

CRAFTING A NEW WORLD IN SCHOOL EDUCATION



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AVENUES FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT IN SCHOOLS: ROLE OF SPC AND NCC

NIRANJANA K P

Abstract: *One of the major purposes of education is to build up a sense of responsibility among the students for the development of nation. India will be able to lead the global economy from the front, if the youth is properly trained and harnessed. Schools as an agency of social change need to identify, engage, and sustain potential resources in school environment and surrounding communities, for developing the competence and problem solving ability of adolescents who can bring positive change within our societies. Various Ministries of the Government of India and State Governments are providing a range of programmes for the development of youth. Over the years, among diverse initiatives the National Cadet Corps (NCC) has emerged as one of India's premier institutions for imparting systematic training to youth which covers a wide spectrum ranging from soft skills to military activities. This chapter describes about SPC and NCC programmes provided in the schools and its impact on the development of the youth.*

Key words: Youth Development, Student Police Cadet

Introduction

Education is the process that enables the learner to acquire the essential skills and competencies which are necessary for leading a better life. Education aims at changing the behavior of the students according to the needs of the society by equipping them with social skills. One of the major purposes of education is to build up a sense of responsibility among the students for the development of nation. The Census 2011 envisaged that the youth in the age group of 15-29 years constitutes 27.5 percent of the entire population of the country and the population of India is expected to exceed 1.3 billion by 2020 with a median age of 28. This huge youth potential has to be transformed into a catalyst force for the growth and development of the nation. India will be able to lead the global economy from the front, if the youth is properly trained and harnessed. Schools as an agency of social change need to identify, engage,

and sustain potential resources in school environment and surrounding communities, for developing the competence and problem solving ability of adolescents who can bring positive change within our societies.

Various Ministries of the Government of India and State Governments are providing a range of programmes for the development of youth. Over the years, among diverse initiatives the National Cadet Corps (NCC) has emerged as one of India's premier institutions for imparting systematic training to youth which covers a wide spectrum ranging from soft skills to military activities. The Student Police Cadet Project (SPC), one of the main flagship youth initiatives of the Kerala Government, is a school-based youth development plan that trains high school students to evolve as future leaders of a democratic society. It aims at inculcating respect for the law, discipline, and empathy for vulnerable sections of society, civic sense and resistance to social evils among the high school students. This chapter describes about SPC and NCC programmes provided in the schools and its impact on the development of the youth.

Student Police Cadet Project (SPC)

SPC Directorate, Government of Kerala (2020) visualizes the Student Police Cadet (SPC) Project as a school-based youth development initiative that trains high school students to evolve as future leaders of a democratic society by inculcating within them respect for the law, discipline, civic sense, empathy for vulnerable sections of society and resistance to social evils. The project also enables youth to explore and develop their innate capabilities, thereby empowering them to resist the growth of negative tendencies such as social intolerance, substance abuse, deviant behavior, and anti-establishment violence. Equally, it strengthens within them commitment towards their family, the community, and the environment.

Origin, Growth and Present Status of SPC Project

On the records of SPC Directorate, Government of Kerala (2020), the origin of SPC can be traced back to 'Janakeeyam' an interactive workshop conducted in 2006 conducted by Kochi City Police for police officers and school-level NSS volunteers. The workshop was enriched with participation of more than 400 high school students from 30 local schools. The event provided an opportunity for students to interact with

police officers on community issues and they expressed a desire to have a permanent arrangement for enduring communication with the police. On realizing the long-term advantages of a permanent school level police youth liaison mechanism to society, Shri P. Vijayan IPS, (City Commissioner at that time) initiated a pilot SPC program at GVHSS, (Iringol) on October 28, 2008, followed by similar programs at St. Peter's School (Kolenchery) and GHSS (Alappuzha).

The follow up done to measure the effectiveness of programme showed positive results on student with significant improvement in academic performance of students, tackling of school-level deviant behavior by police with the help of students themselves, empowerment of girl students to resist exploitation, etc. In order to test the effectiveness of the project a group of police-trained squads of student cadets were groomed as volunteers in crowd control and related responsibilities for the annual state school youth festival at Kozhikode, Kerala. The authorities were convinced the effectiveness of the project and school-going youth could well be groomed as future pillars of the community.

In 2010, Government of Kerala constituted a high-level committee to develop a formal school-level youth empowerment program under then Additional Chief Secretary, Government of Kerala, Shri K Jayakumar (IAS) and then State Police Chief Shri. Jacob Punnoose IPS. A blueprint for the program was developed by Shri P. Vijayan IPS to be launched in schools across the state. Accordingly, under the chairmanship of Shri. Jacob Punnoose IPS (DGP-Kerala at that time) a state-level Advisory Committee was constituted with senior Government officials as members, and Sri P Vijayan IPS as State Nodal Officer for the SPC Project with the objective of moulding a generation of law-abiding, socially committed and service-oriented youth. Thus in August 2, 2010, the Student Police Cadet (SPC) Project initiated by Kerala Police was implemented jointly by the Departments of Home and Education, and supported by Departments of Transport, Forest, Excise and Local Self-Government. The project was implemented in 127 selected high school/higher secondary schools across Kerala 11,176 students, both boys and girls, enrolled as Cadets and 254 teachers trained as school-level Community Police Officers (CPOs) (SPC Directorate, Government of Kerala, 2020).

Over the years, the number of SPC schools and cadets undergoing training has increased as a result of demand from communities and

stakeholders across the state. The gigantic success of the SPC project in Kerala has promoted four other Indian states - Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, and Rajasthan — to reproduce this programme at varying levels and in 2011, the National Police Congress recommended the SPC Programme for a nation-wide rollout. During the inauguration of SPC project in Haryana on July 21, 2018, the Union Home Minister has announced that the SPC project developed by the Kerala Police has been selected for implementing in all the States and Union Territories of India. According to SPC Directorate, Government of Kerala (2020), SPC has expanded to 645 schools within the last eight years in Kerala. Over 52000 students are currently benefiting from SPC's training program, and the SPC training pool comprises more than 1300 trained teachers and about 1500 police officers. 3000 schools are currently on the waiting list for participation in the Program, reflecting the significant demand for the Program.

Features of SPC Project

The motto of SPC project is "We learn to serve" which aims to enable the students to shoulder the responsibility of social service along with learning. Thus the primary message expressed in this motto is service to nation and study through service. The unique features of SPC Project identified by Kerala Police Department (SPC Directorate, Government of Kerala, 2020) are:

- An association between the educational and security frameworks of a state, that trains and encourages youth to develop respect for law and practice abiding by law as a way of life.
- Uses existing network, infrastructure and leadership qualities of Police to supplement physical, mental and educational development of youth.
- Enables school communities to create safe school environments and confident youth willing to react against social evils, and find solutions to community problems.
- Stimulates parents and community leaders to work with police in creating safer communities.

Objectives of SPC Project

The main focus is to instill service-mindedness, as emphasized by Mahatma Gandhi, and feeling of togetherness implied by "we" in young

by minds to develop them as ideal future citizen. The main objectives of SPC project visualized Kerala Police Department (2020) are:

- To mould a generation of youth who willingly respect and abide by Law, and who practice civic sense, democratic behavior and selfless service to society as the natural way of life.
- To facilitate development of good health, physical and mental fitness, self-control and discipline in youth, thereby enhancing their capacity for hard work and personal achievement.
- To enable youth to work with police and other enforcement authorities including Forest, Transport, and Excise in preventing crime, maintaining law and order, promoting road safety, and improving internal security and disaster management.
- To develop social commitment in youth and empower them against deviant behavior in themselves and others, thereby preventing growth of social evils such as drug and alcohol abuse, intolerance, vandalism, separatism, and terrorism in society.
- To enable youth to explore and develop their inner potential in achieving success, by inculcating in them leadership, teamwork skills, innovative thinking and problem solving ability.
- To increase knowledge and understanding of effective use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) among youth, preventing its negative influence and enabling them to benefit from the vast potential of ICT.
- To motivate youth to develop secular outlook, respect for other's fundamental rights and willingness to carry out their fundamental duties as enshrined in the Constitution of India by developing in them qualities of Patriotism, Open-mindedness, Large-heartedness, Inclusiveness, Capability and Effectiveness (POLICE).

Activities of SPC Project

Various activities to be undertaken by cadets listed in Student Police Cadet Project (SPC Directorate, Government of Kerala, 2019) are:

- Effective participation in sports events, exercises, parades, camps, classes and travel plans organized for students police cadets

- Launch legal literacy programmes for peers in cooperation with the government and non-governmental organizations
- Plan and perform short plays, film shows, mono acts etc. for organizing the public against alcoholism, narcotic drugs, terrorism etc.
- Observe on instances of indiscipline in and outside the classrooms and bring them to the attention of the class teachers and principals
- Show dedication to patriotism and hold earnestness ambitions for national development
- Celebrate national days and pay tribute to National flag, symbols etc., and feel pride in the growth and prosperity of the country.
- Build a network of younger generations to serve police activities as well as to experience community policing projects
- Popularize phone numbers of crime stopper, police helpline service etc., among the public and encourage family members and friends to handover relevant information to resist crime
- Organize programmes to bridge the gap between police and public
- Prepare activity reports by visiting police stations, court and prison to acquaint with their procedures
- Participate in various programmes which helps to nurture personality skills and leadership qualities

National Cadet Corps (NCC)

The National Cadet Corps in India is a voluntary organization of the Indian military cadet corps with its head Quarters at New Delhi. The organization recruits cadets from high schools, colleges and Universities all over India and are given basic military training in small arms and parades. Officers and cadets do not assume the responsibility of active-duty military personnel upon completion of the course, but they take precedence over the general candidates when selected on the basis of the performance of the force. According to Vashisht (2019), former Director General of NCC, "the National Cadet Corps (NCC) is the largest uniformed volunteer organisation in the world, which is committed to the business of youth empowerment and is ideally suited to help the

nation realize its demographic dividend, thereby making a significant contribution to nation-building. The military orientation of its training curriculum also ensures handsome dividends in the security domain”.

Background and Present Status of National Cadet Corps

The origin of National Cadet Corps can be traced back to University Corps which was a significant step taken by Indian Army under the Indian Defense Act, 1917 to attract youth towards armed forces with the objective of making up with the shortage of Army. University Corps was replaced by University Training Corps (UTC) in 1920, when the Indian Territorial Act was passed. Later University Training Corps was renamed as University Officers Training Corps. The National Cadet Corps could be considered as successors to the University Officer Training Corps (UOTC), established by the British in 1942. During the Second World War, UOTC never met the expectations set by British which led to better plans that should be developed so that more young people can be trained in a better way with armed forces. Later, Kunzru committee recommended the establishment of a student organization in schools and colleges at the national level in 1946. The Governor accepted the National Cadet Corps Act on 16 April 1948 and NCC inaugurated on 15 July 1948 (Ministry of Defense, India, 2020). Thus, India's NCC was established under the National Cadet Corps Act of 1948.

NCC cadets were the second line of defense in the wars with Pakistan in 1965 and 1971. They organized camp-assisted ordinance factories, supplied weapons and ammunition to the front lines and used them as patrols to catch enemy paratroopers. NCC cadets also work with the civil defense department to actively participate in rescue efforts and traffic control. Following the Parker War in 1965 and 1971, the NCC curriculum was revised. Now, the NCC is not just a second line of defense, but a focus on developing leadership and officer-like qualities was incorporated in the revised syllabus. NCC cadets have received fewer military trainings, and more attention has been given to other areas, such as social services and youth management (Ministry of Defence, India, 2020).

The National Cadet Corps is headed by a general who is an army officer in the rank of Lieutenant General, who operates the national military academy through the headquarters of the National Cadet Corps in Delhi. Covering all states and Union territories the country is divided

into 17 Directorates. Each headquarters of the State National Cadet Corps controls between 2 and 14 group headquarters. Although the forces are under the command of the Brigadier General or their equivalent, the teams are under the command of colonels or equivalents of the Air Force and Navy, and the majors or their equivalents controls the NCC units (Ministry of Defense, India, 2020).

With 20,000 initial cadets, from the beginning of the Parliamentary Act of 15 July 1948, the NCC currently has an authorized strength of around 14 lakh cadets. It has 16,288 institutions, representing whole of India by including 716 districts of the country. More than 8,000 institutions waiting to get enrolled and only extremely remote or threatened areas were not included as well recently developed districts of Manipur and Telangana (Vashisht, 2019). While reviewing the contribution of 17 directorates of NCC during pandemic period of to fight against Covid 19, the Defence Minister, Rajnath Singh, announced that India government is determined and has decided to go ahead with the expansion of NCC in the coastal and boarder areas. The Minister also stressed the modernization of NCC and to make the NCC activities of colleges and universities NCC in tune with the semester system (Gurung, 2020).

Motto of NCC

By abiding the motto of "Unity and Discipline", the NCC is committed to become one of greatest organization to connect young people from different parts of the country together and shaping them into unity to develop as secular and disciplined citizens of the nation. At the 11th Central Advisory Committee (CAC) meeting held on August 11, 1978, the necessity of having a motto for the National Cadet Corps was discussed. Among the various mottos suggested, at the 12th CAC meeting held on October 12, 1980, the final decision was made to choose "Unity and Discipline" as the motto of NCC (Ministry of Defence, India, 2020).

Objectives and Core Values of NCC

The purpose of NCC spelled out by Ministry of Defence, India (2020), are to create an organized, well-trained and motivated youth with leadership skills in all walks of life, who are able to serve the country no matter which profession they choose. NCC in addition to that also provides an environment conducive to inspiring young Indians to join

the armed forces. The main aim of NCC is to develop character, comradeship, discipline, spirit of adventure, ideals of selfless service and a secular outlook amongst young citizens.

The core values identified by Ministry of Defence, India (2020), that should guide all ranks of National Cadet Corps to develop as a continuously evolving organization are :

- a. A sense of patriotic commitment to encourage cadets to contribute to national development.
- b. Respect for diversities in religion, language, culture, ethnicity, life style and habitat to instill a sense of National unity and social cohesion.
- c. Abiding commitment to learn and adhere to the norms and values enshrined in the Indian Constitution.
- d. Understanding the value of a just and impartial exercise of authority.
- e. Ability to participate in community development and other social programme.
- f. A healthy life style free of substance abuse and other unhealthy practices.
- g. Sensitivity to the needs of poor and socially disadvantaged fellow citizens
- h. Inculcating habits of restraint and self-awareness.
- i. Understanding the values of honesty, truthfulness, self-sacrifice, perseverance and hard work.
- j. Respect for knowledge, wisdom and the power of ideas.

Activities of NCC

The training activities to be undertaken by National Cadet Corps are classified into five sections such as *institutional training, community development/social services, adventure training and sports, youth exchange programmes, career counseling* (Ministry of Defence, India, 2020):

- **Institutional Training:** Among the various training activities, 48 percent of activities are related to institutional training which includes military training, parades, camps, certificate examinations A/B/C. These activities are conducted in respective colleges/

schools under the guidance of Associate NCC Officers (ANO) and Permanent Instructional (PI) staff from regular armed forces personnel.

- **Community Development / Social Services:** Activities of community development / social services constitutes 19 percent of activities which includes blood donation, tree plantation, participate in awareness campaigns/ activities listed by Government of India.
- **Adventure Training and Sports:** The 21 percent of activities comprises of adventure training and sports such as para-sailing/ jumping, micro light flying, hang gliding, slithering, wind surfing, scuba diving, ocean sailing, canoeing, kayaking, skiing, yachting, cycle/motor cycle expedition, trekking, mountaineering, riding, rock climbing, etc. These activities are incorporated with the aim of incorporating a spirit of adventure and team spirit among the members.
- **Youth Exchange Programmes:** As the part of youth exchange programmes, selected candidates may get an opportunity to visit various foreign countries such as Russia, Nepal/ Bhutan, Singapore, Bangladesh, Yangon, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, United Kingdom, Foreign Naval Cruise and Foreign Coastal Guard etc. The eight percent of activities constitute youth exchange programmes.
- **Career Counselling :** The four percent of activities are devoted to career counselling. The cadets are assisted and motivated to pursue a career in Indian Military Academy, Naval Ships and Air force. The cadets also are given opportunity to interact with regular Army, Navy and Air Force units

National Cadet Corps organization also organizes various camps at institutional, state and national levels. for developing personality traits, soft skills, leadership, spirit of adventure, patriotism, secular outlook and ideals of service among the cadets

Impact of SPC and NCC on Youth Development

The impact of SPC and NCC on developing various qualities among youth is analyzed by reviewing related studies. Vyas (2018) studied the effect of NCC training on conflict management among NCC cadets (N=40) of Vadodara district. Results of the study indicated that

NCC training has significant positive effect on conflict management skills of the cadets. Among the various conflict management styles majority of the cadets preferred collaborating and accommodating management style and avoiding management style was least preferred. Ranjith (2017) analyzed the legal awareness among student police cadets of Kerala on a sample of 320 students police cadets of secondary schools. The results of the study showed that the legal awareness of student police cadets is at average level. Mumthas and Safna (2016) compared social competence of student police cadets and non-cadets in secondary schools of Kerala on a sample of 800 students. The results of the study revealed that the student police cadets have more social competence than non-cadets in secondary schools. The results also indicated that SPC programme helped the cadets to develop various personality traits such as leadership quality and social commitment.

Velath (2016) reported that more than 90 percent of the stakeholders – cadets (school children), teachers, and police personnel – considered the project objectives highly relevant, and the results were effective. The study also reported that 94 percent of the stakeholders were of the view that SPC has boosted awareness of environmental issues, especially the need for preservation and improvement of public resources such as water, air, and forests. Among the stakeholders 27 percent agreed that participation in the programme had increased their communication skills and 98 percent agreed that SPC was instrumental in improving their health and physical fitness. The 33 percent of respondents agreed that the programme had improved their academic performance and 95 percent of parents were of the view that SPC had enhanced the overall performance of their children and strengthening of their leadership skills.

Sarkar and Margaj (2015) analyzed the impact of NCC studies on developing soft skills among 120 youth undergoing NCC training in various schools. The results indicated that institutional training of national cadet corps helped youth to become confident, committed and competent leaders in all walks of life. The training also enhanced the awareness level of cadets for being responsible human beings and provided opportunities as well motivated the cadets to enhance their knowledge, awareness levels on life and soft communication skills, character building and personality development. The results also indicated that adventure activities developed leadership qualities and risk taking abilities of the cadets.

The analysis of research studies revealed that SPC and NCC are successful in empowering the youth and capable of achieving their objectives to a great extent as the activities resulted in the strengths such as;

- Developing various personality traits of cadets such as leadership quality, confidence, communication skills and soft skills
- Boosting awareness of environmental issues and need for preventing public resources among the cadets
- Improving health and physical fitness of cadets
- Developing social competence and social commitment of cadets
- Contributing to nation building
- Enhancing knowledge, legal awareness and academic performance of cadets
- Enabling cadets to deal with conflict management situation
- Developing collaborative and accommodating conflict management style

Conclusion

By the analyzing the activities of cadets it was evident that those objectives laid out by NCC and SPC have stood test of time and effective to meet the socio-economic expectations of the nation. Naik (2019) reported that the SPC programme is a constructive solution to internal security challenges among youth identified by police organizations such as rising crime rates and anti-social activities such as terrorism among youth, increasing radicalization, deteriorating respect for law, increasing violence against women, weak sense of civic responsibility and environmental protection, and misuse of ICT and technology.

In an article Gurung (2020) reported that the present Defence Minister of India, during the press meeting, appreciated the assistance given by National Cadet Corps to the local administration in handling the Covid-19 outbreak by engaging in logistics and supply chain management duties, assisting traffic duties, ensuring provision of food materials, medicines etc., making as well as distributing masks and engaged in Coronavirus awareness programmes by making short videos. India is fortunate to have a demographic advantage with one of the highest number of young people in the world. These aspirant youth should

be able to transfer what they have learnt in classrooms to real life situations.

Along with explicit knowledge delivering mechanism we the teachers and curriculum frame workers need to provide skills in executing tasks to the students as per global status. One of the important indicators of development is youth development. Both the Student Police Cadet Project and National Cadet Corps are a massive experiment in this direction which provides numerous opportunities for developing various skills and learning continuously at regular intervals at the pace of the learners. In addition to that they bring an interface between police and students or military and students by inculcating values among students to become responsible citizen and contributing to nation building. Thus, it is evident that the SPC and NCC has the potential to coincide with the concept of "Education for Peace" proposed by the National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT), because all the three are designed to promote the concept of peace and enable children to deal with conflict situations.

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