



A Case Study on the Effectiveness of a College Civic Engagement Program in Gulmit Gojal Hunza, Pakistan

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Abstract

In this study, the importance of community service is examined from the perspectives of Gulmit Gojal Hunza teachers and pupils. Questionnaire was used to perform the inquiry. The study's sample included both private and public colleges. Investigating the worth of services in educational settings from the perspectives of both teachers and students is the aim of the study. There were 80 pupils and 20 teachers among the 100 respondents who were chosen at random. A 20-item questionnaire was used as the research instrument, and the data was analyzed using the straightforward percentage approach. The results demonstrate how performing community service encourages learning among students as well as provide opportunity to travel and experience different cultures regarding their community and to show their involvement in various community activities. As students that engage in community service have a deeper understanding of their communities, including the resources, issues, and other knowledge required for a successful integration. It also gives students several opportunities to develop their civic sense and skills. Furthermore by being involved in community organizations while still in school, students can improve their communication and planning skills. Additionally, students develop relationships with different community members and get experience working with them in diverse areas. It strengthens a person's moral principles, which they developed while completing their service. The benefits of community service for individuals, organizations, and the community at large should be emphasized to college level.

Keywords: *Community service, interpersonal skills, practical approach, aesthetic sense*



Introduction

Giving people the chance to learn the knowledge and skills they need to realize their full potential and prosper in society is the fundamental purpose of education. Therefore, various types of courses, programs, training, and services should be offered from school till further. Such course or programs help students make more ethical decisions, maintain positive relationship, set and achieve, goals at schools and at home as well as within the community. According to Bhattacharyya, 2004; Community service learning programs in schools are experienced around the world in extensively diverse contexts. Community Service-learning (CSL) facilitates not only the implementation of theoretical knowledge in practice with the real-world demonstration of skills and boosts student learning outcomes (Buckner et al., 2010; Hunt et al., 2011; Claramita et al., 2019). Previous research suggests that learning through community service develops higher accountability to fulfill social responsibilities (Kolenko et al. 1996; Melville, Berg, & Blank, 2006) and offers students a chance to grow into a civically engaged environment (Godfrey 1999; Rama et al. 2000). Education gives training to acquire the skills to get better adjustment in educational institutions and achieve satisfactory socioeconomic status within society. The other way to entertain and develop the skills in the students is through community service or programs which gives students vast knowledge and information, helping individuals as an effective citizen for their society. When students participate in community service, it allows them to show their creativity in the activity and their abilities to do the task, solve problems by sharing their ideas, gain more information in their knowledge, and help others. As it develops a sense of responsibility in the individuals for upgrading their communities through communicating with their community members and knowing the needs of their societies, they start working for the betterment so then they start taking care of each other. It provides opportunities for the students to interact with various stakeholders such as business people, local government officials, and professionals- many people make the community run and they all have stories. So, it is necessary to encourage students to interact with them and interview them to learn from their experiences. It's essential for the students to engage themselves in different co-curricular and well-rounded activities so that they get a chance to explore their academic interests in a real-world sense. Engaging in the administration is not only to help other members it nourishes their leadership skills, develops empathy, expands their worldview, and brings positivity and impact on them. It also increases social awareness and the



responsibilities of an individual. It is the responsibility of the educational institution for shaping the students through quality education and professional skills as well as to provide such skills that ensure they have better adjustment within the community. For this, community service programs have a lot of benefits like the ability to improve their skills, improve the organization, improve knowledge, manage their time, and also learn ways to motivate other students and individuals to work for the betterment of their society. As educational institutions grow more involved with society and begin trying to address societal concerns, students become more active in their participation in volunteer service activities. The different types of activities can help the students to boost their confidence makes you more confident when you are confident you feel good for yourself. This self-affection in return makes you a positive thinker with a healthy mind. As we observe in our surrounding majority of the population is suffering from stress and anxiety due to social media or social issues, community service helps to reduce the factors of stress and anxiety because it keeps you engaged with different tasks, the engaging time which is making a positive impact on the society will minimize negative thoughts that is chasing the person moreover it connects you with different people reducing the isolation time that is the key factor for stress and anxiety. And give them a chance to show their leadership qualities to conduct the program with better mentality and participating in the activities can keep them physically strong and mentally fresh as well as it is also beneficial for their career along with the competitive world. The aims of the research are to carrying out the importance of community service in educational institution and perception of teacher and student.

Background of the study

In light of this research, when we looked at a subset of viewpoints on the value of community services. This study's main objective was to comprehend how community service characterized the demands of community service for college students. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, community service first emerged. The progressive era popularized the idea of college students performing volunteer work because the majority of institutions in America were doing it to promote democracy and community service. By participating in the development of a new democracy tailored to the needs of modern society, college students began to feel a part of their community.

The history of community service in Pakistan started in the 1950s. Most of the rural areas also started making their own organizations for the welfare of their youth and community, especially in the northern areas of Pakistan. Gulmit, a small village in Gojal Hunza, is making



its way in providing community service for its community. Some of their services include ‘The Gulmit Educational and Social Welfare Society, which was established in 1991 with the aim of providing better standards to the people of Gojal through education. The Gulmit Educational and Social Welfare Society is a community organization owned and managed by the local community through the 100% household membership of the 500 households in the village. The organization was formally registered in 1992 under the category of voluntary social welfare agencies. The society, acting on its motive of social change through quality education, established the Al Amyn model school. The aim was to provide quality education to the students of Gojal so they could compete in this developing world. It was the GSEWS that had the sole responsibility of reaching out to donor agencies, government institutions, and NGOS in establishing and strengthening the institute.

The Aga Khan Development Network is working more efficiently on the sustainable development of rural areas. AKDN is further branched into different agencies, which are the Aga Khan Agency for Habitat that works in wildlife conservation and habitat sustainability, the Aga Khan Rural Support Program, which works for rural development, the Aga Khan Education Service, which provides schools and books for the students of far-flung areas, and the Aga Khan Health Service, which facilitates remote areas with first aid services and other health facilities. The society played its role in the establishment of Hunza Educational Resources (HERP), the first ever educational resource centre that catered to the needs of all the English-medium schools in Hunza.

Not only in academics are students actively participating in the preservation of the natural environment of their areas. These activities, in collaboration with their teachers, include the celebration of environmental day, in which students’ plant trees to develop a sense of caring for the ecosystem and the importance of vegetation for our survival. It is not only a one-day activity for the students but an everyday responsibility as part of the natural environment. The Pakistan Scout and Guiding associations are found to be more active in securing the environment and developing a sense of responsibility in the younger generation. They have started displaying dustbins in commercial areas and tourist hotspots to avoid land pollution. These organizations also participate as volunteers in the village's monthly cleanliness.

Significance of the study

In educational institutions, community service plays a major role in a student’s life because it provides students with the opportunity to show compassion, leadership, and creativity and also establishes the student’s confidence and knowledge. So, it is important to engage students in different co-curricular and well-rounded activities that give benefits to themselves



and to their community. For its intended purpose, a community service program is an essential need from school until college. Through community service, students get an opportunity to explore academic interests in a real-world context. Students get involved in community service to not only help others but also expand their worldview, develop empathy and leadership skills in them, and realize how their actions can have a positive impact on them. When a student is involved in community service, it helps them learn important career skills like communication skills and problem-solving skills. Community service helps students connect with different people, groups, and organizations, which can be very useful in their lives. It helps students mature by developing social skills and relational tasks when more students get to work with concern in a productive manner.

Interaction

Through community service, students gain essential life experience, meet new people, and receive different credits for their volunteering. It's the responsibility of the school to prepare a child to adjust to different societies and different individuals. It fosters a sense of caring for others. It is possibly effective on personal identity, spiritual growth, moral development, and interpersonal development.

Career opportunity

For students in colleges, it's important to foster a sense of community service, as this can help them get ready for their future careers. Community service also allows teachers and administrators to understand the skills and abilities of their students and how to use those skills and abilities for their community, their institution, and themselves. So it may positively impact their personality. Community service gives students a new perspective on life and a new paradigm for approaching challenges and problems in their lives. For example, a student can choose a new career and develop a new perspective on new fields by working with different organizations.

Productive member

Participating in community service is valuable for the students because it helps them develop a good sense of leadership and makes them active members of society. It also enhances student's knowledge about different kinds of activities.

Furthermore, community service is a way of utilizing time in a qualitative and productive manner. For instance, community service is crucial in the lives of students because it keeps them involved in a variety of activities in a world where social media is widely used and projects a bad image of the world on a developing mind.



Social bonding

Community service, in a sense, is a way of empowering one's inner instinct for social bonding. Because humans are social creatures, our society needs intricate social bonds in order to function properly and rationally. In the course of the evolution of life on Earth, humans have progressed to become one of the most successful species there is, and if we dig a little deeper into the success story of Homo sapiens, we will discover that togetherness is the primary factor. Togetherness is what has evolved into community services today. All of our scientific, technological, and ethical achievements can be directly related to community service, as they were achieved not for one's individual benefit but for the whole community. If Thomas Edison invented the bulb, it was not so he could only light up his own home, but so everyone could take advantage of this amazing invention that we are all blessed with today. One can argue that there was a financial gain for Edison in inventing the bulb, but the fact is he put his energy into something unknown not for the sake of money but for the sake of improving his society, and he did. Now this presents a very beautiful message for all of us, especially the youth who are engaged in secondary and higher secondary education to serve their community in a critical fashion.

Community service for students allows exposure to different mindsets and societies along with their needs. Since the higher secondary level, or college level in this research context, is a time when students start exploring their careers and passions, this is the time when students should reach out to their community to seek inspiration. When a student gets engaged in community service, he is able to understand what's missing in his community and what is required to eliminate that need. For instance, an IT student is assigned community service at a school for visually impaired people. He will not only be able to help the unfortunate people carry on with their lives but will also be able to seek inspiration and might be able to start an IT project to further ease their lives. He might be able to invent something that can help them understand writing if they are not seeing. Brails are an excellent example of this.

Another reason for college students to be a part of community service can be best explained by the maxim 'what goes around comes around'. The very first sign that anthropologists and paleontologists look for in a previous civilization is not tools made from stones or mummies but a broken human leg bone (the femur) that has been healed. Back when humans were evolving and learning new things about the world, they were equally vulnerable to many predators and had to rely on themselves for food, shelter, and other vital things. So if a primitive human had broken his femur, his life was over. He would not have been able to



arrange food for himself or escape a predator. But as we evolved, we started getting into groups and caring for each other. Those who fell sick or broke their legs were taken care of without any personal gain. The individual who was cared for and cured in return provided services to his group as well as others. This shows that the key to our success is taking care of each other or as I like to call it, community service.

Mental and physical health

Community service has been proven to be good for mental and physical health in many different ways. Firstly, it promotes self-confidence, which makes you more confident. When you are confident, you feel good about yourself. This self-affection in return makes you a positive thinker with a healthy mind. As we observe in our surrounding majority of the population is suffering from stress and anxiety due to social media or social issues, community service helps to reduce the factors of stress and anxiety because it keeps you engaged with different tasks, the engaging time which is making a positive impact on the society will minimize negative thoughts that are chasing the person, and moreover, it connects you with different people reducing the isolation time that is the key factor for stress and anxiety.

As community services are more likely to have physical tasks that are alternative ways of exercising, Studies have proved that physical work can improve the quality of health and lower the rate of mortality for people of every age, but being specific in terms of age, it is found to be very beneficial for the elderly. It lowers the risks of chronic and heart diseases in old age as community service tasks keep the body active and healthy. Service plays a vital role in the student's life by engaging them in different activities.

Aims of the study

1. The study's main goal is to investigate the value of community service in educational institutions and how teachers and students view it.
2. To ascertain whether or not students' participation in community service offers them real-world experience and enduring learning.
3. To give young people the knowledge and skills they need to better themselves and be contributing members of society.
4. To provide necessary skills and knowledge to young people so they can improve themselves and be active citizens in society.
5. To identify that it really gives an opportunity for the student in practical life.
6. To encourage people to be more confident and get involved with their personal development.



Research Questions

1. Do you agree that community service provides a real-world experience and long-lasting learning among students?
2. Do you agree that the younger generation should be an active part of working for the betterment of the community and understanding society at a deeper level?
3. Do you agree that community service provides young people with the necessary skills and knowledge to improve themselves and be active citizens in society?
4. Do you agree that community service gives students opportunities in practical life?
5. Do you agree that community service encourages people to be more confident and get involved with their personal development?

Delimitation

1. The study was limited to the following aspects:
2. The investigation was only restricted to the students and teachers of different colleges in Gulmit Gojal Hunza.
3. 80 students and 20 teachers were selected randomly.
4. Two questionnaires with 20 items each were developed for 80 students and 20 teachers.
5. The questionnaire was filled out by hand by the students and teachers.

Literature Review

Community service is defined as unpaid labor done by an individual or group for the welfare and betterment of their community without receiving any reward. Meeting frequently with a group of people who share an interest allows one to acquire and practice social skills. A good natural sense of accomplishment and a positive outlook on life can be provided through networking with various people and working willingly. Community service is mutuality in that not only the students but also their families and the community benefit from it. Colleges arrange different social events for the welfare of the community, in which students play a major role as volunteers. In organizing these events, money never becomes a hindrance as most of the financial area is covered by the service of volunteers. This is the best way to develop ethical norms and values in students, as the purpose behind this work is not to get money or recognition. The only purpose of the service is to make a community a better place for everyone. Community service not only develops the academic skills in the students but



also develops moral and social values in the students. Due to a sense of social obligation, volunteers participate in voluntary activities (Kluget al., 2018). Volunteering can greatly enhance a person's ability to express themselves, plan, communicate, take action, and have empathy for others (Wu et al., 2019). Through voluntary work, it helps the participant in communicating with other members, enhances their skills of teamwork, develops empathy for others, and makes them a more productive person for the society. Three characteristics are essential for someone to have a sense of social responsibility: first, they must hold to morally upright principles; second, they must uphold the rule of practical fairness; and third, they must be prepared to put others before themselves and make sacrifices for them (Hawkes et al., 2020; Janeway et al., 2022). The researcher addresses three main points of an individual with a good sense of responsibility, i.e., ideas, for bringing betterment to the society. Next, he discusses justice, as it is important for everyone in society, no matter if they are part of the high class, middle class, or lower class. Every individual should be treated equally. Thirdly, it creates in them a sense of responsibility towards the community and serves them when it is needed. Good social responsibility was shown to be strongly correlated with well-being in studies examining the relationship between these two concepts (Macassa et al., 2021). The degree of a person's subjective self-perception of well-being is a type of well-being (Toh et al., 2020). They believe that if an individual has a sense of responsibility, then his views and ideas about perceiving things become more positive. An individual's perception and outlook on society are more positive when he or she has a strong sense of social duty. In addition, he is more eager to take on civic obligations that do not require payment, making it simpler for him to experience emotional fulfillment (Anderson et al., 2021). He indicates that a person with a good sense has more positive views about society and works only for its betterment, not expecting anything in return. Individual skill development may contribute to improving subjective well-being. These positive cognitive processes and emotions can also bring about increased social appraisal of volunteers and social responsibility, which can make volunteers feel more self-sufficient (Dionigi et al. 2020). One of the key elements influencing subjective well-being is self-efficacy (Chudzicka Czupaa and Zalewska-Unkiewicz, 2020; Bhattarai et al., 2021). They said that believing in and taking part in the activities of community service is such a beneficial and affective activity that helps in mind grooming and also helps them adjust to society and live a healthier life. With volunteer work, their values will be realized, boosting their happiness with life and life in general, which will cause them to pay less attention to its bad parts (Tse, 2020). According to him, when they remain engaged in such activities, they refrain from negative thoughts and bad activities. Their confidence level



boosts, they develop teamwork skills, and after going through hurdles, they realize the values of life. It creates better relationships between teachers, students, and the community.

According to research by Bielefeldt and Canney (2016), social responsibility and volunteerism go hand in hand, and when people's senses of social obligation deteriorate, they are more likely to have reduced the frequency of their volunteerism. He discovered that the awareness of one's social obligations is more related to voluntary services, and when individuals have less sense of it, they have less participation in the services. Moreover, community service is not just limited to seeking inspiration and exposure; it also strengthens our moral values. Going out of our comfort zones and helping our society is easier said than done. Not everyone is able to do that, and it takes a strong moral push to do that. When an individual lets go of his ego and takes time out of his tight schedule to help someone, he is treating his ethical and moral values, and this practice leads an individual to become an exemplary citizen. As per many authentic sources of literature, a person involved in community service is very less likely to be convicted of a crime as he has been an active member of the social fabric through community service. Therefore, community service is a must for a student to not become socially isolated and to become a responsible citizen.

The young generation is believed to be very sharp and keen observers; they hear what the elders say and do what the elders are doing. Community service will make a great impression on the younger generation. By seeing all the benefits of community service, they will feel encouraged to perform the same activity. It may seem easy, but it is far more challenging to manage your time with the services you are providing and the time you are giving to your family. Once you reach out to different organizations, community services will work more like a bridge for you, connecting you with resources that can be useful to your family in return.

Numerous organizations consider occasional volunteers to be a vital resource, and they all have the desire to help others, socialize, and physically challenge themselves for sporting activities. These goals are what keep them committed to their volunteer work (dunn et al.,2016). Because of their motivations, societal expectations, and sense of fulfillment, Hyde et al. (2016) discovered that beginner episodic volunteers wanted to go on volunteering. So, it is possible to view occasional volunteering as a more ongoing endeavor. They still intend to go on volunteering in the future, and it still contributes to their sense of fulfillment and community.



Research Methodology

The purpose of the study was to explore the exigency of community service programs in colleges: a case study of Gulmit Gojal Hunza, Pakistan. The qualitative research method was applied by using a questionnaire survey to carry out the research study. The researchers have selected four colleges of Gulmit Gojal from the population. Twenty teachers and 80 students were selected for the collection of data using the questionnaire method. After the collection of the data, researchers have used the simple percentage method for the analysis of the data.

Analysis

A questionnaire was used to collect data from students and teachers on the study, which was then, evaluated using graphical and percentage methods.

Table 1

The results by students were as follow:

S#	Statement: Importance of community service for students	Series 1 (Yes)	Series 2 (No)
1	Supports college to gain market value and reputation	75%	25%
2	Helps society to make progress in a better way.	86%	14%
3	It should be mandatory for students.	76%	24%
4	Students fear refrain from participating in this program	60%	40%
5	Develops a sense of ethical & moral values among students	77%	23%
6	Increased students' knowledge about the community	93%	7%
7	Cognitive skills of students are enhanced by such activities	82%	18%
8	Teachers' involvement in activities are beneficial for the college	86%	14%
9	Provides opportunities for students to have practical approach	80%	20%
10	Promotes leadership qualities among students	87%	13%
11	It is essential for the progress of college	87%	13%
12	Community service make students confident & creative	85%	15%
13	Enhance professional growth among students	81%	19%
14	Become source for funding to college	71%	29%
15	Help students to get academic success	60%	40%
16	Participation of students in it develops changes in their behavior	88%	12%
17	Creates strong bond between teachers and students	87%	13%
18	Parents should get opportunity to participate in such activities	85%	15%
19	Identify & generate resources within community	78%	22%
20	Help students to get satisfactory adjustment in the community	71%	29%



Figure 1

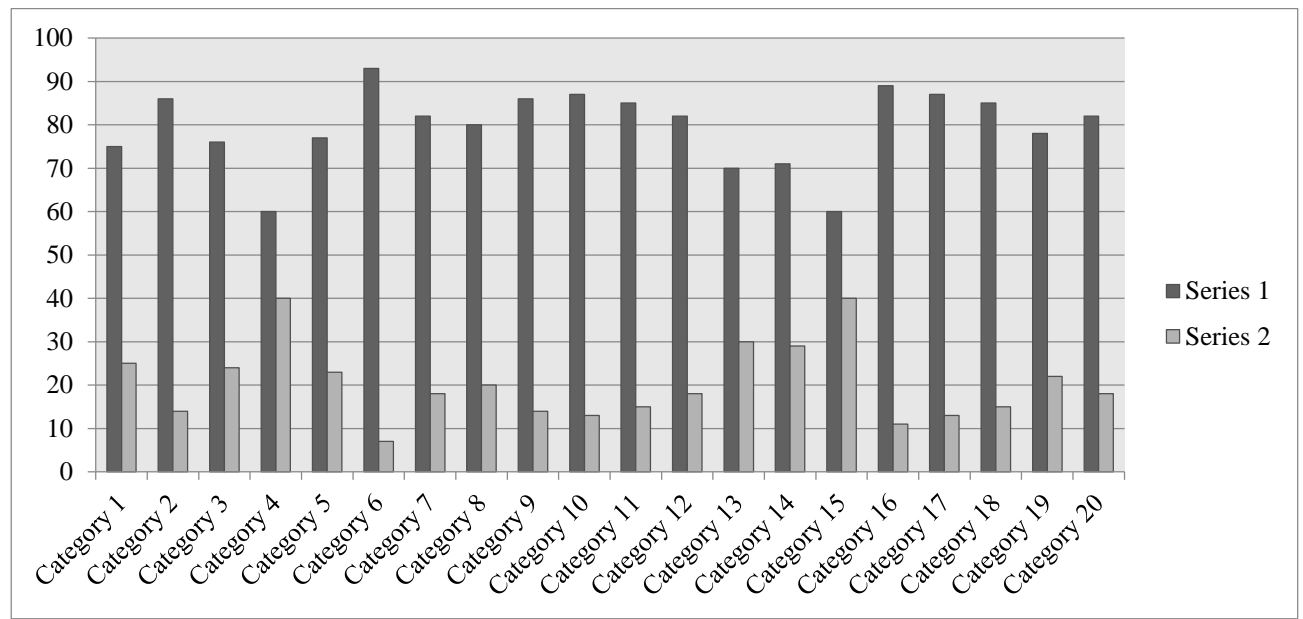


Table 2

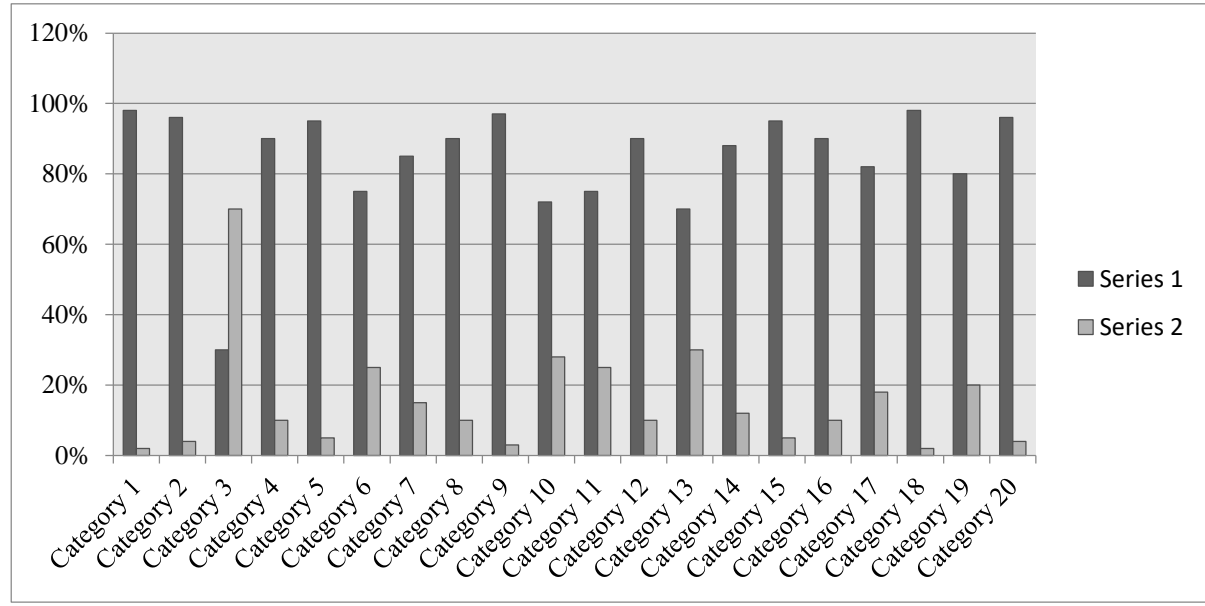
The results by teachers were as follow:

S#	Statement: Benefits of community service at college level	Series 1 (Yes)	Series 2 (No)
1	Contribution of teachers in such activities have a great impact on students	98%	2%
2	Participation in activities make a positive change in the behavior of students	96%	4%
3	Lack of teacher's guidance students don't participate in the community service activities	30%	70%
4	Community service develops a sense of ethical and moral values among teachers	90%	10%
5	Community service should be part of an educational program	95%	5%
6	Students fear refrain from participating in community service	75%	25%
7	Teachers can persuade others to be part of community service through students	85%	15%
8	Activities of community service make strong bond b/w teacher and student	90%	10%
9	Participation in community service gives more opportunities for students for professional growth	97%	3%
10	Concern activities have a relation with the academic success for students	72%	28%
11	Parents should get opportunity to participate in such activities	75%	25%
12	Community service activities develop student's cognitive skills	90%	10%
13	It is also a good source of funding for colleges	70%	30%
14	Provides more physical activities for the students	88%	12%
15	Give real life experience among students	95%	5%
16	Creates leadership qualities among students.	90%	10%



17	Community service program help students to get satisfactory adjustment within society	82%	18%
18	Supports college to gain market value and reputation	98%	2%
19	Identify & generate resources within community	80%	20%
20	Helps to cope with the challenges of globalized communities of the world	96%	4%

Figure 2



Discussion

It has been observed that, due to constraints of time and cost, the survey was conducted among the target population of the study. Both teachers and students have been involved in the study to collect the data using the quantitative method, and the questionnaires are filled out by hand. The study depicts the students who got socially improved through community service; this clearly shows that inclusive involvement in social service has a positive impact on students' social and personality development. Hence, it has an impactful improvement in social life. According to Ahola-Launonen (2016) and Gay 2021, social responsibility is the act of an individual having a moral duty to treat others well and contribute to society. The sense of social duty that motivates volunteers to behave in ways that benefit society is the reason they engage in volunteer work (Brusa and Barilan, 2021). Participating in the activities helps develop morality and responsibility for their community and its members, which is beneficial for the progress of the community. In educational institutions, it's necessary to develop a sense of volunteerism among the students, which is helpful for preparing them for their professional lives. Community service also allows teachers and



administrators to understand the skills and abilities of their students and how to use those skills and abilities for their community, their institution, and themselves. Students gain essential life experience, like meeting with new people and receiving different credit for their volunteer service. It's the responsibility of the school to prepare a child to adjust to different societies and different individuals. Community service creates better relationships between teachers, students, and the community. It fosters a sense of caring for others. It fosters a sense of caring for others. It might be helpful for developing one's sense of self, spirituality, morality, interpersonal skills, and practical experience.

Conclusion

After conducting the research, the researcher concluded that community service is one of the important aspects of developing social skills in students in academics and that participating in activities makes a positive change in the behavior of students. Community service acts go beyond the classrooms and help the students gain real-life experiences. Like being an active citizen leading a community. Students will develop good communication and problem-solving techniques through these activities, which enhance the social cycle of the student and teacher by interacting with new people and also help them adjust to a new environment. The researcher explains in this study that community service is an unpaid service that is beneficial for students and teachers in preparing for professional life. Community service gives the students a new perspective on life and also helps them choose a career. Moreover, it makes productive use of time and strengthens the moral values of an individual, which he learned while volunteering without any personal benefit. Furthermore, the importance of community service should be more widely promoted in educational institutions so students will be motivated to work.

Recommendations

1. The activities should be shared on college websites and on other social media platforms in regard to gaining attention from sponsors and getting appreciation.
2. As a role model to others and to inspire other students to participate in community service, schools should give out rewards and certification to the active volunteers.
3. A few students should be selected to collect requirements from the community and bring them to the school so that the school can work on the community work, which can be beneficial for both the learner and the local area.
4. As volunteers, college students will not ask for facilitation like transportation or financial requirements, so the school makes a separate budget for the volunteers while



- they are working outside their own community or for other communities. Not all volunteers can cope with financial strategies.
5. Principals and teachers should be more active while working on community work; only students should not be pressurized so that it will create a sense of harmony among the community.
 6. There should be a linkage between the community leaders and the college volunteers so that they can improve their leadership skills. In this regard, the school should ensure that it helps the students communicate with the community leaders.
 7. For inspiration, the college should make the students visit different institutions where community service is properly practiced.

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