



'CAMPUS TO COMMUNITY': MAKING STUDENTS SENSITIZED

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ABSTRACT

In the present scenario, it has become an utter need to foster in the students the values that Education carries with it. Merely grabbing the degrees and grades will not be sufficient for students to become a human being. In the educational institutes, any students enhances his/her knowledge, however, at the same time the dimensions of thought process also expand; they are to be directed in a right way so as to make students able to lead a better social life. The present paper focuses on NSS unit as one of the best means of exposure in higher educational institutes for students to come front as human beings. Any society comprises of individuals with different kinds of needs. Some components of the society need to be paid more heed for various reasons. At such a juncture, an NSS unit of the colleges can play vital role in providing a helping hand to such communities.

INTRODUCTION

“Great men come and go, but what remains behind are some unforgettable impressions and heroic deeds, which transform the society for good.”

Mother Teresa



Service to community is service to nation. Many a great scholars and philosophers talked at length about the importance of community service for social and national development. The great social leaders like Mother Teresa, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, Mahatma Gandhi, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Gagde Maharaj, Vinoba Bhave, Baba Amte, and many more dedicated their entire life for social cause as they knew unless society is uplifted, national progress would be a nightmare.

Hence, social awareness can be crated amongst the students at the early ages of education so as to make them sensitive towards problems and trauma of the people. This can be best done NSS unit in the college. Moreover, NSS as an extension component of higher education was accepted by the UGC in 2006, it is imperative to study the philosophical and practical aspects of extension education, implemented through the NSS.

Nevertheless, extension education and services is not a novice term or concept. Right from the ancient Indian educational system this has emerged and practiced by pupils in 'Gurukuls'. The ultimate objective is to channelize youth energy for the national reconstruction by revamping higher education using an independent medium- NSS. As a matter of fact, NSS is a "campus to community" programme under the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India. And today, NSS has been accepted as one of the important programmes in the 'New Education Policy'. The National Service Scheme is a student-centred programme complementary to education. It is a noble experiment in academic extension. It inculcates the spirit of voluntary work among students and teachers through sustained community interaction. It brings the academic institutions closer to the society and serves as a link between the campus and the community, college and village, knowledge and action. The overall aim of NSS is the Personality Development of Students through Community Service. It gives an extension dimension to higher education system and orient the student youth to community service.

Extension work, the third dimension of education, plays a vital role for bringing about a social transformation. The Extension Education Programme (EEP) has been introduced through National Service Scheme (NSS). Under the auspices of the NSS, teachers and students visit underprivileged sections of the community near educational institutions.

The educational institutions and teachers have a well-defined role in this regard to offer their selfless services and also by their conduct inspire their students engage in NSS activities in pursuance of the mission. The students have to realize the dignity of manual labour and make themselves available for the service of the people in distress. It extends the fruits of higher education from the campus to the wider community. Community service is a voluntary affair and one spends time and energy apparently without any material compensation.

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The NSS in our social context has an added significance. Notably enough, NSS in professional education institutions has been transferring technology to practical use for the benefit of the community and ultimately for national reconstruction. The other components include: (a) creating public awareness in social issues. (b) Imparting education to the deprived sections through non-formal educational programme. (c) developing curricular linkages between fieldwork and action. NSS enables students to receive information of all social components society. It is one of the successful methods to have a glimpse of rural India through various NSS activities.⁵The exponents of education examined the extension component of higher education and made attempts to link education with community through NSS activities.

Extension education also covers activities related to rural and urban community development that grows from the needs of the people, and thus considered community education. For example: sensitisation programme on blood donation. The extension education is being developed as a specific field including research, teaching and field activity.

Objectives of Extension Education

Extension is generally conceived at two levels: extension education and extension service. These two levels of extension are interrelated, simultaneously maintaining their separate identity. For example, the NSS extension work provides learning experience to student volunteers and service to the community at the grassroot level. However, the fundamental objective of extension is to develop the rural people economically, socially and culturally by means of education. The general objectives of extension are:

- To assist people to discover and analyse their problems and identify their felt needs.
- To develop leadership among people and help them in organizing groups to solve their problems.
- To disseminate research information of economic and practical importance, useful for the people.
- To assist people in mobilizing available resources.
- To collect and transmit feedback information for solving management problems.⁸

UGC Concept of Extension

The higher education system is indisputably obligated to disseminate knowledge to a multitude of people. The policy statement of the UGC declares that if the higher education system has to discharge its responsibilities to the entire educational system and to the whole



society, it must assume extension as the third important responsibility and offer same status as given to research and teaching. Extension primarily aims at establishing links with the community to identify their needs and problems so that science and technological knowledge, ethics and morals, politics and administration, business and trade development generated in higher education institutions is best utilized in fulfilling public demand and resolving their problems.

University extension represents attempts to extend educational opportunities to those who were unable to attend higher learning institutions and to render specialized educational services to different sections of society. The UGC policy statement (1982) divides extension activities into two broad categories, extension services to schools and colleges. The University should work with the colleges, which, in turn, work with the secondary, and elementary schools in their neighbourhood and help improve standards by in-service teacher education, sharing facilities, student enrichment programme and talent discovery. The development of Research and Development programme for the education system is also a special responsibility of the universities.

In the higher education system, the functions assigned are based on production and sharing of knowledge within the system, increased access to theoretical knowledge and much less testing of their socio-economic viability. If knowledge sharing has to be broad based and the knowledge generated has to be tested, extension must be considered a major approach to accomplish the objectives.

CONCLUSION

The NSS is aimed at offering opportunities to the students to expand valuable practical experience in society and to break the walls that divided the institutions of higher learning from the common people that the students are moulded better citizens. After a thorough analysis of the extension dimension of higher education, it is well established that as a single and all India level agency, the NSS has been contributing significantly in making higher education at the doorsteps of the common people. Thus, NSS is actively engaged in the process of national development facilitating benefits of higher education to the less advantaged citizens of the country. In the above circumstances, NSS is discharging yeoman service to fill the wide gap of education. Thus, NSS can be considered as a gap filling mechanism of higher education intending the integrated development of the country. Therefore, the NSS is to be promoted by the Government and the public.



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