RURAL IMMERSION PROGRAM

Mission of Expanding Mind

Mission of
B To I (Bharat to India) &
I To B (India to Bharat)

Life Skills Learning: Experience Sharing
2017 - 18
I would say that if the village perishes India will perish too. India will be no more India. Her own mission in the world will get lost. The revival of the village is possible only when it is no more exploited. Industrialization on a mass scale will necessarily lead to passive or active exploitation of the villagers as the problems of competition and marketing come in. Therefore, we have to concentrate on the village being self-contained, manufacturing mainly for use. Provided this character of the village industry is maintained, there would be no objection to villagers using even the modern machines and tools that they can make and can afford to use. Only they should not be used as a means of exploitation of others.

Almost half of the population of the world lives in rural regions and mostly in a state of poverty. Such inequalities in human development have been one of the primary reasons for unrest and, in some parts of the world, even violence.
I am extremely happy to note that MIT-WPU has initiated a Rural Immersion Program in its curriculum. This is a very positive step to integrate the students with the heart of India i.e. Rural Society.

Much before independence, Rashtrapita Mahatma Gandhi had appealed to the people of our country to stop migrating to the cities & instead, strengthen the villages to make them more self-sufficient.

I myself belong to a small village Rameshwar – Rui in Latur district of Maharashtra & it has been my endeavour to give back to my village as much as I can & turn it into an ideal village as envisaged by the Founding Father of our great Nation. It therefore makes me very happy that MIT-WPU is imbibing the values of social commitment & social change among the students. This will help to bridge the deep chasm between urban and rural sections of India.

MIT – World Peace University is imbibing the values of social commitment & social change among the students. This will help to bridge the deep chasm between rural & urban sections of India.

Prof. Dr. Vishwanath Karad
I am pleased to note that **Rural Immersion Program** was successfully completed and students had an opportunity to get a first-hand feeling of life of people living in rural areas. Such program gives an insight about lifestyle, culture, plight and problems faced by people living in those places. It also helps us in sensitizing our students who start thinking about how to mitigate some of these issues by providing innovative solutions. Such programs also help students to gel with their peers and create a social support system for them which in my opinion is necessary in the current over stressed community.

Such unique programs provide a rich experience, develops socially oriented mind-set, allows to analyse problems, think collectively about finding solutions and execute the plans strategically. It also provides the students an opportunity of developing strategic plans for different situations especially in absence of sufficient resources. It also provides enough food for thought about one’s own strengths and weakness and develops quality of practical leadership.

I congratulate all the team of faculty staff and students who participated in it and hope had a wonderful experience which they will cherish throughout their life.

Wishing all the best of life.
My idea of Rural immersion Program was not only limited to give exposure to university students to visit villages as a part of one day rural tourism activity but to create a learning opportunity for students of urban background by actually living in the farmer’s house for few days, understand their plight, problems and value system and their courage to cope up with the continuous natural and man-made calamities the farming sector facing. Their struggle for is inspiring and their contribution for food security for our country is enormous.

The MIT-WPU’s Rural Immersion Program is designed and evolved as ‘Bharat To India’ and ‘India To Bharat’ which is a learning and empowering experience for the youth and even for faculty members.

I am all sure that the way in which our Rural Immersion Program team is implementing this unique activity, it will attract the attention of global higher education sector and many more Universities and HEIs will follow our path for the progress of the rural communities in their respective countries.

“”

The true Indian culture and hospitality remains safe in the hands of the rural communities. Their struggle for survival is inspiring and their contribution for food security for our country is enormous.

Mr. Rahul Karad
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x. Life Skills Learning: Students - Faculty of School of Management
The learning out of this Rural Immersion Program is three dimensional which is empowerment process for these students. The three dimensions deployed here are Service Based Learning (SBL), Project Based Learning (PBL) and Research Based Learning (RBL).
Rural Immersion Program is indeed devoted to sensitize and educate urban students about social issues concerning rural people and their mechanisms to fight against all odds in their day to day lives. This is a unique program designed to transform a student into a holistic person. It helps a student in understanding our values and traditions better.

Students from different disciplines learn not only adjust themselves in a rural background, away from comforts of their homes but also be content with scarce resources. They can implement their knowledge to solve certain problems faced by rural population and bring ease into the life of villagers particularly farmers.

The emphasis of this unique program is majorly on researching and working on ground level so that every student can contribute for sustainable development of rural community. Rural Immersion Program is definitely a step to inculcate social values, having compassion and realizing the hardships of Rural India i.e. Bharat.
Dr. Vishwanath Karad MIT world Peace University is a state private University, established under Government of Maharashtra Act XXXV2017 dated on 5th May 2017.

For centuries, India has been the apostle of knowledge and peace. MIT-WPU has been built on this philosophy. MIT-WPU is focused on being the change that is needed in the World today by sensitizing and understanding the human dimensions of conflicts, and developing a toolbox of transferable skills such as negotiation, peace building, technology and Management. These skills will enable graduates from various divers programs to succeed in peace building.

Our students will be in the best position to bring about consolidated change for positive growth, development and social inclusion. An aspirational University for students searching for world class education – Scientist, Researchers, Scholars, Academicians, Philosophers, Technocrats, Successful entrepreneurs.

Dr. Vishwanath Karad MIT-WPU is a flagship University Sponsored by MAEER’s MIT Group of Institutes, which has over 1,00,000 Alumni all over the world.
Academic Credit System (ACS):
Flexible Credit System allowing students to customize their education after firm foundation, by opting for an appropriate track.

Continuously Updated Education (CUEd™):
Continuously Updated Education is a way of ensuring effective learning at MIT-WPU. The CUEd System expedites adapting the latest development in each subject into the real time learning-teaching.

Faculty

Team Teaching by Faculty

Digital Learning

Industrial Collaboration Technology for Internships

Research Collaborations

Fostering Entrepreneurship

Social Missions

Peace Programmes for Holistic Development

Sports Culture for Peace

Rural Immersion Programme

National Study Programme

International Credit Programmes (Up to 4-5 weeks)

Alumni Involvement

Life @ MIT- Beyond Classroom
Rural Immersion Program is the dream project of Executive President, Prof. Rahul Karad to transform rural India by sensitizing the students of different streams under MIT- World Peace University towards the different social issues prevalent in rural societies. This program is designed by Executive President of MIT Group of Institutions, Prof. Rahul Karad to achieve ‘Social Mission’ of University with the Inspiration of Founder of MIT Group of Institutions and noted Educationist Prof. Dr. Vishwanath Karad. Under this program every student of MIT-WPU stays in the house of farmer/villager to understand their lifestyle, culture, plights and problems.

### Vision

To **build leadership** that generates good citizens and a **strong commitment** to society

### Mission

To **sensitize** the urban students towards the problems faced by the villagers

To **provide an opportunity** to the students to become a part of rural development process

To **apply knowledge** of respective disciplines to solve social problems
OBJECTIVES of Rural Immersion Program

1. Connecting urban Indian Youth to Bharat (I To B)
2. Connecting rural Bharat to urban area (B To I)
3. Creating opportunities to learn from rural Bharat for MIT-World Peace University students.
4. Contributing to learn rural development by urban youth of India
5. Sensitizing urban youth about issues and problems of villages in general and farmers in particular.
6. Attempt in providing solutions to village problems through Service Based Learning (SBL), Project Based Learning (PBL) and Research Based Learning (RBL).
Core Team Members

Faculty of School of Management

Prof. Aparna Dixit

Prof. Bhushan Mehare

Prof. Dinesh Banswal

Prof. Dr. Sunil Adhav

Prof. Dr. Harish P

Prof. Dr. Babasaheb Jadhav

Prof. Dr. Ashish Kulkarni

Prof. Dr. Swati Bankar

Prof. Dr. Cyril Castro

Prof. Dr. Neelam Raut

Prof. Pallavi Gedamkar

Prof. Dr. Renuka Deshmukh
Core Team Members

Faculty of School of Management

Prof. Rohini Sawalkar
Prof. Rohit B
Prof. Sonal Muluk
Prof. Dr. Sushil Nirbhavane
Prof. Ujwala Bairag
Prof. Vijayashri Gurme
Prof. Vinita Ahire
### Team of Proactive Faculty & Non-Teaching Staff Members

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### Book Layout & Design

**Akkahshh Agarwaal**  
*S.Y.B. Tech (Electrical)*
Students of Faculty of Management (PG)
Rural Immersion Program is a unique initiative taken by MIT-World Peace University to stimulate the young India to bridge the gap between rural ‘Bharat’ and urban ‘India’.

This program not only gave us an opportunity of experiential learning through various programs hosted there but also life lessons through communication with the villagers and a gander into their simple yet productive lifestyle.

Interaction with the villagers, dining in their homes, participating in their daily house chores created a lifetime experience in the minds of the students. This program has certainly made the positive impact by connecting the students with Bharat.
We carried out various activities during the course of 3 days. We came across many issues that the villagers were facing. Even though they had all the challenges standing in front of them, those people had never stopped living happily. Most of them didn’t complain about anything that they had to face.

There were several issues like water supply, drainage system, electricity issues etc. but what we could observe was, the villagers had conquered these by their attitude of being content with life.
As per conversation with one of the senior citizens over there, ultimate truth of life is the CHANGE. Change is the only constant he said. So, he stated that he had lived all his life in the same village and since his childhood he has seen considerable changes in the village. Though he accepts the fact that the rate at which progress should have been made, wasn’t made he insists that this phase shall pass too and very soon. Such a huge message in such a short span. Those 3 days were really very beautiful and memorable days of my life.
The Rural Immersion Program was basically a new concept that was introduced to us. We had absolutely no clue about this program and the activities involved in this but we were very much excited to experience something like this. It was completely the unique and the best experience for us.

The village that was assigned to us Varasgaon. I along with my two friends and Neelam Pandit ma’am and Pawar Sir first visited the village on the pilot survey day. It was a different experience for me in particular as we went on to see three different villages on that day to do survey for rest of the divisions in our college and finally when we went in Varasgaon, Neelam Ma’am and Pawar interacted with the Sarpanch of the village and they explained everything along with the complete Minute to Minute Schedule and the dates were finally Finalized.

Now came the preparation time when we all sat and decided what all activities we were going to conduct in the village. The top activities involved were Street Play, Mashal Pheri and The School Visit activity.
The day came when we finally started the journey towards Varasgaon. I was really very excited when I was travelling and was also slightly nervous as I headed the Mashal Pheri activity. The way we were welcomed by the villagers the moment when we were entering the village was unforgettable. With all the enthusiasm they welcomed us with “Dhol-Tasha” and with “Flowers”, that was really heart-touching and it actually gave us a really positive vibe and encouraged us to conduct all the activities smoothly and with full energy.

As I spent more time with the villagers my attachment with them increased and I started to think what can I do when as a HR student and as a budding manager to improve the things in Varasgaon and to also motivate the villagers to fight against what they are facing currently.

Our village was mainly the land of the project affected people. They have contributed to the growth of our nation, in my opinion. They have given their self-belonging land to the development of the dam, because of which people leaving in Pune city receive water regularly, on a daily basis. So mainly we have respect for the freedom fighters or the soldiers, because they protect our nation but the respect lacks or our attitude changes when it comes to villagers. It should not happen. Same respect is expected when it comes to the villagers, who have sacrificed their land.

Mr. Sandip Barve, a social worker also came to deliver a lecture on the similar issue. The villagers need to be paid for the land that they have donated, was the issue he discussed. He gave me a very important lesson. If we are expecting a change in any particular process, initially we need to love that particular process. Then and then only a positive change can take place. Once we love that particular activity, our willingness will increase and we will identify new problems and try to address the issues out there by a greater dedication.
By conducting the activities like “Street Play” and “Mashal pheri” we tried at the very smallest level to bring that smile to their faces and also to encourage them and to assure them that we all are with them.

I will never forget the way the villagers welcomed us and also prepared food for us was It feels very nice and special when someone whom you have never met before, so whole heartedly welcomes you. It created a positive and encouraging environment that allowed us to work with the villagers with more energy and with a different perspective.
For Rural Immersion Program our division went to Hiware Village near Saswad. Many of us were excited and anticipated something fruitful from the visit whereas there was another herd who was worried about the visit as they never had any experience of visiting a village. The very first day gave us an insight into the hardships of the villagers as we prepared our own food. We rested at the local villagers houses and they welcomed us with open arms. They had humble houses but very big hearts.

In the visit, we got to interact with the villagers especially when we visited houses for surveys. Some of us even visited the local Zilla Parishad school and interacted with the children. We played games with the children. The Village they were quite satisfied with the development of the village and good initiations taken by the Panchayat. Many of them had even sent their
children to Pune and other cities for pursuing Higher Education. Some of them wished that there were better facilities at their own village. We spoke to the youngsters and even guided some of them about the courses they could pursue ahead. We learnt a lot from them as well. Attributes such as hardwork, simplicity and joy in the tiniest of things.

Overall, The Rural immersion organized by MIT WPU was a great experience to understand more about the rural areas as well as for understanding the challenges, hardships, striving and opportunities for businesses in the rural markets. Our interactions with the villagers were enriching and we all look forward to going back someday and reliving those days.

Understood the challenges, hardships, striving and opportunities for businesses in the rural markets and develop an overall understanding of the rural society at large.

Mashal Feri
As a part of the Rural Immersion Program, our class visited Varasgaon village located in Velhe taluka. This proved to be an opportunity for me to explore a new place & the subsequent experiences proved to be my teachers by improving my perspective towards life. The occasion proved to be a favourable platform for enhancing my knowledge & existing skillsets. While documenting the various events conducted across our stay of three days, my understanding about the art of writing increased to a large extent.

When we reached the village, the inhabitants were waiting & once we started to alight from the bus, they greeted us with the rocking beats of dhol – tashas. The road from the entrance to their temple was decorated with rangolis & the sound continued as we walked on. I was pleasantly surprised & happy after looking at the spirit & enthusiasm of the welcome party. It was an unforgettable occurrence & something that will always be among my favourite memories which brings a smile on my face even today.
During our childhood, we are taught that ‘A Guest is equivalent to God’. After being on the receiving end of their affection & hospitality, I realised that they truly follow the thought process of treating their guests in the best possible manner which was one of my learning experiences. Whenever I got the chance to interact with any of the inhabitants, they were honest & genuine which helped me to have a free – flowing conversation with them & thus made the process of bonding much easier for me.
Through conversations, I learned about the various problems faced by the villagers. Despite facing so many hardships, their spirit & resolve was certainly admirable & worthy of respect. Living in cities, we keep on complaining about what we don’t have & forget about what is there with us, while the rural people appreciate whatever they possess & value it, which was an eye – opener & which has proven to be of help by being a facilitator towards changing my mentality in a positive manner.

School Visit
A visit to the village school was a great experience. I learned about the innovative teaching methods employed by the teachers & the commitment of the students who were both regular & attentive. The kids’ enthusiasm was infectious & the time spent with them was one of the best parts of this program. Through the medium of various activities & games, all the participants enjoyed & made it a memorable experience which was duly captured through photographs & documented by me.

Through the means of this program, I learned several new things through the medium of experiences which led to the creation of several new memories. Also, the food was one of the best parts of our stay as it was simply delicious! The three days that I spent there will remain in my memories forever. It was a fresh & a wonderful event. The adventure felt like visiting my relatives in the rural areas such was the unconditional love & respect shown by the villagers. For me personally, It was a worthwhile visit.
Rural Immersion Program for our div (Finance A) was carried out at a village called Malavali in Pune district. More than as an aid to the villagers I found the program to be aid for us, the urban lads to help ourselves explore a new way of living. The most important and intensive message that I learnt during the due course of 3 days was that one shouldn’t look for happiness around him but within him. The villagers were not even having bear minimum resources an individual should have but none of them was observed to be cribbing over the situation.

In a way the Rural Immersion Program that was arranged for us by MIT- World Peace University helped us not only physically but spiritually too. We learned not only how to adjust ourselves away from the comforts of the city but also how to be happy with the smallest things we could get our hands on.
Our primary aim was to carry out a survey which will yield data relating to the issues faced by the villagers. Yes there were considerable issues they were facing but no problem seemed to have hampered their happiness in any way. The three days went so rapidly that sometimes I miss being there, in those old age people, listening to their stories, their experiences and what not.

Something worth a mention is the amount of efforts taken by Prof. Neelam Pandit of our institute. She has been rigorously working all the time to make this activity a success. Thank you ma’am, for bringing us closer to the reality of life.
For Rural Immersion Program our division went to Hiware Village in the Purandar Tehsil, about 30 km from Pune.

We were all apprehensive about the visit at first since many of us had never been to a village before, let alone actually living in one a period of a few days. However, none of us had an inkling as to how wonderful the experience was going to be and how many beautiful memories were going to be made.

Hiware is a beautiful village with lush greenery and lots of vegetable farms. The village was very clean and well kept. On the very first day we cooked our own meals with a little help from the locals. We also started preparing for the skit that we were going to perform at the village.
During the course of the Rural Immersion Program, we got to interact with the villagers especially during the course of the survey and some of us even visited the local Zilla Parishad school and interacted with the children. We played games with them and distributed stationery at the school. We also performed the Mashal Pheri followed by the skit which was based on the theme of ill effects of drinking. We also heard stories from the Sarpanch about the history of the village.
The Rural Immersion Program is a unique initiative to provide for a rich, practical and socially oriented approach to learning. Everything, right from conducting the pilot visit to actually visiting the village and staying there was truly a learning experience.

The Rural Immersion program allowed us to learn life lessons through communicating with the villagers and gander into their simple yet productive lifestyle. We interacted with the villagers, participated in their daily chores and taught at the local school as well which was fun and at the same time eye-opening. The interactions with the elderly at the village and their wonderful
stories, the games that we played with the children at school would remain etched in our memories forever.

Through this visit we could not only experience the rural life away from the chaos and commotion of the city but also understand the challenges and opportunities for businesses in the rural markets and develop an overall understanding of the rural society at large.
I as an individual feel very privileged for getting the golden opportunity to visit the beauty of nature at Surwad village in Pune district through Rural Immersion Program. I would like to thank MITWPU for giving this chance to experience the true soul of village. The main objective behind this program was to understand the problems of the village people and try to solve them by giving proper guidance and help from our part. By spending 3 days there, I got to know the villager’s life and their social and personal problems.

The Rural Immersion Program was organized from 3rd April 2018 to 5th April 2018. As we reached the village a small group of villagers gathered at the village temple, while we introduced ourselves to them and explained them our purpose to be here in their village. It was a very kind gesture from their part as well to treat was humbly and makes us comfortable to interact with them. After the fruitful interaction, we all students started the march with a MASHAL PHERI along with the slogans like beti bachao beti padao, Mulgi
shikli pragati zaali, Mulga mulgi bhed nako mulgi zaali khed nako. The women empowerment and education related slogans were recited on top of our voice which was followed by us by singing a Mashal pheri song. These uttered slogans had a great impact on villagers and they tried to understand us.
Yoga activity with school children

There were in all 60 houses in which we 2 of us stayed each in every house. It was a pleasure to stay with them at night, share our thoughts with them, to know about their living and their lifestyle. Though they being from simple background, they treated us with tremendous amount of love and affection making sure that we are feeling safe and comfortable with them.

Next day we did a survey of the whole village by interacting personally with each and every family and knowing the problems faced by them. It was sad to know that they had education facilities only till 7th standard, and for further studies they had to travel for 14 kms. This was the purpose that they didn’t allow the girls for further education. Hospital and basic food amenities were also not available nearby, for which they had to travel a long way to get it.
After knowing these problems, we informed the committee regarding these issues. But the best thing to learn from them was that they never complained for the things what they didn’t have and were happy with what they had. Helpful and caring nature and standing for other families during the problems made them unique from urban people. This quality of self-satisfaction is lacking in urban cities.

We visited the schools there and surveyed about the no of students studying there. We had a game session for them which they enjoyed a lot and gifted them chocolates and stationaries. We even taught them yoga, basic exercise and gave them a lecture of self-hygiene and career guidance which was followed by singing and dancing with them.

Then last day our class students gave a vote of thanks to all the villagers and students and villagers shared their experience with each other. It was a great honor to hear from the village sarpanch and requested us to visit their village soon again. Overall it was a memorable journey with lots of happiness in our hearts.
For the Rural Immersion Program our college MIT- WPU School of Management took us to a village called Hiware near Saswad 30 kms away from the city.

We left early morning for Hiware village with a bag full of supplies and enthusiasm. It was my first ever college based village trip. And indeed it was one of the most eventful college trip filled with fun and learnings.

Hiware village was very beautiful with long wide green farms. Most of the houses were made out of mud but there were a few brick houses too. The village also had a school, community hall and a local health care center.

We cooked our own meals on the first day with the help of some locals, they provided us with all the necessary supplies we required. We had to perform a skit, take a local survey, do a Mashal pheri and aware the local villagers about health care benefit plans in the span of 3 days. Students were divided into groups for all the tasks we had to perform.
During the Rural Immersion Program we got to interact with the villagers, we understood the problems that they face in the village and we gave them some relevant possible solutions. The locals were very friendly they offered us food during the survey and shared their stories. Another fun activity was engaging with the students, all of them were filled with enthusiasm and energy. We gave them stationery and played games with them.

We managed to gather the entire village crowd for our skit which focused on harmful effects of drinking followed by which was the healthcare awareness session for the women. The locals appreciated our events and their Sarpanch thanked us on behalf of his village.
MASHAL PHERI

DURING THE SKIT
The Rural Immersion Program is a great initiative by MIT-World Peace University which gives business students an opportunity to understand the rural market from an all new perspective. It taught us the challenges and the need of certain businesses in such areas.

The program gave us many memories which will stay with us forever. The interaction with the villagers and their stories will always be highlight of this trip. It surely taught us how to be better citizens of tomorrow.
My three days experience of Rural Immersion made me realize the transient Nature of the people living in Rural area with the delightful feeling of hospitality. I arrived in Malavli (District- Velhe), the village approximately 40 Kilometres away from Pune City. A small village were just basic amenities were available, the whole scenario in the village was different as compared to city I had arrived from. I was eager to experience the grassroot reality of the village and participate in various rural activities, also I was excited about the challenges ahead and at the same time was missing the comforts of City life. We all were welcomed by the people in the village by the good gesture of generosity. We are living in the world full of selfishness, were people don’t even know who stays next door or even who is our neighbour but arriving in Malavli I felt like I was the resident of the village this was because of the friendly and the kind nature of the people in the village.
The program started with the Mashal Pheri where we visited the whole village spreading some awareness regarding Health and Education. Further the Street play, Health awareness camps for women, etc programs were conducted by us for villagers. I spent the memorable time with the villagers by exchanging some thoughts with them and also learning a lot new thing from them. Being the student of Corporate Social responsibility, I got the good exposure to connect with the Villagers through this Rural Immersion Programme. The learning for me is that, the purpose of Life is not to be happy, but it is to be useful, to be honourable, to be compassionate, to have it make some difference that you have lived and the difference that you can create in the society.

As a Team leader sharing the experience with villagers and fellow mates
For our Rural Immersion program, we visited Varasgaon village. It was a great learning experience for me. It gave me an opportunity to explore myself. I could identify many skills in me of which even I was unaware of. I am a good speaker; I came to know about this after I gave several speeches in the Rural Immersion Program. Even I am good at acting, I realized this after I participated in the Street play.

I even learn many things from the villagers’ as well. They taught me to be humble and honest always. They answered all our questions with utmost sincerity which was great to watch. They understood our questions and after giving a deep thought process, they answered them. This shows their dedication and determination towards it. They were aware that we were students from a management college in Pune; still they were interested in all the activities that we conducted for them.

Our village was mainly the land of the project affected people. They have contributed to the growth of our nation, in my opinion. They have given their self-belonging land to the development of the dam, because of which people leaving in Pune city receive water regularly, on a daily basis. So mainly we have respect for the freedom fighters or the soldiers, because
they protect our nation but the respect lacks or our attitude changes when it comes to villagers. It should not happen. Same respect is expected when it comes to the villagers, who have sacrificed their land.

Focused Group Discussion with Elderly

Mr. Sandip Barve, a social worker also came to deliver a lecture on the similar issue. The villagers need to be paid for the land that they have donated, was the issue he discussed. He gave me a very important lesson. If we are expecting a change in any particular process, initially we need to love that particular process. Then and then only a positive change can take place. Once we love that particular activity, our willingness will increase and we will identify new problems and try to address the issues out there by a greater dedication.

Also, I was glad to know that Government schemes are reaching out to the villagers. Many villagers could build their own homes because of the Gharkul Yojana. Also, children aged 4 have their own bank accounts which was delightful to watch.
The way by which villagers welcomed us and prepared food for us was something I can never forget. It feels very nice and special when someone whom you have never met before, so whole heartedly welcomes you. It created a positive and encouraging environment that allowed us to work with the villagers with more energy and with a different perspective.
Born & bought up in Pune, I never got an opportunity to live a village life. Hearing about the Rural Immersion Program, I was happy and excited, but at the same time nervous. It was a great opportunity for me to visit a village and get acquainted with its residents and their lifestyle. I would like to thank MIT–World Peace University for taking such a unique initiative. The program was aimed at understanding the lifestyle of villagers, their problems and providing a solution to those problems by the students.

Our class had visited a village named ‘Survad Gaon’ located near Velhe taluka. It was a 3 day program with many activities planned for the villagers and the school children. Activities like Mashal Pheri, Street Play, Survey, Career Guidance, Yoga, Craft & Drawing, Hygiene Awareness, etc. were planned & executed by students for school kids as well as for villagers. All these activities were systematically planned & all the required arrangements were made by the students themselves. Posters, slogans & songs for Mashal Pheri were prepared by students. Street Play had a major objective of creating awareness about female education, cleanliness of the environment, dowry & marriage. All these activities were meant for fun but they also helped foster team spirit, leadership skills, presentation & communication skills among students.
Another unique peculiarity of the program was “accommodation”. 2 – 3 students were allotted one house to stay. They were supposed to eat, sleep & stay with the family staying in that house. This brought the students closer to the villagers. The villagers were so humble, down to earth & treated us just like their family members. In those 3 days, I never felt that I’m away from my family; truly the villagers had become second family for me and it was a home away from home.

As a part of Rural Immersion Program, we had to conduct survey of the families staying in the village. Survey was a way through which we could talk to people & understand their problems, challenges faced by them on daily basis. While conducting this survey, I learnt a lot from the people. People in the village are very satisfied, happy in whatever they have, they are not greedy & have a simple life with no high expectations.

While conducting school activities, I noticed that the children in village were very talented. They just need right guidance & direction. The students are hard-working, dedicated & determined to have a bright career which will help them to develop their village.

In a nutshell, it was a life changing experience for me. Living 3 days in a village, talking to people around and building a bond forever was very memorable. I’m grateful to MIT WPU for such taking such a bold move which will help students in urban areas change their perspective and develop a helping hand for the development of villages in all possible manner. I will always look forward for such opportunities where I can contribute a bit for the rural development.
RURAL IMMERSION PROGRAM
Pusegaon, Satara

Raj R Mune
Division: D
Roll no: - 17MBACSR031
Specialization: - Marketing + CSR
School of Management (PG)

My Experience of Rural Immersion Program
On 4th of April to 6th of April we went to rural immersion program to Pusegaon, Taluka, District – Satara, Maharashtra with more than 60 people of entire class.

It was one of the wonderful experiences of the life. I learn many new things about the practical aspects of life from ground level. I also had new understanding how the human life varies very distinct in comparison to urban life.

The three days of experience of rural immersion had great influence on me about understanding the human behaviour that I practically experience there at Pusegaon.

Several activities were arranged for two days. I learned a lot about the Gram Panchayta of Pusegaon that how the Gram Panchatyat works there which varies a lot from generally what understanding I was having from schooling. Rural immersion had brought different view to see the rural life from now.

Apart from educational and social learning we enjoyed a lot in terms of making new friends and making more bonding with the old friends and deeper understanding with each other.

Gram Panchayat Meeting and small contribution from MIT-WPU

The gram panchayat officials told us about how the work, and the various activities conducted by them.

The Rural Immersion Program was one of the best memories of the college life we lived there at Pusegaon.
With Vice Sarpanch and President of Pusegaon temple Sevagiri Maharaj Math

Lecture on rain water harvesting by Vice-Sarpanch
RURAL IMMERSION PROGRAM

Rishi Muley

Division: Finance-B

MBA General (2017-2019)
“The village is the cell of the National Body and the cell-life must be healthy and developed for the National body to be healthy and developed”, a thought provoked after successful completion of Rural Immersion Program arranged by MITWPU’s School of Management.

I am thankful to MIT WPU for giving me the golden opportunity to visit a local village through Rural Immersion Program. The main objective of this program is to identify the problem existing in rural parts of India today and do our best to solve them. Living with villagers, even though for a short while, enabled us to feel the essence of village life and identify with the villagers better.

The program lasted for 3 days from 3rd April 2018 to 5th April 2018. We started on 3rd April at 11 am from the college campus and reached our destination i.e. Village Survad by 2 pm via bus. The bus journey was peaceful, yet we all enjoyed singing songs, etc. We all gathered at Maruti mandir and Welcome by Sarpanch of village Mr. Ashok, he introduced us to some villagers and discussed the current status, problems and initiatives taken by Gram Panchayat for betterment of villagers, etc.

We were allowed to stay at houses of these villagers and in every house two students were accommodated for lunch and dinner. Then we carried a Mashal Pheri in Survad and small school going children also accompanied us with their Dhol and such instruments. We created awareness in villagers by Slogans and displaying Charts.
On next day, we had a school activity in which our team distributed stationery, books, chocolates to students, we conducted two three sessions like Yoga, Career Guidance, Sports and had discussions with school going children. We helped her in cooking food, learnt to use chula and it was the memory of life. Then we conducted surveys which helped us in expanding our understanding of the rural society and its culture as well as helped us understand their struggles. Survad is a small village with around 50 houses and 200 population. Main source of income is Agriculture while many of the people migrated to nearby city like Pune for Job, Business or education.

Unfortunately, I realized that they don’t have enough resources to attain quality education. I wish to do something to change scenario. I feel bad by seeing students of 8 to 10 standard were walking 6-7 kilometers every day to attend school at nearby place as the ZP School in Survad is only up to 7th Standard.

Everywhere we went, we were greeted warmly and it was a refreshing experience to meet such kind and welcoming people. The surveys then handed over to Jan-Seva Foundation for reviews. We conducted a cultural event at night when farmers came from their Farms, in that a street play suggesting ill effects of dowry and education of girl child was played. The enthusiastic villagers also performed some activities like Powada, small kids’ dance, etc. Third day was the last day, of our Rural immersion program and followed by a valedictory function we left Survad by promising some contribution for betterment of people living there and with sweet memories for life time.
I would like to thank all villagers, Sarpanch Mr. Ashok for their care taking approach and Love. Last but not the least our faculty members Prof.Dr. Babasaheb Jadhav, Prof.Dr. Varsha Nadkarni, for accompanying and guiding us throughout the Program. Overall, I can say that the entire trip was a once in a lifetime experience and it truly change my perspective on life and its problems.
Under the Rural Immersion Program of our college MIT- World Peace University, our team of finance department visited the 'Survad' village. It's a small village situated at the bottom of the Rajgad fort with beautiful nature and loving people.

We reached there in the afternoon and were shown our places of staying. It was a beautiful village in the midst of mountains with greenery and scenic beauty all around. Although a village yet we had a very clean and comfortable place of dwelling. After settling our luggage, we immediately went for ‘Mashal pheri’. Together, we lit the torch with various posters, and marched along, citing slogans. Later, we were joined by the kids and the villagers themselves.
On our first day I came in contact with Mr. Shinde, who is a farmer and a very kind-hearted person. Mr. Shinde guided us through our entire three days visit, introduced us to the culture and lifestyle of the village.

Next day morning we went to school of village. At the school, we got to interact with the little students really talented and passionate but unguided and innocent. We spend really good time with them and enjoyed a lot. There we conducted various activities for them like outdoor games, indoor activities such as yoga, drawing, origami, etc. We even gave them a little idea about the internet. Later we distributed chocolates and stationary among them.

One thing that we learned from them was the carefree attitude, the way we should welcome guests, and most importantly, how amazing childhood can be.

In the evening, we got divided into groups and set off for surveying in different houses of the village. Surveying enlightened us about the lifestyles of the people living there, the various problems which they face regularly, how the men in the family earned and women helped along with the household and cattle. Talking to the family members, made us realize that most important need of villagers is opportunities for youth in village and education for children. Though we couldn't promise them anything, but it hit us hard to become something in life so as to help people develop all across the country. Despite of limited sources, the villages welcomed and helped us open-heartedly.
On the same day we performed drama in village on women empowerment and villagers performed singing. That night is still live for me all villagers and students enjoyed till 12 at night which is very rare in villages. This night is very special for me because I did the anchoring for program which is first time in my life, this increased my confidence level.

DRAMA EVENT

On the very last day of Rural Immersion Program in felicitation program I got to meet a girl who really wanted to see her as PSI and trying very hard for it. Her financial condition is not so good hence me and my friends still trying to help her and guide her to success.

Finally, we were on return journey and I was not happy to leave that place this make me go back to that village after completing my first year, now that village is home for me. Mr. Shinde promised me that we will go on Rajgad for trek in coming Diwali. I hope that day will come soon because I miss them every day similar to my own family. Innocent nature and selfless love of villagers won my heart.
MIT World Peace University has this unique ‘Rural Immersion Programme’ for all the students of MIT. It involves staying in a remote Indian village for at least three days to observe and experience life in rural India from their own point of view.

We have painted two vivid and extreme imagery of village in our minds. One is what we drew from our rosy imaginations of how peaceful and rustic the village life; looked idyllic in our drawing classes. The other draws from the information the media imprints with snippets of tragic cover stories. It’s easy to get carried away with these notions and create strong impressions. The first misconception was destroyed by the lush green hill ranges that graced us.

With lot of mixed feelings, we arrived at “HIVRE”, a village which is located near Saswad. The whole environment was different from that of Pune where we arrived from. I was excited about the challenges ahead. The rural immersion learning of going beyond what our single story was hard hitting and important to prime us for getting us to the
point where we understand the dynamics of society and well as the structures that we, in our lofty ambitions, seek to change or reform.

We started our 3 days program with Mashal Feri. Significance of mashal feri was to spread awareness about importance of girl’s education, no gender discrimination, no racism, importance of cleanliness and hygiene.

Our next activity was conducting survey and collecting data about the villagers. This data included number of members in family, income, health issues etc. It was one of a kind experiences where we could interact with villagers on one to one basis. All the villagers gave us a very warm welcome. Indeed, it is said “India is my country”, where we could actually feel the love and warmth.
The most beautiful part of the day was to spend time with school kids at Hirve School of Primary Education. This school had no bench facility, no lights, no water which made us realize about the comfort zone we live in. These school kids were very keen to learn new things from us in forms of games. We contributed little from our side and distributed erasers, pencils, sharpeners.

We had an amazing experience with school kids. Where we learned to share and learned to compromise. We were thankful enough for the lifestyle we have got. Being with kids made us realize importance of money, comfort zone and what true love is all about.

We concluded our Rural Immersion Program by performing skit where we delivered the message about “say no to addiction”, “live health and stay fit”. We created awareness about women regarding breast cancer and preventive measures that can be taken.
Rural Immersion Program was indeed an amazing experience from where we got our life learning’s, life lessons. It gave us more than what we expected. It was truly a lifetime experience. We really go to see what outside world actually looks like. We captured all the beautiful memories with us and moreover a lot of life lesson and experiences. I would like to thank MIT-WPU for giving us wonderful opportunity by stepping out of our comfort zone.
Rural Immersion Program for our division was arranged at village called Malavali near Rajgad fort. The institute has selected the village very meticulously. The youth of the village was very active and supportive. In those 3 days we never felt like we are some outsiders to them. They always tried to make us feel at home.

The most important task was of form filling. We took a bit of time to understand how to pose questions rightly, how to draw right answers instantaneously but once we got the knack everything became easy. Even the villagers were very friendly towards us. They cooperated in each and every task we did.

What actually came up to be the turning point was realizing the difference between amenities they have and the amenities we have here at our place. They are really scarce of resources. One thing we really learnt was that- it’s not your surroundings that make you happy, but your inner values. They were all happy there with whatever limited resources they had with them, and we here crib about every little thing we come across; which certainly isn’t anywhere close to a good sign of content life.
Conducting survey gave us an opportunity to explore the life of villagers. It helps us to understand their plights, problems and the defence mechanism they have developed through as well as the social changes occurred in due course of time.

Those 3 days have really given me a new way of looking at my own life!
We the students of HR visited Varasgaon village for our Rural Immersion program. This was a once in a life time opportunity for me as I had never experienced life in a rural village. The experience I had at this village was memorable and I look forward to attend such immersion programs. I learnt about the simple and hard-working lives that the villagers lead to suffice their family needs.
The one thing that stood out from this experience was that even though the people staying in the village strive hard in their lives, they still manage to remain happy and content all the time. On the other hand, people living in cities are not content even though they lead comfortable lives. Modern amenities are not easily available to the people staying at this village. The village lacks technological advancements that we see in cities near it. Even after facing these problems the villagers are not held back. They keep on persevering to overcome these drawbacks.

Our motto to visit the village was to understand the lifestyle that they lead and the problems that they face in their day to day life. For this, we conducted a survey wherein we visited every house in the village and collected information regarding education, health, transport, sanitation and other facilities. The villagers were very humble and co-operative and openly discussed about their needs and issues. This survey helped us to draw an average conclusion about the whole village.

One of the most unforgettable moments that we had was the grand welcome given to us by the villagers. They devoted all their time to us in those three days that we stayed with them. We got to eat delicious home cooked food that they specially prepared for us. Even though the houses in the village were small, they made sure that every student was accommodated comfortably. They conversed with us openly and were inquisitive to know about the lives we lead in cities. Post dinner, ‘Bhajans’ were held in the village temple.
As a part of our program, we had arranged various activities for the villagers as a source of entertainment and education. We performed street plays that focused on topics such as: ‘Save The Girl Child’, ‘Higher Education’ & ‘Educating Girls’. A ‘Mashal Pheri’ was organized throughout the village that delivered important messages to the villagers. A ‘Hari Paath’ was carried out by all the students during sunrise which felt very divine and peaceful. We visited the school in the village and played with the kids. We held drawing and craft competitions that portrayed the creative sides of those kids. We also helped them with their studies and taught them some new concepts. Over all the kids were delighted with the time they spent with us.

The main issue faced by the villagers was that they lost a lot of their land for construction of dam. This dam was constructed in order to provide water to the residents of Pune city. They had to sacrifice a lot but never received any compensation for it. The villagers are striving till date to get back what they lost.

The government has provided the village with basic yet necessary facilities. It was observed that even Rotary Club had contributed towards providing toilets for each house in the village. Majority of the villagers support their children for pursuing education. It was good to see that the government and other NGOs were helping the village in every way possible.

This immersion program was very successful and all the students got to learn a lot from it. Personally, I learnt qualities like being content, honest, humble and hard working in life.
The Rural Immersion Program of our class was arranged in the Hiware Village located in Purandar Tehsil which is about 30 kms from Pune. Before leaving for the RIP, all students planned the Street play to be performed in the village with a purpose of cleanliness and girl child education awareness. We also formed groups for the Mashal Pheri, Cooking, School Teaching, Survey conduction etc. There was enthusiasm amongst all because staying in a village for more than 2 days was all together a new experience for most of us.

After a fun filled bus drive we reached Hiware, a very hygienic and well-kept village with sumptuous foliage surrounding it. We took a round in the village to discover it more. We cooked our own meals and a local lady helped us do so. We had an interaction with the Sarpanch and members of the Gram Panchayat. It was very kind of them to welcome and support us all in the village.

We rehearsed for the street play and in the late evening headed for the Mashal Pheri. We walked the entire village with Mashals in hand and reciting slogans about cleanliness and hygiene awareness, girl child education and such other social issues. We performed the street
play near the Sarpanch’s karyalaya which was witnessed by many villagers. The play demonstrated ill effects of drinking alcohol and sent out a strong message about quitting alcohol. We also had a few students from MBA-CSR with us who enlightened the women in village about cancer and its precautionary vaccination.

During the course of the Rural Immersion Program, we got to survey the villagers and interact with them on a one to one basis. The villagers were content with the noble initiatives by the Panchayat. Many of the households had sent their children to Pune city for perusing their education or for jobs.

Some of us, including me went to the Zilla Parishad School and interacted with the children. We taught them basics of English and also played brainy games with them. The children were extremely loving and cheerful about the activities and forced us to dance with them. We later distributed stationery as small gifts to every student in the school.
Rural Immersion Programme is a distinctive initiative that helps us sensitize towards the various schemes undertaken by the government in villages and to study and analyse their execution and effectiveness. It gave us a chance to explore the rural markets and identify implementation gaps or business opportunities, which can help fill these gaps for betterment of the village. It made us absorb the village culture and imbibe their simplicity and values of life.
RURAL IMMERSION PROGRAM
Amble, Purandar

Vishal Ostwal
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School of Management (PG)

Departure to Village Amble, Taluka Purandar, District Pune
INTRODUCTION

The idea of this program initiated in institutions for the straight vision to study about the volatile side of the comfort zone for the students, to understand daily life challenges in the villages. Which were faced by the villagers so far, to have a detailed knowledge of another side of comfort zone in villages. And by understanding the challenges we tried to fill the gap like between the stereotype people to the modern society through the activities like mashal feri, street play, and government initiatives for villagers etc.

MY EXPERIENCE

I would like to start from the first day, we arrive in Amble village which is located in Purandar taluka 70 km away from Pune. We were in amble for 3 days, so firstly we went to the Sarpanch of that village for the stay. So he suggested places for the stay arrangements. And as per the plan we divided students in 4 teams for the food, medicine, street play and other activities department.

Our first activity of the day was mashal feri in which our main focus was to promote the gender equality and girl child education in ambale village. Next day we started with the survey of the village about the living and changes in the village in last 10 years under government programs. The very common problem we came to know was they were facing the drinking water problem from a long time. And only action was taken by the Sarpanch was the common purifier for all the villagers near the panchayat.
Second day evening we have planned for the street play and a session for the farmers of Ambale village. There were a sabha of the villagers in evening where they were about to present there for the pratishthan of the temple. So we have used the Sabha as our golden chance to perform the street play and the farmer’s session. The play was successfully performed by our team and the farmer's session was also interactive and informative for them because we gave them detailed knowledge about the Bamboo farming which is declared green gold from the government. Bamboo farming is a sustainable income generation farming.

Third day we went to the orphanage of the Ambale village which was the best part of the rural immersion. We have collected the 50 rupees from each student as a fund for the orphanage. And we gave notebooks and pen to orphanage kids with few fun activities like drawing competition and art and craft etc.

What a surprise?

On the last day. Before leaving the village Paani foundation arrived at the Ambale village with their project from Purander taluka so we had an interactive session with the experts of paani foundation. Ambale village was suffering for clean water from a long time. At the same time they have brief us about their next project of water irrigation in Ambale village.
KEY LEARNINGS

- Environmental study of the village.
- Team building and team work.
- Coordination and implementation of the activities.
- Behavioural study of the people of Amble village.
- Problem solving to the challenges in the village.
- An understanding of rituals of village.
- An understanding of difference between the traditional and modern society.

*Drawing competition, origami for school and orphanage kids.*