

CHAPTER XVI
COMMUNITY LIFE.

As indicated earlier in Chapter XII , Page 371, Community Life is the third aspect of the training programme. This aspect is taken up here under three items, namely, its importance, aspects of community life and items of records. The discussion is in the order suggested above.

1. Its importance.-

Though the importance of including it in the training programme has already been pointed out in Chapter XII , on page 368 , it will not be out of place to add a few words here.

Educational ends and social purposes are the determining factors in the life and programme of an institution. One of the main responsibilities of a training college is to make its trainees realise the values of a democratic society. It is important to develop in them certain habits and attitudes in order to enable them to discharge their professional duties and social responsibilities efficiently. The training programme should be organised in such a way that habits of corporate living and loyalty to the democratic way of life are developed in them. Democracy is not an abstract concept but a practical way of life and is to be understood through real experiences of democratic living.

In these days of democracy, the barrier between the manual worker and the intellectual worker is not recognized. The gulf has got to be bridged and for this the leadership has got to come from the educational institutions, specially from the training colleges.

Our educational concepts are changing every day and are becoming more inclusive and cover the whole life of the child in the community. It is now generally agreed that studies about the community should form an important aspect of education. Under these circumstances, the training colleges cannot confine themselves to narrow vocationalism. They have got to grow out of this. A zest for life and its social surroundings has got to be created in the training colleges. It is not enough if the teachers are taught only to deal with school situations. They should be educated to deal with life situations as well. They should be enabled to develop proper techniques of creating among the children a live interest in the affairs of the community. The trainees should be made to realize that in the teaching profession, they are not to live a secluded or isolated life but should be a part of the community and share the social and cultural interests with other members of the community. The fact that they are social beings should never be forgotten.

There is another important and strong reason for including community life in the training college programme and for insisting on the trainees to have a full knowledge of the community. There are various forces in the community which greatly influence the life of the children and play a great part in developing in them certain habits, attitudes, ideas and ideals. These influencing forces are both good and bad and thus are often conflicting. There are forces which may help to develop certain good traits and healthy attitudes such as good neighbourliness, cooperative spirit, the spirit of tolerance, service mindedness etc. There may be other forces which may influence in the opposite direction and foster selfishness, intolerance, greed, unhealthy competition, jealousy etc. The child being a social being, is influenced by both these factors and becomes subjected to conflicting influences, often creating mental conflict regarding the selection of the right course of action. It is here that the responsibility of the teachers plays a great and influential part. It is the function of the school and the community to minimise these conflicts and help in developing the right attitudes and healthy social ideals and thus contribute towards the development of integrated personalities. In order to assist the children in an effective manner, it is essential that the teachers are first acquainted with a thorough knowledge of the forces influencing the minds of the children.

Without this knowledge, they will not be in a position to play their part satisfactorily.

Thus not only from the point of view of the children but that of the teachers themselves and of the society, it is essential to include community life in the training college programme. Besides formal teaching, there are various ways by which this community life could be fostered in the training college and its general tone and spirit could be built. Further, community life should also help in bridging the gulf between the college life and personal life of the trainees.

2. Aspects of community life.--

Community life is such a broad term that it embraces a number of aspects. The following are some suggestions put forth by some of the training colleges in this regard :

Table No.110
Aspects of Community Life.

S.No.	Suggestions	No. of Training Colleges		
		Traditional	Basic	Total
1.	Students' self government	23	5	28
2.	Recreational and cultural activities	23	4	27
3.	Social work	19	4	23
4.	Cleanliness programme.	16	5	21
5.	Community mess.	13	4	17
6.	Co-operative store.	10	3	13

S.No.	Suggestions	No. of Training Colleges		
		Traditional	Basic	Total
7.	Outer community contact.	9	4	13
8.	Students' court.	10	2	12
9.	Medical and health programme.	9	3	12
10.	Security organization.	6	3	9
11.	Students' Bank.	5	2	7
12.	Running a post office.	3	2	5

The above suggestions could be divided into two broad aspects, namely those confined to the college community and those embracing the outer community. But this broad classification does not mean that they are distinct from one another and have no common meeting point. The activities of one may easily penetrate into those of another and in fact it is not possible to limit their boundaries. Some of the activities such as students' self government, running a community mess, running a cooperative store, running a post office, a students' bank, security organization or students' court could be considered under the first aspect while social and outer community contact works may be considered to fall under the second aspect. Others like cleanliness programme, medical and health programme and recreational and cultural activities may be considered to cover both the aspects. Again most of the items under the first aspect may be considered under the residential life of the trainees.

Therefore the first aspect may embrace the following items :

Activities pertaining to the college community :

- | | |
|---|--|
| (a) Students' self government. | (b) Cleanliness programme. |
| (c) Community mess. | (d) Medical, health and welfare programme. |
| (e) Co-operative store. | (f) Running a post office. |
| (g) Running a students' bank. | (h) Security organization. |
| (i) Students' court. | (j) Recreational and cultural activities. |
| (k) Community prayer. | (l) Publication section. |
| (m) Social service unit. | (n) Tutorial group. |
| (o) Subject unions. | (p) Citizenship training camp. |
| (q) Social functions and social gatherings. | (r) Picnics. |
| (s) Educational excursions and tours. | (t) Literary gatherings. |
| (u) Scouting & girl guide. | (v) Red Cross and First Aid. |

Those items which may fall under the second aspect - outer community - may include the following :

- | | |
|---|---|
| (a) Social service programme. | (b) Cleanliness programme. |
| (c) Medical, health & social welfare programme. | (d) Recreational and cultural programme. |
| (e) Outer community contact and visits. | (f) Educational, economic and social surveys. |
| (g) Community development projects. | |

The list suggested is not exhaustive and may include many other items which the colleges may think fit and these

activities could easily be enlarged according to the needs and requirements of the college community as well as the outer community.

The impact of these activities on the life of the training colleges, schools and the community is well realized and the emphasis day by day is shifting towards more encouragement of these activities. In order to promote these activities, certain facilities and suitable opportunities are essential. The most important facility for building up habits of corporate life among the trainees is the provision of hostels and living together under the same roof. It is only then that they will be able to share their experience and cooperate with one another for realizing the common purpose. It is here that the trainees could have all those experiences and discipline which is so essential for the building of a strong democratic society and an attempt could be made to break the artificial barrier between the working and the privileged class and foster the spirit of self-help and oneness.

Compulsory residential life facilitates most of the activities suggested under the first aspect. If one of the objectives of the training college is to educate the teacher to work for democratic ends, it is but necessary that democratic principles and ideals are incorporated into their educational programme. With the provision of a democratic environment, the trainees will be in a better position to understand and

appreciate the meaning and value of democracy and this will certainly lead them to think and act democratically and uphold democratic principles.

The best method for providing this experience to the trainees is through self-government activities which are given wide prominence in Basic education institutions. Many of the items mentioned under the first aspect could be safely organized under this activity. Through this, the entire hostel life is organized. The entire responsibility for their welfare rests with the students and through their elected representatives the life is regulated. Through this activity, certain important traits such as, cooperative spirit, tolerance, shouldering responsibility, leadership, integrity and honesty, self-help, spirit of service, obedience to the leader, organizing capacity etc. which are essential for a citizen are developed and this in turn is reflected in their dealing with their children in schools. This will also educate them in the parliamentary system. The community as a whole will then be responsible for its welfare in every respect. They learn to share the responsibilities in order to maintain the community in a proper standard. This will help in removing from them many unwanted traits as greed, selfishness, laziness, exploitation, dictatorship etc. Since the responsibilities are shared and since it is on an elected basis, every aspect of the community will be catered for to the satisfaction of every one. The good

of the community will then be the main objective. For the comfort and advantage of the community whatever is required, the elected government will provide. This will give them the required training in the management of organizations as co-operative stores, a dispensary, a post office, a bank, a court etc. The morale of the community will also be high. In view of an organized community life, the need for a separate college union does not arise. The function of the college union would be undertaken by those responsible for different aspects of community life.

Formation of tutorial groups is another way of encouraging community life. This is a powerful instrument, if handled efficiently, to bring the staff and the trainees together and to develop a better intellectual relationship among them. This is in the interests of both the staff and the trainees. It will be of mutual benefit. Most of the colleges are in favour of encouraging this aspect.

But these tutorial groups should be based on the theoretical aspect of the course. This will benefit the trainees. Any other type of break up may result in factions in the community life.

In order to facilitate proper relationship, it is always considered necessary to limit the number in each group and the following limits are suggested by some of the colleges.

Table No. 111

Number of trainees in a tutorial group :

Min. No.	No. of training colleges			Max. No.	No. of training colleges		
	Traditional	Basic	Total		Traditional	Basic	Total
2	-	1	1	4	-	1	1
3	1	-	1	5	1	-	1
4	2	-	2	7	1	-	1
5	7	1	8	8	3	-	3
6	2	-	2	10	17	7	24
7	1	-	1	15	8	-	8
8	4	-	4	16	2	2	4
10	15	6	21	18	-	1	1
15	6	-	6	20	4	-	4
				25	4	-	4

The majority of the colleges (30 to 34%) are in favour of 10 in a group. The smaller the group, the better will be the relationship and it will also facilitate the staff member in organizing his activity but too small a number is not good as it may split up the colleges into too many groups which is not conducive. In colleges where the strength is less, it may be between 10 and 15 while in big colleges it may be between 15 and 20. This will also depend upon the staff available.

In colleges where hostel life can not be encouraged, training in citizenship and community life could be given through citizenship training camps lasting from 10 to 30 days. But since compulsory hostel life has been usually recommended by all, this aspect can be merged with the community life.

Certain activities as N.C.C., scouting and guiding, Red Cross and First Aid have been included under community life. These are essential from the point of view of fostering individual and group discipline and other important traits such as helpful attitude, initiative, spirit of service etc. These are also essential for a citizen aiming towards corporate life.

The programme of the training college is such that generally very little time is left for recreation. By recreation, we do not mean mere aimless entertainment or diversion of mind. It is something more useful, creative and at the same time enjoyable. If the training colleges are to meet the changing needs of the society it is important that new attitudes towards their work are developed among the trainees. The unhealthy distinction between work and play, vocation and culture, industry and art should be removed and this is possible only through creating among the trainees a zest for their daily work and helping them to relate it to social needs. With the industrialization of the nation, the problem of leisure is bound to become acute and sooner or later, the schools are bound to face it. It is high time that training colleges took a note of it and developed healthy attitude towards work among their trainees. They in their turn will instil this new spirit among their pupils. When once such an attitude towards work is developed, participation in purposeful and creative activities will replace mere passive entertainment. The real

impact of art on human life can be realized only when one is actively engaged in artistic pursuits and not by encouraging them to be mere passive observers. Therefore, it is important that teachers are encouraged to undertake artistic pursuits instead of merely visiting a museum, attending concerts or movies or dances etc. No doubt, these are also important if it is a question of real appreciation but real recreation does not end in mere appreciation. Therefore, it is the important responsibility of the training college to guide its trainees in the selection and pursuit of socially useful activities which not only give full exercise to their physical strength, imagination and to their intellect but also release their creative impulses.

This aspect has been included under community life because of its importance in the development of a healthy and useful community. In the pursuit of activities such as painting, music, dramatics, dancing, writing, games, sports, literary pursuits, celebration of festivals etc., not only should the resources of the college community be tapped but those of the outside community as well. Mutual benefits should be derived from all talents available.

The importance of close contact between the college community and life outside has already been stressed. When the objectives of education have widened and the schools are considered to be community centres, to think of training colleges

anything less than this would be unbecoming. If the training colleges are places where educational leaders of the community are prepared, their contact with the outer community should be closer and better developed. There are various ways of establishing and promoting this contact.

One of the important ways is to include and encourage some form of social work. This will supplement and strengthen the theoretical knowledge already acquired by the trainees. The purpose of organizing this activity is not merely to acquaint the trainees superficially with the life of the community. It must help in developing in them a real social outlook and build up in them an enthusiasm for bettering their social and physical surroundings. For this purpose various types of activities such as social education classes, organizing play centres for children, recreational and cultural activities, cooperative societies, cleanliness and health programmes, developmental projects, social, economic and educational surveys and child welfare centres, etc., could be undertaken. Through personal contacts and visits, attempts should also be made to break the unhealthy superstitions and customs and class distinction and thus help especially the women folk to rise from their backwardness. Thus gradually, the principle of corporate life should be instilled into them.

The inclusion of a variety of activities may sound rather too much for the training colleges to undertake and it may even

be felt that too many such activities may hamper the professional aspect. Presenting a list does not in any way mean strict adherence to every item. Moreover, it is not essential that all the activities should be undertaken simultaneously. If the training programme is organized intelligently, there should be no difficulty in including many of the items suggested. If the training colleges are capable of tapping the co-operation of certain institutions which are working for the welfare of the community such as community development projects, social service and social welfare organisations etc., their task should not be difficult. This is indeed a unique opportunity for the teaching profession. They will not only be coming into contact with these various institutions but with the technical help that they receive from these institutions, they can become better educational leaders. If the training colleges can rise to the occasion, they would certainly render valuable service for the uplift and progress of society. By extending these benefits to the community the teacher in his turn will enrich his own personal life. This will also help in breaking the isolation of the training colleges from the rest of the community and will make them dynamic educational centres of the community.

3. Items of records :

As pointed out earlier with regard to other aspects, it may also be stated here, that maintenance of certain records

are essential under community life activities too and this is in the interests of both the staff and the trainees. Any activity undertaken and any new knowledge gained should be recorded. Due to the inclusion of a variety of activities, the records will also be of a wide variety. The following are some suggestions put forth by some of the training colleges in this regard.

Table No.112

Items of records in Community life

S.No.	Suggestions	No. of training colleges		
		Traditional	Basic	Total
1.	Record of participation in recreational and cultural activities.	22	5	27
2.	Daily diary.	12	5	17
3.	Camp diary.	15	1	16
4.	Record of self-assessment of social adjustment.	11	5	16
5.	Record of college community concord.	8	3	11
6.	Monthly Reports.	4	3	7

Six suggestions have been offered by the colleges. With the exception of the first and third items suggested by 39% and 23% of the colleges all other items embrace most of the aspects of community life. Regular maintenance of daily diary suggested by 24% of the colleges facilitates writing of monthly report suggested by 10% of the colleges. Record of self-assessment of social adjustment suggested by 23% of the colleges is

also an important record which helps the trainee to understand his social development aspect. Record of college community concord putforth by 16% of the colleges is rather vague and this need not be a separate record and could be merged with other records.

Though it may not be necessary to list all the records, it may be pointed out here that every activity undertaken by the trainee should be recorded. These records will be of different types such as daily diaries, reports, statistics, graphs, a brief account, charts, lesson plans, results of experiments and projects etc. In order to enable the trainees to maintain them systematically, proper forms should be devised for each aspect.

Thus with proper organization of various community activities and systematic maintenance of all the records, community life could play a very important roll in building the personality of the trainee and facilitating the training college in maintaining its educational leadership in the community.

Organization of an educational programme does not end with the activities. For the programme to be educationally sound, useful and purposeful and for the maintenance of a proper educational standard, its assessment and evaluation is indispensable. Hence, in the next chapter, a detailed discussion of this aspect is taken up.