

Human resource building- an approach to service learning

Sonika Rajan

Isabella Thoburn College, India.

Abstract

Background: Isabella Thoburn College at Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, India has initiated Service Learning Program for its students through 4 issue based centers. One of the centers AIDS Awareness Center for Counseling, Education, and Training (AAC CET) is in the field of HIV/AIDS. It follows 6 pronged approach to achieve its objectives and one of the objectives is Human Resource Building. The paper explains the whole concept and methodology of human resource building as an approach to service learning.

Focus of Discussion: Paper deals in detail with the various training programs carried out by AAC CET. Training is provided to 4 target groups- college students, educators, village animators, and primary health workers. Basic procedure and activities are the same for all the groups but the communicative language, resource material, guest speakers, games, presentations and so forth vary according to the group needs. Variety of experiences provided to the groups transforms them into peer educator, counselor and trainers who go and work with the community

Comments: Human resource building brings teaching and learning, educators and society, theory and practice into new relationships and understanding. Our venture into human resource building is an effort towards modeling a behavior and approach which focuses on sharing so that we can build a better world in the new millennium.

Conclusion: Human resource building aims at bringing change in the minds of people. Change is needed in the present world which can be witnessed only when people change at the emotional level and that is what Human resource building is aimed at.

Keywords: Peer Educators, Village Animators

「建立人力資源」 -- 作為服務學習的一種方法

Sonika Rajan

Isabella Thoburn College, India.

摘要

*背景：*勒克瑙北方邦的印度伊莎貝拉Thoburn學院通過4個問題基於中心創始了它的學生的服務學習計畫。AAC CET是其中一個提高人們對愛滋病(HIV/AIDS)認識的教育及培訓中心。中心根據6種交錯相關的方法以達到其宗旨，而其中一個目標是「建立人力資源」。本文解釋建立人力資源整體概念及作為服務學習的一種方法。

*討論焦點：*本文詳細列出AAC CET執行的各種各樣的訓練計畫。訓練提供給4位元目標群大學生、教育家、村莊設計卡通者和主要公共衛生工作者。基礎的程式和活動是同樣所有小組的，但是直言語言，資源材料，特邀報告人，比賽，介紹等等根據小組需要變化。經驗品種提供給小組變換他們入連同並且工作社區的同輩教育家、顧問和教練員。

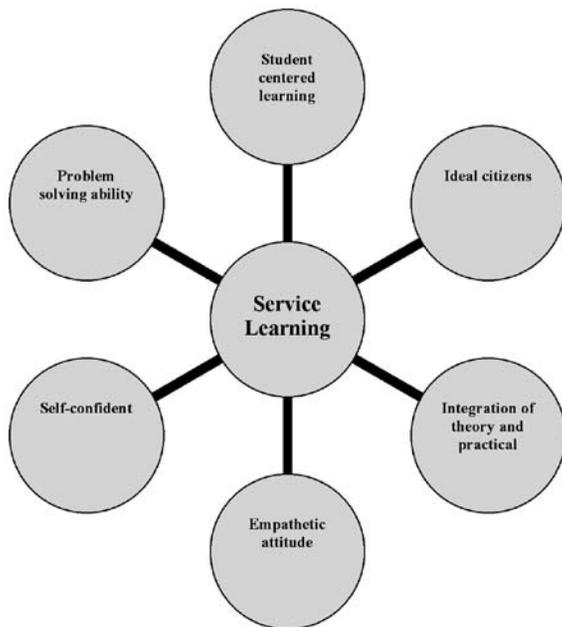
*評論：*人力資源帶領教和學，教育家和社會、理論和實踐進入新關係和瞭解。我們的事業到人力資源大廈裏是往塑造集中於分享的行為和方法的努力，以便我們在新的千年可以修造一個更好的世界。

*結論：*人力資源目標是讓人們在思想上的改變。改變可以是視為當前世界必要，只有當人們的情感上得到改變，而這個改變正是文章提及的人力資源所能夠帶出的。

關鍵詞：同輩教育家，村莊設計卡通者

Background

Service Learning is a method of teaching, learning, and reflecting that combines academic class room curriculum with meaningful service, frequently youth service throughout the community. It is a method by which young people learn through active participation in organized service experience. It is linking community service to the educational mission in such a way that these links are in consonance with one's culture. Service learning programs are meant to measure the learning by volunteers as well as how the recipients have been benefited.



Goals of Service Learning

As a teaching pedagogy, it falls under the category of experiential education. More specifically, it integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibilities, encourage life- long civic engagement, and strengthen communities.

By service learning programs, it is our endeavor to address a wide variety of human and community needs. If we want the world to be a better place, the problems and issues of society inevitably become a matter of everyone's concern. It is a strategy for attacking these all important areas. There is a great need for students to experience the world beyond their own borders.

In the traditional system of education in India which is rigid and theory oriented, students are busy in finishing the required curriculum. As a result, they lack an opportunity to understand the grass root problems of the society. The experience of service is a powerful means of introducing students to global issues and realizes that each problem may and must contribute to the good of whole. Keeping all this in mind, program of Service Learning and Service Action was initiated at Isabella Thoburn College and special emphasis was laid on four aspects - HIV/ AIDS, Women, Nutrition, and Education.

The college established four centers to deal with these issues. The Centers are -

- AIDS Awareness Centre for Counseling, Education, and Training - (AACCET)
- Centre for Education beyond Curriculum - (CEDBEC)
- Nutritional Initiatives for Community Health and Education - (NICHE)
- Centre for Women Studies and Development - (CWSD).

In this paper, pedagogy being followed by AIDS Awareness Centre for Counseling, Education, and Training (AACCET) is being highlighted. Prior to this, a little background of the centre and its activities is being narrated. The State of Uttar Pradesh in India, is one of the most backward (economically, educationally and socially) states of India. With

a very high population and a very low awareness level of HIV/AIDS pandemic, this State is ripe for devastation by the spread of virus unless immediate steps are taken to raise awareness level in all the strata of the society but particularly among the youth and young adults on whose shoulders the future rests.

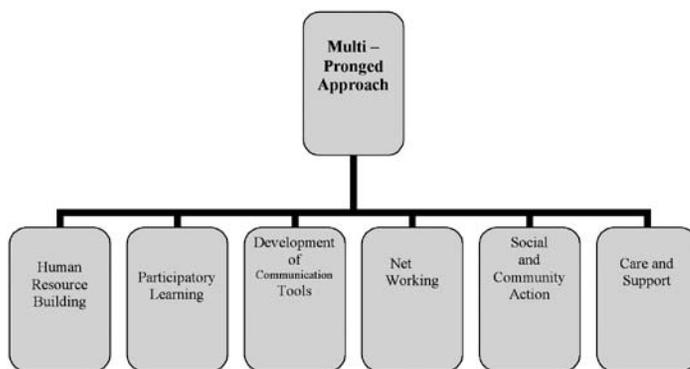
Risk of HIV infection is one of the major problems facing young people today. They face fear if they are ignorant, discrimination if they or a family member is infected from HIV/AIDS. They are ill equipped in terms of both information and skills to handle the life situation which they are to face. Due to lack of information, they consult peers, books, magazines and so forth and in the process have a lot of queries which they are unable to openly discuss. In the context of the evolving HIV/AIDS pandemic, acquisition of relevant information and life skills for dealing with risky situation becomes vital.

Isabella Thoburn College has organized and successfully conducted workshops and seminars for its faculty, students as well as women leaders of Methodist Church in India. Majority of these women have responsibility for schools, hostels (dorms/ residence) in addition to working with women in churches and communities. After the review of contemporary situation as well as need of the hour, the following objectives were framed for AAC CET

(Brochure of AAC CET, 2005) -

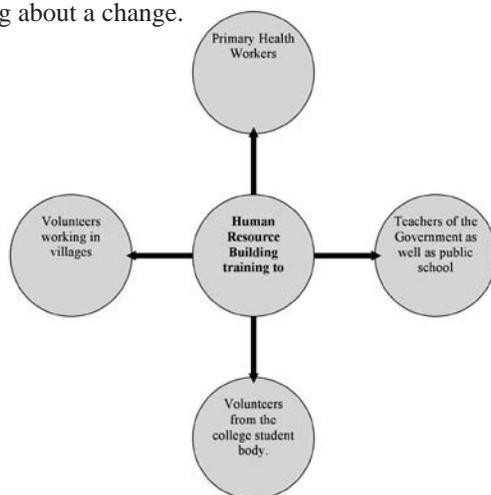
- To educate and build awareness related to HIV/AIDS
- To create and develop resource material for generation of information, education, and communication (IEC)
- To conduct workshops, seminars, conferences, and advocacy campaigns
- To provide training and mobilize volunteers under capacity building
- To generate facilities for utilization of media, performing arts, and other communication skills
- To corporate facilities for the community at large for counseling and training
- To provide ongoing support to people needing psychological and emotional help
- To strive to bring about attitudinal and behavioral change towards people living with HIV/AIDS
- To organize and motivate people to form Self Help Groups in both rural and urban areas
- To develop partnership and promote coalition by networking with the International and National organizations

Multi pronged approach is followed at the centre to achieve its objective---



Human Resource Building is a field of inquiry and practice focusing on the process of improvement in learning and performance in individuals and groups. In a way it is marshalling talent (Dave Ulrich quoted in Times of India, August 26, 2009). It is also a systematic process to secure general and targeted individual competencies and organized capabilities. Human Resource Building is meant to build team work, to foster human resourcefulness through training, to develop soft skills, to create leaders, and to assess the quality of talent. It is generally achieved through domains of expertise such as life long training, career development, life skill programs and so forth.

A plan of human resource building is a systematic process of matching the interests, skills and, talents of individuals with the long term goals and opportunities in the community. Thus, creating a human resource needs to involve the community, so that their participation and input will lead to strong support. It is a strategic and coherent approach to the building of an institution's most valued assets-the people working there who individually and collectively contribute to the achievement of the objectives of any venture. In a nutshell, human resource building means preparing individuals in such a manner that they are able to bring about a change.



Target groups of Human Resource Building

It involves extensive training of the selected group of people as well as the volunteers. The target groups of human resource building as an approach to service learning at Isabella Thoburn College are-

- College Students.
- Voluntary Village Animators.
- Government Primary Health Workers.
- Educators.

Pedagogy

The component pedagogy includes curriculum, teaching methodology, use of teaching learning material, supervision, evaluation, innovations and so forth that leads to quality improvement in teaching learning process. In a way, pedagogy is a science of teaching something to learners. For human resource building, the pedagogy followed is –

1. Training

- Training to college volunteers
- Training to educators
- Training to village animators
- Training to Primary Health Workers

2. Supervision and Coordination

3. Evaluation

1. Training

Trainings meant for the four target groups have certain objectives which are training specific. They are framed keeping in mind the age group of the participants, the area of their outreach activities, infrastructural facilities available, financial resources, duration of the training, and educational background of the stakeholders. Specific objectives of these trainings help in deciding the methodology, resource material to be distributed and other related matters. Detailed activities of each type of training are elaborated here.

Training to College Volunteers

Training to college volunteers is given in three phases

First phase – assigning the work according to the interest and abilities of students

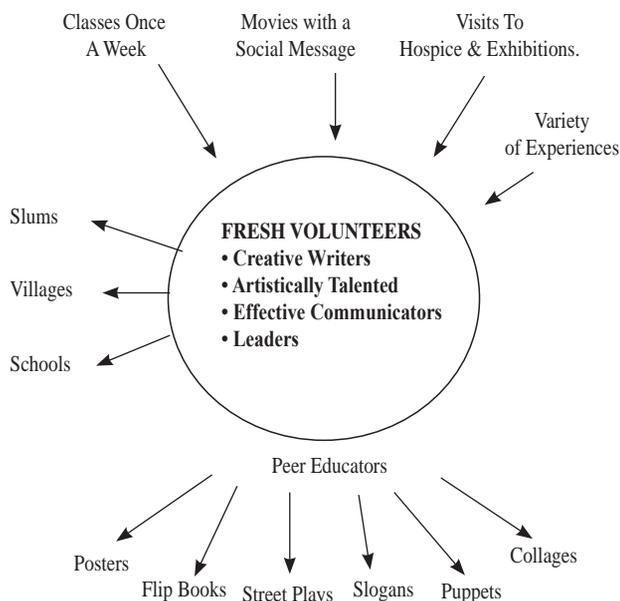
Second phase – preparing them as peer educators

Third phase – working in the community

In the beginning of the three year graduate program or first phase of the program, students are given a choice to choose and register in any of the four service learning centres of the college. Students registered in AACET are trained in such a manner that they are able to shed their inhibitions on HIV/AIDS and spread the message around. The volunteers are screened to identify their hidden talents and on this basis they are assigned tasks. Some of the students being artistically creative are very good at producing information and communication material. Some other is creative writers and is helpful in publishing the monthly newsletter ‘AIDS and YOU’. Irrespective of the special talents all the volunteers undergo the scheduled activities of training. Every Saturday a class is held of two hours which is usually taken by educationist, eminent doctors, social workers and so forth. Indian Society is very traditional and conservative. Discussing about one’s body, sex life and reproductive health, rights is a taboo here. As a result even the students from rich and affluent families are very shy in talking about such things. They just cannot share their problems in the families and their queries cannot be satisfied anywhere. Being young they are curious and satisfy this curiosity by wrong means.

Once a week class which is a mix of lectures, illustrations, questioning, and discussion enables the students to open up. Once they are confident they

act as Peer Educators. In the next phase depending upon the choice and interest of these peer educators; they are assigned responsibilities for producing resource material (street plays, posters, bookmarks, puppets and so forth). Street plays and puppet shows have been found to be the most effective as they touch all the three domains of human personality i.e. Cognitive, Affective and Psychomotor. These modes are interesting, interactive, informative, and cost effective. The volunteers themselves write the scripts, choose the cast, and narrate the events. Further, street plays and puppet shows are produced separately for English medium schools, regional language schools, slums, and villages as the requirements and understanding level of the target groups are different.



In the third phase, these peer educators are divided into three groups which go and work with the community. Social outreach programs are planned and organized for schools, villages, and slums where different groups of peer educators perform. Besides

this, from time to time rallies and exhibitions are held in the city for some or the other cause such as Blood donation day, World AIDS day, Tuberculosis day and so forth in which peer educators actively participate and work for the cause.

Isabella Thoburn College is an affiliated college of the University of Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. Due to this, the college is bound to follow the evaluation pattern as framed by the University. There is no provision of giving credits to the students for service learning program. However, at the end of the session, the volunteers are awarded certificates of appreciation by the college to recognize their time and effort, to encourage and motivate them further and to boost their morale. Thus, a raw student is converted into a trained peer educator who is capable of facing the world through a series of interactive classes and activities.

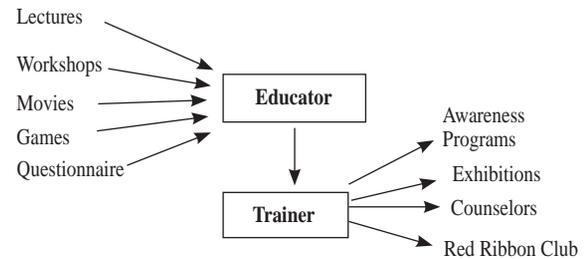
Training to Educators

A teacher or educator is an individual who is in regular contact with the students or the youth of the country. Teacher also holds the most important place in a person's life as he/she is the one who moulds the raw clay. So, to fulfill the objective of spreading awareness to as many people as possible, educators were considered a target group for human resource building.

Trainings with a specific theme like life skills, counseling, adolescent problems are organized for the educators either in their schools or at Isabella Thoburn College. Experts are invited as key notes speakers and activities are included along with lectures to make these programs interesting and fruitful.

Educators fill up the self evaluation sheets before and after the training. At the end, educators who were unaware get transformed into trainers who are able enough to initiate various programs in their

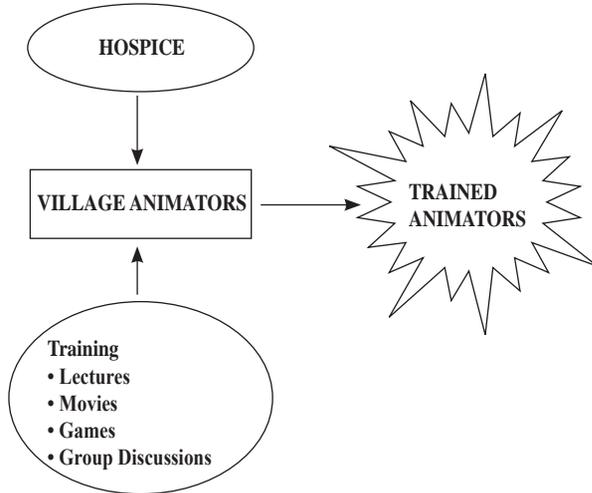
respective institutions. These educators do carry out awareness programs, start Red Ribbon Clubs (Manual of Uttar Pradesh State AIDS Control Society) and actively participate in rallies, exhibitions and so forth.



Training to Village Animators

India is an agricultural country with around 75% population living in villages. Village folks are busy with their work throughout the year and thus education takes a back seat. As a result, level of awareness in rural areas is negligible. Governments as well as Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) engage in various literacy and awareness campaigns in these areas. People associated with CSOs and working in villages are also called as village animators. Since, these workers are directly interacting with locals; they themselves should be properly oriented with their areas of work. So, we ventured into this by collaborating with a hospice 'Shanti Niketan' which looks after terminally ill patients. This hospice is run by Christian nuns. They appoint a resident of the village as a worker who visits each and every house and tries to spread the message as well as acts as a counselor. From time to time, 20-25 village animators are selected for the training in which almost the same pedagogy is adopted as for the educators. Some times relevant movies or documentaries are also screened and focused group discussion is organized. Training for village animators is more focused on making them good counselors who can advise the client not only on the

issue of HIV/AIDS but also health , hygiene , family planning, and general cleanliness .

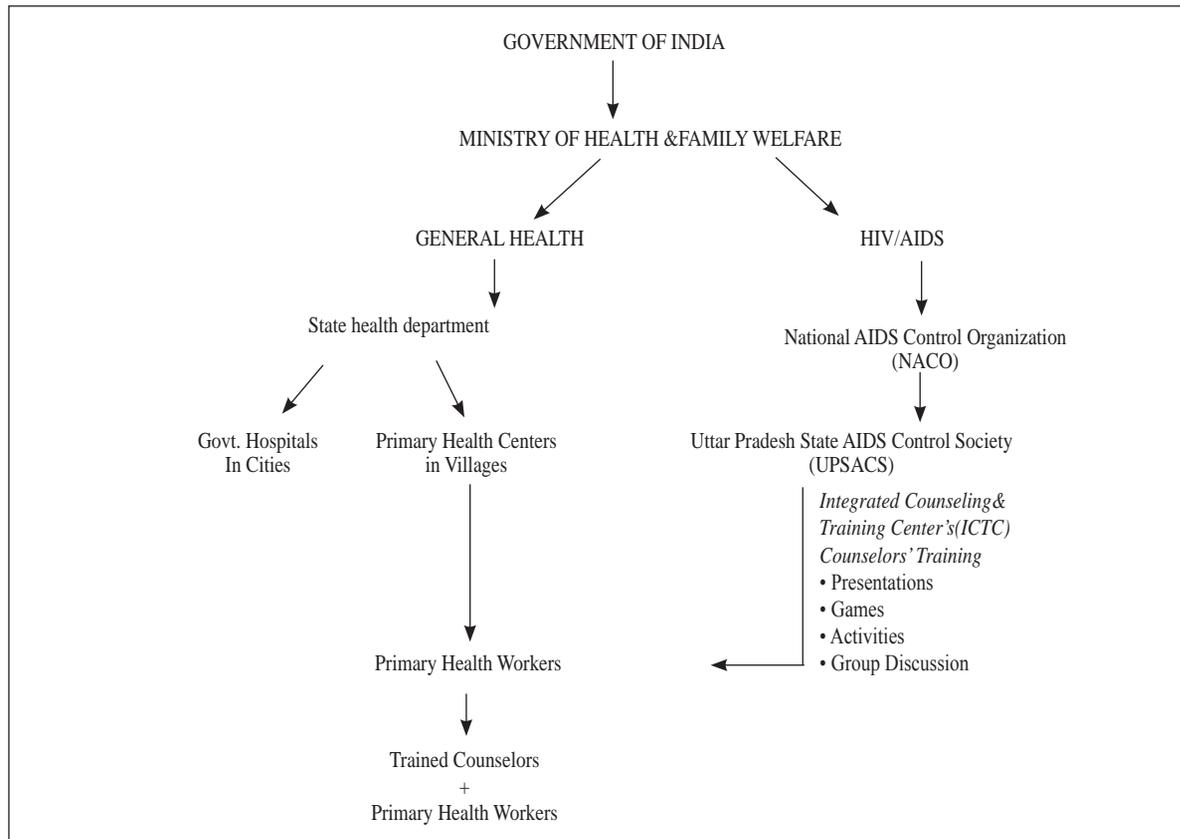


Training to Village Animators

Training to Primary Health Workers

In the government run programs, every village has one primary health center. Qualified doctors, nurses, and health workers are appointed for this. There are two agencies working at national and state level namely- National AIDS Control Organization (NACO) and Uttar Pradesh State AIDS Control society (UPSACS) which work in coordination with each other. Government is planning to train the Primary Health Workers (PHW) as counselors' also (Hand outs of UPSACS for training). Therefore, training programs are held for them which are called as Integrated Counseling and Training Centers' Counselors Training (ICTC Counselors Training).

Initial training is of five day and advanced training is of thirteen day duration. AAC CET is an

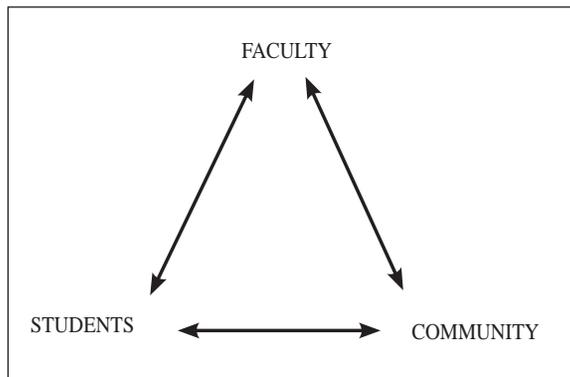


Training to Primary Health Workers

organization chosen by UPSACS as a nodal agency to impart and implement the training schedule. These trainings focus on various aspects of counseling such as role and responsibilities of a counselor, micro skills, causes and reduction of stress, pre test and post test counseling, family planning and maternal health. Eminent personalities from the fields of medicine, social work, UNICEF, UPSACS, and Department of Health take up sessions which include presentations, games, activities, group discussions, questionnaires, and slide shows.

2. Supervision and Coordination

No service learning program can be accomplished without the involvement of faculty, student, and community. Their mutual interaction and cooperation is pre-requisite for a successful program.



During various activities of service learning program, organization and planning part is taken care of by the faculty, which acts as supervisor and guide. Students are assigned individual responsibilities as per their aptitude and then, they carry out the respective roles in the field. Community placement agencies are required for these activities as they help in coordinating the programs. These agencies are instrumental in motivating the local population and in

making them an integral part of the whole program. Without the active participation of these three components, no goal/objectives can be achieved.

3. Evaluation

Evaluation is inevitable in any learning process. It is needed in all the fields of activity when judgment needs to be made. Evaluation includes a series of activities that are designed to measure the learning outcomes. At Isabella Thoburn College, to assess the success of service learning program, certain techniques are employed such as -

i. Inquiry Forms - These include

- Questionnaires - Pre test questionnaires are filled by students in the beginning of the program. This gives the data on conceptual knowledge base of students. Post test questionnaires are filled at the end of the program. This enables to assess the change in conceptual knowledge of the student after they had been a part of the service learning program.
- Schedules - It is a set of questions which are asked and filled by an interviewer in a face to face situation with other persons. During village outreach programs, students of AAC CET fill these schedules while interacting with villagers to get a feedback on the program conducted there. It helps in the assessment of the performance of students and improving it if required.
- Opinionnaire - Using opinionnaires, the data is collected in the form of opinions of an individual. During the training program, the participants fill up these opinionnaires indicating their levels of satisfaction with the program. As students are involved in various aspects of training such as preparing IEC material, the responses help in their assessment.

- i. Observation - Students are observed in a specific planned and systematic manner by the faculty. Their personality, mannerism and behavior are recorded by all the teachers involved and finally a cumulative record is made. It helps in appraising growth in working habits and manipulative skills. It also provides evidence of a student's level of maturity and social adjustment.
- ii. Pupil Products – Students' learning outcome assessment is also done with the help of various articles prepared by them. They are engaged in the preparation of IEC material which is used for training activities. The quality and usefulness of material is an indication of student performance.

The above listed techniques help in rating a student as she is being evaluated continuously. At the end of the program, certificates and trophies are awarded to the deserving students.

Comments

Human resource building at AAC CET focuses on individuals. It is marshalling the talent (Dave Ulrich, 1996). Also, it brings teaching and learning, educators and society, theory and practice into new relationships and understanding. The relationship becomes more collaborative and people involve learn the skills and benefits of collaborations. They discover their own talents the rewards of service to those in need and the purpose for their own life. They further realize educations' purpose and that the privilege of higher education comes with the responsibility of applying once knowledge to the benefit of not so privileged. Persons involved in education especially higher education must commit their resources to the tasks of society.

We are living in 21st Century, which requires a person to be a national citizen as well as a global

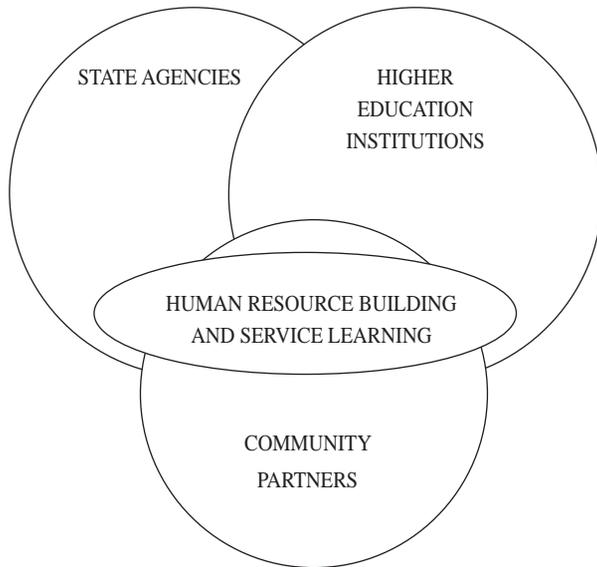
citizen .Global citizenship is directly dependent on values, personality, attitudes, and relationships inherent in a person . This citizenship also brings the feeling of service to society closer to their heart. It instills the belief that what they learn and what they do with what they learn matters. Thus, human resources are useless if we fail to share them. Wide gulf between the rich and the poor is due to the feeling of 'Me Only'. Thus, our venture into human resource building is an effort towards modeling a behavior and approach which focuses on sharing so that we can build a better world in the new millennium.

Individuals and groups who undergo the training imparted by AAC CET in its service learning program get transformed in such a way that they are more committed, have developed soft skills, are more humane in their approach, and thus can reach out to the community in their endeavor for equality.

Conclusion

Social problems are growing in communities and nations around the world. There is growing disparity amongst people due to class, caste, sex and so forth. In some parts HIV/AIDS is leading to a society with only children and elders and no adults. Even developed countries are realizing this crisis. So, education has to be in the forefront to tackle this. It should act as a major player and link the service with community. Further these links should be compatible with the national and cultural context. Service learning has captured the imagination of educators as it provides the power to solve social and intellectual problems. They have understood that academic knowledge in itself means nothing. Action is more important than words. It is hypocrisy to sit in the comforts of four walls and discuss the world

problems. Thus, change is needed in the minds of people and that is what human resource building aims at.



It links community, educational institutions and government agencies so that the objectives can be achieved in collaboration and consonance with each other. In conclusion there is a quote by Dr.Walter Doyle Staples '*To Change the world; you need only to perceive it in a different light*'. (Staples, 1991)

References

- Bajpai, P.K.(1992). *Youth education and unemployment*. New Delhi: Ashish Publishing House.
- Berry, Howard A. & Chisholm, Linda A.(1999). *Service Learning in Higher Education Around the World*. New York: IPSL.
- Crow, L.D. & Crow A.(1956). *Human Development and Learning*. New Delhi: Eurasia Publishing House.
- Handouts of HIV Counseling Training Modules,(2006). NACO, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India.
- Module ES-333(2001). *Techniques and Tools of Evaluation*, Educational Evaluation, School of Education, Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), India, 37-47.
- Mukherjee, B.(1967). *Community Development in India*. New Delhi: Orient Longman.
- Sharma, R.C.(2005). *Modern Science Teaching*. , New Delhi: Dhanpat Rai Publishing Company.
- Staples, Walter Doyle,(1991). *Think like a winner*. New Delhi: UBS Publishers Distributors Ltd.
- Underwood, Charles.(2000). *Learning at the Edges: Challenges to the Sustainability of Service Learning in Higher Education*. Berkeley, C.A University of California.

Author

Sonika RAJAN [itc.sonika@gmail.com]
Senior Lecturer, Isabella Thoburn College, India

[Received: 29.05.09, accepted 28.07.09, revised 06.09.09]