



A Study Of The Factors Improving Enrollment In Extension Education Program

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ABSTRACT

University of Mumbai, Department of Lifelong Learning & Extension has been conducting Extension Education Program. The aim & objective of the research was to study the factors responsible for the development of extension education. The total sample consisted of 200 teachers of 162 colleges in Extension work. The survey method was used for six months.

The study indicated various factors responsible for the development which includes the efforts made by the department to reach to the unreached, spread awareness about the activities, making the process of participation very simple and easy, the reputation & supportive nature of the Director & his colleague staff, the honorarium to the teachers paid on time, the rewards to the colleges & the teachers, motivation & benefit to the students to develop their career & requirement of NAAC accreditation.

Keywords : Lifelong Learning, Education

The University Grants Commission, in its Policy Frame on Higher Education has stated "If the University system has to discharge adequately its responsibilities to the entire education system and to the society as a whole, it must assume extension as the third important responsibility and give it the same status as research and teaching". As per the UGC guidelines, one of its goal is to transform the University system into an active instrument for social change through the institutionalization of Extension as the third dimension through its affiliated college, teachers and students by ensuring that the University system is adult learner friendly and pro-lifelong learning and promoting a meaningful and sustained rapport between Universities and the community.

All universities perform the tasks of teaching and research as the minimum responsibilities expected to be discharged by them. In case of University of Mumbai, today, the Department of Lifelong Learning & Extension (DLLE) has been conducting Extension Education Program with the involvement of more than 12,000 students of nearly 162 colleges affiliated to University of Mumbai in the year 2010-2011. Such a big response in Extension Program as compared to earlier 32 colleges and only 1,888 students in Extension in the year 2005-2006 (when these activities were re-introduced in the University with modifications) is not found in any other Universities under UGC.

Therefore, the researcher has attempted to study factors improving the enrollment in Extension Education Program in the University. It was clear that there may be some academic or social factors responsible for the involvement of students and colleges in this program which is increasing at every academic year. In the present study, the researcher has attempted to test the opinion of the teachers & students in extension work for improving student's participation in extension education. The researcher has also tried to find the factors responsible for this improvement in enrollment in extension education.

Extension Education involves Vocational career oriented & community oriented projects based on field outreach within a discipline at the undergraduate or postgraduate level in

relation to subject of study for enhancing employability and technology skills. It is the extension of knowledge and material resources of the Universities and colleges to the community and vice-versa to gain insights into the socio-cultural realities. To state it simply it is the application of classroom knowledge in the community for its benefit by the students through a participatory approach. These projects give opportunities to the students to gain knowledge and apply it for the welfare of the society with various college and community level activities such as seminar, symposia, workshop, discussion, quiz, exhibition, elocution, essay writing, street play, rallies etc.

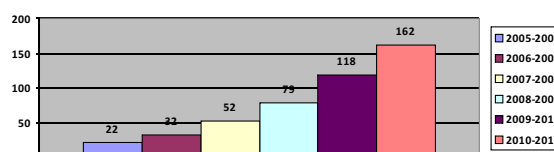
The objectives of the introduction of these projects

- To provide career orientation and job orientation to the college students
- To enhance employability skills of the students.
- To guide the students to apply classroom knowledge for the benefit of the community
- To make the students aware of social problems in the community.

Table No. 1 shows the involvement of Colleges and Students during last six years:

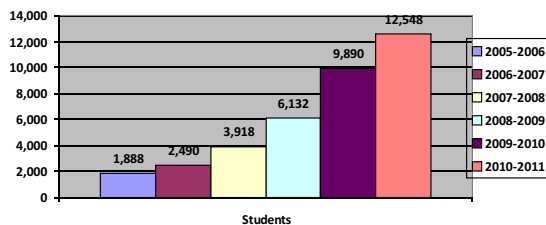
Year	UG	PG	Total (Colleges)	Total (Students)
2005-2006	8	14	22	1,888
2006-2007	17	15	32	2,490
2007-2008	32	20	52	3,918
2008-2009	28	51	79	6,132
2009-2010	77	41	118	9,890
2010-2011	99	63	162	12,548

Figure No. 1 gives the graphical representation of the overall involvement of Colleges in Extension Work since last six years.



From the above graphical representation, it is clearly seen that there is a continuous increase in the number of colleges participating in the extension activities annually.

Figure No. 2 gives the graphical representation of the overall involvement of students of participating colleges together in Extension Work since last six years.



From the above graphical representation, it is clearly seen that there is a continuous increase in the number of college students participating in the extension activities annually.

The review of related literature revealed that very few studies have been conducted in the field of extension education. Very few researchers concentrated on development of extension education program. Though many of the researchers have touched upon various subjects and concepts in extension education, very few researchers conducted their studies on different extension programs. Some of the researchers concentrated and studied the problems of students and teachers in participating extension activities. Others concentrated on attitude of teachers and students. The present study was an attempt in this direction to conduct a study of the improvement in enrollment in extension education program in University of Mumbai.

Objectives:

1. To study the improvement in enrollment of students of the under graduate and post graduate colleges in Extension Education Program.
2. To study the factors (academic & social) responsible for the improvement in enrollment of students of the under graduate and post graduate colleges in Extension Education Program

Hypothesis

1. There are no academic & social factors responsible for the improvement in enrollment of students of the under graduate and post graduate colleges.

Sample

In this study, the convenience sampling method is used. The total sample consisted of 300 teachers & students of 162 under graduate and post graduate colleges participating in extension activities from Mumbai, Thane, Raigad, Ratnagiri & Sindhudurg districts in Maharashtra.

Methodology

The present study has adopted the survey method.

Tools

- 1) Personal data sheet
- 2) Questionnaire prepared by the researcher

Operational Definitions of the Terms

Extension Education: It is the extension of knowledge and material resources of the college to the community and vice-versa through extension activities to gain insights into the socio-cultural realities with a view to reflecting these in the curriculum of higher education.

The questionnaire examining the opinion of the teachers & students was prepared by the researcher keeping in mind the objectives of the study was validated by the experts and used

as research tool in the study. The study included the teachers who have more than three years of experience in extension education & enrolled in extension education for the academic year 2010-2011 from Mumbai, Thane, Raigad, Ratnagiri & Sindhudurg districts. For the purpose, personal visits to the colleges participating extension education were conducted.

Data Analysis

The data collected through the questionnaire was analyzed by using the descriptive analysis methods.

Conclusion:

The results of this study indicated some social & academic factors responsible for the improvement in enrollment of students in extension education such as : These extension work projects are career oriented and related to areas of student's interest. Students are gaining more knowledge and finding it useful to develop their career prospects. They are also getting the opportunities to enhance their employability & marketable work skills. They participate in various college and community level activities such as seminar, symposia, workshop, discussion, quiz, exhibition, elocution, essay writing, street play, rallies etc & become aware of social problems in the community and getting opportunity to apply classroom knowledge for the benefit of the community and develop their socio-cultural roots. These activities fulfill their needs to be the part of dedicated member of the society and delight them.

Further, the efforts made by the department to reach to the unreached by organizing training programs at districts level in a decentralized manner is another factor. It is also found that the Director of the department with his colleague teachers organized district wise meetings of the Principals of under graduate and post graduate colleges, made these Principals aware about the activities, discussed the problems faced by them in the participation of their college students in extension activities and motivate them to convince their students to participate in annual extension activities. As per their suggestions, certain changes were made in extension work such as, the director of the concerned department reduced the extra paper work, various formats and made available the important documents online and also in regional language i.e. in marathi (which was necessary at the district level) and made the process of participation very simple and easy. The information technology, e-mail services and mobile technology was also used to send messages to the teachers and the students to solve their problems time to time. The reputation & the helpful nature of the Director and supportive attitude of his colleague staff is another factor for the improvement in the enrollment in extension education.

Further, the colleges are chosen and rewarded as Best College in Extension work in rural and urban areas so as the teachers. In this way, the colleges & teachers were motivated to win an award of best teacher and college at University level. The honorarium to the Teachers for their efforts throughout the year for smooth conduct of extension activities was paid on time which delighted the teachers. These teachers further motivated the students to take part in extension activities and made them aware of their social responsibility towards the society and the importance of the certificates they will be getting after successful completion of extension activities of 120 hours. The students are also benefitted additional 10 grace marks in their final examination which was proved helpful to the students for passing out and saving their year from failure or ATKT in the subject and sometimes also useful for class improvement from 'B' Grade to 'A' Grade. This benefits were propagated among the students improving number of their participation in extension activities. The certificates acquired by the students for their participation in extension activity are most of the time proved useful to the students for their career e.g. the students completed 120 hours of extension activities successfully and acquired certificate for the same is getting additional 5 points which increases grade points to get his admission for B. Ed. or M. Ed. degree. As per the NAAC accreditation guideline,

, it became necessary to the colleges to participate in extension activities to earn more points towards gaining academic influential grade to the college. It was also one of the reason to increase the participation of college in extension activities.

In this way, the study showed the factors responsible to increase the number of participation of students and colleges in extension education. The present investigation provided a feedback to the teachers about the extent of importance of extension education. The result of the present study projected whether extension education needs more changes and suitability as per the needs of the students. This study is helpful to teachers to motivate the students for their participation in extension education.

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