



NSS IN COLLEGES: CURRENT SCENARIO

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ABSTRACT India is a country of youth, as it accounts more than 52 percent of the total population. They constitute the vital and vibrant human resources of the nation but their representation in the administration and development effort of the country and states are less than the expectation. Indian youth seems to be without any direction in school and college life. The overall aim of National Service Scheme is to give an extension dimension to the higher education system and orient the student youth to community service while they are studying in educational institutions. The current study reveals the present scenario of NSS in colleges of India.

KEYWORDS : NSS, Community, College

National Service Scheme popularly known as NSS, the scheme was launched in 1969, its central schemes being operated by Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, Government of India and aimed at developing student's personality through community service. The overall objective of National Service is Educational. This objective is attained through the service to the community. The NSS unit emphasize the motto "Not me, but you". Motto reflects the selfless service which means putting the need of other person and community first than our own. (Report 2018).

The Council of Environment Quality sounded a warning for developing countries stating, "If the present trend continues, then the world at the end of the 20th century will be more crowded, more polluted, less stable ecologically and more vulnerable to disruption than the world we live in now." It further added to the gravity of the problem by stating, "For hundreds of millions of poor, the outlook for food and other necessities of life will be no better. For many, it will be worse." Obviously, time will not be kind because of rapidly increasing population.

Today Indian student community is without direction and ideology (Altbach 1971; Choudhury 1989) and requires credible youth movement. The educated youth who are expected to take the reins of administration in future are found to be unaware of the problems of the community and in certain cases are indifferent towards their needs and problems. Therefore it is necessary to arouse the social conscience of the students (Deekshitha 2016)

Aims & Objectives of NSS Activities:**The aims and objectives of the NSS are:**

- (i) To render service to the community while studying in an educational institution;
- (ii) To arouse the social conscience among students;
- (iii) To provide them with an opportunity to work creatively and constructively with the community around the educational campus; and
- (iv) To put the education they receive to concrete social use; and specifically,
- (v) (i) To work with and among the people; (ii) To engage in creative and constructive social action; (iii) To enhance knowledge of oneself and the community through a face-to-face with reality; (iv) To use the knowledge gained in the classroom in a practical way for mitigating at least some of the social problems; (vi) To gain skills in programme development to be able to be self-employed.

The goals are to achieve improvement in personality, leadership qualities, national outlook and a sense of civic responsibility.

Need for N.S.S in Higher Education System:

Indian youth have a right, as well as obligation to participate actively in national development and in shaping the destiny of the nation which is the point of fact, their own destiny. The problems of the youths are many and their aspirations are also naturally high, in a country with a great past and greater promise for the future. The need, therefore, is to create increasing opportunities for them to develop their personality

and their functional capability and this make them economically productive and socially useful. The future destiny of India lies with the strong, active and dedicated role of youth (Census Report-2011).

The educated youth who are expected to take the reins of administration in future are found to be unaware of the problems of the community and in certain cases are indifferent towards their needs and problems. Therefore it is necessary to arouse the social conscience of the students and to provide them an opportunity to work with the people in the villages and slums. It is felt that their interaction with the common villagers and slum-dwellers will expose them to the realities of life, and bring about a change in their social perception.

Current scenario of NSS in Colleges:

Since inception of the NSS in the year 1969, the number of students strength increased from 40,000 to over 3.8 million up to the end of March 2018 students in various universities, colleges and Institutions of higher learning have volunteered to take part in various community service programmes (MoYA&S 2018)

The basic unit of NSS normally comprises of 100 volunteers at school/college level. Each NSS unit in an institution is led by a teacher designated as 'Programme Officer (PO)', who plays a pivotal role as an educator, organiser, coordinator, supervisor, administrator and public relations person for the NSS unit under him. He/she also has to perform complex tasks of human engineering and adolescent psychology (Saiyidain, 1961).

The NSS has two types of programmes, viz., (a) Regular activities and (b) Special Camping programmes. Under the "Regular Activities", students are expected to work as volunteers for a continuous period of two years, rendering community service for a minimum of 120 hours per annum (i.e. 240 hours over 2-year period). Under Special Camping Programme, a camp of 07 days' duration is conducted every year in the adopted area on a specific theme. Each student is required to participate in at least one Special Camp over 2-year period. The nature of activities taken up under NSS continue to evolve in response to the needs of the community. A illustrative list of some of the activities being carried out by NSS in various universities and colleges is as follows:

- **Education:** adult literacy, pre-school education, continuation of school drop-outs, legal literacy, consumer awareness, programmes on eradication of social evils, etc.
- **Health, Family Welfare and Nutrition:** immunisation, blood donation, health education, AIDS awareness, population education and family welfare programmes, working with people in nutrition programmes, provision of safe drinking water, life skill education, etc.
- **Environment Conservation:** plantation of trees and their preservation/ upkeep, cleaning and maintenance of streets, drains etc., construction of sanitary latrines, watershed management, soil conservation, etc.
- **Social Service Programmes:** Work in hospitals, institutions for disabled persons, orphanages, old-age homes, women welfare institutions, etc.
- **Programmes for improving Status of Women:** awareness

generation reg. women's rights, creating awareness among women reg. how they can contribute to the social and economic well-being of the community, imparting skill training to women wherever possible.

- **Production-oriented Programmes:** working with people and teaching them about improved agricultural practices, soil testing, repair of agricultural machinery, assistance and guidance in animal resource development, promoting small savings, assistance in procuring bank loans.
- **Relief and Rehabilitation during Natural Calamities:** assisting and working with local authorities in rescue and relief operation, indistribution of rations, medicines, clothing, immunisation and inoculation, etc.

Considering the benefits some colleges and universities have made NSS Compulsory at UG level for the first two years (Lal 2015). Currently, funding is provided for running of NSS activities @Rs.250 per volunteer per annum for regular NSS activities and @Rs.450 per volunteer (once in two years) for special camping activities. Thus, total annual funding support from Government for a 100-member NSS unit works out to Rs.47,500. The funds are to be used for running NSS activities. Out of the total provision, the establishment costs in the educational institutions connected with NSS is also required to be met, including out-of-pocket allowance to Programme Coordinators (@Rs.800 per month) and Programme Officers (@Rs.400 per month). NSS was implemented as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme upto 2015-16. However, from 01.04.2016, it is being implemented as a Central Sector Scheme.

The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India had instituted the National Service Scheme Awards to recognize the voluntary service rendered by NSS volunteers, Programme Officers, N.S.S. units and the university/senior secondary council. These awards were instituted in the year 1993-1994. Since then, these awards are given away every year at various Levels. (MoYA&S 2018)

CONCLUSION:

National service Scheme provides opportunities to students in colleges and universities to develop their personality through community services. NSS has its own identity; it can be used for betterment of the society by proper implementation at higher education to create social responsibility of the students. More and more students should be motivated to take up N.S.S. as the energy of youth may be utilized in positive direction for building a strong and healthy nation.

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