

Inculcating of Lifelong Learning In University Extension.

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Acceptance of 'Extension' ideology by UGC:

The UGC which is considered as the highest and apex body of Higher Education in India, as declared 'Extension ' as one of its important dimensions along with conventional two viz. Teaching and Research (policy statement of UGC ,1977).the need to community orientation became inevitable .It is stated in the UGC policy as follows ;

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If the University system has to discharge adequately its responsibilities to the entire educational system as a whole it must assume extension as a third 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 high priority....The University system also has a great responsibility to the society as a whole. All Universities and colleges should develop close relationships of mutual services and support with their local communities, and teachers must be involved in such programmes as a integral part of their education '. Several programmes and activities which were community oriented and useful to people. The universities and colleges which were involved in execution of these programmes undertook programmes mostly based on local needs and available resources.

The methods were different. The grave issue of eradication of illiteracy was given priority. It is because the University Extension Programme got emerged on large extent since the National Education Programme (NAEP) in 1978.Even before independence, socially useful and community oriented activities were undertaken by some individuals and groups; however, the scope of such activities was limited or such efforts were scattered. They got extended broadly after the introduction of NAEP .The nature, methods and strategies of literacy/adult education programmes got changed according to the policies of government, with different titles such as centre based adult education, mass programmes for functional literacy ,total literacy campaign.

Other programmes like, population education, planning forum were also implemented with the help of university and college youth. Some government sponsored development programmes were also executed. UGC provided guidelines to the universities and colleges for these programmes. According to the guidelines, grant was given too. Modifications took place from time to time in priority areas, nature of programmes and funding patterns. Besides community oriented and community useful activities, UGC and Government sponsored programs, some 'Extension' activities useful for the development of the Department of Adult, Continuing Education and Extension were also implemented.

In the beginning, the emphasis was on activities oriented programmes/ schemes. The nature got diverted when the UGC, laid emphasis on developing the status of the department as an academic one. From IXth the UGC started focusing on discipline development along with the field practice.

Education and Lifelong Education (LLE) ;

Education is considered as an important tool for bringing out expected change in person. Education is also described as providing information/knowledge of skills and imbibing right aptitudes. Three streams are prevalent in education. In Formal Education (FE), certain forms are seen such as time-table, specific syllabus, certain methodologies, paid teachers, examination, certification. All such forms are made as per the directions of education-giving agencies mostly. This is somehow expensive and aims at employment or at least degree/credit. Such forms are flexible in informal Education (IE). Convenience of students is considered in it. It takes place at work place or at leisure time. However its nature is organised and some organisation disseminate it. Adult Education, certain skill-development courses are the examples of Informal Education. The Non-formal Education (NFE) is totally flexible. Sensitizing regarding certain habits and values are examples of NFE. It takes place anywhere. It can be individual oriented as well as h too. All these three streams or methods of education can be mixed or overlapped, but all aim at the wellbeing of mankind. The concept-LLE has emerged due to the following considerations; The Lifespan of a human being is so vast that, the education provided in a limited time of schools and colleges is not adequate. This reality gave birth to LLE. From LLE to LLL ; (Reddy, M .C.Redappa: (2009), Opportunities and challenges to Lifelong Learning in Indian Journal of Adult Education , New Delhi. Vol.70, No.2 (April-June).

Following two reasons can be stated for replacement of LLE by the term LLL , 1.the orientation of LLE was towards community which oriented towards social change, while LLE which emerged at nineties, was more individual oriented. 1.the thrust of LLE was more on structure and institutions. The need for public policies and state intervention was focused in LLE, while the idea of personal responsibility for own educational development was important in LLE. It aims at skill development or skill updation to retain in globalization.

Ideology of Lifelong Learning :

The European Council Communication defines Lifelong Learning as, ([http:// lifelong learningmasters org./ site.aspx ? =57](http://lifelonglearningmasters.org/site.aspx? =57)). all learning activity undertaken throughout life, with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competence, within a personal, civic, social and/ or employment related perspective. This definition is elaborated further as follows; LLL means,

- Acquisition and updating of all kinds of abilities, interests, knowledge and qualifications. It is lifelong from preschool years to post retirement. LLL promotes the development of knowledge and competence that will enable each citizen to adapt to the knowledge-based society and actively participate in all spheres of social and economic life to take control of his/her future.
- Valuing all forms of life-wide learning including formal learning such as a university course; non 'formal learning such as vocational skills acquired at the workplace and informal learning such as inter- generational learning, for example where parents learn to use ICT through their children or learn how to play as instrument together with friends ".

A definition accepted by the European Lifelong Learning Initiative and the American Council on Education includes following elements of LLL ideal ([http:// www.answers. com/ topic/ lifelong -learning](http://www.answers.com/topic/lifelong-learning)).

- (a) A belief in the idea of lifetime human potential and the possibility of its realization;
- (b)efforts to facilitate achievement of the skills, knowledge and aptitudes necessary for a successful life.
- (c) recognition that learning takes place in many modes and places, including formal education institutions and non-formal experiences such as employment, military services and civic participation and informal self- initiated activity and
- (d) the need to provide integrated supportive systems adapted to individual differences that encourage and facilitate individuals to achieve mastery and self- direction ". The wikipedia, the free encyclopedia describes LLL as follows, ([http:// www. en.wikipedia. org./ wiki/ lifelong_ learning](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/lifelong_learning)).

" LLL is Lifelong, life wide, Voluntary and self- motivated pursuit of knowledge for either personal or professional reasons. As such ,it not only enhances social inclusion, active citizenship and personal development, but also competitiveness and employability ". We can see the roots of LLL in 1970s when the Council of Europe, the Organization for Economic & Development and United National Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization accepted this concept in one or another form or title ([http:// www .answers. com/ topic/ lifelong-learning](http://www.answers.com/topic/lifelong-learning)). European and American policy interest in Lifelong Learning waned after the early 1980s; however it got Revied in the early 1990s in the same countries. It became part of national policy

discussion ,particularly as global competition and economic restructuring towards knowledge-based industries became more prevalent. In a full employment, corporations perceived a benefit from investment in human capital, while a new workforce of knowledge technologists expected their employes to maintain their employability by investing in their education. The focus on learning thus shifted from personal growth to human resource development. Meanwhile education and training approaches became central to a transition away from unemployment and welfare dependency([http:// www .answers. com/ topic/ lifelong-learning](http://www.answers.com/topic/lifelong-learning))".

Adoption of LLL by UGC :

Emergence and acceptance of LLL is due to the global trend in its regards along with national scenario ; it is clearly mentioned in the XIth plan guidelines UGC as follows ;(XI th plan guidelines of the UGC on Lifelong Learning and Extension (2007- 12).1. " This may be partly influenced by the global discourse on Lifelong Learning and partly due to socio economic changes taking place within and outside the country ". UGC has accepted LLL and gave maximum priority to it.UGC feels that an access and the adoption of new technology and improving the skills of the labour force, are determinant factors so far country 's economic performance is concerned .The UGC feels the importance of learning in a technology driven knowledge based competitive economy.Such socio- economic factors and situation (at locally & globally) has made the role and importance of LLE prominent. UGC has declared the same feelings in its guidelines(XI th plan guidelines of the UGC on Lifelong Learning and Extension (2007- 12:.1) with beginning of the XI th five year plan, the UGC would accord maximum priority to Lifelong Learning with a view to meeting the demands of emerging knowledge society and facilitate the process of developing a learning society".

Importance of Learning:

The changing social scenario is compelling the persons to obtain the information, knowledge, skills and resources rather than waiting for someone who will come to teach them. The time constraints, diversities in needs and requirements, availabilities for elevating the importance of ' Learning ' in place of education.

Challenges before Institutions of Higher Education:

The UGC ,Universities and colleges have to face following challenges while executing LLL programmes. Some of them are mentioned by UGC in it's guidelines -(XI th plan guidelines of the UGC on Lifelong Learning and Extension (2007- 12:2)

- LLL envisages providing opportunities for acquiring and updating the knowledge and skills for the labour force in globally competitive situation .It must realized that in India, more than 94% workforce is from unorganised sectors. The total population of such workers is more than 40 crores in number.

They work in very adverse situation and live a miserable life. They along with their family members can't fulfill basic and minimum needs.

The literacy level India is not so disappearing. However,such workers from unorganised sectors and their family members don't possess fair education. To equip them for global competitiveness can be an Utopia.

Statistics reveal that, about 50% of Indian population is young (below 25 years).However, the percentage of youth in higher education is just 10 %.It is great challenge before the higher education to acquire new information and skills, to get updated, enhance employability.It can prepare the youth to get developed and contribute in the development of the country too.Along with youth, some other social groups (women, agricultural labourers etc.) need to be brought in the stream of higher education.

LLL is seen as a tool for meeting the demands of emerging knowledge society, especially in the global competitiveness situation. It is expected that LLL would prepare the workforce to enhance own knowledge and skills (other than Hindi).Hence, there is no uniformity in it.It is a big challenge for providing learning opportunities to such diverse population.

-Through the 'Extension ' dimension, UGC is Continuously emphasizing to reach to the community. For it,the UGC sponsored Adult Education, imparting literacy,Continuing Education, Jana Shikshan Nilayam etc. Programmes. The approach for it was -' Education '. Accordingly methodologies were prepared. The finance patterns were constructed. The guidelines were structured on that basis. Along with field outreach activities, academic programmes were also shaped in that manner.

In the XI th plan, UGC has moved the approach from ' Education ' to 'Learning '.It is must to prepare different learning modules and .modus operandi accordingly for different groups. There is a need to prepare learning modules for unemployed youth for obtaining career guidance. Counselling and placement programmes should be chalked out accordingly. The Universities should develop specific learning modules for rural people to get information about health and nutrition.

While developing such learning modules,conventional methods and modern techniques should be integrated and suitable modules should be developed. Such modules should be innovative,attractive and easily accessible.

UGC 's plea for ' Extension ' of higher education is no doubt honest endeavour. The addition of LLL in it is event of welcome .While welcoming it, challenges before should not be ignored. Conclusion-

-UGC has declared 'Extension ' as its important dimension.Repayment of. social debt and personality development of students and teachers in higher education are primary objectives behind it.

- LLL ,which lays stress on learning has become all over the world. UGC has inculcated in it the programme of Adult, Continuing Education and Extension. While implementing this concept, some challenges should not be ignored such as-

- developing learning modules for the labourers from unorganised sectors,who constitute more than 90% of total workforce in the country.

- Increasing the extent of youth (who are about 50% of Indian population)in higher education. Besides youth, several social groups need to be brought in the stream of higher education . preparing different learning modules in various languages - Considering the shift of approach from' education ' to ' learning 'this task is challenging.

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