

CHAPTER – 1
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Background

Education is expected to impart knowledge, inculcate skills and create consciousness for self-reliant development of students. The earlier structure of B.Com degree course was rigid and examination oriented and hence it could not satisfy the emerging needs of the society.

Manpower with appropriate knowledge and skills was necessary for the social and economic development of the country. This requirement necessitated certain changes in the Commerce education. Keeping in view these needs, the Restructured Programme was introduced in University of Pune in the faculty of Arts, Science and Commerce in June 1993 as per the guidelines of UGC. A concept of practical in Commerce for the development of skills was introduced under the 'C' and 'D' component subjects. Initially this programme was implemented only in selected seven colleges affiliated to the University of Pune. At present only two colleges are implementing this challenging and innovative programme.

Initially seven colleges were selected by Pune University to implement this programme on the experimental basis. Five colleges withdrew themselves from the scheme. At present BYK College of Commerce is implementing the scheme in the commerce faculty where as P.V.P College of Arts, Science and Commerce, Pravaranagar (Dist. Ahamednagar) is also implementing the programme in the faculties of Arts and Science.

To incorporate the concept of practical for all students of commerce, the general B.Com. degree course was modified in June 1990 in which Group 'A' and 'B' subjects were introduced with practical.

Vocationalisation of First Degree Education was initiated by the UGC in 1994.

This scheme was also introduced in a few selected colleges in the faculty of Arts, Science and Commerce. In the first year course, 6 papers (out of 19) were introduced as vocational in nature with 10% weightage for the practical.

The present research is aimed at studying the impact of these schemes and to understand the learning outcomes and also to know difficulties faced by the colleges in the implementation of the scheme of practical. An effort is made to study the importance of the development of basic skills in commerce and to prepare an inventory for the guidance of teachers and students. Present study will help to make teaching – learning process more effective and this effectiveness will make our students more competent.

Importance of study

The research work will be helpful to study the impact of the 'Scheme of Practical' introduced under the Restructured Programme, Modified Syllabi and Vocational Scheme of the University of Pune in the faculty of Commerce.

It will be useful to know the learning outcomes in terms of basic skills demanded from the Commerce education and to make commerce graduate more competent and employable.

The study is an effort to understand the difficulties in the implementation of the scheme of practical and suggest guidelines to make it more effective and useful to commerce students in future.

Objectives of study

- 1) To prepare an inventory of basic skills and identify the appropriate teaching methods to develop these skills.
- 2) To study the effectiveness of the 'Scheme of Practical in Commerce' introduced in the following programmes by the University of Pune:
 - a) Restructured Programme – June 1983
 - b) Modified Syllabi – June 1990
 - c) Vocationalisation of First Degree Education – June 1994
- 3) To share the experiences of Principals and Teachers involved in the above schemes.
- 4) To develop and emphasize the concept of 'Learning by Doing' in the teaching of Commerce subjects.
- 5) To get the feedback from the students who have studied and obtained B.Com degree under the above schemes.
- 6) To understand the difficulties in conducting practical effectively and make suggestions to overcome them.
- 7) To know the expectations of the employers from commerce graduates in terms of knowledge and skills.

Hypothesis

- 1) 'A Scheme of Practical in Commerce' introduced under the Restructured Programme, Modified Syllabi, and Vocationalisation of First Degree Education by the University of Pune in the faculty of Commerce has positively contributed to the development of basic skills among the students of Commerce faculty.

- 2) The effectiveness of practical depends upon the availability of trained teachers, adequate infrastructure facilities, linkages established by the college and implementation of the revised evaluation system.
- 3) The effective implementation of the scheme of practical would be able to enhance the competence and employability of commerce graduates.

Methodology

- i) The present study is conducted by using the 'Questionnaire' method. About 300 questionnaires were sent to four categories of respondents - Employers, Principals, Teachers & Students.
- ii) Personal interviews and discussions were conducted by contacting more than 150 respondents, to share their experience and get their feedback.
- iii) The data collected is tabulated for further analysis using simple statistical parameters to test the hypothesis.
- iv) The secondary data was collected by using library references and various reports.

Scope and limitations of the study

The research study is based on the data and information collected from -

- (a) 41 Business organizations
- (b) 31 Principals of the colleges affiliated to the University of Pune (Nasik, Pune and Ahmednagar districts)
- (c) 112 Commerce Teachers working in the colleges affiliated to University of Pune
- (d) 67 students who have studied the 'Scheme of Practical' under the Restructured Programme, Modified syllabi and the Vocationalisation of First Degree Education.

The respondents were selected at random and the responses given by them were studied to identify the basic skills in Commerce education, its need and importance to increase the competency of Commerce graduates.

A few respondents did not submit their responses on time, so they were not considered. A few of them were not able to specify the exact outcome of the practical included in the Commerce education.

Contribution of the study

The study is expected to provide guidelines to University authorities, teachers and students to implement the 'Scheme of Practical' effectively and develop the 'Basic Skills in Commerce'. This will make our students more competent and business organizations will get Commerce graduates with expected knowledge and skills who can perform their role effectively and confidently. The present gap between the knowledge and competency can be reduced with these Innovative Programmes.