

Best Practice - II

Students' Participation in Village Survey

India is the country of villages. A large segment of the rural population is widely dispersed and varied with socio-economic and natural endowments. There is no doubt, rural India is quite rich in natural, agricultural and human resources. If human resources such as members of village bodies, Self Help Groups, rural youth and students are channelized properly; it can bring about expected changes in rural life. It is clear that the rural people are closer to nature and know how to utilize local resources properly. As Mahatma Gandhi says, village development should be interlinked with local participation and needs. If rural youth are actively participated to deal with local problems, it can accelerate village development. Therefore participation of students in village survey is important in this context.

A village survey is the means of communication between students and community. It facilitates to acquaint with local problems in rural area. Hence, the participation of students in village survey is the possible way to create awareness. The basic objectives of this practice are as follows.

Keywords: Students' participation, utilization of resources, village survey

Objectives of the Practice

- To impart a sense of responsibility among students about rural conditions.
- To establish linkage between college and community
- To develop students' leadership in higher education institutions

Context of the Practice

India lives in villages. Rural India is endowed with variety of resources which can be harnessed for its development. In other words, village development is mainly associated with utilization of local resources. Therefore youth participation in village development plays an important role in this context.

The strategy of development of the country should be more compatible with utilization of available local resources. Indian planners have made efforts to execute various programmes in rural area in all five year plan periods. An experience of economic planning has documented that there is widening disparity between rural and urban area. Due to less participation of people, rural area is far away from mainstream of the development. In globalization period, there is an adverse effect on agriculture, rural employment and generation of economic activities in rural area. Indeed, due to the under-utilization of resources, it has resulted to widen sectoral disparity in the country. In order to utilize human

resources, the college has taken initiative to conduct village survey through students' participation in this direction.

The college is situated in rural area and most of the students belong to rural background. Rural youth is an active and healthy resource for development. They are more associated with local situation. The bloc, Ashti is endowed with variety of resources. But less attention is paid to utilize resources. Hence the block is backward as a whole. In view to deal with local problems, the college put efforts to engage students in conducting survey. The practice focuses to create awareness a sense of responsibility among students and to strengthen the linkage between college and community in higher education perspectives.

Role of Students' Participation in Higher Education Perspective

Education, Research and Extension is the three pillars of higher education system. The basic idea of education is to inculcate knowledge among students and reflect into real life of the community. In view to consider this idea, students of college can play an important role to transfer knowledge to the community. It facilitates to strengthen linkage between college and community and also creates awareness and sense of responsibility among students in the higher education perspective.

India is a wide network of higher education institutions. As per the annual report of AISHE 2017-18 indicates that India has 903 universities which consist 39050 colleges in higher education system. Around 60% of total colleges are located in rural area. If each college is to be linked with community, it can promote village development as a whole. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam advocated in his 'India's Vision: 2020' and outlined that each college should take responsibility to adopt villages for the upliftment of society. It is possible to channelize the capacity of students and utilize it through their active participation in rural area. It would reduce the gap between rural and urban area and to bring about expected changes in rural life.

Despite India has a wide network of higher education institutions, the students' capacity could not be transformed into productive assets in rural area. The Indian planners introduced Community Development Programme in 1952 in this direction. It aimed at participating students in community engagement through National Service Scheme. But it could not generate significant changes in rural life. Hence the role of colleges in village development is still remains unexplored. During liberalization period, it is seen that there is a wide spread apathy among educated students in rural area. A sense of responsibility among students about rural area is not at desired level. For that, students' participation through colleges is the possible way to establish linkage with communities. An initiative has been taken by the college to participate students in village survey in this direction. The college conducted a survey on 'Occupational Structure and Sources of Income' at village Pandhurna in Ashti block in 2018-19. This type of initiative is more useful to create a sense of responsibility among students. It would also helpful to establish linkage between college and community in higher education perspectives.

Evidence of success

The college conducted village survey at Pandhurna in Ashti block on February 19, 2019. Nine students of the college participated and collected information through preparing village schedule. The total number of 102 households were listed during field visit. As per the simple random sampling method, 20% samples of total households were selected for study purpose. The findings were arrived by analyzing schedule of village survey. The observations of the survey are as follows.:

Observations of the Survey

- 1) Around two-third of the total households is dependent on agricultural and allied activities for their subsistence.
- 2) 50% of the total households are found under the category of small and marginal farmers while one-third are landless labourers.
- 3) It is observed that there is an inverse relationship between workforce in agriculture and the share of income.
- 4) The proportion of workforce in industry and service sector lies at 16% and 8%, which contributes the share of income around 60% and 30% respectively.
- 5) The proportion of beneficiaries from schemes of social security is around 33%.

The study helps to create awareness about rural area and deal with rural problems. The positive changes have been occurred during survey. These are as follows.

- 1) **Active participation of students:** Nine students of the college participated in village survey.
- 2) **Creation of a sense of responsibility:** The survey created a sense of responsibility among students. So that they can deal with problems of rural area in future.
- 3) **Establishment of linkage with community:** The survey helped to interconnect the linkage between college and community. This type of initiative can determine the role of college in village development in future course of action.

Limitations:

- 1) **Low response of respondents:** Villagers do not communicate effectively with investigators while conducting survey. They hesitate to give information regarding economic and health issues.
- 2) There is a need to for college to emerge as medium of participation in rural area. The extension mechanism of the college should be more village centric.

Resource Required

- 1) All teachers should actively participate to deal with rural problems.
- 2) The village panchayat should cooperate while conducting survey.
- 3) Respondents and investigators should communicate effectively. So that errors can be minimized.
