

# Amalgamating Community Enrichment Programs In Home Science With The National Education Policy 2020

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## **Abstract**

*Home science is a field where students learn from practical experiences and therefore are very apt to participate in community enrichment programs. This is important because community enrichment programs support student's cognitive and social development, introduce students to new activities, and help students develop the attitudes and skills to participate in community programs. This paper discusses need for community enrichment programs and advantages of participating in community enrichment program for students.*

**Key Words:** *Community Enrichment, Home Science, National Education Policy 2020*

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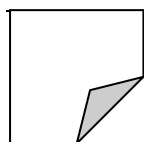
## **I. Introduction**

The philosophy of Home Science is based on the development of the individual, who is the most important component of the community and of national development. Community development programs are an integral part of Home Science. Community Enrichment opportunities that encourage lifelong learning, take place throughout in the Home Science Program. Whether for personal development, job training, hobbies or fun, qualified teachers with students from various departments share their passion to bring new skills to the community. Home science is a field where students learn from practical experiences and therefore are very apt to participate in community enrichment programs. Home Science covers areas of specialization such as Food and Nutrition, Communication and Extension, Resource Management, Human Development and Textile Science.

UGC's long-standing commitment to strengthen social responsibility and community engagement of Universities/ Colleges in India has taken shape with the implementation of NEP 2020. An earlier policy of Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), Government of India (2012) had been developed into a Scheme to promote stronger community engagement amongst HEIs in the country. The interdisciplinary approach of Home Science has taken new dimensions. The Home Science curricula integrates community development programs through their internships which is compulsory for all students no matter which specialisation they choose. This is important because community enrichment programs support student's cognitive and social development, introduce students to new activities, and help students develop the attitudes and skills to participate in community programs.

To achieve the objectives of socio-economic development of New India, HEIs can play an important role through active community engagement. This approach will also contribute to improvements in quality of both teaching and research in HEIs in India. As a growing and large sector in the country, HEIs need to foster social responsibility and community engagement in their vision and mission itself. It is also important that institutional mechanisms are developed to adopt a holistic and functional approach to community engagement, encompassing all the three functions of HEIs—teaching, research and service.

Community engagement in education is widely acknowledged as a vital force to achieve quality education for all. It requires the collective efforts of teachers, children, parents, and community to facilitate fair, equitable, and sustainable outcomes. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 strongly recommends engagement of community at all stages of school education not only for contribution in resources but also for engaging in child's learning. International experiences revealed that when families and community members volunteer their time and talent in schools, both schools and children increase their capacity to do more and to do it better particularly at the foundational stage. Therefore, it has been realized in many countries that community involvement in education system is vital for effective teaching and learning. With deeper involvement of the community, school improvement and better accountability mechanisms can also be built. Empowering local community to take charge of educating their children is the foundation of effective school community relationship. Many initiatives have been taken across the globe and are well documented as good practices and studies on



community engagement. These could be ready references for those who are in the process of planning or organizing community engagement programmes for foundational stage in the States/ UTs

Community engagement is the backbone of creating positive change in any society (Camino & Zeldin, 2002). It involves the active participation of community members in decision-making processes that affect their lives. Community engagement can take different forms, such as community meetings, public forums, and community-based organizations. Centred around trust, communication and collaboration, community participation focuses on the needs, expectations and desires of community members. Effective engagement processes can help build trust within communities, ensure efficient implementation of decisions, and result in better allocation of services.

The goal of community enrichment programs is to provide experiential learning opportunities and cultural expansion for students while improving the living conditions in underserved communities around the world. Community enrichment groups participate in a number of projects that enhance quality of life in a developing community. From cleaning up a beach or a neighbourhood, constructing or refurbishing schools, clinics, community centres or residences, to planting trees, flowers and vegetable gardens, the ways in which volunteers can contribute are numerous! In addition to lending a much-needed hand, students have the opportunity to expand their worldview by experiencing the language, art, cuisine, and customs of another culture.

### **Need for Community Enrichment Programs**

When a community is enriched, it is closer to reaching its goals. Students should work together to enrich the community. Engaging oneself in community enrichment programs promotes critical thinking and problem-solving skills, improve student's ability to concentrate, and make learning more meaningful, valuable, and rewarding (Checkoway & Gutierrez, 2006).

The purpose of community enrichment programs is to provide extended learning opportunities and challenges to students who have already mastered, or can quickly master, the basic curriculum. Participating in community enrichment programs boost student's confidence and self-esteem and increase interest in learning by offering a variety of learning opportunities and to practice what they have learnt in the class. Overall, participation in community enrichment programs will help develop a love of learning and motivate them to pursue their passions. These activities provide students with new and exciting experiences, allowing them to grow and develop in many areas, and unleash their full potential.

The Community Enrichment program supports activities that enhance the vitality of our communities. They include activities that promote local arts, culture, creativity, civic engagement, and community development.

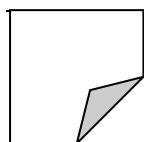
Community enrichment programs seeks to better engage the community to achieve long-term and sustainable outcomes, processes, relationships, discourse, decision-making, or implementation. To be successful, it must encompass strategies and processes that are sensitive to the community-context in which it occurs.

Community enrichment program is not generally driven by a 'model' so much as by a framework of guiding principles, strategies, and approaches. This framework is based on principles that respect the right of all community members to be informed, consulted, involved and empowered. Community engagement employs and range of tools and strategies to ensure success. It also places a premium on fostering and enhancing trust as a critical element in long-term, sustainable engagement and effective governance.

The word 'community' is also a broad term used to define groups of people, whether they are stakeholders, interest groups, or citizen groups. A community may be a geographic location (community of place), a community of similar interest (community of practice), or a community of affiliation or identity such as industry or sporting club.

Community enrichment program is the process of working collaboratively with and through groups of people affiliated by geographic proximity, special interest, or similar situations to address issues affecting the well-being of those people. It is a powerful vehicle for bringing about environmental and behavioural changes that will improve the health of the community and its members. It often involves partnerships and coalitions that help mobilize resources and influence systems, change relationships among partners, and serve as catalysts for changing policies, programs, and practices. Community enrichment' program is therefore a strategic process with the specific purpose of working with identified groups of people, whether they are connected by geographic location, special interest, or affiliation to identify and address issues affecting their well-being.

The linking of the term 'community' to 'enrichment' serves to broaden the scope, shifting the focus from the individual to the collective, with the associated implications for inclusiveness to ensure consideration is made of the diversity that exists within any community. The National Education Policy (NEP) announced by the Government of India in 2020 has presented a transformative framework for higher education in the country. It has reinforced many of the recommendations already included in the new policy, as exemplified through these lines: "The purpose of the education system is to develop good human being capable of rational thought and action, possessing compassion and empathy, courage and resilience, scientific temper and creative imagination, with



sound ethical moorings and values". It aims at producing engaged, productive, and contributing citizens for building an equitable, inclusive, and plural society as envisaged by our Constitution.

In practice, community enrichment program is a blend of science and art. The science comes from sociology, public policy, political science, cultural anthropology, organizational development, psychology, social-psychology and other disciplines. It also comes from organizing concepts drawn from the literature on community participation, community development, constituency building, and community psychology. The art comes from the understanding, skill, and sensitivity used to apply and adapt the science in ways that fit the community and the purposes of specific engagement efforts. The results of these efforts may be defined differently and can encompass a broad range of structures (e.g., coalitions, partnerships, collaborations), but they all fall under the general rubric of community engagement.

Community enrichment program can be complex and labour-intensive and require dedicated resources such as time, funding, and people with the necessary skills. Citizens and leaders in communities across are struggling to make the right choices for the communities and issues they address. Building and implementing effective strategies requires a solid grounding in the best tools, techniques, and information available.

### **Advantages of Community Enrichment Program for Students**

The community enrichment program aims at developing human potential to its maximum capacity. It develops students as a member of the community by promoting a progressive outlook, self-reliance and a co-operative way of life.

Community Enrichment programs give students the opportunity to explore new activities, develop new skills and socialize with others outside of the classroom setting. Students across departments can plan to empower at-risk children, teens and women by providing education and skills training that help them lead an independent and dignified life and also encourage all sections of society, irrespective of caste, religion or economic status, to cooperate on long-term development. The aim also could be to empower, train and support local people to take responsibility within their own communities and to create an awareness of self-worth and provide facilities for improving the lives. They can be scheduled for before and after college hours, during college hours, or during summer vacation. Through rigorous training during internships Home Science students gain the power to make a real and positive change in the various areas they are working in the community.

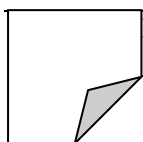
Imparting holistic education through knowledge and life skill development is a paramount duty of every education institution (Benson, Scales, Hamilton & Sesma, 2007). It is important to instil in our students a strong sense of social responsibility the commitment towards helping the needy and disadvantaged sections of society and engaging them in welfare initiatives for environment-friendly, sustainable and inclusive growth.

Community enrichment programs are a movement designed to promote better living for the whole community with the active participation and on the initiative of the community (Wenger & Snyder, 2000). Community enrichment is a balanced programme for stimulating the local potential for growth in every direction. Community enrichment programs encompasses issues related to neighbourhood planning, citizen participation, grassroots organizing, housing, economic development, social welfare, public safety, health, education, recreation, the environment and other aspects of community life.

Home Science covers areas of specialization such as Food and nutrition, Communication and Extension, Resource Management, Human Development, Fabric and apparel science. Home Science has adopted an ecological approach in its curriculum that engages the student through teaching, research and extension. It has contributed a great deal towards national development by training students to take up leadership roles in extension and community outreach programs. The students are encouraged to develop a scientific temper. Familiarizing them with the use of newer technologies, methods in family and community linkages and sustainable use of resources for human development are the hall mark of education in Family and Community Science (Home Science). As a discipline Home Science integrates the ingredients of the sciences, social sciences and technology to facilitate the study of and enhance the quality of human life. Its approach is therefore inherently interdisciplinary which the NEP 2020 has underlined. The education process in Home Science underscores the importance of the individual 's dynamic relationship with his/her family, community and society as a whole, as well as with the resources in the environment. Higher education learning in Home Science subjects provides students the opportunity to sharpen their capacities with a sense of social responsibility.

In contemporary times, Home Scientists promote capacity building of individuals and communities for social and economic empowerment. They train community women and youth from various strata of society for entrepreneurship. Many Home Scientists have done exceptionally well as entrepreneurs themselves. They do not remain job seekers but have also become job creators. They gain and provide employment in research organizations, food and textile industries, dietetic practice, education and child development domains, accreditation of green buildings, strategic planning and communication technologies.

Years of national and international experience in the field of Home Science has contributed to the wisdom that all the five windows of opportunity that Home Science offers be opened, i.e. Food and Nutrition, Human



Development and Family Studies, Resource Management, Communication and Extension and Textile and Apparel Sciences. In these programs, the students learn the fundamental principles and foundations of all the five areas. They are expected to internalize the principle of a Home Scientist, that is, to give back to the community from which they draw, for sustainable development. This is a major contribution of Home Science in both developed and developing societies.

Apart from providing nutrition education to the community, extension education helps the community to know the trends in income, employment, poverty, unemployment, labour force participation, and other social and economic statistics which are very crucial for the development of the nation. All these provide learning, from practical experiences.

## **II. Conclusion**

Home Science program equips students with various skills to engage with the community. Learning outcomes to community enrichment programs are huge. It has a positive impact on students' academic learning because they learn by doing. It improves students' ability to apply what they have learned in "the real world" and therefore has a positive impact on academic outcomes such as students demonstrate complexity of understanding, problem analysis, problem-solving, critical thinking, and cognitive development. This will also improve their ability to understand complexity and ambiguity. Strong, active, and inclusive relationships between communities, the private sector, the public, and civil society should be aimed for.

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