



An Analytical Study on the Role of the National Cadet Corps in Developing Leadership Qualities among Youth

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Abstract:

The NCC (National Cadet Corps) was set up on 15 July 1948 under the NCC Act XXXI of 1948 by the Ministry of Defence, the Government of India. The main objective of the NCC is to install leadership, accountability, and patriotism in young people, making them ready to become responsible citizens and leaders of the future. The NCC through its motto "Unity and Discipline" basically stands for discipline, secularism, and unity among youth coming from different backgrounds of India. The Defence Ministry is all set to increase the enrolment of the NCC from 17 lakh to 27 lakh cadets during the next ten years. This study is an overview of NCC ideas, organization, training, and how it helps the youth to grow essential leadership skills and discipline.

Key words: leadership, accountability, patriotism, unity and discipline, training modules.

1. Introduction:

The National Cadet Corps (NCC) was established on 15th July 1948 under the NCC Act XXXI of 1948, enacted by the Ministry of Defence, Government of India. The main idea of the body was to establish a link between the youth and the armed forces through a combination of military training and social service activities. The organization aims to cultivate leadership, accountability, and patriotism among young people, preparing themselves to be responsible citizens and future leaders of India. The NCC develops the physical fitness, leadership skills, teamwork, and discipline of its members through its structure, syllabus, and training programs. Cadets through NCC become equally responsible citizens by engaging in community service, disaster management, and social awareness campaigns. This paper is about how NCC can be a source of leadership qualities development among the youth and providing them with an ideal platform for their holistic growth.

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2. Objectives:

- ❖ To investigate the basic idea, layout, and components of NCC's training modules, as well as their operationalization.
- ❖ To analyse how NCC training cultivates core leadership competencies and disciplines among youth.

3. Review of literature:

The role of the NCC in instilling leadership qualities among the youth has been the subject of numerous research. Dr. Sonia's (2025) research "Role of National Cadet Corps (NCC) in Developing Leadership among Young in India" brings out that a tightly knit decision-making, communication, and teamwork skills training structure leads to the development of these leadership traits. To the same effect, Dr. S.K. Yadav and P. K. Yadav's (2025) paper recognizes the NCC as a major source of a broad range of leadership attributes in the students such as decision-making, teamwork, and most importantly, a strong sense of civic responsibility. Also, according to the research, "Role of National Cadet Corps in Developing Soft Skills among Youth in India," authored by Dr. U. Sarkar and S. M. Margaj (2015), NCC training helps youth to be leaders who are confident, committed, and competent in any life sphere while at the same time, it promotes in them a strong sense of responsibility as citizens.

The question remains, however, what the level of academic discussion on the NCC is, especially in institutions of higher learning given the fact that the NCC is so significant in the formation of leadership qualities? Furthermore, there are only a handful of research articles on the NCC's role in the soft skill development of the youth which, however, cannot sufficiently address the issue of institutional inequalities, depart the regional disparities, and understand the differences in the mindset of the cadets. This study, therefore, is a response to the abovementioned issues that inhabit the educational discourse on the NCC, and it, therefore, intends to provide an empirical investigation of the NCC's contribution to youth leadership, grounded in the primary and secondary data.

4. Research Methodology:

This research uses descriptive and analytical techniques to accomplish its goals. The study elucidates issues through the use of both primary and secondary data sources. To gather first-hand data, survey techniques, and purposive random sampling methods are used. There are 130 respondents in the sample, who together represent the whole NCC population. Besides that, a number of secondary resources such as the ANO



Handbook, Cadets' Handbook, research papers both printed and online, journals, books, and appropriate websites were employed to reach deductions for the present study dropped out.

5. National Cadet Corps (NCC): A Brief Overview

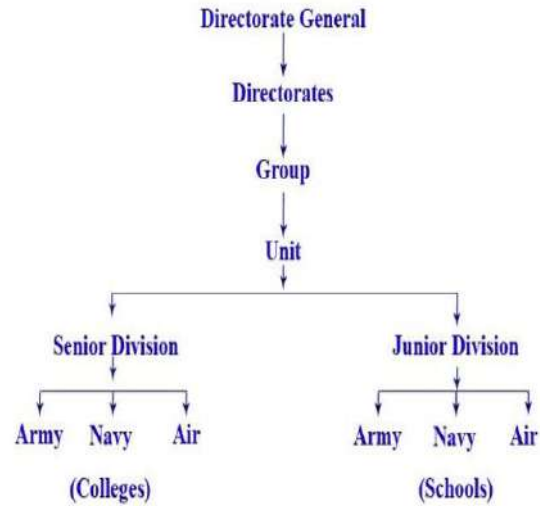
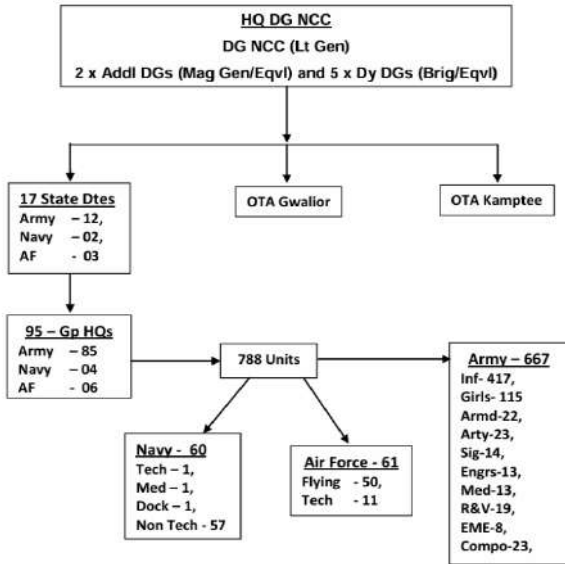
The National Cadet Corps (NCC) has its roots in the 'University Corps' created under the Defence Act of 1917. This was done to tackle Army personnel shortages during colonial rule. After India gained independence, leaders recognized the need for a national youth organization to train both boys and girls as responsible citizens and future leaders, including roles in defence. A committee led by Pandit H.N. Kunzru, with support from Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, recommended establishing such an organization. As a result, the National Cadet Corps was officially formed on July 15, 1948, by the Ministry of Defence under the NCC Act. The motto "Unity and Discipline" was adopted on December 23, 1957. "Unity" represents the togetherness and brotherhood of all Indians, regardless of caste, creed, or color. "Discipline" emphasizes a key principle for a developing nation. The NCC embodies this motto by bringing together youth from different backgrounds and shaping them into disciplined, secular, and united citizens of India. It is important to note that the Ministry of Defence plans to increase the strength of the National Cadet Corps (NCC) from 17 lakh to 27 lakh cadets over the next 10 years (Indian Express, April 20, 2024). This phased expansion aims to include more educational institutions, especially in border areas, and broaden the reach of this tri-service organization. The goal is to strengthen youth involvement in nation-building, national security, and community service programs.

6. Organizational Structure of NCC:

The National Cadet Corps (NCC) has a clear organizational structure that operates across India. Fig. 1 shows the overall hierarchy, with the Director General (DG) of the rank of Lieutenant General leading the NCC Headquarters in Delhi. Fig. 2 illustrates the distribution of NCC Units across educational institutions throughout India, highlighting the extensive presence and network of NCC for cadet training and development.

Fig.1 Organisational structure and division educational institutions

Fig.2 NCC division in



Source: NCC Cadets Hand Book

7. NCC Training:

NCC training takes place in schools and colleges according to the set syllabus. This training aims to instill core values, improve awareness, provide hands-on experience, and introduce students to basic military skills and knowledge.

7.1 Institutional Training syllabus:

In Institutional Training, the syllabus (fig.3) is divided into two parts: common subjects and specialized subjects. Common subjects make up 70% of the training time, while the remaining 30% focuses on specialized service subjects.

Fig.3 Institutional Training syllabus of NCC

NCC Training syllabus	
<u>Common Subject</u> The NCC National Integration and Awareness Drill Weapon Training Personal Development and Leadership Disaster Management Social Awareness and Community development Health and Hygiene Adventure Environment Awareness and Conservation Obstacle Training	<u>Specialized Subjects:</u> Armed Forces Map Reading Field Craft and Battle Craft Introduction to Infantry Weapons and equipment Military History Communication

Source: NCC Cadets Hand Book

7.2 Personality Development and Leadership Qualities through NCC Curriculum:

The NCC syllabus (table: 1) carefully includes a unit focused on Personality Development and Leadership for cadets. This unit aims to build their physical, intellectual, emotional, and social traits. The syllabus stresses the need for developing a well-rounded personality and important leadership skills needed to contribute effectively in all areas of life. The main topics covered in this subject include:

Table:1 Subject under Personal Development and Leadership

Sl. No.	Lesson Code	Subject	Sl. No.	Lesson Code	Subject
1	P-1	Introduction to Personality Development	13	P-9	Attitude – Assertiveness and Negotiation
2	P-2	Factors Influencing / Shaping Personality: Physical, Social, Psychological and Philosophical	14	P-10	Time Management
3	P-3	Self-Awareness – 1	15	P-11	Effects of Leadership with Historical Examples
4	P-3	Self-Awareness – 2	16	P-12	Stress Management Skills
5	P-3	Self-Awareness – 3	17	P-13	Interview Skills
6	P-4	Change Your Mind Set	18	P-14	Conflict Motives – Resolution
7	P-5	Interpersonal Relationship and Communication	19	P-15	Importance of Group / Team Work
8	P-6	Communication Skills – 1	20	P-16	Influencing Skills
9	P-6	Communication Skills – 2	21	P-17	Body Language
10	P-6	Communication Skills – 3	22	P-18	Sociability: Social Skills Ettiquettes and Mannerism
11	P-7	Leadership Traits	23	P-19	Values / Code of Ethics
12	P-8	Types of Leadership			

Source: NCC Cadets Hand Book

7.3 NCC Training Activities:

The NCC training activities are conducted in the following ways:

a. Institutional Training: Regular drills and parades take place in schools and colleges to promote discipline, punctuality, time management, and teamwork among cadets. This training forms the basis for the overall development of cadets and prepares them for further camp-based training and leadership roles.

b. Camp Training: Camps lasting 10 to 12 days aim to give cadets a regimental lifestyle while developing leadership skills and teamwork. This includes:

- Annual Training Camps (ATC)
- Centrally Organized Camps (COC)
 - i. Leadership Camps
 - ii. Thal Sainik Camp (TSC)
 - iii. Vayu Sainik Camp (VSC)
 - iv. Nau Sainik Camp (NSC)
 - v. Rock Climbing Camps
 - vi. National Integration Camps (NIC)
 - vii. Republic Day Camp (RDC) and Prime Minister's (PM's) Rally

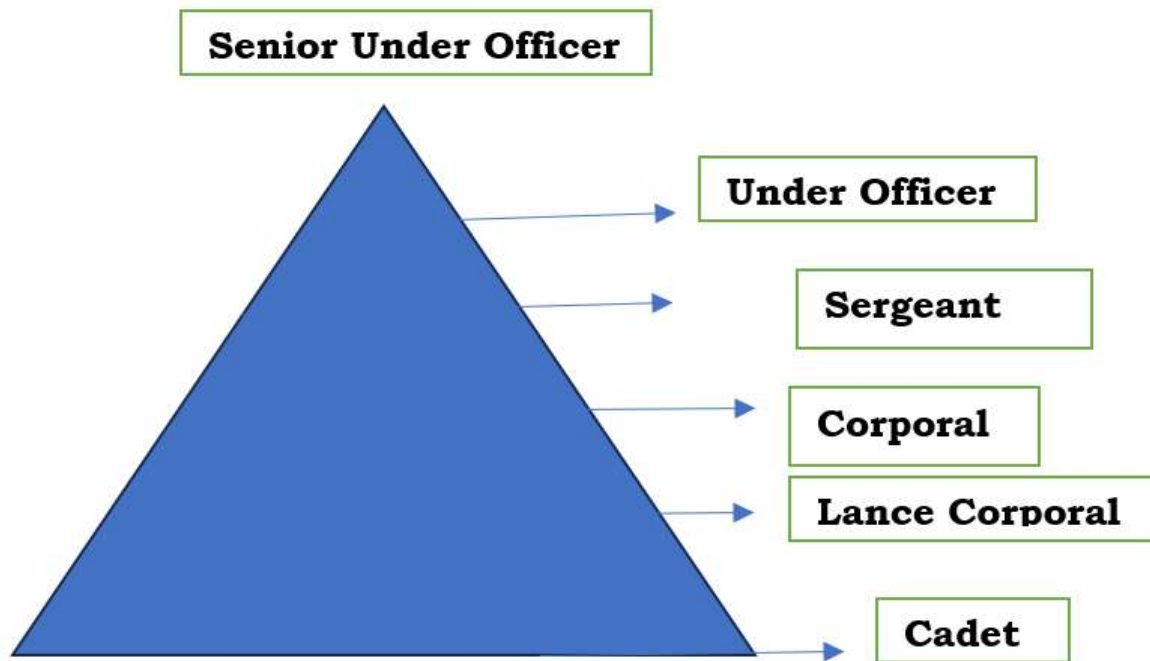
c. Adventure Training and Sports: NCC regularly takes part in events like the Subroto Cup Football, Jawahar Lal Nehru Hockey, and Mavlankar Shooting tournaments. Cadets also take part in activities such as mountaineering, trekking, expeditions, parachuting, para courses, slithering, desert safaris, and white-water rafting.

d. Youth Exchange Programme (YEP): YEP, facilitates the exchange of cadets between friendly countries. This helps them participate in host NCC activities and understand each other's cultural and socio-economic backgrounds.

8. Leadership Positions of Cadets and Their Responsibilities within the NCC Ranking System:

There are guidelines for promoting NCC cadets and assigning ranks. These guidelines help develop leadership qualities and accountability in cadets for their assigned ranks.

Fig.4 Rank structure of NCC cadets



Source: NCC Cadets Hand Book

- a. Lance Corporal:** A cadet must complete a minimum of three months of NCC training and maintain at least 75% parade attendance.
- b. Corporal:** A cadet must have held the Lance Corporal rank for at least six months and attended at least 75% of the conducted parades.
- c. Sergeant:** A cadet should serve as a Corporal for at least six months and attend at least 75% of parades.
- d. Under Officer:** A cadet must hold the Sergeant rank for at least six months, attend 75% of parades, and pass the NCC Certificate 'B' exam.



e. Senior Under Officer: A cadet should have served as an Under Officer for a minimum of six months and maintained 75% parade attendance.

Table:2 Skills and qualities nurtured through NCC training

NCC training activity	Leadership competencies developed
Weekly drills & PT	Discipline, self-regulation, consistency
Annual Camps (CATC)	Problem-solving, strategic planning, crisis management
Centrally Organised Camps (COC)	Experience on obstacle courses, firing practice, map reading, and various adventure sports.
Adventure Training and Sports	Enhancing physical and mental toughness, cultivating leadership, teamwork abilities, discipline and self-confidence
Youth Exchange Programme (YEP)	Enhancing cultural understanding, personal growth, leadership, teamwork and cultivating enduring international friendships
Rank based leadership	Team supervision, communication, delegation
Social Service initiatives	Civic responsibility, empathy, public engagement
Leadership Camps (BLC/ALC)	Critical thinking, ethical leadership, confidence

Source: Dr. Sonia's (2025) *Role of National Cadet Corps (NCC) in Developing Leadership among Young in India & curated by the author*

9. Major findings of the study:

i. Significance of NCC training for youth:

Fig.5 Cadet's opinion on the significance of NCC training for youth

১/ আপোনাৰ মতে যুৱক-যুৱতীসকলৰ বাবে এন চি চি প্ৰশিক্ষণৰ প্ৰাথমিক তাৎপৰ্য কি?

130 responses



Source: Field study

The study reveals that among 130 respondents, 116 (89.2%) agreed on the importance of NCC training for youth empowerment. They acknowledged NCC's role in developing leadership skills, discipline, and a sense of patriotism. Only a few highlighted physical fitness, academic growth, or a focus solely on sports skills.

ii. Fostering a genuine commitment to serve and uplift the community:

Out of the total respondents, 77 (59.2%) noted that NCC training promotes community service and social responsibility by encouraging participation in community welfare activities and disaster relief efforts.

iii. Upholding responsibility, integrity, and self-discipline:

A total of 114 (87.7%) cadets believe that NCC training installs values of responsibility and self-regulation through regular drills, assigned duties, and adherence to conduct rules.

iv. Building leadership through discipline, empathy, humility, and creativity:

Respondents believe that discipline, empathy, humility, and creativity are key leadership skills. Of these, 86 (66.2%) emphasized all four qualities, while 34 (26.2%) focused on discipline, 5 (3.8%) on empathy, 3 (2.3%) on humility, and only 2 (1.5%) favoured creativity as a leadership skill.



v. Building character, teamwork, and camaraderie among cadets:

The study indicates that regular drills and structured routines shape cadets' character and teamwork. Among the respondents, 58 (44.6%) noted improvements in physical strength, academic performance, punctuality, responsibility, cooperation, and mutual respect. Meanwhile, 57 (43.8%) focused solely on enhancing physical strength and endurance.

vi. Promoting critical decision-making and problem-solving skills:

A total of 103 (79.2%) respondents said that NCC activities foster decision-making and problem-solving skills among youth by placing them in challenging situations that require critical thinking and teamwork.

vii. Enabling senior cadets to mentor and develop junior leaders:

The study highlights the important role of senior cadets as mentors to juniors. It shows that 120 (92.3%) respondents believe senior cadets help develop leadership qualities among juniors through their guidance, support, and knowledge.

viii. Strengthening communication and conflict resolution skills:

Cadets acknowledged the role of NCC in enhancing communication and conflict resolution skills. A total of 107 (82.3%) respondents felt that team-building exercises and group discussions during NCC training are key to youth empowerment.

ix. Developing skills to collaborate effectively in diverse teams:

The study shows that 87 (66.9%) respondents noted an improvement in their ability to work well in a team. This skill develops through group drills and tasks that require coordination and communication.

x. Embodying leadership through unity and discipline:

The study indicates that the motto "Unity and Discipline" reflects the main leadership values of NCC, emphasizing the importance of teamwork and self-control to promote these values among youth.



xi. Fostering inclusivity, fairness, and mutual respect:

The study reveals that NCC encourages inclusivity, fairness, and mutual respect among cadets from diverse backgrounds. A total of 109 (83.8%) respondents supported equal participation, respecting diversity, and fostering teamwork during NCC training.

xii. Instilling confidence, perseverance, adaptability, and resilience in leaders:

A total of 116 (89.2%) respondents agreed that their NCC experience greatly contributed to their personal growth. Engaging in challenging tasks and teamwork helped them build confidence, perseverance, and adaptability.

The study clearly shows that respondents recognize the vital role of NCC in developing various leadership qualities. However, due to lower enrolment, progress in some areas, especially in the North Eastern region, is slower than in others in India (Dr. Sonia, 2025). The NCC provides a great platform for girl cadets, promoting gender-sensitive leadership development and allowing them to participate equally with boys in all training activities. The study also indicates that students from the arts stream dominate NCC participation, making up 80.8% of cadets (field survey). The study recommends changing policies to make NCC training compulsory in higher education curricula to direct youthful energy towards building a developed India (Vikshit Bharat).

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