

## Education for Employability-The Role of University Adult Education Department- An Indian Experience



### Education

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### ABSTRACT

*India being the second largest country in the world, with youth as its driving force for development, the government has formulated and implemented a number of welfare, development and educational programmes.*

*One of the areas given prominence is the higher education where, it is intended to promote higher order human resource development. Keeping the above, it has expanded the higher education system enormously by establishing new universities and colleges. Further, it has also established new and innovative departments to promote the human resources among all sections and age groups of the population. The Department of Adult continuing Education is one such department organizing vocational Training, Research and Career Guidance and counseling. Under career Guidance and Counseling the department has been organizing the programmes like Training programme for Degree college Lecturers on Career Guidance, Career Guidance*

India is the second largest country in the world in terms of population and majority of them are in the younger age group. These are low educated, unskilled and involved in primary sector for their sustainability. No doubt the country has produced best scientists and technical manpower distributed throughout the world in all major sectors. In order to improve its domestic sector by reducing the gap between haves and have-nots and to streamline the marginalized, the government, has taken various steps to improve the quality of human resources by implementing number of programmes. The focus of these programmes is towards the employability of youth and makes use of their services in the economy. In addition to that, the University Grants Commission has initiated the steps to qualify the graduates with a sound knowledge in their course discipline and expertise in a concerned skill by introducing a new programme of vocationalisation of education at undergraduate level during the 8<sup>th</sup> plan period. It has also been supporting the different departments to organize the extension and community development activities for different sections of the society including youth and women and disadvantaged. The Department of Adult continuing Education is one such department, established at university level to cater to the needs of the teaching, research and extension in the area of adult education. Under extension activities, education for employability for the women and the youth is one of the area on which the department is providing the services. In this area, the department is organizing the activities like vocational training for women and youth, career guidance and counseling camps for students, training programme for degree college lecturers on career guidance, documentation and research on the activities undertaken in this area.

#### Vocational training for women:

Realizing the need for improvement of the status of the women and to empower them to fight for their rightful share in the development, the Government of India has initiated and implemented a number of programmes for their socio-economic development. One of the areas, which were given more prominence, is to equip the women with vocational skills and abilities enabling them to lead the sustainable life. In India, these vocational programmes are being organized by the Governmental and Non-governmental organizations. In addition to that the department of adult education is also been organizing the vocational training programmes in collaboration with Jan sikshan sansthan in the rural areas. The courses offered are tailoring, embroidery, vermin compost, fabric painting, candle and detergent making.

#### Vocational training for youth:

Development of any nation depends on its quality people and

their involvement in the work. The various reports say that 75 percent of the professional graduates and 90 percent of the students from conventional courses do not have employable skills to be appointed in the establishments concerned. The present day educational is highly bookish oriented and there is a limited scope to acquire knowledge and skills related to career and employment opportunities. Mere degree will not provide a job and one should possess technical/soft skills apart from the knowledge about the employment opportunities. The students are in dilemma after graduation/post graduation. Hence there is a need to promote vocational skills among the youth to enable them to earn some money. The department has organized certificate courses in computer fundamentals & M.S. Office, Oracle, Java, DTPC language, Web technology, PC-Hardware, Dot net, Testing tool, Visual Basic, Java script etc.

#### Career Guidance & Counseling Camps for Students:

Now day's college students present a diverse set of career decision making needs and face considerable confusion with regard to choice of courses that lead them to successful careers. Students are under emotional stress in selecting courses, due to pressure from parents, peer groups and the society and under such pressure will lead to taking up courses/ careers that one may not eventually find interesting and satisfying. Even though the college education process is stressful, with the right tools and resources most students are able to complete the process with ease; hence there is a need to provide guidance and counseling to help the students seek the best tertiary educational experience based on their individual needs. Recognizing the importance of guidance and counseling programs the department has organized these camps in the degree colleges with the help of psychological counselors. The topics covered in the camps were personality development, stress management, Goal setting, Communication skills, Interpersonal relations, Interview techniques, Academic success, memory techniques, and Higher education opportunities. Individual & group counseling was also done to the students who contacted psychological counselor personally.

Training for lecturers on career guidance and counseling: In India, the UGC has conceived a scheme of career and counseling cells in the higher educational institutions with adequate financial support to equip the students with the information about the future higher education opportunities and careers. The objectives of the scheme are to support the students in the development of soft skills and communication ability, to organize training programmes for competitive examinations, add on courses and vocational courses, to inculcate social values and ability to think independently for carrying out social responsibility.

bilities, to create a homogeneous group of teachers to translate the vision of the cell, to develop a resource centre of information, guidance and counseling with free accessibility and internet based global connectivity for exchange of information on professional placements. Two lecturers in each college will be in charge of these cells. They have to function as career guidance adviser to help the students to take right career decisions and to overcome the psychological problems. For this they need some professional development, and to train in such areas as counseling techniques, assessment techniques to measure skills, abilities, aptitudes, interests, life skills training academic success etc., keeping this in view, the department has been organizing training programme for degree college lecturers since 2006. In this training programmes, majority of the participants were co-ordinators of career guidance & counseling cells and Jawahar Knowledge centers. Lectures and Interaction sessions were organized by inviting the experts from Universities (Academicians), Directorate of Employment and Training and IT companies. The topics discussed in the training programme were these training programmes enabled the trainees to guide & counsel the students with psychological & academic problems for degree students in that company, the skill expectations and amenities provided by the companies to the employees.

**Documentation:** The department has also taken up the documentation work by collecting the items appeared in News papers and magazines relating to the student counseling, career guidance and personality development both in English and Telugu on Bi-Monthly basis. The two volumes-one in English and the other in Telugu brought out by the department are useful to the faculty members and adjunct professors, who act as resource persons, also to the UG/PG students and out of college students who are the beneficiaries of the programme. Work shop was organized by inviting the experts such as psychologist, Industrialists, deputy directors of employment & training and academicians and a resource book was published known as Margadarshini. The book was printed in telugu version because most of the students attended the camps are of Telugu medium with rural back ground. The contents of the book are Goal setting, Higher education, Educational techniques, foreign education, foreign jobs, Self confidence, BPO sectors employment, Private sector jobs, Time management, and Self employment. These books were distributed in the colleges where the Career guidance and Counseling Camps were organized.

**Research:** Research studies were conducted by the faculty of the department on impact of vocational training for students, vocational training for women, Career Guidance and counseling needs of students, perceptions of lecturers on student's needs, Career guidance and counseling facilities provided in the colleges and the influence of career guidance camps on students. The reports of the studies were communicated to the journals for publication. The findings of the studies are as follows:

- majority of the students i.e., 91.66 per cent preferred computer courses and they expressed that these courses were of high demand and employment oriented. The second preference was for paramedical courses (70.00), followed by photography, hotel management, dress designing, beautician, screen printing, tailoring, embroidery and web-designing. The trend of the preferences of the students is an indication that the students are aware about the areas where the employment opportunities are available.
- 87 percent of the students expressed the need for providing counseling services in the colleges. 74 Percent of the

students are suffering from the psychological problems like inferiority complex, lack of self confidence, anxiety & lack of communication skills. The present curriculum is not having sound components to meet the demands of placement. The government colleges are backward in providing soft skills through the curriculum when compared with corporate colleges.

- After attending the training program me cent per cent of the trainees attained knowledge in computer operating system.86 per cent of the trainees had an e mail ID and were using internet. Coming to the employment status of the trainees 20 per cent of the trainees got employment with this certificate. As the data was collected within short period i.e., 3 months after the completion of the course, it may be difficult to get employment within that short time. The vocational training program me organized by the department had a good and positive impact on the trainees in gaining knowledge and skills to use computers and they are confident that they will get employment with this certificate.
- In order to study the impact of the training on socio-economic development of the women participants, the trainees were asked to provide information whether the trainee in the trade in which they have been trained, extent of income improve, change in socio-The aim of the training is not only to improve vocational skills but also to improve the income to the individual leading to overall improvement in the quality of the life. Increased self-confidence, income, awareness & recognition in the society among the sample were observed after their training. The trainees are working as tutors of the arya work training for the other batches. The others are earning by doing the arya work on their own. The collected information shows that only 52.22 per cent of the trainees are found to be practicing the trade in which they have been trained.
- The learners expressed that the training programme was very helpful. The resource persons are co-operative. The raw material supplied by the trainer is inadequate. The duration of the training period is less. So, they have no time to learn effectively. They need financial support and follow up from the trainers.

#### Suggestions:

- Motivation and monitoring of the participants to complete the course and to reduce the dropout rate.
- The stipend for the target to compensate their regular wage should be provided.
- Periodic assessment should be made during the training to study the performance of the target in the trade.
- The follow-up of the training should be made mandatory on the part of the providers.

#### Conclusion:

Employment is becoming complex, occupational boundaries are changing and more jobs temporary. These changes present difficulties for the students and are in need of a better understanding of the changes, implications in terms of career prospects, skills to adjust to the culture of new industrial working life. Five main elements characterize an education system which is likely to prepare students and non student community effectively for this new environment. i.e. Emphasis on career preparation in the colleges, Skills standards, Close connection between vocational and academic institutions, Work place learning and Links between employers & colleges. The adult education department of universities in India is working in this direction.

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