



ATTITUDE AND AWARENESS OF COLLEGE-GOING NSS VOLUNTEERS TOWARD PARTICIPATION IN THE NATIONAL SERVICE SCHEME: A STUDY FROM THIRUVANANTHAPURAM DISTRICT, KERALA

Dr. Sheeja P. R.

Associate Professor, Department of Home Science, HHMSPB NSS College for Women, Neeramankara, Thiruvananthapuram. University of Kerala

ABSTRACT

The study examines the attitude, awareness, and challenges of college-going NSS volunteers toward participation in the National Service Scheme (NSS) in Thiruvananthapuram District, Kerala. The NSS, a flagship youth development program of India, promotes leadership, discipline, and civic responsibility through experiential community service. A descriptive institutional study was conducted among 100 NSS volunteers selected from three colleges using simple random sampling. Data were gathered through a pre-tested structured questionnaire and analysed using descriptive statistics such as mean and percentage, with inferential results (t-test and chi-square) referenced from the original dataset. Findings revealed that 79 per cent of the respondents strongly agreed that NSS is necessary in society and 73 per cent believed that it helps build self-confidence. About 22 per cent of volunteers had high knowledge of NSS activities, whereas 18 per cent demonstrated poor knowledge levels. Age and fathers' educational qualification significantly influenced awareness and opinion. While most volunteers received appropriate guidance and leadership support during camps, a few reported minor logistical challenges. The results highlight the importance of strengthening orientation, mentorship, and institutional support to enhance the participation and experiential learning outcomes of NSS volunteers in higher education institutions.

KEYWORDS : National Service Scheme, College Students, Awareness, Attitude, Participation, NSS Volunteers, Thiruvananthapuram

I. INTRODUCTION

The National Service Scheme (NSS) is one of India's major youth development programs, aiming to instill social responsibility, leadership, and empathy among students. The motto 'Not Me, But You' embodies the spirit of voluntary service and community engagement. By integrating service learning into higher education, NSS fosters civic values, discipline, and cooperation among young adults. Understanding the perceptions and participation of students in NSS provides valuable insights for improving its effectiveness in shaping socially responsible citizens.

Participation in the National Service Scheme (NSS) plays a vital role in shaping the personality and civic responsibility of students, particularly young women in higher education. College girls who engage in NSS activities gain exposure to community needs, develop leadership and communication skills, and cultivate empathy toward marginalized groups. However, their motivation and awareness levels often depend on personal interest, parental encouragement, and institutional support. Assessing the attitude, awareness, and challenges faced by female NSS volunteers can therefore provide valuable insights for improving participation and strengthening community engagement programs within colleges (Menon and Pillai, 2024).

II. Objectives

- To evaluate their opinions toward NSS programs.
- To identify common problems faced by NSS volunteers during participation.
- To assess the knowledge level of college girls regarding NSS activities.

III. METHODOLOGY

A descriptive, institution-based study was conducted among 100 college girls enrolled in NSS from three purposively selected colleges in Thiruvananthapuram District—Sree Narayana College, Chempazhanthi; NSS College, Neeramankara; and University College, Thiruvananthapuram. Samples were selected using simple random sampling. A pre-tested questionnaire with 25 closed-ended questions was used to assess awareness, opinion, and problems faced by NSS volunteers. The data were analysed using descriptive statistics such as mean and percentage. Reported inferential tests (t-test and chi-square) were referenced for interpretation.

Statistical Analysis

Descriptive statistics were computed using frequencies, percentages, and mean scores. Likert mean scores (1–5 scale) were calculated to determine the level of agreement on opinion statements. Severity means (1–3 scale) were computed for the intensity of problems faced during NSS camps. Inferential analyses (t-test and chi-square) as reported earlier were used to examine the association between knowledge, opinion levels, and selected demographic factors.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Opinion of NSS Volunteers Towards Various Aspects of NSS Participation

The collected data were analysed to understand the NSS Volunteers' perceptions and opinions about their participation in the NSS. The following table presents a detailed summary of their responses on various aspects of NSS activities.

Table 1: Distribution of NSS Volunteers Regarding the Opinion on Various Aspects of NSS Activities.

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Un-decided	Dis-agree	Strongly Dis-agree	Mean Likert Score
NSS is necessary in our society	79 (79%)	14 (14%)	7 (7%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4.72
NSS develops self-confidence	73 (73%)	20 (20%)	7 (7%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4.66
NSS provides wide experience in life	62 (62%)	35 (35%)	1 (1%)	1 (1%)	1 (1%)	4.56
NSS improves literacy	41 (41%)	49 (49%)	3 (3%)	6 (6%)	1 (1%)	4.22
In colleges, NSS is suitable only for boys	9 (9%)	4 (4%)	36 (36%)	3 (3%)	48 (48%)	2.23

Most respondents strongly agreed that NSS is necessary in society (79%) and that it develops self-confidence (73%). Nearly half disagreed that NSS is suitable only for boys, highlighting positive gender-neutral perceptions. As reported in the original study, age was significantly associated with opinion levels ($p < 0.05$), with younger students showing more favorable attitudes.

2. Problems Faced by NSS Volunteers During Camp Activities

The challenges encountered by volunteers during NSS camps reflect both organisational and environmental factors influencing their participation. The following table highlights the frequency and severity of the problems reported by the respondents.

Table 2 Problems Faced by NSS Volunteers During Camp Activities

Problem Faced	Always (%)	Sometimes (%)	Never (%)	Mean Severity (1–3)
Problems from outsiders while attending camp	2	19	79	1.23
Activities outside campus lead to problems	2	94	4	1.98
Get right guidance from teacher in charge	85	13	2	2.83
Leaders give right instructions	61	35	4	2.57

Face food-related problems during camp	13	23	64	1.49
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As shown, 85% of volunteers always received proper guidance from teachers, while 61% reported clear leadership. However, 23% experienced food-related issues during camps. About 57% of students had moderate satisfaction with NSS camps. Reported t-tests showed that fathers' education level influenced awareness scores ($p < 0.05$).

3. Basic Knowledge of Students Regarding NSS

Figure 1 shows the distribution of students based on their knowledge regarding NSS activities (High: 22%, Medium: 60%, Poor: 18%).

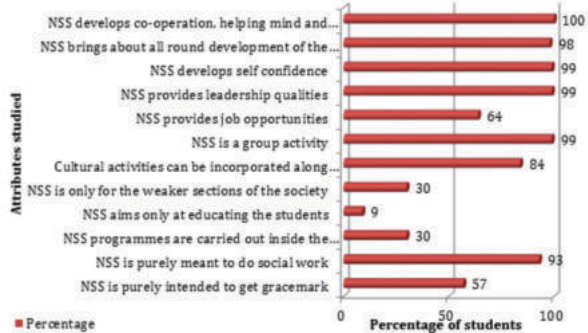


Fig 1. Distribution of NSS Volunteers Based on their Knowledge Regarding NSS

Almost all the respondents opined that NSS activities are highly helpful in developing cooperation, a helping mentality, discipline, and the all-round development of students. They also believed that participation in NSS helps in gaining self-confidence, provides leadership qualities, and fosters awareness of teamwork, as NSS is essentially a group activity.

It is noteworthy that only 9 per cent of the students believed that the primary aim of NSS is merely to educate students. Knowledge regarding other attributes is self-explanatory from the above figure.

When the samples were categorized into three groups based on their knowledge scores, it was found that slightly more than one-fifth of the students had high scores, while 18 per cent had poor knowledge regarding NSS activities. A t-test was conducted to examine whether the knowledge level was influenced by independent variables such as age, place of residence, educational qualification of father and mother, and monthly family income. The results revealed that only the educational level of the father was found to be a significant influencing factor.

V. CONCLUSION

The study revealed that although most college girls were aware of the importance of NSS, their detailed understanding of its objectives and opportunities remained moderate. Educational level of parents and age significantly influenced awareness and attitudes toward participation. Improving orientation, mentorship, and inter-collegiate collaboration could further enhance student engagement. Integrating NSS more closely with academic credit and life-skill development could make it a more impactful part of college education.

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