

National Conference on Social Responsibility of Educational Institutions in the Context of NEP-2020

THEME: Role of Educational Institutes in Extension and Outreach Activities and its Impact

TITLE: 'Nurturing National Pride': An In-depth Exploration of Social Responsibility in Educational Institutions Inspired by the Indian Armed Forces.

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ABSTRACT

Patriotism is often considered a heavy word but we need to view it simply. Patriotism means having a deep affection, devotion, and appreciation for one's country. This includes its culture, lifestyles, people, languages, cuisines, beautiful places, and everything that makes it unique.

It's important to instill a sense of patriotism in children from a very early age. As children develop this feeling over time, they learn best by observing those around them showing pride, enthusiasm, and respect for the country. To foster these feelings in children, the school and the parents must first be patriotic themselves and serve as role models. By embodying these values, we as educators and parents help nurture a sense of patriotism in them.

Salwan Education Trust underscores its dedication to instilling a sense of national pride, cultural appreciation, and social responsibility in children from the earliest stages of their education. This comprehensive approach ensures that the values of patriotism and service become integral parts of their development, shaping them into responsible and compassionate citizens.

The Trust draws inspiration from the Indian Armed Forces' ethos of "The Nation First Always." This dedication is reflected in its various social outreach initiatives like 'Samman Diwas' and 'Rakt Daan Shivar,' which are designed to instill a sense of national pride and responsibility among the youngest learners, in alignment with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

Samman Diwas, initiated in 2003, is a cornerstone event where young students, along with their families and teachers, honours the sacrifices of the Indian Armed Forces. This annual observance allows children to meet and interact with military personnel, instilling deep respect and gratitude from an early age. The presence of high-ranking officers at these events lends importance and authenticity, leaving a lasting impression on the young minds.

Rakt Daan Shivar, an Annual Blood Donation Camp initiated in 1995, demonstrates the practical aspect of supporting the armed forces. By involving the school community, including parents and staff, this initiative teaches children the importance of giving and community service.

The #SaveTheArtisans Campaign and Hunar Mela, introduced in 2019, focus on celebrating and preserving cultural heritage. These events expose young learners to the rich traditions of rural and tribal artisans, fostering an appreciation for diverse cultural expressions. Additionally, recognising Padma Shree awardees from rural backgrounds during these events highlights the importance of honouring achievements and cultural contributions.

Frequent visits to military establishments and historically significant locations like Kargil and Drass are organised to provide children with real-life context about bravery and resilience. Such experiences, along with activities like making handmade Rakhis for soldiers, create emotional connections and instill a sense of duty and patriotism from a young age.

The Schools' decision to appoint ex-armed forces personnel in leadership and administrative roles further shows the values of service, sacrifice, and duty within the school environment. These leaders bring invaluable experiences and perspectives, enriching the learning environment for young children. Their interaction and stories of valour instill pride and admiration amongst the learners from a very young age.

These initiatives are more than just events; they are transformative experiences that align with NEP 2020's vision for holistic education. They help cultivate a deep sense of national pride and duty, ensuring that Salwan Education Trust nurtures future generations who are compassionate, service-oriented, and patriotic. The Trust's comprehensive approach, including collaborations with other educational institutions and support for families of soldiers and artisans, demonstrates its commitment to building a society rooted in compassion and national pride, starting from early childhood education.

IMPACT

The profound impact of 'Samman Diwas,' 'Rakt Daan Shivir,' and 'Hunar Mela,' organized over the years, extends across various stakeholders and leaves a lasting mark on the educational

community and beyond. These initiatives inspire even the youngest students with a deep sense of duty, patriotism, and admiration for the armed forces, significantly shaping their aspirations and character.

Samman Diwas

Initiated in 2003, Samman Diwas is an annual event dedicated to honouring the sacrifices of the Indian Armed Forces.

Fostering Patriotism and Respect: The event instills a deep sense of patriotism in students, helping them understand and appreciate the sacrifices made by the armed forces for the nation. By interacting with veterans and serving personnel, students learn to respect and value the contributions of the defence services.

Community Bonding: The involvement of families in the event strengthens the bond between the school and the families, fostering a supportive community environment. Teachers participating alongside students in honouring the armed forces create a sense of unity and shared purpose.

Character Building: Students take on roles in organising and conducting the event, which enhances their leadership skills and sense of responsibility. Exposure to the stories of bravery and sacrifice cultivates empathy and gratitude among students, shaping them into more compassionate individuals.

Rakt Daan Shivir

Initiated in 1995, Rakt Daan Shivir is an annual blood donation camp that exemplifies the practical aspect of community service and support for the armed forces.

Promoting Social Responsibility: The camp raises awareness about the importance of blood donation and the critical need for such contributions to save lives. Encouraging students, parents, and teachers to participate in blood donation fosters a sense of social responsibility and altruism.

Volunteerism: Students learn the value of volunteerism and the impact of small actions in contributing to the greater good.

Strengthening Community Ties: The event

brings together different segments of the school community—students, teachers, parents, and local organisations—strengthening communal bonds and fostering collaboration. It creates a support network within the community, emphasising mutual aid and collective responsibility.

OVERALL IMPACT

These initiatives complement the academic curriculum by providing real-world learning experiences that enhance students' understanding of civic duties and social ethics.

Participation in these events contributes to the holistic development of students, nurturing not just intellectual growth but also emotional and social maturity. By embedding these values in the school culture, Salwan Public School creates a legacy of service and respect that students carry with them into their future endeavours.

The enthusiasm among students for joining the National Cadet Corps (NCC) and pursuing careers in the armed forces is a testament to these events' transformative effect. The NCC becomes a vibrant platform where children engage with the principles learned during 'Samman Diwas' and 'Rakt Daan Shivir,' fostering their holistic development.

The **recognition of Padma Shree awardees** from rural and tribal areas during 'Samman Diwas' not only honours these individuals but also motivates their communities, encouraging more people to strive for excellence. These events serve as powerful mechanisms for social upliftment, celebrating outstanding contributions from diverse sections of society. In response, Heritage Clubs have been initiated fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation for the nation's roots, aligned with the vision of NEP 2020.

The strategic involvement of high-ranking Armed Forces officers in school management deepens the institutional culture of service, sacrifice, and duty. This leadership choice not only adds prestige to the institution but also reinforces its commitment to supporting ex-military personnel.

The impact is also evident in the increased interest of students in joining the armed forces, facilitated by interactions during 'Samman Diwas.' Visits to the Indian Military Academy (IMA) and places like Kargil and Drass provide first-hand experiences that nurture children's aspirations and deepen their understanding of the armed forces.

Special coaching for the National Defence Academy (NDA) entrance exam by retired defense personnel empowers aspiring students, further demonstrating the institution's commitment to supporting military career paths.

Values of duty, patriotism, and sacrifice learned during outreach programs are expressed in various student-led initiatives. Campaigns like 'Road Safety' promote community well-being, while 'Har Hath Ek Kitab' highlights a dedication to education and literacy. Students actively collect and distribute books to underprivileged children, fostering a culture of learning and knowledge-sharing.

Environmental initiatives like 'Zero Plastic Zone' and 'Save Water, Save Soil' reflect students' understanding of sustainability, translating values of responsibility and stewardship into practical actions for a cleaner and greener world right in the pre-primary stage instills values of responsibility towards the environment and community at large.

Recognising emotional well-being, students launched the 'Helping and Healing' campaign during COVID-19, emphasising community support and creating a compassionate environment within the school.

The 'Ek Muthi Anaaj' campaign addresses hunger and food insecurity, with students actively participating in collecting and distributing grains to those in need, embodying the spirit of service and empathy.

These student-led campaigns, inspired by the armed forces and the recognition of outstanding contributions, create positive change in the community. The commitment of the students, parents, grandparents, and staff demonstrates that the impact of these initiatives resonates widely within the School community.

In conclusion, these events have profoundly enriched our school community, instilling values of patriotism, respect, and social responsibility, while fostering a strong, supportive network within the school and beyond.

CONCLUSION

There is a profound symbiosis between education stakeholders and the defenders of our nation, fostering an exchange of inspiration and reverence that transcends institutional boundaries. The Trust aspires to involve every individual in the field of education, aligning with the true spirit of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. The objective is clear—to cultivate ethical, compassionate learners who not only excel academically but are also deeply rooted in the values of service, sacrifice, and responsibility towards the nation, starting from early childhood.

The Trust remains unwavering in its commitment to extending support beyond traditional education. The vision is not merely to create an educational ecosystem but to establish a comprehensive support system for the families of martyrs, Padma Shree awardees, and the often-overlooked artisans and weavers.

In essence, the Trust seamlessly integrates educational excellence with a profound sense of social responsibility. The journey isn't solely about shaping academically proficient individuals; it's about nurturing socially conscious citizens dedicated to upholding the noble values exemplified by the Indian Armed Forces.

These initiatives are more than just events; they are transformative experiences that align with NEP 2020's vision for holistic education. They help cultivate a deep sense of national pride and duty, ensuring that future generations are compassionate, service-oriented, and patriotic. The Trust's comprehensive approach, including

collaborations with other educational institutions and support for families of soldiers and artisans, demonstrates its commitment to building a society rooted in compassion and national pride, starting from early childhood education.

From an early childhood education perspective, these values are integrated into the curriculum through various activities and initiatives. Young children are introduced to concepts of patriotism and community service through age-appropriate stories, crafts, and interactive sessions with veterans and artisans. Activities like making thank-you cards for soldiers or participating in cultural celebrations foster a sense of connection and appreciation.

Looking toward the future with optimism, the organization believes that every individual within the education landscape has the potential to build a society steeped in compassion, service, and national pride. Early childhood education plays a critical role in this vision by laying the foundation for these values. By starting this journey at a young age, children are more likely to carry these principles throughout their lives.

As these initiatives continue to unfold, their impact will ripple through the community, leaving an enduring legacy of unity and gratitude. This holistic approach to education ensures that every child, from their earliest years, is equipped with the values and skills needed to contribute positively to society.

“Ask not what your country can do for you – ask what you can do for your country.” The examples provided, such as Rakt Daan Shivir and Samman Diwas, represent just a few ways to serve one's country. Serving the nation encompasses various aspects of well-being, including physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual activities.

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