

## *Towards Education for Wholeness.....*

It is indeed an honour to introduce to you, Dr. S.Anil Kumar, Principal, SSMRV College. He is a well-known academician and a visionary in the field of education, who enjoys exploring new methods and models. He is a guide, mentor and motivator to many aspiring youngsters.

He is also an acclaimed author, who has travelled extensively within India and abroad and presented more than 30 research papers at various National and International conferences around the world. He has published more than 20 articles in reputed journals.

He has been conferred “**Appreciation Award**” by His Excellency Dr. Hans Raj Bhardwaj, the then Governor of Karnataka in recognition of his **dedicated service as a Teacher**, instituted by Rotary Club, Bangalore South and Karnataka Civil Defence Corps. He has also received “**Dr. Abdul Kalam Gold Medal Award**” awarded by the Global Economic Progress & Research Association (GEPRA) in recognition of his outstanding achievements in the field of education and research.

In this interview, I look forward to understand the forethought of the new model of education coined and implemented by him in our Institution.

**Having a vast experience of over more than three decades in the field of education, what, in your opinion, are the challenges of higher education faced by the Colleges today?**

Colleges, in the present competitive environment, face a plethora of challenges. The primary issue, in the given scenario, is to reframe the mindset of the students. Majority of the students who join our Institution are first-generation learners with limited exposure to goal setting and focus towards their career. This calls for the Colleges to create a platform for the students to utilize the ‘golden period of their life’ productively. The onus lies on the Institutions- to be accountable, to make the students dream big and to foster a culture of setting ‘realizable progressive goals’ by offering them ample opportunities to polish their skills and unleash their talents. Students pursuing general Degree courses come from varied clusters of the society. They also have diversified interests to aspire. Therefore, these heterogeneous groups of students must be nurtured by the Institutions to fit these requirements.

**How, in your opinion, should an Institution equip itself to deal with these challenges?**

Challenges are inevitable and a crucial part of any success journey. If challenges are proactively handled, they lead to success. We all know that education today is not merely acquiring knowledge but a comprehensive integration of diverged activities to make a student ‘socially conscientious citizen’. This aspect, in my opinion, is the most important aspect of education. Moreover, I believe that institutions are the vehicles that act as facilitation platform for the students to face challenges in the right spirit. Hence, the need of the hour is to develop a new model of education that encompasses within itself all the means and measures of holistic development of an individual that equips him/her to face any challenges. At SSMRV, we have developed and adopted such a model known as “**360 Degree- Education for Wholeness**”.

**Wow that’s a new term indeed Sir! Can you please tell us more about it?**

A child grows into an adult acquiring knowledge, learning from his surroundings and internalizing the values and attitudes that he is acquainted with. All the role models that a child has worshipped go through an editing phase during the child's adolescent phase. The internalization and stabilization happen during the prime time of a student's life, when he/she comes to pursue his/her graduation in a College like ours. The learning that has happened till now by observation, now transforms into knowledge acquisition, internalization and execution. 'Education for Wholeness', is thus, not only delivering knowledge but also facilitating the internalization process and providing platforms to the student to experiment and execute the knowledge acquired. In this journey, we see the child blooming with all the brightness, glowing with the satisfaction of the inner self, and also emitting the rays of wellness to the surroundings. Thus, '**Education for Wholeness**', for me, is providing a 'holistic approach' in the journey of learning. In corporate terms you could call it a "caterpillar to butterfly (C2B) approach."

**Yes we got an overview of it. Please explain the applicability of this '360 Degree-Education for Wholeness' followed at SSMRV.**

Well I may have to use a bit of analogy to drive the point home. As mentioned earlier, I see the Institution as a vehicle that carries students through their journey of learning. To facilitate the learning process, the vehicle must be designed scientifically. Keeping this in mind, SSMRV has designed and adopted a model known as '**360 Degree – Education for Wholeness**'. It is a '**5-Dimensional Model**'; where each dimension represents the wheel of a vehicle. Thus, the wheels that ensure the smooth running of the vehicle (institution) are-

- Academics

- Skill Development
- Extracurricular Activities,
- Career Development
- Ethics and Self-Governance

The front wheel is '**Academics**' that refers to the domain knowledge that a student intends to acquire. At SSMRV, the thrust is on academic rigour through meticulous planning of curriculum and pedagogical innovations. For this purpose, many career-oriented certificate courses like Tally, Networking and Hardware, PHP, Cloud Computing, Digital Marketing, Stock Market courses etc. have been introduced that bridge the gap between the industry and academia. Curriculum delivery is effectively done through diverse and innovative teaching pedagogy like PowerPoint Presentations, Seminars, management games, peer learning along with case studies, projects, role play and guest lectures by industry experts in order to expose students to real-world learning. In addition to all this, counseling and mentoring is provided to the students to bring in the concept of 'wholeness' in every student.

**'Skill Development'** is the wheel that balances and carries forward the knowledge acquired. In my opinion, skill is very critical for the students as it creates an ability and capacity to learn to execute any task through sustained efforts. So, upgrading the skills to competitive standards is required through active involvement of the industry. Through 'Personality Development Programs' we augment the skill sets of every student in our Institution. Certificate courses are complementary to academics. Alongside, the students are encouraged to get hands-on experience through teaching and corporate internships, undertaking socially relevant projects, visits to industries and organizations etc.

The Vehicle gains momentum with the help of the third wheel '**Extracurricular and Co-curricular Activities**'. Together with knowledge and skill, the key drivers for holistic development of an individual are the extracurricular activities. Students' involvement in co-curricular activities, expose them to the world of reality and enhance their performance. With this in mind, SSMRV has set-up "**27 Activity Centres**" which help the students in team building, learning organizing and leadership qualities, enhancing their communication skill and also help in confidence building. Each Activity Centre creates a podium for students to imbibe the life skills that are necessary for their development as individuals.

'**Career Development**' is a critical wheel in the journey. It helps the individual to maneuver into the direction of the set goal. The College has a trained Counsellor who helps the students in formulating and achieving their personal as well as professional goals. 'The Training and Placement Centre' works towards enhancing the employability of the students by moulding them into employable, productive and skilled human resource. Paryapthi – our Training and Placement Centre works on a '4- Dimensional Approach' that includes

- Profiling
- Career Counseling
- Personality Development
- Pre-Placement Training

This endeavor has resulted in an excellent placement record on a consistent basis.

**A vehicle has four wheels. Your vehicle of education is beautifully balanced, but, what about the 5<sup>th</sup> wheel?**

Well, the spare wheel or the fifth wheel acts as an assurance to keep the mind calm and ready for any adversities to be faced during the ride. The journey of education is incomplete without the assurance of **‘Values and Culture of belongingness to the Society’**. Through our centre for community service, we make sure, the journey of education in our College is taken in the society that we belong to. We have also instituted the **“Ethics and Self-Governance Centre”** with an objective to groom our students towards ethical governance, Bharatiya tradition and culture, moral code of conduct, national integration and social responsibility.

**Beautifully explained Sir!! Can you mention the role of faculty, administration and the support services in this journey?**

In my opinion, faculty members are the chauffeurs of the vehicle called the ‘Educational Institution’. Students emulate the behaviour of the faculty members whom they consider as role models. Having ethically-grounded and culturally-rich faculty team is a pride for any institution. We believe that the learning process for a faculty never stops. The College initiates all those activities that help to upgrade the knowledge of the staff so that they can set a quality benchmark in the ‘teaching-learning’ process. One of the most significant steps taken by our Institution in this direction is the **‘Faculty Study Circle – Knowledge Sharing Platform’**, the first of its kind in Bangalore University. At SSMRV, we encourage all our faculty members to present and publish papers at National and International platforms and undertake research projects to embed research culture.

The Administrative and Support Staff facilitate the smooth running of the vehicle. The processes and procedures of the Institution are facilitated by them. Meticulous in their day-to-day operations, they contribute to the process of Institutional development acting as connectors of the five wheels. Their contribution can never be undermined.

**How about the other stakeholders – Management and parents. What is their role in ‘Education for Wholeness’?**

The creator of the vehicle is the Management. The oil in the engine of the vehicle is what keeps the engine alive. The Management is the ensuring force that keeps this engine alive and keeps it going smooth and fast.

Parents and management are the two faces of the same coin. Their views matter a lot to the students in their journey of life. Thus, in this system of ‘Education for Wholeness’ we make all of them an integral part of the journey.

I would like to highlight the role of our wonderful alumni who have achieved so much in their professional lives. It gives me a great feel of satisfaction and pride when they express their gratitude to the College in whatever way it is possible. They are the “**torch bearers**” of this vehicle.

**Any roadblocks, breakdown in this journey....**

As I have already mentioned, any journey is full of challenges. We are prepared for roadblocks and are cautious in our approach. We are well equipped with the fifth wheel,

‘Emotional Stability’ to face breakdowns, if any, with peace and equanimity. When all the constituents come together and work in union, the expected results are bound to follow. The manifestation of this role is evident in all our outcomes.

### **What are the outcomes of following this unique Model of Education?**

As a result of this unique model of education, our students have excelled in both academics and extracurricular activities. With 92% results, the academic performance has been exceptionally good. The College also boasts of a 96% placement record. The National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC), accredited SSMRV with ‘**A**’ **Grade** in its third cycle in January 2017. It is a hallmark of academic excellence and innovations followed at SSMRV. The Local Inquiry Committee (**LIC**), also assigned high score to our College on all parameters and an overall 76.75% score for the academic year 2016-17. All these speak volume about the outcomes of the innovative initiatives taken by SSMRV.

### **How do you see the road ahead Sir?**

Heraclitus, A Greek Philosopher once said “ Change is the only thing which is constant’. We need to keep changing and keep moving ahead without resting on our laurels.

Today we put ourselves in a self-introspection mode by participating in various surveys conducted by the prestigious National Institute Ranking Framework (NIRF) etc. We also participate in several surveys conducted by reputed magazines like The Week, India Today and others. Continuing our analogy about the vehicle, we are **servicing the vehicle** to keep it conditioned.



We also aim at achieving Centre for Potential Excellence (CPE) and autonomy in the years to come

*Thank you very much for your time, Sir. You have been an agent of change in our college, who has heralded stupendous transformation by bringing innovation in all actions. We, the faculty members of SSMRV College, congratulate you on the positive changes brought about by you in the College. We assure you that we will drive the vehicle forward by giving our best to this great institution.*

*Wish you the very best in all your future endeavours!*

**Interviewed by - Prof. Nagaraj M S**

Co-ordinator - IQAC  
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