

## DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES IN YCMOU

Mr. Nagarjun Wadekar,

Assistant Professor,

School of Humanities and Social Sciences,

Y.C.M. Open University, Near Gangapur Dam,

Nashik - 422 222.

### Introduction

The 1986 National Policy on Education had focused on enlarging canvas of educational system by various other adoptable means and models. The limitations of conventional education system in terms of resources, physical infrastructure and educational facilities have been clearly evident since then. If we want to cater to the educational needs of our growing population we do not have any other recourse than to adopt the non-formal education system. Hence, to encompass all the potential learners the need to explore potential of external education, continuing education and distance education system has increased. This has been clearly deliberated upon in various policy documents on education at all levels.

Development of quality study material, delivery and its implementation is the strength of open and distance learning system. Here an overview of these mechanisms is taken and how dynamic this system has come to be over the period of time is explored. The possibilities of further expansion can be envisaged through the same.

**Keywords :** Self Instructional Material, Virtual Learning, Educational Programmes, Counselling

### Development of Educational Programmes

The university has the following eight schools / disciplines that identify educational need of society and develop Programmes accordingly ranging from Certificate, Diploma, Degree, Post Graduate and Research Programmes at general, technical and professional level. The schools develop these educational programmes in tune with the immediate needs of the society, economic conditions, and available infrastructure. This is how in the last twenty years from mere three educational programmes the number has gone up to 224 Programmes.

These educational programmes are developed and implemented by the following eight educational departments – viz. School of Humanities and Social Sciences, School of Commerce and

Management, School of Science and Technology, School of Computer Sciences, School of Continuing Education, School of Agricultural Sciences, School of Health Sciences, and School of Education. The Academic Services Division is a special division that offers post graduate and research level Programmes in Educational and Instructional Communication.

### **Implementation of Educational Programmes**

The University has evolved a web of network to disseminate these programmes to students. We have established eight Regional Centres (RCs) in the State of Maharashtra to co-ordinate and implement educational programmes, to render speedy support services, training and counseling to students. These centers have been situated at Mumbai, Nashik, Pune, Aurangabad, Nanded, Kolhapur, Amravati, Nagpur and Nashik in tune with the conventional universities and headquarters of revenue divisions. Through these regional centers a study centre has been established in most of the medium size towns of the State of Maharashtra. In the last twenty years from 15 study centers the university has increased the number up to more than 3728 now.

In 1993 when Latur and Osmanabad districts were hit by an earthquake the university had immediately started various community development programmes at the affected places. A community-learning centre was established at Latur. Apart from the aforesaid regional centers the university had also started some district centers on pilot basis such as in Latur and Akola. All these study centers, district centers, and community learning centers are monitored by the Regional Centres, and all these eight regional centers are headed by the Students Services Division (SSD) of the university. There are three sections in SSD viz. Regional Centres & Study Centres Management Centre, Registration Section, and Stores & Distribution Section that provide all the necessary support services to the concerned.

For evaluation of learners the University has two separate divisions viz. Evaluation Division and Examination Division. Advanced evaluation technology has been adopted in evaluation, such as question papers are generated from these question banks that are developed and updated regularly. Evaluation Division and Examination Division hold more than 250 examinations every year.

The learners studying in the Open and Distance mode are generally either self-employed or working somewhere or have enrolled for other higher education Programmes or engaged in meaningful work for their livelihood. They do not have as much time as their counterparts in the conventional universities. So, the thrust of Open and Distance Learning System (ODL) is on Self-Learning. The University develops appropriate Self-Instructional Material (SIM) considering practical difficulties faced by students while studying; in addition to this the university also provides support material to these students.

### Print Material

The Self-Learning Material is developed in such a manner that the learner will have least difficulties in following the content and also in carrying these texts along with them wherever they go, so the number of pages is also less. The quality checks and quality control mechanism are in place and that are observed religiously. In preparation of all these material, personalities having national or state level recognition have been involved. Many of these resource persons are already working in the conventional universities, hence these materials are of high quality and so these are also utilized by students from conventional universities, aspirants of MPSC, UPSC and also that are preparing for NET/SET examinations. The university has developed and published more than 2000 books and workbooks on various Programmes with meticulous engagement of the full-fledged Print Production Centre (PPC). Every year more than 65 lakh copies are printed and distributed to students.

### Counselling Sessions

Across the State our study centers are housed at various conventional university colleges/Computer/Industrial Training Institutes/Non-Governmental Organisations and other institutions. These sessions are held on Sundays and holidays so the Open University students are benefited of expertise of qualified teachers from these institutions. Hence, their infrastructure is also brought under optimum utilization. It is noteworthy that these teachers and other staff work on holidays for these students, out of their strong social commitment. The students at these 3728 study centers are benefited of more than 20,000 teachers from the respective institutions.

### Audio- Videos and CDs

In support of the print material (SIM) the university also develops audio-visual material. The students are provided with interviews or lectures of some of the noted writers, critics, artists, entrepreneurs, social workers etc. The well-equipped Audio-Visual Centre has prepared 342 videos and 311 audios so far. The latest feather in the cap of the university is development of full-fledged video programmes on environmental education. As per the guidelines of the Honorable Supreme Court the university has developed 37 videos on environment education with contribution of noted environmentalists such as Sundarlal Bahuguna. These videos are also made available on web so that the school/ college students and teachers can utilize those.

### Samwad

To provide latest information about the developments, articles, notices etc. in the respective subjects to students a house monthly magazine 'Samwad' is sent free of cost to every student of the

university. This magazine that motivates the distance learner and also creates awareness about the open and distance learning was sent to more than 3 lakh students in the last academic year.

### **Virtual Learning Classrooms - A Pilot Project**

In India the success achieved in Development of Distance Education and use of ICT during the last 14 years propelled the country to launch a dedicated satellite GSAT-3 (EDUSAT) on September 20, 2004 with extensive efforts of Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) to cater the need of dedicated countrywide space-based educational network. GSAT-3 Applications (GAP-3) Project is a pilot project planned in Maharashtra (MH), Karnataka (KA) and Madhya Pradesh (MP) for distance education. The GAP-3 pilot project has a combination of interactive television programming, computer networking and multimedia multicasting elements. This provides profound opportunities and also poses new challenges for effective use of ICT in Programme delivery.

To enable dissemination of quality education in the most cost effective manner across the State of Maharashtra the university has been using Virtual Learning Centres (VLCs) through EDUSAT up linking established with assistance from the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). The HUB of VLC, 'Yash Bharati' is situated in the university headquarters. The classes run at Nashik studio can be simultaneously viewed by the students on a large LCD projector screen across Maharashtra. The students can ask their questions to teacher teaching from the teaching end i. e. studio in the hub. Earlier it was a two-way audio and one-way video system, however now the teacher sitting in the studio can also see the students across various classrooms. Considering the availability of expert resource persons in various fields, the university has established a sub-studio at Pune and Mumbai. The sub-studio in Pune is completely operational and lectures of various experts are being transmitted from there, however work of Mumbai sub-studio is in progress.

Since last year M. A. in Sociology, MPSC/ UPSC Composite Guidance Programme and Soft Skills Programme are offered through Virtual Learning Classroom (VLC). It will be an enriching opportunity for the students of conventional university colleges as well. Here, in addition to the print material the learners are also provided with support in other media. Therefore, it is a fulfilling experience for many to earn higher education through open and distance mode and command respect in society. Till today more than 35 Lakh students have fulfilled their aspiration of earning higher education by availing this opportunity.

### Conclusion

Thus, the development of quality study material, delivery and implementation of the quality content through the vast network of study centres through experienced counsellors' counselling definitely ensures the quality education at par with the conventional educational system. By employing ICT – use of audio visual aids, virtual learning technology, it is also ensures that quality education is provided in cost effective manner, at the ease of the learners, anywhere, anytime.

### Bibliography

1. Abercrombie, M.L.J. (1980) *Aims and Techniques of Group Teaching*. London: Society for Research into Higher Education.
2. Biggs, J.B. (1987a) *Student Approaches to Learning and Studying*. Hawthorn, Victoria: Australian Council for Educational Research.
3. John Brennan, Jacky Holloway and Tarla Shah. *OPEN UNIVERSITY. THE UNITED KINGDOM*. (<http://www.oecd.org/education/skills-beyond-school/1871706.pdf>)
4. Robin Roy, Stephen Potter, Karen Yarrow and Mark Smith. *Towards Sustainable Higher Education: Environmental impacts of campus-based and distance higher education systems*. Retrieved from. ([http://www3.open.ac.uk/events/3/2005331\\_47403\\_o1.pdf](http://www3.open.ac.uk/events/3/2005331_47403_o1.pdf))

The logo for GOEIIRJ features a stylized globe in the background with a grid of latitude and longitude lines. Overlaid on the globe is the text "GOEIIRJ" in a large, bold, serif font. The letters are a light brown or tan color, and the "O" and "I" are slightly larger than the other letters.