

Practices of National Service Schemes (NSS) for Enhancing Social Commitment among Undergraduate Students in Kerala

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Abstract

The National Service Scheme (NSS) was established in 1969 with the primary goal of developing the character and personality of student youth through voluntary community service. It was initially launched in 37 universities, involving approximately 40,000 volunteers. However, over time and as a Pan-Indian program, the number of educational institutions covered by NSS has grown year after year. A potent and successful media initiative in the higher education system is the National Service Scheme. By involving students in a variety of activities, it offers community education. Through a range of programmes that include participants from many communities, NSS offers expertise and information to student volunteers. NSS activities aid in the development of a healthy student-community relationship for social development and consciousness. So, the investigator intends to study the practices of NSS for enhancing social commitment among undergraduate students in Kerala.

Keywords: NSS (National service scheme), social commitment, undergraduate students in Kerala

INTRODUCTION

Among today's young adults, the unwillingness to commit is alarming. Sociologist Robert Bella studied "habits of the heart" in 1979 to characterize the typical American. Many people lacked a feeling of social responsibility and community. They perceived the world as an amorphous zone of freedom and choice that offered no solace or consolation. Nowadays, in our country also, especially the youth are in the electronic world where they cannot see anything other than e-files. Most of them are living in digitally divided compartments. So, there is less time they spend on charity, keeping fruitful relations in the society, helping others, organizing cultural programmes, book reading, etc. Lifestyle diseases increase. As a remedy to this situation, there is a chance for college students to develop the values like social commitment through joining and participating in National Service Scheme's programmes.

Additionally, several universities made enrolment in the National Service Program a requirement [1].

This scheme is described on the National Service Scheme's official website. Under the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports of the Government of India, the National Service Scheme (NSS) was launched in Gandhiji's Birth Centenary Year 1969, in 37 Universities involving 40,000 students, with a primary focus on the development of students' personalities through community service [2-4].

NSS is administered by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports. The National Service Scheme's motto, "Not Me but You", reflects the essence of

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Received Date: August 10, 2022

Accepted Date: September 17, 2022

Published Date: September 25, 2022

Citation: Anupama R. Practices of National Service Schemes (NSS) for Enhancing Social Commitment among Undergraduate Students in Kerala. NOLEGEIN Journal of Operations Research & Management. 2022; 5(1): 34-39p.

democratic living and emphasizes the importance of selfless service. The National Service Scheme teaches students to appreciate other people's points of view and to be considerate of other living beings. The philosophy of the National Service Scheme is well exemplified in this motto, which emphasizes the belief that an individual's well-being is ultimately dependent on the well-being of society as a whole, and thus NSS volunteers shall strive for the well-being of society. The NSS wing will train people on how to perform services for our country and recruit volunteers for various services throughout the country, such as traffic control, rush hour control, and so on. National Service Scheme volunteers take part in blood donation, plantation, immunization, disaster management, adventure programmes, cleaning public areas, building houses to the poor and many helpful and charity activities. They educated the public on the services that we can provide to society. In our hometowns and villages, cultural activities, charity programmes volunteer helps, etc. are less conducted nowadays. If it is going on there, we can see the absence of youth. Only the small children and grownups were participating in these. In this area, National Service Scheme at college levels plays an important role in inculcating the values of social commitment among undergraduate level students of India [5–7].

NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The social commitment among the youth in both students and others is a cause of concern. The National Service Scheme is a strong and effective programme media in the higher education system. It is providing community education through student's involvement in various activities. NSS provides knowledge and information to student volunteers through a variety of activities that involve people from various communities. NSS activities aid in the development of a healthy student-community relationship for social development and consciousness. Today, NSS has over 3.2 million student volunteers spread across the country through 298 universities, 42 (+2) Senior Secondary Councils, and the Directorate of Vocational Education. More than 3.75 crore students from universities, colleges, and institutions of higher learning have benefited from NSS activities as student volunteers since its inception [8].

In this time, most of the youth are in the internet world. Lifestyle diseases, obesity, sight problems, drug abuse, etc. are the by-products of these problems. Youth in India is set to undergo a makeover with the participation of National Service Scheme. More than 3.75 crore students from universities, colleges, and institutions of higher learning have benefited from NSS activities as student volunteers since its inception. Because of the large number of volunteers, colleges, and universities involved in NSS activities, it is critical to investigate the role of NSS in the development of social commitment.

With a view to addressing the social commitment related problems, National Service Scheme is conducting a lot of works based on some objectives. The investigator wants to know the objectives of this scheme; benefit to the undergraduate level students in their today's and upcoming life; improvement in their social commitment; and to understand additional activities. This research is being conducted in Kannur University's colleges in order to find answers to these questions. In this context, the topic, the role of national service scheme in developing social commitment gains significance [9, 10].

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS

National Service Scheme

The National Service Scheme (NSS) is a government-sponsored public service program run by the Government of India's Department of Youth Affairs and Sports. The scheme, popularly known as NSS, was launched in 1969, during Gandhiji's centennial year. In the present study, NSS refers to National Service Scheme present in different Arts and Science Colleges of Kannur University.

Social Commitment

Social commitment is an ethical framework that suggests that a person or organization has an obligation to act for the benefit of society as a whole. In the present study, social commitment refers to social obligation of undergraduate students of Kannur University towards the society.

Undergraduate Students

Undergraduates are university and college students who have graduated from high school and been accepted to college but have not yet graduated. In the present study, NSS and Non NSS (who are not a part of any social service activity like NCC, SPC, Red Cross etc.) students at degree level of Kannur University are considered as undergraduate students.

REVIEW OF RELATED STUDIES

Researcher conducted a study on role of National Service Scheme in enhancing social responsibility among undergraduate students. The main objective of the study was to find out the social responsibility of undergraduate NSS students in terms of their gender, locale and management of the study. The study revealed that NSS had a significant role in enhancing social responsibility among undergraduate students.

One Researcher study highlighted that the NSS unit realized two major problems of sensitizing youth towards social service at the grass root level functioning due to lack of initiatives of the college authority in motivating the youth towards NSS, and proper orientation of the volunteers in managing NSS project activities.

The research studies on corporate social responsibility and develops key points of a fresh approach based on critical analysis suggesting that corporate social responsibility is a discourse about the role of the economy in society, it discusses whether a suitable new approach for the analysis of corporate social responsibility projects on agricultural farms exists, and it discusses whether a suitable new approach for the analysis of corporate social accountability projects on agricultural farms exists e.g. building of a cottage, assisting and motivating local farm workers in a wide range of duties.

According to research the corporate responsibility from an economic standpoint and created a corporate responsibility taxonomy to connect disparate approaches to the subject. We investigate whether corporate social responsibility can produce more welfare than other channels of public good provision.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To find out the level of social commitment of undergraduate students of National Service Scheme in University of Kannur.
2. To find out the level of social commitment of undergraduate Non NSS students (who are not a part of any social service activity like NCC, SPC, Red Cross etc.) in University of Kannur.
3. To find out the significant difference in the social commitment of NSS and Non NSS (who are not a part of any social service activity like NCC, SPC, Red Cross etc.) undergraduate students in Kannur University.
4. To compare the social commitment of undergraduate students of National Service Scheme in Kannur University in terms of their:
 - a. Gender,
 - b. Locale,
 - c. Type of Management, and
 - d. Subjects of study.

METHODOLOGY

In the present study, the investigator intended to find out the role of the National Service Scheme in developing social commitment among undergraduate students. In order to study this, the survey method is used.

Population

The current study's population consists of all undergraduate students at Kannur University.

Sample

The sample selected for the study is 600 undergraduate students (300 NSS students and 300 Non NSS students (who are not a part of any social service activity like NCC, SPC, Red Cross etc.) of Kannur University. The current study employs a simple random sampling technique.

Variables of the Study

The independent variable is the Nation Service Scheme, and the dependent variable is social commitment. Gender of students, locality of college, type of management and type of subject are the extraneous variables.

Tool used for the Study

Questionnaire on Social Commitment is the tool used for the study.

Statistical Techniques Used

Percentage analysis and 't'-test are the statistical techniques used for the study.

Scope and Delimitations of the Study

National Service Scheme (NSS) is an academic program in which National Service Scheme has been a regular feature in the realm of a college education. The overall goal of the scheme is education and community service, and thus it provides vast scope for the study that he/she tried to impress upon his/her student's audience should always keep social responsibility in mind. The first duty of students should be to prepare themselves for final dedication to the services of those who provided the sinews of the nation with the national goods services so essential to society, rather than to treat their period of study as an opportunity for intellectual luxury. Students should be involved in their community. The students should do "something positive so that the village's life can be elevated to a higher material and moral level". The purpose of this research is to determine the role of Developing Social Commitment among Undergraduate Students NSS in. It is impossible to develop all children into leaders. But the social commitment may be developed on the basis of certain qualities which may easily be perceived in many activities of the NSS scheme. On the basis of these qualities, students, at times should be given opportunities for expression. Through such activities of self-expression, some of the children will be able to become good leaders in due course. So, the teachers in the school must try to provide opportunities to students who are keen to display their various skills in varying situations of life. Our general educational system suffers from the great drawback that it has no such items in the curriculum that promote social commitment.

Universities provide students with a unique opportunity to demonstrate their social commitment. However, at this stage of education, teachers must be extremely vigilant in identifying concerned students who exhibit some signs of social commitment. The study's findings pave the way for increased student social commitment.

Delimitations of the Study

1. The investigation has taken only one variable social commitment of undergraduate students.
2. Though there are many techniques for measuring social commitment, the investigator used only a questionnaire to measure it.
3. This study is restricted to the Arts and Science undergraduate students at the Kannur University only.
4. The sample of the study involved only 600 undergraduate students at Kannur University.
5. The dimension-wise analysis was not done for the social commitment of undergraduate students.

In spite of these limitations, investigator feels that a sincere attempt has been made to study all the salient aspects of the problem as far as possible and believes that the finding of the study will be useful to find the soft skills and teaching competence of teacher educators.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The following are the study's key findings:

1. It is found that majority (78.33%) of the undergraduate NSS students are found to have average level of social commitment, 18 and 3.67% of students are found to have high and low level of social commitment respectively.
2. It is found that 48% of the Non NSS undergraduate students are found to have average level of social commitment, 42 and 10% of students are found to have low and high levels of social commitment respectively.
3. Comparison of the social commitment of NSS and Non NSS undergraduate students showed t value obtained is 18.56 which is significant at 0.01 level of significance. Since the obtained t (18.56) is greater than the table value at 0.01 level, there is significant difference between NSS and Non NSS students at undergraduate level in their social commitment (CR=18.56; $p < 0.01$) and the difference being more in favour of NSS students.
4. Comparison of the social commitment of undergraduate NSS students showed that the 't' value obtained is 1.78 which is not significant at any level of significance. Because the obtained t value is 1.78, there is no significant difference in the variable social commitment between male and female undergraduate NSS (CR=1.78; $p > 0.05$). Because the obtained t value is 1.78, there is no significant difference in the variable social commitment between male and female undergraduate NSS (CR=1.78; $p > 0.05$).
5. Comparison social commitment of undergraduate NSS students with respect to locality revealed that the 't' value obtained is 6.39 which is significant at 0.01 level of significance. Because the obtained t (6.39) is greater than the table value at the 0.01 level, there is a significant difference in social commitment between urban and rural NSS students at the undergraduate level (CR=6.39; $p < 0.01$), with the difference favoring urban students revealed that
6. Comparison of social commitment of undergraduate NSS students with respect to the type of management of college showed that the F-value is 6.14 which is greater than the critical value of F at 0.01 ($F = 4.68$) level of significance. This shows that there is a significant difference in the social commitment of undergraduate NSS students with respect to their type of management of college i.e., Govt., Aided and Unaided.
7. Exploring the difference in the social commitment of undergraduate NSS students, the Duncan test reveals that Govt. college NSS students had higher mean score than students of aided and unaided college NSS students and hence it can be inferred that Govt. college NSS students had high social commitment when compared to others.
8. Comparison of social commitment of undergraduate NSS students with respect to the subject of study showed that the F-value is 5.61 which is greater than the critical value of F at 0.01 level ($F = 4.68$) of significance. This shows that there is a significant difference in the social commitment of undergraduate NSS students concerning their subjects of study i.e., Science, Arts and Commerce.
9. Exploring the difference in the social commitment of undergraduate NSS students, the Duncan test reveals that Arts group undergraduate NSS students had higher mean scores than Science and commerce group undergraduate NSS students and hence it can be inferred that Arts group undergraduate students had high social commitment when compared to others.

CONCLUSION

Human life is a continuous process. It should not, therefore, be forgotten that this process is bipolar concerning both the individual and the society. It is a process that leads us to a happy and fulfilled life. Education aims at the development of a wholesome and well-adjusted personality of the educant. Such a personality is characterized by the harmony between the needs of the individual and the demands of the environment or society in which he/she lives. The National Service Scheme is a powerful and successful programme medium in the higher education system. By involving students in a variety of activities, it offers community education. Through a range of programmes that include participants from many communities, NSS offers expertise and information to student volunteers. NSS activities aid in

the development of a healthy student-community relationship for social development and consciousness.

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