

## 13th Best Educational Quality Enhancement Team (BEQET) President Award Winners Presentations

### First Prize winner

#### G. M. Momin Womens' College, Bhiwandi, Dist. Thane

#### “Empowerment of Young Women Learners Through Focussed Confidence”

**Team Leader:** Dr. Moses J. Kolet

**Team Members:** Dr. Vaishali Nirmalkar, Ms. Tasmi Ansari, Ms. Jayashree Thakre, Dr. Kamran Abbas Mirza, Dr. Tarannum Attar, Ms. Nazneen Momin, Ms. Nusrat Ansari, Ms. Nobi Hani, Ms. Sendu Noma, Ms. Hafsa Khatri

#### Abstract:

This research work deals with empowerment of underprivileged women learners from KME Society's G.M.Momin Women's College, in the tier II city of Bhiwandi (Dist. Thane), Maharashtra, India; through focussed activities designed and aimed at building their confidence and enhancing happiness; through programmes aimed at development of skills and generation of employment for the women learners predominantly belonging to Muslim minority community from the city, and also takes into consideration the challenges faced during the subtle transformation achieved. Development of entrepreneurship qualities and empowerment of young women learners of the college through skill development and happiness inducing programmes were planned and carried out. Happy students make a happy college and pave the way for all round progress as was observed towards the conclusion of the two year period of the project.

**Keywords:** *Women empowerment, confidence building, happiness, skill development, Bhiwandi*

#### Introduction:

The KME Society's G. M. Momin Women's College is a premier institution of higher education exclusively for women, situated in Bhiwandi, Dist. Thane, Maharashtra, India. A demographic and socio-political/ geographic overview of the area of study would facilitate a better understanding of the circumstances and scenario leading to the project. Bhiwandi is a Tier II city, apparently caught in a time warp, where time has seemingly stopped around 50 years ago and inhabited by a large percentage of Minority populations (over 50% population constitutes Muslim and Jain religious minorities). This city has a distinctive flavor; a character of uniqueness, being officially declared as the city with largest migrant population, which is always on the move. Over a period of time, this historically important city has gained several nick names such as 'Manchester of India', 'Power Loom city', 'Logistics capital' but in current times has apparently been hard hit by the combined effects of changing policies and Demonetization. This is a city facing a multitude of civic problems and health issues, a city where both pen and sword are considered equally mighty, a city where in many cases women are much more educated than their male counterparts. The G.M.Momin Women's College was established with the aim to cater to women learners from conservative homes and backgrounds, to make the opportunity of higher education available to girls whose families do not prefer co-education. The college has made the dream of women graduates and post-graduates in every household in Bhiwandi, a reality; but also has to struggle hard to overcome several socio-politico-geographic issues faced by its learners. Surveys at under graduate entry point revealed that hardly 0-1% students set goals in their life, could consciously dream positive of their own future life and for betterment in quality of life, confidently establish eye to eye contact with the person opposite, could hold their heads high, speak for themselves, dream of a career for themselves and wanted to join Administrative Services. Five Percent of the students lacked confidence to travel alone even to their own homes. Twenty percent of the students had never seen a movie in a cinema theatre. Fifty percent of the students came from severely health challenged backgrounds or emotionally challenged background lacking love and basic healthcare or from infra structurally challenged backgrounds, lacking basic civic facilities. Over sixty three percent of students depended on scholarships from the government, private trusts or philanthropists for continuation of their higher studies. Over 90 percent students came

from homes with large scope for improvement of civic amenities. Over ninety five percent learners came from moderately to severely economically challenged backgrounds lacking own financial resources; were trained to accept whatever is dished out to them and not apply minds for betterment; also having never been out of Bhiwandi city without escort. The students came from ultra conservative homes where co-education is not allowed. They also faced several challenges posed by unprecedented rising levels of pollution in the city. Almost all students came from tolerance stressed backgrounds and were neither sure nor clear of their concept of Happiness.

In spite of their circumstances and challenges thrown before them, there was now seen a new zeal and determination to rise up above the challenging situations and to consciously make a better tomorrow; to achieve and fly high. In the situations, unchanging circumstances and daily struggles faced by students as mentioned above, the current project was designed with the following aims and objectives:

#### Aims:

- To subtly change mind sets of youth learners
- Liberate them from self imposed mental barriers
- To instill confidence and belief in self
- To instill love and respect for oneself and others
- To induce ability to think rationally
- To train participants to aim high in life and use their gifted potential and talents for National progress.

#### Objectives:

To subtly instill in all students self-improving qualities namely, Self confidence, Confidence to face life and the world, Moral Courage, Feeling of security, Feeling of love and belongingness, Ability to think rationally, To increase level and feeling of overall Happiness.

**Road Map:** For accomplishing the set aims and objectives, the following activities and programmes were designed, planned and implemented:

Short Term courses and workshops, Adventure Activities, Treks to places of historical importance, Field visits and Residential Camps, Making of a Short Film, Research Conventions, Celebrating Achievements and successes; learning from other opportunities, Cementing New Friendships, Sports, Giving Back to Society, Interacting with the Principal.

#### Methodology:

The project was introduced since the year 2016-17 and is an ongoing endeavour. The sample of participants included women student learners, the college being a women's college; sample size was 2600 students, spread over 10 different activities and involving different events. Hope and happiness survey was done by following the Adult Trait Hope Scale (1) and Subjective Happiness Scale (2).

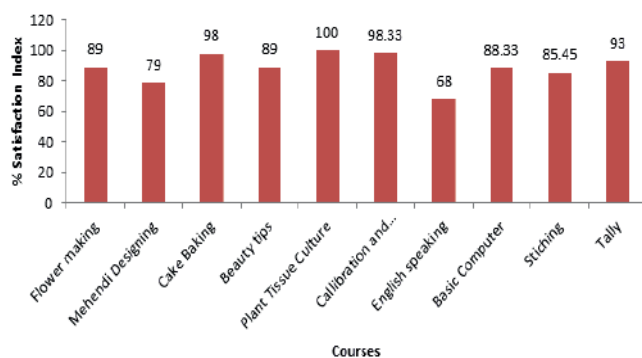
**Correlation analysis:** Karl Pearson's correlation was applied to evaluate the relationship between hope and happiness of participants. Students themselves were the live results of all the activities conducted towards success of the project.

#### Results and Discussion:

This project examined the opportunities for young girls from minority families to develop their entrepreneurship skills in skill courses (Table 1) and overcome constraints. Students acquired an entrepreneurship skill and then trained others to spread their knowledge and expertise. The knowledge of the students before and after the respective course was recorded. Percent satisfaction index (Fig.1) was calculated from feedback of participants. Positive correlation  $r = 0.549$  between hope and happiness was found which was not a very strong relation.

**Table 1: List of some short term courses conducted as part of the project**

Sr. No.	Courses	Sr. No.	Courses
1	Bakery related	12	Mehendi Design
2	Stitching & designing	13	Repair and Maintenance
3	English Speaking	14	Calligraphy
4	Cinematography	15	Jam, Jelly Preparation
5	Photography	16	Event Management
6	Acting Courses	17	Cloth Painting
7	Tally	18	Jewellery Making
8	TallyMS Office	19	Preparation of Solution
9	Mobile Repairing	20	Martial Arts
10	Mobile Repairing Basic	21	Laboratory Skills
11	Beautician Courses	22	Pottery and Sculpturing



**Figure 1: Student satisfaction Index**

**Other Activities:**

Activities such as Treks, Hikes and Adventure Activities, NSS Residential Camps and Activities, Skits, Making of a Short Film, Students participation in Research Conventions, Happiness in interacting and being with the Head of Institution, Happiness in Cementing new Friendships, Happiness in Giving Back to Society were conducted and monitored.

**Achievements Galore:**

In the limited opportunities available in small town Bhiwandi, even small achievements such as being issued a voter card by the Election Commission of India, are celebrated. Conferring and award of degree is likewise, a great achievement as almost all students are first generation learners, being a matter of pride and celebration for the family.

**Tangible compounded results:**

In comparison with the pre-project survey results presented in the introduction, today, after 2 years of running this project, 17% of the students dream of pilot's wings and 20% have plans to join Administrative Services against the earlier figure of 0-1%; for which the college is providing free of cost training. 45% of students now opt for further higher education as compared to the earlier figure of 22%, and 100 % of students are now confident of finding their way anywhere in Mumbai and in the world, setting goals in life, dream of a career for themselves and above all, consciously dream of a better tomorrow. 100% students can today establish eye to eye contact with confidence and can speak confidently for themselves and happy and confident faces can now be seen.

**Compounded results (Individual)**

Qualities as mentioned below could be successfully imparted to learners

- Alertness
- Confidence
- Courage... Moral and Physical
- Decisiveness
- Enthusiasm
- Espirit de corps
- Happiness and confidence as now visible on happy and confident faces of all students

**Compounded results (Institutional)**

Benefits (some accumulated over a period of time since inception) reaped by the institution which also gained from the highly motivated students under able mentorship and leadership could be analysed as mentioned below:

- NAAC Reaccredited 'A' Grade
- Best College Award of Mumbai University
- ISO 9001-2008 of Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS); ISO 9001-2015 Under Process
- Jagar Janivancha Award (2<sup>nd</sup> Position) from the Govt. of Maharashtra.
- Best Extension Education Unit Awards
- Best NSS Unit Awards and NSS Programme Officer awards at University of Mumbai, Maharashtra State and All India Levels
- Winner of Udaan DLLE Festivals of University of Mumbai
- Thane Police Mahakarandak (2<sup>nd</sup> Position)
- Best Actress Awards consistently
- Making and successful projection of award winning short film
- Winning at University Youth Festivals
- Representation at University-, State- and National Research Conventions for students
- Selection of the institution for funding under Star College Scheme of Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Min. of Science and Technology
- Recipient of FIST 'O' Level Grants from Department of Science and Technology
- Selection for Support under RUSA 2.0 of Government of India
- Best Educational Quality Enhancement Team (BEQET) Award of NCQM 2019.

**Overall gains:**

Economic empowerment of women, Improved standards of living, Enhanced Self confidence, Enhanced awareness, Pride in Sense of achievement, Increased Social Interactions, Increased levels of Participation, Improvement in leadership qualities and above all...Happy and Confident Faces in the educational campus.

**Acknowledgements:** Thanks are due to the KME Society, all staff and students of the G.M.Momin Women's College, Internal Quality Assurance Cell of the college, Vidya Prasarak Mandal, Thane, B.N.Bandodkar College, Thane, The National Cadet Corps, India, NCQM and all those who willingly and wholeheartedly contributed towards success of this project.



**BEQET 1st Prize Winner Team receiving Trophy from Mr. Anil Kumar Sinha with presence of all dignitaries**

## Second Prize Winner Shri M. M. P. Shah College of Commerce, Matunga, Mumbai

### Campus to Corporate Connect: Empowerment of Girl Students through the Placement cell

Team Leader: Dr. Shubhangi Kulkarni

Team Members: Dr. Leena Raje, Dr. Sarita Kasaralkar, Ms. Reshma Murali, Mr. Dattatraya Gawde, Ms. Neha Shaikh

A sharpened focus on retention, persistence, and graduation has led our college to look for more effective ways to support student success. Our students classified as first generation learners are more likely a minority, likely to be from lower income families. Our students tend to slip through the cracks at large institutions because they don't have financial support or simply the knowledge of various opportunities meant for them. They are much less likely to reach out for help when it's necessary. Their decision to pursue higher education comes with the price of leaving their families behind. Their desire for education and upward mobility may be viewed as a rejection of their past.

They seem to experience difficulty within four distinct domains:

- 1) professional
- 2) financial
- 3) psychological
- 4) academic.

Our students often see college as a way to "bring honor to their families." view their status as a source of strength. It becomes their single most important motivator to earning their degree. These students are driven and determined. They can perform academically in ways that are equal to or even better than students whose parents have earned a degree.

These students may benefit from a support group to help alleviate the internal pressure they place on themselves to succeed. Technology is a field which is constantly updating itself. In today's world with the advancement of technology and access to information of the different kinds of job in which one can employ themselves has increased. With the growing options, it becomes difficult to choose a career for oneself. When it comes to choosing a career, one should have a clear understanding of what he/she wants out of his life. Employment opportunities have increased enormously. For many students today, a career for life is no longer an option. Most of them will hold jobs with a variety of employers and move across different employment sectors through their working life. Education and experience may make one eligible to apply for a job, but to be successful in most roles, students need skills that are likely to develop over time. Some will be specific to the job, but the vast majority will be 'soft skills' that can be used in any job or employment called 'employability skills'.

After the second cycle of NAAC, the placement cell realized that employability rate of students was drastically low.

Students who applied for jobs were expected to possess certain skills which would help them get a job. It was observed that students were finding it difficult to find jobs of their preference due to lack of confidence, weak communication and presentation skills, lack of office etiquettes and so on. This brought to the forefront the 'gap problem' ie gap between campus and corporate. The entire team of placement cell tried to find a solution to bridge this gap, but was unable to come to a definite conclusion.

In 2014-2015, the placement cell in collaboration with Samvedna Counselling centre organized a career Fair on 14<sup>th</sup> March ,2015. Various experts were invited to speak on the various career opportunities available and motivate students for their future. There was not much of improvement in the percentage of placement seen.

In 2015-2016 Placement cell took up various measures to increase the level of placement by organizing another career Fair in collaboration with Energia Wellbeing on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2016. Stalls were put up in college campus by various organizations to enlighten students of the career opportunities after graduation. Various organizations like ICICI Bank, SOTC provided campus placement to a few students.

The data collected from the questionnaire (structured by the placement cell) about the view of students on career options / Training program/ higher education and the psychometric test analysis gave direction to the action plan as the report suggested that our students lacked employability skills. Various need-based lectures and workshops were arranged for the students under the SAS-CSR (Corporate social Responsibility funded by SAS group.

As per the report, Students expressed the need for career related awareness to be built in the first year itself so that they can plan for what they might need to achieve by the time they graduate.

#### Objectives: Improving the Placements.

#### Sample Size:

Target group: BAFI, BMS and B.com Students

#### Factors contributing to poor employability:

1. Language Barrier
2. Lack of Communication
3. Lack of Motivation
4. Lack of knowledge about opportunities available
5. Gap between aspiration & reality
6. Family Pressure
7. Lack of Accountability
8. First generation learners
9. Lack of Employability Skills

#### Questionnaire Analysis:

In the same year, the placement cell had also designed a feedback form for students in order to understand students expectation, their preference on taking up jobs as well as the skills that they need.

#### Edubridge MET Analysis:

There was a need to get data in terms of the aptitude the students possess for a job. therefore, Placement cell in collaboration with Edusharp, conducted psychometric testing on employability skills on 22<sup>nd</sup> January.

#### Skills Required:

To summarize our students lacked the following skills,

1. Communication Skills
2. Presentation Skills
3. Objection Handling
4. Problem Solving
5. Negotiation
6. Decision Making
7. Time Management
8. How to prepare a CV and an Interview

#### MOU with Technoserve:

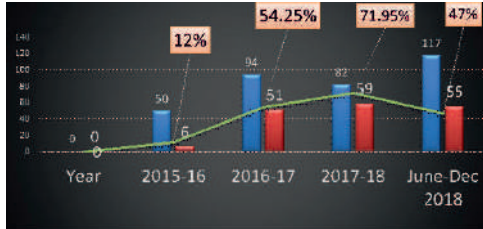
The modules covered include the following topics

- Career Readiness
- Understanding careers in sales
- Customer support
- Human Resource Finance & Accounts
- Administration & Operations
- Mock Interview Communication Readiness
- Group Discussions
- Personal Interview
- Aptitude test
- Professional networking
- Vocabulary list for entry level employees work Readiness
- Professionalism



- Surviving the first year
- Working ethically
- Performance appraisal
- Email etiquettes
- Working efficiently in a group
- Presentation skills
- Work place dynamics

**Conclusion: Increase in Placement:**



**Third Prize Winner**

**VES College of Pharmacy, Chembur, Mumbai IIL (Industry Institute Linkage): Marking the presence in competent world.**

**Team Leader:** Mrs. Ashwini Wani

**Team Members:** Mrs. Sonali Munj, Mrs. Pradnya Korlekar and core team

**Project description in brief**

VES college of pharmacy (VESCOP) has developed very good reputation in academics over a decade from its inception in 2007. VESCOP has achieved great height amongst leading pharmacy institutions in Mumbai and earned good name and fame over the decade. It was very disappointing when we realized through AICTE CII survey conducted in 2016, that despite of being in top 3 institutes in Mumbai, our industry presence was found to be negligible.

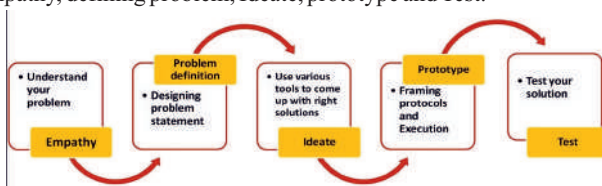
Project IIL was launched with the aim of making VESCOP's significant presence in Pharma industry which will facilitate collaborations with industry, help in immediate employment after graduation, provide training to the students and teachers to develop research attitude to serve industry which will collectively help institute for its horizontal spread.

Establishment of Industry-Institute linkage would give national recognition to the institute which in turn will lead to:

- Better placement options to the students
- Research projects in collaboration with Industry
- Upliftment of Teacher's knowledge
- Readiness of students to work in industry
- Develop research attitude in academic environment

**Objective of the project is to get recognized in industry domain which will additionally help to bridge the gap between academia and industry.**

Project IIL was framed by applying principles of **design thinking**, which includes Simon Sinek's golden circle concept as a backbone to decide direction of the activities and address three questions: why this project needs to be executed? How to define problem area? What methodologies to be adopted to find the solution of problem. In the entire process i.e. from finding root cause of problem up to execution of solutions we followed the principle of design thinking. It covers empathy, defining problem, Ideate, prototype and Test.



**Figure1. Design Thinking Approach**



**BEQET 2nd Prize Winner Team received Trophy from Mr. K. Khambata, CEO, D L SHAH Trust with all dignitaries**

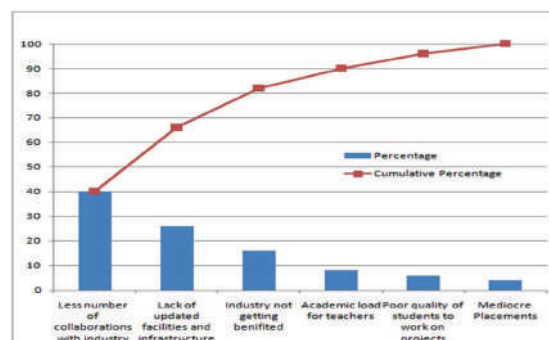
**Methodology:**

The project was executed by using design thinking methodology as depicted in figure 1. At each stage various analytical and statistical techniques were used to work out the best strategy. The methodologies are summarized in figure 2.

Empathy	• Analysis of AICTE-CII marksheet and of NBA Remarks (2016)
Problem Definition	• Pareto Analysis
Ideate	• Nominal Group Technique (NGT)
Prototype	• Mind Map
Test	• Result of AICTE-CII survey 2018

**Figure 2: Overview of methodologies adopted**

Areas to work on in order to achieve the goal were penned down after receiving grade cards. Those listed points seemed to be overlapping each other. Thus we made **Pareto Analysis** to prioritise the action plans. Results of NIRF and CII survey (OCT 16) were shared with all teachers, management, Governing body (GB) members and alumni. Everyone was asked to write the areas of improvement and then the areas were prioritised by total 50 committee members. The committee also included teachers with more than 5 years of experience and alumni with minimum 3 years of industry experience in core area were included.



**Figure 3: Pareto Analysis**

Pareto Chart helped us to prioritise three areas of improvement. These three areas included - Seeking more collaborations with Industry, Providing infrastructure and facilities, and Training workforce to benefit industry.

To find out solutions we applied NGT tool which includes rating the actions which needs to be implemented. The team represents correct blend of academic and industrial experience (members of Departmental Advisory Board, DAB), Management representation

(decision making) and teachers (who are involved in executing student related activities).

**Conclusion from NGT:** NGT revealed that execution plan should revolve around following ideas which were highly rated:

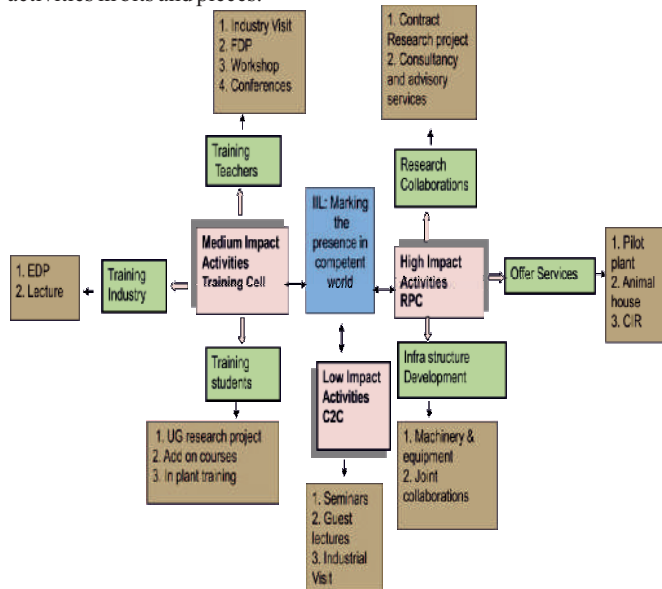
- Preparation of college brochure and presenting it to Industry
- Availability of high end equipment and instruments
- Inviting industry to institute
- Teacher's knowledge up gradation by Industry

To execute the action plan we prepared three teams and assigned them respective task.



**Figure 4: Teams under project IIL**

In order to summaries activities as per its impact to achieved set goal, mind map was framed which enabled us to visualize and connect the activities in bits and pieces.



**Figure 5: Mind Map representing the activities undertaken under each category**

**Results and Outcomes:**

**Achieved Benefits:**

1. VESGOP was awarded 1<sup>st</sup> Prize of “Best Industry Linked Technical Institute” in the category of established pharmacy degree institutions through the survey by AICTE-CII of industry linked technical institutions, 2018.
2. Signed MOU with Merck specialties pvt ltd for collaborative research centre
3. College successfully interacted with around 100 industries through various activities.
4. Faculty interacted with more than 40 industry and able to get the research and consultancy projects.
5. VES got recognition as Scientific and Industrial Research Organization (SIRO) from 21.07.2017 to 31.03.2020
6. Services Provided to industry and academia (put on website)
7. Worked on contract research projects with the industry
8. Proposed Incubation centre
9. Hosted Technology showcase for BRIC-IKP, Hyderabad
10. Hosted the HR summit

**Tangible Benefits:**

1. Around 6 companies have contributed in infrastructure development and equipments, instruments donation which is worth Rs. 96 lakhs
2. Faculties interacted with more than 50 industries and successfully establish good connect with industry folks.
3. College received research projects from industry and provided consultancy for projects around services worth Rs. 61 lakhs

**Intangible Benefits**

1. Institute was able to develop good reputation and grade card in industry which will showcase its strength and attract more and more research projects and other collaborations.
2. As collaboration with industry is developing it will inculcate research aptitude in teachers. Also it will enable them to take up projects with strong rationale. Faculty will get guiding path for sustaining in field of research and will make them grow in field of education.
3. Since Project involves lot of interaction with industry, institute is very much affirmative for quality placement of students in near future. As college is recognized by AICTE CII survey as best industry linked institute it will benefit students for securing good place in their higher education abroad. All these activities will be able to add high value in student's curriculum vitae.

**Conclusion for Project Result:**

Project - Industry Institute Linkage (IIL)-Marking presence in competent world was formed with objective to capture sufficient space in industry sphere.

To make these interactions possible college has strived hard to make the action plans aligned with goal. In this process following tools were applied;

<b>Design Thinking</b>	• To develop Systematic Workflow
<b>Pareto Analysis</b>	• To prioritise areas of improvement
<b>NGT</b>	• To rate the actions and find out solutions
<b>Mind Map</b>	• To summarise and visualise impact of activities

The above processes helped us in devising systematic and scientific problem solving approach which led to many short term and long term benefits.

Contribution of team IIL has just begun and many more steps are yet to go to contribute substantially in research and development of Institute. The team will work better and harder in future days to come to bring overall growth of institute. This will be an ongoing project that will be carried forward by the team in coming years too.



BEQET 3rd Prize Winner Team receiving Trophy from Shri Mahesh Gandhi, Trustee, NCQM in presence of dignitaries.