is ' Extension' ? In broad sense ,Extension can be described as crossing the conventional boundaries in higher education and disseminating educational resources. Generally ,non - formal channels/methods are deployed in it and the convenience of target person/s is considered rather than that of the organizing agency Some characteristics of 'Extension ' - Non- formal, simple, relevant to human life ,flexible ,need- based, meaningful, target oriented. Formal education channel and system has several limitations and lacunae/ rigidity which restricts many persons to participate in educational system. Non- formal education in general and particularly 'Extension ' can find out solutions to overcome it.No doubt, Departments / Centres of Adult, Continuing Education and Extension (henceforth, known as units of Adult, Continuing EducationandExtension)are causitive for emergence and development of 'Extension ' ; however, it should be thought beyond the Adult Education units only . 1) Many times, it is expected in it to execute only UGC / University/ Government guided programmes. Every institute maynot participate in those programmes.

2) In those activities, only some persons from some institutions can participate; whereas, 'Extension ' is moto of entire higher education (and obviously every person from higher education).Many individuals are deprived of it.

3) Many a times such programmes have limitations of time. They have specific grants. These limitations (regarding time and grants)put obstacles in the way of every individual in view of participating in 'Extension ' . The units,their activities vary at various places. The revolutionary UGC policy (1977) which is considered fundamental, advocates mass education for community (besides classeducation in close rooms) for students of higher education.

Today, meaning and working of 'Extension ' is found differently at different places as follows,

1.Implementation of some schemes/ programmes.

2. Outreach activities .

3. Academisation of Extension .

4.Dissemination of resources.

5.Collaborative programmes.

6 Supportive activities (in higher education).

### **1.Implementation of some schemes/ programmes-**

After announcing 'Extension ' as the important dimension of higher education by the UGC ,the process of establishing the units of Adult Education got accelerated in various universities. These units got increased in numbers as well as horizontally. Some programmes / schemes especially the once introduced and assisted by government, UGC and other agencies are being implemented by these units ( programmes like Adult Education, Population Education clubs, Planning Forum etc. ) these nature and structure of such units as well as their pattern of working from place to place.

### **2.Field Outreach Activities-**

Various field Outreach activities are conducted through higher education institutes for sensitisation, awerness building, education orientation regarding some development aspects. e.g.extension lectures, conducting coaching classes, arranging medical check-up camps.

### **3.Academisation of Extension-**

The UGC regarded 'Extension ' as one important dimension of higher education and not just field outreach activity. Initial focus was on implementation of community oriented programmes. Slowly it was understood that, this type of ' youth involvement in community oriented work ' should be a part of higher education academics; and hence, academic dimension of ' Extension ' should be put strongly from that point of view, the UGC urged for discipline development regarding ' Extension ' .Such type of endeavours are carried out by the units of Adult Education. Extension related programmes for foundation courses are some examples. Research programmes are conducted at some universities on different levels.

### **4.Dissemination of Extension-**

Resources are on large scale. Such dissemination of resources is also carried out somewhere,considering needs of community and individuals. Need based Continuing education courses are the examples of such type of 'Extension ' work.

### **5. Collaborative programmes-**

In the field of development and education, several government level and non- government level organisations and different institutes have some programmes. Collaboration is carried out at some places.

### **6. Supporting/ strengthening higher education-**

This important aspect was emphasised in UGC guidelines from time to time. Besides 'Adult Extension Education ( for those not eligible for university based course)' and ' community outreach activities (by reaching out to the needs of the society society)',one more approach has been suggested in UGC guidelines (1977)i.e.Adult Continuing Education (for university groups).In fact that all educational requirements cannot be fulfilled through formal education system. They can be fulfilled through non formal education, where the role of ' Extension ' is important. Non- Formality is one feature of ' Extension Programmes ' (University Grants Commission:1977) .

Some considerations regarding 'Extension '-

Research focuses on scientific in- depth surch in different fields while teaching (in higher education)implies impartanting specific aspects of specific students It is folled by evaluation and marks/ grades are awarded to those students. Uniformity in it, () such as admission specifications, time-table of class, examination etc. ) is felt necessary some times. However, suffocation ,stagnation, importance given to parroting rather than personality development and other such aspects cannot be underestimated. There is a need to change this stagnation; as it is a wastage of time .e.g.how the students from science faculty can learn transactions in bank?It is improper for them to know regarding national integration, social harmony,methods to fight with extremist etc. Should not They learn life enriching stories or poetries ? Even the students from engineering are denied from students from health education/ psychology. Similar problem is faced by the students from commerce faculty. It is said that, the youth enrollment in higher education is not more than 20 %.However the number of those (enrolled) students is large. The number of the students who opt conventional facilities(such as Arts ,Commerce, Science) is big and wards from ordinary families do opt for such conventional paths. Considering this fact the students from Arts faculty should be taught interesting things in

science; they should be imparted computer training. Teaching methods in it may differ. Perhaps it will not reflect in their mark-statement. Nevertheless, it can shape personality of the students. It can be considered as 'Extension'. One other example can be quoted as follows; Suppose the syllabus of SYBA comprises of 'Critc and analysis of Stories'. The syllabus is prepared by the Board of studies. It is taught through classes (in colleges and universities). After examination, marks/grades are awarded to successful students. This is considered as teaching. If the same subject is to be taught to science students, there is a need to change the teaching methodology. It can be evaluated too. However, it differs from conventional examination system. That is Extension. We can take Extension beyond the circumference of higher education institutions. 'Circulation and transition of knowledge to layman' is one of the motto of 'Extension'. There are many misconceptions and ambiguities regarding its status and standard in higher education, meaning and scope. Extension is an important dimension; however, it will get strengthened not only by murmuring but, (1) it should be given importance in evaluation of higher education (2) Every person in higher education can be benefitted from Extension. The first point (which deals with everyone benefitting from Extension), is open for discussion. This discussion can rectify the ambiguities regarding 'Extension'; as well as it can enhance its scope. All the institutes from higher education (such as colleges, academic departments in universities, educational institutes) carry out teaching; despite of varigations in methods and strategies of teaching at different places, whereas, teaching is considered as basic work of education. Not much progress is seen in research. Following are some reasons for it; ignorance, inferiority complex, shortage of resources, not realising its importance etc. Nevertheless, research is carried out in higher education institutes. The extent varies. Comparatively, the situation is very dark regarding 'Extension'. The meaning, scope and programmes accordingly, about 'Extension' are not clear.

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