

## **EDUCATIONAL POLICIES & EVOLUTION OF NATIONAL SERVICE SCHEME**

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### **Introduction:**

The idea of National Service for Youth has been before the country since independence. The turning point is that, after independence the Government of India appointed University Education Commission under the Chairmanship of Dr. S. Radhakrishnan. This commission had originally envisaged the idea of National Service Scheme by youth. This commission stressed on educational reconstruction as well Social and Economic reconstruction. Dr. S Radhakrishnan was the Chairman of this commission, and later on he was a Chairman of University Grants Commission. He recommended introduction of National Service in the academic institutions on a voluntary basis with a view to developing healthy contacts between the students and teachers on the one hand and establishing a constructive linkage between the campus and the community on the other hand.

The Education Commission (1964-66) headed by Dr. D. S. Kothari discussed the role of the Universities has suggested 'one significant way in which college can give a lead is to communicate to the people, new thinking on social and economic problems' and that the Universities should organise social service camps and adopt villages for intensive programmes for development. Therefore, it is of vital importance that the college staff and students reach out to the community and participate in the search for finding solutions to the numerous problems that confront the society.

All we are aware that, NSS is launched in the birth centenary year of Mahatma Gandhi in 1969. Coincident is that in October 1937, an All India National Education Conference was organised at 'Wardha'. Its President was Mahatma Gandhi. It means that the roots of NSS are long back. That conference appointed a committee under the Chairmanship of Dr. Zakir Hussain. This committee submitted its report on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 1937. In this report, emphasis was given on 'Learn and Earn', Vocational Course and Self-supporting Programme for students.

### **Towards National Service Scheme:**

Introducing social service for students and improve the quality of educated manpower, Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) again considered the idea and held a meeting in Cuttack, on January 1950. The CABE studied the various aspects and examining the matter, the board recommended that student should devote some time to manual work on a voluntary basis and that the teachers should also associate with them in such work.

Government of India adopted first five-year plan in 1952. In this plan the need for the social and labour service for students for one year was stressed. The first five-year plan indicated the need for compulsory social and labour service as a part of training of young people with a view to building up the students as workers and disciplined citizens. The plan suggested that initially the scheme be introduced on a voluntary basis. Various educational institutions pursuant to the recommendations made in the first five-year plan, a number of schemes such as labour and social service camps, campus work projects and village apprenticeship scheme were put into operation on a voluntary basis with the objects inculcating a sense of discipline, a spirit of social service, and dignity of manual labour among them an awareness of an identification with the problems of social and economic reconstruction of the country, specially in the rural area.

This plan gave specific and definite shape to the rural development pattern in the country. It is stated in first five year plan that, ‘Community development is the method and rural extension the agency through which the five-year plan seeks to initiate the process of transformation of social and economic life of village. Accordingly, Government of India introduced Development Department as an agency and community development as the method to bring about this transformation. The feature of the National Extension Service was to develop village level functioning to educational method and approach, Block Development Officer being a co-ordinator of block, and he will see the overall development of that community’.

The then Prime Minister, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru said about the community project that, “The Community projects appears to me something of vital importance not only for the material achievement that they would bring about, but much more so, because they seem to build up the community and the individual and to make the latter the builder of his own village, centres and of India in the larger sense.” Further he endorsed the idea that every graduate before he got his degree, should put in certain period of service in an allotted sphere, depending upon his training and capacity, including work in a village or a tribal area.

In 1958, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru raised the idea in his letters to the Chief Minister of having social service as a prerequisite for graduation. He wrote the Chief Ministers on 9<sup>th</sup> June, 1958,

regarding emphasizing the involvement of youth in social service. He urged for engaging youth in certain social services in military discipline. He felt that it would be useful for the Nation as well as the Youth will be benefited from it.

On 28<sup>th</sup> August 1958, on the recommendation of the conference of State Education Minister, the Union Education Minister appointed a National Service Committee under the Chairmanship of Dr. C. D. Deshmukh. The committee considered different aspects of the Schemes and after laying down the guiding principles made recommendations for working out suitable programme. The committee was of the view that one of the glaring defects noticed in the system of education in schools and colleges was the extremely poor contact or lack of contact between the students and teachers in educational institutions on the one hand and work of National reconstruction, particularly in the rural area, on the other.

The Deshmukh committee was emphatic that any such programme must be predominantly educational for National reconstruction the educational aimed at improving the quality and training of manpower required.

The primary objective of National Service should be to provide more lively awareness among the educated youth of the purposes and processes of the Nation's reconstruction efforts, especially in the rural areas and the inculcate in them as sense of a discipline, a spirit of social service, dignity of manual labour and dedication to the cause of country, and thus prepare the educated youth who are the future leaders of the country.

The committee was of the view that, it was necessary that any scheme of National Service must be compulsory if it was to be effective and was to make a real impact in improving the quality of manpower needed by the country. It was also essential that National Service should be of a sufficiently long duration of nine months to a year in order to expose young minds to good influence.

The Deshmukh committee had suggested that student should render one year of compulsory National Service before they entered the University. The other view was that students might be allowed the first two years a period of uninterrupted study and they should, then be given a longer vacation during which National Service could be organised.

As we saw that the then Prime-Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's letter dated 9<sup>th</sup> June 1958 and how he emphasizing the involvement of youth in social service. With the follow-up of this again he wrote on 1<sup>st</sup> January, 1960 the chief Ministers about the utilization of manpower, and compulsory training in social work for students.

In his letter Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru urged for using Manpower for Social Work. He had a vision of student's involvement in social work while studying.

**Turning point of NSS:**

The turning point of NSS is that the Government of India deputed to Dr. K. G. Saiyidain, the then education secretary in July, 1960 on a special assignment to study what is being done in the field of youth development and youth service in other countries and to examine what light their experience can throw on the scheme on National Service for youth which will be consideration in our country. In this connection, Dr. K. G. Saiyidain visited a number of European countries during July 1960 to November 1960.

Dr. K. G. Saiyidain studied National Service by students in France, Yugoslavia, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, The United Kingdom, The United States of America, Japan and the Philippines. He interviewed 188 experts during the visits. He also studied some youth organisations and their functions.

At the time of his assignment, he has advised, that, report should not be a kind of 'essay or theory' but should made concrete suggestions and proposals for the implementation of the scheme. He studied National Service by students implemented in the several countries of the world and submitted his report under the title 'National Service for the Youth' to the Government of India with a number of recommendations as to what could be done in India to develop a feasible scheme of social service by students. Ministry of Education, Government of India, published this report in 1961. It was recommended that National or Social Service can should be open to students as well as non-students within the prescribe age group for better inter-relationship.

In this report he suggested 'Pattern of the National Service Scheme in India' and he focused on, should it be compulsory or voluntary? Availability and training leadership, the Duration of Service, Size and composition Groups, Nature and selection of work projects, General Conditions for the success of the Projects, Publicity and Propaganda, Operation of Youth to the Scheme, the Attitude of the Youth, How to win the cooperation of the youth, Nature and Place of Educational programme, the Question of Discipline, Administrative organisation and work camps for girls. Dr. K. G. Saiyidain suggested valuable recommendations for giving accurate shapes and strengthening the National Service Scheme.

In May, 1969 a conference of student's representatives of the Universities and Institutions of higher learning convened by the ministry of Education and the University Grants Commission also unanimously declared that National Service could be a powerful instrument for National integration. It could be used to introduce urban students to rural life. Projects of permanent value could also be undertaken as a symbol of the contribution of student community to the progress and upliftment of the nation.

During fourth five year plan, the Planning Commission sanctioned an outlay of Rupees Five crores for National Service Scheme. It was stipulated that the NSS programme should be started as a pilot project in selected Institutions and Universities.

Eight Plan Document on Education and New Education Policy have emphasized the need for integrating NSS as part of curriculum in the higher education system.

The important points have to be analyzed to consider NSS as the third dimension of higher education and part of the curriculum viz.,

- i. Integrating NSS with the curriculum to implement the policy decision of Government of India.
- ii. Recognizing NSS work in terms of awarding academic weightage to students, and
- iii. Recognizing NSS work by teachers as extension and considering the quantified participation on par with research.

After judicious consideration of all these reports, on 24<sup>th</sup> September 1969, the then Union Education minister Dr. V. K. R. V. Rao, launched the NSS programme in 37 Universities covering all states and simultaneously requested the Chief Minister of States for their co-operation and help. It was appropriate time that the programme was started during the Birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. At that initial stage 37 Universities in the country were participated in NSS and the number of students involvement was 40,000.

**Conclusion:**

NSS programme are basically oriented towards Social Service, Social Work, Social Welfare & Social Development. NSS required direction & consultancy from the professional social work colleges/Institutions. Social work Institute should shoulder the responsibilities for strengthening the NSS. Such responsibilities will be –

- Selection & Motivation of NSS Student Volunteers.
- Training programmes of Students, Teachers and Community Persons.
- Planning the activities.
- Selection of Projects.
- Local participation in Community Project.
- Co-ordination of Resources.
- Assessment of the Impact on Student & Community.
- Methods of Communication.
- Periodic assessment of the Community problems.
- Development of Collective leadership.

- Supervision & Evaluation.
- Reporting.

The roots of National Service Scheme are seen in the National agenda, which is visualized after independence. The central idea is that the youth power should be engaged in the Social Reforms, Social Reconstruction and Nation Building.

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