



A Study of Views on Commerce Education by the Principals of Commerce Colleges in Ratnagiri District of Maharashtra State

Prof. Hanees S. Vinchu

M.Com. (Bus. Admn.), N.E.T., M.C.S.E., C.C.N.A., Research Scholar:
Department of Commerce, Savitribai Phule Pune University,
Maharashtra, India

ABSTRACT

Ratnagiri is a coastal district belonging to Konkan region of Maharashtra state, situated on the western coast of India. It has north-south length of about 180 kms and average east-west extension of about 64 kms. Sahyadri hills surround it in the east beyond which there are Satara, Sangli and Kolhapur districts, Raigad district in the north, the Arabian Sea in the west and Sindhudurg district in the south. The district comprises of 9 tehsils/talukas. Presently there are 21 UG level Commerce colleges in the district. In the recent past, student enrollment for Commerce faculty has increased drastically. But the commerce education is not yet developed to suit the business needs here and globally too. It lacks practical approach to the business environment. Also, use of ICT in Commerce education is hardly seen in real sense amongst the colleges in Ratnagiri district. Hence there is an urgent need to bridge the gap between Commerce education and its employability to avoid educated unemployment problem in the near future.

KEYWORDS : Commerce (includes Management here), E-Commerce, Employment, ICT (Information Communication Technology), Industry and Ratnagiri, Skill Development

INTRODUCTION:

There are 21 senior commerce colleges in Ratnagiri district. Some of these colleges are about more than 20 years old. Due to inherited poor financial condition and ignorance about educational importance by parents, students here still face the problem to seek education. Commerce education is getting established slowly but has not achieved the major objectives on higher education such as satisfied employability, growth and industrial development.

The syllabus of commerce education has outdated content which needs to be replaced with modern concepts. So it lacks pragmatic approach. The technology i.e. ICT is not implemented totally in teaching, learning evaluation and research. It is very difficult to get qualified, skillful and motivated staff for commerce colleges. There are various reasons for these which have been addressed by the researcher in his findings out of the views of the Principals of these colleges/eminent institutions.

The study aims at understanding commerce education from the angle of the head of the institutions, their perspectives and vision too. The researcher feels that their views can throw light upon important problems and issues of commerce education which can be further studied by others to come up with suggestions and solutions.

CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND:

Commerce is the activity of buying and selling of goods and services between two or more individuals or organizations and/or combination thereof. The system includes legal, economic, political, social, cultural and technological systems that are in operation in any country or internationally. Thus, commerce is a system or an environment that affects the business prospects of economies.

Commerce Education here includes education delivered in UG colleges of Ratnagiri District. Commerce Graduates here refers not necessarily as B.Com. but all the degree education under Commerce and Management Faculty too.

Management is the key to achieve the objectives individually and/or organizationally with commitment, dedication and team spirit.

Industry is an economic activity concerned with the processing of raw materials and manufacture of goods in factories to produce semi-finished and finished goods.

Information Communication Technology is an umbrella term that includes any communication device or application, encompassing: radio, television, cellular phones, computer and network hardware and software, satellite systems and so on, as well as the various services and applications to convert data i.e. facts and figures into required information.

E-Commerce in brief is commercial transactions conducted electronically on the Internet. In comprehensive manner it comprises of three aspects E-Market, Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) and Internet Commerce. It is a newly introduced specialization in Commerce faculty by some universities in Maharashtra to equip the Commerce students with latest technology in their field.

Skill development is the process of identifying your skill gaps and developing and honing these skills. It is important because your skills determine your ability to execute your plans with success.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

Ratnagiri District Gazetteer (2006) is helps to understand the history, development, facts and figures of Commerce and Industry in Ratnagiri district of Maharashtra State. It focuses on various aspects of higher education in Commerce.

OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH STUDY:

The said research study was carried out with following objectives in view:-

1. To study the views on Commerce education by the Principals of commerce colleges in Ratnagiri district of Maharashtra.
2. To study the short comings of Commerce graduates in Ratnagiri district of Maharashtra with reference to employment of Commerce graduates in this region.

GEOGRAPHICAL AREA OF THE RESEARCH STUDY:

The geographical area of the research study consists of all 9 tehsils/talukas of Ratnagiri district of Maharashtra state.

HYPOTHESIS:

The main hypothesis of the said research paper is as follows:

H 1 Commerce graduates in Ratnagiri district fall short in satisfying the present needs of the business environment of Ratnagiri district.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

With the above objectives kept in mind the instructed Interview Method was adopted through a draft questionnaire cum survey discussed and filled by the Principals of the senior commerce colleges. In all, 15 colleges out of 21 falling in all 9 Tehsils / Talukas were contacted and communicated personally. Its composition was as follows -

Table 1: Sample Size of the Survey

Sr. No.	Name of Tehsil/Taluka	No. of Colleges
1	Khed	2
2	Mandangad	1

3	Dapoli	2
4	Chiplun	1
5	Sangameshwar	2
6	Lanja	1
7	Rajapur	1
8	Ratnagiri	3
9	Guhagar	2
Total		15

Source: Primary Data

The Secondary Data was collected from the publications of colleges and reports of Mumbai University with reference to Commerce Colleges.

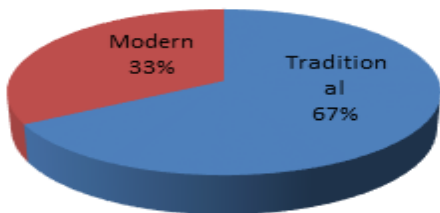
For the present research study the data pertaining to the above objectives was collected and the literature was reviewed on the topic concerned. The literature was collected by visiting online libraries and websites. Some Government websites were also visited for getting office record and statistical data.

VIEWS UPON PRESENT SCENARIO OF COMMERCE EDUCATION IN RATNAGIRI DISTRICT OF MAHARASHTRA STATE:

The Commerce education is developing at a faster rate in Ratnagiri district but it fails to achieve the business/industry expectations. After contacting and analyzing the response from 15 respondents (Principals) all over Ratnagiri district various observations regarding current scenario of commerce education were recorded as follows:

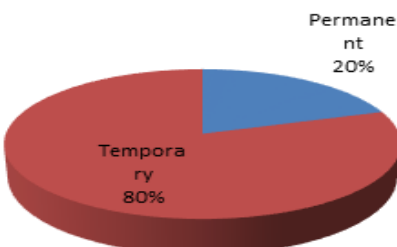
Preference to traditional degrees – The students prefer to go for regular B.Com. than modern courses like B.Com.(Accounting & Finance), B.Com. (Financial Markets), B.M.S., etc. This is because of low fee structure which they can afford easily. The traditional degrees even lack practical approach and hence fail to check the employability of education.

Chart 1: Degree Preference



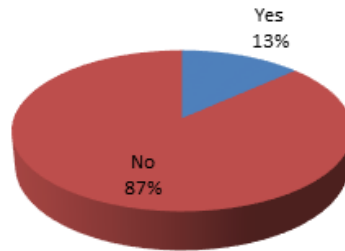
Non stability of qualified and skilled staff – Due to lack of additional grants by UGC for extra staff as per acute requirement and low raising of funds by modern degree courses it is not possible to impart regular pay scales as prescribed by the government. This demotivates the teaching staff of the colleges as finally affects the teaching learning system adversely.

Chart 2: Stability of Staff



Lack of ICT based education – The teaching-learning system lacks ICT based education. This is because of unplanned investment of funds and resistance to change with the use ICT by old teaching staff.

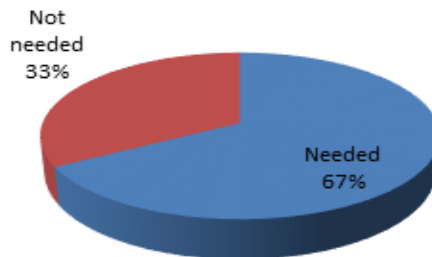
Chart 3: Use of ICT in Commerce Education



VIEWS TO CHANGE THE SCENARIO OF COMMERCE EDUCATION IN RATNAGIRI DISTRICT OF MAHARASHTRA STATE:

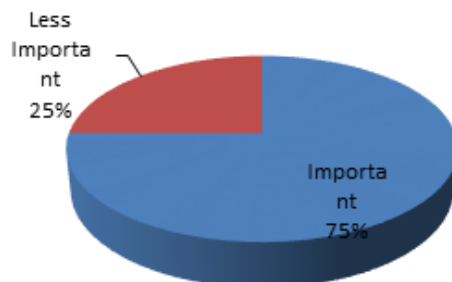
Practical Syllabus – There is an urgent need to reframe the syllabi taking into consideration the actual needs of business and industry present here and globally too.

Chart 1: Need for Changing Syllabus



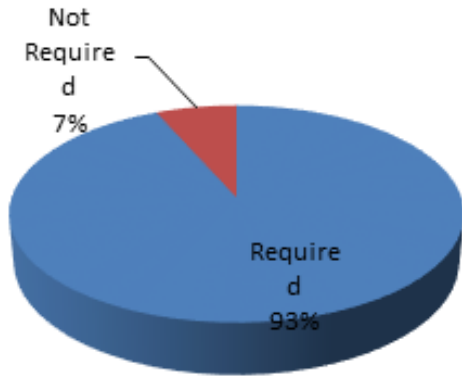
Establish Education-Industry linkage – It is highly recommended to have a strong education-industry linkage to reveal the applicability of knowledge and experience in the form of internship/articlership. This will in turn increase the employability of commerce education.

Chart 2: Education-Industry Linkage



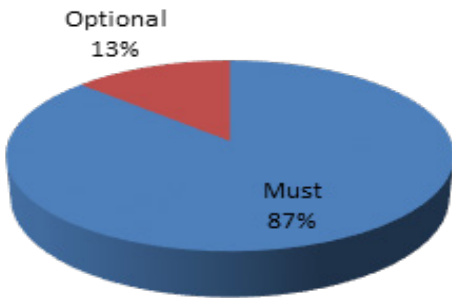
ICT based teaching-learning – Current business environment and global competition expects the students to have deep knowledge and good experience for handling their subjects with the help of ICT. ICT makes the students boost creativity, innovation and performance.

Chart 3: ICT based Commerce education



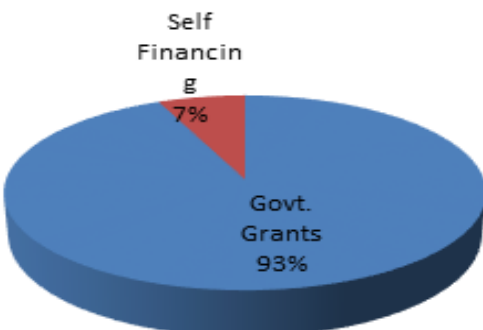
Skill Development – Today is an era of specialization. One must be expert at something than Jack of all trades. Therefore it is necessary to acquire business related skills and competencies. This can be done by devising educational programs accordingly.

Chart 4: Need for Skill Development



Financial Need – The colleges in Ratnagiri district mainly have student population from remote areas since the people here cannot afford sending their children to study in big cities. Hence they are not in a position to pay higher amount of fees. Hence self financing structure of education cannot be implemented successfully over here. Without sufficient and timely availability of funds it is not possible to have permanent qualified and skilled staff. Also the ICT based infrastructural facilities require high investment. Therefore government should extend a helping hand by providing additional and special grants to the colleges here.

Chart 5: Need for Financial Aid



CONCLUSIONS:

The Principals of most of the colleges agreed to the unsatisfactory impact of Commerce education. They threw light upon the following points –

1. Lack of practical approach to the curriculum.
2. Lack of professional staff.
3. Insufficient raising of funds.
4. Lack of ICT based infrastructure.
5. Necessity for education-industry linkage.

If these hurdles are solved by the colleges and government policies then it is surely possible to bring here a revolution through commerce education.

It is necessary to aim at and implement an educationally progressive and technologically updating source of knowledge to provide best of education. New avenues of commerce education can then be made easily available to the students.

There are many opportunities in the field of tourism, banking and transportation in Konkan region of Ratnagiri district but educational awakening is utmost required to tap them wisely and smartly. An organized system of teaching learning can fill this gap intelligently. Commitment and dedication along with truthfulness and quality of work are strong essentials to develop the talent here.

REFERENCES:

1. Government of Maharashtra. (2015, May 5). *Districts*. Retrieved May 6, 2015, from Official Website of Government of Maharashtra: <http://www.maharashtra.gov.in>
2. National Informatics Centre. (2015, April 20). Retrieved April 22, 2015, from Official Website of Ratnagiri District: <http://www.ratnagiri.nic.in>
3. Pathak, D. A. (2006). *Ratnagiri District Gazetteer*. Mumbai: Directorate of Government Printing, Stationery and Publication, Maharashtra.