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EDUCATION PROGRAMMES IN GENERAL  
UNIVERSITIES

### ABSTRACT

The University Grants Commission has recognized extension as the third dimension of the institution of higher education and considered it equally important as teaching and research from the point of view of social usefulness and accountability. In many universities departments / centres of adult and continuing education and extension have been established. The present study was undertaken to study adult & continuing education programmes of general universities in the terms of the status of extension, organizational pattern of extension system, programmes, clientele etc.

A comprehensive questionnaire seeking information about status of extension, organizational pattern, programmes, clientele, and evaluation methods was mailed to 82 universities / deemed universities. The data could be available from 30 universities. The information obtained has been analyzed and discussed in view of the University Grants Commission guidelines on Adult and Continuing Education and Extension programmes in universities and colleges and in accordance with the appropriate and accepted conceptual pattern of philosophy, objectives and programmes of extension education. Suitable measures were developed to evaluate the performance of the universities who responded to the questionnaire. Two good performing and two poor performing universities were selected for studying the reasons for differences in performance based on their performance.

The study revealed that though there is a growing recognition of extension discipline in general universities, yet the status of these departments is not very satisfactory with respect to the number of staff members and their status in the university community. Although, many of the departments / centres are offering academic programmes and enjoying facilities equivalent to the faculty members of the other departments. In about 25 per cent universities, extension has not been recognized as a function. About 50 per cent of the heads / directors were not even aware about the specification of their powers by UGC. On an average there were only 2.5 faculty members in position per departments/ centres. Most of the departments did not have latest audio – visual equipments like LCD projector, video camera, web camera, laptop etc. In about 50 per cent of the universities under study extension was not considered as an

academic activity. Organizational set-up, planning and executional methods may be considered satisfactory. Although, 16 universities differed from each other with respect to various criteria of organizational set-up.

About 37 per cent department / centres were carrying out all the three functions i.e. teaching, research and extension and 50 per cent were carrying out dual function. Two third of the departments / centres were conducting teaching programmes. They were offering 38 programmes in about a dozen disciplines. Of these 38, 13 were M.A. programmes, 18 certificates & diploma courses and 07 M Phil. & Ph.D programmes.

Extension seems to be most popular disciplines of M.A. programme. However, several universities were found offering teaching programmes of other subjects like Human Resource Management, Population Education, Special Education etc. Many departments / centres are also conducting many major and minor research projects. Most of the universities have now stopped implementing the adult literacy programme. However some of the universities were still involved in evaluation or some other activity. Most of the universities were involved in continuing education programmes. Some of them were running the continuing education centres and most of them were organizing various kinds of continuing education courses for different kind of clientele.

The maximum numbers of courses were organized for women followed by for unemployed/ out of school youth / disadvantaged youth. The UGC has been providing grants for implementing the adult & continuing education & extension programmes depending upon the performance of various departments.

Most of the Head of the Departments were of the view that departments /centres must perform all the functions of teaching, research and extension. The reasons of good performance of the two selected universities were: Better understanding of the academic and administrative authorities of the adult and continuing education and extension work, the dynamic leadership provided by the Head of the department and the support of the faculty members due to which they were able to work as a team and were able to influence the university authorities and state authorities to start an academic programme and obtain a faculty status, the support provided by the university authorities for provision of part time teachers, space etc, ability of academic staff to envisage the academic and extension activities of the department in the university system, availability of vehicle in the department, ability of teachers to obtain the research projects from National and International organizations and conduct the research project and the enthusiasm and interest of the faculty members in the adult and continuing education and extension activities.

The reasons of the poor performance of the two selected universities were: apathy of the university authority towards the scheme of adult and continuing education and extension, the academic staff of the adult and continuing education and extension has been given other responsibilities i.e. to run the distance education programme, lack of staff, internal university politics at graduation level, no regular staff is in position.