



12th Best Educational Quality Enhancement Team (BEQET) President Award Winners Presentations

First Prize winner

Shri M. D. Shah Mahila College of Arts & Commerce, Mumbai

“A SKILL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTE: A CASE STUDY”

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Abstract:

India is on the cusp of a demographic opportunity. It is today one of the youngest nations in the world with more than 62 percent of the population in the working age group (15 – 59 years) and then 54 percent of the total population below the age group of 25 years. In fact in the next 20 years the labour force in the industrialized world will decline by 4 percent while in India it will increase by 32 percent. This poses both a challenge and an opportunity to India. To reap this demographic dividend which is expected to last for next 25 years, India needs to equip its work force with employable skills and knowledge so that the youth can participate productively to make India a developed economy. This study answers these questions, where are we on skills? What opportunities can be given by educational institutes to learners for skill development? And what is the way forward? The paper makes a number of recommendations for developing opportunities for employability skills development in universities in general.

Keywords: Employment, Skills, Curriculum development, Quality circle, Quality tools.

Introduction

India has a huge labour force, second only to China. Labour availability is expected to grow further as India is forecast to be the youngest country in the world with a median age of 29 by 2020. In the next 20 years, the labour force in the industrialized world is expected to decline by 4 per cent, while in India it will increase by 32 per cent. This implies that India has a huge potential benefit in terms of labour availability and cost which the country needs to en-cash. However, little has been done so far to tap this structural advantage, which, if not addressed urgently, could cause socio-economic issues. And is the youth which will enter the job market in the near future equipped with requisite skills. The huge unemployment among youth due to lack of skills and poverty is a long term challenge for India. Skill building is a powerful tool to empower individuals and improve their social acceptance. It must be complemented by economic growth and employment opportunities to meet the rising aspirations of youth. The alarming situation is that only around 10 per cent of India’s workforce is trained which includes 3 per cent formally trained and 7 per cent informally trained. This compares poorly with a more than 50 per cent formally trained workforce in developed countries. According to the India Skills Report 2016, only 37 per cent of the Employability Skill Test takers (below 30 years) were found employable.

In India there are many universities from which a number of graduates pass out every year in varied streams of education. All students pursuing their education hope to get a good job in the flourishing economy. Most of the students opt for secure salaried jobs while few consider entrepreneurship. In spite of this there is a large group of individuals who find themselves out of the race because they lack job skills. The reason could be the non-existent practical exposure to vocational skills. Skill is an integral part of Education. And with the fact that job creations are becoming challenging and the country has to grow economically, it is important that the skills are embedded right at young age along with formal education. To bridge this gap efforts have been taken

at Shri M D Shah Mahila College of Arts & Commerce, Malad (West). A systematic attempt was made to integrate regular Education with Vocational training. Women’s education and empowerment being the primary goal of the institution, the focus was on enhancing vocational skills in girl students. Women often have different training needs than men, since they are more likely to work as contributing family workers, home-based micro entrepreneurs in addition to handling their domestic work and care responsibilities. Skills development is a key to improving household productivity, employability and income-earning opportunities for women and also for enhancing sustainable development and livelihoods. This paper is a study aiming to consider the place of employability in higher education institutes, with a focus on, various skill development programmes and outlines an initiative to promote employability skills development at college level. It also deals with vocational training for skills development.

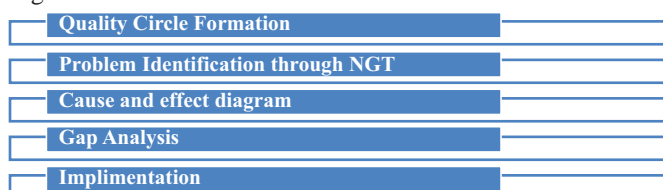
Objectives:

1. To organize and conduct training for skill development and entrepreneurship development.
2. To evolve strategies and methodologies for different target groups
3. To identify training needs of students and offer training programs
4. To identify, design and conduct training programs for students

Methodology

A Special feature of this study is the use of Quality Circle as a methodology. The project was developed using an action research methodology using Quality circle and certain other quality tools. A Quality Circle is a small group of 6 to 12 employees doing similar work who voluntarily meet together on a regular basis to identify improvements in their respective areas using proven techniques for analyzing and solving work related problems coming in the way of achieving and sustaining excellence of self and the organization. It is the way of capturing the creative and innovative power that lies within the workforce. The Quality Circle philosophy calls for a progressive attitude of the management and their willingness to make adjustments, if necessary, in their style and culture.

Methodology adopted for the case study has been shown in Figure 1



Procedure -

The problem was defined precisely by using NGT (Nominal Group Technique) and QC members were invited to provide their valuable suggestion or problems. Data compilation was done by taking evaluation of each answer provided and gathering them into a database, and analyzing the results for further suggestions, improvements, and/or recommendations. The graphical representation of problem areas is depicted in Fig. 2.

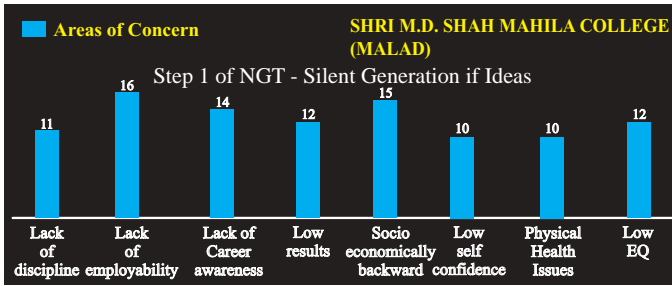


Fig. 2 NGT- Silent Generation of Ideas for problems

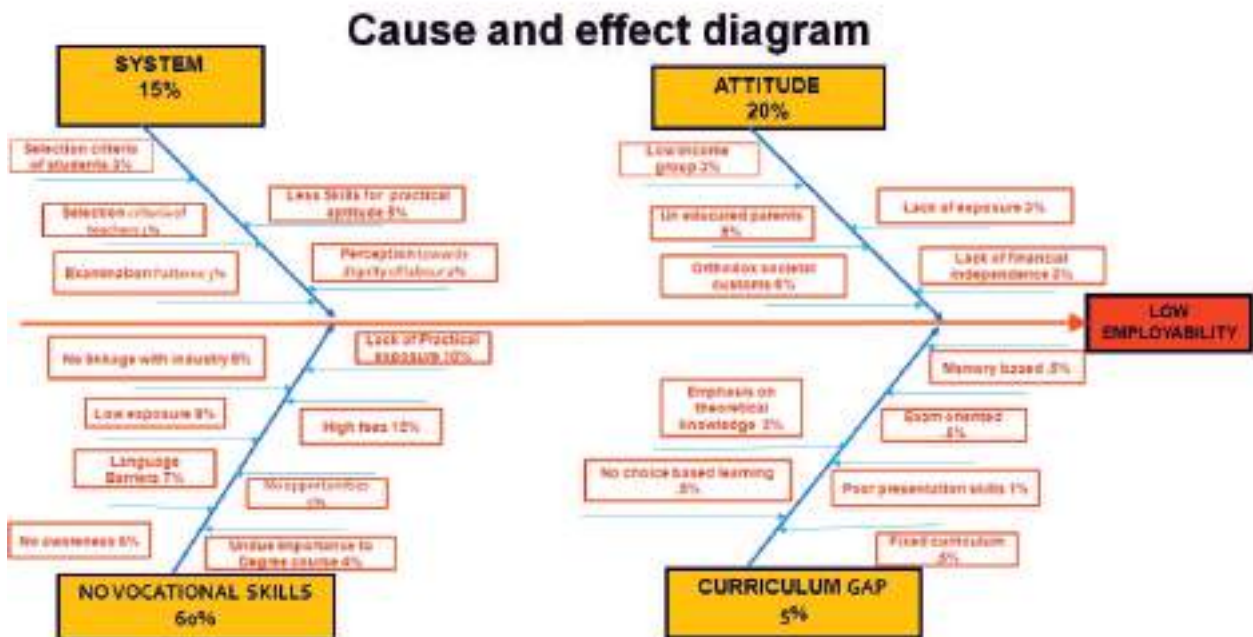
The quantified data projected that QC members attributed three problem areas, namely Lack of employability, lack of career awareness and socio-economically backward factors. These areas were further analyzed and each of the areas was credited a rating as seen in Fig. 3.

Fig. 3 NGT- Votes and rating interpreted in percentage

According to Fig. 3, it was noticed that Low employability among students was the major deterrent which needed attention. QC members located the cause of the problem area through the Ishikawa diagram and further validated the root causes in percentile scores.

Causes	OC ₁	OC ₂	OC ₃	OC ₄	OC ₅	OC ₆
1 Economically Backward						
1.1 Single Bread earners	6	6	5	4	6	6
1.2 Large families	7	3	5	5	6	5
1.3 Illiteracy	5	6	6	4	4	5
1.4 Engaged in bricollege jobs	5	8	5	3	5	6
1.5 Inflation	5	3	3	3	4	1
Sub Total	38	36	34	29	31	33
2 Lack of career awareness						
2.1 Decrease in Reading Habits	6	10	10	8	10	9
2.2 First generation learners	5	8	7	8	10	5
2.3 Misconceptions about career						
2.4 Career Counselling	6	7	3	6	9	6
Sub Total	32	33	24	32	34	28
3 Lack of employability						
3.1 Curriculum Gap	8	10	10	8	8	10
3.2 Language Barriers	8	4	8	7	6	5
3.3 Lack of vocational jobs	10	7	8	10	10	10
3.4 Lack of confidence	6	6	6	10	10	10
3.5 Attitudinal issues	10	6	10	10	7	7
3.6 Poor presentation skills	8	10	10	9	4	5
Sub Total	58	43	52	54	45	48
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

Fig.4 Cause and Effect Diagram with NGT scores in percentage



The Cause and Effect Diagram revealed that lack of vocational skills was the major concern area which required increased attention and intervention. After a survey regarding Need analysis, the QC came out with a 3 Model Solution whereby skills could be imparted in three different levels- Minimal skills, Professional skills and Entrepreneurial skills.

3 Model solution

Models	Solutions
Minimal Skills	JSS Skill Academy
	ADD on and COP Courses
Professional Skills	M I Patel Courses
Entrepreneurial Skills	M D S Life Skill Education

Bridging the Gap through Minimal courses, Professional Courses & M I Patel Vocational Training Institute

Minimal courses	Professional courses	M.I Patel Vocational training Institute
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beauty culture • Event Management • Basic IT • Calligraphy • Tattoo Making • Nail Art • Jewellery designing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beauty culture • Event Management • Basic IT • Calligraphy • Tattoo Making • Nail Art • Jewellery designing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interior designing • Fashion designing • Travel and Tourism • Beauty culture • Hindustani vocal • Software development • Photoshop

705 students enrolled in various courses along with the regular Degree course. Experts from the industry and in-house teachers shared their expertise with students. A systematic programme of theory and practical classes enabled students' to gain knowledge and hands-on experience. Aimed at self-reliance, opportunities were created for students to act as business managers and learn budget planning, control and profit management. The skill development programme led to formation of academic-industry linkages and natural fallout of this association was regular Campus interview sessions and Career fairs. IT companies and Travel agencies absorbed majority of these students as the skills possessed by the students suited the needs of the industry. Some students also embarked on individual entrepreneurship setups.

With the success and positive feedback from students, the management initiated JanSeva Samiti Skill Academy with a regularized programme and essential infrastructure. It resulted in value addition in students' personality in areas of self esteem, interpersonal relationship and emotional security. There developed a sense of social acceptance and urge to contribute to society.

CONCLUSION

The project analysis resonates the idea that skill and knowledge are the driving forces of economic growth and social development of any country. They have become even more important given the increasing pace of globalization and technological changes which provide both opportunities and challenges. As India moves progressively towards becoming a 'knowledge economy' it becomes increasingly important that educational institutes should focus on skill development programmes, advancement of skills and these skills have to be relevant to the emerging economic development.



1st Prize winner team receiving the trophy and certificates from Chief Guest Dr. Gondhalekar

2nd Prize Winner Vivekanand Education Society's College of Pharmacy, Chembur, Mumbai

HEALING MINDS, CARING HEARTS

Team Leader: Ms Ramalakshmi Anand

Team Members: Ms. Ashwini Wani, Ms. Pradhya Shinde Korlekar & core students

Project description in brief:

The profession of pharmacy mainly aims to serve the society in aspects of health care. The training and education imparted has to inculcate such skills and knowledge in the students so that they can positively impact health care in the society. Though drug dispensing and counselling are the primary functions of pharmacist, there are other important roles that a pharmacist can perform to improve health. Most often, a pharmacist's role is diminished to that of a trader who buys and sells medicines. The course structure of degree programme focusses mainly on scientific and technical knowledge primarily aiming to fulfil needs of pharma industry. Most pharmacy graduates take up various positions in the industry in various departments related to manufacture, QC, sales, regulatory affairs and research. But there is certainly considerable lack of involvement of pharmacists in providing primary and community health care. **There is gross under-utilisation of pharmacist's skills and knowledge that can be channelized in the right manner to improve health of the society.**

The reason for this lack of involvement of pharmacist in general health and well-being of the society was determined using Root-Cause analysis. From this analysis, the conclusion was- College should get involved in community health care thereby providing opportunities and platform to students to get involved in community service.

It was decided that a team will be formed headed by a teacher coordinator and will comprise of student members to identify areas, design and execute solutions to identified areas. **PROJECT "HEALING MINDS, CARING HEARTS"** provides platform to students to get involved in community pharmacy practice and helps students to understand and inculcate the values of community health service which is one of the primary role of pharmacist.

The team then used Nominal Group Technique to look at evolving and experimenting solutions to arrive at a solution for the problem diagnosed. The objective was to develop social responsibility among the students of pharmacy about community health issues and help them apply their scientific knowledge and skills that they learn during the course. Considering the available skills, knowledge, feasibility and time available apart from regular academic commitments, following areas were shortlisted as evolving solution to the problem: **Community Health Awareness Activities and Blood Donation Drives.**

The campaigns were decided, planned and executed by Group Discussion followed by Mind-mapping of the

outcomes from the discussion. The target population, type of campaign, venue and techniques used for campaign were decided by answering the following questions using a mind-map template:

When: Health Day or Month

For Whom: High risk group, Children, General population

How: Skit, Posters, Talk, One-to- one interaction, Surveys etc

With whom: Collaborating with NGOs or other organizations

The above technique helped in reaching out to many people and making the desired impact.

Tangible Benefits

Total 11 Activities in one year through Project “**Healing Minds, Caring Hearts**”

Blood donation Drives - **Total 11 drives** throughout Mumbai including Dadar, Ghansoli, Vashi, Andheri, Vikhroli and others with output of collection of **around 2000 units of blood.**

Awareness Campaigns:

- Overall 10 awareness campaigns targeting General health issues, Specific health issues, Hygiene importance and prevalent diseases were conducted
- Project “**Healing Minds, Caring Hearts**” team with student volunteers managed to reach out to more than 1000 school kids in Oral Health Check-up/Awareness and Hand washing Day campaign.
- The team reached out to about 750 people from public while addressing general health issues such as Diabetes, Organ Donation and Anaemia.
- Students interacted directly with more than 50 TB patients and counselled them about importance of healthy diet while undergoing treatment
- HIV awareness campaign was targeted towards truck drivers who were identified as high risk groups. The team managed to reach out to more than 50 truck drivers. Free condoms were also distributed.
- Student community was targeted for some specific issues such as smoking and mental health. Project team reached out more than 130 students for generating awareness about dangers of smoking with special focus on lung cancer and for helping students achieve positive mental health.

Intangible Benefits

The benefits to students was assessed using ‘Impact Analysis’ format in which questions were posed to students in a standard format and were asked to rate on a scale of 1 to 3 based on their perception; 1 being low, 2 moderate and 3 high or substantial. These ratings were then analysed by taking out an average of the scores. The analysis of Impact Analysis showed the following findings:

- More than 96% students have felt that they have understood the role of pharmacists’ contribution to the community which would have been difficult to demonstrate through theoretical lectures or talks.
- These opportunities have made most students aware about the socio-cultural and behavioural patterns of the society as they interacted with various socio-economic sections of the population.
- Additionally, students have reported that participation in these activities helped them improve their communication, networking, planning, organizing and many such soft skills.

Conclusion:

- These actions helped the students reach out to hundreds of people belonging to different sections and groups. The students carried important health related messages through skits, talks, posters, pamphlets and other means to number of people.
- Important health issues such as HIV, TB, anaemia, organ donation and many more were addressed through these activities. These activities instilled in students feelings of empathy and sense of responsibility towards the society in general.
- These values are expected to be carried forward by the students in their professional lives. As they progress, they will carry in their minds their responsibility towards betterment of health in society and align their goals with those of the society.



Team with Principal of VES College of Pharmacy



2nd Prize winner team receiving the trophy and certificates from Chief Guest Dr. Gondhalekar

**3rd Prize Winner
SIES Graduate School of Technology,
Nerul, Navi Mumbai**

BEACON-'Empowerment of Underprivileged'

Team Leader: Prof. D. Senthilkumar
Team Members: Prof. Lokpriya Gaikwad, Dr. Vijay Songire, Prof. Pranita Mahajan, Prof. Mrinal Khadse

As a part of the Institute Social Responsibility initiative taken by the South Indian Education Society, the Graduate School of Technology has launched project 'BEACON', with an aim to provide vocational training to the underprivileged sections of the society i.e. orphans, street children, school dropouts, unemployed youth and the destitute.

Project 'BEACON', commenced from January 1, 2016 with an orientation program. The project started with six vocational trades viz. Plumbing, Welding & Metal Turning, Computer Operator, Sewing & Tailoring, Electrician and Laptop & Mobile Repairing. The main objective of this six month vocational training program was to provide an opportunity to untrained/unemployed youth through skill based education and to further provide internships and job opportunities by collaborating with the industry and service providers. Along with the vocational training the candidates were made to undergo a month long foundation course to familiarize them with minimum functional computer skills, social skills, Spoken English and Basic Mathematics.

The first batch had 33 admissions across all trades, however a few dropped out and a few discontinued at a later stage. A total of 28 have completed the course in July 2016; Plumbing- 3, Electrician - 4, Welding & Metal Turning - 3, Computer Operator - 6, Mobile and Laptop Repairing - 4, and Sewing & Tailoring - 8. A total of 05 students completed internship with various service providers and some of them have been offered jobs. The Sewing and Tailoring and Plumbing students have been trained by professional trainers and given ample hands on practice sessions and have been prepared for self employment.

The second batch will have a revised syllabus with more focus on practical aspects and hands on sessions. Along with the previous six trades, a new trade on screen printing is introduced in this batch. In a nut shell, a total of 27 students got certified out of 29 admitted students. And the third batch consists of total 31 students admitted and 27 successful students were certified. The fourth batch 34 successful students were certified from 35 admitted students.

A new module Graphics design has been included in the Screen printing trade to attract students to this course. Two new courses, Web Designing and Basic AC Mechanic, were added to the existing courses from fifth batch onwards to make the underprivileged section to stand on their own. At present we are offering a total of 9 Trade courses. In future, we planned to have Tally course also in the main stream.

The candidates are selected based on their interest, financial & educational background and their commitment level. The students chosen for these courses were from diverse background. These students have shown a strong desire to overcome the odds faced by them and have taken advantage of the opportunity provided to them.

Most of them have an average family income of less than Rs. 10,000/- per month and live in pathetic conditions in slums and chawls, braving the odds by working on daily wages. The Sewing & Tailoring course provided a welcome opportunity to girls and unemployed women in the nearby localities to be self sufficient and earn a livelihood.



3rd Prize winner team receiving the trophy and certificates from Chief Guest Dr. Gondhalekar



Team - BPCL Bakania Depot 5S Certified Under Very Good Category



Team - BPCL Manglia Receipt Terminal 5S Certified, Under Very Good Category