



Education and culture are two intimately related terms. It is debatable whether culture is an outcome of education or education is the outcome of culture. In the absence of education, culture may grow from age-long traditional beliefs and accumulated knowledge from interaction with nature and society. But without a particular culture, education cannot grow and flourish. If culture is a tree, education is the flower of that tree adding beauty, essence and colour to it.

ISBN 978-93-5407-223-9



9 78 93 5407 223 9

Education and Culture

Volume-II



EDUCATION AND CULTURE

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Editor

Soma Bhattacharya



Vivekananda College for Women

Barisha, Kolkata 700008

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VIVEKANANDA COLLEGE FOR WOMEN
BARISHA, KOLKATA-700008, WEST BENGAL

EDUCATION AND CULTURE - VOLUME II

National Seminar held on 4th and 5th April, 2018
at Vivekananda College for Women, Barisha,
Kolkata-700 008, West Bengal

Published by,

Dr. Soma Bhattacharya, Principal
Vivekananda College for Women, Barisha,
Kolkata-700 008, West Bengal

First Published : August, 2020

© Vivekananda College for Women

ISBN 978-93-5407-223-9

A Publication of
Vivekananda College for Women

Price : Rs. 1200/-

Printed at

Sailee Press Pvt. Ltd.
4A, Manicktola Main Road,
Kolkata-700 054
e-mail : saileepress@yahoo.com

EDITORIAL



'Culture' is a term which has been addressed by different authors from different angles. It is the most complex and important concept in social sciences. There is no consensus among scholars regarding the definition of culture. According to Longman Dictionary: Culture means the beliefs, ways of life, art and customs that are shared and accepted by people of a particular society. Another, completely different definition of culture includes it is 'work and practices of intellectual and especially artistic activity' (that is a more elite sense of the term), (Raymond Williams, 1983). Both the definitions of culture are important indicating its primitive nature and refinement.

Culture of a society or of a clan is the identity of that society or clan. Culture grows in a society from age-long practices which is deep rooted in the physical and social base. It flourishes in the climate, soil, vegetation and other physical characteristics of a particular region, being shaped by the age-old beliefs, teachings, experiences, social bonding, economic pattern of the area and polished by educational habits or/and discourses. Therefore culture has a dynamic nature, continuously responding and interacting with newly gathered knowledge, experiences and expanding education. Every bit of positive experience gathered by man leads to learning which ultimately transpires into knowledge. Since birth of this world and man every bit of such accumulated knowledge has given birth to different discourses of study and shaped the cultural aspects which is the ultimate expression of a society.

It is debatable whether culture is an outcome of education or education is the outcome of culture. In the absence of education, culture may grow

from age-long traditional beliefs, and accumulated knowledge from interaction with nature and society. But without a particular culture, education cannot grow and flourish and cannot spread its silent roots through the society for the refinement of its own origination. If culture is a tree, education is the flower of that tree adding beauty, essence and colour to it. Therefore the words education and culture are highly linked, one being the compliment of the other.

The present book is the golden harvest of the Natural Seminar on 'Education and Culture' organised by our college in the month of April, 2018. We have perceived the topic in the light of different branches of social and behavioural science, as the topic has a close connection with those branches of study.

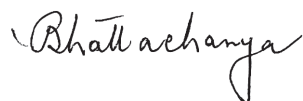
In January, 2018 when we were in search of an abiding and meaningful topic for our seminar, among many suggestions we picked up "Education and Culture". The present era is a time of mixed global culture amidst which we have lost the identity of our own. Any part of the world is now accessible and gradually we are picking up aspects from all and making an unhealthy mixture. This has resulted in forgetfulness of own identity and culture particularly among the young generation who are becoming directionless day by day being confused by the mixed practices. Therefore they are feeling uprooted from their own, failing to grasp and adopt the new one properly. Today the most important social issue is probably the debate between the old traditional culture and the new global one. Our attempt was to discuss the issue without being superstitious or prejudiced.

The theme 'Education and Culture' posses a vast ambiance encompassing almost every branch of social science and literature. We tried to uphold the complex and versatile nature of Education and Culture, as it changes with changing viewpoint. Therefore we concentrated on its meaning in different literatures, its evolution and expansion from historic past, its explanation and position in the subject- education, its philosophical aspect and lastly, influence of local and regional politics on the development and growth of education and culture. About 87 papers have been contributed by authors from different parts of Bengal as well as India. The book has

been divided into two volumes to accommodate the papers. These papers have added a grace to the topic Education and Culture by illuminating it from different perspectives.

I am thankful to all the authors for their contribution which has made the book a meaningful publication. I also convey my thanks to Tara Pramanik and Avijit Mandal, convenors of the seminar and all my beloved colleagues for their help and support to make the seminar a grand success. I also thank Kaustuv Bhadra for helping us in the decoration of the book. Last but not, the least my thanks to Sailee Press Pvt. Ltd. for the smart and attractive production.

Kolkata
July, 2020



Soma Bhattacharya
Editor

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Culture and Education

Prof. Bishnupada Nanda

Culture is not a given, but a human creation, dependent on particular geographical, temporal and socio-political contexts and therefore vulnerable to issues of power and control- Nieto remind us.

According to Kalantis, Cope and Slade (1998), “ [We] are not simply bearers of cultures, languages and histories, with a duty to reproduce them. We are the products of linguistic-cultural circumstances, actors with a capacity to resynthesize what we have been socialized into and to solve new and emerging problems of existence. We are not duty-bound to conserve ancestral characteristics which are not structurally useful. We are both socially determined and creators of human futures. (Minority languages London: Fulmer Press). Culture means different things to different people in different contexts. It is usably interchangeable with ethnicity as if both simply were passed down constant and eternal from one generation to the next. At still other times culture can mean the traditions one celebrates within the family, in which case it is reduced to foods, dances and holidays. Less often is culture thought of as the values one holds dear, or the way one looks at and interacts with the world (Nieto, 1999, *The Light in Their Eyes: Creating Multicultural Learning Communities*’, Teachers College Press).

Culture is more than artifacts, rituals and traditions. Culture and language influence the quest for culturally democratic learning environments by looking at some of the cultural discontinuities between school and home expectations of students from various backgrounds.

Nieto (1999) defined culture as “The ever-changing values, traditions, social and political relationships, world view created, sheared, and transformed by a group of people bound together by a combination of factors

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that can include a common history, geographic location, language, social class, and religion.” So culture is complex and indicate- it includes content or product (The ‘what’ of culture), process (how it is created and transformed), and the agents of culture (who is responsible for creating and changing it). Therefore, everyone has a culture, as all people participate in the world through social and political relationships informed by history as well as by race, ethnicity, language, social class, gender, sexual, orientation and other circumstances related to identity and experience.

Now what is the meaning of culture for educators and how it is related to learning?

Culture is ‘verb’ rather than a ‘noun’ meaning that culture is not static but culture is dynamic, active, changing always on the move. Culture is always changing as a result of political, social and other modifications in the immediate environment. When people with different background come in close contact with others, change in culture is expected. Cultures are always hybrids as during cultural fusion some culture are selected and some are rejected.

In any educational institution culture is static as curriculum and pedagogy were unchanging. According to Frederick, Erickson, when we think culture as static or fixed or simply aesthetic, “the educational practice derived from it supported the status quo”. “When we think of culture and social identity in more fluid terms, however, we can find a foundation for educational practice that is transformative” (Erickson).

Culture is embedded in context that culture is influenced by the environment in which it exists. It is influenced by history, economics and power as well as it is influenced by social economic and political factors. Education also influenced by all the above mentioned factors. Without the economic and political privilege neither culture nor education is influenced.

Culture is learned, learned from families, communities and religious institutions communities and religious institutions. Culture is also learned in the educational institutions. It is not inherited, it is dialectical.

The teacher and the taught must understand the contradictory nature of culture if they are to develop a critical, instead of a romantic, perspective of their own and other people’s cultures.

“Culture is what we do every day. Culture change as a result of the decisions that we, as cultural agents, make about our traditions, attitudes, behaviors and values” (Nieto, 1999). According to Erickson (1997), Culture can be thought of as a construction-it constructs us and we construct it”. The same role is also played by education. Like education, culture is not a passive legacy, but an active operation that takes place through contact and interactions with other.



Culture and Education

Prof. Debasri Banerjee

The terms culture and education are intimately related to each other. The word culture originally meant cultivation, which was furthered to the cultivation of mind or soul. Culture refers to the ideas, customs, traditions, and values and social behaviour of a particular people or society. It includes expressive forms such as *art, music, dance, ritual, religion* and *technologies* such as *tool usage, cooking, shelter, and clothing*, found in all human societies. The concept of *material culture* covers the physical expressions of culture, such as technology, architecture and art. The immaterial aspects of culture like principles of *social organization* (including practices of *political organization* and *social institutions*), *mythology, philosophy, literature* (both *written* and *oral*), and *science* comprise the *intangible cultural heritage* of a society. Culture is the knowledge acquired over time.

Education brings about a change in behavior. This change may be brought about through the formal agencies like school, institutions etc. or through informal agencies like family, mass media etc. Education takes place through interaction with the surrounding environment. This environment is created by the culture of that place. Accordingly the curriculum of that school is made. Dress codes, behaviour of students and teachers, co-curricular activities, curricular activities are also dictated by the culture of the place where it is situated. Education as a part of culture has the twin functions of conservation and modification or renewal of the culture as well as an instrument of cultural change. Education can impart knowledge, training and skills as well as inculcate new ideas and attitudes among the young. It is culture in which education germinates and flowers. It is the culture also upon which education exerts, in turn, a nourishing influence. The intimate relationship between culture and education is evident from the fact the one of the major aim of education is to impart to the child cultural heritage and social heritage.

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Culture may be of various kinds

- Individual culture-Each individual has some personal traits and qualities which guide the habits, thinking and behaviour of the person. These personal likes, dislikes, interests, modes of thinking and patterns of social behaviour constitute his personal culture.
- Communal culture - Different communities have their different customs, traditions, beliefs and styles of living which is known as community culture.
- National culture- Each nation has some distinct patterns of ideals, values, modes of thoughts and behaviour. Such national traits are known as national culture.
- World culture - with the rise in the means of transport and communication the whole world has shrunk into a small unit. The whole world are now supposed to be having common values of life such as cooperation, empathy, sympathy, social services, social awakening and social sensitiveness which is termed as world culture.

Every society has two types of culture according to contents:

- Material culture - includes all those manmade things and objects which human society has created for its physical welfare. As for example clothes, utensils, TV, radio, various machines
- Non material culture- those ideals, attitudes and values which modify the behaviour of an individual. Language, literature, art, music, religion, customs, traditions etc are some of the example of non material culture.

Characteristics of culture

Acquired: Culture is sum total of acquired traits. While growing up a baby acquires different ideals, attitudes and values by imitation and social contacts. These experiences lead to the formation of his personal culture.

Distinct entity: Different cultural patterns are found in different societies establishing the different identities of different nations.

Transmission: Cultural traits and patterns are transmitted from generation to generation. Each generation is free to modify the cultural heritage and transmit it to the next generation. Cultural patterns are powerfully conditioned and influenced by the trends which appear from time to time according to

different circumstances and conditions. The transmission is a continuous process.

Utility: A culture is good if it has utility to the individual and to the society. If it does not fulfil this purpose then it decays and dies out in the long run. Cultural fanaticism promotes conflicts and chaos. Therefore, one should see and adopt cultural beauties and excellencies of all the culture that exist in the world. It will promote the world culture on the one hand where as on the other cultural integration will take place.

Dynamism: Culture is dynamic. It changes and grows with the change of time. Globalization has brought a rapid rise in transport and means of communication. This has lead to interaction amongst various cultures. One culture influences another leading to the adoption from another culture and becoming a composite culture. The thinking patterns, values, beliefs, behavior ideals etc change due to this influence. The different cultures of the world are interacting among themselves and syntheses of cultures are taking place.

Education has various functions. Preservation, transmission and creation of new culture through acculturation being some of them. This is done through formal educational agencies like school as well as through informal agencies like family, mass media etc.

One of the works of the school as an agency of education is preservation and transmission of culture. The school through its various curricular subjects (like literature, history, geography etc) and co- curricular practices like music, dance, observation of various national and international days, even dress code try to preserve the culture. By making the future generation practice it the school the school tries to inculcate those in the students for transmission to the future generation.

Impact of culture on formal educational institutions:

Aims and ideals of the educational institutions are influenced by the values and patterns of the society which reflects its culture

Curriculum: The system of education tries to reflect the culture of the society and at the same time realize the cultural needs of society and propagates it through the curriculum.

Methods of teaching: Culture and methods of teaching are intimately connected. The changing cultural patterns of a society exert its influence

upon the methods of teaching. We can say that cultural and social conditions generate the methods and techniques of teaching in a powerful manner.

Discipline: Cultural values influence the concept of discipline. The present cultural patterns of thinking and living are directly linked to our concept of discipline where the democratic values are accepted all over the world.

Text Books: Curriculum is contained in the textbooks. Textbooks are written according to the formulated or determined curriculum. Textbooks foster and promote cultural values and ideals too.

Teachers: Each individual teacher is imbued with the cultural values and ideals of the society of which he/she happens to be an integral member. They infuse the cultural values in children through their attire, behavior, instruction and way of dealing with the members of the school society.

Educational Institution: The total activities and programmes of an educational institution are organized according to the cultural ideals and values of the society. So, educational institutions are centres of promoting, moulding, reforming, and developing the cultural pattern of the society.

Impact of education on culture:

Just as the culture influences education, in the same way education also influences culture of a country. It can be seen in the following manner:

Preservation of culture: Every country has a distinct culture of its own. Hence, it tries to preserve its culture and its distinctiveness in its original form. Education is the only means through which this task can be accomplished. Thus, education preserves the culture of a society.

Transmission and continuity of culture: The process of preservation includes the process of transmission from one generation to another. A society establishes schools and institutions to preserve and transmit its culture to the coming generations. Through cultural interaction among various cultures it is possible to achieve cultural integration and assimilation and thus enriching the composite culture of a society. The vehicle for it is books, literature, documents, movies etc.

Development of culture: The function of education is to bring the needed and desirable change in the cultural ideals and values for the progress and continued development of the society without which social progress cannot

take place. Education through socialization leads to acculturation and thus development of new culture.

Development of personality: Education aims at developing the personality of a child. It employs diverse cultural patterns of thinking, behaviour and cultural values so that children are physically, mentally, morally, socially and intellectually develop with the development of society to the maximum extent.

Removal of cultural lag: While material cultural develop at a faster speed due to scientific and technological inventions non material culture consisting of ideas, values and norms lags behind and create a gulf between the two. Education is the only means by which these gaps can be bridged.

Globalization has opened the doors for cross cultural intermingling. This has its advantages as well as disadvantages. The mass media like internet, television, cinema etc is helping in creating an understanding of different cultures and their practices. They are acting as eye openers. However there is also the problem of “Aping the West” which is leading to engulfing of one culture by the other. Moreover commercialization is leading to attractive packaging of some cultures while dwindling away of some due to its lack lustre.

Thus the role of education is becoming all the important in preserving and enriching the culture of a community and nation keeping in mind global perspectives.

Reference

<https://sol.du.ac.in/mod/book/view.php?id=1449&chapterid=1335> retrieved on 3.4.18



Indian Culture: A Complex Adaptive System and Education

Dr. Sonali Chakrabarti

Sri Aurobindo pointed out culture as one kind of growth. It is a unique experience of human being, which combines morality, reality and spirituality. Culture helps to direct one's own mission towards life. It is culture, which leads us to exercise intellect and the ways of creative self-expression as well. Whenever we think about Indian Culture, we, the people of India either observe it from Western perspective or evaluate it with a negative attitude as non-realistic. But Indian Culture is not one-dimensional or diametrically opposite from Western Culture. It is a combination of varied thoughts and perspectives nourishing the tree of Indian Culture. If we try to narrate one-dimensionally it will be like the observation of an Elephant by a blind person. Swami Ranganathananda Ji rightly mentioned, 'Indian Culture in its long career has experienced with life in its diverse aspects and levels. It has not neglected any of the values of life, but it has concentrated more on some than on others'. So, Music and Art are the forms of spiritual practice of inward journey.

In Indian society cultural pattern is going through an evolutionary process. Professor Yogendra Singh in his book, *Modernization of India Tradition* (1986), has systematically discussed at length about various issues on values with reference to tradition and modernity. According to him, acculturative processes do not operate in isolation with other syncretic process. For instance, the cultural impact of the British Colonial Rule in India did not merely result in introduction of modern values or innovation of modern institutions, but also, in the propagation of Christianity and introductions of many other cultural styles which for all obvious reasons have no connection with modernity. Indian society is based on the multiple traditions and it is shaped up through the ages. The traditions and values are changing. This process of changing in the era of Globalization deserves a mention. Modern

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sociologists describe it as a composite process, which results from the convergence off a series of developments in societies, which are qualitatively new. Cultural Globalization is a new phenomenon that has broken the barrier of local, regional and national aspects of culture. It is continuous and rapid.

We can call Indian Culture as a Complex Adaptive System. Contradictory to A.K. Kumaraswami, Indian culture, is not shaped only by higher castes of the society. It is a reflection of the interaction between Tribal Culture and Mainstream Culture. Modern Indian art and music are also examples of that interaction. This complex adaptive system requires a little explanation. It is composed of many interacting parts that evolve and adapt over time. Organized behavior emerges from the simultaneous interaction of parts without any global plan. This system has got several characteristics: a) Many interacting parts; b) Emergent phenomenon; c) Adaptation; d) Dynamic change; e) Competition and co-operation; f) Decentralization; g) Nonlinearity. All these characteristics are assimilated in our cultural values since pre-historic age. In these days of Globalization we are striving for a common humanistic value system to preserve our endangered civilization. The very spirit of Indian Culture lies in this thought.

To propagate the values enshrined in this complex adaptive system, education is the most powerful instrument. Not only institutional, but also informal and nonformal system can contribute in this regard. The basic values to be inculcated amongst the new generation to comprehend largely the complex adaptive system maybe stated in brief: -

- Perception of oneness of mankind essential for global organization - Science and technology have brought about commonness in material plane, but not a corresponding sense in Human plane. It is again polluted by political indoctrination so the education should be planned in such a way that Oneness should be reflected in diversity, not in uniformity.
- Technology to visualize unified World-view rather fragmented – The World is indivisible whole, its parts are interacting with eachother and interdependent.
- The universality in every culture – The universal in every cultural and scientific experience should be highlighted. Diversity may carry universal message in various ways, but the spiritual unity is the essential nature of mankind.

- Awareness of universal spirit - Different culture and scientific development reflects the universal spirit of mankind. Awareness is required about that.

It must be education with a new perspective insight and methodology where perpetual dominance of information will be discarded. It will be based on an integrated study of mankind, there cultural and scientific Development. It will reflect on the points: -

- a) Each people have contributed, is contributing and will continue to contribute something specific to universal culture and World Civilization.
- b) Every culture is a unique entity with its own distinctive identity, a universal truth to which it gives particular emphasis.
- c) The different identities are the life forces of the different people of the World.
- d) Consciousness of spiritual unity is the pre-condition of World Peace. Consciousness of real nature and of his identity with human kind alone provides the firm psychological basis on which the defenses of peace can be truly laid. New education will built the mind.
- e) It will ponder over the exchanges and influences that link different civilizations together across space or time. The inter-relation of ideas and values thus transmitted provides a sense of continuity and unity of human development.

Ultimately new education will be able to identify the social moral and spiritual values common for human race. As Rabindranath Tagore termed, 'small myself' will be merged into 'big myself'. All our enthusiasm is dedicated to cognitive, informative, scientific innovations but very little time and energy is devoted to make spiritual unity, which only leads us towards a peaceful civilization. Our Indian culture preaches us about integration with nature and inner self. The disintegration resulted in imbalance in society with devastation of our environment also. So we should call for the new education – integrated education for unity and excellence of human civilization. In words of Sister Nivedita, we can raise voice for positive thoughts. 'Harmony and harmony alone is in this sense real while discord and its elements are unreal...'



Culture in the Classroom: A Professional Development for the Teacher Educators

Dr. Chandrani Acharya

Abstract: Educators today hear a lot about gaps in education— achievement gaps, funding gaps, school readiness gaps etc. Still there is another gap that often goes unexamined— this is cultural gap between students and teachers. Culture is not just traditions, celebrating national days, religious traditions, organizing cultural programs or language system. Rather it is a lived experience unique to each individual. To truly engage students in intellectual development, we must reach out to them in ways that are culturally and linguistically responsive and appropriate. We must examine the cultural assumptions and stereotypes we bring into the classroom that may hinder interconnectedness. Therefore in this study the focus has been on the Strategies of Cultural Development, Practices for Anti-bias Education regarding classroom culture. The professional development activity examines common beliefs that help and hinder work with racially and ethnically diverse students. There are number of reports and policies that provide a backdrop for the purpose and nature of culturally responsive approaches to service delivery in school education. Good teachers embrace their students’ cultural background.

Key Words: Cultural gap, Cultural and Linguistic responsiveness, Cultural Assumptions, Stereotypes in Classroom, Anti-bias Education.

Introduction

Most of us in the education profession are white, middle-class, monolingual-English speakers. Increasingly, the same profile does not hold true for our students. Often, when we stand before our classrooms, the faces looking back at us do not look like our own. Many of us try to bridge this difference with an embrace of color-blindness or the Golden Rule, treating others the way we would want to be treated. But the truth is: culture matters. Culture isn’t just a list of holidays or shared recipes, religious traditions, or language; it is a lived experience unique to each individual. As educators, it is our job to stimulate the intellectual development of

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children, and, in this era, it is simply not enough to operate on the axis of colour-blindness. To truly engage students, we must reach out to them in ways that are culturally and linguistically responsive and appropriate, and we must examine the cultural assumptions and stereotypes we bring into the classroom that may hinder interconnectedness.

What is Classroom Culture

Critical features of **classroom** life that characterize its educational “personality” and reflect both tacit and explicit educational values, beliefs and processes concerning the meaning of learning, teaching, knowledge, technology, student and teacher roles, power and responsibilities. A **classroom culture** of trust and acceptance is the foundation for establishing an environment in which students are empowered and comfortable with: providing feedback to continuously improve **classroom** teaching and learning. Learning from mistakes to enhance achievement.

Overcoming Stereotypes

To engage students effectively in the learning process, teachers must know their students and their academic abilities individually, rather than relying on racial or ethnic stereotypes or prior experience with other students of similar backgrounds.

Many teachers, for example, admire the perceived academic prowess and motivation of students and fail to recognize how even a “positive” stereotype isn’t positive if it presses students into moulds not built for them individually.

Objectives of the Study

- Gain an awareness of effective strategies for creating culturally responsive classrooms and schools.
- Gain an understanding of the challenges that school leaders and teachers experience in creating inclusive environments and transfer that understanding to strategies for undergraduate and graduate programs.
- Gain an understanding of what minority leaders contribute to creating inclusive multi-cultural environments.

8 Strategies to Integrate Culture in the Classroom

How to Integrate Culture into the Classroom

Here are some methods I used in my classroom to approach culture in a thoughtful way:

- Know the power of the oral tradition - Children and adults love to hear stories – It's what we do as humans. I shared stories relevant to the topic and engaged in discussions with my students to help them learn the facts needed.
- Use “geometry” to help them – I used the word geometry to describe setting up the classroom so that I could maintain my students' attention. (I liked to use a circle with me in the middle. This is common in many cultures.) This was particularly useful when my students gave book reports.
- Give your students time to work on projects as teams – This allows the more reserved students to interact more with their friends. Walk around and make suggestions as needed. Some cultures encourage group learning.
- Give your students time to explore individually – This is important for students who come from societies where individuality is paramount. Using both team learning and individual learning strategies will encourage your students to adjust to different situations.
- Invite speakers from different cultures – This allows students to hear about other cultures and see individuals who represent their particular culture.
- Be courteous to your students – Remember: Your students are young human beings. Respect their names. Give them time to speak without interruption.
- Incorporate different perspectives into lessons – It doesn't take much time to mention facts that would interest all your students. For example, mentioning that there were black soldiers in the American Revolution as well as other conflicts can only enhance respect which students build for each other and also you.
- Use technology – When appropriate, show films which include various types of cultures and people working together. For example,

a film talking about women participation in World War II could have a positive impact on how your students interact with each other and you. Always keep the focus on constructive dialogue and steer clear of detrimental debates.

Why Culture Matters

Culture is a part of who we are and everything we do. We cross cultures frequently without being aware of doing so. Some of the cultures we interact with on a daily basis include: neighbourhoods, businesses, and religious groups. The numerous cultures we belong to are extensive. Our relationship with culture is mind-boggling and undeniable. Perhaps one of the biggest cultures we are aware of is the school environment.

Quite simply, culture can be defined as the way things are done around this place, and schools have their own traditions, values, and expectations, just like anyplace else where humans gather. Furthermore, schools have groups which represent narrow subcultures of the general culture of the educational environment. Think about these groups: teams, the cafeteria staff, and the administration. How they interact with each other and the students can be vastly different from school to school. For example the culture of one school may be like this:

1. After every victory of the football team, the principal gives a speech in the auditorium where everybody gathers.
2. Before lunch, all of the students must line up single file to enter the cafeteria.
3. The principal expects all report cards to be returned to the teacher within a week with signatures from the parents.

Understanding Culture in the Classroom

Although educating students is the main goal of the school, teachers may have different variations on how to accomplish that goal. For this reason, another subculture in the school is the classroom where one teacher's preferences may not be shared by his/her colleagues. Yet, culture influences how lessons are presented and how instructions proceed. It impacts how students learn. With the student population projected to be mostly of non-white children by the year 2020 in America, Culture has crucial ramifications for educators and the field of teaching. As a rehabilitation counsellor with

training in the teaching profession, I found these steps useful when delivering instruction to my students:

1. Understand who you are as a person: Remember, We all come from different backgrounds which can influence how we carry out instruction. (Should students raise their hands to ask questions? Should students be given rewards for performing well on tests or quizzes? Should topics be discussed openly in class or simply read about in the books?) We bring these expectations into the classroom.
2. Understand the fact that students learn in different ways: Essentially, every student is not the same. One style of instruction may fail to reach one student while helping another. A teacher must be flexible and use his/her skills to educate all of the students in the classroom.
3. Read about other cultures. This will help you understand your students better.
4. Step out of your comfort zone and talk to colleagues or visit settings where your students come from.
5. Recognize that an inclusive classroom assists with correcting the biases and prejudices in your nation.

Professional Developmental Techniques for Teacher Educators to Promote Cultural Development In The classroom:

- **Curriculum**

Culturally Relevant Curriculum

Curriculum, in its most simple, essential, commonly understood form, is the “what” of education. It is crucial to academic performance and essential to culturally responsive pedagogy. Even the most “standard” curriculum decides which history is worthy of study, whose books are worthy of reading, which curriculum and text selections that include myriad voices and multiple ways of knowing, experiencing, and understanding life that can help students to find and value their own voices, histories, and cultures.

A multicultural society is best served by a culturally responsive curriculum. Schools that acknowledge the diversity of their student population understand the importance of promoting cultural awareness. Teachers who are interested in fostering cultural awareness in their classroom should actively demonstrate to their students that they genuinely care about their cultural, emotional,

and intellectual needs. To this end, there are several strategies that you can use to build trusting relationships with diverse students. To incorporate cultural awareness into your classroom curriculum, you should:

- 1. Express interest in the ethnic background of your students.** Encourage your students to research and share information about their ethnic background as a means of fostering a trusting relationship with fellow classmates. Analyze and celebrate differences in traditions, beliefs, and social behaviours. It is important to note that this task helps European-American students realize that their beliefs and traditions constitute a culture as well, which is a necessary breakthrough in the development of a truly culturally responsive classroom. Also, take the time to learn the proper pronunciation of student names and express interest in the etymology of interesting and diverse names.
- 2. Redirect your role in the classroom from instructor to facilitator.** Another important requirement for creating and nurturing environment for students is reducing the power differential between the instructor and students. Students in an authoritarian classroom may sometimes display negative behaviours as a result of a perceived sense of social injustice; in the culturally diverse classroom, the teacher thus acts more like a facilitator than an instructor. Providing students with questionnaires about what they find to be interesting or important provides them with a measure of power over what they get to learn and provides them with greater intrinsic motivation and connectedness to the material. Allowing students to bring in their own reading material and present it to the class provides them with an opportunity to both interact with and share stories, thoughts, and ideas that are important to their cultural and social perspective.
- 3. Maintain a strict level of sensitivity to language concerns.** In traditional classrooms, students who are not native English speakers often feel marginalized, lost, and pressured into discarding their original language in favour of English. In a culturally responsive classroom, diversity of language is celebrated and the level of instructional materials provided to non-native speakers are tailored to their level of English fluency. Accompanying materials should be provided in the student's primary language and the student should be encouraged to master English.

4. **Maintain high expectations for student performance.** Given that culturally responsive instruction is a student-centred philosophy, it should come as no surprise that expectations for achievement are determined and assigned individually for each student. Students don't receive lavish praise for simple tasks but do receive praise in proportion to their accomplishments. If a student is not completing her work, then one should engage the student positively and help guide the student toward explaining how to complete the initial steps that need to be done to complete a given assignment or task.
5. **Incorporate methods for self-testing.** Another potent method for helping students become active participants in learning is to reframe the concept of testing. While testing is usually associated with grades (and therefore stress) in traditional classrooms, in a culturally responsive classroom frequent non-graded tests can be used to provide progress checks and ensure that students don't fall behind on required material. Teaching students to self-test while learning new information will help them better remember and use what they've learned in class and will help them realize on their own when they need to study a topic in greater depth.
6. **Maintain an "inclusive" curriculum that remains respectful of differences.** A culturally responsive curriculum is both inclusive in that it ensures that all students are included within all aspects of the school and it acknowledges the unique differences students may possess. A culturally responsive curriculum also encourages teachers' understanding and recognition of each student's non-school cultural life and background, and provides a means for them to incorporate this information into the curriculum, thus promoting inclusion.

Schools have the responsibility to teach all students how to synthesize cultural differences into their knowledge base, in order to facilitate students' personal and professional success in a diverse world. A culturally responsive curriculum helps students from a minority ethnic/racial background to develop a sense of identity as individuals, as well as proudly identify with their particular culture group. Teachers can play a big role in helping these students succeed through the establishment of culturally responsive classrooms.

● Honoring Home Languages

Teachers are often a young immigrant's first regular, ongoing contact with someone outside their home community and culture. It's a relationship that can provide the emotional scaffolding necessary to cross the linguistic and cultural divide between country of origin and country of residency.

With a hearty mix of creativity, cultural acumen, and professional expertise, teachers can help English language learners acquire language skills more rapidly — and foster inclusion in the school community.

● Teaching strategies

Teachers need to build literacy *and* social emotional skills while exploring meaningful texts. Unlike conventional or scripted lesson plans, these strategies allow you to select and combine vocabulary, reading, and speaking and listening activities, customizing a pathway that supports your instructional goals. Each strategy is Common Core-aligned and includes a special note about English language learners and connections to anti-bias education.

1. *Exploring Texts Through Read Alouds*

Inspire young readers with strategies that help them define text types, examine how text structure affects meaning, and identify audience and purpose.

2. *Responding to the Read-Aloud Text*

GRADE LEVEL

K-2

Take new readers to the next level with strategies that help them analyze, interpret, criticize and make connections to texts.

Grades 3-12

Meet the demands of the Common Core State Standards with strategies that foster vocabulary, close reading, and speaking and listening skills. Each strategy includes explicit connections to anti-bias education and adaptations for English language learners.

3. *Word Work*

GRADE LEVEL

3-5

6-8

9-12

These vocabulary strategies help students build their comprehension and language skills by using key words from Perspectives texts in their own reading, writing, speaking and listening.

4 *Close and Critical Reading*

GRADE LEVEL

3-5

6-8

9-12

Encourage close reading with strategies that ask students to analyze, interpret, criticize and make connections to texts, and to discover the relevance of their reading within a larger context.

4. *Community Inquiry*

GRADE LEVEL

3-5

6-8

9-12

Nurture students' speaking and listening skills with strategies that ask them to draw upon texts during meaningful — and respectful — classroom discussions.

Critical Practices for Anti-bias Education

This professional development seminar shows how teachers can take action and create the conditions that bring the key components of culturally responsive pedagogy to life:

- building and drawing upon intergroup awareness, understanding and skills
- creating classroom environments that reflect diversity, equity and justice

- engaging families and communities in ways that are meaningful and culturally competent
- encouraging students to speak out against bias and injustice
- making the implementation of anti-bias curriculum part of larger individual, school and community action
- supporting students' identities and making it safe for them to fully be themselves
- using instructional strategies that support diverse learning styles and allow for the development of critical thinking skills.

This study offers here a set of critical practices to help teachers effectively implement culturally responsive components in their own practice. This professional development is divided into four main categories: **Instruction, Classroom Culture, Family and Community Engagement and Teacher Leadership**. Each section includes five carefully chosen approaches that we believe are crucial to anti-bias/social justice education. For each of these you will find a brief description and specific examples of implementation strategies.

The professional development here can be done in a small group setting or individually. Many of the exercises will assume working independently, but participants working in small groups can adapt the work for collaborative practice use as well. The complete Critical Practices for Anti-Bias Education Module is as follows:

Four Professional Development Modules

Critical Practices for Anti-bias Education: Instruction

Define critical engagement with material; explore differentiated instruction methods; identify key components of cooperative and collaborative learning; explore methods for making real-world connections to instruction; and evaluate grading procedures to look at more value-based assessments and evaluations.

Critical Practices for Anti-bias Education: Classroom Culture

Identify thoughtful classroom setup and structure that honour student experience; establish norms for shared inquiry and dialogue; establish how

to create social-emotional learning safety in the classroom; and analyze behaviour management practice to ensure value-based components.

Critical Practices for Anti-bias Education: Family and Community Engagement

Develop strategies to tap into family and community wisdom; develop strategies to tap into local resources; develop strategies to increase connections among families; identify community issues that impact classroom culture; and identify methods of culturally sensitive communication.

Critical Practices for Anti-bias Education: Teacher Leadership

Increase self-awareness and cultural competency; Identify skills to speak up against and respond to prejudice, bias and stereotypes; explore building allies; and define leading beyond the classroom.

Before moving into the specifics of above mentioned critical practices, we must better understand the seven primary components of culturally responsive pedagogy identified within ***Critical Practices***.

This presentation will help us create the conditions that bring these values to life:

1. Building and drawing upon intergroup awareness, understanding and skills
2. Creating classroom environments that reflect diversity, equity and justice
3. Engaging families and communities in meaningful and culturally competent ways
4. Encouraging students to speak out against bias and injustice
5. Making the implementation of Teaching strategies, anti-bias classroom resource, *Perspectives*, part of larger individual, school and community action
6. Supporting students' identities and making it safe for them to be fully themselves
7. Using instructional strategies that support diverse learning styles and allow for deep exploration of *identity, diversity, justice and action*.

These seven components will be incorporated throughout this professional development presentation.

In this professional development, learners will:

- Develop strategies to tap into family and community wisdom
- Develop strategies to tap into local resources
- Develop strategies to increase connections among families
- Identify community issues that impact classroom culture
- Identify methods of culturally sensitive communication

Application

Culture refers to a wide range of identity and community characteristics. Culturally responsive pedagogy engages identities and identity issues across all groups and communities: gender, ability/disability, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, language and nationality.

Culturally responsive classroom culture exists when students are seen, valued, cared for and respected as their full selves.

Considering all that culture encompasses, think about the following:

Learning process

In looking more directly at family and community engagement, keep the following critical practices in mind:

- Culturally sensitive communication
- Inclusion of family and community wisdom
- Increased connections among families
- Use of local resources
- Engagement in community issues and problems

Culturally Sensitive Communication:

Let's begin by looking specifically at culturally sensitive communication. The following guidelines offer some suggestions for building inclusiveness and respect into your communication with families:

- Assume good intentions and approach all families or guardians as partners who want the best for the child.
- Invite families or guardians to share knowledge about the child's life, interests, hopes and struggles.

- Invite families or guardians to share information about family cultures and traditions.
- Recognize and respect different family structures.
- Reflect on the role your identity and background may play in shaping relationships with families; bring a sense of cultural humility to all interactions.
- View linguistic, cultural and family diversity as strengths.

Go Deeper

Get to know your students' home lives by using a questionnaire or survey. Starting a relationship by asking questions sets the tone for collaboration and respect.

Sample questions to ask family members:

- What is your current living situation?
- How many people live in your household?
- Who primarily cares for your child?
- Where and with whom does your child spend a majority of her time (e.g., with parents, family members or guardians, at home, in nursery school, alone)?
- What is the primary mode of communication in your home (e.g., face-to-face, phone, text message)?
- Is a language other than English spoken in your home? If so, how proficient in english is your child?
- Does your child have any health concerns? If so, what?

Sample questions to ask students:

- Who is in your family?
- What's your favourite thing to do as a family?
- What's your favourite family meal?
- What's your favourite holiday and how do you celebrate it?
- What's the most relaxed time of day for your family? What goes on then?

- What's the most hectic time of day for your family? What goes on then?

Because language plays a crucial role in families' lives, communicate with parents in their own mother languages as much as possible. However, asking students to translate for their parents can put them in an awkward position, especially if relaying difficult or complicated information. Provide a translator whenever possible.

Working in a cohort?

Share your steps with a partner.

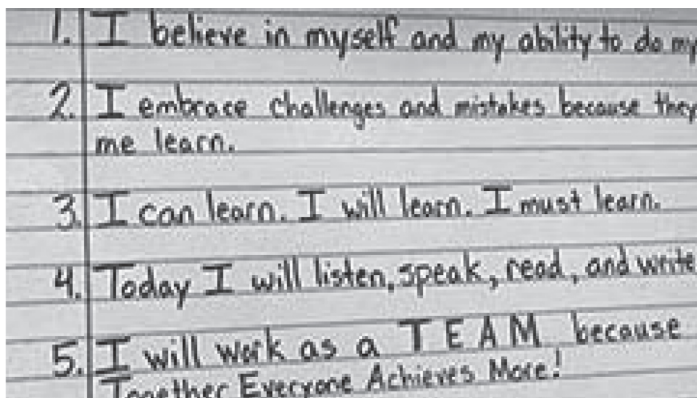
For continued reflection purposes, consider starting a journal where you can jot down your thoughts and ideas as you implement *Critical Practices for Anti-bias Education*. Remember that this work is not in addition to what you already do; rather, it should frame what you currently do so that you can be more inclusive in your work with students.

How do I develop a positive classroom culture?

Many new teachers worry about creating a positive class culture. Should you be kind or firm? Is it okay to smile before December? We're here to help you create a class culture that feels good to you and your students. Remember that creating a positive culture takes time, so try not to get discouraged as you remain in the course.

Creating a Positive Classroom Culture

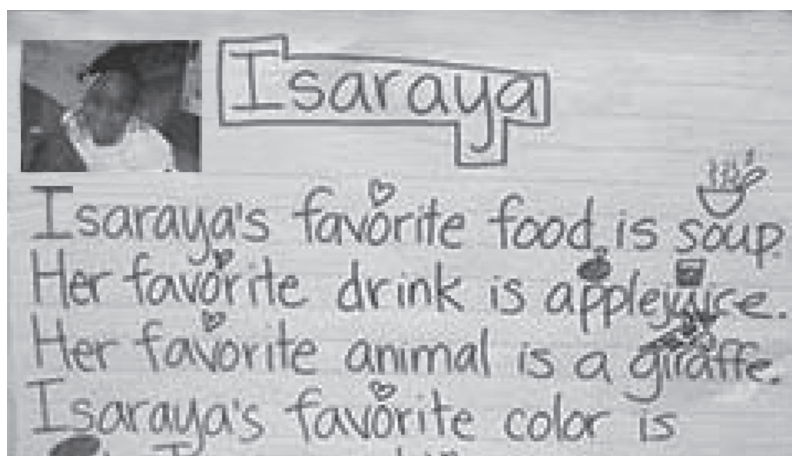
When taking a glimpse into other people's classrooms, it can seem like they've got it all figured out. But behind every successful classroom are lots



and lots of time spent building a strong class culture. Watch how Jen Saul explains how she creates a positive classroom community.

Define and Build Your Class Culture

Class culture is built on relationships. Building a strong class culture is a collaborative effort. When students are involved in creating classroom expectations, they'll be more interested in following them. In this video, check out how one teacher uses the Tribes method to create a positive learning environment.



Building Strong Class Culture All Year Long

It's important to start building a positive class culture from Day 1. But culture is never something that's going to get completely checked off your



list. It's important to keep working on it all year long. Plan about how to build strong class culture all year long and think about what you can do at the beginning, middle, and end of the year.

Strategies needed to create cultural inclusive learning environments

Definition of an inclusive environment

We need to have the courage to speak up and be comfortable about this. To do this, we need to be informed.

- Environments that acknowledge the continuing significance of race and racial identity in ways that empower and motivate students to transcend the legacy of race in our society even when the composite of the classroom continues to reflect it.
- "... helping each student understand himself or herself as a unique, competent, and valued member of a diverse community." Lindsey et al,(p.44)
- An environment that engages all students so that they are successful.

Leadership preparation: creating an inclusive environment

Examples:

- Changing policy/procedures to support the development of an inclusive environment
- create a culture of inclusion
- creating a safe environment for courageous conversations
- allocating needed resources (this is directly related to changing policies and procedures — should affirm these).
- Policies need to reflect the community and changes in demographics.

Culturally relevant leaders

- Need to establish a culture in which the agreements, conditions and compass of courageous conversations and practices are eventually internalized by all educators (Tatum)
- Take a principled position on critical issues. Silence doesn't do it — need to know when to speak up, and how

- Work cooperatively through a community of leaders from inside and outside to determine a set of core values to guide all relationships

Leadership and inclusive environments

- Equity vision: students arrive at their school and feel safe and secure, not because of locks, metal detectors, and security guards, but because they know the schools have their physical, emotional and spiritual safety at heart.
- Moving beyond individual action to systematic change
- Administration leads efforts to reach out to all parents and members of the community
- The way to transform a school culture to change the language

Teacher preparation: creating an inclusive environment

- focus on teaching and learning abilities
- discover and communicate a personal need for an understanding of students and families of colour.
- Establish high expectations and implement more effective instructional practices to close the achievement gap

Classrooms and inclusive environments

- ABCs of inclusive environment:
 - A = affirming identity
 - B = Building community
 - C = Cultivating leadership
- Culturally responsive standards based teaching (CRSB) (Saifer and Barton)
 - always student centered
 - power to transform
 - connected and integrated
 - fosters critical thinking
 - incorporates assessment and reflection
 - builds relationships and community

Strategies

[Courageous Conversations by Singleton and Linton]

- **Cultural climate** (examples)
 - o encourage students to talk about differences without making judgments
 - o teach how to maintain positive interaction among people of different racial and cultural backgrounds
 - o establish school policies that reflect a value for differences among people and establish school board policies that are racially sensitive
 - o Hold educators accountable for demonstrating high expectations for students of colour
 - o Establish a staff that is reflective of the student population.
- **Curriculum** (examples) [key to do when you go through curriculum review process)
 - o multicultural education goes beyond the food, fun and festivities
 - o students of different colours see themselves, their lives and community in the curriculum
 - o the school's curriculum is viewed as pluralistic and ever changing to meet the needs of an ever changing student body
- **Instruction** (examples)
 - o teachers model an acceptance and appreciation for different ideas, opinions, and learning styles
 - o teachers make an effort to understand the racial and cultural characteristics of students, one student at a time
 - o Instructional strategies do not conflict with values, beliefs or cultural practices of any students
 - o Students of different colours feel valued by their teachers and challenged by teachers' high expectations.
- **Assessment** (examples)
 - o a variety of assessments are used that are culturally responsive

- o teacher of different racial/cultural backgrounds collectively evaluate students’ performances to ensure that the same standards are being applied
- o Culturally responsive teacher/student/parent conferences are established.

Higher Education’s Responsibility

- Environment/modeling expectations
 - o to institutionalize a multi-cultural inclusive environment
 - o to create a safe environment that allows for courageous conversations about race e.g. need to talk about white privilege and what that is.
 - o to communicate a belief that exemplifies the institution’s understanding of students and families of different colours.
- Preparation expectations
 - o to prepare students to teach and lead in multi-cultural inclusive pre-K - 12 organizations
 - o to prepare students to establish high expectations and implement effective instructional practices to close the achievement gap
 - o to prepare students to have a strong voice and advocate for multi-cultural inclusive environments.

Teachers’ conceptions of self and others

Culturally relevant teacher	Assimilationist teacher
● see themselves as artists ● see themselves as a part of the community and teaching as giving something back to the community, encourages students to do the same ● help students make connections, national and global identities ● See teachers as pulling knowledge out — like mining	● see themselves as technicians, teaching as a technical task ● see themselves as individuals who may or may not be part of the community, encourage achievement as a means to escape community ● believe failure is inevitable for some ● See teaching as putting knowledge in — like banking

Conclusion

We may conclude that the teachers of today need to conceptualise about the culturally unbiased conceptions and create a culturally enriched classrooms with an anti-bias education system.

As teachers, it can be hard to let go and let young people take control. But, when given that license, how often do they actually fail us or each other?

“Critical engagement requires questioning, forming and challenging opinions, and feeling outrage or inspiration. It is about helping individuals find their voices and learn to trust their instincts.” SAMANTHA SCHOELLER

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Awareness Regarding Prevention of Dropout in Education among Persons with Disabilities and Backward Classes in India: Practice and Problems

Debprosad Biswas* and Dr.Mitali Panda**

ABSTRACT : Plurality is a striking feature of Classroom which has all sorts of children: Learning disorder, Slow learners, Mentally /Physically Challenged, Talented, Gifted i.e. Students with Special Needs, Learners from low income group, different languages & Religion, First generation learners, Emotionally disturbed, Street children, platform children, delinquent child, children from brothels, children of convicts, Socio-economically backward like, children from SC & ST/OBC community and others.

In case we adopt one approach, a substantial large section of the class gets excluded and subsequently dropping out. Each and every child of any class deserves an individualized programmed as each child learns in a very special way. Hence it becomes mandatory for the teachers to understand the learning needs of each child so that he/she could think of adopting the best suitable way of helping that child learn in the most efficient way. To realize that there is no alternative than enrolment of all children in the education system, we should include 'All' irrespective of caste, colour, creed, sex, ability, disability, ethnic character and language spoken.

Keywords: Awareness, Drop out, Persons with Disabilities, Backward Classes, Interventions

1. Introduction

Today we have 74.04% literacy rate only in our country. According to the Unified District Information System for Education (U-DISE) 2013–14 (Provisional), the average annual dropout rate for primary level was 4.67% and for upper primary level 3.13% during 2012-13, in the country. The drop-out rate has been decreasing continuously over the years with better access to schooling facilities, improved school infrastructure and deployment of additional teachers under SSA & RMSA. Drop out is a great problem in Indian Education System especially in the context of scheduled castes,

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scheduled tribes, minorities, and children with disabilities. Students with disabilities are more likely to drop out of School. The 2011 census says 45% of India's disabled population are still illiterate, compared to 25.96% of all Indians.

2. Objectives of The Study

- (i) To identify the status of enrolment of disabled students at school level in West Bengal w.r.t. Indian context.
- (ii) To study the causes and risk factors associated with dropout among persons with disabilities and backward classes in India.
- (iii) To enumerate scope of school education for disabled student to achieve inclusive education in West Bengal.
- (iv) To find out the need and availability of teaching facilities and students support system at school level.
- (v) To identify the problems faced by the teacher, students, in regular schools in West Bengal.
- (vi) To study the effect of awareness program about inclusive education w.r.t. rural and urban areas.

3. Disability

“Disability” means a great number of different functional limitations occurring in any population, in any country of the world. People may be disabled by physical, intellectual or sensory impairment, medical conditions or mental illness. Such impairments, conditions or illnesses may be permanent or transitory in nature.

Disability is determined by its nature and extent and also on the basis of how much damage the impairment has caused. Persons with permanent loss of some parts of the body or some senses can be trained in a systematic way to compensate the experience caused by such losses.

According to Census of India- 2011 and other Sources the number of persons with disability is as follows-

- (i) 26.81 million Population experience some form of disability or impairment in India.

- (ii) 2.36 million Children with disabilities belong to the age group of 5-10.
- (iii) Only 1.72 million are enrolled in schools in 2013-14.
- (iv) In West Bengal, 2017406 people are having one or the other types of disability.
- (v) In this group of disabled population in the state, women with disability constitute 890225.
- (vi) In the age group of 5-19, total number of persons with one or the other form of disability is 466049.
- (vii) Girls/women with disability constitute 207536 in the same age group.
- (viii) SSA Annual Report for WB, 2011-12 has mentioned that 270060 children with Special Needs were identified and 193180 were enrolled in schools in that year.
- (ix) 23218 students were provided with aids and appliances.
- (x) Women with disabilities face significantly more difficulties in attaining education. According to a UNDP study, the global literacy rate is as low as 1% for women with disabilities.
- (xi) Number of Resource Teachers/Special Educators were 1366 and number of IE volunteers are 1503 (Total 2869).
- (xii) No appointment of RT/Spl Educator since 2009.
- (xiii) Enrolment of children with Special needs have increased over the years.
- (xiv) A simple calculation reveals that 1 specially trained teacher teaches 67 children!

4. Methodology

This study is primarily based on the:

- Statistical abstracts,
- School Report Cards 'District Information System for Education' (DISE) reports,
- Data from - census 2011 &

- Review of information collected from secondary sources.

This paper is basically descriptive in nature.

5. Classification and characteristics of disability in School Education

There exist different types of disability:

Legal blindness: Legal blindness is defined as 20/200 ft or 6/60 m visual acuity in the better eye after best correction or if vision does not exceed 20 degrees in the visual field.

Meaning: 20/200 ft or 6/50 m: An object which is usually seen from a distance of 200 ft or 60 m by a person with normal sight is seen only from a distance of 20 ft or 6 m by the person affected by visual impairment.

Low vision: This means markedly reduced functional vision in the individual. The visual condition may demand large print materials and magnifiers for reading. Low vision person has a visual acuity of less than 6/18 to light perception, or a visual field of less than 10 degrees from the point of fixation. But this person uses, or is potentially able to use, vision for the planning and/or execution (doing it) of a task.

Hearing Impairment: Any fault in the transmission of sound through ear(s) to the nervous system causes hearing impairment. Impairment in hearing is a defect in hearing organ due to genetic and environmental factors which cause to reduce the functioning of hearing.

Categories

- (i) Mild: 20-30 dB loss.
- (ii) Marginal: 30-40 dB loss.
- (iii) Moderate: 40-60 dB loss.

Intellectual disability: Significantly sub-average intellectual development with varied degrees. Developmental Period: between the embryonic stage and the end of the adolescent stage.

Classifications: Two groups can be classified on the basis of intellectual assessment and on the basis of adaptive behaviour assessment:

- (i) Mild Intellectual Disability.
- (ii) Moderate Intellectual disability.

Characteristics:

- (i) Signs of delayed development and learns to walk, talk, toilet and feed one year later than the normal child.
- (ii) They are slow learner.
- (iii) Poor control over impulses.
- (iv) Lacks judgment and fails to anticipate the consequences of action.
- (v) Often has speech disturbance.
- (vi) IQ is 55-40.
- (vii) Unable for abstract thinking.

6. Legislations in favour of Persons with Disabilities in India

Persons with Disability Act, 1995: 7 disabilities were identified for protection under this act. These were Blindness, Low Vision, Hearing Impairment, Mental Retardation, Locomotor Disability, Leprosy Cured, and Mental Illness.

Parents and NGOs working for mentally challenged (severe), autism, cerebral palsy and multiple disabilities demanded a separate law for protection of these categories of people in absence of parents — the outcome: National Trust Act, 1999.

Admission in general school is mandatory. No school can deny admission of a child with disability (Ref. RTE Act, 2009)

Paradigm shift, from medical model to social model in UN Convention on the Rights of the Persons with Disability, 2007. Protection of rights of persons with disability is seen in the context of making provisions for inclusion of this population in all walks of life—education, health, livelihood, leisure in a barrier-free society. India was a signatory to this UN Convention.

Implementation

- (i) New law or a philosophy to be adopted by the society for the people who are marginalized.
- (ii) Without this philosophy, no law would be able to protect the rights of the people who have problems in accessing all the facilities provided by the state.

7. Disabilities-Recent Studies

In a recent study on Inclusive Education in the state of West Bengal, 727 schools under SSA in 19 districts of West Bengal were reviewed. Of these schools:

- (i) 63% are primary schools (up to class IV), 10% are Junior (up to class VIII) and 27% are High schools.
- (ii) 9% schools are only for girls, 4% are for boys and 87% are coeducational.
- (iii) Enrolment in these schools are 1191 girls and 1275 boys respectively in 2014-15.

Accessibility

- (i) 213 numbers of schools do not have ramps.
- (ii) 356 schools have ramps at the entrance.
- (iii) 155 schools have proportionate ramps.
- (iv) 223 numbers of schools do not have toilets at all.
- (v) 300 schools have toilets, but no water, no doors.
- (vi) Only 199 schools have user friendly toilets

8. Interventions in schools and role of the teacher:

School Education:

- (i) Admission in general school is mandatory. No school can deny admission of a child with disability (Ref. RTE Act, 2009).
- (ii) However, there are Special schools for the Blind, Deaf , Cerebral Palsy, Mentally Retarded and Autism by the government/ non-government organizations or trusts/parent bodies.

Higher Education:

- (i) UGC runs HEPSN cell for supporting the needs of the students with disabilities.
- (ii) Accessibility within the college/university campus—ramps/railings/ Braille Books/Audio Books/computer with assistive devices (JAWS software for the blind)/visual software for the deaf/AAC for the persons with communicative disorder.

Role of the Teacher:

- (i) Meeting with the parent required on regular basis.
- (ii) See that the child uses spectacles /applies medicine as prescribed/ uses aids.
- (iii) If not, parents have to be summoned and counselled.
- (iv) If clinical assessment mentions progressive vision loss or permanent low vision, staff meeting is required for retention of the child in school.
- (v) Requirements of the child in classroom to be provided including aids and appliances.
- (vi) Insist on verbal communication with the child.
- (vii) Peer group counselling most important so that this child is not segregated within the classroom and in other activities.
- (viii) Extra time should be given for written work.

Strategies:

Practice skills in structured lesson, natural environment, as a part of their daily routine.

- (i) Use real objects.
- (ii) Adopt a multi-sensory approach.
- (iii) Make adaptations to meet physical needs.
- (iv) Create an environment which encourage.
- (v) Optimal functioning – but avoid over stimulation.
- (vi) Break down the task into small steps.
- (vii) Selection of an Appropriate Medium of Reading and writing for Low Vision Children

9. Backward Classes and dropout:**Scheduled Castes:**

For a long time, the low caste people were referred to collectively as outcastes, depressed castes or untouchables. Gandhi chose to describe them as Harijans.

The government of India Act, 1935 and the Indian Constitution called them scheduled castes in reference to a “schedule” of lowest castes that was drawn up in both documents.

The militant activists of untouchables have adopted the identity of “dalit”; it conveys a tale of exploitation and discrimination. In popular parlance, the term “Dalit” represents a wide range of meanings, all of which convey a tale of exploitation and discrimination. The wide usage of this term replaced the word “harijan” which had been coined by Mahatma Gandhi in the aftermath of the Poona Pact of 1932. To radical “Dalit” activists, “harijan” represented a paternalistic categorization of a group doomed to remain in perpetual bondage. In contrast, the term “Dalit”, which literally meant oppressed or broken and in the beginning had a negative connotation, is perceived to be somewhat self-inscriptive and is associated with self respect, pride and anger. Since the early 1990s, Dalit movements have spread all across India. These have also acquired a global dimension and have been successful in enlisting the support of the overseas dalit activists and non-Indian sympathizers. From early 1990s, caste came to be recognized as a major mobilizing factor. However, upper-caste disquiet over the issue of reservation raised serious apprehensions about the divisive impact of articulated caste consciousness in India. The growing incidence of violence among the Dalit communities and the upper castes convinced many Indians that assertion of caste identity could lead to a destabilization of the political sovereignty of the nation state. These issues had in fact become important during the last phase of the colonial rule, a time when nationalists had attempted to reconcile caste identity with the other features of Indian pluralism, ostensibly to lay foundations of a strong anti-imperialist mass movement. It is this history of identity formation in the colonial period and the politics of protest associated with it which informs much of the later developments on the caste question.

We know that B R Ambedkar was born in a poor Mahar family of Maharashtra on 14 April 1891. He faced all kind of discrimination from the upper caste Hindus. He gradually developed a concern for the interests and rights of the Dalits. He was nominated to the constituent Assembly and was chosen the Chairman of the Constitution Drafting Committee. He was included as Law Minister in the Nehru cabinet and converted to Buddhism to defy the traditional rites and rituals practiced by the Hindus.

Population: As per Census 2011:

- (i) SCs comprise 16.6% of the total population.
- (ii) 1108 number of SCs are enlisted.
- (iii) 21.53 % of population in the villages belong to SC and ST.
- (iv) In 2012-13, SC student's enrolment rate is 26.11% in WB.

Scheduled Tribes:

- (i) 774 Tribes were enlisted in accordance with the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Orders (Amendment) Act, 1976.
- (ii) Census 2011: 8.6% or 104 million of the total population.
- (iii) Prominent in Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Gujarat, West Bengal, Maharashtra, Odisha, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, 3 NE states (Mizoram, Meghalaya, Nagaland), Andaman & Nicobar Islands.
- (iv) Literacy rates rose from 8.5% in 1961 to 40% in 1999-2000.
- (v) In West Bengal, 38 Scheduled Tribes were enlisted in 1976.

Other Backward Castes:

First Backward Classes Commission was constituted in Jan 1953 to enlist the castes which were socially and educationally backward. Report was submitted in 1955. 2399 backward castes were identified, of them 837 were classified as "most backward".

Mandal Commission was constituted in 1979. It has identified 52% of the total population of India under OBC category. Of them, 43.70% constitute Hindu OBC, and 8.40% constitute other communities' OBC such as Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists and Jains.

Muslims:

Sachar Committee Report (2006) brings out the following facts:

- i. Far below the national average in literacy ratio.
- ii. 25% of Muslim children of the school going age (6-14 years) have either not attended school or have dropped out.
- iii. UDISE data: Muslim boys' and girls' enrolment rate in WB is 22.72%

Reasons being:

- (i) Lack of facilities to teach Urdu at the Elementary level.
- (ii) Parents are not averse to sending children to Govt. school.
- (iii) Non-availability of schools within easy reach for girls in rural areas.
- (iv) Very low Literacy Rates in Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh.
- (v) Dropout rates are high in school education

OBC:

The Mandal Commission was constituted in India in 1979 by the government under Prime Minister Morarji Desai with a mandate to “identify the socially or educationally backward.” It was headed by Indian parliamentarian B.P. Mandal to consider the question of seat reservations and quotas for people to redress caste discrimination, and used eleven social, economic, and educational indicators to determine backwardness.

According to UDISE Data:

West Bengal has the highest Ratio of Primary to Upper primary schools/ sections

Retention Rate:

- (i) at Elementary Level is 67.38% means out-of-school rate is 32%.
- (ii) at Primary Level is 83.74% means out-of-school rate is 16%.

Whereas, Annual Average dropout Rate in the country was 4.34% in 2013-14 at Primary Level and 3.77% at Upper Primary level. The drop out students mainly belongs to: SC/ST/OBC/Girls/Minorities/Students with Special Needs.

As per the data, the annual dropout percentage for primary classes (Class I to IV) in Mumbai (2012) is zero which is much better than the state average of 2.2 per cent (Maharashtra) and that for upper primary is 3 per cent which is slightly higher than 2.6 per cent dropout rate at the state level.

But the dropout rate in backward groups such as OBC (5.7 per cent) and Muslims (4.5 per cent) in the primary classes and ST (16.8 per cent), OBC

(9.7 per cent), Muslims (9.8 per cent) in the upper primary classes remains startlingly high in city schools.

The tribal belt has primary schools but once kids complete primary classes, they have to travel 5 to 20 kms for upper primary and secondary schools. This is a major reason for higher dropout rate, especially in case of girls. Many Muslim kids go to Urdu medium schools that also have similar problem with the network of upper primary and secondary schools. This is the most likely reason apart from other social and psychological reasons.

According to Education expert Ramesh Panse, "it was high time that communities step forward in ensuring their next generation gets educated. There are many social and economic issues behind high dropout rates in certain communities. It's the need of the hour for communities to rise to the cause," said Panse.

10. Necessary steps and awareness in favour of persons with disabilities & backward classes to prevent dropout:

Barrier Free Guidelines for Persons with Disabilities:

Barrier Free Access (BFA) refers to universal access for all children and adults within the schools. This should not be limited only to buildings and physical infrastructure, but also extend itself to curriculum and teaching learning processes. This is particularly relevant in the context of children with Disabilities because they have variety of learning needs which need to be addressed.

General guidelines for BFA:

General guidelines will include access to the physical environment as well as access to the curriculum and the teaching environment. Whereas the access to the physical environment mainly takes care of the children with orthopaedic impairment as well as visual impairment, access to the curriculum and teaching learning environment is particularly important for children with visual impairment, hearing impairment, intellectually challenged, children with cerebral palsy and children with multiple disabilities.

Some Children might have one predominant disability with associated difficulties. In such cases, please refer to guidelines given under the appropriate disability.

Access to physical environment:

- (i) The path from the gate to the school buildings and playground must be clear and levelled.
- (ii) All entrances and doorways in the school buildings should be between minimum 4' to 5' feet wide.
- (iii) The toilet inside the school should be accessible to Persons with Disabilities. This toilet should be fitted with commode and grab-rails.
- (iv) The drinking water outlet should be accessible to Persons with Disabilities also.
- (v) Avoid sharp turns in the walkways.
- (vi) Safety of all children should be ensured by provision of hazard free environment (broken window panes, broken steps, broken fixture and furniture, unsafe ceilings, etc).
- (vii) The school/ classroom design should allow the teacher to be able to pay personal attention to the child, including effective positioning and placement, keeping in mind the individual needs of Persons with Disabilities.

Access to curriculum/ teaching learning processes:

- (i) Adaptation and accommodations needs to be made in procedures for assessment, use of teaching strategies including signs & gestures and use of teaching learning material as per the needs of varied needs of Persons with Disabilities.
- (ii) Availability and accessibility to teaching learning material within the class rooms to be ensured.
- (iii) Ensure participation of persons with disabilities in all curricular and co-curricular activities.
- (iv) Use of peer support effectively to ensure increased participation of persons with disabilities in schools.
- (v) Use of enabling technologies to meet the needs of persons with disabilities.

Most of the teachers have no knowledge of the- concept of LDs.

They were not aware of the-

- (i) Types of LDs.
- (ii) Causes of LDs and
- (iii) Identifying the student with LDs in their classroom.

Main reasons for dropout of students among persons with disabilities and backward classes are: household work, lack of parental guidance in studies, large family size, poor economic condition of the family, failure in examination, lack of time for study, punishment by teachers, lack of interest in studies, lack of parental interest in continuation of studies, dislike of teachers, ill-health and illiteracy of parents.

A social awareness has to be created in awakening the child to cultural values, in preparing him for later professional training and in helping him to adjust normally to his Environment.

10. Conclusion

Every child in the class is special in a way or other on the basis of the achievement or cognitive abilities or even sensory defects.

SC & ST/OBC community are the largest socially disadvantaged sections of Indian society, who are still reeling behind in the race of life despite numerous provisions created under the Indian Constitution for their betterment and upliftment, even after 70 years of India's independence.

Teachers should play the role of facilitator of information rather than provider of knowledge. A school must include and value equally all students from its surrounding communities or neighbourhood irrespective of their gender, caste, religion or disability.

Successful experiments and new approaches to education have emerged from NGOs by providing equipments for disabled students and enhancing the capacities of school teachers to prevent dropout.

Teachers in inclusive settings-

- (i) Have the ability to take advantage of every child's individual interests.
- (ii) Use a child's internal motivation for developing needed scales.
- (iii) Should be able to structure the environment in a way so that students are motivated and actively engaged.

A multi-branched approach for reducing dropout rates includes strengthening of school infrastructure and facilities, residential hostel buildings for children in habitations not covered by regular schools, provisioning for additional teachers, regular training of teachers, provision for free text books and uniforms to children.

Efforts of the government and its agencies towards dropout is equally creditable, be it about the introduction of SSA-2001, KGBV residential schools for SC, ST, OBC and Muslim girl child, NPEGEL, MDMS-1995, RMSA-2009 and many more scholarship schemes are there concerning modernization, infrastructure development, ICT applications, etc.

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Life in a Prison and a Ray of Golden Touch

Dr.Rohini Dharmapal

Abstract : We all know that life in a prison is most distressing and humiliating. Prison life makes a person more depressed, more mentally sick. There are some men behind the cell are surely guilty, but there are so many unfortunate people who were just present in the wrong place in the wrong time and were put behind bars. It has been observed nearly 50% of the pupils are on trial, waiting for judgment, year after year. Life has stopped for them.

When Mr. B.D. Sharma was appointed as IG, correctional Home, the gloomy picture started to change gradually. He started thinking about how to make a prisoner's life a little bit better and a wonderful idea flashed in his mind. In this initiative he got the support of some special personalities—Smt Alakananda Roy- an eminent dancer, Chitto Dey- an eminent artist, Jolly Mukherjee -a theatre artist, Tapan Roy- Music teacher; they together initiated a plan and named it "CULTURAL THERAPY". I had the privilege of personally meeting the first two teachers and their students, which no doubt was a lifetime experience for me.

The star of Smt Alakananda Roy's troop was Nizel Akara who was accused and arrested for kidnapping, robbery and murder. Total 18 cases was filed against him. He and his cellmates first performed in a small drama in Precidency correctional Home – Brotherhood Beyond Boundaries .The programme was a huge success. Then Smt Alakananda Roy selected Balmiki Pratibha for her next programme and chose Nizel as Balmiki and the rest is history. This programme has changed Nizel's and other participant's life forever. They first ever tasted the joy of freedom, the joy of success, the joy of appraisal and rejoiced the power of music and dance.

The same story continued with Chittoda's painting class. The colours not only coloured their hand, the effect of the colour therapy has changed their mind. In Dumdum central correctional home, Tapan Roy started music classes. Inmates, specially who came from remote places, were more touched and started expressing their joy and sorrow with music. The inmates, who took part in this cultural therapy, whatever the form may be—dance, music, drama, painting; were transformed. Their perspective towards life, towards society, towards themselves, took an optimistic turn and a new life was opened for them.

Keywords: Prison, Prisoner, Cultural Therapy, Inmates

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Once, Gayatri Chakrabarty Spivak said, if you destroy culture, you are actually destroying civilisation. Culture manifested or revealed the delicate parts of our brain and mind. With culture a man becomes a human being. Without it human civilisation would become a lifeless mechanical world where there will be no colour.

There are so many definitions of culture. One of the most comprehensive definitions of the term culture was provided by the British anthropologist Edward Tylor. He defined culture as “that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society”.¹ Culture is moral, intellectual and spiritual discipline for advancement, in accordance with the norms and values based on accumulated heritage. It is imbibing and making ours own, the life style and social pattern of the group one belongs to. Culture is a collective heritage learned by individuals and passed from one generation to another. The individual receives culture as part of social heritage and in turn, may reshape the culture and introduce changes which then become part of the heritage of succeeding generations. Music, dance, painting sculpture, architectural works etc. are the forms of culture which play a very effective role in society.

If we look into its characteristics, we can say it's a beautiful way of living life; a very ordinary life can become colourful. It is a human product; it is originated by pupil or individual from within. You cannot force someone to draw a perfect picture or create music. But you can change a person by the help of culture. Today I will tell you the story of some special persons whose life has stopped for them but the golden ray touched them and their flow of life find a new trace. I met many of them personally, took their interview, listened to their story and felt the power of culture. So this paper is mainly written on the basis of my research and experience.

Though education and culture are very much related to each other, there are some basic differences too. In my opinion education takes a little more time to fulfil its aims, whereas culture affects our mind rapidly; because it works directly. There is no need of past experience. If you don't know certain languages, then also you can enjoy music. If you are a learned person or not, you can be mesmerized by a beautiful painting or sculpture. There is no age limit to feel the beat of a rhythm of dancing. So language, education, social status, money, age – nothing can stop you. And this is the speciality

of culture which has made the 'Cultural Therapy' for prisoner much more successful.

We all know that life in a prison is most distressing and humiliating. Prison life makes a person more depressed, more mentally sick. There are some men behind the cell who are surely guilty, but there are so many other unfortunate people who were just present in the wrong place in the wrong time and were put behind bars. It has been observed that nearly 50% of the people are on trial, waiting for judgement, year after year. Life has merely stopped for them.

Correctional home is a new name of jail or prison, but what is in a name!! Life is horrible there. Prisoners have to do some works allotted to them. These works are purely mechanical and tiring. Food is tasteless, sometimes cold, sometimes stale. There is nothing positive in a prisoner's life.

When Mr. B.D. Sharma was appointed as IG, correctional Home, the gloomy picture started to change gradually. He started thinking about how to make a prisoner's life a little bit better and a wonderful idea flashed through his mind. In this initiative he got the support of some special personalities—Smt Alakananda Roy- an eminent dancer, Chitto Dey- an eminent artist, Jolly Mukherjee -a theatre artist, Tapan Roy- Music teacher; together, they initiated a plan and named it "CULTURAL THERAPY". I had the privilege of personally meeting the first two teachers and their students, which no doubt was a lifetime experience for me.

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Nizel was telling me his story- "before the first show, I was standing

alone in the stage in Rabindra Sadan. In front of me thousands of chairs were empty then, and suddenly I felt a strange feeling inside me. When I was first asked to join this cultural therapy by the IG and Alakananda Roy whom now I used to call ma, I thought it was a joke! They want to teach dance to a criminal, accused and arrested for murder? I refused. Then they started persuading me and tried to motivate me by giving promise for medical diet, which is very much tempting to every inmate. At last I agreed and join the dance class and today is the day I will perform in a stage like Rabindra Sadan in front of thousands people coming from every sphere of the society!!! I was feeling happy as well as frightened! The bell rang, the show started and I forgot everything. I forgot that I am Nizel, I forgot my past, I forgot all my worries; Nizel was nowhere, only Balmiki was there. After the show the whole audience gave us a standing ovation with continuous clap!. The entire team of Balmiki Pratibha's mind was changed forever. The words and the music of the dance drama was the true winner."

The same story continued with Chittoda's painting class. The colours not only coloured their hands, the effect of the colour therapy has changed their mind. In Dumdum central correctional home, Tapan Roy started music classes. Inmates, who came specially from remote places, were more touched and started expressing their joy and sorrow with music.

The inmates, who took part in this cultural therapy, whatever the form may be— dance, music, drama, painting; were transformed. Their perspective towards life, towards society, towards themselves, took an optimistic turn and a new life was opened for them.

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Integration of Culture in Education- Need of the hour

Shazia Hasnain

ABSTRACT : Culture and Education are intertwined. It is through education that culture can be transmitted and preserved while culture gives shape to our education system. Culture is a set of attitude, values, language and ways of life and it is transmitted from generation to generation. India is a multicultural country with assimilation of different culture in its social fabric and it has contributed to our cultural richness. With modernization lot of changes have come in our education system and cultural values. To be at par with other developing countries it is important that we include the current trends in our curriculum but at the same time we need to keep our cultural values alive in the form of art, music dance handicraft as well as our traditional values of tolerance, brotherhood etc alive. Our schools are more concerned with developing certain competencies in students and rote memorization does not reduce this problem. Our students fail to learn the necessary social skills which is necessary in life. They forget our rich culture which stands on non-violence, togetherness and respect for each other. No longer are we dealing with students who waited for teachers to pour knowledge into them. We are in an era where there is technological impact on students. There is less of patience and more of unrest. Education is supposed to make a person cultured. However, at times, it is seen that education takes the person away from culture. This paper aims to discuss the interrelationship between culture and education, how educational practices can help in inculcating cultural values and the role of teachers in this respect.

Keywords : culture, education, students, unrest, teachers, educational practices

Introduction

According to J.S. Ross, 'Schools ought to stress the duties and responsibilities of individual citizen, they ought to train their pupils in the spirit of cheerful, willing and effective service—they will themselves be model communities.'

Education is a systematic process through which a child or an adult acquires knowledge, experience, skill and sound attitude. It makes an

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individual civilized, refined, cultured and educated. For a civilized and socialized society, education is the only means. Its goal is to make an individual perfect. Every society gives importance to education because it is a panacea for all evils. It is the key to solve the various problems of life.

Culture or Civilization, taken in its wide ethnographic Sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society – E.B. Tyler.

Culture means the whole complex of traditional behaviour which has been developed by the human race and is successively learned by each generation. A culture is less precise. It can mean the forms of traditional behaviour which are characteristics of a given society, or of a group of societies, or of a certain race, or of a certain area, or of a certain period of time - Margaret Mead.

Giselle Mora-Bourgeois in her article "Reflections on the Impact of Culture in the Classroom," (2000) says culture refers to the ways in which different groups of people organize their daily lives within national or ethnic groups, urban neighbourhoods, companies and professions, and other settings. Culture includes what people actually do and what they believe. Culture influences greatly how we see the world, how we try to understand it and how we communicate with each other. Therefore, culture determines, to a great extent, learning and teaching styles.

Education and culture thus are interrelated. While culture is an integral part of human society, education is a tool that can help in conservation and modification or renewal of the culture. The valuable cultural heritage, which has accumulated a vast store of human knowledge and experience, is transmitted to the coming generations through education, otherwise each generation would have to go over them again. Culture includes arts, sciences, religions and the social customs developed gradually by many people contributing to it. It has to be conserved and transmitted to the youth for their own benefits because past cultural values are useful in learning the new ones.

Education is conceived as a systematic effort to maintain a culture. Education can impart knowledge, training and skills as well as inculcate new ideas and attitudes among the young. It is the culture also upon which

education exerts, in turn, a nourishing influence. The intimate relationship between culture and education is evident from the fact that one of the major aim of education is to impart to the child cultural heritage and social heritage. Every individual is born into a particular culture which provides him with definite patterns of behaviour and values which guide his/her conduct in different walks of life.

Education with various elements of culture can help a person in following ways-

- 1) Culture includes tradition and values and education acquaints the individual with these things so he is able to adapt to his environment and attain socialization easily.
- 2) Culture influences the physical, mental and emotional aspects of a being to a great extent and this in turn is reflected in one's behaviour.
- 3) For adopting a culture, one has to socialize and participate in activities of the society. Thus to socialize one has to learn the culture of a society.
- 4) Education has to keep pace with changing conditions. However there needs to be vigilance that not every new thing is followed blindly in education. It is through education that we can prepare students to evaluate the past and understand the present and to be prepared for future.

Difference between Ancient and Modern Education system

Indian Education system during Vedic period had given due importance to the teaching of 'values' to the children. Untiring efforts by some Indian sages and seers of that time had developed priceless heritage of Indian culture that continued till the end of about 16th Century. The ancient education system in India had explicitly recognized that the supreme goal of life is self-realization and hence it claimed to be unique in the world in several aspects like , the society, which did not in any way interfere with the curriculum of studies or regulating the payment of fees or hours of instruction. The other aim of ancient Indian education included preservation and enrichment of culture, character and personality development and cultivation of noble idea. It being completely residential, hence students had to live in the guru's house and learn from him not only what was taught but also

observe how his teacher responded in different situations arising in daily life and learn from it. Education was absolutely free. Each student used to meet the teacher separately and learn from him through separate instructions and guidance.

After arrival of British Raj, the aim of education underwent a complete change. The British rulers needed cheap clerks to run this country. With independence there was an emergence of many educational institutes as well as many policies which were drafted for improving the education system of the country. The British influence did remain behind as some of their cultural influence was there in the education system.

The scenario of education has changed since then, worldwide and in India as well. On the one hand, technology has greatly expanded access to education. In medieval times, books were rare and only a few elite had access to educational opportunities. Individuals had to travel to learning centres to obtain an education. Today, huge amounts of information are available in books, audio, images etc. Videos are available over the Internet, and opportunities for formal learning are available online as well. Today, technology allows forms of communication and collaboration among students easily. Students can collaborate on group projects using technology-based tools such as wikis and Google Docs. Classroom walls are no longer a barrier as technology allows for new ways of learning, communicating and working collaboratively. Role of teacher has changed to that of a facilitator.

Education and Cultural Lag

Due to rapid progress of scientific inventions and technological advancement, material aspect of culture has gone ahead and its area has been greatly widened. The modern society is gradually adopting more and more of these techniques and scientific achievements in their day to day styles of living, while the non- material aspect of culture has been left far behind. The vast difference between the material and non-material culture is known as social and cultural lag. As the pace of material culture cannot be slackened, the need is to speed up the changes in the non-material cultural patterns of thinking and living. Both should proceed together in a corresponding pace as the two wheels of a chariot. Education is the only means to bridge this cultural lag.

Education is not only to reflect the social conditions but also to improve them. With the advancement of science and technology our ways of life are also undergoing tremendous change. If we would not cope with the present advancement there would be 'cultural lag'. We must adjust ourselves with the fast changing world. So education must adapt itself to the changing conditions. At the same time it should exploit the innate tendencies, interests, needs and demands of children for the purpose of education.

Education should guide youth to have a clear-cut vision of one's responsibilities and a balanced approach towards one rights and duties, which is a must for any matured/civilized society. It should lead to positive thinking, which could channelize human efforts in proper direction, make vision broader, thinking flexible, increase openness to information and enhance spirit to work hard. Discipline and productivity are also necessary for a sound system of education. In the recent past, it was not the principles, but the practices, which went wrong. Today, when Indians are growing away from their roots, nothing is more needed than the constant interpretation of past experiences and present circumstances. Present should be a constant challenge to the opinions of past. A value or a system, which in the light of modern times appears more effective and beneficial, should be replaced by a better one. At the same time, it would be suicidal to sacrifice ancient value systems to an increasing passion for change.

The curriculum of a school, its extra-curricular activities and the informal relationships among students and teachers communicate social skills and values. Through various activities school imparts values such as co-operation, team spirit, obedience, discipline etc. Education acts as an integrative force in the society by communicating values that unites different sections of society. The school teaches skills to the children which help them later to integrate within the culture of the society. Education in its formal or informal pattern has been performing this role since time immemorial. Through scientific inventions, investigations and discoveries, many of our own Indian people are enjoying the fruits of material culture, yet there are vast masses of people steeped in ignorance, inertia and utter backwardness. Many aspire to get education and be cultured but they do not have the opportunity to gain knowledge about the cultural values of the society they are living in. Education can eliminate this cultural lag and inspire the general people to march on the road of progress and modernisation as they best can.

Barriers in integration of Culture with Education

Some reasons which becomes a barrier in total integration of culture with education are as follows-

- 1) People in our country acquire 'quality' education on the basis of their socio economic status. The gap between government and private schools is quite wide. Even the curriculum is different everywhere.
- 2) Our educational system refuses to do away with the age old rote memorization which makes maximum student gain degree with superficial knowledge.
- 3) The classroom pedagogy denies the students opportunities to learn in a collaborative, reflective manner that would have at least helped them acquire basic social skills.
- 4) The curriculum demands child centric education but many schools and colleges still follow the teacher centred approach. The students are hardly given a chance to speak out their minds.
- 5) The students no longer wait for information to be given as they have gadgets to get all the information, so they lack interest in the classroom.
- 6) The monotonous teaching methodologies hardly help these students.
- 7) Education today is seen as a ticket for a good job and status, not for grooming better human beings. Thus the aim of education in modern world has altered where cultural values are hardly given importance.
- 8) Unrest and indiscipline is on the rise as education system fails to meet the demands of the students.
- 9) Our education system is theoretical with minimal real life applications.

Education is desired by people to become "cultured" but sometimes education take these people away from their culture as they hardly learn anything about their culture in curriculum.

Recommendations of CABE (2005) on integration of Culture in Education

To meet the needs of cultural values Committee of CABE (2005) submitted a report- "Integration of Culture in School education". The Committee noted that much harm was being caused by failure to integrate culture with

education inadequately. This report discussed the problems due to lack of cultural values in youth and also gave some suggestions-

- 1) If children are encouraged to work in group activities or group projects even in the primary grades, gender and other kinds of biases will never get embedded in their mind. On the other hand, opportunities for imbibing the ability to accept the viewpoints of others, leadership qualities etc will routinely become part of day-to-day school life.
- 2) The entire schooling should be based on the culture of the locality / community. Learning should be made 'culture sensitive'. The curriculum should have sufficient flexibility to accommodate the hopes, aspirations, needs and culture of the local community. Village Education Committees could be involved in developing the 'school curriculum', which could be designed to dovetail with the 'general' curriculum.
- 3) The 'dominant' nature of the text book should be toned down. There must be sufficient space for accommodating local art forms, practices, places, institutions festivals, rituals, artefacts, literature, even local riddles and humour.
- 4) Conscious efforts should be made to ensure that the Teaching-Learning process does not become culturally sterile: consciously or unconsciously promoting one particular culture / sub-culture.
- 5) Different folk art forms, folksongs, stories, riddles, and games should be included as 'text' material. Conscious efforts should be made to ensure that the illustrations in textbooks reflect local culture. Decorations, embellishments in textbooks could use local forms such as local mural paintings, Rangoli, Kolam and others.
- 6) Every teacher should be trained to utilize collections of local folk stories, folk songs and folk 'knowledge' as part of the Teaching-Learning process. Exchange of groups / troupes of performers from other districts and even other states should be organized so that children (and teachers) get direct opportunities for learning the nuances of these art forms and the differences.
- 7) Both B.Ed and D.Ed courses should have specific modules for art appreciation. Every student-teacher should be given opportunities to

specialize in at least one of the creative arts. Excellence in these should be adequately recognized.

- 8) The government and government-aided schools should be empowered in every possible manner. A new 'Common School System' should be designed and implemented, one that would bridge the cultural barriers by bringing all students together irrespective of caste, creed, location or sex, to have access to education of comparable quality. This would be one important approach to the integration of cultural values into school education.

The recommendations of CAGE Committee are relevant even in today's situation because not many of these recommendations have been applied in practical aspects.

Role of Teacher in integrating Education with Culture

Teachers can play an important role in integrating Education with culture and setting a good example for the students. Teachers can develop future citizens who are free from any kind of bias, capable of critical analysis and who have adequate knowledge of cultural values on which their country stands. Teachers can help in following ways-

- 1) Some students nowadays believe in end results and as such means seem to make no difference to them. Thus they hardly bother about the laws of the society. They acquire degrees and become egoistic. Teachers should emphasize on human values in their lessons so that the students hold certain values in high esteem like peace, justice, cooperation, equal opportunity for all.
- 2) The teacher should make the students multicultural by making them understand different cultures and should establish positive relationships of exchange and mutual enrichment both between the different cultural components within a country and between various cultures throughout the world. This will help in developing respect for one's own culture and cultures of others.
- 3) Teacher should promote the development of certain abilities like observation, critical reasoning and problem solving. There needs to be a balance between the intellectual and analytical abilities and emotional, spiritual and moral qualities of the learners. Teachers

should keep in mind the needs of the community and the society.

- 4) Teachers should make their lessons interactive. Interactive sessions can only develop their analytical minds. Apart from discussion, use of modern technology and aids while teaching can help in capturing the students' interest.
- 5) The teaching of the various disciplines should give rise to interdisciplinary and co-operative activities conducive to cultural and intercultural education. To ensure closer integration of cultural, intercultural and interdisciplinary practices, teachers will find it useful to adopt a project approach. This will encourage team work.
- 6) Teachers should motivate students to participate in artistic and cultural activities by themselves as well as to be acquainted with them.
- 7) Teachers should be impartial while teaching any topic and also wherever possible they should discuss the values which are the backbone of our nation. Examples of humanistic and ethical values and their impact on society should be discussed.

Thus teachers from primary , secondary upto college level can help in guiding the students about the cultural values on which our society stands. Teachers take the responsibility of educating the youth of a nation and are builders of nation. They have to look after their all-round development. While a nation without a culture cannot be differentiated from other nations, hence, it is proved that the process of teaching, learning is a much stronger way/ means of the culture to flourish. The teachers are also supposed to translate and to practice the country's educational theories and policies by implementing them in a real and practical situation.

Conclusion

According to the Secondary Education Commission, "The Secondary School must make itself responsible for equipping its students adequately with civic as well as vocational efficiency and to lay their part worthily and competently in the improvement of national life. They should no longer emerge as helpless, shiftless individuals who do not know what to do with themselves."

In order to perform its role efficiently as an agent of cultural development and prepare individuals for life in a society that is being enriched by different

cultures, education needs freedom of expression, freedom of participation, free exchanges between people, scientific knowledge and cultural creativity. Education requires equal access to the learning process and a democratic cultural life; at the same time, it is one of the most important means of creating and improving that life.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had said, "Can we combine the progress of science and technology with the progress of the mind and spirit also?" We cannot be untrue to science because that represents the basic fact of life today. Still less can we be untrue to those essential principles for which India has stood in the past throughout the ages. Let us then pursue our path to industrial progress with all our strength and vigour and at the same time, remember that material riches without toleration and compassion and wisdom may well turn to dust and ashes.

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Context of Elder Abuse – An Unwanted Culture of India and Emergence of Value Education

Tara Pramanik

ABSTRACT : The abuse of elders by caregivers is a worldwide issue. Concept of elder abuse as relevant to the developed world is alien to the Indian society. But at present emotional, psychological disrespect and neglect exist in all the areas and while one part of the group blames it on westernisation of society and lack of value system in the once traditional family system in India, there are others in the group who somehow seem to be blaming the older parents for the actions by the younger generation. Economic dependence is considered as a major reason for abuse. Physical weakness due to age is also another reason. Nowadays elder abuse is gradually linked to violence and it is becoming a family culture in our society. This unwanted culture is depreciating the nature of mentality of young generation day by day. 90 percent of elder abuse and neglect is perpetrated by someone well known to the victim, usually family members, specifically grown children and spouses. But culture always makes a difference, and presents another layer of complexity. In this context to resist the trend we need to provide an effective value education system and value - based curriculum for our future generation.

Key words : Elder abuse, Culture, Non culture, Values

Objectives

The objectives of the study is –

- To highlight the concept of elder abuse
- To search the trend of elder abuse as a non cultural tradition of the society
- To focus on the old age problems or miseries
- To describe the painful status of older adults
- To illuminate the crisis of value system in respect of gratitude for the older

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- To highlight the need for value education regarding the care for older adults in respect of Indian culture

Introduction

Old age has never been a problem for India where a value based, joint family system has prevailed. Indian culture is automatically respectful and supportive of elders. Under this background, elder abuse has never been considered as a problem in India and has always been thought of as a western problem. But at present times our country, India, is also not in a safe position. Rather, it is gradually becoming a trendy culture and in many families elder abuse is an emergent problem. Dependence of the older parent due to extreme physical and mental impairments requires a constant support of a caregiver. The “burden” is perceived both in the capacity of time and money. Caregivers became non- caring or not caring enough for the older parents and are often subjected to neglect. Elder abuse is a single or repeated act, or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust, which causes harm or distress to an older person. This type of violence constitutes a violation of human rights and includes physical, sexual, psychological, and emotional abuse; financial and material abuse, abandonment, neglect, and serious loss of dignity and respect.

Culture-Non-culture-Violence in Culture

Culture consists of the beliefs, behaviours, objects and other characteristics common to the members of a particular group or society. Through culture, people and groups define themselves, conform to society’s shared values, and contribute to society. Sociologists define society as the people who interact in such a way as to share a common culture. Culture and society are intricately related.

Sometimes cultural and social norms are highly influential in shaping individual behaviour, including the use of violence. Norms can protect against violence, but they can also support and encourage the use of it. For instance, cultural acceptance of violence, either as a normal method of resolving conflict or as a usual part of rearing a child, is a risk factor for all types of interpersonal violence. Social tolerance of violent behaviour is learned in childhood likely, through the use of corporal punishment or witnessing violence in the family, in the media or in other settings. Different cultural and social norms support different types of violence. For instance,

traditional beliefs that men have a right to control or discipline women through physical means makes women vulnerable to violence by immediate parents and places girls at risk of sexual abuse. Equally, violence against older person is nowadays accepted generation to generation as a cultural acceptance in most of the families of our Indian society. (Violence prevention the evidence)

In the 'Overview' of American Psychological Association we get a delicate description of elder abuse from the socio-cultural aspect—

Certain societal attitudes may contribute to violence against older people and make it easier for abuse to continue without detection or intervention. These factors include the devaluation of and lack of respect for older adults and society's belief that what goes on in the home is a private, "family matter."

When older people are regarded as insignificant, society fails to recognize the importance of assuring dignified, supportive and no abusive life circumstances for every older person. The idea that what happens at home is private can be a major factor in keeping an older person locked in an abusive or neglectful situation. Those outside the family who observe or suspect abuse or neglect may fail to intervene because they believe "it's a family problem and none of my business" or because they are afraid they are misinterpreting a private quarrel. Shame and embarrassment often make it difficult for older persons to reveal abuse. They do not want others to know that such events occur in their families.

Certain cultural values, beliefs and traditions influence family dynamics, intergenerational relationships and ways in which families define their roles and responsibilities and respond to daily challenges. These differences make some situations difficult to distinguish from abuse or neglect. Older individuals who are ethnic minorities, particularly recent immigrants, may face language barriers and financial or emotional dependence that influence their ability or willingness to report abuse.

Although definitions of abuse may vary across diverse cultural, ethnic and religious communities, it is important not to ignore signs of abuse by attributing the behaviours to cultural differences. For example, some cultures do not honour the basic rights of women, and older women in these cultures may not realize they are being abused. They probably would not call for

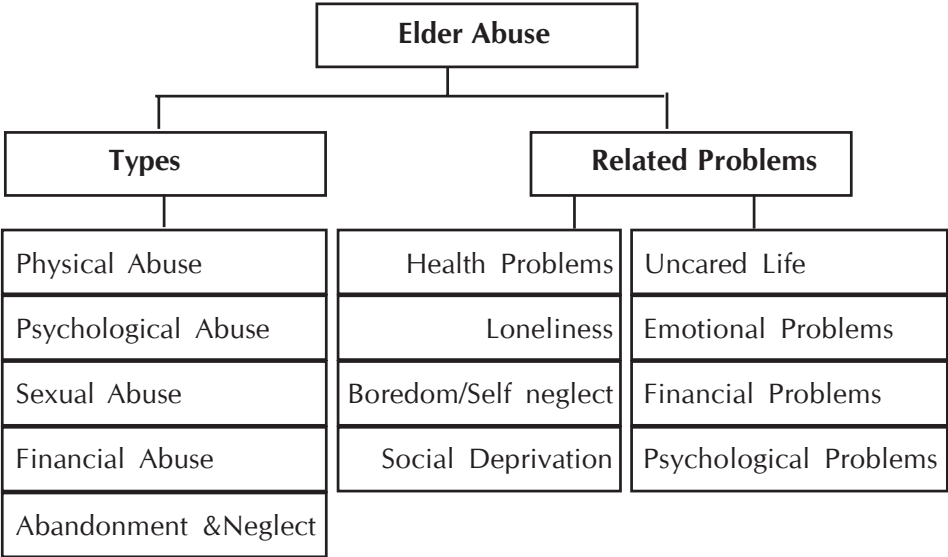
help outside the family and may not even know that help is available. Persons working with older people in potentially abusive situations need to be sensitive to cultural differences and intervene accordingly. Formulating culturally sensitive prevention and intervention efforts requires an understanding of roles and responsibilities within the family and help-seeking behaviours (Elder Abuse and Neglect: In Search of Solutions).

Elder Abuse

Very recently in 2018 World Health Organization reported that study based in 2017 on the best available evidence from 52 studies in 28 countries from diverse regions, including 12 low- and middle-income countries, estimated that, over the past year, 15.7% of people aged 60 years and older were subjected to some form of abuse. This is likely to be an underestimation, as only 1 in 24 cases of elder abuse are reported, in part because older people are often afraid to report cases of abuse to family, friends, or to the authorities. Consequently, any prevalence rates are likely to be underestimated. Although rigorous data are limited, the study provides pooled prevalence estimates of number of older people affected by different types of abuse: psychological abuse: 11.6%, financial abuse: 6.8% neglect: 4.2%, physical abuse: 2.6%, sexual abuse: 0.9%. Data on the extent of the problem in institutions such as hospitals, nursing homes, and other long-term care facilities are scarce. A survey of nursing-home staff in the United States of America, however, suggests rates may be high. Of all nursing-home staff surveyed, 36% witnessed at least one incident of physical abuse of an elderly patient in the previous year; 10% committed at least one act of physical abuse towards an elderly patient; 40% admitted to psychologically abusing patients.

There is even less data on elder abuse in institutional settings in developing countries. Globally, the number of cases of elder abuse is projected to increase as many countries have rapidly ageing populations whose needs may not be fully met due to resource constraints. It is predicted that by the year 2050, the global population of people aged 60 years and older will more than double, from 900 million in 2015 to about 2 billion, with the vast majority of older people living in low- and middle-income countries. If the proportion of elder abuse victims remains constant, the number of victims will increase rapidly due to population ageing, growing to 320 million victims by 2050 (Elder Abuse-WHO).

Types of elder abuse and related problems in older adult persons:



Cultural shock is a feeling of uncertainty, confusion or anxiety that people experience when visiting, doing business in or living in a society that is different from their own culture. Culture shock can arise from a person’s unfamiliarity with local customs, language and acceptable behaviour, since norms can vary significantly across cultures. Though the term ‘cultural shock’ is used to understand the unknown unfamiliar culture with which the people cannot cope-up positively, but the term is more or less similar to the state of those older people who spend their old age life time in an abusive environment with their own family members or the caregivers of old age home, who are the main perpetrators. Like a negative or bad tradition or culture the elder abuse problem slaps on the value system of our Indian society. Nowadays the picture is seen in almost each and every family repeatedly in a very casual manner, such as the young generation has no time to give respect or precious time for the older adults. As a result various symptoms are automatically associated with this type of cultural shock like frustration, feeling of isolation, loneliness, homesickness, sadness, depression, withdrawal, suffering from body aches and pain and sleep a lot or unable to sleep. Ultimately it increases the serious physical and psychological or emotional trouble or hardship.

Need for Value Education

Human values are the foundation for any viable life within society. Human values are empathy, friendship, brotherhood, compassion, acceptance, recognition, appreciation, honesty, loyalty, welcoming, sharing, solidarity, fairness, civility, respect, consideration, etc. These human values have the effect of bonding, comforting, reassuring and procuring serenity.

Family is the first social organization that provides the immediate proximity from which the kid can learn his behaviour. Children identify themselves with their parents, other family elders and adopt them as their personal models for emulation and imitation. The behavioural problems are set correct only by the involvement of family in the child's life as they spend most of their time in adolescence with the parents. The family shapes the child's attitude towards people and society, and helps in mental growth in the child and supports his ambitions and values. Blissful and cheerful atmosphere in the family will develop the love, affection, tolerance and generosity, a child learns his behaviour by modelling what he sees around him. Family plays a major role in helping a child socialize and has great influence and bearing on the progress of the child. In the joint family system, the presence of elders in the family plays the effective role in social and moral development of the children. It will also help young generations of the family to imbibe human values and eradicate their negative mental tendencies when they are among elders. Values developed by a family are the foundation for how children learn, grow and function in the world. These beliefs, transmits the way of life a child lives and changes into an individual in a society. These values and moral guides the individual every time in his actions. Children turn out to be good persons because of the value taught and given by their family members and ideas passed down from generation to generation make up the family values. Customs and traditions followed and taught by the family helps in leading a disciplined and organized life.

Education undoubtedly is one of the most powerful agencies moulding the character and in determining the future of individuals and nations. Thus the whole realm of education is centred on the development of the moral aspect of man. Education plays a key role in making people aware of the value of family relations. Positive attitude needs to be inculcated from childhood through parents and other members of the family. Teachers and parents have some duties and responsibilities for our younger generation or

students so that they show value towards elderly members with their heart. They can give the value education or lessons on values. Children should remember that parents have worked tirelessly to give us a life full of opportunities, comfort and privilege. So when they will become older it is imperative that as their children that they return the favour of caring and loving for them. Respect and care for elders should be started with parents, our first Gurus. Without their endless sacrifice during the early years, children are incapable of becoming what they are today. So we need to care for elders because they deserve to be cared for. If we have elders at home, then we should listen to them, talk to them, and spend some quality time with them. Thus they will be more than happy.

We all are going to be elderly people someday too. The truth is we need our elders and we cannot live without them. There will come a day when they cannot live without us. They need our support just as much as they have given us theirs when we did not even ask for it. This brings out the humanity within us. This expression of humanity makes us human. When we act to care for our elders, our children will see that with respect and will take up the act to care for us someday...at least we can hope they will. We should put ourselves in the shoes of an elderly person. When we know we are becoming fragile and our body is failing, it is difficult to cope with the uncertainty of the future—mentally and physically. Our elders may have many things on their mind but they may not be able to express them. Our responsibility comes in to give them the support they need to help them live the rest of their lives peacefully. So education, particularly quality value education, takes time and requires significant long-term investment over many years. In addition, the empowerment of older persons and the integration of ageing issues into development policies are essential. Governments also have the responsibility to formulate national policies on aging and to implement programmes to address the needs of older persons. They are also entrusted to protect the human rights of older persons. They should promote policies that support gender equality of older persons and combat discrimination, violence and abuse of the elderly.

So we must remember the words of **John Hoeven—**

“Caring for our seniors is perhaps the greatest responsibility we have. Those who walked before us have given so much and made possible the life we all enjoy”.

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Role of Teachers in Preserving and Enriching The Culture Through Education: Need of The Hour

Shree Chatterjee

ABSTRACT: Culture is the mirror of society that reflects the inner entity of a society and it varies from society to society and generation to generation. It is the unique characteristics of a society. According to Tyler, culture is a complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, law, customs and any other capabilities acquired by man as a member of the society. It is the sum total of a given society's way of life moulded and shaped by prevailing circumstances and environment (Brown, 1990). Culture is a collective term for socially transmitted behaviour patterns. The culture of a people is what they perceive, the way of life, the things that they give value on and also those which they do not give value on, the habits, life styles, the work of art that they like and do. But in the present day we have seen the continuous degradation of our culture by which our own existence is at stake. We are losing our own essence of culture. Due to rapid progress of scientific inventions and technological innovations, men become more lazy and forget their own cultural entity. Advancements in comforts of life has reduced the conscience of men. Therefore, they are gradually adopting the culture of others which leads to the advancement of material aspect of culture rather than the non-material aspect of culture. Education is the process by which our cultural heritage can be transmitted. It is the powerful instrument by which the culture can be purified, transmitted, sustained and nourished. It is the tool by which cultural change can be met. Education can impart knowledge, training, and skills as well as inculcate new ideas and attitudes among the young generation. That is why one of the major aims of education is to protect and glorify the cultural heritage of one's society by sowing the seeds of culture in the character of students. In this case, the teacher plays a vital role in the making of an individual's cultural life. The teacher can deliberately transmit the cultural heritage, accumulated knowledge, values, and skills from one generation to another generation through providing righteous education and also cultivate the seeds of the dynamics of change and thus can keep pace with the changing world. This paper elaborately and critically attempts to deal with the role of teachers to preserve and enrich the culture through education.

Key Words: Culture, Cultural Degradation, Education, Preserving culture, Teacher.

Introduction

Culture refers to the patterns of thought and behaviour of people. It includes values, beliefs, conduct, and patterns of social, political and economic entity. These are passed on from one generation to the next by formal as well as informal processes. Culture consists of the ways in which we think and act as members of a society. Thus, all the achievements of group life are collectively called culture. In popular parlance, the material aspects of culture, such as scientific and technological achievements are seen as distinct from culture which is non-material. This includes higher achievements of group life art, music, literature, philosophy, religion and science. Culture is the product of such organizations and expresses itself through language and art, philosophy and religion, social habits, customs, economic organisations and political institutions. People and culture are inseparable since there is no denial of the fact that the basis of human society is its culture. For a society to be societal it must be cultural. Therefore, society and culture are intertwined.

The culture of a people is their identity as it affords them due recognition. It is their underlying distinguishing factor from other people and cultures. In fact, all societies across the globe have various and divergent cultures which they cherish and practice. Nevertheless, no two cultures, when juxtaposed are absolutely identical. Culture is the soul of a nation. On the basis of culture, we can experience the prosperity of its past and present. Culture is the collection of values of human life, which establishes it specifically and ideally separates it from other groups.

Indian culture is an invaluable possession of our society. Indian culture is the oldest of all the cultures of the world. In spite of facing many ups and downs Indian culture is shining with all its glory and splendour. In ancient Indian culture we had the 'Gurukula' system of education in which anyone who wished to study went to a teacher's (Guru) house and requested to be taught. The teacher was treated as 'God' – 'Brahma'. Guru was one who gave 'Mantras'. He showed 'shishyas' the right path of life through his vision and dedication. If accepted as a student by the guru, he would then stay at the guru's place and help in all activities at home. This not only created a strong bonding between the teacher and the pupil, but also helped to build the parent - child relationship among them. 'Guru' taught the student everything about running a house (Gupta, 2016). The guru taught everything

the child wanted to learn. The student stayed as long as he wished or until the guru felt that he had taught everything he could teach. All learning was closely linked to nature and to life, and not confined to memorizing some information.

Indian Education system during Vedic period had given due importance to the teaching of values to the children. Untiring efforts by some Indian sages and Seers of that time had led to the development of priceless heritage of Indian culture that continued till the end of about 16th Century. After arrival of British Raj, the aim of education underwent a complete change. The British rulers needed clerks to run this country. So, they developed a system of education which could produce people to do clerical jobs for them and nothing more. The foreign rulers who came before the British, were also responsible for demolishing Indian centres of value education like Taxila and Nalanda University. Our education has failed in nurturing our ancient culture and values. Values are deeply rooted in our Indian heritage and culture. Any culture is identified by its values and our Indian culture is recognized worldwide for its values which are unique. For example, in Hindu perception there are four primordial embodiments- Dharma, Artha, Kam and Moksha and Five practices- Satya, Ahimsa, Astaya, Aparigraha, & Brahmacharya. These form the basis of our culture.

Concept of Culture

The English word "Culture" is derived from the Latin term "colore" meaning cultivating or refining practice, cherish and worship. In sum it means cultivating and refining a thing. The definition adopted by the World Conference on Cultural Policies (MexicoCity,1982) considered culture as 'the whole complex of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterize a society or social group'. It includes modes of life, traditions and beliefs, the arts and letters, while incorporating in its value system the fundamental rights of human beings. The culture of a country is not confined to scholarly culture, but also includes popular culture. It is not restricted to the heritage but is enriched and developed through both creativity and memory. A living culture cannot be inward looking; exchanges make it fertile. According to Tyler "culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, arts, morals, customs, laws and other capabilities which are learned, shared by men as members of society, and transmitted from one generation to another." This implies that any kind of

laxity would result in rapid erosion and disappearance of the uniqueness of the people and their culture. Without culture, man is reduced to an animal. Culture therefore has two essential qualities: first, it is learned and second, it is shared.

Culture is a way of life. The food we eat, the clothes we wear, the language we speak in and the God we worship all are aspects of culture. In very simple terms, we can say that culture is the embodiment of the way in which we think and do things. It is also the things that we have inherited as members of society. All the achievements of human beings as members of social groups can be called culture. Art, music, literature, architecture, sculpture, philosophy, religion and science can be seen as aspects of culture. However, culture also includes the customs, traditions, festivals, ways of living and one's outlook on various issues of life. Culture thus refers to a human-made environment which includes all the material and non-material products of group life that are transmitted from one generation to the next. Material culture consists of objects that are related to the material aspect of our life such as dress, food, and household goods. Non-material culture refers to ideas, ideals, thoughts and belief. Culture is the expression of our nature in our modes of living and thinking. It may be seen in our literature, in religious practices, in recreation and enjoyment. Culture varies from place to place and from country to country. Its development is based on the historical process operating in a local, regional or national context. For example, we Indians differ in our ways of greeting others, our clothing, food habits, social and religious customs and practices from the West. In other words, the people of any country are characterised by their distinctive cultural traditions. Culture also provides a kind of blueprint or map for relating with others. Culture supplies standardized formulas for dealing with various critical situations. The teacher has to play the role of guiding students to know their culture and relate it with other cultures.

Cultural development is a historical process. Our ancestors learnt many things from their predecessors. With the passage of time they also added to it from their own experience and gave up those which they did not consider useful. We in turn have learnt many things from our ancestors. As time passes we continue to add new thoughts, new ideas to those already existing and sometimes we give up some which we do not consider useful any more. This is how culture is transmitted and carried forward from one generation

to the next generation. The culture we inherit from our predecessors is called our cultural heritage. Culture is liable to change, but our heritage does not. We individuals, belonging to a culture or a particular group, may acquire or borrow certain cultural traits of other communities/cultures, but our belongingness to Indian cultural heritage will remain unchanged. Our Indian cultural heritage will bind us together. For e.g. Indian literature and scriptures namely, Vedas, Upanishads Gita and Yoga System etc. have contributed alot by way of providing right knowledge, right action, behaviour and practices as complementary to the development of civilization. They can be regarded as our traditional teachers of culture.

Culture is closely linked with life. It is not an add-on or an ornament that we as human beings can use. It is not merely a touch of colour. It is what makes us human. Without culture, there would be no humans. It gives us meaning, a way of leading our lives. Human beings are creators of culture and, at the same time, culture is what makes us human. A fundamental element of culture is the issue of religious belief and its symbolic expression. The need for coexistence makes the coexistence of cultures and beliefs necessary. We have to know other cultures, while also getting to know our own. The three eternal and universal values of Truth, Beauty and Goodness are closely linked with culture. It is culture that brings us closer to truth through philosophy and religion; it brings beauty in our lives through the Arts and makes us aesthetic beings; and it is culture that makes us ethical beings by bringing us closer to other human beings and teaching us the values of love, tolerance and peace. The role of teachers is to make students human and, in this process, culture plays a major role.

Cultural Degradation

Due to the rapid progress of science and technology human beings are becoming lazier. They are losing the power of creativity and innovation. They imitate the culture of others by forgetting their own cultural entity. In India, gradually there is a loss of our own rich and fine cultural heritage of India. During the modern period in India, the relationship between the classical culture represented by English and the vernacular culture represented by Indian folk traditions which was present has now become a thing of the past. Traditional equilibrium has been affected by different factors and processes of modernization. With the impact of modern social forces, the relationship between the classical and the folk traditions has been

disturbed. The importance of classical traditions has been changing from time to time with changes in political power structure, but the folk and the tribal traditions have remained consistently vibrant. Modern society ignores the classical, traditional, folk and tribal culture. They usually brand the traditional culture as primitive and superstitious in comparison to the modern culture. They try to modernize and westernize all the elements and streams of Indian culture. The processes of westernization, industrialisation, urbanisation, globalisation and democratisation are influencing various aspects of Indian culture today. Therefore, the task of the teacher is not only to transmit knowledge, values, and other components of the cultures to which individuals belong, but also preserve the traditional culture and to foster creativity together with independence. By developing receptiveness, there is an increase in the capacity among individuals to enrich, in turn, both their own and other cultures.

Culture and Education

Education and culture are intimately and integrally connected. The cultural pattern of a society creates its educational pattern. For example, if a society is spiritually oriented, then its educational procedures will emphasize the achievement of moral and eternal values of life. On the other hand, if a society is materialistic, then its educational pattern will be shaped for the attainment of material values which promote pleasures of senses and material comforts. Therefore, the culture of a country has a very powerful impact on its educational pattern. The ultimate relationship between culture and education is evident from the fact that one of the major aims of education is to create an impact on the cultural heritage. Culture plays an important part in man's life in the adaptation to the natural environment, in the adaptation to the social environment, in the development of personality and socialization. It is through the process of education that children and new members are appraised of these facts. The purpose of education is to inform the individual about the nature of his culture and the acceptable methods of coping with that culture. The implication, clearly, is that education should teach the students of a particular country how to look at the world and to do things according to the tradition of his own country.

Education as a part of culture has the twin functions of conservation and modification or renewal of the culture. Education is conceived as a systematic effort to maintain a culture. In its technical sense education is the process

by which society, through schools, colleges, universities and other institutions, deliberately transmits cultural heritage, its accumulated knowledge, values and skills from one generation to another. Education is an instrument of cultural change. Education can impart knowledge, training and skills as well as inculcate new ideas and attitudes among the young. It is culture in which education germinates and flowers. It is the culture also upon which education exerts, in turn, a nourishing influence.

Culture and education are two sides of a same coin. One without the other is incomplete. They influence each other, and the aims and ideals of education are mostly determined by the cultural values and patterns of society. Curriculum is conditioned according to the culture of society. Methods of teaching and culture are intimately connected. Socialized methods like project method, seminar, symposium, discussion, etc. are widely used in the teaching - learning process because of the influence of culture. Discipline is also influenced by the cultural values. Text books are also written according to the formulated cultural ideals and values.

Role of The Teacher To Enrich Culture

Teachers are the architects of the future and hopefully, the progenitors of a humane society. They have the potential of being role models for their students. They can influence their students and change their outlooks so that they may step into the more righteous avenues of life. Many Indian educators like Rabindranath Tagore and Swami Vivekananda have emphasized the role of the teacher in the all-round development of students. Tagore attached great significance to moral values and ethics in education. He emphasized that, "A teacher can never truly teach unless he is still learning himself. A lamp can never light another lamp unless it continues to burn its own flame. The teacher, who has come to an end of his subject, who has no living traffic with his knowledge, but merely repeats his lessons to his students, can only load their minds; he cannot quicken them." ['Creative Unity' (1922), p.187]

A resourceful teacher can evolve new models of culture in conformity with the emerging aspirations of the society, through formal and non-formal education. This will enable the young to develop adaptive capacities and adjust to changes in the society. In the ultimate analysis, the teacher is the conservator and democratic mediator of culture. He is the architect of the culture-to-be by drawing upon the old cultural experiences and reconstructing

new experiences and thus producing innovations. To enrich our own culture the teacher should maintain the following –

Realizing the Indian Culture

Indian culture is one of the most ancient cultures of the world. Its fundamental principles are the values of spirituality, praying nature, faith in karma and reincarnation, non-violence, truth, non-stealing, chastity, non-acquisitiveness, unity in diversity, sense of harmony, tolerance. Teachers should realize the main characteristics of Indian culture and should direct the students accordingly.

- The oneness of the universe is the main essence of Indian culture and this has to be realized by the teacher and the teacher has to convey this message among students. This concept will help the students to realize the ideal of co-existence. This vision will thus, synthesize human beings, nature and God into one integral whole. This is reflected in the idea of *satyam-shivam-sundaram*.
- Indian philosophy and culture tries to achieve an innate harmony and order and this is extended to the entire cosmos. Indian culture balances and seeks to synthesize the material and the spiritual, as aptly illustrated by the concept of *purushartha*. The teacher has to teach this idea to the students.
- An important characteristic of Indian culture is tolerance. There is a peaceful coexistence of various religions in India and all have been influencing each other. Indian culture accepts the manifoldness of reality and assimilates plurality of viewpoints, behaviours, customs and institutions. It does not try to suppress diversity in favour of uniformity. The motto of Indian culture is both unity in diversity as well as diversity in unity. The teacher has to be aware about this and direct the students accordingly.
- A special characteristic of Indian culture is its continuous flow. Indian culture has always favoured change within continuity. Synthesis of old and new is preferred over replacement of old by the new. This synthesis must be encouraged among students by teachers.
- Adaptability has a great contribution in making Indian culture immortal. Adaptability is the process of changing according to time,

place and period. It is an essential element of longevity of any culture. Indian culture has a unique property of adjustment. The teacher has to teach this adaptability.

- Receptivity is an important characteristic of Indian culture. Indian culture has always accepted the good of the invading cultures. Indian culture is like an ocean, in which many rivers come and meet. We have always adopted the properties of various cultures. *Vasudaiva Kutumbakam* is the soul of Indian culture. Therefore, its continuity, utility and activity are still there today. This receptivity of culture has to be kept alive by the teacher among students.
- Religion has a central place in Indian culture. Vedas, Upanishads, Purana, Mahabharata, Gita, Agama, Tripitak, Quran and Bible influence the people of Indian culture. These books and scriptures have developed optimism, theism, sacrifice, penance, restraints, good conduct, truthfulness, compassion, authenticity, friendliness, forgiveness, etc. Teacher should spread this main essence of Indian culture among students.
- Spirituality is the soul of Indian culture. Here the existence of soul is accepted. Therefore, the ultimate aim of man is not physical comforts but is self-realisation. This self-realization is to be fostered among students by the teacher.
- The concept of Karma (action) and Reincarnation have special importance in Indian culture. A man gets the fruits as per the action he does. Therefore, man needs to modify his actions, to improve the next birth also. By continuously performing good actions in this birth, he will get salvation. The teacher must emphasise good actions and encourage students to perform actions which are beneficial for him.
- An important characteristic of Indian culture is Unity in Diversity. There is much diversity in Indian culture like in geography, in caste, in creed, in language, in religion, in politics. Dr.R.K.Mukerjee writes India is a museum of different types, communities, customs, traditions, religions, cultures, beliefs, languages, castes and social system. But even after having so much of external diversity, none can deny the internal unity of Indian culture. From north to south, east to west, people from diverse backgrounds have mixed and

cultures have intermingled over centuries. Nevertheless, there has been an underlying continuity in identity. Thus, in Indian culture there is Unity in Diversity.

To enrich and promote culture the teacher should maintain the following:

Preservation of culture: Every country has a distinct culture of its own. Hence, it tries to preserve its culture and its distinctiveness in its original form. It is the duty of teacher to preserve our own culture through education. They should teach the children about the glorifying history of our ancient Indian culture, such as Gurukula system of education, rituals, architect, sculpture, classical music.

Transmission of culture: The process of preservation includes the process of transmission from one generation to another. The famous sociologist Ottaway has rightly remarked - 'The function of education is to transmit social values and ideals to the young and capable members of the society.' Therefore it is the noble task of teachers to transmit the essence of the culture to the next generation for the betterment of their life.

Development of culture: The function of education is to bring the needed and desirable change in the cultural ideals and values for the progress and continued development of the society without which social progress cannot take place. Thus the duty of a teacher is to acculture and modify cultural processes by research and deeper investigations .

Maintain continuity of culture: Culture is a life breadth of a society. Education upholds the continuity of culture through its diverse activities and programmes. A society establishes schools to preserve and transmit its culture to the coming generations. The role of the teacher is to motivate the children to learn more and more from cultural interaction among various cultures. Thus, cultural integration and continuity will enrich the composite culture of a society.

Development of personality: Education aims at developing the personality of a child. It employs diverse cultural patterns of thinking, behaviour and cultural values so that children develop physically, mentally, morally, socially and intellectually. A teacher must inculcate good values and culture among students that helps in building character and good personality.

Removing cultural lag: While material culture develop at a faster speed due to scientific and technological inventions, non material culture consisting of ideas, values and norms lags behind and create a gulf between the two. Education is the only means by which this gap can be bridged. Teachers can play an important role for the acceleration of non-material culture through giving new ideas, thoughts, ideals. Teachers should emphasise the progress of science and technology with the progress of the mind and spirit.

Providing Quality education: Education functions as a corrective for all cultural ills. By explaining the dimensions of culture, education corrects egoism and false individuation. Educational enlightenment does not imply only aesthetic appreciation of art and beauty, it also means having kind and generous heart and soul. Education, being the absorber and reflector of culture, is the best medium for the initiation of the rising generation into the cultural norms and process of the society. Education should strive for unity in diversity and not over-emphasize diversity. Education can promote intercultural understanding among various cultures. We should provide such educational experiences and programmes which develop this understanding of cultures and that development of such understanding will promote co-operation and through a process of give and take, a cultural synthesis will take place. Education will be able to achieve the goal of national culture so essential to national unity and national integration. Therefore the teacher should give righteous and quality education.

Conclusion

Today we have entered 21st century and our country is somewhere lost under the influence of western culture. The future growth of any country depends on its youth. Unfortunately, youth in India is getting increasingly inclined towards violence, social evils and lack of respect towards elders and teachers. Deterioration of human values and culture has become a part of life in India. This trend of decline in human values and culture does not only pose a serious threat to the future course of development of the country but also its survival. Due to lack of proper value education in educational institutions, society is facing many problems. Some facts related to this problem are given below:

- Violation of human rights is a regular feature by persons in power or persons, Woman and children are abused in every place.

- Moral and ethical values exist in name only. No practices of values are found at any work place. Rules are made to be broken.
- Increased sense of Materialism among students is one of the factors causing psychological problems among them.
- It is a matter of great regret that gradually we are losing our values and culture with the result that we tend to become hypocritical.

A major responsibility for corrective action lies on our teachers, education policies and syllabus. Our education system should try to be focused towards its quality up gradation not only in terms of degrees but also in its application and practices. Education must teach a person what life is and what its goal is. It must purify the heart and clarify the vision. It must promote virtues to raise the moral, spiritual and social standards of the educated. However, the existing system of education in India has not evolved from its own culture. There is a need that education should be related to our own culture. The existing system of education is largely based on the ideals of spreading western science and literature. Training persons for services under the government is still considered as the most viable objective of education. It is still academic and book-centred and fails to promote citizenship training. It is essential that moral awareness is promoted to orient the progress in science and technology towards the welfare of mankind. In such a situation value education assumes a special significance. Thus, the teacher has a special role to protect the culture and values through quality education.

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Festivals: A Connotation of our Creative Unity

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ABSTRACT : Festivals promote equality in diversity, brings neighbours into congregation of happiness. Festivals endorse cultural exchanges and improve society's general psychological wellbeing. Rabindranath Tagore is one who realized that social alliance can be the inner strength of the progression of humanity. Tagore always wanted to encourage the creative self of person. According to him, the very notion of creativity is the "surplus" for our divine soul which connects one to the world. The consciousness of our personality reveals as mass awareness and reflects prominently distinct with the colour of our emotions. Rabindranath Tagore proposed whole lot various types of festivals capturing multiplicities and diversities of creation. As an unprejudiced person, Tagore valued all aspects of human creation through festivals. Conventionally, festivals are community specific, always celebrated by communities to practice ritualistic or religious activities. But Tagore's understanding of festival speaks a different tale of our life. He encourages creativity as well as its application. In every aspect of Tagore's philosophy, abstraction and concreteness set out hand to hand. Here, we see four types of festival to celebrate in Santiniketan and Sriniketan.

1. *RITU UTSAV (seasonal festival)*
2. *NABAPARJAYER UTSAV (occasional festival)*
3. *SMARANOTSAV (festival in remembrance)*
4. *BICHITRA PARJAYER UTSAV (miscellaneous festival)*

Festivals always have an educational value where our knowledge of understanding becomes alive and vibrant. Scope of pragmatic and utilitarian aspect reflects as universal knowledge. Here, we want to illustrate how different festivals enrich the educational system.

Keywords : Festival, Rituar, Creation, Community

Education and its conventional method were not very pleasant experience in Tagore's upbringing which reflects in the pages of his autobiography- "*Jibonsmriti*". The conventional mechanical system of education and its unattractive learning process made him anxious to build up a new educational

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infrastructure. Rabindranath was particularly concerned about the purpose of education and its process of learning. In 1892, he gave a lecture on education in the Rajshahi Association at Shilaidaha. Later this speech was published as '*Shikkhar Herfer*', where he stated that education is always as backbone of nation. We know that if we do not give enough water to the root, a tree cannot flourish. Likewise Rabindranath took the responsibility to exhibit the true meaning of education. Tagore crafted a methodology for education to help a man to become a good human being. This search was not limited as an idea. In December 1901, he started a small school with five children which later formed as Visva-Bharati University. Rabindranath Tagore was not a professional educationalist, although he expressed very valuable opinion about education through his sensible thinking. Indicating the defects of the prevailing traditional education system, he proposed the changes required therein. His essential objective of education is independence of mankind. Independence elevates people to that level where they can truly feel their own transcendent self. It was disturbing to see any kind of subjection of man. So, he repeatedly condemned the imposed politics and imposed education system.

Education is the seed of human life. As adequate light and air helps grow a seed into plantation, likewise Tagore thought that child education needs a proper atmosphere for the growth of child's selfhood. But main stream education went completely in the reversed direction. Going up against the contemporary educational system, Rabindranath raised his voice against the brutality of British culture and its custom. Rabindranath Tagore wrote "*...I try to make provision for these aspect of freedom- freedom of mind, freedom of heart and freedom of will.*" (*Thoughts on education, R. Tagore*) This is the core thinking of Tagore's education. It is our responsibility to give a free environment to grow up the children of our society. If education does not help to cultivate free mind, free will, and free vision to observe the world, the backbone of mankind will collapse. According to Rabindranath, school is not a place to satisfy the small interests, to drive the students towards greatness. Rabindranath Tagore wanted to create a new mould of life through education. The main objective of his education is to understand the compatibility of man's intellect, social, moral, economic and spiritual aspects in his own mind. He said "*...the highest education is that which does not only give us information but makes our life in harmony with all existence.*"

Rabindranath Tagore found a unique way to apply the core concept of education. He was the proponent of various kinds of festivals. He thought that festivals always have an educational value where our knowledge of understanding becomes alive and vibrant. Scope of pragmatic and utilitarian aspect reflects as universal knowledge. Here, we want to illustrate how different festivals enrich the educational system.

Briksharopan (Tree plantation)

We all know the relation between the monsoon and the poet is inseparable. In respect of that two festivals were added by the poet. One is the *Briksharopan* (Tree plantation- July 21, 1928) and the other is the *Halakarshan* (Plough Festival- 22nd of July, 1928). These two festivals are part of *Barsha Mangal*. Why the poet did introduced this tree plantation program is clearly stated in his speech of 1939 *Halakarshan* festival:

‘পৃথিবীর দান গ্রহণ করবার সময় লোভ বেড়ে উঠল মানুষের। অরণ্যের হাত থেকে কৃষিক্ষেত্র জয় করে নিলে, অবশেষে কৃষিক্ষেত্রের একাধিপত্য অরণ্যকে হঠিয়ে দিতে লাগল। নানা প্রয়োজনে গাছ কেটে কেটে পৃথিবীর ছায়া বস্ত্রহরণ করে তাকে দিতে লাগল নগ্ন করে। তাতে তার বাতাসকে করতে লাগল উত্তপ্ত, মাটি উর্বর তার ভাঙার দিতে লাগল নিঃস্ব করে। অরণ্যের-আশ্রয়-হারা আর্যাবর্ত আজ তাই খর সূর্যতাপে দুঃসহ।

এইকথা মনে রেখে কিছুদিন পূর্বে আমরা যে অনুষ্ঠান করেছিলুম সে হচ্ছে বৃক্ষরোপণ, অপব্যয়ী সম্ভান-কর্তৃক লুপ্তিত মাতৃভাঙার পূরণ করবার কল্যাণ-উৎসব।’

Shantiniketan with its surroundings was a deserted land without any plantation/tree with red pebble arid land. Poet felt the necessity of filling and beautifying the terrain with the tree, plantation & flowers with introducing tree plantation festival:

‘মানুষ ঘন্যভাবে প্রকৃতির দান গ্রহণ করেছে; প্রকৃতির সহজ দানে কুলাইনি, তাই সে নির্মমভাবে বনকে নির্মূল করেছে। তার ফলে আবার- মরুভূমিকে ফিরিয়ে আনবার উদ্যোগ হয়েছে। ভূমির ক্রমিক ক্ষয়ে এই যে বোলপুর ডাঙ্গার কঙ্কাল বেরিয়ে পড়েছে, বিনাশ অগ্রসর হয়ে এসেছে- এক সময়ে এর এমন দশা ছিল না; এখানে ছিল অরণ্য সে পৃথিবীকে রক্ষা করেছে ধ্বংসের হাত থেকে, তার ফলমূল খেয়ে মানুষ বেঁচেছে। সেই অরণ্য নষ্ট হওয়ায় এখন বিপদ আসন্ন। সেই বিপদ থেকে রক্ষা পেতে হলে আবার আমাদের আহ্বান করতে হবে সেই বরদাত্রী বনলক্ষ্মীকে আবার তিনি রক্ষা করণ এই ভূমিকে, দিন তাঁর ফল, দিন তাঁর ছায়া।’

The first tree-plantation festival was held on 21st July 1928 (5th Sraaban

1335) at Gourprangan of Santiniketan Ashram.and. On this occasion, a *Bakul* tree was planted there.

On 25th July the poet wrote to the daughter-in-law, in a letter:

“Tree plantation programme is done with the Bakul tree of your tub. You cannot imagine such a good luck of any tree in the world. The beautiful well dressed girls were singing and blowing conch accompanied the tree. Shastri (Bidhusekhar) recited Sanskrit verse - I read one by one 5 poems.”

In the presence of poet, on 26th Shravan tree plantation festival was held in Santiniketan in 1929. A few days before, Tagore wrote tree plantation song for the festival, the main theme of the song was an affection to take care of the baby trees -

‘আয় আমাদের অঙ্গনে অতিথি বালক তরুদল,
মানব স্নেহ সঙ্গনে, চল আমাদের ঘর চল
শ্যাম বঙ্কিম ভঙ্গিতে চঞ্চল কলসঙ্গীতে
দ্বারে নিয়ে আয় শাখায় শাখায় প্রাণ-আনন্দ-কোলাহল।।
দেপবনেবনবল্লভে মর্মর গীত উপহার।
আজি শ্রাবণের বর্ষণে আশীর্বাদের স্পর্শনে
পড়ুক মাথায় পাতায় পাতায় অমরাবতীর ধারা জল।।’

In 1930, Acharya Dinendranath Tagore led the music of this year’s tree plantation festival. One *Amlaki* tree was planted in front of Shribhavan. Bidhushekhhar Shastri read the appropriate Sanskrit verse for the ceremony. In the evening, recitation, vocal music and presentation of musical instruments took place in Uttarayan Compound. On 15 August 1935, due to bad weather tree plantation ceremony was happened at 3-30p.m. instead of 7.30 a.m morning. Acharya Kshitimohan planted five coconut trees in the compound. In 1937, tree plantation festival was organized in Santal Palli near Santiniketan. Under the leadership of the poet and with the recitation of verse by Kshitimohan Sen. In 3rd September 1938, the tree plantation ceremony of Sriniketan was held in the presence of the poet. Poet presented in his brief lecture on what is the purpose of the tree plantation and the festival of Halkarshan. This speech has been found in the book

“Palli Prakriti” with the title ‘forest deity’. In this manner the poet’s tree plantation festival is going in Santiniketan. The *Barshamangal* and tree plantation festival earlier use to be held on the same day. Now ‘*Barshamangal*’ festival is held after a few days of tree plantation festival. After the death of poet (1941), tree plantation is being held on 22nd Shravan on the death Anniversary of Poet.

This festival is currently held at the Vishwa Bharti barren places or the newly built neighbourhood. In the selected place, 25-30 feet length and breadth square area is cleaned with soil and cow dung, digging about 18 inch square hole in the middle of the area, where tree will be planted. The area around the hole is beautifully decorated with *Alpana*(Designs). On the day, at appropriate time, two well-groomed young people carry a baby tree in palanquin, decorated by artists of the Kalavaban along with musical procession. They sing:

‘মরুবিজয়ের কেতন উড়াও শূণ্যে হে প্রবল প্রাণ।

ধূলিরে ধন্য করো করুনার পূণ্যে হে কোমন প্রাণ।।

মৌনী মাটির মর্মের গান কবে উঠিবে ধ্বনিয়া মর্মের তব রবে;

মাধুরী ভরিবে ফুলে ফলে পল্লবে হে মহান প্রাণ।।

পথিক বন্ধু, ছায়ার আসন পাতি এস শ্যাম সুন্দর।

এসো বাতাসের অধীর খেলার সাথি, মাতাও নিলম্বর।

উষায় জাগাও শাখায় গানের আশা, সন্ধ্যায় আনো বিরাম গভীর ভাষা,

রচি দাও তাতে সুপ্ত গীতের বাসা হে উদার প্রাণ।।’

Various flowers, sandalwood, incense, lamps and various types of *Mangalic* products are kept in the ceremony. Plant being carried by the palanquin and then Chief Guest of the festival places the plant in the ground at the specified hole. Then the soil is given, the water is sprayed, it is aired with hand fan made of pulm leave and the fire is touched. In this way, the help of earth, water, fire, air and sky i.e. *Panchavuta* is provided. The Vedamantra is recited in loud voice.

In the nearby five children, nicely dressed, sit on a well decorated stage - they are the symbols of each bhuta or element. One by one they recite

hymn on earth, water, fire, air and sky. These hymns represent *Panchavuta*, so that this child tree becomes a fully grown tree giving flower, fruits and leaves for the welfare of human society. Several appropriate songs are sung in the festival.

Halakarshan (Plough festival)

Along with “Tree Plantation”, Rabibdranath made “*Halakarshan*” also a festive programme on agricultural knowledge and agricultural education in Sriniketan. The festival of *Halakarshan*, on one hand, identifies his scientific knowledge, while on the other side commemorates his artistic sense. In a speech given on the occasion of *Halakarshan*-tree plantation held in Sriniketan, the poet said, “*Today’s festival has two parts. First Halakarshan-plough we need for the food, for grains; for perform our duty to ourselves be Halakarshan. But by doing this we insult Basundhara and to prevent that we should give something back. For doing duties to the earth, we organize this tree plantation to prevent its wounds. I wish due to this festival tree shades should be widen and grains are embellished with the surrounding and get relief.*”

On February 6, 1922, Palli Sangathan Bibhag was established in Sriniketan near Surul village. When the poet was in the work of managing the zamindari in Shilaidah, he observed the misfortune of the general public. Then he began to look for ways for its remedy. He easily understood that the progress of agriculture can bring the welfare of the countrymen. But the educated society of the country is indifferent towards the welfare of the village.

A quarterly magazine called *Bhumilakshmi* (ভূমিলক্ষ্মী) use to be published in Birbhum. In Bengali calendar 1331 the management of this journal came to Visva-Bharati and started to publish as a monthly letter. Regarding this magazine, the poet writes-

“... আমাদের দেশের চাষের ক্ষেত্রের উপর সমস্ত পৃথিবীর জ্ঞানের আলো ফেলিবার দিন আসিয়াছে। আজ শুধু একলা চাষীর চাষ করিবার দিন নাই, আজ তাহার সঙ্গে বিদ্বানকে, বৈজ্ঞানিককে যোগ দিতে হইবে। আজ শুধু চাষীর লাঙলের ফলার সঙ্গে আমাদের দেশের মাটির সংযোগ যথেষ্ট নয় সমস্ত দেশের বুদ্ধির সঙ্গে, বিদ্যার সঙ্গে অধ্যবসার সঙ্গে তাহার সংযোগ হওয়া চাই। এই কারণে বীরভূম জেলা হইতে এই যে ‘ভূমিলক্ষ্মী’ কাগজখানি বাহির হইয়াছে ইহাতে উৎসাহ অনুভব করিতেছি। বস্তুত লক্ষ্মীর সঙ্গে সরস্বতীকে না মিলাইয়া দিলে আজকালকার দিনে ভূমিলক্ষ্মীর যথার্থ সাধনা হইতে পারিবে না।”

Ploughing and Farming is shameful job for considerable period-it is work of Shudra (lower caste}, although the ancient epic Ramayana of ancient India is indeed a “*Krsihi Kavya*” i.e. “Agricultural poetic work”. Even when Aryans entered India, there was no enterprise of agriculture in the country’s virgin soil. The Aryans first rescued the virgin land from the hands of the monsters. The land gradually became grainy and royal. Agriculture extended from Bideha to Panchabati. The King Janaka got Sita by ploughing. The poet said in 1346 in relation to the Plough - “The great importance of the agricultural knowledge felt by Arya Samaj at that time is evident in Ramayana. Sita got her impersonation during ploughing, and Rama convert the virgin land into cultivable. One day, this ploughing penetrated the forest and mountain and made India’s north meet south.

Buddha Purnima

Poet Rabindranath was the worshiper of human religion. He has completely gave up his respect and devotion to the religion wherever he found the world’s welfare, happiness and peace is present and where there has been the tune of universalism-worldly love. The Buddhist ideology entered the Tagore family before birth of Rabindranath. In 1859, Maharshidev’s son Satyendranath and Keshab Chandra Sen went to Singhal. Since then, Buddha’s ideology was practiced in Tagore family in different way.

Regarding Lord Buddha in the article ‘Buddhadev’, he wrote, “*Lord Buddha one day after leaving the estate was started to meditation. The meditation was with the determination of bringing down sadness of all the people.*” Was in this meditation there were any differentiation in right? Was there any lower caste? Was there any Non-Aryan? He left all his belongings for the poorest, illiterate people. In his meditation there was respect for all people of all country without any reservation. The poet use to become very emotional about Buddhadeb. He believed that Buddha was the greatest human. He first time went to the Buddha Gaya, a place rich with memory of Buddha, on 8 October 1904. At that time he stayed there for few days. The poet had many companions on this journey. From the letter written by Srishchandra Majumdar, it is known that the companion was Jagdish Chandra Bose, his wife, Sister Nivedita, Sister Christine, Lalu (Brajendra Kishore Devbarma), Jaty, Santosh Chandra, Rathindranath and Srishchandra. Two daughters of Jadunath Sarkar and Ananda Mohan Basu later joined the team.

Second time he went there in 1914, and stayed there for three days- in this trip Barama Hemlata was with him. From the book 'Rabindranath in the memory of women', written by her, it is known that the poet used to stay in Buddha Mandir for two to three hours alone. He used to stand firm in front of the Buddha statue, with the tears flowing from his eyes. Poet wrote in his article on Buddhadev—

“One day I was in Bodhgaya for visiting the temple there of. Then this thought emerged in my mind - whose foot prints once made this earth sacred, he personally travelled this Gaya, Why did not I take birth at that time to feel his holy touch through my entire soul and body.”

In 1935, the poet went to Sarnath to pay homage to the Buddha. This poem was composed by the poet in 1931 on the occasion of the establishment of a new monastery in Sarnath

ঐ নামে একদিন ধন্য হলো দেশে দেশান্তরে
 তব জন্মভূমি।
 সেই নাম আরবার এ দেশের নগরে প্রান্তরে
 দান করো তুমি।।
 বোধিদ্রুমতলে তব সেদিনের মহাজাগরণ
 আবার সার্থক হোক মুক্ত হোক মোহ-আবরণ,
 বিস্মৃতির রাত্রিশেষে এ ভারতে তোমার স্মরণ,
 নবপ্রাতে উঠুক কুসুমি।।
 চিন্তহেথে মৃত প্রায়, অমিতাভ, তুমি অমিতায়ু,
 আয়ু করো দান।
 তোমার বোধন মস্ত্রে হে থাকার তন্দ্রালস বায়ু
 হোক প্রাণবান।
 খুলে যাক রুদ্ধদার, চৌদিকে ঘোষুক শঙ্খধ্বনি
 ভারত অঙ্গন তলে আজিতবনব আগমনী,
 অমেয় প্রমের বার্তা শতকণ্ঠে উঠুক নিঃস্বনি

এনে দিক অজেয় আহ্নান।।

The poet established the center of Buddhism in Visva-Bharati, Professor Nityanind-Binod Goswami was sent to Shingal (Sri Lanka) and Bramhadesh (Myanmar) for higher education in Buddhist philosophy. Rathindranath wrote in his *"Pitrisriti"* (In the memory of father) book - "I believe, due to this Buddhagaya visit, subsequently father's internal attraction towards Buddhism and its literature became deeply intense. The poet himself went to various Asian countries and visited the pilgrimage of Lord Buddha. He travelled to China, Japan, Singhal, Brahmadesh, Shyam, Java, and realized the essence of Buddha's preaching.

The essence of Buddhism is to inspire the greatness, superior feeling, and welfare power within the human. Rabindranath is the worshiper of human religion. He was gradually attracted towards Buddhism due to similarity of his thoughts with that of Lord Buddha of Buddha. In Rabindranath's own words- *"Whom I feel in my within as greatest human being, in his birth festival on the Baisakhi Purnima day I have come to pay my homage. It is not a material ornament of any particular event; it is what I surrendered to him in confidence repeatedly."*

Rammohan Smaran (Remembering Rammohan Ray):

In the modern era touching the history in the light of Renaissance Raja Rammohan Roy is ever remembered. On the afternoon of 27th September at Santiniketan, the Rammohan Memorial Festival is celebrated with reverence.

Someone asked to Rabindranath "Who is your hero?" Rabindranath replied, 'Rammohan Roy', Maitreya Devi narrated the incident. Mahanta Rammohan Roy's first death anniversary was celebrated on 27 September 1922 in Santiniketan. But the poet was absent on the first celebration. Nepal Chandra Rai and Kshitimohan Sen were in Acharya's seat. The poem *"Chiraswaraniya"* is 'rhythmic form' of poet's infinite respect towards Ramamohan.

‘মৃত্যুঞ্জয় যাহাদের প্রাণ,

সব তুচ্ছ তার উর্ধে দীপ যারা জ্বালে অনির্বাণ,

তাহাদেব মাঝে যেন হয়

তোমাদের ইনিত্য পরিচয়। তাহাদের খর্বকর যদি
 খর্বতার অপমানে বন্দী হয়ে রবে নিরবধি
 তাদের সম্মানে মান নিয়ো
 বিশ্বে যারা চিরস্মরণীয়।’

It should be mentioned that Rammahon's life was the foundation of human friendship and establishment of truth. This impression of motivation repeatedly came in the thought, sense and work of Rabindranath. Not to be confined to the small area of the country, Brahma will be seen among the people of the entire world, one has to expand himself. In fact, Rammohan showed the nation the path to the world; he gave mantra to associate with the knowledge and science of the world. He wanted to erase differentiation, ethnic narrowness, cruelty to the women. He did not get satisfaction in the bound rules of ceremonial rituals of religion. His truthfulness of mind is gift of the ancient Indian Rishis in search of infinity – Upanisad was his way of life. Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore said about Rammohan:

‘পূর্ণ মনুষ্যত্বের সর্বাঙ্গীন আকাঙ্ক্ষাকে বহন করে এদেশে রামমোহন রায়েব আবির্ভাব হয়েছিল-- ভারতবর্ষে তিনি যে কোনো নূতন ধর্মের সৃষ্টি করেছিলেন তা নয়, ভারতবর্ষে যেখানে ধর্মের মধ্যে পরিপূর্ণতার রূপ চিরদিনই ছিল যেখানে বৃহৎ সামঞ্জস্য যেখানে শাস্তং শিবদ্বৈতম, সেইখানকার সিংহদ্বার তিনি সর্বসাধারণের কাছে উদ্ঘাটিত করে দিয়েছিলেন।’

On September 27, every year, students, professors, employees and Ashrambasi of Santiniketan worships at Chattimtala on the occasion of Rammohan's commemoration. With Brahmasangit, recitation of mantra, a sacred atmosphere is created. On the occasion of the centenary of the death of Rammohan, the poet (1934) paid his tribute this way:

হে রামমোহন, আজি শতক বর্ষ করি পার
 মিলিল তোমার নামে দেশের সকল নমস্কার।
 মৃত্যু অন্তরাল ভেদি দাও তব অন্তহীনদান
 যাহা কিছু জরাজীর্ণ তাহাতে জাগাও নবপ্রাণ।
 যাহা কিছু মূঢ়তা হে চিন্তের পরশমণি তব
 এনে দিক উদ্বোধন, এনে দিক শক্তি অভিনব।

Maharshi Smaran (Remembering Maharshi)

The worship takes place in the temple in the morning of 6th Magh in memory of Maharshi Debendranath. At 3pm, there is a memorial meeting in front of the prayer seat of Maharshi in Chhatimtala. In this meeting, the songs of Brahma Sangit and Puja echelon are sung. The selected sections are read from the writings of Maharshidev. Honour is devoted by discussing the life and work of Maharshidev.

In 1828, on 20 August, 6 Bhadra 1235, Wednesday, Brahma Samaj was established by Rammohan. Dwarakanath was a close friend of Rammohan. Debendranath thus came near Rammohun and was become attracted to him. So the holy Wednesday found place in the heart of Maharshi. In his established Ashram still prayer takes place in that temple on Wednesday.

At that time, in order to curtail the influence of some condemnable young people of Hindu College and influence of Christian missionaries, 'Tattwabodhini Pathshala' was established by Maharshidev in the first week of June 1840, in Calcutta. The purpose of setting up this school (the manner it was notified at that time) is like this: *"Accepting English language as mother tongue and Christian religion as ancestral religion,- To prevent these horrific incidents, giving education of science and religious teaching in Bengali language, giving practical and spiritual truth both types of education free of cost to the students..."*. But this school did not run in Kolkata for long. On 30 April 1843, Debendranath had set up a 'Tattwabodhini Pathshala' with the same intention in the Bansbere village.

Debendranath, was an appropriate visionary of Bengal during that period. This great man has left Santiniketan for us. This Santiniketan was a barren valley. Maharshidev saw this place on the way to Raipur. Standing in this liberal open wilderness, he could see establishment of throne of eternity. In the life of Maharishi's life there were fascination for meditation and nature. In nature he would get the touch of 'Ekamebadwitiyam' (only one without a second). Surrounded by these two *Chhatim* tree, he settled twenty bighas of land from the zamindar of Raipur. Then he placed his meditation seat below *Chhatim* tree. There he got '*comfort of life, joy of mind, peace of soul*'

Debendranath, after renovating religion, while establishing its truthful form introduced new ceremonial practice excluding paganism. Eliminating Jagyik rituals (sacred fire worship), *hom*, *narayansila* etc sacred thread

ceremony was performed for his son Rabindranath on 25th Magh 1279. In fact, Maharshi established the foundation of new awakened Bengal from superstition ridden Bengal. He did not gave away Santiniketan Ashram for a particular community. To come to Santiniketan one never has to go through formal initiation (*Diksha*). He has given this monastery (ashram) in the hands of the people. The base of this monastery is built on the path of - *Shantam Shivam Adwitiam*.

Anandabazar

Prior to Puja, all the bhavans of the Visva-Bharati stages at least one drama in the “Natyaghar” (Theatre Room). Puja vacation is knocking at the door. The golden bloom of the sunlight puts tinge in the mind of the children, their mind started to look forward to their home. At the same time, on the day of Mahalaya at 3 in the afternoon, *Anandabazar* is organised which ends at 8.00 in the evening. Actually it’s a fair – for just a few hours. The students of the Ashram puts up shops in the “Gour Prangan”- trading takes place. As parents and guardians comes to take their children’s to home on vacation resulting in increase in the number of buyers.

From the day before the festival, collections of bamboo, cloth etc. takes place for constructing the shops. Making dolls and necklaces, drawing masks, drawings of dies, and drawing cards have long been started. The festival day gradually approaches. Tune of clarionet (Sanai) is heard from the dawn. The gong (Kansi) and drum (Dhak) starts sounding. Children begin to decorate the shops – Professors also join with them. Flower-leaf, coloured-sari, colourful paper are accessories to decorate shops. By putting one jar above another, and drawing on them a fine arcade is constructed and the decorations of the shops are completed by noon.

“Gaur Prangan” is now non recognisable. The Circus Tent is in the middle. The owner of the Circus is students of the “Kalavaban”. Elephants, horses, lions, tigers, bear all are there in circus. Acting of Drama is being held in “Sinha Sadan”. Tickets are being sold here also. In the convenience store floral dresses are being sold. Beautiful floral ornaments are made by putting red ‘Rangan’ flower (রঙ্গন-Jungle Geranium) and bud of white ‘Tagor’ flower (টগর- crape Jasmine) on the leaves of Jackfruit. String made of Fir seeds and “Sandhyamoni” (সন্ধ্যামনি-4 O’clock flower plant) seeds are being sold. Small children are selling prepared betel leaf moving around in the fair. A boy or

a girl of Kalavaban may be seated there with white card and pencil. If you stand in front of them they will draw a sketch of yours and will ask money for that; someone may write poem or rhyme in your name and giving it to you they will ask money.

Many funny events took place in Anandabazar. In the food shop tea, coffee, different type of snaks like ghugni, chop, beguni, peyanji, alukabli, and sweets are sold. The variety of name of things and variety of shops attracts buyers. At 8 o'clock in the night, the lights were disconnected and signal is given to close the shops. Selling should stop at 8-30. That day, it is tradition that after calculating profit & loss, the profit amount needs to be deposited to the "*Daridra Bhandar*" (Poverty fund) of welfare branch of employees of Viswa Bharati.

Through this fair, many tasks are held which helped children to be emotionally strong and skilled. Through this children's creative power, taste of beauty is developed, also managing and accounting capacity is practiced and they learned the ability to work together. By donating profit to welfare branch power of sacrifice is increased.

Nandan Mela

Santiniketan's Kalabhavan is the place of worship of Shilpacharyya Nandalal. Nandalal's involvement was quite long in the history of Kalabhavan. That's why naturally the student and professor of Kalabhavan all perceive the birthday of Nandalal as a memorable day. Nandalal was born on December 3, 1883. On December 3, in the early morning students of Kalabhavan use to sing (*Baitalik*) while going around a part of the Ashram. Then the student and professors used to go out together for *Banabhojan* (বনভোজন-picnic). All day spent rejoicing. In this way, the birthday of Shilpacharya became a festive day to the students and professors of Kalabhavan.

There cannot be any action without reason. In 1972, problem relating to arranging financial help for a student of Kalavaban, who met with an unexpected accident, made all to think about. Absence of a permanent fund was strongly felt. Just then, at that time only, Nandalal's Birthday Celebration Festival, 'Baroda Art Fair', creation of perpetual fund all lead to the birth of *Silpa Mela*. The main objective was to create a permanent fund for dealing with accidents and bad days.

The first fair was held at the Kalavaban in 1973. Then its name was 'Nanda Mela'. The next year, 1974 it was named as '*Nandan Mela*'. This offended some students and professors. Rabindranath Tagore's named Kalavaban workshop as '*Nandan*'. Workshop '*Nandan*' gave pleasure to Karmaveer (champion of work) Nandalal in his whole life. Therefore, in the name of Shilpacharya or in the name of his creation or whether it is in the name of arts, leaving these argument it can be said that this fair is a popular festival of Visva-Bharati.

Various types of items of handicrafts are displayed in the fair, such as idols, dolls, toys, painted dies, paintings, photos, calendar, congratulations letter, brass jewellery, blouse pieces with batik work, scarf, vanity bag, appliqué work etc. There are also tea and food shops. Tickets are sold for Acting of play and variety entertainment programmes. The fair compound are beautifully decorated. This decoration consists of art and beauty. Students are engaged in various ways in preparing for this fair and their professional skills are developed for making different types of saleable products. This gives an opportunity to the students to come close to their professors and gets the opportunity for getting "*Gurmukhi Vidya*" (direct learning from teacher's contact. So inner soul of this fair embraces education, art and beauty.

Creation of permanent fund which was main objective of the fair that fund has now become treasure of Lakshmi (Goddess of Wealth). The welfare capability of this fund has made the students of the Kalavaban feel secured. Students can borrow from the fund if needed. Poor students can get help to run their studies. There are plans to provide scholarships to talented students and arranging art exhibitions outside Santiniketan – the required expenditure will be incurred from this fund. Like this, Students and Professors are having many developmental plans.

Convocation

Convocation is mainly programme for bestowal of recognition for success. The successful students in examination of Viswa Bharati are awarded *Abhigyan Patra* and the same is presented to the student in the Convocation ceremony.

It is noteworthy, which we are not unaware of that, Rabindranath was not much trustful in the system of examinations, degrees, diplomas etc. For

this reason, in the first phase of the Santiniketan Ashram, poet kept the students away from examination system and involved in education of making good human being in the liberal natural environment.

Pramathnath Bishi, the first student of Santiniketan commented- *“At that time, the same boy in Santiniketan was able to study in higher or lower class according to the disparity of education; ... a child may be in seventh grade in Bangla-English, he is the eighth grade in mathematics.”* Needless to say, this style does not last forever. According to the need and pressure of different incidences later on poet has to accept prevailing education system i.e. examination etc.

Convocation ceremony started in Visva-Bharati. The annual convocation of Visva-Bharati use to be held with Paush festival (Poush Mela) at Amrakunj in Santiniketan. On the second day of the Paush Mela i.e. 8th Paush, at eight o'clock in the morning in presence of many invited honourable guests and uninvited mass gatherings, at the end of recitation of Vedic Mantra begins in the convocation ceremony. In the meeting, from the speeches of Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor and the chief guest, full of knowledge and wisdom, many achievement and work of the Viswa-Bharati are unfolded. After delivery of the Acharya's advice and blessings, with the Postgraduate Certificate or Avigyan Patra a piece of *Chhatim* (ছাতিম) leaf and Saptaparni (সপ্তপর্ণী) leaf are given as symbol of peace and harmony.

Many may know the reason and history for giving leaf of Saptaparni tree (Devils Tree). 'Olympic Games' began in the Golden Age of Greek civilization in Homer's Country Greece. If one wins in Olympic Games, with the medal a beautiful bunch was given decorated with olive leaves. It is possible that, in view of this practice, giving Saptaparni (সপ্তপর্ণী) leaf with the certificate of Visva-Bharati graduates was introduced. But we think more important mysterious reason is hidden in the leaves of Saptaparni tree. The initial motivation of Maharshi Debendranath to establish Santiniketan was 'Chhatima Tala' (ছাতিমতলা). Two Satparni Tree standing in the infinite darkness gave him rest and comfort of mind. In Rabindranath's words, *“When my father was returning, after attending invitation, from Bhuvan Sinha's house in Raipur, he felt attracted to these two trees in the middle of the field. In search of peace he accepted this land as donation from Sinha's of Raipur.”*

In 1952, the convocation of the Visva-Bharati Society was held in

Amrakunj gorgeously. Sarbapalli Radhakrishnan preceded over the ceremony. In his speech in the context of giving advice to the new graduates he said, "Just now what Pandit Khsitimohan Sen spelt out towards you "*Sattyanna Pramaditbyam*", "*Dharmanna Pramaditbyam*", "*Kushalanna Pramaditbyam*" after that I think I don't have to say anything."

In the Visva-Bharati's convocation, prominent personalities of the country and abroad use to be present as special guests. Not only Rajendra Prasad, Radhakrishnan – prominent leaders of the country like Sarojini Naidu, Jawaharlal Nehru, Abul Kalam Azad, Lal Bahadur Shastri, Indira Gandhi and others have expressed their impressive views on in the convocation ceremony. At the ceremony, not only the political personalities; artists and poets, literary personalities, scientists, philosophers also accepted the invitation for convocation, and rendered immense respect to the organization of Rabindranath, in Amrakunja's Chayabithi. In particular, note that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has repeatedly arrived at Amrakunja in Poushmela. He attended not only as the Prime Minister of the country, but also present in the playground like ordinary people. Sometime he reached school and ate sitting with everyone. In the same way he mixed with the kids and played with them. In one word he became part of Santiniketan. He alone use to amused the environment

Festivals promote equality in diversity, brings neighbours into congregation of happiness. Festivals endorse cultural exchanges and improve society's general psychological wellbeing. Rabindranath Tagore is one who realized that social alliance can be the inner strength of the progression of humanity. Tagore always wanted to encourage the creative self of person. According to him, the very notion of creativity is the "surplus" for our divine soul which connects one to the world. The consciousness of our personality reveals as mass awareness and reflects prominently distinct with the colour of our emotions. Rabindranath Tagore proposed whole lot various types of festivals capturing multiplicities and diversities of creation. As an unprejudiced person, Tagore valued all aspects of human creation through festivals. Conventionally, festivals are community specific, always celebrated by communities to practice ritualistic or religious activities. But Tagore's understanding of festival speaks a different tale of our life. He encourages creativity as well as its application. In every aspect of Tagore's philosophy, abstraction and concreteness set out hand to hand.

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Education and its Effects on Cultural Development – Past, Present and Future

Joyita Mitra

ABSTRACT : In ordinary language culture means good manners and good taste. According to Ellwood, culture includes all of man's power to control over nature and himself. In practice or conduct, culture stands for all our behaviour patterns which are transmitted and acquired socially. A group or people have often some peculiar behaviour patterns, each of which has a particular trait or complex. Its habitat is called a culture area. The patterns of culture are divided into three types. The first pattern is the common ways of people, called folkways. It includes clothing manners, greeting exchanges, food habits and common superstitions. The second type is called modes. They are patterns of ethical behaviour. Mostly, they are moral or religious. The third pattern is institutions which grow out of specific needs or desires.

Keywords: Culture, Education, Aspects.

Objective of the study

1. To understand the importance of culture from the past till today.
2. To explore what role does education play in the development of culture.
3. To assess the cultural dimensions in school curricula.

Method

The primary method followed in this study involves a combination of results from different studies. And data collected from books and internet

Indian Culture

Professor K.A. Nilkantha Shastri defines Indian culture as the total accumulation of material objects, ideas, symbols, beliefs, sentiments, values and social forms which are passed on from one generation to another in any given society. Tracing Indian history is extremely difficult because when

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Indian people appear on the horizon of world history, they have already acquired a developed form of material culture. A study of Rig Veda, the first recorded history of mankind in India, gives us the picture of a people who had advanced agriculture, handicrafts, and village organization patterns. They also exhibit a good deal of the love of life, poetry, art, literature and war. If we accept the viewpoint of several eminent historians that the history of the Indus Valley Civilization is pre-Rig Vedic, even so, that civilization appears as a highly sophisticated urban and rural culture. This only points to a state of social evolution long past the primitive stage and poised as a mighty advance on the plan of mind and thought. This mental evolution gradually evolved into a spiritual outlook which became the dominant characteristic of Indian Cultures.

Role of Education

The function of education is to bring the needed and desirable change in the cultural ideals and values for the progress and continued development of the society without which social progress cannot take place. Culture plays a vital role in man's life. Education of various elements of culture can help man in the adaptation to the natural and social environment, development of individual personality, socialization of the individual, proper use of leisure and understanding other cultures and proper meaning of liberality. Education in culture is imparted mainly by the family, society and the school. Considering the importance of culture in man's life and the role played by education in the socialization and acculturation of an individual, it is worthwhile to analyse the changes that have taken shape in our culture.

Importance of Culture

1. Culture is said to be the oil that keeps society running. Tradition and knowledge have also been described in certain quarters as the main pillars of development and sustenance of communities and no society can progress in the absence of the two.
2. It helps in the transmission of knowledge norms and values of a given people and therefore, can serve as a good medium to change negative mindsets, about the environment, relationships with others.
3. The quality of our lives depends to a great extent, on our being able to take part in and benefit from our culture.

4. Culture is a powerful driver for development.
5. Politically, culture plays a natural part in development policy that is serious about human rights.
6. Culture ensures unity during crisis, influences identity, debate and dialogue. It is important for nation building and for peace and reconciliation.
7. Culture is the key that opens the door to an analysis of human societies and human behaviour.
8. By culture we mean the system of norms and standards that a society develops over the course of many generations and which profoundly influence the everyday behaviour of people in the society.

The purpose of culture is to give the society by conscious process of learning and experience, patterns of behaviour which are found useful for harmonious existence and smooth functioning in all occupations and interactions and thereby individual and group survival and perpetuation is ensured.

Types of Culture

Mainly, there are two types of cultures - Visible and Invisible culture. Visible and invisible culture is otherwise called explicit/ implicit or overt/ covert culture. Explicit culture includes language, dress, food habit, religion and aesthetic convention. Implicit culture is those which are in use without realisation. Such as, how long in clock time one can be late before being impolite, how one conceives or experiences emotional or physical pain, how one displays such pain behaviourally, what topic should be avoided at the beginning of a conversation, how one shows interest or attention through behaviour.

According to subjective standpoints there are 4 types of cultures.

1. **Individual Culture-** Each individual has some personal traits and qualities which guide his habits of thinking and behaving in all fields of human activities. These personal likes, and dislikes, interest and mode of thinking and patterns of social behaviour constitutes his personal/individual culture.

2. **Communal culture-** As in the case of individual culture different communities exhibit their distinct traits of life styles comprising specific modes of community beliefs and life styles. All the members of different communities show different traits known as community culture.
3. **National Culture-** Each nation has some distinct national traits and attributes of character which condition its national patterns of ideals, values, modes of thoughts and behaviour. Such national traits are called national culture.
4. **World culture-** Due to the rapid rise in the means of transport and communication, the world has shrunk into a small unit with the result that different nations of the world live together as members of a world community having common values namely cooperation, sympathy, social service, social awakening and social sensitiveness etc. there by, constituting a world culture.

According to contents there are two types of culture in each society-

1. **Material culture-** Material culture includes all those man-made things and objects which human society has created for physical welfare in times of peace and war. Items such as clothes, utensils, homes, roads, ornaments, TV, radio, various machines, gadgets and various means of transport and communication are some examples of material culture.
2. **Non- material culture-** It includes all those ideals, attitudes and values which modify the behaviour of man, language and literature, art, music, religion, customs, traditions.

Factors of Culture-From the factors we can see how the culture changes through ages through educative experiences and influence our lives -

Cumulative nature- With the evolution of the race, its culture patterns have also developed. The modern man stands on the shoulders of the past. Culture is cumulative, says Brown. Our language, for instance is the result of the centuries of cumulation. It has passed through the pictographic, phonetic stages and is now in the alphabetic stage when a letter is the symbol of a sound. The development of community organization from the tribe to union of states is another remarkable evidence of cumulative nature of culture.

Diffusion of culture- Inventions, discoveries, made by a person or group, are often taken over by others and become a part of the total cultural pattern. They travel from one group to another, from one country to another through the press the radio and trades.

Cultural pluralism- Everything is included in cultural pluralism. Morespecifically, it is that cultural environment in the world in which the self operates. This includes physical world, the mental world, or the world of feelings. Education then, should help the individual to recognize such pluralism of culture.

Cultural conflict- We are living not only in a new and dynamically changing society, but a new world in which science, industrialism and new methods of warfare have completely reset the old perspectives. If we are unable to adapt ourselves to this new situation, we shall face cultural conflicts. In this situation, there is a need to develop a sense of right values or moral or social understanding that can balance these conflicting groups. Right education alone can bring about a solution to this problem of culture conflicts.

Education and cultural Lag- The style of living in the modern society has under gone a total change. This society is gradually adopting more and more the gifts of scientific achievements. Therefore, the non-material aspects of culture have been left behind. People today like to lead a material way of life. The gap between material culture and non-material culture is known as cultural lag. Education is considered as an important instrument to bridge this cultural lag.

Enculturation through education- Enculturation is defined as a conscious or unconscious conditioning occurring within the learning process, whereby man as child and adult achieves competence in his culture. Enculturation is basically therefore, synonymous with the more widely used term socialization. It takes place through an informal, indirect, and unconscious process and transmit the culture to the present and also to the oncoming generation

Education and culture

Education as a part of culture has the twin function of conservation and modification or renewal of the culture. Education is conceived as a systematic effort to maintain a culture. Education is an instrument of cultural change,

Education can impart knowledge, training, and skills as well as inculcate new ideas and attitudes among the young. It is culture in which education germinates and flowers.

Impact of Culture on Education

The following are some of the influences of culture on education-

1. The **aims and ideals** of education are mostly determined by the values and patterns of society.
2. **Curriculum** is conditioned according to the culture of society. It is framed according to the ideals and need of the society to realize the cultural values.
3. **Methods of teaching** and culture are intimately connected. The changing cultural patterns of a society exert powerful influence upon the methods of teaching also. Socialized methods like project, seminar, symposium, discussion are widely used in the teaching learning process because of the influence of culture.
4. **Discipline** is also influenced by the cultural values. The present cultural patterns of thinking and living are directly linked to our concept of discipline. The concept of repressive discipline of ancient and middle ages has been replaced by the modern values of life.
5. **Text-books** - Text books also foster and promote cultural values and ideals.
6. **Teacher** – The teacher who has imbibed the cultural ideals and values of the society only, can achieve his mission successfully. Only such a teacher is able to infuse higher ideals and moral values in children.
7. **School** – The school is regarded as a miniature society. The total activities and programmes of the school are organized according to the cultural ideals and values of society. Hence school is the centre of promoting, moulding reforming and developing the cultural patterns of the society.

Cultural development as a dynamic process, means the enriching of culture, the strengthening of forms of cultural expression and making culture available to everyone by promoting wide-ranging participation and creativity through appropriate means in a spirit of mutual respect and tolerance.

Impact of Education on Culture

Education also influences culture of a country in the following ways -

1. **Preservation of culture-** Education preserves the culture and the distinctiveness of a society in its original form.
2. **Transmission of culture-** The famous sociologist Ottaway, has rightly remarked, "The function of education is to transmit social values and ideals to the young and capable members of the society.
3. **Development of culture-** Education brings the needed and desirable change in the cultural ideals and values for the progress and continued development of the society without which social progress cannot take place.
4. **Continuity of culture-** Culture is life and breadth of a society, without which a society is bound to decay. Education upholds the continuity of culture through its diverse activities and programmes.
5. **Development of personality-** Education aims at developing the personality of a child. It employs diverse cultural patterns of thinking, behaviour and cultural values so that children are physically, mentally, morally, socially and intellectually develop with the development of society to the maximum extent.
6. **Removal of cultural lag-** While material culture develops at a faster speed due to scientific and technological inventions, non - material culture consisting of ideas, values and norms lags behind and create a gulf between the two. Education is the only means by which these gaps can be bridged.

The Place of the School in the Promotion of Culture

In order to be able to better satisfy the demands of contemporary society and to respond to the challenges of the 21st century, the school must open up to its social, economic and cultural environment and became a place for fruitful dialogue, broadening its horizon to cover the cultures of the world, whether regional, national or local. In addition to developing intelligence, and the abilities of observation, critical reasoning and problem-solving, the school should seek a balance between the intellectual and analytical abilities and the emotional, spiritual and moral qualities of learners. The teaching of

the various disciplines should give rise to interdisciplinary and cooperative activities conducive to culture and intercultural education. The school can be effective in transmitting the cultures of all learners. Curriculum planning is essential if the school is to move from a mono cultural approach to a multi-cultural one, that will meet the cultural needs of all students. Implementation of a multi-cultural approach to education can be successful if it is approached carefully, deliberately and sincerely.

Role of Teachers

The improved quality in education requires a new role of a teacher and innovations in the learning process. In a cultural partnership, relation towards colleagues, superiors, public relation officers, parents and mostly towards students, a teacher has to create conditions for a better-quality educational process and at the same time, also influence the quality of informal and non-formal cultural education through partnerships.

The coordination of educational and cultural development can

Cultural Dimensions in the School Curriculum

Modernization of education and cultural renaissance is needed to evolve education for its own culture. India is on the move again with the promise of a new renaissance in the making. The most powerful tool in the process of this renaissance and modernization is education based on moral and spiritual values on the one hand and on the other, science and technology. Education should transmit the outlook of the young towards life in the light of the past in the context of cross –cultural influences and in the light of the future requirements of the individual and the society. Hence the curriculum in schools should include -

1. **History and citizenship education-** History and citizenship education program contributes a great deal to the integration of culture. It fosters student's social literacy, that is, their learning to be implemented by the teacher through participation and cooperation with other institutions of society contributing to cultural and socio-economic development. The body of knowledge shared by a community, without which citizens would be like a foreigner in their own society also enables students to become acquainted with their cultural heritage.

2. **Drama, visual arts, dance and music-** Students who study any of the four arts education subjects taught in schools use many cultural references to increase their knowledge of the subject and enrich their relationship with culture. Visual, musical, choreographic or dramatic work introduce students to a shared heritage and enable them to understand their role in society.
3. **Physical education and health-** The physical education and health program involves learning associated with many cultural references, the evolution of policies, customs, lifestyles, safety, level of practice, rules of ethics, games, social values. These enable students to enrich their thinking and understand the relationships that influence the choices of a constantly changing society that is open to the world.
4. **Moral education-** Moral education program is concerned with the distinctive ways of life, belief, customs, traditions, norms and values shared by members of a social milieu. The moral education program enhances students' ability to perceive, think and express themselves concerning different ways of life, events, practices, values and other cultural references that influence people's actions. Dialogue on these subjects enables students to listen to others. This is an important step towards the transformation of students into agents in their own culture, and it involves not only thinking about what fosters community life in our society, but applying the values and attitudes that make it possible into action.
5. **Scientific and technological culture-** Science and technology are increasingly present at different levels and are imbibed by people of all ages and social backgrounds. Scientific and technological advancements now affect many aspects of our lives. It follows that citizens have to increase their knowledge and competencies in science and technology in order to understand the world better around them and participate in the exercise of democracy in a context in which new laws and major social endeavours are increasingly based on science and technological phenomena.

Thus, the effect of education on culture helps us to know the value of cultures since long past continuing till today. Specially, the cultures of Saraswati Civilization, Harrappan Civilization, the essence of Vedas,

astronomical facts, Vedic calendar, the basis of astrology and the stars, architecture, chemistry, metallurgy, historical facts, the grand epics, advanced war technologies, the army, atomic concepts, medicine, surgery, chariots and their evolution into modern vehicles.

Results

The findings are the following -

Culture has a past, present and future orientation. It is an orientation that can shape every aspect of managerial behaviour and when the orientations are not matched, the cultures are quite spectacular. Past oriented societies are concerned with traditional values and ways of doing things. Tradition is, in fact, highly valued and attempts to mess with that tradition are regarded with a lot of distrust and suspicion. As a result, past orientations tend to be conservative in management and slow to change those things that are tied to the past. They look to the past –real or imaginary – for inspiration, motivation, sustenance, hope, guidance and direction. These cultures tend to direct their efforts and resources and invest them in what already exists.

Conclusion

Therefore, we can say education is mainly a technique while culture is a nature. The kind of society in which we live is the result of an interaction between education and values. Education has mainly been regarded as a means, sometimes for personal enrolment and perfection, and sometimes creative, participant citizenship. Culture on the other hand, is a value. It is good in its own right. Hence it can be said that education is the process of creation, perpetuation and enhancement of cultural values. Right education should maintain a balance between material and non-material culture of a society.

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The Indian Culture and Modern Education

Sudip Ghoshal

ABSTRACT : The term culture is used in a random manner, but it is not very easy to define the term, as we know that Culture is something very dynamic by its nature. But generally, we can say that it is a peculiar combination of faith, custom, religion, value and ethics of a race. The very idea of education is impregnable with idea of culture. As a tree is incomplete without its fruit, branches, colour, and leaves, in the same manner, to understand the culture of a race, we must know the system of their education. India is known for its cultural diversity and variation. History says that the education system in Vedic India was a compound result of so called beliefs, idea, moralities and culture that one finds in the Vedas. In the era of Raja Rammohan Roy, the greatest social reformer in Indian history, the Indian education system was largely based on morality, faith, and values. The education system in India, like the other countries in the world indicate significant twists and changes in order to satisfy the demands of time and change in society. Once again, we must remember that time as well as society is greatly influenced by political systems. India is the home land of Hinduism, Buddhism. More than thousand languages are spoken like Bengali, Marathi, Panjabi. The Sub-Continent not only shows geographical diversity, but at the same time diversity is ensured by custom, faith and value of different races. It is a critical as well as a sensitive task to continue the education system in India and modernise it against such a huge cultural backdrop. In the introduction I have tried to point out the relationship between Indian culture and modern education. The relationship and effect of modern education with Indian culture, the limits of that effect, and the results of that effect are the subjects of my interest in this paper.

Key words : Culture, Education, Modern Education, Influence, Cultural plurality.

Introduction

Culture is a complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, morals, customs, and any other capabilities acquired by man as a member of society. It is the sum total of a given society's way of life moulded and shaped by prevailing circumstances and environment (Brown,1990). This implies that culture is not static but dynamic and it is responsive to external influences, which bring about changes and influences on education. Culture

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includes intellectual and socio-cultural aspects of human being. It also take into account the aesthetic instinct as well as the spiritual impulses of human beings. It has also an appeal for the subconscious and acts as a force for the formation of character.

India is a very vast country with a lot of diversity in her physical and social environment. But within all diversities there is an underlying unity which acts as a cementing force. Diverse culture practices should also be looked at as resources as a diverse culture and cultural plurality are intimately related with cultural development and it is also prevalent in our modern education system. It explains how culture can influence diversities in education.

Education

Education is the most powerful and important instrument invented by mankind. The behaviour of an individual, as a result of interaction with the environment, constitute learning. The history of the world proves that education has been the root cause for any change which has taken place in the social, cultural, spiritual, political, and economic aspect of human life. It is education, which not only transforms the human animal into a rational human being, but also prepares and develops him to survive and adjust with surroundings so as to lead his personal as well as social life successfully. Therefore, we may say that education is anything which the individual acquires through formal or non formal organizations in the form of certificates or training by which his personality is prepared and developed to undertake any sort of task and also adjust himself with the environment in order to fulfil his basic necessities and objectives of life. It is discerned from this statement that education has become one of the basic necessities of human life like food, clothing and shelter. Today, life is education and education is life. Hence no distinction can be made between life and education under any circumstances.

In fact, education is part and parcel of human life consisting of biological, sociological, spiritual and also cultural aspects. The biological aspect of human life can be sustained by food, shelter, and reproduction. This aspect of life is found common in almost all biotic organisms. But the sociological spiritual, and cultural aspect of life are found in human life alone. It is the only aspect which differentiates mankind from all other living organisms on

the earth. Therefore, the sociological cultural and spiritual aspect of human life should be given due consideration. They can be achieved and developed only through the medium of education. John Locke has aptly remarked, planet is developed by the medium of education. Hence, we may conclude that as shelter is essential for biological life, so is education essential for sociological and cultural life. In short man's cultural goal become impossible to achieve in the absence of education.

The meaning of the word "Education" can be understood from its root, and the four Latin words that is Educare, Educere, Educatum and Educo.

Education has been defined by many Indian philosophers, thinkers, and educationists in different ways according to their philosophy of life gained out of their past experiences. Since, education is related to time and space, philosophers and thinkers from Panini to A.P.J. Abdul Kalam have varied their definitions of education -

Panini: "Human education means the training which one gets from nature".

Kautilya: "Education means training for the country and love for nation".

Swami Vivekananda: "Education means the manifestation of the divine perfection, already existing in man".

Tagore: "Education means enabling to find out that ultimate truth which emancipates us from the bondage of the dust and gives us the wealth, not of things but of inner light, not of power but of love , making this truth its own and giving expression to it".

Mahatma Gandhi: "By education, I mean all round drawing out of the best in the child and man - body, mind and spirit".

A.P.J. Abdul Kalam: "Education is one that fosters capacities, such as spirit of enquiry, creating, entrepreneurand moral leadership, which are central to nation building in a democracy. We need education which develops in our children these capacities and makes them autonomous learners who are self-directed and self-controlled".

However, education is the process of gaining those experiences which prepare the individual for personal, political, social, spiritual, cultural, aesthetic, and also economic life.

Culture

The word “culture” has been derived from the Latin word “colere” which means to cultivate or cultivating the mind. It is also said that the term has been taken from the verb “cultivate” and its noun “cultivation”. In this way, culture means to refine or to civilize the individual as well as the society. It includes all that man has acquired from his individual and social life. Actually, human beings are born within a cultural environment that consists of tools, buildings, equipments, machines and other material objects, which man has invented out of his physical environment for his comfort and use. The meanings which are attached to things and their qualities together with the knowledge, institution, social practice, symbolic system, are all the creation of man. Beliefs, customs, attitudes, mutual association are all creation of man. Style of living, dressing, and participation in various social subsystems are the basic tenets of Indian culture. The basic cultural tenets of India, which kept its continuity intact, despite numerous foreign invasions, migrations, and assimilation of various groups, are the foundation pillars of the Indian cultural system. Thus, the principle of “Varna, Karma and Dharma” must be understood from the standpoint of its cultural value. This principle of Varna, Karma, Dharma together provide the whole society with a quality of life and has contributed to its growth. The Doctrine of Varna gave the Indian society a stable, sustainable social structure. In the past, it had assigned duties to different groups according to their natural endowments, instincts and qualities.

Knowledge is supposed to be necessary for giving “Karma”. Its due meaning, direction and value helps one in acquiring skills. Ignorance is considered to be leading to futile effort destroying direction. The doctrine of karma teaches people to accept their surroundings as they are and extract as much happiness as possible. Principle of karma makes inequalities prevalent in a society tolerable.

Principle of “Dharma” defines the duties and inspires people to do their jobs well, as all worldly honour and spiritual happiness are vested in dharma. It assures the people that proper performance of one’s work, whether high or humble, whether of a priest, warrior, shudra or yogi are equally important for the society and are therefore, right, respectable and worth pursuing.

Characteristics of Indian culture: India is an amalgamation of various thought and ideologies. Many things can be included while describing the distinguishing characteristics of Indian culture. It is very vast and varied culture rich in knowledge, devotion, deed, emotion and feeling. It is the broad mindedness of Indian culture that along with continuity, culture has kept on changing, whereas the basic spirit of it has continued. It has kept on discarding whatever became irrelevant in the modern age. In our long history, there have been periods of ups and downs. As a result, movements have grown and reforms brought about. The reform movements in the Vedic religion brought about by Jainism and Buddhism in sixth century B.C. and the religious and social awakening in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries initiated and assimilated all those characteristic features to which it was exposed without any hesitation from various other cultures and moulded them in its own way.

Change and Continuity

Many great cultures had developed in different countries and regions of the world. Many of them have perished or have been replaced by other cultures. However Indian culture has had an enduring character. Despite major changes and upheavals significant threads of continuity can be traced throughout the course of Indian history right up to the present day.

In fact, a remarkable feature of Indian culture is that along with continuity it has kept on changing, whereas the basic spirit of our culture continued. There have been periods of ups and downs. Revolutionary changes have come in Indian thought and practices. Yet, the thread of basic philosophy of Indian culture has continued and still persists. Thus a process of continuity and change has always been a feature of Indian culture. This shows the dynamic character of our culture.

Secular Outlook

The secular character of Indian culture is a result of the intermingling of people belonging to diverse cultural groups over a long period of time. There have been instances of occasional conflicts here and there, but by and large, people have lived together peacefully for centuries. The popular cultural traditions of India are the best examples of such cultural synthesis in which

a large number of people belonging to different religious groups come together. Right to freedom of religion ensures secular nature of our polity. In the Western context, development of secularism meant complete separation of the church and the state. In India, secularism is taken as a more positive concept to cope with the complex social structure in the country with a view to protecting the interests of all, particularly the minorities.

Universalism: The concept of coexistence has not been confined to the geographical and political boundaries of the country only. India has a universal outlook and it has been promoting the message of peace and harmony to the entire world. India has been raising a strong voice against racialism and colonialism. It has protested against the formation of power blocks in the world. In fact, India became one of the founder members of the nonaligned movement. India is committed to the development of other underdeveloped nations. In this manner, India has been discharging her responsibilities as a part of the world fraternity and has been contributing to the progress of the world.

Materialistic and Spiritualistic: India is popularly known to be a land of spirituality particularly to the West. However, Indian history from ancient times to present day shows that the developments of materialistic and non-materialistic culture have been going on alongside. The Harappan civilization was an urban one. It had a systematic town planning where roads cut each other at right angles. They had a profound knowledge of mathematics, weights and measures. They had built their towns in a scientific manner and had an elaborate drainage system. The Harappans had external trade and travelled across the seas to trade with the Sumerians. In Indian philosophical thought even, atheistic thinking developed and grew in India. Jainism and Buddhism were silent about the existence of God. This is the Indian culture consisting of both materialistic and non-materialistic or spiritualistic features.

The Indian Culture and Modern Education:

The main foundation of culture is philosophy. Indian culture is dependent on Indian philosophy. Indian culture and modern Indian education are intimately connected. The cultural pattern of a society depends on the educational pattern. For example, if a society has spiritual pattern of culture,

then its educational procedure will emphasize the achievement of moral and eternal value of life. On the other hand, if cultural pattern of society is materialistic then naturally its educational pattern will be shaped for the attainment of material value which promote pleasures of senses and material comforts. A society devoid of any culture will have no definite educational organization. Hence the culture of a country has a very powerful impact on its educational pattern.

Aim of Education: The cultural idea, value, and pattern of a society determines the meaning and aims of education. Culture helps individuals in refining the physical, intellectual, and moral aspect of their personality. Thinking and pattern of behaviour of the people and their standard and style of living also play an important role in determining educational aims. Modern Indian education focuses on the aesthetic concept of truth, beauty and goodness.

Curriculum Construction: Curriculum is the medium through which the aims of education are achieved. The cultural needs of society such as philosophy of life ethics, values and traditional practices are realised through the curriculum in every system of education. According to Lawton, curriculum is a selection from the culture of society of aspects which are so valuable that they are entrusted to teachers for expert transmission to the young. It is the most appropriate statement for shaping the modern Indian education and its curriculum from culture. In India “Yoga Education” is now included in the curriculum, based upon Indian philosophical thought and culture.

Moreover, co-curricular activities are part of the curriculum based upon cultural values, and celebration of Independence Day, Republic Day and social services build the moral character and enrich the cultural trait. One of the main spirit of our culture is “Unity in Diversity” on the basis of which Rabindranath Tagore established the Biswabharati University.

Language and culture: Language learning is part of cultural education. The national language of India is Hindi and the link language is English. However, there are almost 22 official language and near about 400 other sub-languages are spoken daily in India in its various states and territories. So, Kothari Commission had recommended the “Three Language Formula”

The thrust of educational reformers is purely based on Indian culture. Many organizations were formed all over India in the past, like Brahma Samaj founded by Raja Ram Mohan Roy in Bengal (1828), Prarthana Samaj in Maharashtra (1867). These organizations also influenced education and culture in the 19th century. Even today, reforms in Indian education are a part of cultural synthesis.

Plurality of Culture in India

Cultural pluralism is a pattern or a system in which people of different faiths, religions, castes, creeds can all work and live together, retaining proudly their own faith and identity and sharing the common bond of being, either by birth or choice. Plural culture means the co-existence of several subcultures within a given society on equal terms. In such a pluralistic culture, the validity of various sub-cultures is recognized. The people living in different sub-cultures follow different ways of life, live differently and think according to cultural patterns adopted by them. Thus, cultural pluralism also gives rise to the concept of cultural diversity. Each group falling under a plural sub-culture has a collective opinion and shares a responsibility which is distinct and separate from the desires and intentions of other groups. Members of each group have common beliefs, common rights and common duties towards the group and they make efforts to maintain and integrate it. Rural and urban areas of India present a plurality of cultures. It has tribal, rural and urban populations. It presents a diversity of culture and people in terms of language, religion, caste, food, dress and way of life. All of them constitute sub-cultures of a larger Indian society. This diversity is carried to urban areas as well, but it is not as clearly defined and demarcated and apparent as it is in tribal and rural areas. Urban areas present a complex and variety of sub-cultures.

Conclusion

Culture is a combination of human resources, acquired through intelligence, diligence, judgement and education. The contents of education are collected through culture. If the school is not familiar with the culture of a child, then the child will never learn to adjust with the environment. So, the duty of the teacher is to nurture in the students some cultural values through education. As a pluralistic country, India must maintain her plural culture through diversified and value - based education.

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A Study on Cultural Development and Their Effectiveness in Our Society

Rakhi Maity

ABSTRACT : It is obvious that culture creates a world by providing a context within which individual inter action takes place. Culture is an important determinant of thought and feeling, the impact or effectiveness of culture as a variable depends upon the particular aspect of culture as a variable involved and related more or less to responsive values and norms. Cultural norms are based on cultural values and they develop according to situation. There are rules that define appropriate and inappropriate ways of thinking. Mores are also rules for thinking, feeling and acting as they have moral significance. The folkways and more are the routine ways of doing things developed through trial and error as people struggle to meet the needs of life. In other words, mores are those folkways identified with group-welfare and group-survival. Sociologists use the term norms or cultural norms to include folkways and mores. In fact a norm is standard to guide, and regulate proper and acceptable behaviour within the group. Usually violations of norms prescribed as a must, calls for some kind of punishment. It is culture which influences future developments. For practical purposes culture traits have been use in term of culture complexes. In short, culture is the collective terms for all behaviour patterns, socially acquired and socially transmitted. A recent definition of culture not only talks about the total behaviour of the group conditioned in part by the physical environment both natural and man -made but also primarily by the ideas, attitude , values and habits which have been developed by the group to meet its needs. Culture replaces their various patterns in our community or the nation. Every society has its own culture or social heritage. It has been used with various meaning. The concept of culture was discovered recently as its significant has been realized more than ever. It is the distinctive way of life of a group of people and their complete design for living.

Key words : Variables, cultural values, effectiveness, group-welfare, group-survival.

Introduction

Culture is the social behaviour and norms found in human societies. Culture is considered a central concept in anthropology, encompassing the range of phenomena that are transmitted through social learning in human

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societies. Some aspects of human behaviour, social practices such as culture, expressive forms such as art, music, dance, ritual, religion, and technologies such as tool usage, cooking, shelter, and clothing are said to be cultural universals, found in all human societies. The concept of material culture covers the physical expressions of culture, such as technology, architecture and art, whereas the immaterial aspects of culture such as principles of social organization (including practices of political organization and social institutions), mythology, philosophy, literature (both written and oral), and science comprise the intangible cultural heritage of a society.

In the humanities, one sense of culture as an attribute of the individual has been the degree to which they have cultivated a particular level of sophistication in the arts, sciences, education, or manners. The level of cultural sophistication has also sometimes been seen to distinguish civilizations from less complex societies. Such hierarchical perspectives on culture are also found in class-based distinctions between a high culture of the social elite and a low culture, popular culture, or folk culture of the lower classes, distinguished by the stratified access to cultural capital. In common parlance, culture is often used to refer specifically to the symbolic markers used by ethnic groups to distinguish themselves visibly from each other such as body modification, clothing or jewellery. Mass culture refers to the mass-produced and mass mediated forms of consumer culture that emerged in the 20th century. Some schools of philosophy, such as Marxism and critical theory, have argued that culture is often used politically as a tool of the elites to manipulate the lower classes and create a false consciousness, and such perspectives are common in the discipline of cultural studies. In the wider social sciences, the theoretical perspective of cultural materialism holds that human symbolic culture arises from the material conditions of human life, as humans create the conditions for physical survival, and that the basis of culture is found in evolved biological dispositions.

When used as a count noun, a “culture” is the set of customs, traditions, and values of a society or community, such as an ethnic group or nation. Culture is the set of knowledge acquired over time. In this sense, multiculturalism, values, the peaceful coexistence and mutual respect between different cultures inhabiting the same planet. Sometimes “culture” is also used to describe specific practices within a subgroup of a society, a

subculture (e.g. “bro culture”), or a counterculture. Within cultural anthropology, the ideology and analytical stance of cultural relativism holds that cultures cannot easily be objectively ranked or evaluated because any evaluation is necessarily situated within the value system of a given culture. Yet within philosophy, this stance of cultural relativism is undermined and made inapplicable since such value judgment is itself a product of a given culture.

Objectives or Purpose

The purpose of culture is to give to the society by conscious process of learning and experience, patterns of behaviour which are found of learning and experience, patterns of behaviour which are found useful for a harmonious existence and smooth functioning in all occupation and interaction and thereby ensure individual and group survival and persuasion. It is the integrated social, biological, ethnic, modes of behaviour of a group or a society. It is implied that even the possession of ideas, attitudes, values etc form culture.

Main Section

Culture and education cannot be divorced from each other. They are interdependent. The cultural patterns of a society guide its educational patterns. As for example, if a society has a spiritual pattern of culture, then its educational procedures will emphasize the achievement of moral and eternal values of life. On the other hand if the culture of a society is materialistic, then its educational pattern will be shaped for the attainment of material values which promotes pleasures of senses and material comforts. A society devoid of any culture will have no definite educational organization. Hence, the culture of a country has a very powerful impact on its educational patterns. Education as a part of culture has the twin functions of conservation and modification or renewal of culture. It is the culture in which education germinates and flourishes and exerts a nourishing influence. Human being receives from society the gifts of family life, community life, education, vocation, legal rights, safety and protection in the same way he/she inherits from the culture the gift of cultural heritage. The present chapter discusses the relationship between culture and education.

By going through the text you will be able to:

- Understand the relationship between culture and education.

- Clarify the concept and meaning of culture
- Explain the role of school in preserving and transmitting culture.

Kinds of Culture

According to the subjects there are different kinds of culture:

- Individual culture
- Communal culture
- National culture
- World culture

Each individual has some personal traits and qualities which guide the habits, thinking and behaviour of the person. These personal likes, dislikes, interests, modes of thinking and patterns of social behaviour constitute his personal culture. Similarly, different communities have their different customs, traditions, beliefs and styles of living which is known as community culture. Likewise each nation has some distinct patterns of ideals, values, modes of thoughts and behaviour. Such national traits are known as national culture. Further with the rise in the means of transport and communication the whole world has shrunk into a small unit. The whole world is now supposed to be having common values of life such as cooperation, empathy, sympathy, social services, social awakening and social sensitiveness which is termed as world culture.

According to contents there are two types of culture in every society:

- Material culture
- Non material culture

Material culture: It includes all those man made things and objects which human society has created for its physical welfare. As for example clothes, utensils, TV, radio, various machines

Non material culture: It includes those ideals, attitudes and values which modify the behaviour of an individual. Language, literature, art, music, religion, customs, traditions etc are some of the example of non material culture.

Characteristics of culture

Acquired traits: Culture is sum total of acquired traits. A new born baby acquires traits in the process of growing up. As the baby grows older he/she acquires different ideals, attitudes and values by imitation and social contacts. These experiences contribute to the formation of his personal culture.

Distinct entity: Different societies of the world have different cultural patterns establishing the different identities of different nations.

Transmission: Cultural traits and patterns are transmitted from generation to generation. Each generation is free to modify the cultural heritage and transmit it to the next generation. Cultural patterns are powerfully conditioned and influenced by the trends which appear from time to time according to different circumstances and conditions. The transmission is a continuous process.

Utility: A culture is good if it has utility to the individual and to the society. If it does not fulfil this purpose then it decays and dies out in the long run. Cultural fanaticism promotes conflicts and chaos. Therefore, one should see and adopt cultural beauties and excellencies of all the culture that exist in the world. It will promote the world culture on the one hand where as on the other cultural integration will take place.

Dynamism: Culture is not static but is dynamic. It changes and grows with the change of time. Due to rapid rise in transport and means of communication one culture adopts another culture and becomes composite culture. One can notice that our culture has travelled a long way and changed from its previous times in numerous ways. Our thinking patterns, values, beliefs, behaviour ideals etc all has changed. The different cultures of the world are interacting among themselves and syntheses of culture is taking place.

Cultural Growth and Development

The growth and development of culture of a society is dependent on the different factors which govern perception and learning and the development of behaviour .Different functions and institutions in societies are need based. In the course of time they give rise to cultural pattern. In other words, the needs determine many acts and functions and what has been going on is

followed from generation to generation or adopted by one society from another. Culture is, therefore, integrated with the socio-economic conditions and also the biological needs. It is not inherited or transmitted biologically. It is through socialization that the culture grows and develops from time to time in society. It passes on from generation to generation through the continuous process of socialization. Since people can give up certain things or practices after finding them useful or after finding better ways of doing things, culture is constantly undergoing a change. Many practices keep on changing with time. Culture is therefore a dynamic ongoing process. Since culture is a complete whole of all ways of life (knowledge, attitude, value, behaviour etc.) it helps to bind the individuals in society together. When new things happen in a society, there is growth and development of culture.

Thus culture is the progressive growth into humanization and liberalization of the human spirit. It aims at enhancing the capacity of man from joyful pursuit of some fundamental ideas.

Cultural development: We encourage the use of the term *cultural development*, rather than *arts* or the commonly used *arts and culture* because we argue that the development of culture is the *purpose* of the work, with *arts* being the *activity*. Taking an outcome focus, as we are recommending, rather than an activity focus, as many teams are used to doing, we are best identifying our work with the *outcome* we are aiming for (cultural development) rather than the *activity* we are undertaking to get there (*arts*). Therefore, departments and their staff would be better entitled *Cultural Development* teams, managers and officers.

Thus, we define *cultural development* as *the process of enabling cultural activities, including the arts, towards the realisation of a desired future, particularly of a culturally rich and vibrant community*.

We distinguish this area of work from that undertaken by council staff known as Multicultural or Diversity officers, also sometimes known as Cultural Development Officers. Those staff members are usually working to ensure that people from CALD (culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds) have equal access to council, and other, services. Thus, their work has outcomes that are aligned better with the social domain (such as *equality of access for all people in the community* and *bridging social capital- positive connection between unlike others*), than the cultural, which

is more about how that diversity is expressed. Sometimes the two areas of work overlap, in activities such as community festivals, where the desired outcome is the opportunity for people of diverse cultural backgrounds to express their own culture. Thus a *social* outcome is reached in the equal opportunity for those who might not otherwise have it, and the *cultural* outcome is reached in the expression of that group's own culture

Cultural development planning: We use the term *cultural development planning* rather than *cultural planning*, because culture exists, with or without local government's intervention. So we are not seeking to *plan culture*, but rather to plan the *development of culture*, through the activities of local government.

Therefore, we might say that cultural development planning is a strategic process of:

- *planning of cultural activities to assist the realisation of a desired future*
- *planning for a desired future of a culturally and rich vibrant community.*

Cultural development plan: Cultural development plan is the strategic document that guides the work of council staff whose job it is to promote and support the cultural richness and vibrancy of the LGA. These documents are currently known by many other names, including Arts Policy, Arts Plan, Arts and Culture Strategy, etc. We recommend the term Cultural Development Plan, with its implication that it is a plan for local government staff's contribution to development of the culture of a particular community.

Planning terms used in the Framework

We offer definitions here to encourage consistency across the field, while being aware of different practices across councils. There are many terms used in strategic planning for similar activities, some being used interchangeably within the same system, and others meaning the opposite in different contexts. For example, in council plans, what we identify here as *goals* are also called mission, strategic objectives, priorities, themes, key principles, while what we identify here as *objectives* are also called focus, aims, themes, etc. *Outcome* and *impact* can both mean either short or long term change depending on who is using the term.

The following list notes terms as we have defined them, each with a distinct meaning. We encourage planners to use the definitions provided here to be consistent with other cultural development planners in local government, while still working with the content of their own Council Plan. More detail about each of these terms is available on specific pages.

Values: we define values in this context as *what residents care about for their lives and desired future that their local government will reflect in its policies.*

Goal: In this Framework, we define a goal as *the result or achievement that effort is directed towards; an intention for the desired future of residents in an LGA.* This is a long term proposition that is always aspirational and may never be fully achieved. For example, we may have a goal of ‘a culturally rich and vibrant community’. While we may make progress towards this goal, we are likely never to get to a point where we believe we have reached the maximum ‘cultural richness and vibrancy’.

Objectives: In this Framework we define an objective as the *intended outcome: a specific result that a person or system aims to achieve within a timeframe and available resources;* in this case, the specific result the council seeks to achieve towards each of its goals. Thus, because it is specific and timely, an objective can be reached.

Outcomes: we define outcomes as *the consequences directly attributable, at least in part, to the program or project and are usually measured at, or shortly after, completion.* Ideally these match objectives (thus they are intended outcomes), i.e. we achieve what we set out to achieve, but we cannot be sure that we will do so when we start.

Theory of change: *the reason we do what we do: what we intend to be achieved as a result of doing it, and how we would know.*

Activity (outputs): *the program or project that we undertake in order to achieve the desired objective or intended outcome.*

Education and Culture

Education as a part of culture has the twin functions of conservation and modification or renewal of the culture. Education is conceived as a systematic effort to maintain a culture. “In its technical sense education is the process

by which society, through schools, colleges, universities and other institutions, deliberately transmit its cultural heritage, its accumulated knowledge, values and skills from one generation to another." Education is an instrument of cultural change. Education can impart knowledge, training and skills as well as inculcate new ideas and attitudes among the young. It is culture in which education germinates and flowers. It is the culture also upon which education exerts, in turn, a nourishing influence. The intimate relationship between culture and education is evident from the fact the one of the major aim of education is to impart to the child cultural heritage and social heritage. Every individual is born into a particular culture which provides him with definite patterns of behaviour and values which guide his/her conduct in different walks of life. Thus, culture plays an important role in the life of a person. To understand the nature of its importance, it will be easy to understand how education of various elements of culture can help a person. It can be seen in the following manner:

Adaptation to the natural environment: Everywhere man lives in a definite natural environment to which they adapt themselves. Without adaptation he/she cannot survive. All the inventions and experiments that he/she make in the process of this adaptation form an important part of the culture. Differences in the natural environment of different communities pave the way for differences in their cultures. In all the tribes of India, the members of the community behave in a particular way which is adapted by the coming generations of the particular community or tribe. It is this mode of behaviour which makes up culture.

Adaptation to the social environment: Culture includes customs, traditions, beliefs etc. All of these help the individual to adapt to his social environment. It must be kept in mind that all these elements undergo gradual changes as the social environment changes. Culture determines the patterns of social control, through which the individual is subjected to remain attached to that group. Hence, the advantage in communicating the culture of the group to the child through education is that he/she is thereby acquainted with the traditions, customs, values and patterns of conduct prevailing in his group. This knowledge enables him to adapt to social environment and thus achieve his socialization.

Development of personality: The personality of the individual is

manifested through his pattern of behaviour. The behaviour is always influenced by the culture of his/her group. Culture influences the physical, mental, moral, social, aesthetic and emotional aspects of individual. Thus, the behaviour of the individual is greatly influenced by the culture.

Socialization as a process of acculturation: Many cultural anthropologists regard socialization as a process of acculturation or the culture of a group. In the words of Martin and Stendlar, "Culture refers to the total way of life of a people that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs and any other capabilities and habits, acquired by man as a member of society." This means that for the adoption of a culture one must participate in the activities of the society. One must mix up with others to learn the habits etc, of the society to which he belongs. In other words to socialize oneself one must learn the culture of the society.

J.S. Brubacher has observed, "We cannot teach the coming generation to be good simply by teaching them to be wise. They must have plenty of opportunity to habituate themselves to moral ideals. Instead of learning lessons in school apart from life, school must incorporate into itself a social context of shops, laboratories, and play grounds. Moral learning in school and college must be continuous with moral training outside through field trips, community activities and the like. If schools fulfill this larger function, we may be assured that anything learned in an enterprise having an aim and in cooperation with others will be inescapable moral."

Society and Need for Schooling: Society is very keen that its young members should not lapse into barbarity and ignorance. Whatever, it has attained in social, cultural, religious and other fields it feels its bounden duty to transmit it to the next generation. As the society has become more complex and knowledge is piling up it feels the need for formal education and thus society starts schools to educate its members. The purpose is two fold:

- To transmit cultural heritage.
- To improve the society.

Transmission of culture heritage: To perpetuate present progress we should transmit the cultural heritage. Only physical reproduction is not sufficient; we should equip the new generation with our attainments in all fields of life. Here we should exploit the innate tendencies, needs and

interests of the children for the purpose of education. Our education should also be in consonance with the mental 'make-up' of the students.

Improvement of the Society: Without improvement the society will stagnate. Education is not only to reflect the social conditions but also to improve them. With the advancement of science and technology our ways of life are also undergoing tremendous change. If we would not cope with the present advancement there would be 'cultural lag'. We must adjust ourselves with the fast changing world. So education must adapt itself to the changing conditions. But as it always happens, some new things are not very desirable. So we shall have to guard ourselves against the tendency of the schools to import everything new in the society. If old and out-dated things are to be discarded we shall have to be vigilant against blind and slavish imitation of the new developments. It is through education that we can prepare students to evaluate the past and understand the present and to be prepared for future. In short the students should be taught to get inspiration from the inspiring past, to live in the dynamic present and to face the challenging future.

Education is obviously reflection of the social, cultural and political conditions prevailing outside. It reflects the society but it has within it the seeds of dynamics of change and thus can keep pace with the fast changing world. The schools thus are not blind followers of the dictates of the society but when it degenerates they can improve it and enthuse it with new idea of thought and new horizons of desirable ideals.

Role of the School: The school has to give up its ivory tower isolation. It must be closely linked with the society. "The starting point of educational reform must be the re-linking of the school to life and restoring the intimate relationship between them which has broken down with the development of the formal tradition of education," recommends the Secondary Education Commission.

Mr. Branford writes "The school should be an idealized epitome or model of the world, not merely the world of ordinary affairs, but the whole of humanity, body and soul, past present and future."

T.M. Greene states, "The good school programme stems from community needs as an integral part of the life of the people. It is made by, for, and of those it would serve."

In the words Kandel “The schools exist to accelerate the impact of the essential aspects of culture which prevails in the society.”

Impact of culture on educational institutions:

The aims and ideals of the educational institutions are influenced by the values and patterns of the society.

Curriculum: The curriculum is prepared according to the culture of society. The system of education tries to realize the cultural needs of society through curriculum which conditions all educational activities and programmes.

Methods of teaching: Culture and methods of teaching are intimately connected. The changing cultural patterns of a society exert its influence upon the methods of teaching. Previously teaching was teacher centered where teacher used to give knowledge to the child. Now it has become student centered. The teacher considers the needs, interests, aptitude, attitude, inclinations, behaviour etc before teaching. In this way education is a method of preparing child for the future for effective living. In short we can say that cultural and social conditions generate the methods and techniques of teaching in a powerful manner.

Discipline: Cultural values influence the concept of discipline. The present cultural patterns of thinking and living are directly linked to our concept of discipline where the democratic values are accepted all over the world.

Text Books: Curriculum is contained in the textbooks. Textbooks are written according to the formulated or determined curriculum. Only those textbooks are welcomed which foster and promote cultural values and ideals.

Teacher: Each individual teacher is imbued with the cultural values and ideals of the society of which he/she happens to be an integral member. Only such teacher achieves his/her missions successfully. They infuse higher ideals and moral values in children.

School: A school is a miniature of a society. The total activities and programmes of a school are organized according to the cultural ideals and values of the society which establishes and organizes the school. Hence, school is the centre of promoting, moulding, reforming, and developing the cultural pattern of the society.

Impact of education on culture

Just as the culture influences education, in the same way education also influences culture of a country. It can be seen in the following manner:

Preservation of culture: Every country has a distinct culture of its own. Hence, it tries to preserve its culture and its distinctiveness in its original form. Education is the only means through which this task can be accomplished. Thus, education preserves the culture of a society.

Transmission of culture: The process of preservation includes the process of transmission from one generation to another. The famous sociologist Ottaway has rightly remarked '*The function of education is to transmit social values and ideals to the young and capable members of the society.*'

Development of culture: The function of education is to bring the needed and desirable change in the cultural ideals and values for the progress and continued development of the society without which social progress cannot take place. Education helps to transmit culture to an individual, modifies cultural processes by research and deeper investigations into all areas of human requirements.

Continuity of culture: Culture is a breadth of life of a society. Without which a society is bound to decay. Education upholds the continuity of culture through its diverse activities and programmes. A society establishes schools to preserve and transmit its culture to the coming generations. Children should be motivated to learn more and more from cultural interaction among various cultures. Thus cultural integration and assimilation will enrich the composite culture of a society.

Development of personality: Education aims at developing the personality of a child. It employs diverse cultural patterns of thinking, behaviour and cultural values so that children are physically, mentally, morally, socially and intellectually developed with the development of society to the maximum extent.

Removal of cultural lag: While material cultural develop at a faster speed due to scientific and technological inventions non material culture consisting of ideas, values and norms lags behind and create a gulf between the two. Education is the only means by which these gaps can be bridged.

Thus, education and culture are interdependent and complementary to

each other. However the existing system of education in India has not evolved from its own culture. There is a need that education should be related to our own culture. Education system is not related to Cultural Heritage. It has been rightly said. "The existing system of education is largely based on the ideals of spreading western science and literature and way of life among a small minority of the population and of training persons for services under the government. It is still academic and book-cantered and fails to promote social, cultural, economic or political development on proper lines." A foreign system of education was introduced in India without taking into account the cultural heritage of India. It was cut off from Indian cultural traditions and was alien to masses.

Reorganization of education has remained a challenging task right from the beginning after independence. K.G. Saiyidain an eminent educationist observed, "We are to-day at one of the great cross roads of our history when the pattern, both of our culture and our social order is being refashioned. While it is true that education should always be essentially a forward-looking activity, in normal times when changes take place rather slowly and decorously, its function is mainly conservation— adjusting the child to relatively stable environment. But in periods of crisis like the present, when the older is dying out and the new one is not quite born, when the older forms of culture have lost their grip on the loyalty, at least, of the young and the new "shape of things" is far from being clear, education has a special difficult and critical role to play."

Modernization of education and cultural renaissance is needed to evolve education from its own culture. India is on the move again with the promise of a new renaissance in the making. The most powerful tool in the process of this renaissance and modernization is education based on moral and spiritual values on the one hand and on the other, on science and technology. In this context we cannot do better than to quote Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, *"Can we combine the progress of science and technology with the progress of the mind and spirit also?"* We cannot be untrue to science because that represents the basic fact of life today. Still less can we be untrue to those essential principles for which India has stood in the past throughout the ages. Let us then pursue our path to industrial progress with all our strength and vigour and at the same time, remember that material riches without toleration and compassion and wisdom may well turn to dust and ashes.

Education should transmit the culture to the new generation and transform the outlook of the young towards life in the light of the past; in the context of cross-cultural influences and in the light of the future requirements of the individual and the society.

Conclusion

Education is mainly a technique while culture is a value. The kind of society in which we live is the result of an interaction between education and values. Education has mainly been regarded as a means, sometimes for personal enablement and perfection and sometimes creative participant citizenship. Culture, on the other hand, is a value. It is good in its own right. Hence, it can be said that education is the process of creation, perpetuation and enhancement of cultural values. While education is a technique and means for culture, it is not the whole means to culture. That part of education whose main aim is the utilitarian pursuit of a vocation cannot be regarded as a part of culture. This may be regarded as material culture. Culture is more concerned with non-material aspects. Right education should maintain a balance between material and non-material culture of a society.

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Traditional Creativity and Women's Empowerment: Two Illustrations from tribal areas

Dr. Debashis Debnath

01. Introduction:

1.1 *Meanings of creativity and innovation:*

Creativity, as the name implies is the art of turning new and imaginative ideas into reality. Basically, creativity is the production of anything, that could be an idea, a tangible product, or a performance. It develops capacity or skill through a process in order to continuously improve ideas and find unique solution to problems. Creative people as explained by Yvonne (2012) are curious, self-confident, optimistic, flexible, visionary and have a sense of humour. Creativity is the front end of a process that ideally will result in innovation, which is defined as the ability to make change or alteration in anything established. Innovation is the implementation of a new or significantly improved products, service or process that creates value for business, government or society. It is a deliberate, specific change which is thought to be more efficacious in accomplishing the goals of a system.

Creativity has three inter-dependent disciplines, each having a different way of thinking:

1. Art emphasises ideas, feelings, and visual qualities.
2. Craft emphasises the right use of tools and materials. It is an activity involving skill in making things by hand. In very popular terms these are Handicraft, artisanal handicraft or handmade, i.e. "Items made by hand, often with the use of simple tools, and are generally artistic and/or traditional in nature. They are also objects of utility and objects of decoration."

3. Design emphasises planning, problem-solving and completion, using drawing as a means of thinking

There are various forms of arts and crafts:

1. Visual arts including drawing, Painting, Ceramics, photography, Architecture, Sculpture, Conceptual art etc.
2. Literary arts including myths, ballad, epic, legend etc.
3. Performing arts including theatre and dance, etc.

They are of three types:

1. Consumer goods. Artisan prepare such utilitarian goods for self-consumption or foreexchange such baskets for keeping domestic articles, smoking pipes, footwear, huntingarrows, combs, storing, wooden and stone plates for use, textile items like shawls, coats, jackets,
2. Processing industries such as minor forest products for self-consumption and for exchange at weekly hatt on barter age system or sell them for money to purchase other items for self-consumption
3. Decorative items include jewellery, and ornaments, earrings, ankle bells, necklaces, head gears, head dresses, In addition other decorative items such as wall paintings, deities either wood or stone, artefacts. These handicrafts for decoration are for self-use or sell /exchange them in the weekly market for money

O2. Objectives of the paper

1. To discuss the significance of Arts and Crafts in Traditional Creativity.
2. To assess the Women's Education and role of arts and crafts in it.
3. To explore the traditional arts and crafts in present day livelihoods generation.
4. To discuss the women empowerment and Sustainable development in the creative world.

03. Education in Arts and Indian Women Artists:

Swami Vivekananda told that "Education is the manifestation of perfection, which is already in man". So education plays an important role in the development of a nation whether it is social or economic growth. A nation can be developed in the real sense of the term, when its entire population is

educated. Women section is important stakeholder in development of a country. So women's education is important for the development of each house as well as for the development of the nation. In India now-a-days you will see that women are working together with men in every field. This is happening because of the women education. Over the years, India's literacy rate has improved manifold from 12% in 1947 to 74.4% in 2011. Even though, the literacy rate is still below the average of 84% around the world. As per 2011 census report, out of 77,84,54,120 individuals who are considered literate in India, 44,42,03,762 of them are male and 33,42,50,358 are female. If you look at the percentage of educated people, there is a huge gap between male (82.14%, in 2011) and female (65.46%, in 2011) literacy rates in India. Low women literacy rate has a huge negative impact on the overall growth and development of the society – where women are majorly responsible for child care and development. As per research results, it is proved that children who are taken care by educated mom are well-nourished and have all-rounded development. Though slow, in the last decade (2001-2011) the gender gap is seen to be narrowing rapidly – women literacy rate has been growing at 11.8% and men at 6.9% (Census of India 2011). With 65.46% female literacy rate as per the 2011 census, women's education in India is still a point in question. It is still below the world average of 79.7%. India is ranked 105 amongst 128 countries in its Education for All Development Index. There is much work to be done to enhance education in India; particular attention is warranted to women's access to education. An attempt has to be made to remove the social, psychological and structural barriers, for the participation of the majority of women in education. Even though the Government and various voluntary organisations are engaged in several attempts to sensitise the local population to the need for women education, unless parents of the girl child see value and merit in sending the girl child to school, they will resist doing so and instead prefer to use her help in household chores or agricultural activities. It is absolutely vital that we incorporate the belief among women that they must stand on their two feet and the only feasible way to achieve this is through education and its proper utilisation. One way to make the families more interested is by making the school come to them rather than sending their girls to school far away from home by implementing more mobile schools across rural India.

We assume that schooling has become a norm now and imagine that every child by the age of 3 starts some form of schooling. But in many rural areas, if the child is a girl then there are many hindrances to her access to education in India. Women's education in India is still perceived as an unnecessary indulgence in many parts. While Kerala tops the charts with 92.07% female literacy (and 94.00% overall literacy), Bihar scores much lesser with 51.50% of female literacy (and 61.80% overall literacy).

When the parents cannot afford education for their kids, the son is always given preference over the daughter, if at all they try and send them to school. The daughter stays at home and cooks, cleans, and helps her parents in doing the chores, or she might even be employed as a helper somewhere, which is child labour and illegal as per law.

If the daughter wants to go for higher studies it becomes a matter of discussion among parents, relatives, neighbours, (along with long lost aunts) on if there is a need for the same! If the son wants to go for higher education, then it is seen as an achievement and opportunity for the boy to settle well and would be lauded among the same set of people.

It is a well-known fact that most Indian families spend more on their daughter's wedding when compared to her education. And the daughters-in-law are mostly expected to take care of the family rather than continuing their studies or having a steady career. Because of this reason, women are said to have jobs and not careers!

We live in a society where the upbringing of children still depends largely on the mother. What good are we going to pass on to the next generation if that mother is illiterate. The chances are that her own daughter might become an illiterate mother one day, thus continuing the vicious cycle. So the crux of the points come out as follows:

1. Male-children are preferred in selecting performing arts, due to cultural constraint, security.
2. In the early life, in middle and upper middle class interests are created in the minds for music and dance, but the interests are not being sustained in the later age.
3. The patriarchal dominance is prominent in the classical culture.
4. Clear biasness is occurred in awarding in the performing arts.

04. Arts and Handicrafts in traditional Livelihood:

India's industrialization and participation in the modern world economy is decades old. Nevertheless, millions of Indians still depend on indigenous modes of production, traditional skills and techniques to make a living based on handmade products. These craftspeople and artisans are the backbone of the non-farming rural economy.

Despite some instances of well-known design houses using handmade products and successful crafts-based businesses such as FabIndia and Anokhi, the majority of craft production remains unorganized and informal with its full market potential untapped, especially by the artisan, who more often than not struggles for sustenance. Propelled by loss of markets, declining skills and difficulty catering to new markets, a large number of artisans have moved to urban centers in search of low, unskilled employment in industry.

Ancient Indian folk painting and art styles have been passed down from generation to generation, and are still practised in different parts of the country. Here's a look at what makes 10 of these folk art forms unique passed down from one generation to another, Indian folk art is still alive in many parts of the country. Being culturally diverse and distinct, a variety of art forms have evolved over the years; some untouched by modernisation, some adapting to new paint colours and materials. Each depict religious epics or Gods and Goddesses mostly, but they're all unique, admirable and inimitable in their own right. In the days of yore, they were made with natural dyes and colours made of soil, mud, leaves and charcoal, on canvas or cloth – giving it a sense of antiquity, vintage nostalgia. Here's a look at 10 folk painting forms that are still practiced in select parts of the country. These are Madhubani, Miniature paintings, Phad, Warli, Gond, Kalamkari, Tanjore and so on.

One of the biggest issues in India is that our markets do not recognize the true value of craft. When this value is recognized, and people become willing to pay a higher price for craft-based products, it would translate into higher wages for weavers and craftspeople and act as a boost to millions of rural-based livelihood opportunities associated with this sector. The economics however is not as simple, as finally it comes down to the conflict between pricing and sales. If you out-price goods, you sell only a limited number. If you don't give craftspeople enough work, it kills the craft.

Sustainable livelihoods will ultimately depend on finding a fine balance between the two. For example: Fabindia follows an inclusive model of capitalism, placing craft at the center of the quest for profitability and growth.

Attempts have been made in this paper that these artisan products have also become marketable and a good economic benefits derived to the tribal women developing marketing channels and selling the products with the help of different stakeholders and good outcomes are shown at the state and National levels. The tribal handicrafts are specialized skills which are passed on from one generation to another and these handicrafts are means of livelihood of the artisans. However, in absence of any organized activity in this sector and the products not being adequately remunerative, there is a possible likelihood of the artisans taking up alternate livelihood options (which may involve migration as well). In such a case this age-old activity will die its own death. At this stage it is very imperative to understand the problems faced by this sector and suggest the strategies for development of tribal handicraft based on which certain policy level interventions need to be taken by the government to sustain the traditional tribal handicrafts. Socio Economic and Educational Development Society (SEEDS), entrusted by Planning Commission to carry out research study on the "Status Study of Tribal Handicrafts- An Option for Livelihood of Tribal Community in the States of Rajasthan, Uttaranchal, Chhattisgarh and Arunachal Pradesh".

Women's role in tribal livelihoods are very much significant but in supporting their traditional economy, they adopt several secondary non-farming occupations. Of then handicrafts are very much important. In utilization of their forest resources they produce various forest products as the outcome of their indigenous knowledge or traditional culture. These are leaf-plates, mats or brooms, ropes etc. in non-timber forest management. Later in the participatory or Joint Forest Management making these handicrafts played an important role in livelihoods development. Once the women who were head loaders, became involved in the small and micro-enterprises through self-help group formations and subsequent skill or capacity building measures. These new livelihood options helped in poverty reduction in the fringe forest villages. Thus new forest products such as dona-pattal (leaf-plates), baskets, bags, wooden crafts, bamboo crafts, carpets, dry flowers, all from natural resources and ornaments, brooms, tribal jewellery, tribal weaves, embroidery, tribal paintings, all form non-natural resources.

Every year a national fair of tribal artisans known as “Aadishilp” is being organized by Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India Ltd. (TRIFED) at Dilli Haat in New Delhi. Unique and exquisite tribal artefacts of more than 90 tribal artisans from all over the country are being exhibited in this Exhibition. Hand crafted items, handloom products, and lot more is being exhibited at the venue. Design and quality inputs are given to the artisans wherever required for overall improvement and better marketing prospects of their products. and so on

05. Women’s Empowerment and Sustainable Livelihood:

One of the things that prevent so many women from transiting from poverty and raising their standard of living through creativity is their lack of access to quality functional education. Obviously, innovation and creativity is very vital as the basic tips and skills through the entrepreneurship activities that pave way for self-reliant. Empowerment no doubt leads to creativity. When women are empowered through functional education and skills acquisition in small and medium enterprises, they can contribute to their well-being and that of their family and the development of the society in general. Empowerment is a process or a way of improving the quality of lives of women at the same time meeting their basic needs. It is a means of helping or encouraging them to have the means of finding their own solutions especially through economic empowerment. Women empowerment as defined by Mbachu and Diepiribo (2013) means the process by which women collectively come to recognize and address the gender issues which stand in the way of their advancement. Women empowerment entails throwing off the habits of female subordination and patriarchal message which were unconsciously internalized during schooling. Women empowerment as explained by Duyilemi (2006) entails identifying gender inequalities and discrimination which were previously accepted as “natural” or “normal” and learning how to take action to end gender Discrimination. Maduewesi and Maduewesi (2006), explain that empowering women ensures the development of a sustainable and equitable society. No society can reach this goal without taking both women’s productive and reproductive roles into account. Both aimed to ensure that policies and programmes at all levels incorporate a gender perspective and address women’s lives and their needs. Obviously, Nigerian women can be empowered through functional education programmes, skills acquisition or both.

A holistic education is the need of the hour where women think beyond just earning degrees or continue working but are not encouraged to think about money. We need to strive continuously to pursue those matters which are considered only as man’s work to achieve comprehensive women education in India.

Govt. of India has initiated a mission oriented policy framework for skill development to meet the challenge of skilling at scale with speed and standard (quality) and sustainability. One of the biggest challenges of skill development in our country is that 93% of the workforce is in informal/unorganized sector. Consequently, it is difficult to map existing skills in the unorganized sector and gauge the skilling requirement in the sector. On the other hand, the rate of job growth in informal sector is estimated to be twice that in formal sector. This is utmost necessary to promote the traditional knowledge and skills to develop small-scale entrepreneurship.

In this context two cases have been developed, which are given below:

Case 1: **Convergence of indigenous knowledge and government schemes in Sericulture activities in Betul district of Madhya Pradesh**

Guvasen forest village is situated at a distance of about 40 km from Betul in Chicoli range under West Betul forest division of Madhya Pradesh. The village is situated near the main road. The village is dominated by the Korkus. There are about 300- 400HH of Korkus and 25 HH of Yadavs and about 10-12 HH of Gonds. Table 1 gives a profile of the village

Table 1. Profile of Guvasen Village

Total	Male	Female	Sex ration		
population	399 49.6 %	405 50.3%	0.98		
Occupation	Agriculture	Agri-Labour	Non-agri-Labour	Forest collection	
	78 60%	32 24.62%	22 16.9%	40 30.8%	
Land holding	Landless	Marginal	Small	Medium	Big
	13 10%	78 60%	39 30%	Nil Nil	Nil Nil
Education	Lit	Primary	Secondary	Grad	PG
	326 40.5%	260.82 32.4%	228.2 28.3%	Nil Nil	

In the year 2012 the forest department under the UNDP-GEF project initiated an income generating activity for the women JFMC members of the village. A SHG of 20 women were formed for the activity of extracting threads from the silk cocoons. Ten machines were purchased by the JFMC fund of Guvasen FPC which was formed in 1996. These women were provided with training by the sericulture department. The sericulture department gives cocoons to the women members and purchases the silk thread from them. The payment is based on the grades of thread extracted. The women members involved in this activity earn monthly income of Rs 4000-6000. This activity was done in collaboration with the sericulture department of Madhya Pradesh Govt.. The department of sericulture provides cocoons to the women. In one day women weave about 100-200gm of cocoons.

This activity is undertaken in the room provided by the forest department at the free of cost. The Department has provided them the infrastructure and the Department of sericulture provides them trainings to undertake this activity.



Figure 1: Women members busy in extracting threads from cocoons

The women who are involved in this activity are very happy and satisfied with the work and the income earned. This has greatly reduced their

dependency on forest resources and the migration has also declined considerably. Women members have become more confident and feel more secured and independent. About 70% of the women were confident that they had the ability to demonstrate their skill to other women. Women were very proud of their skills and ready to demonstrate it to others. Women members come as far as Bhopal to sell their products in Van melas.

Case 2: An innovative income generating activity of Paper mesh craft making in Bamnai, ObedullahGaunge Forest Division of Raisen district in Madhya Pradesh

Bamnna forest village is about 30-35 km from Obdullaganj Forest Division under Dahod range in Raisen district. This village is situated near the Bhopal –Indore main Road. The village is a multi-ethnic village of Gond, Korkus and Basods. The Eco-development committee of Bamnai was formed in 2006. This EDC come under Ratapani Wild life sanctuary .The village is surrounded by rich miscellaneous forest of Teak, Saja and other species. Table 2 gives a profile of the village

Tabl.2. Profile of Bamnai Village

Total	Male	Female	Sex ration		
population	398 51 %	383 49.0%	1.03		
Occupation	Agriculture	Agri-Labour	Non-agri-Labour	Forest collection	
	108 60%	108 60%	90 50%	36 20%	
Land holding	Landless	Marginal	Small	Medium	Big
	69 38%	111 62%	Nil Nil	Nil Nil	Nil Nil
Education	Lit	Primary	Secondary	Grad	PG
	572 73.2%	343.20 43.94%	286.00 36.62%	Nil Nil	Nil

In Bamnai women have grouped themselves into a SHG and are engaged in making toys and handicrafts from paper mesh/waste paper. The Forest Department imparted training for this activity through some NGOs/institutes. These toys are sold at herbal melas (van melas) organized by the Forest department, which are held regularly at different places of the state. These are also exhibited in Delabadi Ecotourism center. This is a very cost

innovative marketing mechanism initiated by the forest Department. The Forest department provides them raw material like waste paper, gum etc required for making toys. Their products are sold by the forest department and women members engaged in this activity get about Rs. 80/day. During the initial years this activity was a success and members engaged in this activity were appreciated and recognized for their work. This activity is running in a full swing under the initiation of the beat guard Ms Ganga Thakur since 2008. Besides their daily chores and other activities, they do this activity in their own convenient time sitting at home. As per the demand they make the materials and supply it either to the forest department or to individuals



Figure 2 : Figure Women making toys of paper mesh

Due to the active involvement of the beat guard in this activity the percentage of women members acquiring his training has also increased considerably. This activity has helped in increasing the income of the women members and reduced their dependency on forest resources to a great extent. Women are more confident about the skill acquired. They go along with the beat guard to Bhopal melas to sale their goods and demonstrate their skills.

Before these working women members were involved in fuelwood selling, now this has decreased completely. Women members have started taking interest in JFM activities.

06. Conclusion

It has been observed that need of employment by development of handicrafts sector through locally available resources which may be utilized for the development of handicrafts sector. Employment opportunities can be categorized in three segments namely (1) Self-Employment (2) Regular Employment (3) Daily Waged. Employment efforts shall be made to engage the un-employed tribal youth for providing them Self-Employment through various development schemes on priority basis.

Various financial institutions have identified financing promotion and development of Rural non-Farming Sector as one of its thrust area and have introduced several measures to enlarge and diversify the credit and developmental activities in the field of Rural Development. They have been providing refinance to banks against the loan for manufacturing, processing and service activities in small, tiny, cottage and village industries including handicrafts.

At the same time, a large number of NGOs have realized the importance of income generating activities for rural, poor and have diversified into enterprise promotion through training and saving and credit programme through groups. They have been able to develop a close and enduring relationship with the rural people. These NGOs articulate the local people's needs and aspirations and translate them into effective action/plans and implements them with people's active participation.

The synergic approach and planning between tourism industry and handicrafts sector can create new milestones in the prosperity and economic growth of the country.

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Effluxion of Education and Culture in Ancient India

Akbar Ali

ABSTRACT : Education and culture is substitute for each other. Education progresses a society and culture shapes it. They are interdependent. Education is a tool of cultural change. Education enlightens with knowledge, skills and yields new ideas and attitudes among the young. Culture is that patterns of thought and behavior of people including values, beliefs, rules of conduct and patterns of social, political and economic organization. It is the culture in which education manifests and grows up in its fullest form. The intimacy between culture and education is evident from the fact that one of the major aim of education is to instruct to the child cultural and social heritage. Both education and culture play vital role in the life of an individual. The ancient Indian education system was successful in preserving and spreading its culture and literature even without the help of art of writing. The education infused a sense of responsibilities and social values. The Vedic education system achieved its aim to the fullest extent. Ancient education emerges from Vedas. The basis of Indian Culture lies in Vedas. Education has a prominent place in society at the time of Vedic age. Education was must for everyone to become cultural. Relationship between *Guru* and *Ācārya* were very cordial during Vedic and Post Vedic age even later Buddhist period. Being stayed at Gurukul, pupils had to perform different duties which made them cultured properly. The *Guru* taught *Ācārya* everything like religion, medicines, literature, astrology etc. They learnt various arts including dance, music etc which made them prosperous and cultured individually. By this scribe, I want to explore my opinion how in ancient India education and culture both effluxed which accomplished Indian Civilization.

Keywords : education, culture, society, ancient, civilization

Culture and education is interrelated. Without culture and education, human being is incomplete just like trees without roots. Culture progresses a society, a nation and ultimately a civilization. Education is that tool which completes human being with the enlightenment of knowledge in every field. Culture is actually social behavior. It is considered a central concept in anthropology, encompassing the range of phenomena that are transmitted through social learning in human societies. Various forms of culture such as art, music, dance, religion, social forms etc. existed in all human societies. In another way,

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education is a system of acquisition of knowledge, facilitating learning, skills, beliefs, values and habits. From ancient to present time, it is impossible to say whether culture influences education or education influences culture. In the system of education, History was being studied which was the main and basic record of culture hence it could not be ignored that culture was being nourished by education. In those days, pupils took education seriously. The aims of education were to provide good training to the learners in the performance of their social, economic, psychological or cultural duties. On the other hand culture is how people manage their life. A society cannot separate from its own culture. Because Culture is the result of human thought, it can be seen as tradition that creates cohesion and continuity. The Pre-Vedic and Vedic culture influenced ancient education system. Thus ancient education and culture interdependently prolonged and both of them accomplished and enriched ancient civilization.

Education

The English word ‘Education’ is derived from the Latin word ‘Educare’ which means to bring up. So education means helping people to learn how to do things and encouraging them to think about what they learn. The history of education in India can be divided into several periods and each of them has a particular educational pattern by characteristic of its own. Ancient educational era is meant of the Vedic educational epoch that lies from 1500BC to 600BC. Two words śikcā and adhyāpanā occur in Vedic Period. Śikcā means to learn and adhyāpanā means ‘to go near’ implies the idea of pupils going to teacher for education. In Vedic Period, Education consisted of learning to recite the Holy text of Veda.

The Vedic Education system

The education practice which was introduced first in ancient India was based on the Vedas and therefore it is known as Vedic education system. The basis of Indian education and culture lies in the Vedas which are divided into four- Ṛgveda, Sāmaveda, Yajurveda and Atharvaveda.

“Rūpayauvanam sampannāḥ viśālakulasambhavāḥ /
Vidyāhīnāḥ na śobhante nirgandhāḥ iba kinśukāḥ //”

These types of verses were widely quoted in Indian society illustrates the importance of education. The uniqueness of Vedic education system was not found in any other civilization of the world history. Swami Vivekananda considered it as the ideal system of education. He said that, “The old system of education

in India was very different from the modern system. The students had not to pay. It was thought that knowledge was so sacred that no man ought to sell it; therefore, knowledge should be given freely and without any price.”

The Gurukula

During the Vedic epoch, the Gurukula system is a unique educational system. It was manifested in India since many centuries until it was substituted by the Buddhist mode of education. The pupils who were known as Śiṣyā% had to spend with the family of Guru. They sat at the feet of the teacher and closely observed his instructions and listened to his advice. They were inspired to lead an unsophisticated and honest life. Besides the Vedic studies, they acquired fairly practical knowledge of the world. The Guru was a symbol of knowledge and moral values.

The Āśrama

It was another center where pupils from different parts of the countries gathered together for learning around famous sages and saints. For example, the āśrama of Bhāradvāja at Prayag was a large āśrama where prince Bharata used to study.

The Pariśad

The Pariśad was larger educational institution where several teachers used to teach different subjects. This may be compared to a college in modern aspect. The students of advanced learning flocked and enriched themselves through discussion and discourse.

The Sammelana

The word Sammelana refers to getting together for a particular purpose. The scholars crowded at one place for discussion and competition generally on the invitation of the king.

The Goṣṭhī

It was a national congress summoned by a great king in which representatives of various schools were invited to meet and exchange their views.

The Teachers

The Vedic and Post-Vedic education was centered on Guru. The importance of the teachers is seen in the Kaṭhopaniṣad. The teachers were expected to be

in possession of the essential qualities of education, correct vision and intellectual regeneration. They were regarded as friend, philosopher and guide. It was their duty to impart the knowledge they possessed to their disciples. They were also careful to give lesson of morality. They were careful to reveal the truth they discovered to the students, who had proven the ability and sincerity to understand and preserve the truth. The life of the teachers was spiritual and intellectual models for the learners. It was said in the Upanishad-

Asato mā sadgamaya /Tamaso mā jyotirgamaya/
Mṛtyormā amṛitaṁ gamaya // om śāntiḥ śāntiḥ śāntiḥ //

There were several types of teachers-

Ācārya: one type of teacher who taught his pupils without fees.

Kulapati: taking care of more than 10000 students in a particular educational institution is known as Kulapati.

Upādhyāya: one who adopted teaching as profession to earn his livelihood and taught only a portion of Veda.

Guru: one who used to lead G[has]thya life and earn his livelihood after imparting education to his disciples.

Caraka: the wondering scholar toured the country in quest of higher knowledge. They were regarded as informal teachers by Śatapatha Brahmana.

Śikṣaka: a teacher who gave instruction in arts, craft etc.

The Students

There were two types of students ‘Upakurvāṇa’ and ‘Naiṣṭhika’. ‘Upakurvāṇa’ entered to the second phase of āśrama after finishing their education at Gurukula. ‘Naiṣṭhika’ didn’t go their home and stayed permanently at Gurugṛha. Education was essential to the upper castes especially for Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya. After the Upanayana ceremony parents entrusted their male children to a teacher for education. Education was not denied to women. However women scholars i.e. Maitreyī, Gārgī are mentioned in Vedic literature. Students had to sacrifice passion of sex, unnecessary sleep, anger etc. Simple living and high thinking was the motto of their life. After the end of education, the graduate students were honored as Snātaka by Samāvartana ceremony.

The syllabus

The study of the Vedas was an integral part of education. It was considered as the greatest gift and its ultimate aim was to enlighten the students about the celestial order. Vedas were transmitted from Guru to Śiṣya verbally. The methods of recitation and memorizing the text by repetition were very important. The Vedic knowledge was directly heard from the Guru's lips and committed to memory. That is why Vedas are known as Śruti. The Mantra, Brāhmaṇa, Āraṇyaka, Upaniṣad, Vedāṅga etc. were the main subjects for study. In the Chāndogyaopaniṣad, Nārada described his own knowledge to his Ācārya Sanata Kumāra. The lists are bellow:-

Four Vedas
Six vedangas
Itihāsa Purāṇam
Mathematics
Tarkavidhyā
Bhūtaavidhyā
Bākobākya
Astronomy
Polity and Administration
Brahmavidhyā etc.

Method of Learning

During ancient India, there was a close relationship between teachers and students. Teachers always paid individual attention on his every student. They taught them various subjects through different method according to their capability. The methods are:

Memorization: It was the preliminary stage where learning was done by listening for the sacred text of Vedas.

Critical Analysis: The teacher comprehended the knowledge through it.

Introspection: Method of realization of the truth of Vedas.

Story Telling: A useful method to give knowledge to the pupils.

Question and Answer: A process for understanding knowledge undoubtedly.

Hands-On: A practical method to clarify the query.

Seminar: A discussion and debating way for knowledge enrichment.

Relation between Guru and Śiṣya

Being residential, the Guru- Śiṣya relationship was most important factor during Vedic and post vedic period. Students had to obey Guru not by force but spontaneously. They look after Guru as their father. They performed different domesticated duties for the sake of Guru. They were strictly guided by the prescribed disciplinary rules. Teachers were also careful to every student. They had tremendous sympathy and love for students. The main aim of teachers was the all round development of students. The teachers got remarkable respects from people. They were model of purity and respect for the students.

Culture

Culture refers to the patterns of thought and behavior of people of a nation. The diameter of culture spread in a huge area. It includes values, beliefs, rules of conduct and patterns of social, political and economic organization. These are passed on through descendants as formal as well as informal process. The food we eat, the clothes we wear, the language we communicate and the god we worship all are the aspects of culture. All the achievements of human being including dance, music, art, religion, architecture etc. can be seen as the aspects of culture. It is actually a man made environment of material and nonmaterial products.

Indian Vedic Culture

Vedic culture was one of the oldest cultures of the whole World. The basis of ancient Indian culture lies in Vedas. The impact of Vedic culture on modern culture is widely prevalent. According to Indologist, Indian culture stands not only for a traditional social code but also for a spiritual foundation of life. On the basis of culture, we can experience the prosperity of its past and present exists in a nation. According to the scholars, the history of Indian culture is divided into three categories; ancient, medieval and modern. The ancient culture might be divided into two parts- Vedic culture and Post-Vedic culture. The Vedic culture is existed between 1500BC to 600BC.

Aspects of Vedic Culture

Vedic culture reformed on the basis of Vedas and their Vedangas. It has different aspects which we will describe shortly.

Social Life

The social structure laid on the basis of patriarchal family. The joint family system was the normal form. Women also occupied a respectable place in a family. The birth of a son was regarded as an auspicious.

The Varṇa System

In the early Vedic age, there was no caste or varṇa among the humans. But, it was mentioned first in Ṛgveda's Puruṣa Sūkta.

“Brāhmaṇo asya mukhamāsīd bāhū rājanyaḥ kṛtaḥ /
Ūrū tadasya yadvaiśyaḥ padbhyām śūdro ajāyata //”

According to traditional Indian interpretation, there is no doubt that there was a gradation of people in the civic life of the nation. The Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya and Śūdra are the major forms of varṇa in Vedic society. Some scholar stated Niṣāda as fifth varṇa.

Position of women

Women occupied prominent place in Vedic society. Women had equal rights in every field. From the Saṁhitā to Upaniṣad, we can find so many references of women warriors, philosophers, poets. Ladies like Visvavārā, Apālā, Ghoṣā etc. are the extreme parable. They were respected not only in the form of mother, daughter or wife but also Ṛṣikā, warriors and philosophers.

Caturāśrama

The custom of four Āśrama known as Caturāśrama-dharma persisted in Vedic society. They are Brahmācārya, Garhasthya, Vānaprastha and sannyāsa. All had to undergo the first stage that of Brahmācārya. Then they had to lead the domestic life that of Gṛhasthya and after that, Vānaprasthya, the life of retirement from sublunary responsibilities. In the Vedic literature there is no mention of Sannyāsin. In the Upaniṣad, we can come across so many Ṛṣi although they were designated in the stage of Vānaprasthya so called Āśrama scheme. None of the Zci in the Upaniṣad or in the Purāṇa was Sannyāsin.

Food, drink, dress and others

Yava, wheat, barley were the main grain in Vedic society. Cakes, bread, milk product such as ghee, butter were also favorite dish of them. They also took fruits, vegetables as favorite commodities of food. The flesh of various animals including ox, sheep, and goat was normally eaten. In post Vedic age rice became popular food that was not mentioned in Ṛgveda.

Milk, honey, water were the normal drinks. Surā and Soma were favorite drinks prepared from grain and Somalatā.

Vedic people used Adhivasa, Vasa, Nivi etc. as garments. During marriage, the bride wore a special garment. According to scholars, they both wore cotton and woolen garments of various designs. Ornaments of gold and precious stone were used by them.

In the Ṛgsaṁhitā, we get the information of musical instruments i.e. flute, drum, lute etc. which proved their fondness of festivals.

Religion

The phenomena of nature were worshipped by them in various forms of gods. It has a purpose to establish a relation between god and human unconditionally. Among the thirty three gods mentioned in the Ṛgveda, Indra, Varuna, Agni, Soma etc. were prominent gods. They believed in hell and heaven. They prayed to gods through sacrificing various foods, animals to fulfill their mortal life with power, wealth and honor.

Political Life

Family and society was the main basis of society and state respectively. The king was the head of state and tribe. The political administrations are following:

The King

The king was the head of the state. His primary duty was to protect lives, lead in war, punish guilty and extend his reign. His power limited by his own duties, by the chief officers and popular assemblies. The kingship was hereditary though we find some example when the king was elected by the people.

Chief Officials

The priest was the chief officer who wielded good influence with the King. The other chief officers were the Senānī, the head of the army and the Grāmaṇī to look after the administration of the villages.

Justice

The king and his priest was the main justice in Vedic society. Robbery, cattle lifting, theft were principal crime. The common punishment was to stake the criminal at ground and later set free.

Army Organization

Charioteers and Pulton were the main element of army organization under the king. Bows, arrows, spears, lances were used as weapon in war.

Assemblies

Sabhā and Samiti were the assemblies existed in that age. Historian stated that Sabhā was a body made with few selected peoples to help the king and Samiti was an assembly of larger group for the discharge of tribal business.

Economic Life

The economic life of Vedic society was progressive and prosperous. The developed cities were the solid proof of it. Irrigation and cattle rearing were principal occupation. Wheat, barley, cotton etc. were produced by them. People reared cow, ox, and sheep etc. as domesticated animals. Hunting, fishing, pottering, weaving etc. were the source of good economic life. Inter-external trade was introduced to fulfill balanced economy.

Conclusion

After the destruction of Harappa Civilization, Vedic civilization appeared. The expansion from 1500BC to 600BC is generally regarded as Vedic period. It is very difficult to conclude the above discussed topic. The system of education mentioned in Rig-Veda had influenced its society and culture. For that, Vedic Civilization had got prominent place in the World history. With the flow of time, the evolution of education, culture has been changed. The education and culture has totally changed in modern age. *Although the present education system has undergone a lot of changes* it was primarily based on the ageold *Vedic Brahmanical* education system which continued till the medieval period. With the advent of Western education, the old system has undergone some changes. It is no denying the fact that the old system has limitations and restrictions in the perspective of modern age of science and technology. But it is our legacy which has advanced us to the present stage of enlightenment. We can at least follow the ideals of our old system. It is also our prime responsibility to preserve

the ancient scriptures and ancient language Sanskrit to preserve the cultural heritage of our country.

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Privatisation of Medical Education in India: Higher Education Under The Threat of Globalisation

Dr. Amrita Bagchi

ABSTRACT : The present paper aims to discuss the causes behind the growth of private medical education in India and tries to locate the issues related to the privatization of medical education. Privatisation of medical education and medical care have been two crucial social issues in the post LPG (Liberalisation , Privatisation and Globalisation) phase. Privatisation or to be more specific Corporatisation of health care services has converted medical care from a service to an expensive commodity. Simultaneously growing trend of privatization of medical education produced 'Technical Robots', (in place of doctors) keen to squeeze money from their patients who are now being identified as 'depersonalized bed numbers' in the commercial medical world. However it is interesting to point out that this tendency of increasing growth private medical institutions had widespread globally and influenced medical educational policies all over the world. Though privatization has broadened the scope of health care, it has resulted in the commercialization of education. India is the only country which authorizes the sale of medical seats. Many colleges take illegal capitation fees which ranges and anywhere between 25 lakhs and one crore. Hence, even if the students lack the intellect, grit and determination to be physician, money can make things easier for him. This has resulted in a steep decline in the quality of medical education, especially at the MBBS level. The flow of doctors from these medical schools and its impact on accessibility cost of health care and perceived quality\ of medical care needs to be explored.

Keywords : Privatisation, Higher Education, Globalisation Threat

The present paper aims to discuss the causes behind the growth of private medical education in India and tries to locate the issues related to the privatization of medical education. Privatization of medical education and medical care have been two crucial social issues in the post LPG (Liberalisation, Privatization and Globalization) phase. Privatization or to be more specific Corporatisation of health care services has converted medical care from a service to an expensive commodity. Simultaneously growing trend of privatization of medical education produced 'Technical

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Robots', (in place of doctors) keen to squeeze money from their patients who are now being identified as 'depersonalized bed numbers' in the commercial medical world. However it is interesting to point out that this tendency of increasing growth private medical institutions had widespread globally and influenced medical educational policies all over the world. The flow of doctors from these medical schools and its impact on accessibility, cost of health care and perceived quality of medical care needs to be explored.

Privatization is an act of reducing the role of government or increasing the role of the private institutions of society in satisfying people's needs; it means relying more on the private sector and less on government.¹ Privatization of medical education can be defined as *"Medical Education which is imparted by an organization, which is not a government part. They can be profit-generating institutions or non-profit society centered institutions."*² So private medical schools can either be totally autonomous or partially autonomous, depending upon the nature of financial investments.

The Private Medical Education: The Indian Context.

According to World Health Organization (WHO) report, India ranks 67th in the list of 133 developing countries with a doctor-population ratio at 1:1700. That means, not even 1 doctor is available for 1000 population, even after more than half century of independence; a goal still far behind as per the recommendation given by Bhore committee in 1946, subsequently modified by Mudaliar committee (1961) and Bajaj committee in 1987. Although WHO is aiming to achieve a doctor-population ratio of 1:1000, India can achieve this in 2031 within the framework of existing colleges and state of affairs. It is now also estimated that there will be still a shortage of 9.54 lakh doctors by the time India achieves that.³ In the last 2 decades, there has been a massive increase in the privatization of medical education with rapid expansion in the number of private medical colleges in India along with a boom in private medical education worldwide. These private medical colleges are either autonomous or partially autonomous. Though India has several private medical colleges and produces thousands of medical graduates now every year, still there is a great shortage of doctors in the rural areas. Most of these private medical graduates do not like to practice in rural areas. Factors like inadequate training, technical skill of the health

force, improper deployment, inefficient skill mix, poor working environment, and lack of opportunities for personnel management are few reasons making the medical education system a more paradox to solve by our policy makers and implementers.⁴

Privatisation of medical education was introduced to solve the grave lack of doctors. The first self-financing medical college was KMC in Manipal, which started functioning in 1953. Gradually India has witnessed a rapid growth in the medical education sector—one of the largest in the world. Starting with 28 teaching institutions at the under graduate level in 1950, we have reached a total of 384 colleges in 2014 with a total intake capacity of about 50,000 medical students.⁵ Businessmen have now found this as a new avenue to make large earnings from private medical schools in the form of high tuition fees and high donations, putting the element of commercialization of the medical education to the serious note. In one of the articles, published in Times of India (TOI) dated 5th Aug 2013, medical education in India is much costlier than its neighboring countries. As data available with the Medical Council of India, availability of the medical seats has improved in recent years of the available medical seats has been created since 2000.⁶

The private medical colleges have increased by 405 per cent (from 41 to 209) in the last two and a half decades (1990 to 2014), whereas the government run medical colleges have increased only 72 per cent (from 102 to 176), with an overall growth of 169 per cent during this period.

The share of private sector in total number of medical colleges has increased from 3.6 per cent in 1950 to 54.3 per cent in 2014. Similarly, the enrolment share in these colleges currently accounts for more than half (52.1 per cent), in comparison to merely 1.4 per cent in 1950. Thus, the growth of medical institutions and their intake capacity in India has been driven largely by developments in the private sector and in some states it grew to such a level that in relative size, the public sector became small.⁷

Causes behind the growth of Private medical education:

To historicize, the root of the present problem it can be said that traditionally, medical colleges in India were largely funded by the government and the contribution of private sector were negligible. The reasons for the sudden increase in private medical schools are manifold. On the one hand,

in many developing countries, due to the population explosion, the demand for places at medical schools is greater than the available supply. In addition, governments are unable to meet the medical needs of society due to both economic constraints and limited infrastructure. On the other hand, the booming private sector economy means more aspirants from the expanding middle class are entering the medical field. This increase of wealth amongst a subset of society has led to a differential growth of private medical schools in the richer and healthier states/countries. In the developed countries, the emergence of new private schools has been driven by workforce shortages. The demands of the population for increased use of recent technological advances in medicine as well as higher average life spans has increased the requirement for medical services in these countries.

Globalisation has resulted in an increased demand for medical professionals from foreign countries (outsourcing). This lure of increased income has led to more entrants into health professions. This enhanced need for medical schools is fulfilled by private medical schools. Indian physicians form the bulk of foreign trained physician in all the major five developed countries (UK, US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand) and this correlates with the fact that India has the greatest number of private medical institutions in the world.⁸

Changes in government policies in many countries also resulted in the climate being more conducive to privatisation. In 1956, the four-year-old republic of India replaced the colonial Indian Medical Council with the Medical Council of India (MCI). This institution was meant to guide the young republic in establishing a modern system of medical education and developing the human resources to provide the most appropriate medical care to all citizens. The Bhoré committee report had already been completed in 1946. It had advised the establishment of a universal medical delivery system, with the primary health centre as the basic unit, *taluk* and district hospitals at the secondary level, and medical colleges at the tertiary level.⁹

Thus the medical colleges had two tasks: to develop the human resources required for expansion of the medical facilities available, and to provide the highest level of treatment that the country could afford. In keeping with the spirit of the times, everything was supposed to be available to everyone.

Up to the 1980s, medical education remained largely a government

responsibility. There were a few private colleges, but these were generally not-for-profit, like the Mahatma Gandhi Medical College at Wardha and the Christian Medical College in Vellore. In the medical care sector, however, private providers were plentiful, but this was mainly in primary and secondary care. Tertiary care remained largely the province of government hospitals. All this changed in the late 1980s. There were huge advances in medical technology in the Western world. Interventions like open heart surgery, transplantation of human organs, and joint replacements became commonplace. This medical technology is expensive. It became an area of interest to corporate groups in India and, quite rapidly, the tertiary medical care sector in India shifted to the private sector. The goal of universal equitable medical care was quietly abandoned. Many medical interventions became available primarily to those who could pay, with patchy provision in the public sector. Almost simultaneously, medical education underwent increasing privatisation.¹⁰ With the implementation of new economic policy of 1991, broadly known as structural adjustment programme (SAP), the trend shifted towards private funding of medical education and the growth of private medical colleges has been phenomenal.¹¹

In order to establish an integrated network of evenly spread specialty and super specialty services, National Health Policy (2002) advocated to increase the availability and coverage of the health services by encouraging private investments. The National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) has also envisaged the participation of the private sectors to ensure that states make full use of the healthcare providers available in the remote areas, and to also encourage better utilization of the public-owned health facilities. In that order, Government of India (GOI) offered number of financial concessions to corporate hospitals in the form of the subsidized sale of the land, reduced import duties, and tax concession for medical research/medical education.¹²

According to National Sample Survey data, the Indian government's share in overall expenditure on education is declining steadily; from 80% in 1983 to 67% in 1999. Further we see that Medical education has grown rapidly in India; from 11,800 admissions per year in 1990 to 24000 in 2005.¹³

Successive governments continued to pay lip service to the idea of universal comprehensive medical care and equity in medical education but allowed private entities to establish medical colleges, ostensibly as a public

service. In theory, the colleges are supposed to be not-for profit, fees are supposed to be regulated by the government, and the hospitals attached to the colleges are expected to provide subsidized treatment for the poor. In actual practice, nearly all these colleges collect very large sums of money from students and keep this money off the books.

The sudden expansion of medical colleges led to an acute shortage of teaching faculty, especially in certain specialties which were not popular choices of medical students because of lack of social approval and opportunities for private practice. Examples of such specialties are anatomy, forensic medicine and community medicine. Some faculty in these specialties saw an opportunity and appeared on the rolls of more than one private college. The regulator, the Medical Council of India, also saw an opportunity and, it is widely believed, collected large sums of money to turn a blind eye to this and other malpractices. A coterie captured the MCI and the regulator became the problem.¹⁴

Negative Aspects:

Usually, the primary intention of the trusts/agencies running the profit generating medical colleges is to earn money through a business venture. This is typically the yardstick against which all decisions regarding the institution are made. The common factor in all the private medical colleges around the globe is that they are more expensive than the public medical schools. Medical education has become costlier over time and the burden of debt on medical school graduates increases due to the high tuition fees in private medical schools.^{1/15}

- **Quality of Students.**

The quality of students entering programmes in private institutions is more often dependent on their paying capacity rather than their merit. Some institutions do insist on minimum standards of admissions, but these standards are definitely below those required by state-owned schools. Hence the quality of the doctors coming out of these institutions is likely to be compromised.

- **Issues of Infrastructural Deficiencies**

The quality of training provided in private medical colleges is also questionable. Major problems facing the private medical colleges are poor

staffing, poor quality of training and high student /teacher ratios. The staffs frequently lack proper training in medical education. Many of the faculty work in these colleges on a part-time basis, or are appointed only for the purpose of accreditation (short term appointments). In some countries, the increased demand for teaching faculty is met by faculty with dual appointments. Deficiencies in physical infrastructure with a shortage of equipment, laboratories, specimens and chemicals are also rampant.^{2/16}

There is also a reduced availability of patients for clinical teaching in private medical schools. This is because the number of in-patients in the private hospitals tends to be less due to their reduced length of stay, sicker patients avoid examinations by students, and an admission of increasing number of elderly patients who are in no condition to give a history due to cognitive impairment. Scarcity of “clinical material” in private medical colleges in the poorer developing countries is due to the lack of patient paying capacity as the private hospitals are much costlier than the government-run hospitals.

It has been observed that government support has always helped to improve the quality of education, in particular by covering the increases in costs as laboratory science has evolved. This means that “When government support declines, so too do intellectual standards.”^{3/17}

- **Question of Accreditation**

Many newly formed private colleges are not accredited by the national accreditation body. Accreditation is a quality control measure for maintaining high standards of medical education and of health care for the nation. It also instills public confidence in medical schools and ensures that graduates’ competencies comply with national standards. The absence of accreditation for some of these private medical colleges will result in a questionable future for their graduates as their qualifications may not be nationally and internationally recognised.^{4/18}

- **Question of Employment**

More medical colleges will result in an anticipated oversupply and misdistribution with too many new doctors entering the medical profession. This will result in a future lack of job opportunities for fresh graduates.¹⁹

What is To Be Done

One of the benchmarks for planning medical education worldwide is the report of Abraham Flexner, ²⁰commissioned by the Carnegie Foundation, on the state of medical education in the United States of America. Establishing for-profit medical colleges is considered such a bad idea in the developed world, for reasons so well enunciated by Flexner, that it is not even a point of discussion.²¹ It is surprising, therefore, that this bad idea finds such a prominent place in the recommendations of the Niti Aayog²². Even more shocking is the proposal to allow prospective students to bid for seats. Even the most ardent proponents of the market economy consider medical education not a suitable area for market forces. It should be obvious that training of medical professionals should serve the objective of medical care delivery in the country.

Therefore there is a need to integrate medical education with medical services. We need an understanding of what the health needs of India are in order to formulate plans which integrate medical education with medical care. India is faced with the situation that large sections of its population cannot access necessary medical care. The primary barriers are physical and financial. The Bhore committee vision of primary health centres accessible in all areas has not been fulfilled. In many places even if the health centre exists, there are no doctors or even nursing staff present. Secondary and tertiary care facilities are overcrowded and understaffed. On the other hand, towns and cities are full of doctors chasing the few patients who can pay. Thus we see the amazing phenomenon of corporate hospitals employing marketing professionals to sell their services.. So are unethical practices like giving kickbacks for referrals and diagnostic services, doing procedures on patients just to earn money, and unscientific practices which are financially rewarding. In brief, those who need care do not get it. Those who have means may be subjected to procedures which are unnecessary and potentially harmful.²³

The confused attitude of successive governments in India led to the present situation: on the one hand, too many doctors trained in high technology medicine (which is lucrative, because it is largely privatised) chasing the few patients with the ability to pay; and on the other, not enough doctors to deal with the basic medical needs of the majority of the population.

We should resist the easy path of superficial solutions. It is not one of Central Government control versus state government oversight.

Merely tinkering with these may bring some probity to the council but it will fail to change the big picture. It will be another lost opportunity.

Many of **Flexner's recommendations**²⁴ are still relevant, more than a hundred years later. Some of these are:

Financing of medical education. Flexner was of the opinion that medical care is a social cause. Medical education has to be supported by the state. It should on no account be commercialized ***Medical universities have three responsibilities:*** the definition and enforcement of entrance standards, the upholding of scientific ideals, and responsibility for adequate support (of the staff) Flexner was very clear that full-time faculty are required to properly train medical students, and advised that teachers in universities should be adequately remunerated and no private practice allowed. There must be stringent entry and exit norms for students, so as to train a high quality workforce.

Only one university should be permitted in each town. Flexner said that experience has shown that there is an unhealthy competition for faculty if more than one university is present in a town. Experience in India, with private universities poaching faculty from the government colleges bears this out.

Every state should have its own medical university. This is because students prefer to study in their own provinces. Flexner specifically warned against overproduction of doctors.

Integration of all the then-existing systems of medicine on the basis of science. Flexner stated, "It is precisely the function of [the] scientific method – in social life, politics, engineering, medicine – to get rid of such hindrances to clear thought and effective action." Also, "Scientific medicine therefore brushes aside all historical dogma.... all are required to undergo rigorous cross examination. Whatsoever makes good is accepted..." This idea is relevant to India, we must examine and integrate Indian systems of medicine, instead of the compartmentalized approach we now have.

From the **Bloor Report**²⁵, two messages are important for India:

First, in general, there is a lack of attention to basic economic principles. The role of incentives is largely ignored elasticities in the labour market are, for the most part, unknown and poorly researched. It is often assumed that manipulating price alone will control expenditure, without paying attention to volume.

Second, there is a need to better integrate planning across the professions, with special attention to skill mix and geographic balance. Effective development of skill mix requires legislative change and incentives for physicians that encourage advancement. Clearly, much work needs to be done so as to create a medical education system in India which addresses the desired outcome of training high quality medical persons able and willing to deal with the health problems of people in places where they are needed.

Higher education is the sector which has the huge potentiality for profit. This idea is paving the path for privatization, thereby opening the vast area of profit for big business man and imperialist capital. The idea is clearer if one goes through the report published by the research division of the World Bank's education and training department. The report stated that 'unless educational development becomes the less dependent on public funds, developing countries will not be able to tap fully the profitability of further educational development'. The report also advised to change the syllabus as per the needs of the industry.

To conclude it can be said that, though privatization has broadened the scope of health care, it has resulted in the commercialization of education. India is the only country which authorizes the sale of medical seats. Many colleges take illegal capitation fees which ranges and anywhere between 25 lakhs and one crore. Hence, even if the students lack the intellect, grit and determination to be physician, money can make things easier for him. This has resulted in a steep in the quality of medical education, especially at the MBBS level. Thus many colleges have turned out to be factories that produce money minded technocrats instead of socially committed dedicated physicians serving the society at large.

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Lights on Nawab Faizunnesa Chaudhurani (1834-1904)

Anamitra Bhattacharyya

ABSTRACT : Women's question occupies a central position in the sphere of 19th century social reform of India particularly of Bengal. Recent researches brought into limelight the role played by some women patrons in this unique act of emancipation. However, the pace of enlightening Muslim women was comparatively slower. We are all acquainted with the role played by Begum Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain(1880-1932) in this context. But one of the most under researched and unfocussed area in this context is the contribution of Nawab Faizunnesa Chaudhurani (1834-1904) of Comilla in present Bangladesh. She was one of the pioneers of mass campaigners of female education, a social worker and a prolific writer.

The credit for being a pioneer in introducing formal education amongst Muslim women in Bengal goes to Nawab Faizunnesa Chaudhurani. She established one of the earliest female school in the subcontinent. Faizunnesa cultivated Bengali at a time when it was not normally practiced by the Muslim aristocrats. Roop Jalal (1876), her autobiographical allegory is written in prose and verse and is acclaimed for its literary value.

In appreciation of her social work , in 1889 British Queen Victoria awarded the title " Nawab Bahadur" making her the first woman in the then British Empire to receive this title.....

Keywords : Colonial ideology, churity, civilization Education

E ducation was a key social reform issue in the sub-continent during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Concern extended to female education as well, with at least some reformers advocating a change in women's role. Recent researches indicate that women patrons also played a significant role in imparting education to girls.

At the very outset it is apt to point out that during 19th century a new colonial ideology was growing in India especially in Bengal as an aid to British cultural imperialism. The colonial powers tried to promote the superiority of Western civilization and status of the women was taken as a

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major yardstick to measure the superiority of the society. The newly western educated middle class of Calcutta was aware of this trend and they didn't want themselves to be graded as inferiors in the scale of civilization and that led to reassessment of indigenous social norms in particular the position of women. Still the point that should not be missed is that a few women mainly coming from Brahma, Christian and upper caste affluent Hindu families received some education. The Census figure reveals that the number of female students at the primary level during 1881-82 was around 17,000 in Bengal. Among them only 8% to 9% were Muslims. ¹ All our authorities accept that traditional obstacles to education of Muslim continued for long mainly because of apathy of the community to Western education, lack of material facilities, lack of trained female teachers, rigid orthodoxy in Muslim society and above all due to the absence of a rising middle class in Bengali Muslim society. Chetna and Avinash Rai however, have shown that studies on Indian women in colonial society have tended to be focused on Bengali "Bhadramahila" as the region was the focal point of reform movements for women. Bhadramahila, herself was a modernized patriarchal reconstruction of women rendered a passive impression of female agency homogenizing the feminist experience to the exclusion of all other women across different class, caste, region and community. Sharing the time and space with these illustrious women, lived the obscure Bengali Muslim women in a deemed hyper masculine Muslim community unreceptive to reforms taking place in society and thus considered backward or traditional to have exhibited any consciousness. ² Generally, the credit for being a pioneer in introducing formal education amongst Muslim women in Bengal goes to Begum Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain (1880-1932), a writer, thinker, educationist, social activist and advocate of women's rights. But the role played by Nawab Faizunnesa Chaudhurani (1834-1904) is relatively unknown at least in this part of the sub-continent.

We first get the mention of Nawab Fizunnesa Chaudhurani in Sonia Nishat Amin's work published in 1996.³ Fayeza S. Hasnat's translation into English of the long neglected semi-autobiographical work of Faizunnesa "Rupjalal" for the first time secured a place for her work among the global readership.⁴

Nawab Faizunnesa Chaudhurani was born in the village of Paschimgaon under Lakshman Thana of the district of Comilla in Bangladesh. Her father Ahmed Ali Chowdhury, a zamindar (landlord) of Homnabad-Paschimgaon

estate was a learned gentleman. As a devout Muslim having stayed within strict purdah, ⁵ Faizunnesa became proficient in all classical languages in Arabic, Persian and Urdu as well as in Bengali and Sanskrit. ⁶ It was the period when the superstitious belief existed that women would go to hell if they were educated.

In 1860, Faizunnesa was married to a distant cousin and neighboring zamindar Muhammed Gazi thus becoming his second wife. But the couple became separated for an unknown reason and Faizunnesa started living with her paternal family. In 1883 after her mother's death she inherited her father's property and became the zamindar of Paschimgaon.

She became increasingly involved in social work after becoming the zamindar. In 1873, Faizunnesa has already established a girls' high school named Faizunnesa Girls' Pilot High School in Comilla which is one of the earliest female schools privately established in the sub-continent. The school catered especially to pardanashin or pardah observing girls. It took a while for this unique institution to gain acceptance but it did eventually flourish. She also founded a Madrasah at Paschimgaon that was later upgraded to a college and now named as Begum Nawab Faizunnesa Degree College (March, 1996).

In 1883 Faizunnesa established a charitable dispensary in her village for women in pardah, particularly destitute women. She also built a hospital for women, Faizunnesa Zenana Hospital in Comilla. In addition she built mosques and contributed towards the development of roads and ponds.

Faizunnesa cultivated Bengali at a time when it was not normally practiced among Muslim aristocrats. Her autobiographical allegory *Rupjalal* (1876) was written partly in prose and partly in poetry and was in the mixed style of *punthi*⁷ tradition and *jaarigaan*⁸. Sonia Nishat Amin regards *Rupjalal*'s publication year (1876) as a significant marker in the history of Bengali Muslim women's literary practice and the founding of Lady Brabourne College in 1939 as the culmination of Muslim women's education since that was the first time it had got govt. support during colonial period⁹ Amin regards Faizunnesa as the first significant modern Muslim writer of former Bengal. ¹⁰ But Fayeza S. Hasanat¹¹ and Muhammed Mahmudul Hasan¹² have shown that new researches is unearthing more and more past Bengali women writers like Rahima and Zamirunnesa.

Rupjalal is a story of Prince Jalal and two heroines, Rupbanu and Hurbanu. It narrates Jalal's heroic and sexual exploits. Hasanat reads Rupjalal as a manifesto of Muslim's women's sexual defiance and subordination in 19th century Bengal.¹³ However, the text can also be read as a counter narrative to the discourse of 19th century western literary orientalism that tends to emasculate Muslim men and represents Muslim women as always in the lookout for a gaze at Western heroes only to offer themselves to their supposed dream lovers. Contrastingly, Faizunnesa depicts an athletic and strong Muslim hero of virility and valour. Muhammad Mahmudul Hasan thinks that it gave the community hope and confidence until now drenched into menace of despair.¹⁴ But strikingly enough Faizunnesa didn't utter a word in Rupjalal against the Islamic custom of polygamy. As a matter of fact Rupjalal reflects a sensibility poised between medieval path and mentality.

Faizunnesa also patronized different newspapers and periodicals including Bandhab, Dhaka Prakash, Mussalman Bandhu, Sudhakar and Islam Pracharak. She also composed a number of other books such as Sangeetsar and Sangeetlahari.¹⁵

In appreciation of her social work, in 1889 British Queen Victoria awarded Faizunnesa the title of "Nawab Bahadur" making her the first woman in the then British empire to receive this title.

In 1894 Faizunnesa performed Hajj and is said to have founded a madrasa and an inn at Mecca. Before her death she gave away a large portion of her landed property to provide scholarship for needy students. This waqf¹⁶ fund continues to provide financial aid to needy students till now.

In 1903 she passed away in her own home and was buried in the family graveyard. After more than a century the independent state of Bangladesh recognized Nawab Faizunnesa's unique personality by conferring upon her the "Ekushey Padak", the highest honour of the state (posthumously in 2004).

It is worth pointing that Faizunnesa was brought up at a time when women had very few rights and their status in society was poor and abysmal. Social taboos and cultural restrictions coupled with the absence of role model ensured that they remain passive members of society. The various activities undertaken by her tried to de-mystify the stereotypical image of

Muslim women living in seclusion, segregation and in the zenana¹⁷ apartment. She strove hard to promote the status of women by setting personal example, opening formal institution of learning, establishing organization that took up social issues. She motivated women to come out of seclusion and gradually opt for education. In fact, the path shown by her has been directly or indirectly responsible for encouraging the enrolment of girls especially Muslim girls in the formal institution of learning in contemporary time. Strikingly, she didn't question much the Islamic tradition of polygamy. We have to keep in mind that she couldn't complete the process of women's liberation. But she kept the ball rolling thus contributing towards the acceleration of the process. We may conclude in the words of Muhammad Mojlum Khan that Faizunnesa Chaudhurani by the sheer dint of powerful character and personality has left an indelible mark upon the history Muslim Bengal.¹⁷

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Women's Education & Empowerment in Colonial Bengal

Asit Kumar Kar

ABSTRACT : Women's education in Bengal and India lagged significantly behind the great strides taking place like the Bengali Renaissance and the opening of the universities of Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras. However, for women's, the mainstream Hindu society was mired in prejudices and superstitions. For girls to be married off by the age twelve or thirteen, receiving an education was often considered an anathema, sometimes even a sin. But by the middle of the nineteenth century, liberal Indian minds (obviously men) imbued with western thoughts and values started feeling the serious deficiency. Some of these men, among the British administrators, also felt the need to spread women's education. English men and women established several women's schools. Surprisingly, they all gathered the reputation of wishing to convert girls. These girls were therefore made to stay away. Finally, a lawyer named John Drinkwater Bethune established possibly the first and most influential school for women's education in Calcutta in 1849. It was a seminal institution with a strong mandate for secularism (meaning non-Christian). Women's Education in Colonial Bengal gradually Transformed the position and identity of the Women's in the society .Initially, the Christian-missionaries of Bengal played a significant role to improve the women's education in Colonial Bengal . After the role of the missionaries it should e mentioned that some of the scholars of the Bengalees, such as Vidyasagar,Raja Radhakanta Dev- played a important role to manifest the women's education and empowerment. In these ways, the women's education and empowerment spread over colonial Bengal.

Keywords : *education, women, empowerment, colonial, bengal, female, christian-missionary.*

Women's education in Bengal and India lagged significantly behind the great strides taking place like the Bengali Renaissance and the opening of the universities of Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras. However, for women, the mainstream Hindu society was mired in prejudices and superstitions. For girls to be married off by the age twelve or thirteen, receiving an education was often considered an anathema, sometimes even a sin. But by the middle

of the nineteenth century, liberal Indian minds (obviously men) imbued with western thoughts and values started feeling the serious deficiency. Some of these men, among the British administrators, also felt the need to spread women's education.

In colonial Bengal as well as in colonial India, the social status of women seemed to be dependent on their men (Mill, 1840). The religious tradition ascribed for their humility and subordination to men in all matter. They were denied the opportunity of education and refinement . Except a few women of the upper classes, the life of general women was not worth living. In short, the access to social justice and equality were denied to them. They were unaware of their basic rights as individuals due to illiteracy, ignorance and economic subordinate through the age.(Manu Smriti with six commentaries, 1886). Strange is the fact that when the christian missioneries saw the deplorable condition of women in traditional Indian society .they were amazed and emotionally moved. The Christian missionaries aimed to spread their religion in India.for this purpose they opened schools asylums, dispensaries and orphanage to give relief to the poor and the needy Indian people. They succeeded in converting mostly the lower classes of Indian people. They failed to understand as to what should they do to save the women from burning alive. They desired to undertake from some "Culturally Motivated" performance to end the crime. The first and foremost social problem that attracted enlightened opinion was the need for a better deal for women in society in the abolition of the cruel rite of sati and infanticide, in the condemnation of child marriage and polygamy and popularization of widow remarriage, in the abolition of purdah, in provision of education facilities for women and economic opening to make them self-supporting and finally an equal share for women in the political life of the country by enfranchisement.¹

Indian society seems to have always been riddled with bewildering contrasts: the opulence and development of Mumbai and Bangalore with poverty in rural India; the high philosophy of Vedanta with the pervasive idolatry, superstitions, and rampant caste prejudices; the widespread Islamophobia with our past two Muslim Presidents. The history of women's education is another example. Most of our grandmothers in the early parts of the twentieth century were married off by the age of twelve or thirteen, putting an end to their formal education. In sharp contrast, many of our

grandfathers were college educated – some were lawyers or doctors. Yet, a generation before that, in 1882, Chandramukhi Basu and Kadambini Ganguly, passed the examination of the bachelor's degree in arts from University of Calcutta in India. Their formal degrees were handed during the convocation of the University in 1883. They were the first two graduates of the entire British Empire, which includes the United Kingdom. (Some interesting facts on this issue are presented in the Appendix at the end of the article.) The first woman graduate from Bombay University was Cornelia Sorabjee in 1888. Women's education in Bengal and India lagged significantly behind the great strides taking place like the Bengali Renaissance and the opening of the universities of Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras. However, for women, the mainstream Hindu society was mired in prejudices and superstitions. For girls to be married off by the age twelve or thirteen, receiving an education was often considered an anathema, sometimes even a sin. But by the middle of the nineteenth century, liberal Indian minds (obviously men) imbued with western thoughts and values started feeling the serious deficiency. Some of these men, among the British administrators, also felt the need to spread women's education.²

Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar –Ishwar Chandra Bandyopadhyay (1820-1891) was one of the key figures of India's renaissance in the nineteenth century. He worked wholeheartedly for women's empowerment and prosperity. He was an academician, a thinker and a scholar par excellence. It was due to his vast erudition that the title of Vidyasagar – the sea of knowledge was conferred on him. Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar was a man of multi-dimensional personality. Besides being a great scholar, he was also a leading social reformer. Particularly, women's regeneration formed the nucleus of his ideals and works related to his social reform programmes. He studied the social status and honour women enjoyed in the past. He also analysed the root causes of their pitiable condition in his own time and came to the conclusion that for the restoration of their freedom, due honour and respect, and to bring them within the ambit of equality, it would be necessary to get women out of the hardship of social evils and malpractices. He laid emphasis on education among women. Women, due to lack of education were in the grip of social malpractices. Therefore, they were deprived of their human rights and were, in fact, totally unaware of the purpose of life. Education, in the words of Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar himself "...is the priceless treasure (of life). Just its arrival not only ascertains welfare

at individual level, but paves the way for large scale development of the society.” Dealing with education and its basic spirit at the root, i.e., the realisation and development of virtues within everyone equally, Vidyasagar started his social movement from Bengal in both the fields – women’s education and getting them out of the grip of social evils, and thus, became a champion of social reform. His endeavours for women’s upliftment, welfare, empowerment and elevation proved to be a milestone, and he became a great source of inspiration for people. The social condition of women, especially within Hindus was pitiable in those days. Social evils were, as has been mentioned, responsible for a hell-like situation for women all over the country. Those malpractices were framed by male-dominated society.³

English education in India has its foundation in the 18th century. The missionaries came to India with the East India Company and various measures were adopted to educate the local population. The missionary activities also included conversion to Christianity and as such the Indian population was weary of the education given by them. In 1773 Warren Hastings established the foundation of British Education. The controversy was generated because of the education being Western in its content and delivery. Thomas Babington Macaulay gave his famous Minutes in 1835. Another issue besides religion was the medium of instruction. Vernacular medium was the demand by Indian educationists whereas the British wanted it to be through the language of English. The problem encountered by the British in the field of female education was still more serious. The ‘purdah’ system, the system of child marriage and the general indifference of parents to the education of their daughters acted as a check to the progress of female education. A girl child was believed to be much different, as far as her education was concerned, from a boy child. Girls were not required to be independent of their established customs and domestic duties. Her general appearance was the main criteria in being selected as a bride. The desire to get their boys educated was openly expressed but girls were good if they stayed at home. There was a rigid seclusion of women. These causes prevented even the elementary education from being given to girls.⁴

After time, the Brahmo families led the way towards a slowly broken down resistance. In 1888, the Bethune School of 136 students had 87 Brahmos, 44 Hindus, and 5 Christians. Bethune College was started in 1879

with Kadambini Bose as the only student. There was also a burst of publications of Bengali periodicals like *Prabashi* and *Bharatbarsha* which contributed heavily to the enrichment of the Bengali women's minds, if they were lettered. They could read them in the confines of their 'shoshurbaris,' often clandestinely. Now back to Chandramukhi and Kadambini. Chandramukhi Bose was a Bengali Christian born in Dehra Dun in 1860. In 1876, because of the discriminatory official stances towards gender, she had to be given special permission to appear for the F.A. examination. As the only girl to appear that year, she had ranked first. Knowing this fact, the university held a series of meetings to decide whether her results could be published. Only the university's changed resolution in 1878 allowed her to study further. Along with Kadambini Ganguly, she then moved to Bethune College for the degree course. After her graduation, she was the first woman to pass MA from the University of Calcutta and from the British Empire in 1884. Beyond this feat, Chandramukhi Bose became the first Principal of Bethune College in 1888, retiring in 1901 due to ill health. She married Pandit Keswaranand Mamgayen in 1903, and died in Dehra Dun in 1940. Her two sisters, Bidhumukhi and Bindubasini, were two of the earliest graduates of Calcutta Medical College in 1890 and 1891, respectively. The life of Kadambini Ganguly (nee Bose) was even more eventful. Kadambini was born in Bhagalpur, Bihar in 1861, the daughter of a Brahmo reformer. After obtaining a B.A. degree in 1883, she married Dwarkanath Ganguli. She also entered the Calcutta Medical College the same year. In 1886, she qualified as a medical doctor, one of the first two Indian women doctors qualified to practice western medicine (the other was Anandi Gopal Joshi – more on her later). Kadambini went to the United Kingdom in 1892 and returned to India after qualifying in LRCP (Edinburgh), LRCS (Glasgow), and GFPS (Dublin). After working for a short period in Lady Dufferin Hospital, she started her own private practice. Astonishingly, she held the dual responsibility of raising eight children as well as a professional practice. In addition, she and her husband were actively involved in female emancipation and social movements. She was one of the six female delegates to the fifth session of the Indian National Congress in 1889 and even organized the Women's Conference in Calcutta in 1906 in the aftermath of the partition of Bengal. Kadambini Ganguly died in 1923. (I have read somewhere that the first ten female graduates of Calcutta University were all Brahmos or Christians – no mainstream Hindus) Anandi Gopal Joshi

was born in an orthodox Marathi Brahmin family in 1865. She was married at the age of nine. At fourteen years old, Anandibai gave birth to a boy. But the child lived only ten days because necessary medical care was unavailable. This situation proved a turning point in Anandibai's life and inspired her to become a physician. At the age of nineteen, with the help and inspiration of her liberal minded husband Gopalrao and some American benefactors, she could enroll in the Women's Medical College of Pennsylvania. While in America, she contracted tuberculosis. Nevertheless, she graduated with an MD on March 11th, 1886. Anandibai returned to India in late 1886. She was appointed the physician-in-charge of the female ward of the local Albert Edward Hospital in Kohlapur, Maharashtra. Anandibai died early next year on February 26th, 1887, before turning twenty-two. The history of women's education in Bengal would be incomplete without mentioning two girls schools of a different genre and different perspective. One such school is the Mahakali Pathshala established in 1893 by Mataji Gangabai.⁵

By the turn of the century, and precisely around the time when the male nationalist resolution into the 'home' as distinct from the 'world' was reaching its zenith with the rise of extremist nationalism, women were doing even more unusual things. They attended schools which began to develop in the metropolitan cities from the mid-nineteenth centuries, and which took them away from the domestic confines and the control of kinship networks, giving them a public identity beyond the familial. They were also admitted in the colleges and universities, receiving degrees in the sciences and arts, much earlier than the English women were allowed those in Britain. Some of them went abroad for medical training and a few of them took up employment as teachers and doctors. (S. Sarkar and T. Sarkar 6) Sumit Sarkar and Tanika Sarkar, in their "Introduction" to *Women and Social Reform in Modern India*, marked the growing participation of women in the urban education system. Women's coming into the realm of public affairs began with the initiation of their education in the formal public schools. Sending a girl child to school necessitated the disavowal of the traditional custom of purda or the veil. This unveiling of Bengali woman generated sharply divided opinions -while it faced the wrath of the traditionalists, it won the support of the progressive Brahmo and Hindu males. The following lampoon by Iswar Gupta represents the traditionalist perspective on women's education and the prospect of their subsequent emancipation: When the women took the books in their hands smartly, they, learning the 'A B', fashioning as

Bibi, talk in the foreign tongue. They end up handing the forks and spoons, forget to eat sitting in a piri. They will drive on their own car to relax in the Garer Math saying 'hoot' they wear the 'boot'; they will go to heaven by smoking 'chooroot'[6]. (111-112) This lampoon clearly indicates the interface between women's education, the process of their "unveiling" and their free movements in the public space. It mirrors the traditionalist voice against women's education as it was at odds with the custom of veiling and confinement within the domestic space. The oppositional voice, presented by the progressive Brahmo and Hindu reformers like Monmohon Ghosh, Satyendranath Tagore, Sashipada Bandopadhyay, Umeshchandra Banerjee, Dwarkanath Ganguly, Kishorchand Mitra, realized the essential connection between women's education and their freedom. Kaliprasanna Singha asserted in *Narijati Bishayak Prastab* (Proposal about Women): If it is expectable that women will be educated, I cannot understand why they are not expected to be free. Without freedom, one cannot be properly educated. Female education, which was the outcome of the colonial as well as nationalist reformist strategies, in spite of all the limitations, undeniably, engendered the first flutters of women's voices. It gave Bengali women the first taste of freedom. However, not all women were privileged enough to enjoy the fruit of the social reform movements. The women who crossed the thresholds of the domestic education to study in formal educational institutions- schools, colleges and even universities, belonged to the upper and middle classes of the social strata, and were protected by their supportive families—their progressive fathers and husbands who stood by them. Those women who enjoyed the fruits of formal education in the second half of the nineteenth century achieved remarkably in the professional and academic fields. Chandramukhi Bose (1860-1944) and Kadambini Ganguly (1861-1923) were the first graduates of the University of Calcutta, and Kadambini even succeeded in becoming the first professional female doctor. These successes which the Bengali women attained through formal education opened up potential challenges for the new patriarchy, comprising the modern, middle class urban elites, as women now intruded into the professional public spaces that were designat .⁶

Critical engagements like the first autobiography written by a Bengali woman, *Rasasundari Devi*, and the non-fictions by *Kailashbasini Devi*, *Krishnabhabini Das*, and other women writers in the second half of the nineteenth century contested the imagined idealization of the Hindu

domesticity and conjugality as spaces of loveableness and spiritual commitment. They criticized coercion in child-marriages and the forceful injunctions of the Hindu scriptures on both married and widowed women. Such rhetoric of quasi empowerment needs to be disaggregated to perpetuate issues of 'double colonization,' 'dual-hold' in feminism in India. The question is whether there can be any grounds of women's agency in the Indian tradition. Eurocentric critiques are ill-equipped to politicize all modalities of a culture of social exclusion in Hindu imaginaries. Henceforth, as questions of equality, emancipation, and empowerment are fiercely debated in the public domain in contemporary India, we need to argue how immanent dissenting woman subjectivity can originate to counteract multiple patriarchies formed in Indian immediacies.⁷

Women's empowerment in Bengal as well as in India is heavily dependent on many different variables that include geographical location (urban/rural), educational status, social status (caste and class), and age. Policies on women's empowerment exist at the national, state, and local (Panchayat) levels in many sectors, including health, education, economic opportunities, gender-based violence, and political participation. However, there are significant gaps between policy advancements and actual practice at the community level. One key factor for the gap in implementation of laws and policies¹ to address discrimination, economic disadvantages, and violence against women at the community level is the largely patriarchal structure that governs the community and households in much of India. As such, women and girls have restricted mobility, access to education, access to health facilities, and lower decision-making power, and experience higher rates of violence. Political participation is also hindered at the Panchayat (local governing bodies) level and at the state and national levels, despite existing reservations for women.² The impact of the patriarchal structure can be seen in rural and urban India, although women's empowerment in rural India is much less visible than in urban areas. This is of particular concern, since much of India is rural despite the high rate of urbanization and expansion of cities. Rural women, as opposed to women in urban settings, face inequality at much higher rates, and in all spheres of life. Urban women and, in particular, urban educated women enjoy relatively higher access to economic opportunities, health and education, and experience less domestic violence. Women (both urban and rural) who have some level of education have higher decision-making power in the household

and the community. Furthermore, the level of women's education also has a direct implication on maternal mortality rates, and nutrition and health indicators among children.⁸

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Women Disability: Educational and Cultural Development in The Perspective of West Bengal From 1947 – Till Date

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ABSTRACT : The disability studies has gained a great popularity in India and abroad . This flow of the subject has got momentum in the last decade .In the beginning of 1996 a law was enacted in India about the handicapped persons namely *“Equal Opportunity, Protection And Full Participation Act 1995”*, popularly known as *Handicapped Law* ,. But the main weakness of the Law is that is almost silent about the social significance and the gain of society if they are brought to the mainstream of society . According to the Law of the full participation of handicapped people of the Asia and pacific Region should scope of equal opportunity. As India signed the agreement so this Law was enacted with a view to abide by the points of agreement . But only the enactment of Law is not enough to solve the problems as in our Society . The right of women are limited and neglected in the true sense of the term . So this Law will not be able to remove the women disabilities - I think: In course of time the development of handicapped women their real condition will open a new casement .But it is a matter of great regret that in the Study of mainstream history the subject of women disability is neglected constantly.

So the question spontaneously appears in my mind although the subject of women disability is discussed in the perspective of sociology is commonly related with law , religion , psychology , education , political science , international relation and above all history . From the middle of the 20th Century the different categories of people entered into the area of social historical studies in India and International field. The historical studies became a point of study not only of the farmer and labourers but also the refugees , children ,women , scheduled caste and tribes ,and the environmental appeared in the preview of the subject . In 1980 the marginal people of society entered into the subject matter of historical studies but only the study of the handicapped aside specially the women disabilities . It is a matter of great concern why the study of women disabilities did not get entry in the history .So it is a burning question why in the mainstream historical studies and humanities studies the handicapped women are neglected?.

Keywords : *Disability, Education, Culture, Society*

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From the 90's of 19th century the disability studies have gained great popularity in India and abroad. This flow of the subject has got momentum in the last decade. In the beginning of 1996 a law was enacted in India about the disabled persons namely "Persons of Disability (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act 1995" popularly known as 'Handicapped Law'.

But the main weakness of the law is that it is always silent about the social significance and the gain of society if there brought to main stream of history. According to the law the full participation of the handicapped people of the Asia and Pacific Region should have the scope of the equal opportunity. ¹As India signed the agreement, so this law was enacted with a view to abide by the points of agreement. But only the enactment of law is not enough to solve the problem as in our society. The rights of women are limited and neglected in the true sense of the term. So, this law will not be able to remove the women disability - I think. In course of time the development of disabled women and the real condition will open a new casement. But it is matter of great regret that in the study of main stream history, the subject of women disability is neglected constantly. So, the question spontaneously appears in my mind although the subject of women disability is discussing the perspective of sociology it is commonly related with law, religion, physiology, education, political science, international relation and above all history.

From the middle of the 20th century the different categories of people entered into the area of social historical study in India and international filed. The historical studies became a point of study not only of the peasants and labourers but also the refugees, children, women, scheduled caste and tribe and the environmentalist appeared in the purview of the subject. In 1980's the marginal people of the society entered into the subject matter of historical studies but only the study of disability aside specially the women disabilities. It is a matter of great concern why the study of women disabilities did not get entry in the history. So it is a burning question why in the main stream historical studies and in the studies of humanities disabled women are neglected?

Long term ago Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay regretted by saying "The Bengalese have no history"², I feel the same at the beginning of my research work that the disabled women have no history. Bankim Chandra appeal to

the people of Bengal by saying “The history of Bengalee will be written by you and me”. I think if Bankim Chandra was alive till date he must say that the disabled women will write their history. With this perception I want to start my research work but undoubtedly, I feel that I shall have to face many problems in this regard. The privileges received by the disabled women by the state are so meagre that they never appear in the statistics and investigation in the public domain. Why the disabled women do not find place in the historical studies? - may be a matter of discussion. The reason is the scarcity of data. But according to my opinion it is partly true not fully. There is a standing perception in the Indian society that the women are particularly disabled³. So, the main problem is a tendency not to understand disabled women. Every day with the open roads we face many successful disabled women in their respective workplace. We call that they are successful based on indomitable mental spirit, the gift of god and the kindness of all mighty God, etc. But we don't think how they are well placed in the perspective of Indian society. So, the past study of them becomes compulsory.

In India the special law for the handicapped people in 1995 added momentum to the movement of the upliftment of the disabled persons. With this act the disabled women in India became more and more aware to gain their rights. But in recent times we can see that disabled women can be a person in the struggle to acquire social political and economic rights. This struggle is initiated by the non-government organizations. Surely there is a long-standing tradition behind this movement. The Indian government has taken an indifferent outlook in regard to the disabled women in the post-independence period. But the nature of this indifference is not a one-way affair. Actually, the concept of the welfare of the women disability is not considered by the state directly as efforts have been undertaken for the upliftment of the Schedule Cast and Tribes. On the contrary the tendency to avoid main problem is noticed. So, in the majority of cases we had to depend on the efforts of non-governmental organizations and the same picture is still same recently in West Bengal and all over India. Some governmental and non-governmental organization in West Bengal are given below ⁴:

- 1) Society for Mental Health Care
Khjurdihi, Katwa, Burdwan.
- 2) National Institute for the Orthopedic Handicapped
Bon Hoogly, Kolkata – 700090

- 3) National Institute for Mentally Handicapped,
Bon Hoogly, Kolkata – 700090
- 4) Indian Institute for Cerebral Palsy
Taratalla Road, Kolkata – 700088
- 5) Monovikas Kendra, Rehabilitation and Research Institute for the
Handicapped
Eastern Metropolitan Bypass, Kolkata – 700107.
- 6) Alakendu Bodh Niketan,
Kankurgachi, Kolkata – 700054.
- 7) Speech and Hearing Institute and Research Center,
Mandevilla Garden, Kolkata – 700019.
- 8) Shelter
Kalabati Lane, Bhadreswar, Hooghly.
- 9) Institute for Social Work, Vocational Training Centers for Distress
Women, Salt Lake, Kolkata – 700164.
- 10) Asha Bhavan Center,
Ulberia, Howrah.
- 11) Bikash Bharati Welfare Centre,
Lalbazar, Kolkata – 700001.
- 12) Missionaries of Charity,
AJC Bose Road, Kolkata – 700014.

But the performance of these organizations regarding disabled women is not credible. Even in 21st Century despite Parliament are there.

In 2014 in the law, to protect handicapped female children and women a special chapter is added. In the added chapter it is said that the disabled women and children often face violence indecent treatment, neglect and objectionable behaviour in a home and outside⁵. These are to be detected. In this context the question of women disability came to the limelight of discussion.

So, in the first decade of the 21st Century in India a special consciousness developed in harmony with the international developing outlook. Nowadays

a disabled woman began to express their problem and so the theory “Nothing about us, without us” - awareness is popularized. I can produce an example – Twin sisters Pragna and Prachi who are blind by birth brought to light through a book named “The Light Within: A different vision of life”. The book was published in a function in New Delhi, the distinguished guests, like Pranab Mukherjee, the President of India and Lalkrishna Advani was present on this occasion. The books consist of a collection of photographs, the photographs were taken by Shipra Das, who earlier worked in Anandabazar Patrika, The Ajkal, PTI and India Today, 1989. In the book ‘The Light Within’ sympathy is shown to the handicapped⁶. The pictures express the belief and steadfastness of the disabled men and women. Some of the disabled women are depicted in these pictures, such as the pictures of Sangeeta who manages a school in Mujaffarnagar, Kanhaiya Devi who works as a Nurse’ the mountaineer Rinku Lahiri and Purbi Munda who work as doctors. In this book it is shown that disabled women are not separated from the society and on many cases, they earn livelihood in good manner.

I think this book will work like the good books of “The Other Senses: an inspiring true story of a visually impaired” by Prity Monga⁷ or “Lights Out” by L. Subramania, it is noted that in the book of Shipra Das there were no characters like super models or hero. But there are episodes of some women who overcame their disability. In this context we can recall the name of Helen Keller, one of the world-famous women. She worked in the field of women movement, labour struggle and anti-war movement.

It is to be noted that the during the post independent period in India and specially in West Bengal the subject of disabled women remains neglected⁸. But on the whole the subject of the disabled people was not un-discussed in our conscious thoughtful world. In 1974 in Great Britain an organization was formed named Union of Physically Impaired against segregation UPIAS. The organization at first started a movement to bring the disabled in the main stream of social and political atmosphere to acquire equal rights.

In 1990, in India also a partial effort was initiated with the Governmental venture, although in 1955 in the book “Social welfare in India” two essays were published by the venture of Jawahalal Neheru, the Ex-Prime Minister of India, taken by Government for the people. At first the book ‘The Deaf and Blind in India’ written by the blind author Amla Lal Advani, informed

us about the welfare project undertaken by the Government of India for the deaf and blind persons. Smt. Fatema Ismail wrote a book about the social and family problems of the victims of physical and locomotor disabled children. But in this book the subject of women disability did not find special importance, or the problems of disabled women were discussed but the importance of the social and political opportunity remain undiscussed.

In the silver jubilee celebration of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, a book was published and edited by A. R. Wadia. In that book two essays were written about disability and their upliftment. In those two essays about A. Anesur and J C Sarkaria pointed about the proper treatment of Indian disabled women. These two were physicians in profession and they lived in England for a long period of time. They tried to present a statistical data about the disabled persons under the British colonial rule and in the first decade after independence. But the defect of the essays is that we don't get the picture of all round and realistic disability in Indian women. In 1963 Usha Bhat, a research fellow in Mumbai University wrote a book named wrote a book named "The Physically Handicapped in India: Growing National Problem". This book is an important reference, she discussed elaborately in this book how the disabled persons can be brought to light in the social situation by education and technical training.

Initially all research works were Mumbai centered. But later it became Delhi centered. In West Bengal the subject study faced many problems and the same can be said about West Bihar and Jharkhand. The reason is that the social problems of this women were deported. In the perspectives of West Bengal, discussions are rare about disabled women. In the last decade of 19th Century two separate special schools were established. They were Calcutta Deaf and Dum School, 1893 and Calcutta Blind School, 1894. In these two schools disabled women were admitted. In 1985 there was convention of State Handicapped persons. In West Bengal in 1956 the first organization of Indian Blind Persons Association was established under the leadership of Mr. Nagendranath Sengupta. In spite of that it can be said in the area of academic research the subject of disabled women is neglected. One of the reasons was that there is no proper representative of a disabled woman in the Assembly and Parliament. In the environmental structures also, we see the lack of study about the disabled women. We must keep it in mind that the disabled in India along with West Bengal live in

indescribable condition. We cannot see a simple day whether in the media that we fail to find the description of torture on the disabled women. Till date about 70 cases of torture on the disabled women are published in the newspapers.

So, it can be said undoubtedly that research works on disabled women has become a prime need of the house. To sum up my discussion I can say this only “most helpless people in this world are disabled. No disabled man can give birth to disabled man. Only able man can give birth to a disabled man.???/Able man makes a man disabled by hitting. Able man through accidents and suffering from various diseases becomes disabled. When a man or woman suddenly becomes disabled facing severe injuries which give him or her a pain more than death, the dignity of man is lost specially if a woman becomes disabled. Able man dashes them to this level. Even they are not pronounced as a man. In reality the percentage of reservation of the handicapped person in government services is less than the requirement for the solution of the problem as well as rehabilitation of handicapped persons three things are very much needed –

- 1) Separate Handicapped Welfare Ministry in Central and States which will deal with the problems of the handicapped and make ways to solve.
- 2) A Special Law against any sorts of harassments and cruelty towards the handicapped persons should be enacted.
- 3) In order to empower and to increase the honour, prestige, dignity and equality three or four percent reservations from the Parliament to Panchayat according to the law of the equal opportunities of the handicapped persons.

Opportunity from Parliament to Panchayat is urgently needed. Handicapped persons are willing to be a part of nation. It is our responsibility to convey the Government to consider the matters according to its means. It is our concerted effort that can bring light to their life.

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Female Labourers of Bengal (1940-1970)

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ABSTRACT : Post colonial period saw emergence of bengali women labourers in different sectors such as in the jute mills, coal mines as white collar employees, as agrarian labour, in tea plantations. In parallel with the mainstream national movement the continuous struggle if the female labourers is focused. With the non cooperation movement, civil disobedience movement, quit India movement tebhagha movement women revolutionaries, women labourers and freedom fighters came to the forefront. Some died some fought against the Britishers.

Post colonial India saw the introduction of certain laws beneficial for the protection of women labourers. Along with this there was the role played by CPI(M), Naxalites. Formation of several women headed and membered labour unions which fought against the atrocities of women labourers of Bengal. Many associations that were formed in post 1947 period absorbed women labour candidates such as the Khetmajur Samiti, Bengal Trade Union Congress, Kisansabha, Local Mahila Ganatantrik Samiti, Refe Committee, Cha Bagan Mazdoor Union, AITUC, INTUC, UTUC, HMS,. The Tea planters Association and so on. Literacy rate, women labourer mortality rate, infant marriage rates were common. Interestingly some of the women labourers movements had its own significance. Many activists in women movement. Revolutionary women labourers, rural women and female labourers played a significant role in the struggle and journey of women labourers during 1940-1970 in Bengal case study.

Keyword : *towards equality, nationalist movement, tea plantation, peasant women, agrarian movement.*

History has always been His story, Her story lacks sources. This continuous lacuna or paucity of sources has often forced historians to highlight only on one aspect of history leaving behind the gender or feminist aspect in history. But, the truth is from the ancient period in India women labourers had always been employed with lesser wages/salary than male labourers. Women labourers had always played a dual role that of a worker/labourer and the other as a home maker sometimes as domestic labourers, or agricultural labourers, in jute mills, cotton industries, tea gardens, in mines,

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bidi factories, construction sites, as prostitutes, jharudarni, domestic servants, etc.¹

Report from “Towards Equality” suggests women labourers had suffered many mishaps. They not only fought for their bread but also for their equal wages/equal income, for maternity leave, fight against several exploitation in their workplace and so on. The women committee Report highlighted on the status of women during the colonial and post colonial period in India. Post colonial India saw some Bengali women employed as clerks, typists, receptionists, doctors, nurses, teachers, social workers and academics. Also, women in Bengal were employed as labourers in cotton – textiles, leather, leather products, silk textiles, non-metallic mineral product glassware, etc.²

Bengali women labourers between 1911 – 1951 were employed in industries of foodstuffs, beverages, tobacco, cotton textiles, jute textiles, woolen textiles, silk textiles, miscellaneous textiles, wool products, printing/publishing, leather, rubber, petroleum, coal, chemical making, non-metallic minerals, machinery, electrical equipment, transport, etc.³.

Mother workers faced difficulty to rear children and keep their jobs. Males dominated the trade unions. Women labourers migrated to Bengal from Bihar, Orissa, Central Provinces, United Provinces, Nepal, Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri, Chota Nagpur for working in the Jute Mills. In 1911 the santhals and Bauris also migrated to Bengal for work which included 6,618 women. In the tea gardens of Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling 64,661 female workers were employed. Dooars gardens had 57,959 female workers. Several acts were passed for the betterment of female labourers such as the plantation labour Act of 1951, Maternity Benefits Act of 1961, Equal Remuneration Act of 1976⁴.

In 1975, a Report on the status of Women was published which highlighted the condition of women labourers from 1911 to 1951. This report pointed to a decline in women cultivators from 18.3 Million in 1911 to 9.2 million in 1951. Female cultivators’ number was higher in Nadia, Hooghly, Burdwan, Birbhum. The N.S.S. highlighted on the extent of disguised unemployment or under employment among women. Married women preferred to work in domestic household sectors rather than in industries such as in Dairy, Poultry, animal husbandry, spinning and wearing, tailoring.

In West Bengal, the membership of the C.P.I. dominated Khetmajur Samity (Agricultural Labourers Organisation) founded in 1968 increased from 35,055 in 1978-79 to 56,355 in 1980-81. Communist dominated Kisan Sabha concentrated since the Tebhaga Movement of 1946-1947 on organizing bargadars and agricultural labourers for the occupation of surplus land.⁵

National Movement among Bengali Women labourers

The All India Women's Conference was founded in 1927. It had 137 branches and members of about 25,000 in 1947. Leadership came from the Nationalist leaders like Sarojini Naidu, Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya, Saraladevi, Rameshwari Nehru, Hans Mehta. It campaigned for Hindu law reforms in its session in 1940. It gradually formed the Mohila Sangha. In Bengal 9,70,003 women were enfranchised. With Gandhiji's launching of the non co-operation movement women volunteers clad in Khaddar saris and Khaddar blouses sold khadi cloth in the Calcutta Streets. Basanti Devi, wife of C.R.Das and Urmila Devi, sister of C.R. Das were arrested. Karma Mandir was the women's wing of the non-co-operation movement. In Midnapore in regions of Contai and Tamluk no tax movement was launched by the women. Atma Sakti was published during Civil Disobedience Movement in Calcutta. Nari Satyagraha Samity was established. Movement took place in Tamluk, Contai and Ghatal. 2 Girl students Santi and Suniti killed the District Magistrate of Commilla in his bungalow and were arrested. Hundreds of women were activists/sympathizers of the revolutionary movement in Chittagong like Kalpana Datta, Pritilata Waddadar lived underground with the revolutionaries. In 1942 with quit India Movement women of Tamluk, Contai became rebellious. Matangini Hazra played an important role. The Vidyut Bahini was composed of women. When the famine hit Bengal in 1943, not only the Jamine Commission was formed. Also, the Mohila Atmaraksha Samiti was formed in 1943. By 1944, the MARS had 390 units in 25 districts, in Calcutta it had 13 units and 43000 members 51 delegates. Role of Manikuntala Sen, Nellie Sengupta, Indira Devi Chaudhurani, Prabhabati Devi Saraswati, Babli Sarkar, Rani Mahalanobish Ela reid cannot be overlooked.⁶

Agrarian Movements and Bengali female Labourers

The role of Tebhagha Movement in districts of Dinajpur, Rangpur and Jalpaiguri over the Bargadars who were mainly Rajbansis, Santals and

Muslims brought many women labourers who became revolutionaries to the forefront. Tebhaga Movement spread to Midnapore, 24 Parganas, Tamluk, Ghatal, Kakdip, Mathurapur. East Bengal had communal riots. The problem with 'Khamar' remained. Tribal women peasants took part in the Tanka movement in North Mymensingh under the Garo Hills. The Bengal Bargadars Temporary Regulation Bill was launched. Movements such as the Kholan Bhang movement started. Hindu Mahasabha started agitation for partition. The communist dominated Bengal Trade Union Congress which gave the call of a general strike on 28th March. Mohila Samiti took part in the Tebhaga movement. Tebhaga spreaded to 24 Parganas, in the Dooars in Jalpaiguri. On 27th April, 1949, the MARS held a meeting in Calcutta where the release of political prisoners was demanded. In the meanwhile the railway strike on 9th March, 1949 paralysed Bengal. Many activists were arrested for it. Tebhaga Movement had many prisoners such as Bimala, Monikuntala, Monorama, Jyotsna Bhowmick, Ila Bose, etc. Many women labourers were killed at Chandanpiri and Budhakhali⁷.

CPI led Kisan Sabha organized partial struggles in some parts of the country. 1948-51 saw the concept of united national front there were elections in West Bengal in which the CPI won C.P.I. splitted in 1962 and CPI(M) formed a single party with 88 seats. In 1959 the Kisan Sabha held a peasant demonstration in Calcutta the land struggle was intense in 24 Parganas, Midnapore, Sonarpur, Bhangar, Canning, Hawrah, Sandeshkhali, Mathurapur. From 1947 onwards peasant women were mobilized in land struggles. Local Mohila Ganatantrik Samiti was formed with leaders like Pranati Bhattacharya, Manju chakraborty. State Kisan Sabha fought in the Kakdip region, in Budhakhali village. The Mahila Ganatantrik Samiti was formed and 117, 239 bardardas were recorded under operation barga. Kisan Sabha dealt with the 'benami' lands of Midnapore. Geeta Mukherjee played a significant role. Lakshmibala Doloi, Giribala Seth, Nirupama Chatterjee, Mabukta Khatun played prominent role in this case.⁸

Naxalite Insurgency and peasant women

In 1967, the Naxalites were splitting away from the Communist Movement. In May, 1969, the Naxalites formed the C.P.I. (ML). Kanu Sanyal was one of the architects of the Naxalbari struggle. Charu Majumdar, Kanu Sanyal, Sourin Bose, Jangal Senthall, Kisan Chatterjee, Dilip Bagchi, Pabitra Rani Saha were famous Naxalites who attacked on Police Station such as

the Pansidewa, Kharibari, Naxalbari Murder of Roy Chaudhuri, formation of Land Reform Committees all added flabour to the Naxalite Movement C.P.I. led Kisan Sabha with 44 leaders. It had 528 members. Some Naxalite women were killed by the police such as Dhaneshwari Singh, Sonamati Singh, Phulmati Singh, Surubala Burman, Suniti Biswanath Karmakar, Nayaneswari Mallick. The Ganatantrik Mohila Samiti was dominated by C.P.I. (M) had 1650 members.⁹

Labour Movement and Female Labourers in Plantations

The Assam Bengal Railway was formed in 1892 was quite significant for the trade of tea, silk in Bengal. The doars in Jalpaiguri District had eleven tea companies formed between 1879 and 1910. Several tea magnates were Jadav Chakraborty, Gopal Ghosh, Ashoke Ray, B.P. Singh Roy, S.K. Dutt, A.N. Chaudhury, A.K. Mukherjee, Labour in the Doars was recruited from the Chotanagpur, Santal, Tribal peasants from Orissa, Madras, Central Provinces. Female labourers formed 50% of the labour force in the tea gardens. There were 378 tea plantations in the Doars and Darjeeling gardens, 363 in the Assam Dooars and Darjeeling Gardens, 363 in the Assam Plantations. Rege Committee was formed to look after women labourers in tea estate. Tribal women, Oraon women, Nepali women formed the labour class. The Industrial Disputes Act, Minimum Wages Act were formed for these women labourers. The Darjeeling tea garden workers Union was formed in 1945. Several strikes occurred. In the Dooars, the Cha Bagan Mazdoor Union was formed in 1946 which was later on affiliated to the AITUC. From 1951 onwards the labourers on the Dooars Gardens organized a series of partial struggles. There were 281 strikes in 1953. The tea planters Associaton issued several reports Griffiths tells us that the employees remained in the strike for no less than 3 weeks. They demanded bonus. They set up many political parties like the Indian National Trade Union Congress, Hindu Mazdoor Sabha, United Trade Union Congress. Also AITUC, INTUC, UTUC and HMS formed part of tea plantation women workers. Hartals, Gherao took place very often. The second wage fixation Committee announced for the rise in wages of workers. But for the daily wage labourers pay was fixed at Rs.6.50 per day. Maili Chetri was a famous activist. So were Niaro Orain, Amrita Thapa, Victoria Kharia, and Kalabati Pradhan.¹⁰

Other Issues

Literacy rate was extremely low among the women labourers in the rural area. In Bengal it was 14.63% in 1961. Marriage rate of women below age 15 years was very common. The Congress Agrarian Reforms Committee was formed which formed 2 plans for agricultural improvement. The left front Government also had contributed to it. The Panchayats at the village level played a dominant role in this case. Women Panchayats, Zila Parishads were also formed.¹¹

Significance of the Women Labourers Movements

Ulgulun led by Birsa Munda stirred the women. The Bardoli Satyagraha, the Tanka Movement, Naxalbari struggle, strike movements, Unionization, role of women labourers, Mahila Samiti, Pradesh Congress Mohila Samiti, Nikhil Banga Mahila Sangha, Mahila Sanskritik Sangha, Agrabami Mahila Samiti, C.P.I. dominated Mahila Samiti (MARS) all had its own significance. Also the C.P.I. (M) formed the Paschim Banga Ganatantrik Mohila Samiti, the Progressive organization of Women, the Shahada Movement all had a significant role to play.¹²

Some of the Activists in students and women's movements were Renu Chakraborty, Manikuntala Sen, Kamala Mukherjee, Latika Sen, Bela Lahiri, Kanak Mukherjee, Sudha Roy, Sova Majumdar, Geeta Banerjee, Santi Pradhan, Juiphul Ray, Geeta Mukherjee, Pankaj Acharya, Dr. Alaka Chatterjee, Ila Mitra, Rani Das Gupta, Bina Guha, Kalyani Das Gupta, Nirupama Chatterjee, Dr. Ila Basu, Dr. Bina Ray, Uma Schanofish, Meera Chatterjee, Bani Das Gupta, Priti Banerjee, Maya Lahiri, Chinu Chkraborty, Vidya Kanungo, Sipra Sarkar, Bela Banerjee, Naseema Banoo, Sujata Sen, Chaya Das Gupta, Prativa Mukherjee, Sipra Bhowmick, Saswati Ghosh, Hemprava Majumdar, Urmila Devi, Jyotirmoyee Ganguli, Nellie Sengupta, Labanyaprava Datta, Bimal Protima Devi, Lila Roy, Dr. Phulrenu Guha, Purabi Mukherjee, Santi Kabir, Renuka Ray, Manjusree Chatterjee, Abha Maiti, Gauri Ayyut.¹³

The revolutionary women labourers included Bina Das, Kamala Dasgupta, Kalpana Datta, Santi Ghosh, Suniti Chaudhuri, Pritilata Waddedar, Ujjala Majumdar.

Among the rural women and female labourers included Matangini Hazra, Bimala Maji, Gangamani Pattanayak, Charushila Jana, Rajbala Pattanayak, Chabi Panigrahi, Lakshmibala Doloi, Giribala Seth, Sushil Bala Malua, Jyotsna Bhowmick, Punneswari Debba, Mangri Uraoni, Poko Uraoni, Bhandani Burman, Yasodarani Sarkar, Kausalya Kamrani, Prabharani Das, Swarajnandini Sarkar, Pakhibala Sinha, Ahalya Das, Chabi Mandal, Chaya Bera, Jamuna Draon, Sreemati Munda, Mebukta Khatun, Suniti Biswakarma, Nayaneswari Mallick and Dhaneswari Singh.¹⁴

Many more struggles of women labourers continued to exist till date. In all other fields as in jute mills cotton mills, coal mines, iron and steel company among white collar employees, in Government Hospitals, Courts, etc. This fight for own right continued to exist among the women labourers. Fight for safety, freedom from sexual harassment by male colleagues, freedom in dressing sense, are faced by women workers not only in Bengal but all over India. These women labourers faced many ups and downs yet they succeeded in earning bread for their family and also in raising up their children and looking after their family. These women labourers are the real fighters who irrespective of their problems managed to keep up their positions both in their workplace and in their families. Often they migrated in search of jobs to other states. Whenever, inflation or depression occurred these women labourers were the first to lose their jobs. Yet they fought with courage and managed to excel in their lives without fear.

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Swamiji's Monastic order: Collective consciousness and the Benedictine thought

Somnath Mandal

ABSTRACT : Swamiji's establishment of the Ramakrishna Monastic order brought an otherwise unthinkable sense of discipline-it promulgated and ensured a path of service, dedication that worked on the models of social responsibility and awareness.

The paper will look at what influenced the formula and development of Ramakrishna Mission and how finally it became a movement harping on collective social growth and social inclusiveness. An interesting note is that Ramakrishna Mission, an order of Brotherhood was in spirit almost in the line of Benedictine order in the West.(St. Benedict (c. AD 480-550) worked towards developing monks and monastic order under the authority of an Abbot. The main thrust of the order was to 'pray and work' and soon it had become popular throughout Europe. Benedict's concern was to establish a monastic order in a community environment and to formulate a religious order that would neatly bond communities of different lifestyles together: obviously the main focus was to encourage humanistic approach in religion. The influence of the Benedictine order is a suggestion that gains credibility when we look at how the Ramakrishna Mission had worked during community crisis like flood etc. and also helped in social growth and progression since its inception.

Key words: *Ramakrishna Monastic Order, Benedictine Order, social inclusiveness, social progress, community service*

Swami Vivekananda's establishment of the Ramakrishna Monastic order brought an otherwise unthinkable sense of discipline. Wherever it spread – it promulgated and ensured a path of service, dedication that worked on the models of social responsibility and awareness.

When Ramakrishna, Swamiji's spiritual guide, left for heavenly abode in the year 1886, the idea of nationhood in our country was still in the making of the collective consciousness. The very next year after the death of his mentor, when the young disciple, Vivekananda established the Ramakrishna

order, it was not with the intention of promulgating any cult but to create God-consciousness and eradicate dogmatic and oppressive religious views that plagued the society of that time. Vivekananda studied both Indian and western philosophy and these gave him a clear pragmatic understanding stated: "It is we who are responsible for all our misery and all our degradation". Swamiji's call for his countrymen was to learn to work for their own salvation. The first steps were taken by the great monk to awaken his countrymen from slumber and lead them to realize their weaknesses. An inspiration quote of Swamiji in the context is: "to struggle unto life and death to bring about a new state of things – sympathy for the poor, and bread to their hungry mouths, enlightenment to the people at large". Under such inspiration and vision was born the Ramakrishna Mission. An interesting note is that Ramakrishna Mission, an order of Brotherhood was in spirit almost in the line of Benedictine order in the West (St. Benedict (c. AD 480-550) which worked towards developing monks and monastic order under the authority of an Abbot. The main thrust of the order was to 'pray and work' and soon it had become popular throughout Europe. Benedict's concern was to establish a monastic order in a community environment and to formulate a religious order that would neatly bond communities of different lifestyles together: obviously the main focus was to encourage humanistic approach in religion. The influence of the Benedictine order is a suggestion that gains credibility when we look at how the Ramakrishna Mission had worked during community crisis like flood etc. and also helped in social growth and progression since its inception.

One of the primal aims of the paper is to investigate what influenced the formula and development of Ramakrishna Mission and how finally it became a movement that harped on collective social growth and social inclusiveness.

Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Swami Vivekananda happen to be 19th century phenomena who transformed Hindu Religion and culture infusing it with fresh thoughts and ideas that soon nurtured in such a fashion that it found thunderous acceptability from the western educated rationalist minds of the time. Some scholars have seen Ramakrishna and Vivekananda as "Hindu-revivalist" more so specially in the wake of the fact that Hinduism was in erosion and there was large scale conversion amongst the newly Western educated Bengalis into Christianity, the obvious and popular examples being Michael Madhusudhan Dutta, Govind Chander Dutt etc.

On the other hand, popular arguments on the rise of political extremism in the second half of 19th century was not only because of the failures of the Moderates but it was also a fallout of the changing cultural environment that was voraciously advocating the idea of India as nation. The very concept of Indian nation was gaining momentum as many social reform organizations worked towards a more holistic and identity development for example Arya Samaj in 1875, Prarthana Samaj 1867, Brahmo Samaj 1828 etc. These social reforms movement too were influenced by the presence of the western knowledge system and post enlightenment rationalist ideas. The time was apt and thus the Hindu revivalist movement came into formation as rightly concluded by many scholars. Then there were intellectuals as well as social reformers like Bhudev Mukhopadhyaya, Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyaya who played pivotal roles in augmenting and building the social character. In the midst of the sea changes, Swami Vivekananda arrived from Chicago after having created a perception of our motherland very different from what the West was accustomed to seeing India. Though few Europeans had acknowledged the greatness of India by then, Swamiji's sojourn is vital because it affected and touched the minds of commoners too in the West, a revival that worked wonders for the collective thinking of the common Indians too. Scholars have differed in their opinions of Vivekananda as a revivalist but none have denied the universalistic aspects of his teachings.

It is known to all of us that 19th Century Bengal was in a state of flux and change, a kind of renaissance environment was in the air as far as social thoughts and reforms are concerned. Women's education to abolition of Sati had rumbled the once stagnant and dogmatic society. Still India of that time could not see religion completely detached from politics and thus the 'reforms' advocating their acceptability to the educated mind was an agenda in itself. The Ramakrishna-Vivekananda movement of the 1880s emerged in a way that was both accepted by the English educated elites and the lower strata of the society. Ramakrishna Paramahansa who was completely untouched by western education went on to offer simple interpretations of Hinduism that was more rational. In the year 1856 Ramakrishna was appointed as the head priest in the temple of Goddess Kali that was founded by Rani Rashmoni, at Dakshineswar. He propagated that Goddess Kali, whose idol he worshipped was not an image of clay but gave her a humanistic interpretation, thus bringing man and God closer. Also the act of taking up the job as the priest at Dakshineswar for the 'Maar household'

was uprooting the upper caste hegemony in terms of religion. The Maars being businessmen and non-Brahmins – their foray into the socio-religious domain created a stir.

The 19th Century environment invoked reformatory change what many agreed was the age of Renaissance. It was also the time when everything was put under the radar of rational point of view. Scholars like Partha Chatterjee concluded that Ramakrishna's teaching formulated a new religion for the subordinated middle class which happened to be more "appropriated", "sanitized" and "classicized" than the popular traditions.

My paper will now focus on the formative ideas that went into the making of the missionary order that is popularly known as Ramakrishnaite order. This monastic order propagated rational thinking and social development and soon its branches and followers grew all across the globe. Historian Shekhar Bandopadhyay rightly pointed out that "Ramakrishna's catholicity therefore soon came to be projected as an essence of Hinduism and became for his disciple, Vivekananda, a ground for claiming the superiority of Hinduism over all other religions". It is known to all of us that Swamiji founded the Ramakrishna Mission in 1897 as a philanthropic organization built within the monastic order.

Now the question is: where did the idea of the establishment of the monastic order come from and what was the force that created the environment? Swamiji and his followers belonged to the same social background and flowered in the reformatory atmosphere of Renaissance. Obviously, many of the followers were products of English education. Yet these people rejected social and other comforts choosing instead to follow their forefathers and their age old religious traditions. They studied well the Vedas and other religious texts intensely and concluded that a great teacher can only lead one to follow the right path of knowledge. Ramakrishna's followers had confidence in him and followed the path of supreme sacrifice but always had a larger social orientation and betterment in vision. Vivekananda with this deep faith in the soul enriching religion called Hinduism went on to conquer the thought and attention of the West as well as America. After the powerful Chicago speech that saw the world see and embrace India in the light of enlightenment, Swamiji swept America further with a series of lectures. Though Vivekananda had taken to the monastic order, he was deeply respectful to the family structure and bonding

that he acknowledged was the essence of Indian culture. In Ramakrishna, the young monk saw a spiritual father figure. Vivekananda's own father too had been influenced by western education and his mother had received English education. It was his mother who first imparted English education to little Bille. One of the sisters of Vivekananda studied at Bethune school. His parents did raise their voice when the neighbourhood had taken offence to a case of widow remarriage. A young Bille was then growing among these fervours of new thinking and reforms. No wonder, Vivekananda thought that men and women were like two wings of a bird and hence essential for the development of a healthy and progressive society. At the Presidency College, the erstwhile Hindu College saw him read Edward Gibbon's Book on History. The critical thinking mind stood deeply affected by Europe's rise, fall and its journey. Tapan Roy Choudhury noted that probably it is Vivekananda's reading of the European History that set Swamiji thinking about his own nation and its faults – the rise and fall! It is highly probable that Vivekananda came to know about the rise and growth of the Benedictine order in the medieval times that grew out of the need to purify Christianity through his scrutinized reading of European History. Vivekananda was aware of the ecclesiastical history of the church or Christian order as he was of Judaism, Islam and obviously Buddhism. All these in all probability encouraged and influenced Vivekananda to incorporate philanthropy in the monastic order that he formulated. Such a monastic order was also in keeping with the need of the Indian society. In this way, Swamiji hoped to build the feeling of community work and sharing. But then I am forced to suggest that Vivekananda who read widely also the Indian history knew of the structure of the Buddhist monastic order, thus the Benedictine order is not a singular influence or model for the Ramakrishnaite order.

Young Vivekananda who vouched for a strong body and mind became: 'a patron prophet for an entire generation of extremist leaders and militant revolutionaries dreaming of the resurrection of the glorious Hindu India' (Shekar Bandhopadhyay). Swamiji who crisscrossed the country on foot understood the necessity of awakening the minds of his countrymen and help them work together. To then propose that Vivekananda propelled an entire generation to come out of their narrow prejudices and began a journey of reformation, corrective and rightful thinking in terms of the individual as well as the society would not be very wrong, more so as Vivekananda's thoughts still resonate in our times.

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Education and Culture: Some Points to Ponder

Gauri Chattopadhyaya

I must congratulate you the organizers – the intellectual academics, for the important theme of this seminar, which provides a platform for thinkers and researchers to generate creative ideas on education and culture in this phase of global crisis.

It is said that some engineers and bureaucrats of Germany asked Chancellor, Angela Morkel as to why they should not claim equal pay and respect with teachers/professors. To this she said, “How can I place you on the same level as those who taught you?” In several advanced nations of the world, including the USA, only teachers and scientists are regarded as VIPs.

This alone shows how important is the role of teachers in the field of education and their responsibilities towards society. But, we should be very clear at the outset that education is not ‘indoctrination’ imposed by teachers to students, as great contemporary thinker, Noam Chomsky has cautioned. We have to be very creative and come out with original ideas.

In a situation of problem, our task is to go for trouble shooting. A scientific approach is that if something goes wrong in the field of technology – rocket propulsion, for example – one has to revert back to the fundamental laws of nature – Newtonian mechanics in this case. Likewise, if the present world faces crises, derailment from smooth functioning, we should return to history, philosophy and psychology to trace out where we went wrong. A historian’s approach is to revert back to the pristine age without the complex developments like agriculture, territoriality or civilization. So the approach of the present seminar is both interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary.

The sub-theme of this seminar, “Education and Cultural Development – issues and perspectives”, is both pertinent and highly challenging one at the same time. Challenging, because there is little unanimity among scholars

regarding the definitions of modern categories like culture and education. These two categories, ought to be taken as interconnected ones, are understood differently in three distinctive epistemes – pre-modern, modern and post-modern. The modernist approach still dominating academic discourses took its strength from the 19th century developments in Europe – industrial revolution, capitalism and colonialism. It was based on a ‘metaphysics’, that Jacques Derrida tried to deconstruct, according to which the world has been perceived in terms of polar, value-loaded oppositions – subject-object (we-they), presence-absence, culture-nature (equivalent to male-female), civilized-uncivilized etc., one side of which is selectively preferred over the other; the latter is seen as undesirable, hence worth eliminating. This is close to what A. L. Basham said: “the logic of excluded middle”. In a paper I highlighted the following arguments of Donald K. Miller (Chattopadhyaya 2012): the system of logic which the Modern West has been following is based on the principle of either/or; i.e. substitution and exclusion. In contrast, the traditional Indian system, because of the cultural diversity as opposed to homogeneity in the West, follows four-fold logical principles as described in Kautilya’s *Arthashastra*, viz. 1) *Niyoga* (restriction, command, no option), 2) *Vikalpa* (option between possibilities like either/or), 3) *Samuccaya* (combination – an/both logic), and 4) *Uhya* (understanding through revocation in neither/nor sense). In Modern Western thinking only the first two of the above are generally used. It may be pertinent to mention that in a rare moment of crisis in explaining the nature of light – wave or particle – the Danish physicist, Neils Bohr came across an ancient Chinese text *I-tching* (1st century B.C.) in which the so-called opposites like Yin and Yang are understood as two different manifestation of the same reality. He thus interpreted light as ‘both’ wave and particle. This is the same as ‘*samuccaya*’, as mentioned above and led to the famous Copenhagen interpretation of Quantum Theory that brought about a paradigm shift in physics.

According to Dutch historical theorist, Frank Ankersmit (1982), trauma and suffering constitute one of the forgotten sources of 19th century Western historical consciousness. But as the West overcame its suffering on economic level though, the problem was shifted on to the shoulders of the colonized subjects, the issues of historical inquiry too moved away towards ‘identity’ and related politics – we (the Occident) vs. they (the Orient or the Rest) trying to prove racial and intellectual superiority of the West to facilitate

political domination; but it also involved gender discrimination. The term 'culture' emerged in colonial anthropology as an important category to compare and contrast the civilized West and the primitive societies deemed fit to be eliminated from the New World, Australia etc.

Richard Lewontin, Steven Rose and Leon Kamin, the authors of a more recent work, *"Not in Our Genes"* (1990) show how science as an extended metaphor is being used to justify the age-old racial and gender-based biases through the principles of biological determinism to repeat in a hidden way what one cannot say in a literal way.

I. Culture

I begin the issue of culture first, the most nebulous of terms in contemporary usage, defined and understood variously by scholars leading to confusion at its best. The development of ideas on culture from the times of early anthropologists and sociologists through to the postmodern phase has added to confusion, and that is because of the initial fault based on 1) Western metaphysics questioned and deconstructed by Jacques Derrida, and 2) the socio-political agenda defined first, in colonial interests and the more recent mega-project known as 'globalization'.

I.1 The Politics of Culture

Among the enormous efforts of anthropologists in defining culture, I shall discuss the ideas only of two anthropologists, viz., E. B. Tylor (British) and Leslie White (American).

E. B. Tylor, in addressing the issue of the evolution of religion, introduced the dichotomy of higher versus lower culture. Accordingly, it was suggested that religion evolved from polytheistic beliefs, associated with primitive societies to more monotheistic forms, such as Judaism, Christianity. Subsequently, he refers to culture as "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (Tylor 1974/1871).

Leslie White suggested that culture is the human capacity to extract energy from the world and, thus, believed in the technological determinism; i.e. higher the technological advancement, more sophisticated is the culture. Again, culture associated with technology is understood as the domain of male, superior to nature supposed to be the female counterpart. This leads

to superiority of culture (as male) over nature (as female), legitimizing the right of the former to dominate over the latter. This has been an issue of feminist anthropologist of more recent years, but it is beyond the scope of this presentation to elaborate on this point. I shall discuss the matter in the final paper that I shall submit later.

Marx was aware of the politics of culture in the 19th century Europe and America and suggested that culture is controlled by people who control the means of production (the economic base).

Despite various efforts after Tylor, culture is still the least understood category; it was directly linked with identity-politics and used as a socio-political tool for discriminating societies for political domination.

1.2 *Towards a Holistic View of Culture*

In all fairness to Western approaches, we cannot ignore the rare contribution of a German thinker, Adolf Bastian (1826-1905), that paved the way for a holistic understanding of culture. He suggests the “psychic unity of mankind”, irrespective of apparent diversity of human behaviour across the world (Köpping 2005). He proposed that a scientific comparison of all human societies would reveal that distinct worldviews consisted of the same basic elements. According to Bastian, all human societies share a set of “elementary ideas” (*Elementargedanken*); different cultures, or different “folk ideas” (*Völkergedanken*), are local modifications of the elementary ideas (Ellis 2017). This view paved the way for the modern understanding of culture. Franz Boas (1858–1942) was trained in this tradition, and he brought it with him when he left Germany for the United States (Liron 2017). Boas, famous for introducing the potlatch culture of native North American societies, took the most sympathetic approach to these societies and suggested that the business of give and take between the European colonizers and the indigenous societies was not a one-way process; Europeans too learnt and adopted many features from the colonized societies. This is true in other colonized regions as well, including India. Bruce Trigger, a more recent anthropologist from Canada, also took a similar approach to the indigenous societies of Americas.

1.3 *An Alternative Perspective – The Essence of Simplicity*

Barring the rare understandings of Bastian and Boas, the term culture, as has generally been defined and used by the vested-interest colonial groups,

is a reflection of complex minds, or a by-product of societal complexity. If that is the case, then one has to address the question as to what is its form in simple societies – hunter-gatherers-fishers and/or foragers, for example, living close to nature. It may also be pointed out, following anthropologist Marshall Sahlins (1974), that simple societies like small-scale peasants of Papua New Guinea do not have separate categories like culture, religion, politics, economies, technology, etc. as is the case with intellectually driven complex societies in the West from the times of Aristotle. These are all intertwined in the Papua New Guinea example. This lack of emphasis on categorization among societies living in simple level of social organization also reflects their simplicity of minds, which is lacking in today's world.

All contemporary societies of the world emerged from our prehistoric ancestors living close to nature, but unfortunately they have been described through current education system as primitive or backward; thanks to the modernist paradigm of cultural anthropologists! Their level of rare wisdom, still found in their uncontaminated descendents living in forests in hunting-gathering mode of production, is seldom appreciated. Anthropologists often described them as poor, incessantly working in search of food, thus contrasting with richer agriculturalists with abundance of food. But Marshall Sahlins described hunter-gatherers as the “original affluent societies” who follow the Zen path to affluence. To understand this, we have to change our perspective by rethinking about basic issues of economics – demand and supply. In Zen thinking if the demand or want is less, then in a situation of finite resources, one is happy, no sense of deprivation. That is why Karl Marx once said that it is paradoxical that “People in rich countries are poor, whereas those in poor countries rich”. The complex modern society is poor in mind as it suffers from a sense of deprivation; never happy because of unlimited want, whereas people at simple level of social organization are happier; no sense of deprivation.

Satyajit Ray's film “Aranyer Din Ratri” shows this contrast between modernized environment of cities like Kolkata and the forests of Palamau in Jharkhand. A critique, Pauline Kael notes:

“The subtext is perhaps the subtlest, most plangent study of the cultural tragedy of imperialism; the young men are self-parodies – clowns who ape the worst snobberies of the British”.

In fact, Marx and Engels, while challenging the capitalistic modes of production, traced the evidence of 'primitive communism' among simpler hunting-gathering societies leading an egalitarian way of life without the evidence of private property and class division.

Marx and Engels were not the first to have drawn inspiration from archaic foragers in providing a powerful social theory. Gautama Buddha did the same some 2400 years earlier in developing a social philosophy centering on the problem of suffering and its solution that has had a far deeper and more enduring impact on mankind. Buddhism, primarily a social philosophy certainly played an important role in world history, first in India and then in wider regions of Asia where it continues till date. As against a popular understanding that Buddhism emerged as a protest or revolt against the Vedic/ Brahmanical Order, it can be argued by drawing parallels between archaic values and Buddhist values that the Buddha, in search of a solution to the problem of suffering, tried to revive (in an age of growing socio-political complexity) the life-ways and values of earlier prehistoric societies living in a simpler level of 'egalitarian' social organization; close to nature.

The concept of 'Culture' has been developed as a category by Western anthropologists and thinkers under a modernist paradigm. Like religion, it is a socio-political tool to compare and contrast, first elites and folks within Europe, and then between modern Europeans and native/primitive peoples of the colonies. Against this approach mention may be made of Jesus Christ coming from a shepherd family of Jerusalem, but whose message of love and compassion has had an everlasting impact on the masses – literate or illiterate – and united almost the entire West. Again, Kabir of India, without birth details was brought up in a poor family of weavers. His level of supreme knowledge at both practical and transcendental levels cannot be questioned. Their common points are the highest level of simplicity. So was the case with the Buddha, despite his aristocratic heritage. In other words, the rare quality of simplicity with utmost mental equilibrium in which the mind grows and expands to such an extent that the complex mind can never achieve that feat. The complex minds have problems which they try to solve through reasoning (a time-dependent process) and simple mind has the instant solutions, although they are capable of explaining their solutions to the suffering mankind through a simple logic and convincing parable, as was the case with both the Buddha and Sri Ramakrishna.

The point is not to suggest any gap between peoples in simple and complex levels of social organization or mindsets. According to the teachings of the Upanishads, all individuals are potentially divine, as forcefully and convincingly argued by Swami Vivekananda.

Understood through the Bastian's notion of the psychic unity of mankind, Culture is then an "innate quality of inclusive and complementary growth of the self through simplicity". It includes non-human organisms too, which follow a path of least resistance. So, under this definition, there is little point in maintaining that only humans have the culture. Tim Ingold cites examples of honey bees as great architect (Ingold 1981). Construction of nests by birds is another example. In fact, there are examples to show that humans developed many aspects of their culture from animals, including birds. All organisms have different roles to play and it is through ignorance that the modern humans are eliminating plants and animals with an intention of expanding selective interests. All that is needed is to ensure optimum conditions that are denied when a group of people under the influence of societal complexity decide in favour of exclusive growth (for some rather than all), as if they are the ultimate agents to decide the world agenda in the world of globalization. No such apparently leading groups have created any permanent mark in history; they too are victims of this vested-interest movement; they too suffer in the end. A simple mind has no greed, no sense of competition; his attitude is an inclusive one. In a deep state of meditation when the mind is in a state of void, this uncomplicated soul has the compassion for all beings and has the solutions to the problems created by people of complex minds.

II. Connectedness

In contrast to studies in social sciences of Western origins, a different perspective emerges, again in the West, after the development of New Physics – Quantum Mechanics and Relativity. Fritjof Capra (1983) tries to establish parallels between the "unified vision" of Modern Physics, on the one hand, and the Eastern philosophies – Hinduism, Buddhism and Taoism, on the other.

According to the Upanishads, the Brahman is the ultimate reality; the jiva and the jagat are only its outward manifestations; in short nothing is unconnected. All the organisms, including mankind and the physical surroundings are parts of nature and thus live in a connected way. This is

well-established in the famous Einstein-Podolsky-Rosen experiments of Quantum Mechanics in which the behaviour of physically distantiated electrons of a Helium atom possess, what David Bohm describes as, 'non-local connection' (Bohm 2002; Bohm and Hiley 1975, 1995. According to Capra (1983: 225), "Quantum theory has shown that particles are not isolated grains of matter, but are probability patterns, interconnections in an inseperable cosmic web." There is an asymmetrical relationship between humans and the world, as Martin Heidegger remarked: we belong to the world, but the world does not belong to us (quoted in Sundara Rajan 1991). In an important paper titled, "Non-local connections in comparative religion: Vedic world-view and the Tani mythology", a learned Sanskritist, Dr Parbati Banerjee (2000-2001) showed a striking parallel between the Vedic people and the Tani tribes of Arunachal Pradesh on the origins of universe, without any historical connections between them.

The sacred texts of the world, on the one hand, and modern scientific researches, on the other, have differing ideas/opinions about the genesis of the world; any debate on this point is beyond the scope of the present paper. But, a powerful concept emanating from the Rgveda is 'rta' which is a cosmological and intelligent, ordering principle that governs the working of all phenomena – natural or human. Varuna is the presiding deity who watches human conducts and actions, and punishes anybody violating that natural order. It is often believed that only humans possess what is loosely called 'culture' that may either conform to the natural phenomena or else act as a counter-text to confront nature. So, if today's world looks fragmented or disharmonious, it is because of certain vested-interest groups that deviated from the original prehistoric scenario when men, animals and plants showed co-existence and harmony with nature.

Finally, I wish to touch upon the concept of deep play experience introduced by a Hungarian psychologist, M. Csikszentmihalyi (1975). During unique experiences in forests or mountaineering expedition, for example, our mind develops "oneness" with the surrounding leading to monistic view. In Buddhist philosophy, "*Vipassana*" is a special technique of attaining mental purity and equilibrium and in modern Cambodia, Ministers and Government officials are sent to forest for a period of three months every year. We all should learn to our benefit from this unique example.

III. Education

Having discussed the issue of culture, I now wish to discuss the related concept of education. Education too has two forms of understanding; one is through external agencies or mediators and the second one relates to the vision of Noam Chomsky and earlier, Swami Vivekananda in which the capacity to grow in all creative directions is innate in a child; the only responsibility of parents and teachers is to create optimum condition for its growth and not to condition towards a certain goal. Education, according to Vivekananda,

“Education is the manifestation of the perfection already in man”.

– Complete Works IV.358

Education in the West has been understood with the assumption of John Lock (1894), that a child is a *tabula rasa* (clean slate) and needs to be trained to meet certain goals of society; they need to be ‘disciplined’ and conditioned towards certain thoughts, taking away their individual freedom or creativity. Accordingly, modern teachers are expected to impart such education that would make a work force for modern industries, government organizations in all its forms. Beyond this point, it is needless to count the merits and demerits of modern education based on cut-throat competition.

In *The Purpose of Education*, Noam Chomsky, defines his view of education in an Enlightenment sense, in which the “highest goal in life is to inquire and create. The purpose of education from that point of view is just to help people to learn on their own. It’s you the learner who is going to achieve in the course of education and it’s really up to you to determine how you’re going to master and use it.”

Earlier, Swami Vivekananda developed revolutionary idea on the infinite potential of mankind. In defining education as manifestation of the perfection already in man, the role of the teacher or parents is no different from that of a gardener who only creates optimum conditions for the growth of plants. Thus like a plant, the ability to grow is inherent in human child. Swami Vivekananda’s comprehensive vision of life and education may be summed up

in two words: ‘*equilibrium*’ and ‘*synthesis*’. According to Swamiji, we must have life-building, human-making, character-forming education. Needless to mention that now it is high time to assimilate and imbibe the

true spirit of this averment. It calls for a radical shift in the prevailing paradigm of our system of education.

The National Council for Teachers' Education, New Delhi, has made elaborate modules on paradigm shift in modern education based on Vivekananda's views. I wish to quote from their report:

"The educational discourse during the past few decades, ... has renewed focus on the concept of teaching, the nature of teacher's engagement with learners, and about the nature of learner's engagement with knowledge. The act of teaching is no longer considered synonymous with transmission of information and knowledge. Instead, a teacher's task is to facilitate learning by enabling the child to construct or generate knowledge on the basis of his/her own observations, experiences, experimentation, analysis and reflection. This shift in thinking about teacher's task is based on the premise that children have the potential to construct knowledge, make meaning and think independently given a conducive and challenging pedagogic environment."

– Pandey et al. 2015: 9

In the end I wish to suggest something related to future projects on education. It should not be confined to class-room teaching. Periodically, the students of modern schools and universities should be taken for outings away from cities into forests or mountainous regions, close to nature. Following the models of Rabindranatha Tagore and Jiddhu Krishnamurti, new education centres should be established away from cities; close to forests and open places. There should be no pressure on students; the role of the teacher is to find out natural inclinations and talents of students and then create conditions where those talents could grow.

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Education - Weapon of Social Development

Nabanita Deb

ABSTRACT : At the beginning of '*Education and the Good Life*', Bertrand Russell gives an importance on education of character.

For Russell, the primary purpose of schooling should be to produce certain necessary characteristics in men as well as in women. Russell identifies four qualities that must be included in character of education. These are vitality, courage, sensitiveness, and intelligence.

The first one, vitality promotes interest in the world and it also encourages hard work. Vitality is quality that all men and women should possess; it is a legitimate outcome of schooling.

The second aim of education is courage. This quality has two parts. The first Russell calls the absence of fear. The second aspect of courage involves the ability to understand one's own limits.

The third quality is sensitiveness. According to Russell this is a response to particular emotional event of life. Russell believed true sensitive people couldn't tolerate the cruelties of industrialism even if they had only vicarious exposure to it.

Finally Russell stresses on intelligence. Russell's conception of intelligence offers a useful perspective for contemporary teachers. He makes an important distinction between acquired knowledge and what he calls the aptitude for acquiring knowledge. The truly intelligent person is the one who knows how to learn. Russell also states that curiosity about general propositions rather than interest in specific facts is a concomitant of intelligence. It includes the ability to think for oneself.

According to Russell above four are the basic elements of education, which help for the well-being of children. Basically Russell thinks that the main purpose of education is to make a perfect man. To Russell education is a process of self -development. However, when tells about self development he never forgets about society. He mentioned every individual has a social self. So the self development possible only in and through the society.

Keywords : Well-being, Education, Self development, vitality.

Education is the root of our society. Education builds a man. Liberality, tolerance, patience- these are generated through education. That is why every sensible person gives priority on the educational system.

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Bertrand Arthur William Russell, one of the contemporary philosophers, also delivered his view on the educational system. Bertrand Russell was one of the most formidable thinkers of modern era. He was also a moral philosopher as well as an analytic one. His moral philosophy is one where he argued against the repression of freedom. He was too much concerned about human freedom because he thought that without freedom self development would not be possible. And in his educational theory, which was manifested in the light of his ethical theory, he repeatedly attached great importance to self development. Philosophers like Russell, Foucault are not only theory makers but they are also social reformers because they want to accept a social change. They want to reduce the Kantian rigidity from ethics. Russell felt about the prosperity of all-over mankind. He emphasized on education and wanted to use it as a weapon for ethical upbringing of pupils; thus he was like a social reformer.

Russell was an open minded philosopher. He opposed any kind of obligation which authority imposed on man. He thought that sometimes obligation make people bounded which becomes burden to them. Basically, Russell was a non orthodox thinker. He always accepted changes accord to time needed. He thought that society is an ever changing formation; so if man does not change his view according to society he would be treated as barbaric. And for changing his view man needs sufficient freedom which gives him the power to analyze between wrong and right and helps him to determine the right one. And through these freedom and changes the all over development of society is possible. And before social development, self development is one of the mandatory conditions. And education is the first step through which this development would be possible. A perfect man is a precious gift to our society. So it is our duty to make a child not like a machine but like a rational being so that he could take decision rationally. Russell made this clear that it is our responsibility to make a child capable of differentiating between right and wrong. Basically, education is that kind of thing through which morality is built up in a child or in a pupil who is the social being of future. So according to Russell, education means not just to learn how to fit in the classical view what is given by such authority but by the means of education man can understand his real duty or responsibility and he can be the judge of his own decision. So from this view point it is clear that Russell was one of the modifier who wanted to change the orthodox social system which forcefully imposed rules

or norms on man. And through education he wanted to modify the classical system. That is why he gave very much importance on self development.

I am going to discuss on some important topics which here presented 'On Education', the brilliant and timeless work of his. At first, I shall emphasize on there sponsibility of teachers in education.

Responsibility of teachers : The foremost aim of education is to develop pupils' intellect and character. Only through education conscious and superior type of individual can be created. According to Russell , if the teacher is not sympathetic and affectionate towards student then the student's intelligence and character cannot be developed. No man could be a good teacher unless he has feelings of warm affection towards his pupils. Teacher who has genuine sympathy and welfare consciousness for his students, can only adopt appropriate methods of teaching. And teacher must treat and handle pupils seriously event if they are younger in age. Teacher must give them responsibility , talk to them candidly , provide privacy and solitude for them and make them readers and thinkers of sufficient thoughts from the beginning. And that's if the teacher seriously wants to make a responsible social being.

After, Responsibility of teachers Russell explained the nature of education.

Nature of Education : Russell writes 'Education is, as a rule, the strongest force on the side of what exists and against fundamental change.'⁽¹⁾

According to Russell, education makes pupils enable to think , enables them to choose intelligently between two views which they want to accept. Education as a political weapon, could not exist if we respect the rights of children. If we respect the rights of children , we should educate them so as to give them the knowledge and the mental habits required for forming independent opinions. In the essay 'The place of Science in a Liberal Education', Russell defines Education 'as the formation by means of instruction of certain mental habits and a certain outlook on life and the world.' State wants an obedient citizen, the church wants good saints so every authority wants a man who can easily accept the given rules and can easily fit with them. But it is not fruitful to a child because the real existence of a child is ignored here. In 'Freedom and Organization, 1814-194', in

[1) Russell , 'The Basic Writing of Bertrand Russell' –pg 379]

‘Marriage and Moral’, Russell repeatedly told about the change of social thinking . Russell defined that education must not be one sided. To him education means to make oneself capable as he can choose his own interest of life way.

Russell took four characteristics which seemed to him jointly to form the basis of an ideal character. These four are vitality , courage, sensitiveness and intelligence.

Discussion on the four characteristics

Vitality : According to Russell, although vitality is a physical trait but it largely shapes our mental state and stamina. Russell suggested that the vitality is rather a physical than a mental characteristic ; it is presumably always present where there is perfect health , but it tends to ebb with advancing years and gradually dwindles to nothing in old age. In vigorous children it quickly rises to a maximum before they reach school age, and then tends to be diminished by education. Where it exists, there is pleasure in feeling alive , quite apart from any specific pleasant circumstances. It heightens pleasures and diminishes pains. It makes it easy to take an interest in whatever occurs and promotes objectivity which is an essential of sanity. Vitality promotes interest in the outside world; it also promotes the power of hard work.

The second characteristic of our ideal character ingredients list is courage. In a discussion of courage, Russell gives us a clear view about courage .

Courage:- This quality has two parts. The first is which Russell called the absence of fear. Then second aspect of courage involves the ability to understand one’s own limits. Many people suffer from fear – both consciously and unconsciously and without any reasonable ground. Through education fear should be removed from the minds of children.

Russell suggested that men and women should be educated in such a way that they can lead a fearless life. In any way fear should be conquered. It should be conquered through vitality and self respect.

Sensitiveness - Third element of character formation is sensitiveness when our nearest and dearest one feels sorrow we also feel sorrow with him. But we do not feel sorrow for persons who are not dear to us and not present before us. According to Russell this type of abstract sensitiveness might solve many existing evils of the modern world. “The education producing

sensitiveness to abstract stimuli would wipe out a large proportion of the evils that exist in the modern world today”, said by Russell in his treatise *On Education Especially In Early Childhood*. Hence, one of the aims of education is to create abstract sensitiveness in the minds of the students.

Intelligence - The fourth element of character formation is intelligence. In the opinion of Russell, intelligence means acquired knowledge and ability to acquire knowledge. But, actually it means the later. Without knowledge intelligence cannot be developed, said Russell. Opportunities should be provided so that the students can think. The aim of education is to develop the power of thinking of a pupil. More time should be given for participation in discussion and debate to the students. As a condition of developing intelligence, curiosity should be created in the minds of the students.

Besides the above four elements, there are other elements conducive to character formation which Russell mentioned in his notion on education. These are co-operation, truthfulness, observation, open-mindness etc. Russell mentioned education.

So, this is the short summary of Russell’s view on education. Basically, Russell believed on change. And he understood that education is one of the instruments through which the social change could take place. Russell emphasized on the point that the education which results from regarding a child as an individual is very different from that which results from regarding him as a future citizen. Human beings function not only as obedient citizens but also as individuals who must analyse his position in that society where they live. According to Russell, human being must use the education of their individual self to function and improve their role as a citizen.

This is how Russell had developed his educational theory in the light of his social value theory. The open mindedness of Russell’s grasped his educational theory. And it is a great contribution in the world of social value oriented philosophy.

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The Benevolence Educational Contribution to Indian Society from the Thoughts of Sister Nivedita

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ABSTRACT : Education is the most important basis of a human to gets growth towards a well-being. Only organized and integrated human beings can take a civilization to its highest excellence. The journey of a child towards a perfect human being, takes proper formation through education. Our society is continuously changing with the never ending changes of thoughts of human being. Education, culture and tradition, and new creation are the main pillar in the context of these continuous changes of social structure, as only with the help of these pillars, human being can manifest his thoughts. Manifestation of thoughts is very much required for a civilization to reach its highest excellence. Human-being and society is very much interdependent for their existence and values have a great important role in this.

In this new era of continuous changes, we are getting a chance to know every culture and civilization. Only through the combination of the rich old culture (ancient and medieval) with the new culture (modern)we can take our society to its highest excellence.

The oldest Hindu civilization was in an endangered situation in 19th century. In order to protect the society Bhogini Nivedita started advocacy of real education and the traditional rich Indian culture. The effects of her acts are still flowing in this 21st century.

The purpose of this paper is to raise the important issues of the thoughts of Bhogini Nivedita on education and how it is going to play a role in making the future society as well as nation. The two main pillars of the Indian culture, that is 'self-sacrifice' and 'Service' for others are still working and have effect on education. Specially, education and progress of women, as these are the key powers of a nation, which are the main tools for socialize and organize a society. It acts as a catalyst in realizing nationalism which can transmigrate into internationalism.

KEYWORDS: Empowerment, Values, Organization

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Objectives

1. Discussion related to awareness among women on education, health and socio- economic status.
2. Discussion related to protection and importance of Hindu religion and ancient art and culture.
3. Ascension of nationalized thought to internationalism to form a social structure.

Introduction

"Each man and woman, that is to say, when perfectly educated, becomes an epitome of the history either of his or her own race, or of Humanity as a whole."

-Sister Nivedita

From the ancient to medieval till modern, human civilization has experienced many changes. Each of these periods is unique in its characteristics. In these periods, with every change many problems arise and only human beings can find the solutions to these problems. Every society faces social problems. Society without problem is a utopian concept. Still, human beings secure their existence and progress in this society by the help of interaction among themselves. Society changes parallel with the thoughts of human beings living in the society. So anything we are considering as a problem today, it can be solved with the changes of thoughts. So it can be said that whatever problem we are facing today, may in the past or coming future, we did not or will not consider it as a problem. Social problems which create obstacles in our life are basically the result of the deviation from social norms.

The best natural way to remove these obstacles through the introduction of real education can be removed. Only real education can help a person to develop his/her own self. As a result, as he wants to stay in a good state; he will also want others to stay in the same state of life. This self-realization of human being can bring effective solution to every problem in society which we are facing today or we can face tomorrow. At the same time this will help a society to grow by holding its ancient culture and merging it with the extract of new one. From Sri Sri Sarada Ma, she has learn – there is no division among the human beings on language, religion and geographical

boundaries, opposition of illogical superstition is called modernity and progress is joint venture of ancient and modern thoughts. Every human being has biological, social and spiritual crave and culture can fulfill these craves. In this sense, culture is the holistic deed of a person for his biological, social and spiritual need. Knowledge, belief, art, ethics, law, custom these all are part of the culture. Culture replaces civilization and only an exalted civilization only can elevate every human being to its highest state.

After staying under Vedic culture, it has been seen that the oldest religion-Hinduism slowly included many traits from other religions from very starting of AD. Today technological advancement and economic globalization had made people come very close to each other. As a result, Indian society and psychology gets affected by western life style, eating habits, dress, mentality of competition, materialistic view, education etc. Even Indian spiritual thoughts which evolve universal spiritual thoughts were affected by the western life and thoughts. With change of time, for technological advancement and economic globalization, different cultures get a chance to introduce their thought to one another; as a result, western culture introduced its materialism to India. In this crucial time Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Ma Sarada and Swami Vivekananda incarnated to spread the main essence of Indian spiritual thoughts based on Vedas and Upanishads to the whole world, and western culture has enriched with the spiritualistic base of India. So we can say that, Indian spiritualism turns into universal spiritualism.

The first renaissance in Bengal happened at the period of Hussein Shahi in the sixteenth century. It happened for the second time in the nineteenth century, on the basis of the conflict between Indian and Western education and culture. That time Indian society was filled with religious and social superstitions. Swami Vivekananda called Margaret Elizabeth Noble (28 October 1867 – 13 October 1911) to be here in India to help people for their betterment and to uplift Indian women especially. She was very much keen in literature, culture, art and science. Her father was a college professor. From him, she learnt the ideal of service to mankind as the true service to God. These remarkable thoughts and potentialities within her make her one of the best disciple of Swami Vivekananda. With the help of Sister Nivedita, Swamiji tries to escalate the potentialities of every human being, especially women and make a transition from potentiality to actuality. In his words, *"There is no chance of the welfare of the world unless the condition of*

women is improved. It is not possible for a bird to fly on one wing.”(*The complete works of Swami Vivekananda. vol-VI, AdvaitaAshrama, Kolkata: 2009, p.329.*) From this line we can understand how much importance he has given to women education and uplift. Sister Nivedita was his one of the top most disciple through whom he wants to reform the situation of women. Swami Vivekananda gave her the name – Nivedita (meaning “Dedicated to God”) when he initiated her into the vow of Brahmcharya on March 1898.

In the month of January 1898 Nivedita printed her footprints in her dreamland – India for the first time. Leaving her nation, religion, culture, family and environment, she started a new journey with Indian thought, culture and environment. Initially, she has seen India through Swamiji’s eyes. Later when she got to know the land of diversity and its culture through her own eyes she devoted herself totally for the uplift of its people. She felt the importance of education for the wellbeing of everyone. Only education, culture and civilization can uplift a person to his extent. Nivedita with education takes her first step towards fulfilling her dream. In Swami Vivekananda’s words, “Education is the manifestation of the perfection already in man”. With this thought in her heart, Nivedita established a school in 17no Bagbazar Bospara lane on November 1898 and started educating women of the nearby locality where she lived and for that she has given all her expertise to elevate every woman, her thought and soul through education. One of her direct students - Saralabala Sarkar state that, Nivedita has used such processes to educate her students, that if there was a girl who was a slow learner, even she also would understand and remember her teachings very well. She taught them a game ‘jorkibijor’ (Nivedita Vidyalaya Patrika: Shatabarsho Jayanti Smarok Sankhya, Ramakrishna Sarada Mission Bhogini Nivedita Vidyalaya, Kolkata:1967,p.122)[in Bengali] and it was the first step to learn addition and subtraction. Small little girls learnt counting with the help of the seeds of some easily available fruit. This method of learning with easily available things and learning through play was her unique thought. She said this method is the implication of impression and expression through which a student can develop an opinion and act as a perfectionist. In this way, she combined Indian culture and things with western processes and it forms a more easy and accessible education system. Today, on the 21st century, we have seen the application of the ‘Virtual Reality Box’ in some schools for learning (Ananda Bazar Patrika, 11th March, Sunday, 2018, Kolkata, ‘Hate Kolome Pora Bojhanor Kormoshala’).

In her school, girls used to learn history, geography, as well as Ramayana and Mahabharata. Moreover, mathematics, understanding maps, life science, dance, singing, painting, sculpture, and physical education - these also were a part of learning in her school. She has tried not only to give knowledge but also vocational education, which helps a person to develop him/herself in every aspect of life and make them independent. Nivedita from one aspect devoted herself to teach her students' science and language through easy process; from another aspect she tries to develop nationalism within them. (Letters of Sister Nivedita – Edited by Sankari Prasad Basu, Vol – 1, Nababharat Publishers, Calcutta 1982, P-219.) As a sign of that, she placed banana tree and Mangal Ghat (a specific pot Indian uses as a symbol of blessings) to celebrate the release of freedom fighter in front of her school. Still today Bhogini Nivedita Vidyalaya starts with the Sri Ramakrishna 'Sloke' and after that students are aloud 'Vandemataram' for the love and respect for the nation or motherland.

For building students character, Nivedita takes inspiration of sanctities from Sita and Sabitri (two holy women of India scriptures), at the same time she takes inspiration of firmness from Gandhari (Mother of Kauravas in Mahabharata). Ideally, she wants to uphold the life of the Indian women. In our holy scripter's women's character had been portrayed as a combination of dedicated, strict religious austerities, tolerance, sacrifice, service for others, kindness and only this kind of character of a woman can hold the nation.

Her realistic perspective of life gives her a stage to work with poor women. This gives a platform to the poor women to be empowered and be economically independent. This independence makes women elevated in every aspect of life. Nirjhrion Sarkar has given an amazing picture of this scenario. Many poor women come to her school to learn sewing and different hand crafts. Other than that they make pickles and Bori (dried lentil dumplings) to earn money. These concepts grow in them after Nivedita evokes their mentality and try to develop them from every aspect of life. This kind of activity of Sister Nivedita makes her one of the main leaders of that time and onwards.

Nivedita learned from Ma Saroda, the two main pillars of Indian culture - that is sacrifice and love. Self-sacrifice is the basis of love and love can extend sacrifice. Love is something where a person can give up his own interests or wishes in order to help others. In other words it has been termed

as self-sacrifice. So, self-sacrifice is the basis of love, same as love can turn self-scarification to its highest form. For the all-around improvement of kids, Nivedita also gives importance on playing of children, due to development of physical and mental health and to understand the importance of the nature for the human civilization teaches us how to love nature, through the plantation of sapling. She wants students should read first and then travel and after that they will chose the task by themselves. Because this sequence can give human being supreme vision and delight. (Hints on national education written by Sister Nivedita) She said, "Our conception of education must have a soul. It must form a unit....Unless we train the fillings and the choice, our man is not educated."(The complete works of Sister Nivedita, Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta, vol. IV, P. 344) Nivedita also hold that, social security and malnutrition is the main barrier for the betterment of women, especially for them who stays in villages. She was simultaneously concern about both mental and physical betterment of women. Today people are more concern about women and aged people. This awareness of general people supports that, Nivedita's thinking related to women was appropriate and beyond any time limit. Nivedita did not want to build a single human being, she wants to build a nation and healthy a society. For that, she set aside religion and caste. Swami Vivekananda wants everyone to flourish through their own inner nature and culture. Unity in diversity was his main focus and it brings his concept of Universal Religion to Practical Religion (a concept about religion given by Swamiji). Nivedita tried to fulfill Swamiji's dream to the extreme.

Swami Vivekananda wanted to make educated trained lady teachers who will be able to spread education to all women. To implement her master's thought Sister Nivedita chose some students from her school and started to train them. Even she was willing to establish teachers-training institutions. She has given her valuable comments not only on teachings, but also on its methods and purpose. One of her unique thought on education is the method of learning through practical teachers training educational system. If a person learns something through practical process, the learning process makes a permanent impression in the learners mind. Now a day's teachers-institutions using this method to teach their students through based on practical experiences.

Conclusion

From November 1898, the time when Nivedita establish the school in Bagbazar, till now – after almost like 120 years, and after 150 years of her birth, are we really the person what Nivedita want us to be?

Indeed there has been some changes in ours thought. Today women are getting more chances in every field. Even there are lady astronauts, doctor, engineer, writer, mountaineer and scientist and so on. Their contribution is making amazing progress for human civilization. But most of the time this environment is only surrounded within the privileged class of the society. Women from the financial weaker section are still in the same situation and another big problem is the mentality of the masses, though education has changed most of its thoughts, still some of the people having the same brutal mentality. So, though there are some exceptional cases but generally most of the woman is not in that situation as much as Nivedita wanted.

Till the last moment of her life, Nivedita tried to develop the mentality of the masses and especially tried for the betterment of women. At the last moment of her life she said, “The boat is sinking, but I shall see the sunrise”. Today her words are getting fulfilled; we are trying to elevate our life-our nation as she wanted. This is a tribute from our side to this great soul. “We are a nation, when every man is an organ of the whole, when every part of the whole is precious to us...” (The *complete works of Sister Nivedita*, vol. IV, AdvaitaAshrama, Calcutta: P. 348). So we have to hear her voice again and again.

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Education as a means to Human Well being : A Philosophical Study

Shreyasee Majumdar

ABSTRACT : Education is the backbone of any society. It facilitates both moral and social development of individuals. In the words of Nelson Mandela, “Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” Today education is amidst a number of challenges which hinders its advancement. So this paper is a humble attempt to find out the barriers to true education and the ways to remove them. In this paper, endeavor has also been made to see whether education can be a means to human well-being. The Upanisadic dictums along with the views of some great Indian thinkers will be considered in this regard.

Key words : Barriers, Well-being, Treasure, Educatum, Inequality, Non-violence, Sarvodaya, Life-building, Decentralization, *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*.

Introduction

Education is the greatest necessity in today’s world and is the highest treasure that cannot be stolen. Education is the process of facilitating learning, or the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values, beliefs and habits. According to some learned people, the word ‘education’ has been derived from the Latin term ‘educatum’ which means the act of teaching or training. A group of educationists say that it has come from another Latin word ‘educare’ which means “to bring up” or “to raise”.¹ The concept of “Education” does not refer to mere gathering information, memorizing facts and data, passing exams and getting good marks and degrees. On the contrary it signifies much more than that. It aims at upliftment of society in all respects. But of late, various problems strike at the fulfillment of ideal education in true sense. There are many barriers to education.

Some Barriers to education

- **Poverty:** It is one of the important barriers to education. Due to poor financial condition many families mainly in rural areas refrain from sending

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1. <https://www.slideshare.net/rdhaker2011> accessed on 24/03/2018.

their kids to schools, instead they involve them in child labor. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights makes it clear that every child has the right to a free basic education, so that lack of money cannot be a barrier to schooling. In many developing countries government has announced abolition of school fees. But still many families residing below poverty level remain reluctant to their child's education and chose to send them for earning to solve daily needs. In this way some families remain locked in a cycle of poverty that goes on for generations.

- Inadequate funding: Education sector needs much more funding as education is the backbone of any society but there is insufficiency of funds. Paucity of Funds is the major reason for the education problems in India. Even if funds are available, they are not being used effectively. The education problems are of grave concerns today. India has achieved success in economic sector and many changes have already been made. But these changes have not turned to be sufficient to solve the ever existent and ever changing Education problem in India. Though there is provision of 'Sarva æikcâ abhiyân' still quality of school education is in a free fall. In rural areas the condition is even worse. Lack of fund creates poor infrastructure, deficiency of books and learning materials. It is shameful to think that after so any years of Independence our country is still burdened with the curse of illiteracy.
- Gender inequality: The age old impression that women are inferior and subordinate to men, is still prevalent. Even in this age of advancement, girl child are often denied access to proper education in some areas, as if they should grow to be a good daughter, a caring wife and a loving mother. Thus gender inequality poses a great threat to education.
- Faulty educational system: Educational system in our country, sorry to remark, is outdated and faulty. Confined to the four walls and closed door, teenagers are forced to run after marks and attain mere bookish information. The time they reach high school levels, they have already lost their self confidence, creativity and naturality. Today's education system is turning students to mere machines. The faulty education system has created such an environment where students find no other option than going to 'commit' 'vomit' and then 'omit'. The students are being robbed of their childhood, their freedom, creativity etc due to the system.

- Too much competition and bookish studies: Today education has become a mere rat-race. Small kids are sent to schools nowadays with heavy bags as the parents fear that their child will be left out of the competition in life. Students and parents' natural psychology is to fight intense competition for obtaining higher marks and good degree in order to get a high salaried job. In this way education has become highly commercialized. Degree and job are necessary in life but these cannot be the only goal of education. Many students are concerned with book-centric education at present. To them, Education is nothing more than parroting. Eminent thinker Tagore many years back wrote a satirical essay named 'Totâkâhini', revealing the idea of the mechanical kind of education prevalent in those days. The situation has not improved rather deteriorated over days and is one of the major barriers to true education today.
- Language: In case of higher education and research, students often face problem due to language. Since recent years in many states of India the learning of English as second language has been highly neglected. Students with a poor background of English could not cope with the advancement of higher education. They fail to correspond in English and even cannot read valuable books and articles written in the same. It is shocking to mention that these students are even not good at their mother language. Thus, knowledge of language stands in the way of progress in higher studies and research as well.

Solutions to these problems

With a view to combat with poverty as a barrier to education, State, NGOs and other philanthropic institutions should come forward with financial support for the underprivileged section of the society. They should strive for creating social awareness among the masses about the need of basic education. The state should take the initiative to conduct literacy drive. Here poverty and education is intimately related. If, due to poverty a child does not get even basic education he will remain unemployed and as a result will again be entangled in the net of poverty in future. So the government should strictly ban child labour and take care of the fact that every child is sent to school. The state and other business organizations should allot more funds for the sake of better education. And there should not be any gender inequality. Girls and boys should be given equal access to education. Female education in India has been an urgent need of the new era. A society can never prosper if majority of women are uneducated.

We cannot hope for a developed nation without proper education of the women of the country. Swami Vivekananda laid great emphasis on women's education. He realized that if the women of our country get the right type of education, then they will be able to solve their own problems in their own way. The main objective of his scheme of female education is to make them strong, fear-less and conscious of their chastity and dignity. Swamiji was emphatic that women must be educated, for it is the women who nurture the next generation and mould the destiny of the country. Rabindranath also spoke in favour of women's education. He was fully aware of women's role in the society. His campaign for Women liberation was ahead of his time. In "Strīśikṣā", Tagore writes, "Whatever is worth knowing is knowledge. It should be known equally by men and women not for the sake of practical utility but for the sake of knowing."²

Now, our system of education should be thoroughly reformed. There should be a proper education curriculum and students should not be unnecessarily burdened. In a letter entitled "Āikṣāvidhi"³, Tagore focused on the problem of the philosophy of educational method in some of the fundamental aspects as well as in the context of the existing socio-political and educational conditions in India. There he opined that the stereotyped and mechanical educational atmosphere of India obstructs the originality and creativity of children and said that education can be imparted only by a teacher and never by a method.

Tagore, perhaps the only literary genius in contemporary history, has devoted major part of his life to thinking about education and creating an educational institution of international repute. For the first time in the arena of education, Tagore established a milestone. With boldness and firmness, he rejected bookish education for students. To him, it is not just to confine the young mind of boys and girls to text books only. It will destroy their creative skills. So students should be freed from the book centered education and should be given a broader avenue for learning. As a naturalist, he laid emphasis on the practicality of education. Tagore attached great importance to fine arts in his educational curriculum. To him game, dance, music, drama, painting etc should form a part of educational process. Swami Vivekananda was also against the traditional book centered education. He was rather in favour of such education which will enable one to stand on one's own feet. According to him, "Education is not the amount of information that is put into your brain and runs riot there, undigested all your

2. Tagore, Rabindranath (1351 B.S) , "Strīśikṣā", *Śikṣā* , Viswabharati, Santiniketan, p.138

3. A letter written by Rabindranath Tagore to Dharendra Mohan Sen in September, 1912.

life. We must have life building man-making, character making assimilation of ideas...”⁴

In regard to the language problem, although the need of the vernacular language in basic education of a child is advocated by Tagore in his article entitled “Śikṣār Herpher”⁵, still he insisted that English may be taught as a language from early years in judicious manner and in the proper sequence only as a supplement to the mother tongue.

Thus the problems standing in the way of true education can be solved.

Education as a means to human well-being

If the barriers can be removed, education can flourish in its way and as a result can lead to human well being by curbing social evils. Today our society is amidst a number of problems like Poverty, unemployment, child-labor, crime and so on. These evils have threatened human life and have robbed of their peace and well being. All these problems are interrelated and education is supposed to be intimately related with these problems. It is true education which can lead to human well-being by removing these problems.

Education has become one of the clearest indicators of life outcomes such as employment, income and social status and is a strong predictor of attitudes and well being. According to Merriam Webster, Well being is the state of being happy, healthy or prosperous.⁶ Education is important to live with happiness and prosperity. Education is the only thing that can remove poverty, corruption, unemployment, crime and so on. In today’s era it is important to understand true education. A true education does not mean going to school or college to get a degree. It goes beyond that. If someone is able to read or write, has gone to school and attained a degree it does not mean he has a complete education. An educated person is one who is able to adapt to his situations as per the necessity of the hour. He should be able to utilize his skills and his education to overcome difficult obstacles in life and can take the correct decision at that moment. Education gives a person knowledge about various things including moral values, duties and responsibilities in life. A good education teaches a person the art of living life to the fullest. It is the powerful instrument of economic, political, cultural,

4. Swami Vivekananda (1985), *The complete works of Swami Vivekananda, Vol 3*, Advaita Ashrama , Kolkata.

5. Tagore, Rabindranath, (1342 B.S.), *Śikṣār herpher, Śikṣā*, Viswabharati, Santiniketan.

6. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/well-being> accessed on 25/03/2018.

scientific and social change. Social problems are mostly result of lack of education, lack of empowerment and poverty. Studies reveal that people who are less educated, economically poor and less empowered are more influenced by social problems. Social and ethical values are slowly withering away from the society. Vivekananda tries to solve all social and global evils through education. He talked of the education for the masses. Education opens up the mind and develops the logical thinking within human being. According to Tagore, "The highest education is that which makes our life in harmony with all existences."⁷ Another important aim of his educational philosophy is education for universal brotherhood and love for all.

Proper education can eradicate poverty to a great extent. Education and poverty are inversely related. The higher the level of education of the population, the lesser will be the number of poor persons because education imparts knowledge and skills which is supportive in earning higher wages. Early education system as reflected in various Upanicads was in favour of life based vocational trainings and rejected blind book-centric education. Tagore was aware about the rural poverty of our country. So he wanted to eradicate it through education. The practical training imparted in different crafts to the students will make them skilled artisans in their field. They can eradicate the poverty of the rural bulk by applying their education helping thereby in the process of rural reconstruction. Gandhiji was also in favour of craft centered education. With good educational background, one can attain good job thereby preventing unemployment and thus eradicating poverty in turn. The removal of the curse of poverty can in turn reduce the curse of child labour.

With the help of education, corruption can be reduced. According to a survey the least corrupt state is Kerala, because Kerala has highest literacy rate in India. It is due to unawareness in the field of law, public rights and procedures thereof that a common and an uneducated suffer out of the corrupt society. Main cause of corruption is lack of values. Students' minds must be inculcated with values such as honesty, integrity and selflessness etc. If each one of us is honest and dutiful towards our profession then, corruption will automatically decrease.

Increasing crime rates are one of the biggest problems in today's world, which has robbed of peace and wellbeing of the society and as a result more

7. Tagore (1917), "My school", *Personality*, Macmillan, London.

and more money and resources are being fuelled into correction facilities and measures dealing with crimes and consequences of such things. Instead, if funds, energy and everything are invested in quality education of a child that would reduce future crime rates and save money contributing to the well being of the society at large.

A good quality education is the foundation of health and well being. Education can reduce health related problems. For people to lead healthy and productive lives, they need knowledge to prevent sickness and disease. Statistics from UNESCO's Global Education Monitoring Report show that the attainment of higher levels of education among mothers improves children's nutrition and vaccination rates, while reducing preventable child deaths, maternal mortality and HIV.⁸

To Gandhiji, centralization is the chief source of social evils. Sarvodaya which means upliftment of all irrespective of caste, creed sex and nationality helps in decentralization. One significant aspect of Sarvodaya is his philosophy of education and its implementation. Gandhiji was very much aware of the needs of the country and considered Basic education as the only type of education which may lead to success. His chief aim in planning for education in India was to fulfill the need of the country. To quote Gandhiji, "By education I mean an all round drawing out of the best in child and man - body, mind and spirit. Literacy is not the end of education. Literacy in itself is no education".⁹ In Gandhiji's opinion, the aim of education is self dependence, self reliance and integral development of human personality which is more or less an echo of Rig Veda which says "Education is something which makes man self reliant and selfless". He also emphasized that character building is the moral ideal of education. He admired the Indian Gurukul system of education and the ideal of Brahmacharya. Gandhiji believed that the chief aim of education is moral and spiritual though education also focuses on the social, economic and political upliftment. Besides basic education and social education, he thought seriously over rural education and education for women. He was against any discrimination imparting education. Gandhiji's scheme of education not only aims at character building but also social, political and economic upliftment of all the sections of the society. Another important element in the means of education in basic scheme was synthesis between actual problems of life and education, between different subjects of

8. <https://en.unesco.org/themes/education-health-and-well-being> , accessed on 28/03/2018

9. Harijan,1937.

the curriculum and finally between theoretical education and practical ability.¹⁰ According to Gandhi, it is education which can ascertain ultimate peace for a human being.

Conclusion

In this paper endeavor has been made to show that true education can remove social problems thus leading to human well being. As far as true education is concerned, we should not confine ourselves to theoretical readings only. It is high time that we inculcate and follow the teachings of great thinkers in our life. I would like to conclude with the mantra from *Bṛhadâraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (1.3.28) which reflects on the true purpose of education-

Asato mâ sat gamaya (Lead me from ignorance to Truth)

Tamaso mâ jyotir gamaya (Lead me from darkness to Light)

Mrityor mâ amṛtam gamaya (Lead me from death to Immortality).

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Education on Social Change

Moumita Mondal

ABSTRACT : In Indian perspective education is implying 'siksha', 'vidya', which signifies the process of knowing and learning. By this process one can attain wisdom and the meaning of Philosophy is love of wisdom. Etymologically Philosophy is derived from Greek words 'Philo' which means love and 'Sophia' meaning wisdom which is not only identical with knowledge but goes beyond knowledge. So education and Philosophy are closely related with each other and both are interdependent. Sir Jhon Adams described education as the dynamic aspect of Philosophy. According to Dewey education is the laboratory where we taste the Philosophical truths. According to him great Philosophical truths have always been established in life when they have been practiced and evaluated through education.

In narrow sense education is akin to schooling. In this sense the scope of education becomes limited. But in the broader sense education is as wide as world and it is never ending, lifelong dynamic process. According to Mahatma Gandhi, "education covers the entire field of life." Philosophy touches education at every point of point of life. We know that where we find life we must find a society. Society is not only the composition of men but also their values, tradition, customs, culture etc. Our social world signifies that men are tied together for some common social, spiritual, interests through some process of action. Society and education are integrally related with each other.

A man apart from society is beyond our imagination. No personality increase in isolation. So education is a social process by which personality is developed and by which we realize the relationship of man to man and of man to the universe. So education is a social process and one of the main aspects of the function of education is the welfare of the society. This process of action and interaction between the individual and society leads to the social progress and socio culture change.

Keywords : wisdom, customs, cultural change.

From general perspective education means the process of knowing and learning. In narrow sense education is similar to schooling. In this sense the scope of education becomes limited. But in the broader sense education

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is as wide as ocean and it is a never ending lifelong dynamic process. Education covers the entire field of life. In this context education is dependent on various branches of social sciences like Sociology, Political Science, Psychology, History. But in my opinion the basic foundation of education is Philosophy. According to Dewey "education is a laboratory where we test the philosophical truths"¹. Philosophical truths have always been established in life on the basis of its practical evaluation which is occurred by education. Philosophy touches education at every point of life. We know that where we find life, we must also find a well established society. Society is not only the composition of men but also their values, traditions, customs, culture etc. This social world signifies that men are tied together for some common social, spiritual interests and purposes. A man apart from society is beyond our imagination. No prosperity is possible in isolation.

In this context we can say that education is a social process, by which not only we can attain wisdom but develop personality also. In this way we can realize the relationship of man to man and of man to the universe. So education is a social process and one of the main functions of education is the welfare of the society. This process of action and interaction leads our society to a civilized society and bring a social progress and at the same time socio cultural change.

A little reflection can show that there are a lot of similarities between social progress and educational process. Education is not only a process which establishes a teacher-student relationship but it also helps to make a natural and mature relationship between a teacher and a learner, between a teacher and teacher, among student and the whole process is regulated by their interactions. So this educational process is a social process which leads to social progress. So in a broader sense we can say that education is a social process. But in this context I would like to mention here that educational process is wider than the fundamental social process. For this reason some educationalists describe education as a complex social process. So here one question might arise as how to actual social progress is related to education?

Socialism and education are closely related to each other and both are interdependent. A living society runs through education and education is followed or maintained through social aspirations. People became aware about social traditions, customs, rituals, social skills and gradually they

become socialized. Here I have already mentioned that society is nothing but the composition of men and education helps us to cooperate with each other. Cooperation and a healthy competition among the people help them to develop our society and teach us how to become moral. Education is a continual process of adjustment which makes a man social.

Now the question is that is this process changeable or static? Here I would like to say that nothing is constant. So change is the mark of progress in our social life. This is the philosophy of our daily life. Social change does not mean a single cultural or values or language changes but it covers the entire area of the whole social life – it may be political, cultural, economic changes and these changes are not mechanical. These are deliberate changes and it may come through geographical, scientific, economical, cultural and any other different ways. So let us see how education can bring a social change.

Education and Social Change

If we analyse the history of different nations we can find that education and social change are the two sides of the same coin. Sometimes social change takes place through education. On the other hand, sometimes social change accelerates education which gives birth to a disciplined nation. In this context I would like to mention the names of some thinkers and their activities to bring a change in our society.

Raja Rammohan Roy's view on social change:

In Raja Rammohan Roy's time, society was full of superstitions and brutal actions. He raised his voice against the Sati system. The wife of the deceased husband had to enter in the funeral; if she did not agree to enter into the flame voluntarily, the wife was thrown mercilessly into the flame. Then she was termed as 'sati'. There was huge influence of greedy and superstitious Brahmins behind this brutal system. Rammohan Roy was determined to abolish the Sati System. At the same time he also advocated in favour of widow remarriage. He also told that like sons, daughters also have their right over parental property. He raised his voice against child marriage and polygamy. In this way Rammohan Roy tried to change the society.

Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar and his social thought:

Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar was a great social reformer who worked

endlessly to transform the society. His contribution to change the social status of women in India was remarkable. As a social reformer he had given importance to widow remarriage and wanted to spread it out to the common peoples. Due to his efforts 'Widow Remarriage Act' was passed in 1856. He believed that one day this educational reformation will bring about social reformation.

Mahatma Gandhi and his view on Social Change:

According to Mahatma Gandhi human beings are the combination of goodness and brutality. But there is an element of goodness essentially present in every man. But without proper education no goodness can be expressed by a proper way. According to Gandhi the goal of education should be moral education which can keep us away from selfishness and build up our good character. Gandhi's conception of social change is derived from his concept of man and society and the way of social change according to Gandhi is non-violence. For Gandhi, a non-violent revolution is not a programme of seizure of political power, but it is programme of transformation of the hearts of men. If the attitude of men is changed, then the society would naturally be changed. The aim of Gandhi's non-violent revolution is to reform the individual at the moral level. He believed that non-violence is an infallible means for resolving all social, political and economic problems. He believed that it should not only be practiced by an individual, but also by the whole society. So the Gandhian technique of social change consists in the principle of struggle without arms and a fight with the help of truth.

Dr. B. R Ambedkar's conception on social change:

Dr. B. R Ambedkar, the leader of Dalit was born on on 14th April 1891, in Ratnagiri district to Ramji Maloji Ambedkar and Vimabai as their fourteenth son. He was Mahar by caste and untouchable by birth. Historically in Indian society the caste system involved the division of people into a hierarchy of unequal social groups. For that reason in India the fundamental rights and duties of people are based on birth and here caste is not subject to change. A Dalit² could not participate in any holistic work in Hindu society. Even they could not enter any temple, use common well and they had no right to education and had to live outside the village. They were totally deprived from all benefits in Hindu society.

But Dr. Ambedkar announced that nothing can be fixed or eternal. Change is the law of life for individuals as well as for the society³. His Philosophy was based on three words which are liberty, equality and fraternity. Dr. Ambedkar eagerly tried to uplift Dalit in his whole life. His thought was not bounded inside his theory. He participated actively in Dalit movement. In this way Dr. B.R. Ambedkar wanted to change the society by changing the social rules.

In my concluding part I would like to say that in the context of 21st century one thing has been abolished from our society and that is love. So if we able to change our society peacefully then we can hope for an ideal society and without proper education we can never think of a peaceful cultural society. Education is the way of personal realization which can transform a mind to super- mind. Education dignifies our pure existence. It helps us to be free from ourselves or any personal egoistic consideration. It turns us from 'I' to 'the other'.

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Cultural Beliefs and Human Well-Being In the Indian Psyche

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ABSTRACT : Human well-being, as opposed to suffering, is a leading concern of not only philosophers but other social thinkers as well as psychotherapists. Human psyche evolves round the crucial play of culture. Cultural insights help in understanding the psyche. Belief systems survive the test of space and time and are thus considered to be the markers of particular cultures. Now culture is not a monolithic and homogenous entity. Each culture is continuously divided into micro-cultures. Geographical, political, religious, ethnic, linguistic and other boundaries may act synergistically or separately, depending on the local context. Again these boundaries act as multi-layered filters through which culture reaches the individual subject. Moreover, extra-cultural influences are also present which modify cultural belief systems for the individual. Science is a strong extra-cultural filter which has nowadays transformed into a separate culture altogether. This paper concentrates on Indian culture and related belief-system with its impact on the Indian psyche. Indian culture centers round the question- What is the Indian way of thinking? Indian psyche has been influenced by the Eastern-Western or the Indo-European binaries apart from its huge scriptural influences. This paper focuses on the Hindu religious scriptures, not to undermine the profound influence of other texts, especially Islamic thoughts and practices. The key-concepts of mother-worship, reincarnation, androgynous nature, karma, rituals, suffering and well-being will be discussed here. These concepts uphold the understanding of the genesis of our suffering as the first step towards our well-being. The paper concludes by upholding the Indian belief-system as the Traditional model stressing emotion. It can easily accommodate contradictions and opposites, as opposed to the Western rationalized model which possesses universality but lacks context-sensitivity and context-freeness- values which are highly acclaimed in recent times in all disciplines.

Keywords : Mother-worship, Reincarnation, Androgynous nature, Karma, Rituals, Suffering, Well-being.

Culture plays a pivotal role in the formation of individual psyches. Since birth, as a person grows up in a given culture, her/his responses to a situation, the emotional outbursts made, the thought processes and belief systems- all get

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moulded by the given culture in subtle and not so subtle ways. Accordingly, the individuals expectations from life is essentially culture bound. Every culture nurtures different belief-systems which are the accumulated views of people belonging to that particular culture and have withstood the test of time. These beliefs bear the value of promoting mental health and help its believers to cope with the different struggles of life.

Now culture is not a homogenous and a monolithic entity. There are different cultures in the world and each culture is continuously undergoing a process of change wherein it is divided into micro-cultures. The changes in these cultures are brought in by geographical, political, linguistic, ethnic, religious, familial and other factors- depending on the local context. Further, these boundary conditions act as multi-layered filters through which culture reaches the individual. Apart from these cultural boundaries there are also extra-cultural influences which modify the belief-system of the individual, thereby complicating the individual. Science is a leading extra-cultural filter which has gradually shaped up as a separate culture altogether.

This paper considers Indian culture and its effect on the Indian psyche. Professor A. K. Ramanujan(1989), in his paper on Indian thought, has aptly analyzed Indian thinking into the following ways-

Is there an Indian way of thinking?

Is there **an** Indian way of thinking?

Is there an **Indian** way of thinking?

Is there an Indian way of **thinking**?

Instead of answering each of the questions individually, we find that Indian thought and culture tend to use the Eastern-Western or Indian- European binary way of thinking. Here, Indian thought processes derive its most from the Indian or specifically Hindu texts and scriptures. I shall now talk about a few core concepts of Hindu belief systems.

Worshipping of mother goddess is an integral part of Hindu religious practice. This tradition has originated in India not only from *Tantra-sādhana* and the non-Aryan Dravidian influences but also from the Harappan, Mesopotamian and Egyptian civilizations. Infact at one time, the entire area from Eastern Europe to India, including Asia Minor regarded mother-worship as the main religious practice. In accordance to this background, traditional Indian society looked upon women

as mothers or would-be-mothers and thus undermined her other roles in the family and society.

Reincarnation is another idea central to most Indian thoughts. It is believed that we undergo the process of multiple births and deaths until we attain *mokṣa* which in turn arrests rebirth and unites us with the Supreme Being. The present life is considered as a source of suffering and *mokṣa* as the ultimate aim of life. Side by side we have the Vedāntic view which upholds that we are usually under the veil of *Māyā* till we realize the Supreme Brahman leading to the world-life negation.

Another unique feature of Indian godhead is the half woman god image (*ardhanārīśwar*). *Hara-Pārvati*, *Kālī*, *Durgā*, *Prajñā-Pāramita* as well as the *Sāṃkhya* concepts of *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti*- all depicts Indian males to be less masculine than their Western counterparts. Interestingly, androism or maleness is not admitted in Indian conception of womanhood.

The concept of *Karma* has also developed immensely through the ages. In the early Vedic times, *Karma* implied rituals revolving round home and *yajña*, leading to material gain in this world or in heaven or in after-life. Later, during the time of the *Upaniṣads*, these *Karmas* were seen as paths towards spiritual liberation. Further, *Karma* came to be known as *Karmaphala*, implying the accumulated results of one's actions in this world. This *Karmaphala* earlier regulated the next life. Hence *Karma* here becomes *Karma bandhana*, leading to the eternal life-death cycle. Thus we find *Karma*, in its Vedic restricted sense, was a path of attainment, while according to the Vednātics, later Jain, Buddhist and Hindu thought, it became an obstacle for this achievement. In any case, *Karma* is a leading concept of Indian thought which teaches us non-attachment through its idea of *Niṣkāma Karma*.

Thus, following the *Gītā*, we may opine that the *Gītā* does not ask an individual to remain indifferent about the probable consequences of one's action. It rather wants the doer not to be affected by the success or failure of the action in bringing in the desired consequence. The rationale behind this teaching is that the more an individual is swayed by the success of an action; the individual is more open to feel disturbed if the desired result is a failure thereby jeopardizing the inner peace and tranquility. Thus pursuing disinterested actions assures our physical as well as mental well-being.

Hindu thought is again dominated by Rituals. Our entire life, from our birth till death, revolves round rituals. Hindu religious activity aims at self-purification. This purification is a physical as well as a mental process. These processes are not ethical activities but ritualistic performances. The most common feeling associated with these rituals is guilt, which is caused by ethical digression.

Furthermore, the concept of suffering is one of the basic thoughts of Indian culture. Every human being undergoes pain or suffering in some form and in some intensity in her or his life though all of us dislike it. Sometimes we hold ourselves responsible for it, while most commonly we blame others for it. When we proceed to understand the genesis of suffering we find that understanding suffering is the first step towards well-being. The more we reduce suffering, the more can we progress towards our well-being.

Now human suffering is intimately connected to the belief-system. Every person possesses her/his set of beliefs. This belief includes expectations. Whenever the expectations are not fulfilled, we undergo suffering; and whenever we suffer, it hinders our well-being. Thus in Indian tradition, we look towards our inner world in our search for well-being. It is upheld that when a belief is true, it produces well-being. Whereas when a belief is false, it produces suffering. Sometimes a true belief seems to produce suffering too, but there some other false belief may be operational. Moreover a false belief may seem to produce well-being, but it will not do so in the long run. Thus a true belief is powerful enough not only to produce well-being directly but to help in the removal of suffering indirectly.

Maharṣi Goutama, in the second verse of his *Nyāyasūtra*, affirmed that true belief or *Tattvajñāna* can do away with suffering or *Dukkha*. Here he affirms that there is a causal relation between false knowledge or *Mithyājñāna* and *Dukkha*. *Mithyājñāna* can be of various types like mistaking non-eternal objects for eternal objects, thinking someone to be a protector who is not really so, considering someone to be the source of pleasure whereas s/he is really not, etc. etc. These false beliefs create negative features in us like jealousy, treachery, greed etc. which in turn cause pain or suffering.

The Buddhists define “well-being” similarly. To them, well-being is a state of life that is free from suffering. To them, such a state is attainable by the removal of the causes of suffering. These causes are usually psychological states like hatred, greed, passion etc. These states make people perform various evil acts

like killing, stealing, lying, adulteration and addiction. The root cause of all these impurities is ignorance. Ignorance about the true nature of objects causes suffering. Repeated performance of good acts purifies the mind by the removal of ignorance thereby generating well-being.

Even Western thinkers admit an intimate relation between belief, well-being and suffering- exploring related theories of cognition and emotion in this context. But apart from the similarities, Indian and Western viewpoints differ in the fact that Indian philosophical systems admit different kinds of suffering namely, *Ādhibhoutika dukkha*, *Ādhidaivika dukkha* and *Ādhyatmika dukkha* which are not so in the case of Western Philosophy. These ideas of the long Indian tradition can be traced back to the times of the *Upaniṣads*.

Here a question arises as to the uniqueness of the individual. An individual has her/his individuality. Still, s/he is socially rooted and culturally conditioned. Thus in spite of the uniqueness of the individual, there might be some cognitive factors which distinguish one community from another, although individuals within the community keep on maintaining their individuality.

Now human culture is a dynamic process, changing through times. Indian culture has also changed through the invasions of foreign cultures. For the past 2000 years, foreign invasions like the Huns, Kushanas, Arabs, Muslims, the Dutch, the French and the British took place. Thus Indian culture has been exposed to other alien cultures though India has still restored its cultural identity. These cultural roots determine the free choice of the individual.

Indian culture is very flexible. The songs of Rabindranath Tagore like ‘*Āche dukkha, āche mṛtyu, biraha dahana lāge, Tobuo śānti, tobu ānondo, tobu ananta jāge*’, “*Tomāro asīme prāṇa mana laye yata dūre āmi dhāi*” etc, all establish our connectedness with the pure consciousness producing bliss or well-being in us. This is the core thinking of Indians even after so many foreign invasions.

Indians believe in spirituality. Prof. Mohanty states, “ it is an essential component of Indian culture to believe that it is possible for individuals, given suitable effort , discipline, and perhaps, past *Karma*, to achieve experiences- intuitive, if that word is to have any sense- that free you from pain of bondage due to the cycle of rebirth...”. Echoing Prof. Mohanty we find that Indian psyche stresses on subjectivity. This subjectivity is multigraded. Prof. K.C. Bhattacharyya distinguished between three grades of subjectivity-the bodily, the psychic and

the spiritual. In every grade of subjectivity, freedom from the object is realized. This freedom helps in our journey towards bliss. Each lower grade of subjectivity thus produces relative well-being. In the highest grade of subjectivity a person experiences bliss or well-being.

The characteristic feature of Indian psyche is also spiritual identity and solidarity. This belief about self-identity helps a person to view other persons from the spiritual perspective, thereby making the person more accommodative and open towards others. The person in turn gets more and more connected, unconditionally and is full of delight and not insecurity. Here a question arises that if Indians do believe this way and they have a true belief, then why do they suffer? In answer it can be said that Indian people who suffer also have the belief that non-spiritual objects also constitute their identity. This wrong identification causes their suffering.

Thus mainstream Indian thought and life run through different channels though they mutually influence each other. Indian thought is famous for its inherent contradictions. Here we find world-and-life negation, again India exhibits colourful survival. Scriptures frown upon physical and sexual pleasure, whereas *Kâmasutra* itself has owned a place for itself as a religious text. Mysticism is the main stay of Indian thought, whereas simultaneously science and mathematics have also been flourishing since primitive times.

Hence it is interesting to note that Indian thought has an immense capacity of overlooking theoretical problems thereby taking the path of compromise. Indian thought is not concerned with its problems by analyzing its roots. It rather intends to find a practical solution by mixing the old and the new, thereby creating a world-view. According to Schweitzer, there are two distinct patterns of human thought- the universal and the contextual. The European thought-processes aim at universalizing qualities while Indian thought concentrates on contextual utility.

Thus the cultural belief-systems may be divided into two- the Indian Traditional model and the Western Rationalized model and interestingly they seem to be opposed to each other. Traditional model deals with contextual thought which centers round human emotions thereby being context-sensitive. But rationalized models focus on universalism and is more abstract and coherent. Comparing the two, we find that emotion can easily accommodate contradictions and opposites, while reason is monogamous. The Western rationalized model thus possesses universality but lacks context-sensitivity and context-freeness. Considering the

openness and all-inclusiveness of the Traditional Indian Model, it can thus be concluded that the Indian psyche is finely developed and firmly grounded by the strong cultural beliefs and value-system of Indian thought. It is not only acclaimed by all other disciplines but also guarantee our well-being to the fullest.

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Marriage: Reflection of Indian Culture and Philosophy

Aditi Mistri

ABSTRACT : To discuss the characteristics of the society of an ancient or modern age, the two aspects of the subject are to focus on economic and familial. I want to focus on one another, from the side of the family. Family is the foundation of the society anywhere in the world. As the bare of family we can arise some philosophical and cultural aspects. Marriage is one of them. In this topic I would like to discuss about the philosophical bare of marriage according to vedic philosophy. Vedic Philosophy aims at attaining worldly happiness and also spiritual upliftment. It is to achieve all the four-dharma, artha, kâma and moksha, or puruṣārtha catumaya. In order to realize this goal, the vedic sages have taken great care in prescribing a course of conduct for day to day life. Āśrama system is one of such course. Among the four Āśramas gṛhasthāśrama is given the highest significance. This is from the point of view of the ‘social values’ and culture. The foundation of gṛhastha is ‘marriage’. I am interested to discuss some aspects of vedic philosophy which dwells in detail in the physical, mental, social, religious and spiritual importance at marriage in the life of a man. In this paper I would like to locate on the aims of marriage (Dharma, Prajā and Rati) and two most important essential values behind marriage (growth and harmony) according to vedic philosophy.

Keywords: *family, cultural aspect, marriage, vedic philosophy, worldly happiness, spiritual upliftment, Āśrama, gṛhasthāśrama, Dharma, Prajā, Rati, growth and harmony.*

Human being is considered as the supreme creation for his highest intellect, power of making judgement and creative imagination. For this reason, Indian philosophy thinks that the goal of human life should be much beyond of eating, drinking and being merry. Indian philosophy aims at attaining spiritual upliftment as well as worldly happiness. In other words, it is to achieve all the four; i.e. dharma, artha, kâma and mokṣa, popularly known as *puruṣārtha catuṣṭaya*. In order to achieve this goal, Indian philosophy has prescribed a course of conduct for the whole life of human being. The Āśrama system is one such course. There are four āśramas: *brahmâcārya, gṛhasthya, vānaprastha* and

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1. Sing, Bal Ram(ed.), *Indian Family System: The concept, Practices and Current Relevance*, p.20.

sānnyāsa. So, the whole span of a person's life can be divided into four stages. In the first part, a man spends his life at the house of the guru, during *brahmācārya*; the second part is meant to live a householder's life or married life; in the third part he has to spend retired life in the forest and in the fourth part he has to spend a life that is fully detached from the worldly tie. This distribution of a person's life into different stage is very important because it allows a person to pursue all the *purusarthas*.

Among the four *āśramas*, *gṛhastha āśrama* is considered with most significance. It means the life of a householder. This stage starts with marriage ceremony. The foundation of *gṛhasthāśrama* is 'marriage'. Indian philosophy dwells in detail on the physical, social, religious and ethical importance of marriage. According to vedic tradition, marriage is a sacramental rite. In it, two complementary halves are brought together to make the whole. *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* says: He, indeed, is without sacrifice who has got no wife. It again adds "*He is himself a halfman, the second half is wife*"¹ Marriage in Indian culture is regarded as one of the most essential *samskāra*. Marriage is the institution which enables a man to enter into the householder's stage of life, in which he can perform several civic and sacred duties. It is treated as a religious obligation also. It makes a man eligible to become a worthy member of the society. Marriage is the means by which a person can discharge his obligations to his forefathers through procreation of progeny.

As marriage is treated as the foundation of *gṛhasthya āśrama*, so, to justify the importance of marriage, we have to clarify the concept of *gṛhasthya āśrama* according to Indian philosophy. In Indian philosophy, among all the *āśramas*, *gṛhasthya* is given the highest importance. Manu says, "*As rivers, great and small, find a resting place in the ocean, even so men of all āśrama gather their stability and support at the hands of the householders. Since men in the three other āśramas are daily supported by the householders with sacred knowledge and food, the householder's is the leading āśrama.*"² In accordance with the precepts of the Vedas and the *smṛtis*, the householder is declared to be the superior to all of them.

Now the question is, why the *gṛhasthya āśrama* is considered with so much importance in Indian tradition. Generally, each *āśrama* is regarded as an

¹ Sigh, Bal Ram(ed.), *Indian Family System: The Concept, Practices and Current Relevance*, p.18

essential stage for the development of individual. All of them are important. But, among them *gṛhasthya āśrama* is given the most importance.

First of all it can be said that, according to Indian Philosophy, *gṛhasthya āśrama* lends support to the other three *āśramas* and provides the ground for practicing and cultivating all the three *purusartha* (*dharma, artha and kâma*). Secondly, it provides the stage to discharge the three obligations (*ṛṇas*), the debt to the gods (*deva-ṛṇa*), to the ancestors (*pitṛṇa*) and to the sages (*ṛṣi-ṛṇa*). But the most important point to glorify *gṛhasthya āśrama* is not in terms of absolute superiority of all other *āśramas*, but from the point of view of social values. In this *āśrama* a person can fulfill all his social obligations. It changes the idea of an individual as a ‘free windowless agent,’ totally detached from the outer world. It creates the idea of selfless sacrifice, love and caring mentality to the family and to the neighbours. These ideas make a man ideal and social human being.

Another important and integral part of *gṛhasthya āśrama* is family. So, it is necessary to justify the importance of *gṛhasthya āśrama* from the point of view of family system. *Gṛhasthya* is the central construct of family. This *āśrama* unites the two extreme but accommodative stages of *brahmacarya* and *vânâprastha*. A person from *brahmacarya āśrama*, who gets all the moral education, applies it in *gṛhasthya āśrama* through family. The idea of socialization is closely related to the idea of ethics. And this socialization is cultivated in *gṛhasthya āśrama*. The main aim of *gṛhasthya āśrama* is to lead a household life and to make a family. According to Indian tradition family is a moral and social institution. In a family, a householder with his spouse maintain their holy marital responsibility. The householders realize the ultimate emancipation or *moksa* with accompanying virtues like *satya, jñâna, ahimsâ, tapaḥ, ârjava and âcâra*. These familial ideals have significance in indic civilization which developed with passing of time in their modern approach by social reformers like Rammohan Roy, Ramkrishna, Vidyasagar and others. As *brahmacarya* evolves into *gṛhasthya* as inevitable stage, the life of rigorous academic discipline of *brahmacarya* forms the seed of household life. In *brahmacarya āśrama* the pupil are strongly built up with the knowledge of the ethical, spiritual, intellectual etc, which they apply in their household life.

The world today focus’s as many problems related to marriage and family life. The marital life is becoming unstable day by day. This life is lacking of

mutual love, emotional bonding and sense of responsibility for each other. As a result, social relations are gradually breaking down. Distrust, unrest, selfishness, insecurity and tensions are increasing rapidly in society. The analytical study of Vedic Philosophy of marriage and family throws a ray of hope in this frustrating situation. Indian cultural tradition, philosophy and morality suggest us two main universal values to guide a family. These are—growth and harmony. Here, growth means not only physical growth, but emotional and intellectual growth also. The intellectual growth can be called as ‘soul phase’ or ‘spiritual phase’. When a person goes through the various stages of growth (physical-mental-intellectual-spiritual), then she/he can be superior, worthy and dependable member of family and society. According to Indian ethics, proper growth can be the result by pursuing four purusarthas—*dharma*, *artha*, *kâma* and *mokṣa*. Adequate growth can be gained through fulfilling by maintaining the four *purusarthas*.

Another important value of family is harmony. Peaceful coexistence is essential for a family and for the growth of an individual. There has to be harmony between individual and family, family and community, community and greater society. By following these values, we can maximize the sum total of the average happiness of all the individual in family and in society.

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Women Empowerment : An Initiative for Upliftment of Human Society and Culture

Joyita Basak

ABSTRACT : The subject of women empowerment has become a burning issue all over the world including India for last few decades. The issue of women empowerment has been in the public domain, but the presence of women in decision making has yet not been activated in nation. Woman empowerment is still a deception of reality. In ancient time women used to get equal position with men. In ancient India women were described as – “*Ya Devi Sarva Bhuteshu, Matirupen Sansthithe, Namatasya, Namastasya, Namastasya, Namo, Namah*”. These words clearly show that women is the another name of goddess and they deserve respect. But since post-Vedic age, their social position suffered deterioration. “Men” always are treated as “Savior” and “Women” as “Victim”. We have seen in our daily life, how women get deprived of their rights in different social circumstances.

Women empowerment is the key instrument to extend women’s capacity. It is the way towards guarding them against all types of violence. After the independence of India, the constitution makers and national leaders strongly demanded equal social position of women with men. Because of constitutional changes, rights of women got protected and as a result we see women securing some respectable position in some sphere of life. Everyone says “Behind every successful man there is a woman” but I think from now we should say “Beside every successful man there is a woman”. Women should stand besides men instead of standing behind.

Yet, women are not free from discrimination. Today, they go through from many kinds of harassments, such as – eve-teasing, gender discrimination, rape, dowry, child marriage, domestic violence etc.

To overcome this it is extremely important that women should empower themselves first. They have to empower themselves by the light of education because without education no one can stand successfully in their lives.. In this way, they can improve their economic position also. If a woman establishes and becomes modified herself financially, then she would able to get an identity of her own. In that way, she would able to insert the idea of self-reliance to next generation and thus the shape of the society and its culture will change and modified in favour of women upliftment.

Keywords: *Empowerment, Upliftment, Society, Culture*

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Introduction

Women empowerment is a burning issue in modern time in India. Almost 50% of the world's population is woman. Women empowerment has been in the public domain, but still they are not able to stand in the society. Because women are not totally free from social superstitions. They are always kept in home to avoid social violence, like – rape, acid attacks, eve teasing etc. Till now some of them are dependent on men. They are not allowed to speak in loud voice. Women are not treated as equal to men in all the places. So, empowerment of women should be top priority to remove these circumstances. Empowerment of women means the upliftment of monetary, social, and also political status of women. By this , we should change our human society, because women are the pillar of our society. If we empower them, society will change gradually in favour of women.

Cultural Impact On The Women

Culture is one of the areas, which encircles the people, in all respects. Since childhood, all of us are surrounded by different cultures and we grow accordingly. Among women, the impact of culture is a little more than, it is over men. It is the Culture which impacts their education, conduct and behavior. Our society, traditionally, cultures our women to be dependent on the Men. To keep their position dominant, the men have evolved such regulations which they enforce on the women, and, as a result the independence of the women is restricted. Such practices encourage the gender discrimination and result in a dominant patriarchy. The famous German philosopher John Stuart Mill says, **“the legal subordination of one sex to another – is wrong in itself, and now one of the chief hindrances to human improvement, and it ought to be replaced by system of perfect equality, admitting no power and privilege on the one side, nor disability on the other.”**¹ But Gender inequality in India can be traced back to the historic days of Mahabharata, when Draupadi was put on the dice by her husband as a commodity. Monu describe women as a burden of a family. Monu says, **“by a young girl, by a young women, or even by a aged ones, nothing must be done independently, even in her own house. In childhood a female must be subject to her father, in youth to her husband, when her lord is dead to her son's, woman must never be independent.”**² By this manner, women always kept aside from the society.

1. John Stuart Mill, p.1.

2. Andrey shastri, p.29.

In the old traditions the women were discriminated... some of which are as below.

Devadasis:- Devadasis was a religious practice in India. According to this practice women were forced to marry with a deity or temple. After some period later, they are being sexually exploited.

Jauhar:- Jauhar refers to practice of the voluntary immolation of all wives and daughters of defeated warriors in order to overcome the depression of war. This practice was followed by Rajput rulers.

Purdah:- Purdah is a custom among some religious communities of requiring women to cover their body, so that their body should not be confronted among the people. This custom is a symbol of women subordination.

Sati:- Sati is an old custom in Indian society. According to this cruel custom, widows were immolated alive on her husband's funeral pyre. This custom was forcedly charged to the women.

So, it is clear that women have been victims of harmful customs and rituals in the Indian society since ancient times. **But my question is why such practices are continuing even today?**

Yes, today also we see such kinds of brutal ritual and custom are present in the society. Such as following:-

Female Genital Mutilation or khatna:- This is a cruel practice of female genital cutting. Khatna is not only practiced in tribal region, but also in India young girls aged six and seven are regularly being cut.

Teeth Chiseling of Female:- Women go through a painful practice known as teeth chiseling in Sumatra. The local shaman sharpens the teeth by a rude blade as best he can and then take a rock and begins to hack away. The young girls given no drug support to numb her pain. This practice is done to make them more beautiful and attractive to men.

Partial or Complete Removal of the Clitoris:- For the girls of Sabiny tribe, in Uganda, the price for womanhood is genital mutilation. According to this custom, if they can survive the test, then they prove themselves strong to endure every obstacle. Female circumcisions are complete when the clitoris is partially cut. This ritual makes sure that she is faithful to her husband.

Breast ironing:- According to this custom large hot stones, hammers or spatulas are burned over hot coals and pressed against the girl's breast to stop their breast from growing by attempting to damage breast tissues. And all of this is done just to prevent male attraction and as a precautionary measure against girls getting raped.

So, till now women are suffers from these kind of cruel custom. To band these brutal customs, we need laws but empowering women is the best way to stop these negativity. Until women steeped out and raising their voice, law is not sufficient to prevent these dangerous rituals. In this way, the position of women in the society become prominent.

Reason And Need Of Women Empowerment

Today in India, we have noticed different schemes of central government as well as state government, which has been implemented to empower the women. But the participation of women at every level of the society is very low. Due to lack of education, they do not engaged themselves in services and other activities. Around 66% of the female in rustic area is still unutilized. If 50% of global population suffers daily discrimination, increased risk of assault by virtue of being female, then we can say that empowerment should be a top priority to remove those circumstances.

Women are found to be economically very poor all over the India. So, they need economic power and educational power because without educational power economic flexibility is not possible and without economic flexibility no one can stand on their own legs. Financial empowerment of woman spurs economic growth within a country, which can lead to the country economically strong and stable. More empowered women means more safety and security.

It is found that among the world's 900 million women living in destitution are uneducated. Rate of education among men in India is observed to be 76%, though it is just 54% among women. Women are still face many kinds of social violence such as – gender discrimination, eve teasing, harassment, domestic violence etc. They do not express their own views and they deprived of their fundamental rights. Advanced education, particular trainings, self-defence training is surely required to empower women which will make them strong and help them in accomplishing anything. Empowerment is also required for ensuring one's dignity.

At the time when India was under colonial rule, it was the male members who could vote elections while women were totally absent from the political scene. If women could get political rights, they would be able to save and protect the lives of many women. If we want our daughters would be brought up in free atmosphere, then we need more women in political power.

The population of this world is increasing day by day. Scientist estimate the world's population will swell to 10 billion people by the year of 2081. That's 10 billion people fighting for food, water, shelter. If women are self empowered then nobody wants to worry about fighting for fresh water, healthy food, and comfortable shelter.

At last but not least, we say that women empowerment cannot be possible unless women come with and help to self-empower themselves. This is a need to formulate reducing feminized poverty, promoting education of women, and prevention & elimination of violence against women.

Implementation Of Women Empowerment

The concept of empowerment flows from the power. Empowerment of women would mean economical stability, self-reliant, have positive mental & physical power to face any difficult situation.

In India, the Ministry of Human Resources Development and the National Commission for women have been worked to protect the rights and legislation of women. The Women's Justice Initiative is our national network of lawyers and social activists, using the law to oppose all forms of gender-based discrimination and violence against women and to increased women's access to the justice system as a vital means to their empowerment."The NewPanchayati Raj" is a way to empower women at last at the village level. But constitution amendments has exploded several myths, like –upper class women will come through reservation, only women of powerful politicians will enter panchayets, and lastly most important that women are only members, they do not participate in panchayats. But now these myths are rejected. Today the buzzword is that women can do anything. The most positive development for last few years has been the growing involvement of women in the Panchayati Raj Institutions. There are many elected women representatives at the village council level. At present 8,38,244 laces is the women member all over the India. At the central and state levels too women are progressively making a difference. Today, we have seen women chief

ministers, women president, different political parties leader, well establish businessmen etc. The most well known women are –our ex-priminister Indira Gandhi, Mrs Protiva Devi Singh Patil, Sonia Gandhi, Binda Karat, Susma Soraj, Mamta Benarjee etc. Women are also involving in human development issues of child rearing, education, and health.

The government of India has produced various human rights for women. During the year of 2001, a landmark document has been adopted, that is “The National Policy for the Empowerment of Women”. For the uplifment of the women government has been adopted different schemes and programs, such that – the National Credit Fund for women, Food and Nutrition Board, Information and Mass Education etc.

At present, the Government of India has more than 34 plans for women worked by various division and services. Some of these are as per as the following:-

Mahila Samridhi Yojna:- This scheme is to be implemented through SCA in rural and urban areas by way of financing the women beneficiaries either directly or through self help groups.

Swashakti Group:-Swashakti group is a national programme to develop women.

Support to Training and Empowerment of Women:-The ministry has been administering this ‘Support to Training and Empowerment for women’ scheme (STEP). The STEP scheme aims to provide skill that give employability to women and to provide competencies and skill that enable women to became self-employed.

National Mission for Employment of Women:- The committee of Governors set up to study and recommend strategies for speedy socio-economic empowerment of women.

Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescence Girls:- Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescence Girls – SABLA aims at empowering adolescence girls of 11 to 18 years by improving their nutritional and health status, up gradation of home skills, life skills, and vocational skills. The girls would up equipped with information on health, family welfare and hygiene. This scheme also aims to mainstream out of school girls into formal education or non-formal education.

Training of Rural Youth for Self-Employment:- The scheme – TRYSEM aimed at providing basic technical and entrepreneurial skill to the rural poor women in the age group of 18 to 35 years, enable them take up income generating activities.

Women's Development Corporation Scheme:- This scheme evaluate programmes for promoting entrepreneurship and generating self-employment among women in the fields of trade, business, service etc. which will enable women to earn and improve their standard of living.

SBI's Stree Shakti Scheme:- The streeshakti package is a unique scheme run by the SBI, aimed at supporting entrepreneurship among women by providing certain concessions.

Kanayshree:-Department of Women Development and Social Welfare, Government of West Bengal is implementing the KanayshreePrakalpa. According to this scheme, conditional cash was transferred to the girl child for improving their educational status.

Indira MahilaYojna:- This scheme aims at organizing at the grass-root level to facilitate their participations in decision making and their empowerment. The objectives of the scheme are: convergence of the schemes of every sectoral department, awarness generation among the women from rural areas and urban slums and economic empowerment of women.

These are the finest steps, which can help them to achieve their supreme goal of empowerment. By this hope, we can say that "There is no work that they cannot do, women can do anything."

Conclusion

The society can only propagate with the equal contribution of Men and women. Thus, if the women remain backward, then that society is likely to remain deprived from Cultural enrichment. Empowerment of women is possible only when the men and women work in tandem. In our society, there is a practice to look down upon women. Even if one man in the society looks down upon women, the chances of progress of the society as a whole, diminishes. The ill effects of deprived women would show through the culture of the society. It is imperative that the same be taken care of by empowering all women.

Different theoretical analyzes have been given for the empowerment of women, but it should not be limited only to the theory, but the practical aspects of the theory should be taken into account. This awareness cannot be achieved only through manual education. With women experiencing such experiences in everyday life, somewhere they lose their independence, and somewhere they are deprived of their rights. All of these small areas should be kept in mind, they must fight for their own rights, do not think of themselves as weak. At present, in the modern era, it is very necessary for women to make their own debut.

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Cultural Values for Well being from the Perspective of Mahabharata: Relevant in Today's World

Dr. Lalita Agrawal

ABSTRACT : Mahabharata is a unique piece of Indian literature for its realism of human condition, human traditions, culture, moral values and practical approach which are still relevant. It teaches us that there are no happily-ever-after. If happiness is gained, it is gained after much sacrifice.

Mahabharata gives us choice to choose perfection of goodness and perfection of survival by any means. It's up to people to choose their path. It also emphasises that only physical or numerical strength or courage do not lead to victory, the victorious must take to truth, non-violence and an abundance of enthusiasm. Above all, it teaches us through Arjuna that learning throughout life is the best gift you can give yourself. Arjuna grasped whatever came his way. Not only did he learn the best of military science from Dronacharya, but he was also interested in learning about divine weapons from Indra. Additionally, he treated Yudhishtir and Krishna as his mentors too, and continued learning whatever they had to offer. Through the character of Ekalavya, we come to know that you cannot be stopped if you are passionate about what you do. The dominating mood of the Mahabharata is peace, and not chivalry. In the social psyche, death, however imposing or violent it be, is not the last word, but is precursor to prospective well-being of the agent in peace and harmony in future lives. The Mahabharata, embodies the spirit of tolerance and synthesis, in having avoided physical combativeness with the other religions, in tolerance of these other faiths. In the Mahabharata, we see examples of tolerance not only regarding the other ways of spiritual pursuit, but even in actual war situation where violence is supposed to be practised. There are definite rules to follow in the battle, like not killing or injuring the women or children. The relevance and importance of the Mahabharata is in taking the stride on, in order to reestablish the age-old value, at a time when discord is tearing apart the social fabric. Dharma, artha and kama are to be pursued on an equitable basis. Those attached to one of them exclusively are certainly to be despised.

Although about the whole of the story of the Mahabharata, is occupied by description of fights, fight is not the end of it. There is no description here of the violent rejoicings of the Pandavas after they rescued the lost wealth from the Kauravas. The story shows instead the victorious Pandavas abandon the conquered riches beside the ashes of the funeral pyres in Kurukshetra, and take the path of detachment toward the land of peace. Such is the final dictate of the epic, which is addressed to the humanity of all times.

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Indian mythologies have, over a period of time, enriched our culture, ideology, morality and societal values. They also have been source of our philosophy and provide solutions to varied problems faced by Indian society. Mahabharata is one such mythological source and teaches us the deep values to lead a good, prosperous and harmonious life. It also contains two mini-classics within being the Shanti-parva and the Bhagavad Gita, their core messages being- virtuous rule by a ruler and selfless and detached performance of duties respectively. The epic Mahabharata is one of the most important sources of values for the human life and is the gist of devotion, knowledge and courage.

It is a unique piece of Indian literature for its realism of human condition, human traditions, culture, moral values and practical approach which are still relevant. The value of an individual depends on their culture. For the country to progress, the citizens have to cultivate moral, ethical, and spiritual values. The epic of Mahabharata teaches various principles and techniques regarding warfare like skilled warfare (Chakravuha system), role of leader, role of advisors, various technologies and weapons used but this interpretation is a narrow one, in a broader sense, Mahabharata delves into deeper values of life whose strict adherence will strengthen modern concept of 'rule' or 'law'.

It is in the nature of masterpieces to be timeless and applicable everywhere, the Mahabharata fulfills such criterion. It is a vast epic containing many stories which highlight the complexity of life, the multiple situations and the way to deal with them. In several problems it has followed the middle path being both practical and ethical while in certain situations, it highlights the value of certain absolute values such as truth, selflessness, and duty, for which all can be sacrificed.

The Bhagavad Gita, embedded within the epic Mahabharata, is the most influential text of Hindu philosophy. Here Lord Krishna explains to the Pandavas prince, Arjuna, the meaning of dharma (religious duty). Apart from the main message that everyone must follow the course of duty without thinking about its results¹.

Krishna taught us that one must perform his duty and shows us that dharma is not your institutional religion. It is your natural and binding duty. It is of ethical nature and you are born with it. A king's dharma is to perform

his kingly duties. Dharma holds the cosmos together. The most important thing in the world is Dharma (righteousness or justice); rest all bonds are secondary. His message is to uphold Dharma and Truth- life of Yudhishtira is an epitome of truth and dharma. It symbolises that dharma needs to be upheld even if it means losing the war. Yudhishtira was a righteous soul, the most mature and kind out of all his brothers; his virtues are something everyone should try and emulate. Yet, in a fit of hubris and greed, he gambled away his kingdom, his wealth, his brothers and finally his wife. So righteousness is useless unless paired with foresight.

Lord Krishna teaches us how to be dutiful in challenging times. Duty is sacrosanct– ‘perform your duty even if it means going against your beloved ones’ is the message of Krishna to Arjuna. One must hold his duty above all other concerns.

Through the teachings of the epic, people have been able to see their need to abide by their dharma, despite the consequences that may follow, as dharma is one's duty to the world around them. Dharma has grown in the Hindu culture as a moral law, an intrinsic good, and the ultimate goal of life. This form of devotion can be expressed in numerous different ways from prayer and meditation to dedicating one's life to god in hopes of reaching him at least one time². So, dharma is the central theme of the epic and its modern application will be that we shall not do something to others that we do not do on ourselves. Justice, fairness and common good shall be the aim of ruler.

For a long time people have derived legality of their actions while sighting the instances or values in Mahabharata. A responsible society's ethics shall be based on strong ethical sources and the values preached in Mahabharata can be a source of individual and social ethical actions for centuries to come.

The relationship between two generations in Indian culture follows the teachings of these literary or religious books and the respect for the elderly comes as a natural form of behavior. Obeying the adults (often not restricted only to the family members) is seen as “dharma” and not as submission or loss of individuality. The great grandfather Bhishma in Mahabharata becomes the icon of determination, truthfulness and principle who commands respect.

Respect for elders is one of the highest values in the epic and teacher is equivalent to God, even standing on the opposite side of battle, Arjuna first payed respect to his teacher. Before starting the war, Yudhisthira takes permission of his Pitamaha Bhishma whether to start the war or not.

In the same way the epic teaches us to respect the women. Recognising a woman's worth is the first step to a more powerful and equal society. The balance is missing in today's world. It's lost in the cacophony of words. It needn't be. The Mahabharata shows us in so many words. The epic also shows us that those who empower their women or the family where women have the decision making power are always on the winning side³. Kauravas never gave too much of the importance towards women for decision making. Gandhari retreated to the inner chambers but nobody listened to her. In case of Pandavas, Kunti was the supreme authority for the Pandavas. Anyway, Draupadi was a companion in whatever Pandavas did. She had a big role in all the decision makings, without her, Pandavas would have probably retired to the forest.

It teaches us to respect inherent dignity of every human being. A kingdom or society which violates human dignity is bound to decimate. Kauravas act of tampering with the dignity of Draupadi decimated the whole Kaurava clan.

Being kind, humble, loyal and generous is not enough to live life. The way Karna's life moved, we realised, more often than not, that the world is an evil place to survive in and to face it, we must understand how it really works. It says loyalty should not be immoral because it affects personal ethics. For example, personal integrity of Karna towards Duryodhana was loyalty which is blind adherence to one's values.

It teaches us that there are no happily-ever-after. If happiness is gained, it is gained after much sacrifice. Although about the whole of the story of the Mahabharata, is occupied by description of fights, fight is not the end of it. There is no description here of the violent rejoicings of the Pandavas after they rescued the lost wealth from the Kauravas. The story shows instead the victorious Pandavas abandon the conquered riches beside the ashes of the funeral pyres in Kurukshetra, and take the path of detachment toward the land of peace. Such is the final dictate of the epic, which is addressed to the humanity of all times.

Mahabharata gives us choice to choose perfection of goodness and perfection of survival by any means. It's up to people to choose their path. It also emphasises that only physical or numerical strength or courage does not lead to victory, the victorious must take to truth, non-violence and an abundance of enthusiasm.

Above all, it teaches us through Arjuna that learning throughout life is the best gift you can give yourself. Arjuna grasped whatever came his way. Not only did he learn the best of military science from Dronacharya, but he was also interested in learning about divine weapons from Indra. Additionally, he treated Yudhishtir and Krishna as his mentors too, and continued learning whatever they had to offer. Arjuna taught us how single-minded focus can help achieve one's goals. When you want something in life, you must be as focused on it as Arjuna. Only this focus can make you a winner, an accomplished person respected by all but incomplete knowledge gives rise to a tragedy. Abhimanyu's brave yet tragic breaking of the 'Chakravyuh' teaches us how half knowledge can be dangerous. Although he bravely volunteered to enter the Chakravyuh, Abhimanyu could not break out of it. His example shows us how half knowledge can have dangerous results.

Through the character of Ekalavya, we come to know that one cannot be stopped if he is passionate about what he does. With hardwork and dedication even impossible seeming tasks can be overcome.

The dominating mood of the Mahabharata is peace, and not chivalry. In the social psyche, death, however imposing or violent it be, is not the last word, but is precursor to prospective well-being of the agent in peace and harmony in future lives. The Mahabharata, embodies the spirit of tolerance and synthesis, in having avoided physical combativeness with the other religions, in tolerance of these other faiths. In the Mahabharata, we see examples of tolerance not only regarding the other ways of spiritual pursuit, but even in actual war situation where violence is supposed to be practised. There are definite rules to follow in the battle, like not killing or injuring the women or children. The relevance and importance of the Mahabharata is in taking the stride on, in order to reestablish the age-old value, at a time when discord is tearing apart the social fabric. Dharma, artha and kama are to be pursued on an equitable basis. Those attached to one of them exclusively are certainly to be despised.

The most important value it teaches is that immoral means like corruption, cheating only provides momentary gains, in long-terms truth always becomes victorious as exemplified by victory of Pandavas over Kauravas.

Kurushetra's warfare has many things to learn not in arena of warfare but in the area of establishing peace, prosperity and growth. Above all, even if a cardinal principle that 'duty is sacrosanct' can be learnt, we can be able to eliminate all kinds of administrative inefficiency and be able to establish 'effective, efficient and participatory administration'⁴.

From Duryodhana, we learnt that *pride comes before the fall*. Duryodhana teaches us how blind swa-dharma (desires for your own self) can lead you to 'adharma'. His greed is wrong, his methods are wrong; he teaches us that blind pride and wrong actions have consequences and one must be careful and thoughtful about their actions and thoughts. Similarly, the consequences of Dhritarashtra's actions taught us how one should not be blinded by love. Not only was Dhritarashtra partially sighted, he also loved his children blindly, and thus he never reprimanded them⁵. Correcting your loved ones when they go astray doesn't make your love for them any less, it helps them and prevents them from committing blunders. The biggest blunder was done by Shakuni whose resolution to take revenge leads to the destruction of the Kuru clan. Revenge consumes all; Shakuni teaches us that the whole idea of revenge can actually consume an entire civilization, a whole order of things, as we see at the end of the Mahabharata.

The Mahabharata is a book of wisdom, of courage in face of difficulties and ultimately compassion and forgiveness, it can teach the present world on how to lead better lives while dealing with life's complexities⁶. War is bound to cause misery and destruction for millions of years to come; even fought for a just cause, war is full of destruction and thus, in a way Mahabharata teaches the importance of diplomacy. Besides it also talks about the use of technology and power at right time and right place in right way and it should be for public welfare. Similarly, utilitarianism is talking about it by ignoring means if maximum happiness and public welfare are achieved. It is important not to ignore wrongs, even small ones, which if left unresolved lead to breakdown and destruction of a society.

Egoism makes one blind, unable to distinguish between the good and the bad thus committing gross injustices upon others.

A life of small means but lived with purity and watchfulness is more satisfying than a life as a ruler of kingdoms.

One's karma decides one's life and its end, it is one's choices in life which ultimately decide one's position.

Nishkam karma is the ultimate message of the epic, that is, action performed without any expectation of fruits or results. It has significance in modern social system also as stepping beyond personal goals and agendas while pursuing any action over greater good is the way forward to build a great society and in this pursuit values like team spirit, well planned strategy, farsightedness and larger goal make people successful. Pandavas had team spirit, union, larger goal that is why they prevailed over Kauravas.

Forgiveness as the greatest virtue of humanity, in fact whole of the Mahabharata could have been avoided if stakeholders had forgiven the mistakes of others. On the other hand greed, envy and egotism can destroy everything.

Mahabharata never says the killing of emotions for rationality unlike Kant's categorical imperatives but to make balance between both.

So Mahabharata teaches how to make choices in our life if we are suffering from what to choose among the best or worst things and also talked about our duties towards god, Country and human beings. Krishna termed Mahabharata as the Dharmayuddha where the destruction of adharma is inevitable to sustain dharma on the land⁷. History is repeating whatever happened before is happening now and will happen then also.

Mahabharata taught us how to balance ethics and morality while performing an action. For example, we mostly come under ethical dilemma between two values like public interest and personal interest. By understanding Bhagvad Gita, we can come out of such dilemmas.

Mahabharata gives a message that we should always be ready for all situations by explaining the cycle of life and birth.

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***Vivāha*: The Hindu Sacrament and its Relevance in Present Society**

Dr. Madhumita Datta

ABSTRACT : Hindu thoughts and practices are divided into - *Jñtāna-kāṇḍa*, *Upāsana-kāṇḍa* & *Karma-kāṇḍa*. The sacraments form an important section of the *Karma-kāṇḍa* because they are believed to reform and sanctify the person for whom they are performed, marking various occasions of his life from conception in the mother's womb to the cremation of the body at death. Thus, Hindu sacraments aimed at not only the formal purification of the body but also at sanctifying, impressing, refining and perfecting the entire individuality of recipient, producing a special merit in him.

The *Vivāha* is the most important of all the *Hindu - Saṁskāras*. The *Grhyasūtras* generally begins with it because it is the origin and centre of all domestic sacrifices. In the Vedic period, the marriage ceremonies were developed and they have found literary expression in the *R̥g-Veda* (X.85) and the *Atharva-Veda* (XIV.1.2). It is regarded as a sacrifice (*T.Br.ii.2.2.6*) and one who did not enter the married life was called 'one without sacrifice.'

In course of time, the aspects of human life developed more or less independently. So the *Saṁskāra* of *Vivāha* lost their content and importance; only its religious sanctity survived in its truncated form and reduced to mere ceremonies.

But through observation and experiences the ancient Hindus realized that life requires cultivation and refinement. The nuptials in their utterances promises hopes and fears in the life of the bride and the bridegroom. They have to run an independent home, to earn their own livelihood, to procreate children and to discharge their obligations towards others. So, marriage acquires its true meaning and reaches perfection only when the conjugal relationship is based on the realization that marriage is a willing sacrifice for the good of the partner, the family, the society and the world.

Keywords: *Saṁskāra*, ceremony, sacrifice, sustain, humanity.

Hinduism as an organized religion provides a comprehensive scheme for the enlightenment and purification of man. In the broad sense, Hindu

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thought and practice is divided into *Jñāna-kāṇḍa*, *Upāsana-kāṇḍa* and *Karma-kāṇḍa*.

The sacraments (*saṃskāras*) form an important section of the *karma-kāṇḍa* because they are believed to reform and sanctify the person for whom they are performed, marking various occasions of his life from conception in the mother's womb to the cremation of the body at death.

The *vivāha* (marriage) is the most important of all the Hindu *saṃskāras*. The *Gṛhyasūtras* generally begin with it because it is the origin and centre of all domestic sacrifices.

In the Vedic period, the marriage ceremonies were developed and they have found literary expression in the *ṚgVeda* (X.85) and the *Atharvaveda* (XIV.1.2)

A sweet home, a lady-love and fondling in the house – these were desired objects for the Vedic Aryans.

When religious consciousness developed, marriage was not only a social necessity but became a religious duty upon every individual. Marriage was regarded as a sacrifice (*Taittiriya Brāhmaṇa*, ii.2.2.6) and one who did not enter the married life was called 'one without sacrifice'.

Several terms like – *vivāha*, *pariṇaya*, *upayama* etc. are used in the *Śāstras* to convey the sense of marriage. The word *vivāha* is derived from the root 'vah' (to carry) proceeded the prefix 'vi' and followed by the suffix 'ghan'. So it may mean the act of carrying the maiden for the purpose of marriage.

The word 'marriage' has a reference to 'a union of the male and female which does not cease with the act of procreation but persists after the birth of the offspring until the young are capable of supplying their own needs. The desire for a son, the protection of wife and children, the need of running a home and the ideal of domestic felicity are duly reflected in the marriage ceremonies.

Different Forms of Marriage

The *Smṛtis* (*Manusmṛti* iii.21) and (*Yajñavalkyasmṛti* I.58-61) have recognized eight methods of marriage – *Brāhma*, *Daiva*, *Āśa*, *Prājāpatya*, *Aśura*, *Gāndharva*, *Rākṣasa* and *Paiśāca*.

Brāhma- In this the girl was given by her father, with such ornaments as he could afford, to a man of character and learning, whom he invited voluntarily and received respectfully without taking anything in return.

Daiva – In this form the girl was given away by the father to a priest, who officiated at a sacrifice commended by him. According to *Baudhāyana* the girl was given as a *Dakṣiṇā* or sacrificial fees. It was called *Daiva*, because in it the gift was made on the occasion of a Daiva sacrifice. Infact, it involved no proper marriage, but the concubinage associated with polygamy developing among rich and powerful classes. Later on, this custom fell into disuse and it was thought not proper to offer a girl to a priest without considering other conditions.

Āśa - According to this method the father of the bride received from the bridegroom a pair of kine or two for the uses prescribe by the law e.g. the performance of some sacrifice.

Prājāpatya – Here the father gave away his daughter to a suitor on the distinct understanding that they should both perform their civic and religious duties together.

Aśura – Here the groom after having paid money to the relations of the bride and the bride herself accepts him out of free will. The main consideration in this kind of marriage was money and it was more or less a purchase.

But in spite of its unqualified condemnation this custom lingered in India, and is still found though restricted, to very poor families. Still it is not done with a clean conscience and an attempt is made to hide the sale.

Gāndharva – In this form, it were not be parents of the girl who settled the marriage, but the bride and the bridegroom arranged it among themselves out of sensual inclination.

This method was so called as it was mostly prevalent in a tribe called *Gandharva*, living on the slopes of the Himalayas. The *Kṣatriyas* followed this method than any other section of the *Hindus*.

In course of time, when the sense of property increased, the children were regarded as possessions and the parents began to exercise greater control over their sons and daughters, Therefore, the independence of bride and the bridegroom in selecting their mates diminished.

Rākṣasa – It is a capture of a girl by force, while she was crying, having injured her relatives. The method was prevalent in ancient warring tribes and the captive women were enjoyed as war booties. This custom was current up to the Rājput period, although in most cases the captured wife was a willing one, for instance, the capture of Sanyuktā by Pṛthvirāja was prearranged. After 12

century, this custom disappeared as the political power of Rājputs dwindled away as the *Hindus* became more and more agricultural.

Paisāca – It is carrying of a girl who is either sleepy, intoxicated or unconscious. It was prevalent in primitive savage tribes, later on very rarely repeated and ultimately disapproved.

Kauṇilya favours the first four forms of marriage – *Brāhma*, *Prājāpatya*, *Ārśa* and *Daiva*. Yājñavalkya's account also gives a somewhat similar picture. At this point we should mention that the sanction of *Gāndharva* marriage by mutual love was undoubtedly an asset in regularizing the inter caste marriage. According to Vātsyāyana (3rd Century AD), the *Gāndharva* marriage is determined by mutual love and not by considerations of birth, money and other requisites. So in early times when class distinctions were not so rigid and motives of birth and money were not so important, the *Gāndharva* marriage prevailed among the *Kṣatriyas* and others.

These facts prove that marriage was not always an imposition by the parents and that there was a scope for personal selection of life partners.

Sacramental Aspects of Marriage

Normally a person should marry in the same *varṇa* but outside the *gotra* (clan) and *piṇḍa* (blood relation). *Anuloma* marriage (in which the wife is of inferior was permitted but not encouraged.

Pratiloma marriage (in which the husband is of inferior caste) though tolerated early, was later on discouraged and banned. In the selection of the bride and the bridegroom their family, age, traits of body, learning, wealth and resourcefulness are considered.

The marriage consists of items pertaining to the pre-marital, marital and post-marital stages. These are –

- *Vāgdāna* (betrothal)
- *Vara-varaṇa* (formal acceptance of the bridegroom)
- *Kanyā-dāna* (gift of the bride to the bridegroom by the legitimate guardian)
- *Vivāha-homa* (marriage offerings)
- *Pāṇi-grahaṇa* (clasping the hand)

- *Hṛdaya-sparśa* (touching the heart)
- *Saptapadī* (seven steps of prosperity and felicity)
- *Aśmārohana* (mounting the stone)
- *Suryāvalokana* (looking at the sun)
- *Dhruva-darśana* (looking at the pole star)
- *Trirātra-vrata* (three nights continence)
- *Caturthī- karma* (fourth day ceremony or the formal unification of the couple)

Symbolisms of marriage

Vāgdāna – It is a semi-legal and psychological engagement, which materialize into actual marriage.

Vara-varaṇa – It symbolizes that the bridegroom chosen is the best and the fittest of his sex.

Kanyā-dāna & Vivāha- homa– In this ceremony, the father or the guardian of the bride formally hands over the bride to the bridegroom with a purpose (*sariskāra*) calling to witness the sacred fire round which the pair takes the symbolic walk ; for the fire is the centre and the symbol of the union of the couple.

Pāṇi-grahaṇa – The bridegroom accepts the bride as a wife formally by clasping her hand which suggests that he has accepted the responsibility of her companionship.

Hṛdaya-sparśa- It indicates a complete emotional harmony between the husband and the wife.

Saptapadī – The husband asks the wife to take seven steps in the northern direction with the words- step one for sap, two for juice, three for the prospering wealth, four for comforts, five for cattle, six for the seasons.

This formula contains all the essentials of domestic felicity.

Aśmārohana – That marriage is a permanent union and not a temporary contract is symbolized by the five items beginning with *Aśmārohana*.

The fact that marriage is not a license for indulgence, but a human institution aiming at moderation in conjugal life is symbolized by the *Trirātra-vrata*.

Thus, the concept of Hindu marriage comprises a much deeper relationship than just a union between a man and woman. It is considered as one of the most important and permanent element of Indian society. In the Hindu social heritage marriage has never been looked at from the materialistic point of view. Marriage among Hindus is a sacrament and not a contract. It is considered as a sacred relationship. It is meant for the continuation of family and as well as the practice of dharma.

The Hindus consider that fulfillment in life comes when one accomplishes four aspects of life known as *Dharma*, *artha*, and *kāma* leading to the fourth – the complete release of bondage and to total freedom known as *mokṣa*. *Dharma*, *artha* and *kāma* conflict with each other. But a householder necessarily involves in the pursuit of good life, seeking *artha* and *kāma* in raising a family and not find himself in conflict with *dharma* and *mokṣa*. That means, a person, in order to keep that delicate balance among the attributes of *artha* and *kāma* has to have a spouse who is *dhārmic*. It is that protection coming from such a spouse, that torch light, that spirit of friendship and cooperation and sacrifice that gives a responsible chance for a couple to succeed in meeting the challenge of conflicting attributes.

All these indicate that marriage is not only the physical union of the two hearts or souls. And it is a union not only for the life, but for all lives to come. Through utterances, promises, hopes and fears this sacrament impresses upon the minds of the couple that marriage is an act of sacrifice in the interest of the community.

Changing Trends in Hindu Marriage

In the last few decades many changes have taken place in Hindu Marriage due to the influence of globalization and western culture. Some of the changing trends in Hindu marriage are as follows:

- (i) The rituals of marriage have been minimized.
- (ii) The traditional Hindu marriage considers “Dharma” as its primary object whereas the modern Hindus give more importance to “lifelong companionship” between husband and wife.
- (iii) Previously the selection of life partner was done by the eldest members of the family but now the consent of the boy and girl is essential.

- (iv) The Hindu Marriage Disabilities Removal Act, 1946 permitted marriages between different divisions of the same caste. The special Marriage Act, and Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 have also allowed marriages between persons of different castes and religions.
- (v) The traditional form of Hindu marriage implies *kanyādāna* which is associated with giving away ornaments to the bride by her father. This was a mark of parent's affection for the daughter. This cannot be considered as dowry in which the father of the bride provides jewels and ornaments to the daughter at the time of marriage.
- (vi) The Hindu Marriage Act of 1955 has introduced a significant change in the institution of Hindu marriage by permitting divorce under certain specific circumstances.

Present Status of marriage in India

Modern society has become quite complex coupled with changes in socio-economic conditions seconded by the disintegration of the joint family structure as well as rapid industrialization and urbanization, education and employment. Moreover, the laws which have given equal status and rights to women, have had a tremendous impact on the intuition of marriage which is no longer treated as an indissoluble union.

A study report of BBC reveals that 1.36 million people in India are divorced. That is equivalent to 0.24% of the married population and 0.11% of the total population.

More strikingly, the number of people separated is almost thrice the number of people divorced, i.e., 0.61% of the married population and 0.29% of the total population.

Divorce rates in north-east states are relatively higher than elsewhere in India. Mizoram has the highest divorce rate i.e., 4.08%, more than four times that of Nagaland, the state with the second highest rate i.e., 0.88%, Meghalaya has the most number of cases of separation followed by Mizoram, Sikkim, Kerala and Chhattisgarh.

The question arises here – Why are the marriages failing these days?

In fact, they are not always failing, but rather the 'patience' level of people is significantly low. A small argument turns into divorce. A little fight and wife

accuses husband of domestic violence. If husband is financially strained, wife runs away as she can't adjust her lifestyle. Instead, of keeping hope for future, they start to believe that love has ended in their lives and they should just find someone else. People break up or divorce in a hope that they will find a better person, which they hardly find.

It's just they need to understand that in marriage the relationship is much more than a lavish candle light dinner followed by some romantic episodes. It includes compassion, faith and responsibility. Life is all about sacrifices and these should never be one-sided. People demand more but don't want to give anything in return.

Conclusion

Actually one can never find happiness, if he doesn't change himself from within. Happiness is not something that someone can give you. One has to achieve it for himself. And the only way to do so is by developing one's own character and capacity as a human being by fully maximizing one's potential.

Thus, the ancient Hindus realized that life was an art like any other art in the world. It requires cultivation and refinement. Man born and left to himself was a mass of elements crude and brutal. His life stood in need of as much care, protection and cultivation as a plant in a garden, crops in a field and an animal in a cattle farm. The *vivāha-saṃskāra* involves conscious efforts to meet this end.

The classical thinker like Durkheim views family as an important institution for maintaining social order a moral society. As Bertrand Russell puts it – The essence of good marriage is respect for each other's personality combined with the deep intimacy, physical, mental and spiritual which makes a serious love between man and woman the most fructifying of all human experiences. Such love like everything that is great and precious, demands its own morality and frequently entails a sacrifice of the less to the greater, but such sacrifice must be voluntary, for where it is not, it will destroy the very basis of the love for the sake of which it is made.

I must conclude with the view of Rabindranath Tagore-

উড়াল উর্ধ্ব প্রেমের নিশান দুর্গম পথ মাঝে

দুর্গম বেগে দুঃসহ তম কাজে।

রক্ষ দনের দুংথ পাইত পাব -

চাই না শান্তি, সান্ত্বনা নাহি চাব।

পাড়ি দিতে নদী হাল ভাঙে যদি, ছিন্ন পালের কাছি,

মৃত্যুর মুখে দাঁড়িয়ে জানিব

তুমি আছ আমি আছি।

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Culture and Social Development-A Brief Sketch

Sangeeta Bhattacharyya

ABSTRACT : The word 'culture' is used in many senses. It includes rites, rituals, values, norms etc. It is the framework of our social life. So, many important matters like education, economy, religion etc are closely related to culture. Every individual's life and behaviour are influenced by his / her culture. Our society evolves from simple to complex, situation. In this manner, our culture also keeps changing. Society is a place from where our cultural life can develop. Many important parts of our society like economy, education, religion etc all these are birth products of our culture. If a person wants to portray any social life and social development, then he or she is compelled to consider socio-cultural aspects also. Culture plays really a vital role for society because it is indispensable for our social life. If anyone tries to think about social life then why does he or she naturally have to think about cultural life? Why culture is so important for human life? Can we really survive without culture? Without norms and values can anyone develop his/ her social life? All these questions have various kinds of answers and can we really chose any one kind of answer regarding this issue?

Key words : Survive, socio-cultural, evolve, framework.

Culture and Social Development- A Brief Sketch

The word 'culture' has so many uses in our social life. When we use the term 'culture', we not only consider its origin but also how culture influences our social life. How does it become an important ingredient of our social development? Such questions naturally arise in our mind while discussing about social development. In this regard, it is important to know what social development is. It will not be very easy to explain in a single line what the nature of social development is. It is actually a continuous process which promotes any kind of sustainable development. The motive or intention of social development is the wellbeing of every individual because people can interact or understand about social issues or the matter of society and contribute to social development only when they have an all-round or holistic progress in society. Culture, society and social development

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are interconnected issues. With the continuous evolution of the society, cultural pattern also keeps changing. For example, a few decades ago mobile phone was a very rarely used device as it was regarded as expensive by common people; but now-a-days it has become an indispensable part of our everyday life. So from this fact, it can be concluded that society evolves from simple to complex phenomena just like technology and economic condition which also keep changing from simple to complex. Cultural change also takes part in this continuous process of social evolution.

Education is one of the most powerful tools for our social development. Without education, a person cannot attain complete development – both as an individual as well as a social being. An educated person can bring about significant change in his or her cultural world by cultivating his or her knowledge, acting as an agent for the moral and the psychological uplift of the society and, therefore, contributing in the making of a beautiful world. Educational structure and cultural pattern are very closely connected to each other, and therefore inseparable and interinfluencing. In various forms education influences culture and also gets influenced by it. At first question springs up naturally in our mind, why education is so important for us? We all know that it is a powerful instrument which can bring change in a person's life – both in his outer as well as inner self. It teaches us values, norms, behaviour etc and we know that these all are part of our culture. Society needs a good culture which can contribute in the development of the society. We know that education shapes our future generations and these future generations play a vital role in the social development. So it is a fact that proper education nourishes our cultural aspects which are very important for our social development. Actually, education infuses the light of knowledge into human mind and it enables a man to perceive his environment in a better or progressive way.

Culture influences our economic structure in the same way. It is related to our social development because economic development cannot be explained without society and this society is closely related to cultural development. Culture teaches us how to behave towards other members of the society and this behavior has effects upon our economic structure or economic attitude. A child becomes a man and the man becomes an agent of the society who takes part in the economic development which affects social development. Norms, ethics, and honesty all these are cultural products

and they influence our economic development. For example, it is important to mention these values in the public sphere as they have an immense importance in maintaining public or social relationship. When we step into our professional life, we do many things which are closely related with social development. How much money we save or spend, depends on our attitude and definitely it comes from our culture. Society needs a strong economic structure which is possible only when we have a strong cultural background. Culture influences tourism, labour market etc and they, in turn, influence culture. All these play a vital role in the development of a society-country wise, state wise and location wise.

Now I would like to explain about another important instrument of social development, which is religion. Religion and culture are both closely related. Religion affects our cultural life which, in its turn, affects the development of our society. Religion influences culture in different ways. People get influenced by various kinds of religious beliefs in their daily lives. These beliefs, rites, norms etc influence their behaviour towards society. We know that behaviour is a cultural product; this product plays a very important role to shape our views towards society.

Religion directly influences human soul which nourishes a person's culture to make him an important factor for his social development. Religion has different forms, different sources and different beliefs although it exists in every individual's life- be it in the certain source of power or strength; or in the form of a thought. No matter in which forms it is, its influence always remains always in human life. This influence of religion helps a man perceive his society as well as determine his responsibility as a social being. It also helps him determine the way of living for himself. Thus, religion imparts a great impact on the social life of a man and the understanding of religion helps him connect with the process of development of his society and prosperity. Social control, social cohesion, and harmony are connected with religion. These factors are tremendously significant in the matter of social development. From another point of view it can be said that as religion is connected with culture or with changing cultural scenario, religious beliefs and practices also keep changing, and with these views towards social development also change.

Social development is the holistic development of a society. It includes the cultural and economic development with education and religion also taking part as key factors in this process of social development.

So, we can understand that if a person wants to portray any social life and social development, then he or she is likely to consider socio-cultural aspects also. Now very naturally some questions arise in our mind- if anyone tries to think about social life then why does he or she naturally have to think about cultural life? Can we really survive without culture? Without norms and values, can anyone develop his or her social life? All these questions have various kinds of answers and we can really choose any one kind of answer regarding this issue.

However, here I have done a brief discussion on the topic of culture and social development. My intention is to provide just an overview of this matter and not to delve deep into the issue concerned.

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Materialism, Culture and Social Progress— A Philosophical Review

Dr. Maitreyee Mukherjee

ABSTRACT : Some camps of philosophers echoing Marx assert that man has rightly realized that dynamics of social change lies in subjugating mind to matter. However to others like humanists, spiritualists, environmentalists the present strife-sticken world appears grey and a matter of serious concern requiring immediate changes in our thought-process. Marx however condemned thought or ideas and asserted that material means of subsistence actually conditions our intellectual life process in general.

In my view, in this age of ever-changing structure of human relations and social values we are in dire need for such knowledge which could harmonise technology with worthy human ends and provide a deeper meaning to both individual and social existence by facilitating a better understanding of the is-ought relationship.

Keywords: materialism, super-structure, culture, ideas, values, social progress, human well-being.

The 21st century witnesses tremendous achievements in various fields of activities. The Modern Man prefers to live in a hi-tech world. He has learnt the skill of self-defence by inventing nuclear weapons; he has learnt art of conquering the world digitally but does not mind losing soul connections. He has gained mastery over the technique of consuming natural resources to the fullest in the name of securing individual health and happiness. Furthermore, he has also realized that dynamics of social progress lies in subjugating 'mind' to 'matter' or in being a thorough materialist and the list of triumphs of Man thus goes on.

Such observations would appear extremely commendable to persons who echoing Karl Marx would reemphasize that man actually is not a product of circumstance, rather it is the other way round. This reminds us that Marx,

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in course of explaining the material conception of history of mankind proclaimed that the common interest which overrides everything else among different classes was material interest which actually divided people into the class of producer and the class representing those who appropriated the fruits of the producer's labour. Unlike Hegel, Marx believed that alienation would continue to be an intrinsic part of human condition since, for him, it was very much rooted in social relations and not in the inadequacy of human intellectual powers. He believed that only through social co-operation in production people could harness nature to human ends. So, his focus was primarily on 'economy' or the economic status-quo of the respective classes. He further asserted, "The sum-total of these relations of production constitute the economic structure of society, the real foundation...The mode of production of material life conditions the social, political and intellectual life processes in general. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being but on the contrary, their being that determines their consciousness."¹(Preface to The Critique of Political Economy, 1859)

Such an assertion however throws light upon Marx's another conviction with which he initially embarked on his journey through Dialectical Materialism and that is, he sought to perceive reality not in the form of the object of contemplation but as human sensuous activity. According to him, the human essence is constituted by an ensemble of social relationships and should not be understood as an abstraction inherent in each individual. (Marx and Marxism, p.23) According to Marxism, "...the theoretical conclusions of the communists are in no way based on ideas and principles that have been invented or discovered, by this or that would-be-universal-reform, but they merely express actual relations springing from an existing class-struggle from a historical movement."²(Marx-Engels, Selected works, Vol.1,p.44) In this regard he argued that the brain with which people thought was material in nature and conceptual categories required to acquire and organize knowledge were social products accumulated over the history of humanity. Thus, the point he was trying to make was that the knowledge people gain about the material world were dependent upon the influences they were exposed to and it is not enough to interpret the world in various ways but we need to change it. This point precisely made him antagonistic towards idealistic philosophy as such.

At this point I am reminded of the interesting debate on thought and action and I personally feel that the following observation made by P.V.Kopnin³ would help us understand the complex relation which exists between the two. In Kopnin's view, the development of theoretical investigations enabled people to penetrate deeply into the essence of natural phenomena and to create a constantly changing scientific picture of the world. The success of practice or practical activity largely depends on our precise knowledge with regard to the law governing the motion in those phenomena of reality which we wish to change. Again, the best and the noblest ideas remain merely ideas if they are not assimilated by the masses of the people, and people do not act in conformity with the ideas. (P.V.Kopnin, "Thought and Action", Proceedings of Indian Philosophical Congress, 1957, pp.111,121)

Now, changing the world, for Marx however, meant changing the destiny of the proletariat which demanded annihilation of injustice and inequality in the context of relations of productions. And he firmly believed that private property contained the germ of all inequalities. So, he insisted that inhumanity and inequality could be abolished only by 'revolutionizing practices' or socialising material productive forces. With such an intention he came up with his famous 'base—superstructure' model where 'economy' stood for '**base**' of a society and he pushed into background everything else that was 'non-economic' such as art, aesthetics, law, science, politics, religion and belief-systems. He collectively labelled these as '**superstructure**' and further asserted that the latter was caused and conditioned by the former.

In the present paper, I have made an attempt to analyse and evaluate whether a materialistic conception whose upgraded version finds expression in 'consumerism' in today's globalised world leads us to any desirable social progress. In this context, I have tried to point out that in my opinion, certain Marxian premises and conclusion, in particular are highly debatable and the present world scenario dominated by aggrandizement and market-culture in general appears to me as a matter of grave concern posing serious challenges before humanity. I personally feel it calls for immediate changes in our thought-process, value-systems in understanding the true meaning of 'social progress.'

Interestingly enough, we find that in view of many anthropologists what was designated by the name superstructure in Marxism actually represents

the term 'culture'. According to E.B Tylor, "Culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society."⁴ Anthropologists do admit that social progress for that matter is an undeniable cultural reality .Culture is the mental medium in which man lives and breathes just as air is the physical medium of his existence. A civilization cannot survive without a strong stimulus however high may be its achievements in science and technology for human beings do not merely react to stimulus in the form of reflexes rather, use their minds to interpret 'how' and 'why' to respond. Culture, therefore should provide both the inspiration and the vital force for its growth and development resulting in a strong and successful organization of life.

Cooley, the noted sociologist perceived society as a 'psychical whole' and explained social change in terms of growth in the individual of an ever-expanding we-group feeling involving sympathy and understanding for others.(Reck,1964,xxxiv). In view of Cooley, "Enlargement of consciousness strengthens public will ..."⁵(Sociological Theory, Adams &Sydie). Such vision however makes room for the truth that although ethnography tells us what is distinctive about a particular culture however, cross-cultural comparisons and inter-cultural communications are real pointers to what is true for many or even all cultures. In fact, anthropologists hold that without cross-cultural comparison we could not talk or write about what may be universal and variable about human cultures and we could not discover why the variation exists."⁶ (Cross-cultural Research Methods, p.4)

Now, I think in today's strife-stricken world, to grasp the real meaning and significance of the term 'progress' we need to delve deep into the enlightening thought of great visionaries (both Oriental and Occidental). For example, I consider Tagore's perception on this concept worth-mentioning as he rightly pointed out that civilization should not be equated with power and possession .According to Rabindranath Tagore, " Progress means that there is an ideal which the individual seeks to reach by extending his limits in knowledge, power, love, enjoyment thus approaching the universal."⁷ (Religion of Man, p.24) Even Hegel's view expressed sort of same line of thought when he explained progress in terms of gradual refinement and realization of the uniquely human capacity to understand not only the natural

world of which human beings are a part but also to understand the principles underlying the development both to the natural world and of the society. Rabindranath Tagore believed that true enjoyment can never be had through the satisfaction of greed, but only through the surrender of our individual self to the Universal Self as Tagore clarified "... The material world is the world of quantity where resources are limited and victory waits for those who have superior facility in their weapons, therefore success in the path of progress of one group most often runs parallel to defeat in another."⁸(p.28) In this context I find Sri Aurobindo telling us, "We see a humanity satiated but not satisfied by victorious analysis of the externalities of Nature...."⁹(The Life Divine, p.1). According to Sri Aurobindo the problem lies in the fact that, " To the ordinary material intellect which takes its present organisation of consciousness for the limits of its possibilities, the direct contradiction of the unrealised ideals with the realised fact is a final argument against their validity."¹⁰ (Ibid, p-2)

At this point, I would like to comment that all the foregoing discussion however, does not in the least intend to depreciate 'matter' nor does it claim to signify its absolute rejection for it is often argued that even to denounce 'matter' we need a physical body which is nothing but an aggregate of gross, unconscious elements. This has been beautifully explained by Sri Aurobindo when he writes, "...evidently the individual embodied Mind is not the creator of the phenomenon of Matter; earth-existence cannot be the result of the human mind which is itself the result of earth-existence. If we say that the world exists only in our minds, we express a non-fact and confusion; for the material world existed before man was upon the earth and it will go on existing if man disappears from the earth or even if our individual mind abolishes in the Infinite."¹¹(The Life Divine,p. 234) Thus, Sri Aurobindo considered 'matter' as the basic principle out of which life evolves. And interestingly many scientists of our generation are of the opinion that the world is made up of energy which is the ultimate 'stuff' of which the atom is constituted. Therefore, it has been suggested that 'materialism' should be better replaced by the term 'dynamism.'

But the most disturbing and depressing part of the story is that the human beings not only fail to comprehend such truth but also show a fatalistic tendency to over-emphasize the role of 'matter' and 'material' in constituting social as well as individual well-being.

Marx was definitely revolutionary in thinking that if the working class could have access to both the means of production and the things produced they would not be deprived of anything. In other words, all strife and struggle would cease to exist i.e. they would enjoy a blessed and peaceful life. But on deeper reflection, the inconsistency of such thought would reveal that it cannot be claimed to be true. In this, regard, I feel tempted to share with my readers a few commonly discussed pressing issues of our time and also to enquire if 'Materialism' or 'Marxism' could come up with welcoming solutions for these problems: First, let us suppose that a son of a wealthy 'proletariat' is deprived of a certain high position in a government job just because he belongs to a 'low caste' or a different religion. Secondly, can a person earning handsomely procure food which becomes scares owing to insensible over-consumption by his fellow-men? And last but not the least, does a mere access to the means of production and its control by the producer in the economic sphere ensure social health or social progress while in a gender-based patriarchal society women do not even have a right over their 'body'(the means of production) ? Instead, they are constantly being dehumanised by being treated as mere 'commodities' rather than 'persons with dignity'.

I personally feel that 'economic determinism' cannot offer a standard solution to every human problem. Though Marxian Model had a good starting point in proclaiming a theory of social progress it however could not proceed far in its journey as Peter Worsley rightly points out that Marx's model did not take into account the real-life manifestations of class consciousness; it paid even less attention to the radically differing patterns of non-economic and non-political life such as different types of education, difference of values and interests which distinguished working-class culture from the ways of life of other classes and also ignored the discontent which afflicted not only the workers but whole categories of people both wider than classes or within them. In particular categories such as women and ethnic minorities which are differently stigmatized socially in ways that Marx's economic model focusing on ' the point of production' takes little account of.¹²

In the last analysis, it appears to me that it is absolutely logical to believe that Man as an essentially value-seeking being is not concerned with utilitarian values alone. Rather, it consciously aspires for a higher order of those values

which affect the quality of his spiritual being which actually constitutes man's cultural life. Here, I would again like to recall Tagore's words : " We must know that the evolution process of the world has made its progress towards the revelation of its truth—that is to say some inner value which is not in the extension in space and duration in time."¹³(Religion of Man, p. 29)

Indeed, I think we all need to appreciate the fact that life holds innumerable projects and potentials in the form of human . In other words, self-enlargement of humanity lying beyond the scope of material existence alone could act as the 'catalyst' to evolve at a higher level of existence defying the brute, blind force of the mechanical law thus providing a deeper meaning and a sense of worth to both individual self and social existence.

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Baulism -Culture and Human Wellbeing

Tanusree Das

ABSTRACT : Tradition bound India's heart is its Folk culture. Through the folk culture we can observe the breath of real India. Multicultural theme and multireligious philosophy are the bases of this folk culture. In Baul tradition of Bengal, a folk tradition cum a folk religion where the songs of Baul called as "Baul geete", which expounded humanity over all social and religious dogmas. As they have no faith on religions and society which are based on so many binaries like caste, class, gender etc. Through Bauls comprise only a small fraction of the Bengali population, their influence on the culture of Bengal is considerable. In 2005, The Baul tradition was included in the list of Masterpieces of the oral and intangible heritage of humanity by UNESCO. Now a days baul geeti are floating in the society in various forms, In print and audible media. The Bauls of Bengal are free-thinkers. They express their philosophical thinking by their mystic songs which are the cult of rural Bengal. Bauls live either near a village or travel from place to place and earn their living from singing to the accompaniment of the ektara, a simple one stringed instrument and a drum called dubki. Baul geeti conveys a message of simplicity, love and humanity. The basic principle of baul philosophy is to find out the "Man of the heart" (moner-manus) by loving Man. Human life of this world is most important in baulism. We will be able to know the absolute reality by knowing ourselves. The culture of baul is deeply based on their songs, of which most of the familiar songs are composed by Fakir Lalou Shah and his followers.

Baulism is very much related with human well being. They Only Worship Man And They Preach Humanism. This human being where the absolute being resides is called "manus- Ratan". Now a days when violence consumes the society baulism can give us a lesson of pure love. They tended to customary interactions within many different religions. Such as Hinduism, Buddhism, vaishnavism and Sufism, giving rise to new theories that become known as the Baul philosophy of Bengal.

Keywords: *baul geeti, moner- manus, manus- rattan.*

India is a land of diverse cultural heritage. Tradition bound India's heart is its folk culture. Through the folk culture, we can observe the breath of real India and its people's psychic graph. Folk culture basically consists of beliefs,

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1. Nihar Ranjan Roy, Bāṅgālīr itihās, Dey's Publishing, Kolkata, (Bengali-1356), P: 608,640

superstitions and rituals transmitted from generation to generation in a specific culture. It could be contrasted with an organized religion or historical religion in which founders, creed, theology and ecclesiastical organization are present. Baulism is one kind of folk culture of Bengal Bauls and their songs hold a very special place in the history of Bengal.

The word 'Baul' comes from the Sanskrit words "Bâtul", and "Vyâkula. 'Bâtul' means mad or afflicted by the wind disease and 'Vyâkula' means impatiently eager. Similar word in Hindi is 'Bachul' from which has come 'Baura'. Basically bauls are free thinkers who openly declare themselves to be mad for the God who dwells within us. Their songs and dance reflect the joy, love and longing for mystical union with the Divine. According to Bengali grammar, the very word 'Baul' originated from the Arabic word 'Aul'. These two words 'Aul' and 'Baul' are very popular among the people of Bengal. The origin of 'Baul' has appeared in Bengali texts as old as 15th century. The first traces of practices similar to those of the Bauls appear in the caryâpadas, the oldest texts recorded in Bengali culture. The word is found in Caitanya Bhâgavata of Vrindavana Dasa Thakura as well as in the Caitanya Caritâmrita of Krishna Dasa Kaviraja. The caryâpadas reference the appropriate behaviors and restraints for an Individual wishing to be find the ultimate release.¹ The bauls share this early sect's philosophy of achieving personal freedom through practical means and worship, also known as Tantra. The poems of the Siddhâcâryas also have a similar metaphoric nature to those of the Bauls' vague and often enigmatic songs. Bajrayana Buddhism, Tantricism, Hindu Vaiṣṇavism and Islamic sufism all have their share of influence in the formation of this sub-culture.

Bauls are a group of wandering mystic minstrels of Bengal. This unique community has a rich cultural heritage which developed over a long period of time. Their way of life has been formed through the direct and indirect interactions of realistic and cultural folk beliefs and ideas. Bauls are known for their unconventional life-style and a different kind of religion. They can often be identified by their distinctive clothes and musical instruments, like ektara, one stringed instrument held in hands, Dugi, a drumming instrument tied to the waist, Nupur or anklet etc. They usually dress in orange or saffron-like alkhalla. In early days, in each village there was a special house set aside for them to stay in, and as they would arrive, the villagers' responsibility was to supply them with food and the necessities of life for as long as their visit lasted and the bauls'

responsibility was to make them happy and give them a clear message of life, so that they can go on with their happy soul.

The deep philosophical thinking of the Bauls are basically man-oriented. It gives us a lesson of humanism. The basic principle of baulism is to find out the 'Man of the heart' (maner mânuṣa or Sahaja mânuṣa) by loving man. Human life of this world is most important in this philosophy of bauls. We will be able to know the absolute reality by knowing ourselves. Pure devotion is the only way to reach this goal. This 'maner mânuṣa' has no caste, no religion, no gender bias, he is far away from all of this things, on realization of which we can attain eternal bliss. The very beginning stage of this searching of maner mânuṣa is self realization. Lalan Shah, one of the greatest baul fakirs was a mystic philosopher. One of the basic concepts of mysticism is the theory of self. According to Lalan Shah soul is situated in this body. 'Soul' or 'I' is a very important concept in his philosophy. On one hand 'I' is the creator of the world and on the other hand 'I' is created. The creator 'I' is the Absolute Reality and the created 'I' is myself. One could know the greater 'I' or the Absolute Reality by knowing one's own self. So Lalan said :

‘Âmi ki tai Jânle Sâdhana Siddhi hoy,
âmi úabder-artha bhâri, âmi seto âmi noy.”²

The real beauty of Lalan Fakir's teachings is to cross all the boundaries of religion, caste and creed and at the same time rising to unite with the 'I', similar to the paramatma of the Upanicads. He criticized the superficiality of religious division through his songs like :

“Sab loka koy Lalan ki jât sangsare ,
Lalan bole jâter ki rûpa dekhâm na ei najare.”³

Bauls are never agreed with the caste division and various religious superstitions of the society. They only worship man and they preach humanism. They believe in the existence of God in the human body. Their religion is based on an expression of the body. Which they call deho-Sadhana. According to baulism human body is like a temple where God resides. Bauls are admired for

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2. Dr. Motilal Das and Pijuskanti Mahapatra, Lalan-gitika, Calcutta University, 1958, P: 171
 3. Ibid, P: 38⁴ Abu Ishac Hosen, Baul Daroana o Lalan Tatta, Prachalan Prakashan, Dhaka, 2013, p:108

this freedom from convention as well as for their music, poetry, song and dance. Though Bauls comprise only a small fraction of the Bengali population, their influence on the culture of Bengal is considerable. Baul geeti, ‘a master piece of the oral and intangible heritage of humanity are approved by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), on 25th November, 2005.

Baulism always remind us that man is the most valuable asset of nature. We should not forget the greatness or the nobility of human nature. For this reason Lalan says:

“ei mânuce âche re mon
Jâre bole mânuca ratana.”⁴

Baul geeti conveys the messages of love, mankind and peace which are very relevant to our modern society. Now a day when violence consumes the society baulism can give us a lesson of pure love.

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Culture and Issues: A Cinematic Exploration from Satyajit Ray's Perspective

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ABSTRACT : Satyajit Ray expressed his confidence in various cultural inter-relationships through his writings and photos. His attitude is very relevant in modern times, as well as in the world's major cultural debates. He took various cultural specializations with deep reverence and tried to give them a sense of inner diversity and mutual values. Emphasizing the need to pay tribute to the specialty of different cultures, the world did not want to close the door outside. Rather, opening the door of communication was the most important thing to him. His views on Indian culture were completely different. He wanted to see the cultural curve lines highlighting various problems. Whether it is possible to give each culture its own characteristics and its individuality, or if it is given, this question is very important. Because with the times of the world, the world is very small and similar. We are living at a time when the concept of meditation is practiced very quickly after the border of the region. Due to this solidarity, some of the precious materials may be lost. This is the world with deepest incompatibility.

Keywords: *Satyajit Ray's writings, Satyajit Ray's cinema, cultural relations, social issues, cultural values, intercultural cooperation.*

The current cultural scenario of India, is going through a difficult period. In recent times our Culture is trying to rephrase the term '*Hinduism*' with certain rigid notions of morality, which is not only harmful, but is also regressive and depreciative of our value. We cannot just project India with the term '*Hinduism*'. It can be considered as an assimilation of various cultures. But if India is defined only by '*Hindutva*', then other Indian cultures are in the danger of facing a deep crisis. India is not merely about Hindu culture, but it is an assimilation of different cultures like Muslim, Christian, Jewish etc. But the sad part is that other cultures are interpreted and projected in a different light nowadays with a more strong emphasis on '*Hindutva*'.

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Again if we cross the Indian frontier and enter other national boundaries, there is also a conflict. Here we find two dichotomous terms. One is “western culture” and other is “Indian/oriental culture”. According to Prof. Amartya Sen, it is very difficult to separate these two terms. The Oriental and western ideas are nothing but vague terms. He explains his position with the help of an example. According to him, ‘western science’ is not only European and America’s exclusive property. This is to say that, it is for sure that most of the scientific development has taken place in the western world since the advent of Renaissance and Industrial revolution, but along with that it is also necessarily true that these scientific developments are largely indebted to the fore runners of Arab, China, India and other oriental cultures in the field of mathematics and science. In this sense one can say that the term ‘Western Science’ is confusing and illogical. As a result, the distinction of culture is a very difficult and a distant prospect. However, it is also true that each culture has its own unique characteristics, so much so that we can identify and understand them separately. This is more obvious if we look at Indian culture. India is an assimilation of varied culture. Here we find different regional culture. There is no similarity of culture of one region to the culture of another region. So, India cannot be identified with a particular culture.

In this article, I have focused on Satyajit Ray’s perspective in this regard and tried to highlight the cultural issues. It is highly appreciable, that even though he was influenced by various world cultures, he was positively influenced by Indian culture along with its regional culture and projected the same in the global platform. Amartya Sen feels that the road to cultural sharing got another dimension through his efforts. According to Sen *“My admiration for him and for his work is altogether boundless. For many of us he has changed the way we live. Aside from enjoying the narrative, imagery, music and vision, we are invariably moved to address deep and difficult questions to which we are led by him. Satyajitda presented in his films and writings a remarkably insightful understanding of the relation between different cultures”*¹

Ray was very much aware of the obstacles arising due to his efforts of cultural exchange. Even though there were various obstacles in any cultural exchange he did not consider this intercultural identity to be impossible.

1. Ghosh, Tarapada (ed.), West Bengal, A special number on Amartya Sen, Vol:XXI,1999 p. 79

However, there was a barrier to payment, but he never thought of intercultural identity and maturity. Now the question is what are the barriers to cultural exchange? Or how could this obstacle arise? We can clarify the matter by the help of an example. It is very difficult to properly understand and differentiate two cultures. Such difficulty can be understood in different ways. Just it can be understood in the frame work of literature and films. As in case of literature, if we look into the poetic works of Tagore, the aesthetic beauty and inner meaning of his poetic works is mostly not understood by many foreigners and Indians, as well. In such a case many people think that this lack of appreciation and praise for Rabindranath's works is a deliberate ploy or a kind of stubbornness on their part. But if we try to analyse and understand the real problem, we find that there is a barrier of language where most people fail to properly translate his works which in turn, makes them lose interest in the poetic beauty of his work. This real cause is mostly overlooked.

Again, in the context of cinema, even though this barrier is not so difficult to overcome, yet it is not so easy also. Here not only language is used to communicate, they are also body enacting or story line of the cinema which helps in highlighting what needs to be conveyed. That is why films do not depend so much on verbal language. Moreover cinema is situated on our day to day experiences our practical situations. As a result it is not so difficult for us to understand the cinematic projection even if we do not understand the language. But any foreigner who has not experienced or situated himself in that framework, fails to grasp the meaning. As a result that which appears to us as ordinary or normal is extraordinary or abnormal to them. Ray Said, “সবাক চিত্রে কথা শুধু কাহিনীই বলে না, রূপ ও সৃষ্টি করে’ এবং ভাষা যদি জানা না থাকে বা ভালোমতো জানা না থাকে, তাহলে অনেক কিছুই বোধের বাইরে থেকে যায়”². This means that talking movies not only project the story but also gives a form it. In such a case if the language is unknown then a lot remains unclear. He has shown the way of overcoming these barriers through his works.

In this context we can refer to Rabindranath Tagore. He had always wanted an interconnection between various cultures, which will overlook any distinction. He had always given importance to openness in cultural matters. This can be reflected in his various poems, prose, letters etc. When Rabindranath's son-in-law Nagendranath Ganguli went to America to study

2. sen, Amartya, *Tarkapriya Bharatiya*, 2005, p.121

agriculture, he wrote a letter to him, “স্থানীয় মানুষদের সঙ্গে ঘনিষ্ঠ সম্পর্ক স্থাপন তোমার শিক্ষার একটি অঙ্গ। কেবল কৃষিবিদ্যা শেখাটা যথেষ্ট নয়, তোমাকে আমেরিকাকেও জানতে হবে। কিন্তু যদি আমেরিকাকে জানবার প্রক্রিয়ার মধ্য দিয়ে কেউ নিজের আত্মপরিচিতি হারাতে শুরু করে ও আমেরিকীভূত লোক হয়ে ওঠার ফাঁদে পড়ে, তা হলে অবশ্যই তার পক্ষে একটি বন্ধ কামরার মধ্যে আটকে থাকাই ভাল”³. It means that he wanted his son-in-law to learn American culture alongwith his studies. But in this process he also warned him of the danger of forgetting his own identity. Learning another culture for him was not about adapting that culture by forgetting one’s own. Thus it is clear what Rabindranath’s perspective was about culture. Cultural relations should be dynamic but not at the cost of uprooting one’s identity. Adapting another culture by forgoing one’s own was not permissible for him.

Here it must be pointed out Satyajit Ray was a student of Shantiniketan. Since he has grown up with the ideology of Tagore, it is undeniable that his way of thinking will be similar. Ray has always projected the Indian social scenario in all his films. He always maintained the identifying features of that social scenario, the social time, and the the context in all his films. We can mention here some of his works.

Most of the movies directed by Ray had Calcutta as the backdrop. Calcutta in those days was the seat of learning, the city of social reforms and picture of the spirit of ‘Young Bengal’. In Both *Devi* and *Charulata*, the Calcutta of the last century has been framed, viewed from the angle of the landed aristocracy, with superb grace and finesse which have heightened the human drama instead of overshadowing it. Urbanity, as is understood today, gets manifest in *Charulata* and *Ghare Baire*, set in late nineteenth and the first decade of the twentieth century, respectively. There is a great deal common between *Amal* and *Nikhil* as also between *Charu* and *Bimala*. The western liberal influences are visible. Both the husbands are English-educated zamindars, benevolent and broad-minded, rational and questioning, secular in outlook, and exhibit a cautious awareness of women’s progress. But *Charu for whom*, the city reveals itself mainly through images and sounds, through books and journals since she is confined to her mansion. Through the film is set in Calcutta, its impact on Charu is marginal, more by way of providing fun and excitement as the bored wife watches the vignettes of life outside through the window-shutters. Calcutta is never explicit in *Ghare Baire*, but

3. Ibid, p. 102

its presence felt, as a city of prosperity and the centre of colonial power “*malignant and vigorous*”, pursuing the divide-and-rule policy. *Aparajito* starts with the family’s entry to Banares. It stands somewhat in between a village and Calcutta, measured by the degree of urbanisation. Apu’s bewilderment when confronted with Calcutta has been filmed by Ray with a degree of sensitivity unsurpassed in the history of cinema. Calcutta was a crucial factor in Apu’s development, from a priestly brahmin boy to a secular, sensitive and progressive human being. The migration of people from rural to urban areas has been focussed in Ray films time and again. Calcutta became the home for people coming from all parts of Bengal and other parts of India—for different reasons.

The culture which Ray actually portrays in his cinema is not a rigid cultural portrayal. It is quite flexible in the sense that it shows the indigenous elements alongwith the foreign influences. Here a mixture of cultural influence and its effects has come to the forefront. This means that cinema projects both the scenes of a man having a holy dip in Ganges as well as the twist dance practised in clubs. Here the question arises that since he gave so much emphasis on the mixed portrayal of regionality and westernisation, can he be accused of being an opposer of modernity? His affinity towards modernity can be seen in his various works, like the broad mindedness and western influence is seen in Amal and Nikhilesh of *Charulata* and *Ghare Baire*. College life, Coffee houses, hippiness, skyscrapers, radical politics is projected in *Pratidwandi*. Nuclear family and alienation is projected in *Shaka Prashakha*. In all these works he shows both the positive influence and the negative influence of the modernisation and intermingling of old indigenous culture with the new culture is very clearly pointed out. This shows that both the cultures have a profound influence on each other, whereby both can benefit from each other. Ray was always influenced by western tradition which is quite clear in his choice of music, cinema or other matters. “Ray was always willing to enjoy and learn from ideas, art forms, and life styles from any where—within India or abroad.”⁴ But he projected those westernised notions in the light of Indian culture. For example *Pather Panchali*, he acknowledges that he had taken the story line from Vittorio De Sica’s “*Bicycle Thieves*”. When he saw this movie in a theatre in London,

4. Ghosh, Tarapada (ed.), *West Bengal, A special number on Amartya Sen*, XLI, 1999, p.79

he immediately decided that if he ever makes a movie called *Pather Panchali* it will be based on this storyline.

But it is to be noted that even though there was an inspiration from a foreign movie, yet *Pather Panchali* remains Indian in its subject and presentation. Ray thus shows that one can surely be influenced by other cultures but not at cost of uprooting one's own. Also holding rigidly onto one's culture is also harmful has also been portrayed by Ray in *Chare Baire* through Sandip's character. Ray, no doubt, was a product of a 'Cultural implosion' that took place in Bengal in 19th century. The influence of European Rationalism and values was a part and parcel of his development. A part of him was Indian and other part was Western, as a result of which 'bi-culturalism' was expressed in his movies. The depiction of life in the city, as expressed in *Mahanagar* was fast paced and contemporary. Similarly, the use of spoken English by actors in *Kanchenjunga* indicates the degree of westernization of the characters and their social status.

In dealing with the subject of religion and superstition, Ray balanced the orthodox notion of Indian culture along with the scientific mindedness of progressive household. Ray knew that the conflict between reason and superstition was a sensitive issue and required an intelligent solution, which will gravely depict the power of reason over superstition. The discipline of Ray's inner self is reflected in his films which are a reflection of both the cultures. This makes Ray a true integrated film maker.

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Education's Role in Cultural Modernization as Reflected in Tagore's and *Upaniṣad's* Philosophy

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ABSTRACT : Education is a much loaded term. It signifies much more than mere gathering of bookish Knowledge. In Ancient times we find a guru-œiṣya paramparâ in education where man making was the main goal of education. This paper is a humble attempt to find out the role of education in the development of Culture. In this regard views of *Upaniṣad* and Rabindranath Tagore will be considered.

Key word : Education, Tagore, Upanishad, Gurukul, Culture, Nature, Liberation, Santiniketan

According to Swami Vivekananda, Education is the manifestation of perfection already in man but if one deeply thinks then one will find that this statement reveals only a fraction of the entire truth. This is because the inner thoughts and expressions can be brought out in reality only in favorable conditions. Thus the external influences play an important role in this regard. According to Indian sages education is that learning which frees us from the bondage of darkness, improves our life vision or liberates our souls to eternity. The ancient sages also emphasized the physical needs but they thought beyond mere bodily necessities and concentrated on soul's liberation. They advocated the adoption of all knowledge that lies beyond time and space and Indian culture from time immemorial have advocated on finding reality of the universe. The truth must be unearthed by humans through perceptions. The truth is unearthed through generations but the ancient 'Sanâtana' Philosophy and its teachings prevail till date. *Upaniṣad* has laid deep emphasis on cultural, social and philosophical enhancement which can only be attained through proper education. Education tries for wholesome development of souls and according to Tagore; education is aimed to build strong pillars to sustain healthy life which can be had through interaction of the external and internal entity. So from the philosophical viewpoint, education should be an interaction between nature, natural laws and man's quest

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to live in perfect harmony with it. It may be noted that both Tagore and the teachings of Upaniṣads laid emphasis on understanding the laws of nature and live in harmony with nature; the rule of which is explored through education.

The education system in Upaniṣadic times was mainly preceptor (âcârya) centric. Students used to hold their mentors or preceptors in high esteem. The mentors were the highest source of inspiration, ideology and the container of highest knowledge. In ancient times, there was a Gurukul system. The students went to their teacher's gurukul (âûrama) and were treated as a member of the teacher's family. They grew up in the lap of nature with teacher's affection and love. In a gurukul, students used to reside together as equals irrespective of their social standing, learnt from the gurus and distribute work among themselves to help the guru in his daily life.

The rishis like Yâkjñavalkya, Vippallâd, Âruni were the most learned persons of that period. The disciples were aware of the fact that their teachers are storehouse of Brahma-jñâna and individuals, who have entered the household life, can only attain Brahmajñâna with the advice of their mentors. The teacher-student relationship was one of father and son. This deep, intimate relation between teacher and disciple is one of the significant characteristics of education system in Upanicadic times. In those days, teacher-student relation was so amiable that no one bear any ill-feeling for another. There were respect, affection, responsibility, tolerance etc in the educational process. Ancient Indian educational system focused on building a disciplined and value based culture. Attainment of knowledge was the sole goal of Upanicadic period and as we know that without a good teacher-student relationship, attainment of knowledge in true sense is never possible. The teachers helped in the full manifestation of the inner possibilities of the disciples thereby leading them to spiritual upliftment. So education was the medium of liberation both for the teacher and the student. In upanicadic education three stages of úravana, manana and nidhidhyâsana were witnessed. At first, the student acquires knowledge of ærutis by listening -this is ceravana. Then comes, manana i.e pupils think, analyze the information as heard and assimilate that information. Then tries to comprehend the truth and apply it into the practical life.-this stage is nidhidhyâsana.

In ancient India blind workless education system was rejected. The teachers were of the opinion that as unintelligible work is futile similarly workless cultivation of reason was baseless. They were opposed to that type of education which means mere memorization of facts and data. There was a guru-œicya

paramparâ where guru used to impart teachings orally and pupils internalized those teachings. In this way hundreds of flames were ignited from one flame of lamp.

That time the method of education was work based. The students' work was tiring but there was joy in their work. The students willingly and joyfully used to do that laborious work. In the gurukul system, besides studies, the pupils happily got involved in works like cow-rearing, alms-taking, collecting fruits and flowers. The teachers were kind enough to give recognition to labour and the pupils also considered it respectable to get teacher's grace through their own labour. Through seeking alms, their pride and self-ness would get removed. They learnt to be humble through the process of seeking alms. From stories of Satyakâma Jâbâla we also get to know the importance of cow-rearing in all round development of a child.

Rabindranath Tagore was the true descendant of *Upaniṣad*. He tried to develop the education system of the country on the model of ancient education system. He rejected book-centric education and adopted work based education. He included teaching of different types of crafts, cultivation and animal rearing etc. under education. In those days, stereotyped mechanical study system was not the medium of attaining true knowledge. The main means of acquiring knowledge was body, life, mind, speech etc. of a student. These are like the doors of realization of Brahma. So through this gross mundane world which is grasped by the five sense organs, the preceptors helped in the full inner development of a student. In *Taittiriya Upaniṣad* it is seen that Bh[gu, son of Varuna enquired about Brahma tattva. Then his father replied that anna, prâna, cakcu, karna, manas, vâk etc are all Brahma. That from which this world is originated, by which it is sustained and to which it will get dissolved after destruction is Brahma. In this way it is shown there that ânanda is Brahma.

Ânanddhyeva khalvimâni bhutâni jâyante (*Taittiriya Upanicad* 3/6)

In the story of Satyakâma Jâbâla contained in the *Chândogya Upanicad*, it is seen that cow rearing is the medium of acquiring knowledge in Satyakâma's life. It is said that through this, one can attain knowledge of Brahma. Similarly in case of basic education it is seen that educational process conducted through handicraft. It is no denying the fact that Satyakâma's story is a good example of the educational system prevalent in ancient India. Satyakâma attained true knowledge through cow rearing in the lap of nature. Here mention may be

made of educationalist Rousseau. According to him, “Everything is good as it comes from the hands of the author of Nature, but everything degenerates in the hands of man”. (Rousseau’s *Emile* p.60) *Emile*’s education also started in the lap of nature.

As the preceptors of ancient times were opposed to forcing students to learn in an uncomfortable unhappy environment, rather talked of studying in the lap of nature similarly Tagore was in favour of naturalistic education. He opined that students could learn well if they get free environment. Therefore, in his philosophy of education nature occupies an important place. Give and take relation between man and nature is the highest arena of education. If we turn our eyes to Santiniketan then we will be able to understand Tagore’s thought well. Students grow up in Santiniketan in close proximity with nature. Here, every change of season is clear and vivid. Here, in free environment the students get enough freedom. In Santiniketan, students do not have to learn from books that in which season we get to see which fruits or flowers, or hear which call of the bird or what is the colour of the leaves; when does it changes etc. They learn all these things through experience. The greatest education was the love for nature.

The prime aim of Tagore’s life was to explain education in the true sense of the term. By education, he meant the exploration of each shades of a human being’s personality. He was extremely disheartened regarding the contemporary educational system. This was the prime reason why he thought about imparting education. His concept of education was distinct but he never hesitated. He started his journey with his distinct conception of education. His philosophy of education gives importance to nature. For him, it is essential to harmonize with nature because he believe that the role of nature in blooming a person to self each undeniable. His philosophy of education is based on the concept that education that is incapable of extracting humanity from a human being is not education at all. To emphasize the process of being a human being once he remarked that “perfect freedom lies in the perfect harmony of relationship which we realize in the world not through our response to it in knowing but in being.” (A poet’s school, Rabindranath Tagore)

Therefore according to him, there a proper environment is to be created in the school where tender minds of children can gradually bloom in its fullest. The environment has to be full of delight and positivity. If a child remains depressed of delightful education from the very earliest period. That education is not proper education. Tagore did not only take about delightful environment. He gave equal

importance to action as well. He wanted the children to be educated in the true sense of the term. He talked about imparting that education, which is a combination of action, knowledge and love. He believed that environment bookies education is important but nature and people. Understanding life and nature is not enough to him, rather one should feel integrated with both his and her life and nature. Another aspect of his educational philosophy is creativity whether it is literature, painting, singing whatever it is.

Tagore's philosophy was greatly influenced by Upanicads. To him Upanishad is the basis of every philosophy. Some prayers of Upanishads were his favorite. For example, one such prayer is 'Ânanda rupam am°taA yadvibhâti' (*MuGdukyopanicad*) talking about the inner meaning of this prayer he viewed that whatever is existing is in its ultimate form, something which is unpolluted and heavenly. The whole universe is a concrete form of omnipresent happiness, love and delight of omnipotent God. The revelation of fulfill truth is the only delight and love in a human beings life. The only path for these revelations is to love nature and a complete integration with it. There is no other way to become successful without this integration with nature. Tagore opined that the highest purpose of education is to being complete fulfillment of a human beings life. At the sometime Tagore never ignore the benefits of practicality vocational education, scholarship education where given equal weightage at Santiniketan. He thought that the nature environment of a tapovan is an ideal place to cultivate human relationship. Therefore, he selected a place far away from the hustle and hustle of city life where there was no obstacle to build and integrated relationship between man and man and between man and nature. He believed that in such an environment one can perceive the infinite within the finite.

The World Post also gave importance to the capability of utilizing one's body completely and freely if someone cannot utilize his body in a proper manner it can hinder his or her personality to bloom to all its potentiality. The same concept of physical exercise is also found in the Greek philosopher Plato's educational philosophy. He also talked about mandatory physical exercise of every child. Again, in the utopian educational system proposed by Rousseau such concept of physical education is quite evident. Tagore in his 'Âúram' provided opportunities of physical exercise. He suggested that children should mix with nature freely and find the pleasure in the lap of nature. The powerful body can be built only by welcoming all the natural elements. In Santiniketan, Tagore also made scope for meditation in a dually schedule. In fact, there were

provisions for manual labour, handicraft and vocational education as well as with proper communication with earth, water, air and light. One's physical education cannot be completed. According to Froebel's theory, play is necessary in childhood and work is necessary in adulthood. Work and play are intermingled. The true soul can be revealed through multi-various works. Diversified works are important foregoing wholesome education. Tagore gave special importance to both work and play. Therefore, there is no doubt that almost all great men have given priority to work and play. Work gives momentum to life and shows the path to enlightenment.

Expansion of natural education was the primary aim of Tagore. He emphasized all round development of personality as he was deeply pained by the contemporary educational system that was prevalent in India. Thus, an educational system which is dysfunctional is valueless. Swami Vivekananda said that "work is worship". He strongly believed that the path of salvation is achieved only through rigorous work. His educational philosophy also depicts work as an important ingredient of education. He believed games and sports and physical education are as important part of education as curricular activities. The body is used for many leisurely and other activities by man and Tagore also stressed on the necessity of physical education for all round development.

It can be observed that both Rousseau and Froebel had put a lot of emphasis on child psychology and stressed on freedom for development of personality. The educational environment must be conducive for granting freedom to the child and must be allowed to grow unhindered in the lap of Mother Nature. Tagore too emphasized on harmonious interaction between the child and nature through his educational philosophy. According to him, the child must be nurtured in the lap of nature to ensure his proper all round development and this aim encouraged him to visualize and start the institute at Santiniketan.

The system is equally beneficial and cost effective in the regions of favourable weather in our country. An open atmosphere full of natural air is also beneficial for health. Tagore's purpose was to establish a kind of environment where the mind and body of children would be uplifted just as their enthusiasm would utilize and control nature; similarly, they would directly observe nature and understand the law of nature. This education would be possible only through direct interaction with the nature. In this way Tagore paved the way for the love of nature and human being in his ashram. This is the cause that he called his educational institution 'āúrama' or 'tapovan.' This is the place where one can

inculcate the human qualities to love everything and not to ignore anybody. Therefore, it is evident that the elementary component of an ideal institution for him was the close attachment with nature. God is there where there is love, and love is there where there is nature. To be precise, in this way children would realize the pulse of nature within their hearts.

In conclusion, it can be said that in the schools of current decade the demands of all the stakeholders of these schools, i.e. students, teachers and parents have increased considerably. Students are fighting day in and day out to conquer everything. On the other hand, the environment that is conducive for natural delight, freedom, teacher-student relationship, expression, integration with nature is gradually decreasing. Therefore, students are becoming mentally unhealthy and intolerant. They are suffering from the lack of basic values. So we should currently try to mention our old cultural heritage through proper education.

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Status of Education In India : Trends & Reforms

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Current scenario of the education is vibrant and progressive in an incredible India with lots of diversification. Education in the Indian subcontinent is virtuoso and is foremost a source of liberation. Liberation from illiteracy which had led to subjugation and exploitation of the long oppressed sections of the society. The tradition of the Indian education had led to a significant contributions in Mathematics, Medicine, Astronomy and Statecraft (Arthasastra) was confined to small section of people and was largely hereditary in nature. This was a reality over a long period of time. It was largely the involvement of British in Indian education system, particularly from the late nineteenth century, which brought a rapid growth of schools and colleges - established both by the government as well as private agencies, for spreading western education. At the same time, Christian missionaries had found western education most efficacious for Indian society. It was found that the rise of a popular education policy of missionaries at the beginning of the twentieth century was from below. So, Christian missionaries in India were the catalysts for the rebirth of learning and intellectual aspiration. The philosophies of education veered round a general "all round development" approach covering language, cognitive or intellectual, motor, physical, creative, emotional, aesthetic, spiritual, social and moral. The issue of access, equity and justice to education needs to be addressed in the light of vast economic disparities, cultural and linguistic diversities and extremely uneven opportunities of learning and aspirations of the potential students. The issue of accessibility of quality education arises in the context of the transition from the elite to the mass education. This issue has significant implications in the sense that it demands redefinition of the aims of education. The movement for change has arisen from a wide spread sense of inadequacy of the traditional paradigm. This sense of inadequacy cannot be understood unless we look beyond the historians' craft at the changes in

the wider world. The mode of education changed with the change of time. The new waves of globalization, liberalization and privatization had redefined the transnational provisions of higher education through the mobility of the programmes or educational institutions from one country to another. There are many new trends putting pressures on the conventional system, forcing many institutions to review and amend their existing policies and procedures. The aim of the study is to focus on existing trends and reforms in education emphasizing on prospects and challenges.

Jayaprakash Narayan and Partyless Democracy

Tapan Kumar Chattopadhyay

1. Since mid-1950s JP became attracted towards the Sarvodaya movement led by Vinoba Bhave – as against party and power politics (*rajniti*), sarvodaya was *lokniti*, i.e. non-party and non-power politics – the sarvodaya period of JP's life lasted from 1957 to 1968 – during this period JP talked of partyless democracy –

2. Concept of partyless democracy based on critique of (a) party system and (b) state socialism –

a. 'All that the parties were concerned with was to capture power for themselves so as to rule over the people...The party system...was seeking to reduce the people to the position of sheep whose only function...would be to choose periodically the shepherds who would look after their welfare !' – partyless democracy as 'people's democracy' which is different from formal representative democracy –

b. Human freedom would be fully realized only in a stateless society – 'The test of human evolution for me became man's ability to live in amity, justice and co-operation with his fellow-men without outward restraints of any kind'(JP) – modern State is a Leviathan – politics of sarvodaya make it possible for the people to do without the State as far as practicable and to run their affairs themselves – sarvodaya is people's socialism as opposed to state socialism –

3. Stateless, partyless society to be a communitarian society – self-government, self-management, equality and freedom could be developed far better if men lived in small communities –

4. Legislative body of the primary community shall be the *gram sabha*

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and the executive shall be the *gram panchayat* – primary communities shall be integrated into a regional community – the executive at this level will be the *panchayat samiti* – regional communities will be integrated into the district community where the executive body will be the ‘district council’ – district communities will be federated together to form the provincial community (*pranta sabha*) – legislative function at this level by *vidhan sabha* – *pranta sabhas* will together form the national community(*rashtra sabha*) – legislative function at this level by *Lok sabha* –

5. Two things emerge from this scheme : (a) there will be no minister, Chief Minister or Prime Minister – their roles will be played by various committees – (b) in this scheme as one moves from lower to higher levels of communal organization, one will find a gradual decrease in functions –



Education, Inequality and State

Dr. Manoj Kumar Jena

Education is one of the important constituents for social development. Education is not only emancipate and liberate individual and community from sufferings but also brings structural transformation as well as social and cultural change in each and every aspects of the Society. Present day most of the democratic and progressive state is always concerned about educational participation of all communities. It is a matter of fact that through the process of educational socialization cultural values of equality could be imbibed and inculcated. Simultaneously, educational attainment for all is an indispensable consideration for social, political and economic empowerment across caste and gender lines. Educational attainment not only opens up new possibilities but also helps to overcome the culture of fear and culture of subjugation. Further more it will improve the quality of life and enable us to a stage of equality and disenthral every one from agony of any kind. But the idea is, how to reach the level of equality? This is a pertinent question in our contemporary times. Many a times politics of education creates injustice and inequality among its fellow citizens. Educational system is manipulated, controlled and regulated by a handful of selected individual and communities where a particular caste, race and capitalist command the power relationships for their own benefit. These selected lot deliberately create an exploitative and discriminative order as well as shapes a culture of systematic exclusion. Historically, it is evident that our educational system is associated with notion of preferences on the basis of caste and gender since *Gurukul Parampara* to contemporary period.

In this context my presentation will critically examine issue of politics and culture of systematic exclusion in Indian Society. Firstly, it will focus on the historicity of educational system in India particularly *gurkualparampara*

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to colonial expansion of educational system. How do these two traditions cultivate an inequality in terms of educational attainment. Secondly, it will discuss education in post independent period, most importantly the role of state promotion of educational equality. Thirdly, it will critically assess how the social and cultural factors are responsible in creating barriers in educational attainment and equality among women in India. Finally, it will discuss the contemporary education in the phase of Information society.



Tagore: An Alternative Value System of Education and Culture

Dr. Minu Sinha Ratna

ABSTRACT : Tagore the first Indian and non-European to win the Nobel Prize was highly influential in introducing the best of Indian culture and education to the West and the world. Generally regarded as the most outstanding and creative personality of Indian renaissance period Tagore's thoughts and ideas brought about a revival of culture values and aesthetics culminating into modern India. Tagore's theory of education is marked by naturalistic & aesthetic values. He belied that "Education can develop a new pattern of life" and is the solution of all our problems. He envisioned a holistic education that was deeply rooted in one's cultural moorings but also connected to the wider world.

In the realization of Universal man Tagore emphasized the generation of holistic educational and cultural values leading to world peace and internationalism. Tagore's theory of education emphasizes the intellectual, physical, social, moral economic and spiritual aspects of human life with which a man can develop an integrated personality. As one of the earliest naturalist educators and environmentalist to think in terms of the global peace and internationalism Tagore's educational model brings out a unique sensitivity within multi-racial, multi-lingual and multi-cultural situations amidst conditions of political dependency and control. The paper by juxtapositioning Tagore's views on education and culture tries to explore on discursive lines the naturalistic ideas on education, development of universal man, love for environment and pursuance of internationalism for establishment of world peace.

Keywords: *naturalistic education, environment, political dependency, internationalism, global peace.*

To Quote Rabindranath Tagore, from 'My School' (1925) "The first question you may well ask is: what urged me to take up education. I had spent most of my time in literary pursuits till I was forty or more. I had never any desire to take my part in practical work, because I had a rooted conviction in my mind that I had not the gift. When I was thirteen I had finished going to school. I do not want to boast about it, I merely give it to you as a

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historical fact afterwards realized that what then weighed on my mind was the unnatural pressure of the system of education which prevailed everywhere”¹.

The above quote is quite relevant even today if we juxtapose the same observation for the current educational system that prevails in India creating unprecedented pressure on the system of education, culture and society. The paper tries to explore Tagore’s views on education and culture based on the methodology of discursive and analytical reasoning to highlight the naturalistic ideas on education and Tagore’s experiment with an alternative value system of education and culture in India. By applying Tagore’s mechanism of the concept of development of universal man, love for environment and pursuance of internationalism or universalism for establishment of world peace the paper prepares the groundwork for holistic and aesthetic education for all as advocated by Tagore.

Tagore (1861-1941) the first Indian and non-European to win the Nobel Prize was highly influential in introducing the best of Indian culture and education to the West and the world. Generally regarded as the most outstanding and creative personality of Indian renaissance period Tagore’s thoughts and ideas brought about a revival of culture, values and aesthetics culminating into modern India². Tagore’s views on education are marked by naturalistic & aesthetic values. He belied that education can develop a new pattern of life and is the solution of all our problems. He envisioned a holistic education that was deeply rooted not only in one’s cultural moorings but also connected to the wider world³.

In the realization of universal man Tagore emphasized holistic educational and cultural values leading to world peace and internationalism. Tagore’s theory of education emphasizes the intellectual, physical, social, moral economic and spiritual aspects of human life with which a man can develop an integrated personality. As one of the earliest naturalist educators and environmentalist to think in terms of the global peace and internationalism Tagore’s educational model brings out a unique sensitivity within multi-racial, multi-lingual and multi-cultural situations amidst conditions of political dependency and control.

Tagore contributed significantly to the intellectual and cultural growth in Bengal having a pan –India impact. The rich variety and sheer magnitude of

Tagore's writing is nothing short of phenomenal, a major presence in world literature a reality that would be lost by merely looking at his "texts" The beginning of twenty –first century saw Tagore's work getting wide recognition (Noble Prize in Literature for Gitanjali) His creative and intellectual range included achievements as poet, dramatist, novelist, composer, actor, singer, educational reformer, political and social activist, editor (of the Bengali literary journal Sadhana), religious philosopher, and a humanist above all⁴.

Tagore's philosophy of education

The core of Tagore's educational philosophy lays greater emphasis on the complete harmonious development of individual personality within the naturalistic surroundings. He believed that education should help an individual to attain complete personality so that all his powers may be developed to the fullest extent for his own individual perfection as well as the perfection of the human society. Education was not merely a means for the growth but it was also concerned with the whole physical and social milieu in which he lived. He wanted everybody to be fearless, free and open- minded, self-reliant, full of freedom spirit of inquiry and self- critical, with their roots embedded in India but reaching out to the world in material and spiritual progress. Tagore strongly believed that education of a country acquires shape and substance only against the socio-cultural and aesthetic values of that land. It is also important that there should exist a strong relationship between education, culture and society⁵.

Tagore was not a professional educationist. All his views and observations on education starts with the assumption that education is not a profession, but an art to be performed. It was the poet in him that demanded a creative approach to childhood. In other words, only as a creator, a dreamer, a poet and a lyricist did Tagore attempt to turn educational practice into a meaningful process leading to successful integration of the individual in society. The perfect education given to the child should, therefore, be like the perfect poem: self-contained, uniform, integrated and guided by the ever-recurring rhythm of natural growth from a child to a man. On the other the perfect teacher would indeed resemble the person in so far as he gives shape, in complete freedom from tradition, by creating images of beauty and rhythm for the young mind out of the raw material of experience and by interpreting nature in its manifold aspects⁶.

The basic tenets of Tagore's educational ideals consist of the belief in unity of soul and mind of the individual to be attained, an ideal of harmony where all the contradictory elements that constitute a human personality would be resolved. This certainly may seem an extraordinary ideal to put forward in this century where fragmentation and specialization have been considered as ultimate to achieve perfection in life. Instead, Tagore says, the capacity of any individual to adjust himself successfully to his environment that of nature or society, so as to reach a degree of integration that would ultimately lead to a unified personality. Tagore must have known that "the young mind should be saturated with the idea that it has been born in a human world which is in harmony with the world around it" to develop a complete personality in harmony with nature⁷.

The same question grapples the modern educationist today who will ask that how we as teachers can help the child to find his place in a world which very largely consists of fragmentation, frustration, and growing dissatisfaction. Yet, basically, the educational situation has not changed since the ancient times till present. A teacher's noble function still today is to help the child to "realize himself", to establish a significant relationship between himself and his natural and social environment. Tagore was fully aware of the split in modern man's consciousness. On the one hand, there is man's striving for knowledge and on the other, there is his instinctual life, interfering with his attempts at intellectual self-realization. Tagore finds the only remedy for modern man in a harmonious co-existence of the instinctual and the mental in his spiritual make-up to be natural with nature and human with man⁸."

Tagore' writings on Education

Tagore's views on education are scattered in a number of his writings which constitute a voluminous literature, mostly written as independent essays, speeches and letters. Only a small number have been collected and published in books and journals. The rest either are available in pages of old magazines and periodicals or lying in obscurity. Tagore's educational writings majority of which have been in Bengali are yet to be translated in English⁹. Some of the valuable writings of Tagore shed light on his educational philosophy and his experiments in education. Tagore's first educational writing which attracted wide attention in Bengal was published in editorial columns of *Sadhana* under the title 'Prasanga Katha' - Relevant

talks. "Sikshar Herpher"¹⁰ enunciates some of his fundamental educational thoughts, published when he was only 31 years of age. In "Purvaprasner – Anubritti" he argued, that it is necessary to remember if we place education in the hands of the government, they will attempt through that education to fulfill their own interests and not ours¹¹. In "Siksha-Samasya" — The Problem of Education Tagore clearly indicated for the first time his fundamental point of difference with the National Council of Education¹². He firmly believed that no true national system of education in India could be based by imitating of a foreign model. In the article "Tapovan"(1910)¹³ — Forest, Tagore for the first time introduced a new idea of the education of feeling one with nature. In "Laksya O' Siksa"- Aims & Education, a letter written in August, 1912, Tagore makes it clear that the aims and ideals in the life of a nation should first be clearly apprehended and formulated before its educational system is determined for "What we want to be and what we want to learn are inseparably connected together". In "Strisiksha"-The Education of Woman (1916) Tagore believes that education is universal in nature. It should be known equally by men and women, not for the sake of practical utility but for the sake of knowing¹⁴. "Whatever is worth knowing is knowledge". "My School" (1916) is based on the lectures delivered by Tagore in America. In this article Tagore's ideas on education and educational system are revised and reformulated. It is perhaps the most comprehensive writing by Tagore on his school at Santiniketan¹⁵.

Tagore's experiment with an alternative naturalistic value system of education

Tagore for his entire life strived for an alternative value system of education based on Indian values, aesthetics and educational sensibilities. He expressed his active involvement in the field of education with the establishment of Shantiniketan, in 1901 a school built on the model of an ashram, an institution aimed at reforming village communities cultural practices. Visva-Bharati, an international university was established on 24 December 1921, fulfilling his vision of the universal man in symbiosis of his environment and close to nature. In correlation to nature, classes in Shantiniketan were held under the shades of the trees not simply as a romantic idea but a deliberate way of bringing students close to nature, making it a way of life so that students could learn to preserve and respect nature.

Tagore's philosophy of Atmanshakti laid the foundation for his rural reconstruction programme¹⁶. To achieve this purpose a separate institution Sriniketan was established in 1921 to bring the scientific temper to improve human conditions in villages. He launched the rural reconstruction programme at Sriniketan to create and establish an equilibrium between man and man and between man and nature. To suffice this thinking he also started a school called Shikshashastra to provide all round education to village children enabling them to live decently in harmony with nature. Tagore's philosophy of an alternative system of education was to bridge the gulf between city and village laying the foundations of a modern India. This dream was fulfilled in rural Bengal with the establishment of Santiniketan and Sriniketan, where he founded a school and an institute of rural reconstruction, which together was transformed into his Visva Bharati International University¹⁶. He was the pioneer who laid the foundation of an alternative system of values in culture and education through his views and thought process thereby upholding the rich socio-cultural and spiritual heritage of India in the East and West alike.

Final observation

"For Tagore the mind is nourished in truth; the imagination is nourished in art; and the world of relationship is nourished in sympathy for the created universe. Tagore wanted to inculcate in young minds an appreciation for the need to practice the arts and simultaneously to rejuvenate interest in the pursuit of conventional education. The aesthetic sense of education was given the highest priority in the writings of Tagore. This became the fundamental principle in his conception of holistic learning and education. Tagore's philosophy of education, culture and society is distinctive. Yet he sought a synthesis of East and West in both ideals and methods. His humanistic philosophy is marked by a synthesis of naturalistic, aesthetic and universal values.

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Peace Education through Films: Depicting the Politics of Transgressive Peace

Shankhamala Ray

According to UNICEF guidelines, Peace Education is a process to promote knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed to bring about behavioural changes that will enable children, youth and adults to prevent overt and structural conflict and violence, to resolve conflict peacefully and to create conditions contributing to peace at intrapersonal, interpersonal, intergroup, national and international levels. However, film, as a medium of promoting peace is not a new phenomenon. In war-torn societies, films by renowned film-makers have often tried to indoctrinate people with the values of peace. Though the power-monger state leaders have propagated hatred, a parallel force has always been active emanating from the sane part of the civil society that dared transgression from the path of violence. This paper will delve into this queer politics of transgressive peace practised through film-making. The paper will focus on three post-2000 films on different Islamic societies- 'The Gardener' (2012) by Mohsen Makhmalbaf, 'Five Broken Cameras' (2011) by Emad Burnat and Guy Davidi and 'Encounter Point' (2006) by Ronit Avni and Julia Bacha. These films respectively from Iran, Palestine and Israel, have spread the spirit of peace in a world which is much more incendiary today by the promotion of mono-dimensional cataloguing of human beings. Transgressive politics, characterized by peace, in different Islamic societies, through the filmic lens, is the kernel of the paper.

Keywords: *politics, peace education, films, transgression, Islamic societies, conflict, violence, 'Five Broken Cameras', 'Encounter Point', 'The Gardener', Mohsen Makhmalbaf*

Peace Education and Films

According to the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) guidelines, 'Peace Education' is a process to promote knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed to bring about behavioral changes that will enable children, youth and adults to prevent overt and structural conflict and violence, to resolve conflicts peacefully and to create conditions contributing to peace at intrapersonal, interpersonal, intergroup,

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national and international levels.¹ It may be mentioned that a film, as a medium of promoting peace is not a new phenomenon, and can therefore be used for raising consciousness about conflict resolution through 'Peace Education' as per the UNICEF guidelines. In war-torn societies, films by renowned film-makers have often tried to inculcate in people the values of peace. The movies that this paper focuses on can be very usefully taught as a part of peace education. Three films have been chosen for discussion, which are from some conflict-ridden areas of West Asia. The films are, *5 Broken Cameras*, *Encounter Point* and *The Gardener*.

Transgressive Peace and *5 Broken Cameras* (2012)

The film, *5 Broken Cameras* (a 2012 documentary film, jointly produced by a Palestinian and an Israeli citizen- Emad Burnat and Guy Davidi), is very much significant in the sphere of peace-education. The film has been found to be unmistakably characterized by transgressive peace. Before the discussion of transgressive peace, the film narrative has been given below.

The Film Narrative

This documentary film revolves around Emad Burnat, a Palestinian farmer, who bought his first camera when his fourth son, Gibreel, was born. It was in the year 2005. He started using it for home videos. Gradually he developed a sense of emancipation. He felt that he could serve his community with the lensed apparatus in his hand. Then, he started using the camera to archive their struggle against oppression by the Israeli authority.

Over five years Emad made his film and during this period five of his cameras were destroyed by Israeli order. These cameras were the eyewitnesses of the rigorous battle of the villagers against Jewish settlers and Israeli troops.² The cameras have captured the struggle of Emad and his friends Adeeb and Bassem/Phil. It recorded how they embraced passive resistance, how they were arrested, how they suffered injuries. The cameras bravely captured atrocities committed by the Israeli authorities in the West Bank during various demonstrations. They captured the enormity of the resistance of the common people like Emad. A camera recorded Emad's helpless silence when he is told by a soldier that filming by a camera is prohibited even in his own house as he lives in a 'closed military zone'. The Jewish military usually broke up demonstrations and protests by 'closing' a territory militarily, by issuing Section 318 of the Order regarding Security

Provisions.³ The issuing of a 'closure' represents a declaration on behalf of the military commander that entry to a **specific area** is prohibited, generally or for a specific population, without explicit permission. The declaration applies for anyone who is in that area to leave it. **The order does not apply to the residents of the area declared a closed military zone.**⁴ One of the cameras encapsulated horrific moments when a Palestinian olive orchard was destroyed by Israeli settlers. It also encased hopeful moments when little Gibreel handed a twig of a bulldozed olive tree to an Israeli soldier.

In the film, the lifetime of each camera is marked by a chapter of struggle in the Palestinian village Bil'in from 2005 to 2009. Emad's first camera witnessed Bil'in's (West Ramallah) villagers' passive resistance. When Emad buys the first camera, the villagers discovered a security barrier route that cut through their farmlands. The adjacent Israeli settlement was also going to expand. In protest, the villagers marched every Friday and Emad filmed the demonstrations. Adeeb and Phil were always with him. Israeli soldiers always tried to disperse the protest marches with tear gas and rubber bullets. They destroyed Emad's first camera by shooting at it. Emad gets his second camera from a friend. The protest activities intensify. He continues to shoot films. Villagers started to build a concrete structure to protect the village land from settlers. Then the settlers burnt their olive grove. Adeeb was shot in the leg and an Israeli settler broke Emad's camera.

Resolute Emad now starts his journey with a donated camera. This time, the situation is much harder. The Israeli army's presence became more frequent in the village. They started arresting people including children. Emad and his brother were also arrested for throwing stones. Children started their own demonstrations, for instance, shouting the slogan 'We Want to Sleep'. A few weeks later Emad was freed and he started his work with the camera. As time passes, people started questioning the integrity of the non-violence movement. In a neighbouring town, violent activities by Palestinians began to grow. In the meantime, Emad's third camera was shot at. However, Bil'in villagers won a legal victory. An Israeli court held that the existing fence had to be dismantled. It had to be built farther from the village. This victory was celebrated by the villagers but the order was not implemented. One day, while returning home after work, Emad's truck was crashed (it is not mentioned in the film, whether it was a deliberate act). The images of

the accident were the last shot of his fourth camera. Emad was seriously injured and he woke up in an Israeli hospital after 20 days of the accident.

Meanwhile the supporters of nonviolence decreased in number. Emad's friend Phil, who was one of the staunchest supporters of nonviolent resistance, was hit in the chest by a tear gas canister during a demonstration and died instantly. His death shook the village. This death made the villagers furious and the protest intensified. The fifth camera lasted from the winter of 2009 to the spring of 2010. It was smashed by a soldier and repaired before being shot at, at a protest rally. In the meantime, the verdict of the court started to be implemented much to the appeasement of the villagers' anger. Nevertheless, a concrete wall was being built further from the village. Emad went on narrating, "Some of the lands will be returned to the owners. But Bil'in continues to resist the new wall." The film ends with these words- "The sixth camera witnessed spring 2010. At the last day of filming the destruction of the wall, Emad was hit by a stun grenade, but his camera wasn't hurt and is still filming to this day."

The Idea of Transgressive Peace

Transgression is resistance, protest, disapproval or dissent. Transgressive peace can be a truly political term. The idea of transgressive peace can be defined as a kind of peace that occurs when an individual of a nation resists the unjust, draconian rules of his or her own government. The term has an organic solidarity with the term non-violent resistance.

However, a video related to the film had been posted on YouTube⁵ by Guy Davidi, the Israeli co-director of the movie. The video shows that Davidi is showcasing the struggle of the Palestinian farmers of a village, Bil'in, against Israeli settlers and the Israeli army in the movie *5 Broken Cameras*, to Israeli youth in a programme called 'Windows' (an alternative youth education programme). ⁶

After watching the movie the reaction of some of the Israeli students are given below:⁷

Student 1: "It is a very despairing reality and the fact that every Friday they (Palestinian villagers of Bil'in) go out to protest, is inspiring. We are in their age (the Palestinian boys who were forcibly arrested by Israeli police in the dead of the night from their houses to terrorize the Bil'in villagers) and if we were living in Bil'in, they would knock on our doors at night to

tell we threw stones. So why? Just because I was born a few miles over the other side?"

Student 2: "The strongest feeling I had during the film was anger towards the soldiers. I felt so angry on our side because of how they behaved. It was just so different to watch my side."

Student 3: "No one ever tells us of these issues at schools and I always look at it as a bit of an escape on censorship... School students are not taught to think for themselves."

Student 4: "By not showing to us anything like this they take a clear political stand. They censor films like this to conceal the truth."

Student 5: "In Israel they often say academic freedom is good. We want to explore things and we have the high court... Ironically, it (*Five Broken Cameras*) shows how liberal Israel is as a state!"

It is evident that the reactions are marked by a strong sense of empathy toward the Palestinians and an apprehension against the injustice perpetrated against them. So, the film was successful in its intention to make the youth think a bit differently from the 'official', 'statist' mode of thinking. Therefore, on Davidi's part, it is basically transgression from his government's policy of covering the truth. It is a transgression from the path of violence as it is a protest against the strategy of deprivation, exploitation and torture. Davidi raises his voice against injustice. But, he is doing it in a peaceful manner by uniting with a Palestinian to make a movie. It is quite fascinating that two people from two rival regions, rival political and religious affiliations got united to make a film. Hence, in this context, they do not actually belong to different politico-religious affinities. They belong only to humanity. They represent humanity. They seek human rights but they do not take resort to malicious outbursts. The film does not become the instrument of any political faction, thus maintaining the spirit of a truly independent movie. Hence Davidi is practicing peace, but a different kind of peace which is resistive or transgressive in nature. Therefore, carrying forward the torch of transgressive peace, the film ceases to be entertainment and becomes pure political activism.

***Encounter Point*(2006): Encountering Hatred**

Encounter Point (2006) by Julia Bacha and Ronit Avni is a documentary (Israeli/Palestinian/North American/Brazilian production) that talks about

people who decide to help constitute a non-violent dialogue among common people. The film mostly shows victims who lost near and dear ones in the Israel-Palestine conflicts, former zealots from both sides and others who want to follow the road to peace. This 85-minute feature documentary film follows a former Israeli settler, a Palestinian ex-prisoner, a bereaved Israeli mother and a wounded Palestinian grief-stricken brother who risk their lives and public standing to promote a nonviolent solution to the conflict. These civic leaders endure suicide bombings and checkpoints to meet with militants, the wounded and civilians on both sides. It proves that the gulf between Israelis and Palestinians, even though extremely wide, is nevertheless bridgeable.

Promotion of People to People Peace

The striking feature of this documentary is that it tries to keep far away from cries of despair, but cautiously. It only speaks of optimism and tries to show a way to build peace at the grassroots level. It tries to metamorphose the grief of the sufferers to a force that can mend the violent atmosphere of the conflict-laden region.

The film follows the crusaders of peace from Telmond to Tulkarm, from a suicide bombing in Tel Aviv to the funeral of a 12-year-old Palestinian girl in Bethlehem, to the first conversation between a former Israeli settler and a former Palestinian prisoner and to a lot more places. The directors hope, “perhaps years from now, their actions will be recognized as a catalyst for constructive change in the region”.⁸*Apart from showing the efforts of the civic leaders, the film is also critical about the silence of journalists and politicians on the vital Palestinian and Israeli grassroots peace efforts.*

Encounter Point moves beyond sensational images and challenges. One of the directors, Ronit Avni says in a director’s statement, “Yet even though Palestinians and Israelis who support peace, outnumber the militants, their voices are continually drowned out by sensational, explosive headlines. Keenly aware of this gap in media coverage, I assembled a crew of Palestinians, North Americans and Israelis to document a few of these forgotten heroes. After 475 preliminary interviews, two years of research and 16 months of production, our multi-national, multi-lingual team selected a handful of subjects from both sides, built unprecedented relations of trust with them, and gained deep access to their lives and work.”⁹

The film *Encounter Point* won the Audience Award for Best Documentary at the San Francisco International Film Festival in 2006. *Encounter Point* subsequently won the 2006 Audience Award for Best Documentary at the Rencontres Film Festival in Montreal.¹⁰

*In this film, a very important character has been played by a nongovernmental organization, that is 'The Parents Circle-Bereaved Families Forum' or 'The Parents Circle Families Forum (PCFF)'. This grassroots organization of Palestinian and Israeli families, who have lost family members due to the conflict, operates under the principle that a process of reconciliation is a prerequisite for achieving sustained peace. The PCFF is also known as the Israeli Palestinian Bereaved Families for Reconciliation and Peace. It was founded in 1995 by Yitzhak Frankenthal and several bereaved Israeli families.*¹¹

Along the way, various projects have arisen with the objective of increasing communication between communities. While severe restrictions on personal travel effectively keep Israelis and Palestinians from interacting in normal human ways, the Hello Shalom/Hello Salaam project is a toll-free line that allows any Israeli to pick up the phone and talk to a random Palestinian, and vice versa. In 2003, the 'Parents Circle/Bereaved Families Forum' received the Rex Foundation's Bill Graham Award for its peacemaking efforts.¹²

Main Characters

Encounter Point is a documentary film, documenting life and therefore the characters in the documentary are real. Robi Damelin, the Parents' Circle public relations officer, whose son David was killed by a Palestinian sniper, said in an interview, "We created it (Hello Shalom/Hello Salaam project) in 2002 as a sort of counter to the powers. Since then we've had over a million calls on this line which is a toll-free line for all Palestinians and Israelis to talk to each other. Sometimes people scream at each other and say appalling things over our telephone line, but if they give each other their telephone number at the end of the conversation, which has happened, then I would think that there is some hope. That's the beginning of talking, and it's not throwing stones or killing each other. For me that's very important."¹³

Her colleague, Ali Abu Awwad, a Palestinian, was once imprisoned for four years for his active involvement in the *intifada*. After being released, he

was shot by an Israeli settler, and while in the hospital, learned that his brother had also been shot and killed by an Israeli soldier at a checkpoint. Then he moved from the path of violence and became an ardent supporter of peace between Palestine and Israel.

Shlomo Zagman, an Israeli, is another important real life character in the movie. In the past, he actively supported deporting Palestinians to neighboring Arab countries. However, a religious Jewish mentor convinced him that Israel's continued occupation of and settlement in Palestinian territory, endangered its own future. Then Shlomo and his wife left the settlement and moved to a city inside Israel. He also became a founding member of the 'Movement for Realistic Religious Zionism', a group working to encourage withdrawal from settlements. His public expression of his opposition to the occupation angered many people in his hometown, just like the violent Palestinian opposition faced by Ali Abu Awwad.

In 1996, another Israeli real life person, Tzvika Shahak's 15 years old daughter Bat-Chen was killed by a Palestinian suicide bomber outside a Tel Aviv mall. It was only after her death, Tzvika and his wife, Ayelet, discovered that their daughter's diaries were full of poems on peace. They published Bat-Chen's poetry in Hebrew and Arabic. They also became founding members of the Bereaved Families Forum.

One of Bat-chen's poems is given below:

A Dream of Peace

Every person has a dream
One wants to be a millionaire
Another wants to be a writer
And I have a dream
Of peace.
Sometimes we give up
And feel that the special day
When everyone will be happy and united
Right and left
Arabs and Jews

Become partners and friends
And there is no hatred and war anymore
That unique day
Looks like it won't come.
Maybe I'm a naïve girl
But is it too much
To ask for peace and security?
Is it too much to dream
Of walking securely
In the streets of the Old City?
Is it too much not to see the mothers of
Young soldiers
Crying on their graves?
(Written in the ninth grade)¹⁴

Another character, Rutie Atsmon is the director of 'Windows', an organization that publishes a children's magazine in Arabic and Hebrew; 'Windows' also brings together Israeli and Palestinian youth. Rutie refuses to be deterred by military checkpoints, military curfews or the fury of Palestinians confined to the other side of the Separation Barrier. She is determined to take her workshop with her Palestinian partners where she wants to, although her efforts are often daunted by restrictions and non-cooperation.

Aziz Tanji is a co-founder of the Windows' youth organization's center in Tulkarm. He grew up in the local refugee camp. Though he lived an impoverished life, he never thought of becoming a militant. He is now a well-known social worker. He believes that Palestinian and Israeli children benefit from meeting together and learning about each other's lives. The Israeli army has not granted him a permit to enter Israel for years. But he never loses hope. He communicates with the Israeli staff daily and hosts them when they come to Tulkarm. He and his Israeli colleagues struggle to overcome the obstacles posed by the military occupation and conflicts.

The Stereotypes

However, the film *Encounter Point* cannot detach itself from stereotypes. The directors and producers are Israeli. Even if it talks about peace, the Palestinians are shown mainly as violent people and the Israelis as calm and reserved peace-lovers. It has not even mentioned once that the occupation is unjust and Israel is like an apartheid state. Palestinians have been depicted on many occasions ranting violently that they want resistance and not peace. Still, the film raises important questions regarding the basic rights of Palestinians.

Interestingly, the character of Shlomo is different from the other characters. He breaks the stereotype. He does not take world peace for granted. He raises critical questions on how the conflict can be resolved, how the demands and logic of both sides can be analysed or who should compromise on which ground etc. Simply put, he does not treat world peace as an ornamental coinage. Shlomo embarks on a journey through the West Bank, questioning the society's assumptions about the conflict, moving beyond traditional right and left-wing positions.

Other People to People Contact Initiatives in the Region

Like PCFF, there are a number of organizations in Israel and Palestine working dedicatedly to ease the relation between common people from both sides. Below, some of these organizations are discussed briefly.

The 'Israel/Palestine Center for Research and Information', or *IPCRI*, is a joint Israeli/Palestinian non-government organization (NGO). It works towards building partnerships in Israel/Palestine. It implements various peace building projects from time to time.¹⁵

Another organization, the 'Alliance for Middle East Peace' or *ALLMEP*, secures funding to expand peace-building interactions between Palestinians and the Israeli people. It connects individuals and groups to promote living under the principles of peace. It is a group of over 90 leading non-governmental organizations. Its members include a wide variety of groups, including coexistence groups, academic groups, social and economic development foundations. There are a number of *ALLMEP* members who tirelessly work on trust-building and peace-making measures.¹⁶

Yet another organization, the 'Rosh Pina Mainstreaming Network', is one of the members of ALLMEP. It provides training to early childhood instructors of different religious backgrounds focusing on minimizing aggressive behaviours. It also promotes encounters between diverse groups of kindergarten children.¹⁷

Another organization, 'Save A Child's Heart' organization was founded by the late Dr. Amram (Ami) Cohen, an American cardiac surgeon 'The Heart of the Matter' project increases the knowledge and expertise of five Palestinian health care personnel in pediatric cardiac care through a three-year training program at the Wolfson Medical Center in Holon. This project builds strong professional bonds between Israeli and Palestinian medical staff and aims to reduce conflicts.¹⁸

The 'Women Building a Politics of Peace' or '**Creativity For Peace**' project encourages more equitable participation of women in both Palestinian and Israeli political life, in particular, women who focus on cooperation for humanitarian needs.¹⁹

The 'Off-Grid Food Energy and Water Solutions (OFEW-Solutions)' project of the **Arava Institute for Environmental Studies**, implements off-grid food, energy, and water solutions (grey-water recycling and biogas systems) for mitigating environmental conflicts between Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza.²⁰

If more and more documentaries like *Encounter Point* are made, focusing on the peace efforts of the above-mentioned organizations, those movies can also be used for public peace-screening, which may alleviate the acrimony in common people's mind at least to some extent and promote ideas/thoughts of peace.

The Gardener (2012): A Film on Spiritual Harmony and Coexistence

The Gardener by Mohsen Makhmalbaf is the first movie shot in Israel by an Iranian director. The film revolves around the Baha'i faith, which is a religion based on monotheism and which is constituted of three basic principles- unity of God, unity of religion and unity of humanity.

Filming in Consonance with Peace

When Director Mohsen Makhmalbaf went to Jerusalem to attend the Jerusalem Film Festival (2013), which screened *The Gardener* as a tribute to

him, Iran's official film organization called on the State Cinema Museum to remove his awards because of his liaison with the Zionist regime.²¹

In response Makhmalbaf said that he went to the Jerusalem Film Festival as an 'ambassador of peace' to promote Iranian art in a country which previously threatened to launch preemptive air strikes against Iran.²² His visit angered the authorities back home. But, he said, he was overwhelmed by the welcome he received in Israel and he felt that the people were genuinely interested in Iranian art.²³ Interestingly, a number of Iranian intellectuals, including opposition figures said in a joint letter that they were pained at Makhmalbaf's decision to visit the apartheid country. The letter said, "As human beings of conscience, we are appalled by the brutality Palestinians undergo at the hand of Israeli occupation and we are supportive of the non-violent global BDS movement which seeks to pressure Israel to implement an equitable, just solution to the ethnic cleansing of 1948, the occupation of Palestinian lands since 1967, and the current implementation of an apartheid system. We are deeply dismayed at Mr. Makhmalbaf's disregard for the global movement for Palestinian human rights and the implicit support for Israel's apartheid policies that his decision to attend a film festival directly sponsored by the Israeli government represents, particularly given that he is being prominently honored by the festival with a special tribute."²⁴ The resentment of the Iranian authorities is also due to the screening of Makhmalbaf's film *The Gardener* in Israel, which is about the Baha'i faith, a taboo religion in Iran.²⁵

The Premise of the Movie

The Gardener shows Mohsen Makhmalbaf and his son Maysam Makhmalbaf engaged in a vigorous debate on the positive and pejorative connotations of religions. While Mohsen sticks to the belief that faith incorporates enormous power to do good to humanity, Maysam cynically declares that all the good inherent in religion had been contaminated by religious fanatics. The Baha'i faith originated in Persia in 1844 and its followers had suffered oppression in contemporary Iran. Makhmalbaf chose this religion to be the central theme of his film as the focal point of this faith is peace. He also chooses to shoot in the Baha'i gardens of Haifa, Israel and named his film *The Gardener*.

The Gardener and his Garden

The Gardener in *The Gardener*, symbolically refers to God Almighty who

owns the garden called world, where the people of various religions grow as flowers. The character of *The Gardener* in the film has a metaphorical significance. The Gardener of the Baha'i garden, has been projected in the movie as the resemblance of God's love for humankind. When Maysam gets irritated as his father shoots The Gardener of the Baha'i garden for a long time, the father responds to his irritation with poise: "He is not only gardening... It is a kind of meditation to be like a gardener to society".

Makhmalbaf maintains in the film that all religions are inherently good and beautiful as the multi-coloured and multi-perfumed flowers of the garden. Various geometric patterns, in which different plants in the garden are assorted, symbolize the vast difference of people all over the world. Makhmalbaf shows that The Gardener is equally careful in nourishing all the different plants in the garden. Thus the idea of equality and unity of human beings before God and the vainness of conflicts in the name of God has been repeatedly stressed in the movie.

The Mirrors in the Film

In *The Gardener*, Makhmalbaf uses the mirror as a symbol a number of times. The characters placed mirrors in front of trees, flowering plants or the sea, several times. Makhmalbaf said in an interview, "When we speak about mirror, it is a part of reality we perceive with our mind. I would say, we use cinema as a mirror, we put it before the society to show people themselves and to fix something... I use the mirror as a memory of the history and it is bleeding... I would like to enter a mirror and end up in another place."²⁶

Thus in Makhmalbaf's diction, mirror symbolizes reflection of reality and its glitches can be fixed when observed thoroughly. Another ace Iranian director Abbas Kiarostami once said, "People do not look at properly what is in front of them except it is framed".²⁷ A mirror 'frames' the reflection of reality. Hence people must take notice of it. When the glitches are fixed, the reflection transforms into something else, something better. In this way, the mirror or the framed reflection of reality acts as a door to reach 'another' place, perfected by corrections. As Makhmalbaf uses the mirror as the memory of bleeding history, it also symbolically opens up a way to nurse the wounds of the 'bleeding' history. Cinema, as a mirror, helps spectators to be truly aware of the reality and also provides a chance for the reality's improvement. On the other hand, the mirror context brings up a fascinating

precinct of equality and peace. Some *Qur'anic* precepts state that the whole world is a reflection of God.²⁸ If the whole world is actually a mirror to God, then God belongs to each and every organism of the world, thus leaving no space for inequality. If all are equal, then there is no scope of conflict/violence.

Religious Faith as a Catalyst of Harmony

In the movie *The Gardener*, the Baha'i faith's proposition of peace has been celebrated by Makhmalbaf, a Muslim director from Iran. At a point of time, his son, Maysam, who also acts in the movie accuses his father, Mohsen, of using technology to serve religion and asserts that religion starts with peace, ends with violence, starts with women emancipation and ends with enslaving them. In reply the father says, "You are also creating a new religion with technology... Technology led to the emergence of nuclear weapons. I am not making a movie to promote religion. I am investigating a faith for which many people have died. Many people are still in the prison for their belief in this religion. Its followers had never used violence. I want to understand how this religion has been able to raise a group of peaceful people."

It may be recapitulated that the Baha'i religion is known for spreading messages of peace throughout the world. Baha'u'llah, the founder of the Baha'ifaith in the mid-nineteenth century said, "The earth is but one country and mankind its citizens... Let your vision be world-embracing, rather than confined to your own self".²⁹ Baha'u'llah taught in the mid-nineteenth century that the human race as a distinct entity has undergone an evolutionary process, much like a child growing into adolescence, and that it would necessarily pass through difficult and traumatic stages before ultimately arriving at a state of maturity when the "wolfs shall dwell with the lamb".³⁰ The Baha'i writings state "The world of humanity is a composite body".³¹ and "when one part of the organism suffers, all the rest of the body will feel its consequence".³² According to Baha'u'llah's teaching, religion is progressively revealed by one God through Manifestations of God, as the founders of major world religions. Buddha, Moses, Jesus, Krishna and Muhammad, Baband Baha'u'llah are those founders. Baha'i shows that the major religions are fundamentally unified in purpose. Nevertheless, they are varied in socio-cultural applications.³³

The Inherent Similarities of Different Religions

Interestingly, in the Old city of Jerusalem three important landmarks of three different religions can be found: The Christian Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the Muslim Al-Aqsa mosque and the Jews' Western Wall or Wailing Wall. While wandering in Old Jerusalem (East Jerusalem), Maysam realizes that these three religions are actually similar to a large extent.

He says in a background voice, "What is religion? A collective spirit? A series of practices? Traditions and accessories?" He gives examples of the rosary, as most of the religions use some kind of rosary. He also refers to the slab situated in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, on which the dead body of Jesus Christ was said to have been washed and anointed. Maysam says, it is interesting that in Islam also, the process of washing and anointing the Prophet's dead body was followed. People of both religions bring cloths to rub against the holy slabs for blessings. Maysam again mockingly says that most of the religious places have high ceilings to make people feel small. He even says, "Communal singing stirs up religious feelings in me. But I have to control myself so that I am not deceived by it". He maintains that all religious places create a mystical ambience with the use of candles, light and darkness, chimes and fragrance that people can be charmed to exit reality and enter a metaphysical world. Astonished by the fact that the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Western Wall are so near to each other, he wonders, "Wasn't there enough space in the world, that God brought the centres of two major religions so close? Did not he know that his believers would not make good neighbours?" He again asks, "If Iran makes nuclear weapons and hits Western Wall, what will happen to their own Al-Aqsa Mosque?"

Cinema as a Religion

At the end of the film, it is shown that Maysam is filming his father. The sequence shows that Makhamalbaf is watering some of the plants in the garden. Whenever he reaches a plant, he utters the name of a specific religion- "I am a Muslim", "I am a Christian", "I am a Buddhist", "I am a Jew", "I am irreligious"; as if each plant represents a different religion or religious belief. Then he says, "I have planted my camera, that it can flower". The statement perhaps signifies that the camera, rather, cinema, is the religion for Makhmalbaf. In *The Gardener*, his camera appeals to a human's innate

qualities of amity and peacefulness. And this is the message that this movie wishes to impact.

Conclusion

The films discussed in this chapter convey a message- when negotiations become futile at the state level, regional interactions, grass roots-level coexistence measures involving common people of various communities show a ray of hope. While *5 Broken Cameras* has the ability to teach people the dignity of peaceful resistance, *Encounter Point* can motivate the common masses with the verve of resistance to conflicts. Similarly, a film can encourage people to learn the lessons of peace. As a very popular medium for connecting people, the use of films as peace-building measures can be seriously considered by governmental and non-governmental organizations and institutions of conflict-ravaged countries.

Lastly, *The Gardener* dispenses a healing touch of peace, with spiritual elegance. Abhorrent violence in war, genocide or massacre, raises unsettling questions about the fundamental nature of humanity. The ethical basis of human societies gets jeopardized with the chronicles of gore. In such a scenario, *The Gardener* with its message of intrinsic similarity and goodness of people and their religions, has the potential to permeate human minds with a sense of tolerance and harmony.

Nevertheless, films cannot be structured meticulously on strategic lines because of their emotional fabric. Still it can be used to humanize the strategic facilities for peace promotion available in a political system. Moreover, use of cinema to teach peace, to educate the mind with the ethos of peace may lead to a less violent earth.

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²¹Saeed Kamali Dehghan, "Iranian Director Mohsen Makhmalbaf Defends Israel Visit after Outcry", *The Guardian*, News, Iran, July 16, 2013, available at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/jul/16/iranian-mohsen-makhmalbaf-israel-visit>, accessed on 05.01.19.

²²Ibid.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Nirit Anderman, "Iranian Filmmaker Mohsen Makhmalbaf's Visit to Israel Angers Critics Back Home", *Haaretz*, July 16, 2013, available at <https://www.haaretz.com/.premium-iranian-filmmaker-visits-israel-critics-lash-1.5296243>, accessed on 05.01.19.

²⁶ Gulnara Abikeyeva, "What Do "Mirrors" Reflect in Mohsen Makhmalbaf's Films?" Busan Film Festival Conference, 2013, Conference Paper, available at https://www.academia.edu/35149497/What_Do_Mirrors_Reflect_in_Mohsen_Makhmalbaf_s_Films, accessed on 18.12.15.

²⁷ Abbas Kiarostami, "I've often noticed that we are not able to look at what we have in front of us, unless it's inside a frame. Abbas Kiarostami", *Brainy Quote*, available at https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/abbas_kiarostami_500901, accessed on 05.01.19.

²⁸Spahik Omer, "Allah's Signs in the Universe", *IslamCity*, October 28, 2015, Available at <https://www.islamicity.org/5735/allahs-signs-in-the-universe/>, accessed on 2.2.18.

²⁹Jonathan Gandomi, "A Baha'i Vision for World Peace", *Huffington Post*, Sep 25, 2011 Available at https://www.huffingtonpost.com/jonathan-gandomi/a-vision-for-world-peace_b_906540.html, accessed on 05.01.19.

³⁰Ibid.

³¹Ibid.

³²Ibid.

³³Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi, "Buddha, Krishna, Zoroaster and Related Subjects", *Baha'i Library Online*, Volume 1, pages 15-23, 1991, available at http://bahai-library.com/compilation_buddha_krishna_zoroaster, accessed on 2.2.18.



Swami Vivekananda's Concept of Religion/Caste and Significance of Women in His Philosophy"

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ABSTRACT: The present study is supposed to examine and understand the Indian caste system as the unique ideology of exclusivist doctrine which has its distinctive and continuous impact on Indian social, political and cultural life. He engaged throughout his life for the development of women education. His objective of education is man making and character building-these principles also applied in field of women education. The most distinctive feature of Swami Vivekananda's teaching is that he applied his philosophical principles of Vedanta to the affairs of everyday life. Being a Vedantin, Vivekananda has firm faith in the inner unity of all. He depicts Vedantic society as the ideal form of society as it was based on equality. His ideals and principles of Vedanta are instrumental in patterning and structuring the cultural spheres of people. Every social and cultural change alters the essence of the activities in the different social spheres and is manifested in new interconnections between those spheres. Thus, we observe tremendous changes occur in the progress in traditional India, and the old values relating to caste system

Keywords: *Vivekananda, Caste System, Vedanta, Women status.*

Introduction

Swami Vivekananda, one of the greatest sons of India is always remembered all over the world for his address at the World's Parliament of Religions held at Chicago in 1893, which made the western intelligentsia to turnaround to recognise the great culture and tradition India had since time immemorial. In the march of events, we notice the rise and fall, and generally look towards the rise, forgetting the fall. But both are necessary and both are great. This is the nature of the universe. Whether in the world of our thoughts, the world of our relations in society the same movement of succession of rise and falls is going on. Hence great predominance's in the march of events, the liberal ideals, are marshalled ahead, to sink down, to digest, to as it were, to ruminate over the past- to adjust, to conserve, to gather strength once more for a rise and a bigger rise.

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It was Vivekananda's speech at the World's Parliament of Religions which made him famous as an 'orator by divine right' and as a 'Messenger of Indian wisdom to the Western world'. After the Parliament, he spent nearly three and a half years, spreading Vedanta philosophy as taught and practised by Sri Ramakrishna Paramhans, mostly in the eastern parts of USA and London.

During his travels all over India, Swami Vivekananda was deeply moved to see the appalling poverty and backwardness of the masses. He immediately understood that the real cause of India's downfall was the neglect of the masses that had lost faith in their capacity to improve their lot as a result of centuries of oppression. First of all, it was necessary to infuse into their minds, confidence and faith in themselves. For this they needed an inspiring message that can energise them into lead a life full of activity for their own betterment. Their faith in religion but with no understanding of the Vedanta philosophy and its practical application showed Swamiji the light amidst darkness. The masses needed two kinds of knowledge: secular knowledge to improve their economic condition and spiritual knowledge to infuse in them faith in themselves and strengthen their moral sense. Education was the answer that Swamiji found. To carry out his plans for the spread of education and for the uplift of the poor masses, and also of women, an efficient organization of dedicated people was needed. It was for this purpose Swamiji founded the Ramakrishna Mission a few years later.

"Hinduism-caste-based discrimination" is at odds with the historical moment, when much of the energy of Hindu reformers for the last 300 years has been spent reaffirming how utterly irrelevant caste — and caste-based discrimination — is to Hinduism. Vedanta, Yoga, Ahimsa, the Gita, Bhakti — none of these depend even remotely on caste. Swami Vivekananda, Dayananda Saraswati, Mahatma Gandhi, Bharatiar all spent considerable time *fighting* caste-based discrimination, if not always caste itself. Hindu belief and history is filled with venerated figures from both extremes of the caste hierarchy — Valmiki was a tribal robber before he wrote the Ramayan; Veda Vyasa, the son of a fisherwoman, compiled the Vedas; Guha and Sabari were revered Nishadas who helped Rama; Kannapa was a hunter who proved his devotion to Shiva by placing his foot on the Shiva Lingam; the Reddy dynasty was founded by a herdsman.

The person accredited with framing the Indian Constitution was Dr. BR Ambedkar, an 'untouchable' himself, a great and enlightened founder of Independent India, who has written extensively on the subject of 'Caste,' and who finally gave in to Mahatma Gandhi's pleas that the untouchables should not break away from the rest of the Hindus but remain united in the Freedom Struggle. India has had Dalits as President, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, and as the Speaker of Parliament. Several distinguished officials have also been Dalits.

However, caste discrimination continues to be a social evil experienced everyday in several covert forms, and in periodic public acts of murder, rape, and arson. Poor people identified as Dalit are routinely refused housing in communities dominated by the upper castes, even in urban conglomerations where such distinctions are hard to identify. In rural areas where everyone's social origins are well established, Dalits suffer the most. Marriage with a higher caste person is absolutely taboo. If anyone breaks the taboo, lynching is a common tragic occurrence. Dalits are expected to be submissive. A demand for better treatment can be met with beatings or even murder. Upper caste landlords occasionally exercise the *droit de seigneur* over attractive poor Dalit women in rural areas. Minimum wages established by law are rarely paid. Bonded labourers are more often Dalits.

Swami Vivekananda was generally critical of the caste system, and advocated education for women and the poor. He taught his followers that in order for India to move forward as a country, it must not cling to outdated concepts. However, according to some biographers, when traveling abroad, he often defended the caste system as an organized form of the hierarchy that exists in every society. Similarly, Swami Vivekananda also defended the marginalization of women. He described Hindu women as being more spiritual, and therefore superior to Western women.

What does Vivekananda say about caste and women?

Vivekananda readily accepts that the caste system as it exists has become corrupt. He stresses that caste is not by birth, but is based on qualities. He even says that one exhibits qualities of all varnas in their life. The beauty of the caste system is that it leads to a stable non-violent system and the end result is that it achieves good for all. To drive home this point, he says that a brahmana is a brahmana only when they share their knowledge and strive

towards making everyone else a brahmana. Vivekananda talks about an age where everyone was a brahmana, and implies that we now live in a degenerate age and if only we strive hard enough, the golden age can come back. Given human history, the golden age is just a myth. It never existed. "To the non-Brahmana castes I say, wait, be not in a hurry. Do not seize every opportunity of fighting the Brahmana, because as I have shown; you are suffering from your own fault. Who told you to neglect spirituality and Sanskrit learning? What have you been doing all this time? Why have you been indifferent? Why do you now fret and fume because somebody else had more brains, more energy, more pluck and go than you? Instead of wasting your energies in vain discussions and quarrels in the newspapers, instead of fighting and quarreling in your own homes – which is sinful – use all your energies in acquiring the culture which the Brahmana has, and the thing is done. Why do you not become Sanskrit scholars? Why do you not spend millions to bring Sanskrit education to all the castes of India? That is the question. The moment you do these things, you are equal to the Brahmana! That is the secret power in India". All you need to do is train people in that task and they will do it. Now consider the time Vivekananda lived in. Some non-brahmana castes were actively denied education. Forget education. They couldn't even drink water from the same well as that of the brahmanas. There existed a system which denied every opportunity to those people and yet Vivekananda is blaming them for not getting opportunities. He also blames that system (partly, not fully), but that is beside the point.

"Religion is the manifestation of divinity already in man" (Letters 70). According to Vivekananda religion is that will be equally philosophic, equally emotional, equally mystic and equally conducive to action. Religion is a social institution; worship is a social activity and faith a social force. Swamiji changed the focus of religion from God to Man on rather; to God in man (CWSV VI 244). His master Sri Ramkrishna had taught him that service to man was service to God. Swamiji made this principle the basis of his social service programme. He taught that the best form of worship was to see God in the poor, the downtrodden, the sick and the ignorant and to serve them.

Vivekananda was a keen student of History. Analyzing the historical facts available he comes to the conclusion that four fundamental social forces are ruling society in succession: Knowledge, military power, wealth and

physical labour. These forces are in the hand of four classes, Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaisya and Sudra. After analysing the merits and defects of the three different kinds of rules Vivekananda prophesied that Sudra rule is bound to come in the near future: nobody can resist it. At the same time he predicted that during the Sudra rule, there will be spread of general education but the number of geniuses on talented people will be few. From the angle of vision, it may be said that in comparison Vaisya rule is better than the other three because during this rule contact between people of our country and another was made possible through commerce and trade. History shows that Sudras were condemned in society in different periods. They were deprived of all opportunities to receive education. If a Sudra is absorbed in a higher class he will be lost to his own community and may not feel any urge necessary uplift of his own community.

"It is a tremendous error to feel helpless. Do not seek help from anyone. We are our own help. If we cannot help ourselves, there is none to help us." According to Vivekananda, "Man making is my mission." "Woman must put in a position to solve their own way; no one ought to do this for them. And our Indian women are as capable of doing it as any in the world."....Men should be taught to be practical and physically strong. A dozen of such lions will conquer the world and not millions of sheep can do so. Secondly, men should not be taught to imitate a personal ideal however great." "The ideal of perfect womanhood is total independence. The central idea of the life of modern Hindu lady has chastity." A soul has no male / female difference. Avoid the difference of male and female and feel that all are soul and they are the parts of God. The only way is love and sympathy. The only worship is love (CWSV VIII 331). That country and that nation which do not respect women have never become great. Swami Vivekananda repeatedly emphasized his fellow countrymen to remove their shackles on women and let them free.

Swami Vivekananda wanted women to have full freedom to understand their own ideals, their problems and to propose solutions for their own betterment. He believed that women could tap and use their capabilities, if they were properly educated. He believed in the self-respect and self-dignity of women and wanted no man to trample upon it, be it in the guise of protection or in the guise of reformation.

Swami Vivekananda, one of the great religious and social thinkers of India, thought about the empowerment of women in the context of traditional Indian philosophy. His thoughts reflected throughout his work and speeches, which are much more socialistic rather than religious in nature. He believed that in the future, Indian women would cross the chapter of glorious achievements made by the ancient Indian women instead of making them only as a reflected glory. He tried to increase awareness, develop and empower women not only through education but also by enlightening them through the philosophy of Indian spiritualism, which might be considered as an effective system or approach in the process of empowering women. The word 'empowerment' is related to 'freedom', which is described in the dictionary as 'to make able'. More specifically, empowerment includes the physical, social, economic and intellectual development of human beings.

Conclusion

Unlike Communists Vivekananda did not believe in using violent and revolutionary methods for the quick overthrow of the capitalist system. He insisted that permanent results could never be achieved through this method because there was no end to violence and hatred. As we could not squeeze oil from sand, so peace could never be achieved through violence. Hence, this method could never be accepted as the permanent basis of peace. The only method for achieving harmony and peace in society was the method of 'love' and persuasion. Vivekananda's conception of an ideal society was a society in which diversity of capacity and occupation would remain, but in which privilege would be totally unknown. All this required a root-and-branch reform, but he believed that such reform could not come through a revolution based on force. It could be ushered in only through evolution based on culture and mutual esteem. Swami Vivekananda has raised his voice against caste system and its related discrimination. He tried to increase awareness, develop and empower women not only through education but also by enlightening them through the philosophy of Indian spiritualism, which might be considered as an effective system or approach in the process of empowering women. It appears that He was more serious about caste anomaly than any other reformers. Thus his motto was, "From caste to socialism through culture." So the point is that even well-meaning individuals end up supporting a brutal system because they don't rely on real world evidence and instead rely on myths.

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Crystalline Bonds of Education and Culture: Their 'Green' Endorsement

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ABSTRACT: The word 'education' as one of the prime concepts might chiefly associate itself with the teaching-learning process though in a broader sense it connotes a multidimensional standpoint. In connection with this, culture and its linkages with education have been a widely accepted phenomenon. Education refers to 'acculturation', this notion envisions a clear view expressing both education and culture as two mutually interdependent entities where the former is held responsible for acculturating an individual besides transmitting, preserving and developing the culture of a society.

Environment and its 'sustainable development' share an important tie with education and subsequently the culture of a society. Sustainable development may be defined as the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs. Each and every country needs for its effective existence a proper awareness and understanding regarding its rich cultural heritage and diverse resources all which might add to the creation of a better future.

This article mainly aims to highlight the relationship between education and culture along with their role in the promotion of sustainable development thereby paving the way for a friendlier society in the days to come.

Keywords: Education, Culture, Acculturation, Awareness, Existence, Environment, Sustainable Development.

The term 'education' signifies the process of teaching and learning which make an individual gain an overall understanding of their surrounding environment. In other words, education connotes the method of acquisition of skills, knowledge and values that contribute towards the fullest development of potentialities already inherent within the humans themselves. Culture, refers to the social behaviour of an individual or an entire human society that gets transmitted to the upcoming generation through the process of learning. This also brings us to the concept of acculturation that allows

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an intermixing of different cultures thereby leading to the adaptation of each other's cultural traits as the subsequent course of action thus, enabling the creation of a progressive society. Therefore it seems to be clear that both education and culture are interrelated which call for a sound awareness on part of their efforts leading to a country's development in this age of globalization.

Sustainable Development: The “Environmental Trendsetter”

The expression ‘environment’ may be defined as the surroundings comprising both the living and non-living entities including all the natural forces that affect the development and growth of a living organism. Keeping this in mind, one cannot forget the advent of globalization which has flagged off serious changes within the Earth's atmosphere. The phenomenon of rising levels of consumption coupled with the relocation of industries subsequently giving way for more emissions of waste gases have become serious concerns behind environmental degradation. This in turn demands immediate and necessary action from the international organizations, international laws that can usher the possibilities for conserving an environment suitable for everyone's existence.

As against this backdrop, one of the prominent notions that played a greater role in shaping the global environmental agenda was the issue of sustainable development. Sustainable development found its first appearance in the 1987 report of the World Commission on Environment and Development, commonly known as the Brundtland Commission titled ‘Our Common Future’. Before this, environmental issues have the themes on the discussion panel, as was evident in 1972 when the first United Nations (UN) Conference on the Human Environment (UNCHE) was convened by the UN General Assembly (UNGA) in Stockholm. This initiative on the one hand, raised demands of parity been given to environment alongside other economic, political and social issues for the entire development of a nation whereas on the other hand, laid the groundwork for the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Following this the Brundtland Commission Report acted as an important landmark which endorsed the maxim ‘growth of limits’ instead of ‘limits to growth’ and advocated that the world in order to survive needs to approve new approaches that would in return facilitate the using and conserving of resources taking into account the socio-economic

and ecological factors, the totality of which can only lead towards the maintenance of a healthy living.

Another milestone in this respect remains the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) or the Earth Summit, as a celebration marking the twentieth anniversary of the Stockholm conference on Environment held at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992. The efforts of UNCED had been essential in reinforcing the keystone behind the programme of action, namely Agenda 21 which embarked upon treating the concepts of environment and development on the same platform. Agenda 21 to be more specific consists of total 40 chapters divided into four sections that highlight the Social and Economic dimensions, Conservation of Resources, Strengthening the role of Groups and the Means of Implementation. Chapter 36 of Agenda 21 "Promoting Education, Public Awareness and Training" under section IV referred to as 'Means of Implementation' has been widely recognized as an endeavour for accelerating sustainable development besides increasing the capabilities of the humans for dealing effectively with environmental challenges. One of the central points in this chapter has been the importance of formal and informal education in making sustainable development the focus of planning and conduct of activities in almost all the spheres of life. Apart from the above, this also attempts to incorporate environmental topics into formal, informal and cross-disciplinary curricula, particularly public awareness and educational programmes on various environmental issues.¹ Thus the above account makes it clear that other than access to basic education (upto the primary level) through formal and non-formal schooling, sustainable development requires an encouragement among all the sectors of the society to make themselves socially aware regarding the environment thereby leading towards the creation of a stable and a secure society.

The definition of sustainable development, as one of the topics in trend throws light upon the fulfilment of Earth's interest without destroying its resources besides meeting the interests of the present without depriving the future generations of the resources necessary for their existence. Regarding this context, one can bring into forth the 'egg of sustainability' model as perceived by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) or

1. Ozge, Yalciner Ercoskun., (n.d.). in Newman, Julie., (Ed.), Green Education: An A-to-Z Guide. (pp. 7-14). USA: Sage Publications

the World Conservation Union where stress has been laid upon both the humans and their communities living within the ecosystem striving to achieve an equity among the present generations and between both the present and the future generations.² Thus, an urgent call for the day seems to be some appropriate conditions for survival of the people and their environment which can serve as the avenues for opening the doors of sustainable development.

Poverty's Eraser: The Learning Curative

The magnitude of education got its recognition in 2000 after its incorporation within the list of Millenium Development Goals (MDGs) which education the status of being a necessary prerequisite for the utmost realization of an individual's latent capabilities. In addition to this is the outcome document of the Open Working Group of July 2014 emphasizing upon the Sustainable Development goals all pointing towards education and its relation with certain yardsticks all marching towards the accomplishment of a 'green' future.

As against this background, the menace named poverty has emerged as one of the serious threats to sustainable development. This could be visualized in the World Summit of Sustainable Development (WSSD) in 2002, held in Johannesburg that took up agricultural improvisation, availability of water, alongside poverty eradication as its chief themes to be discussed upon. Education imparted through schools seems in this regard as the only antidote that can decrease the number of dependants per family within the poor by making them do their own jobs, earn higher wages and subsequently run their own households. A basic education has also allowed the educated lot set embark upon own business ventures the profits of which have been of huge help in nourishing their livelihoods. Therefore from the above explanation, it becomes apparent that sustainable development for its existence requires a combination of economic well-being leading to social development all operating within a stable environment. An effective use of market forces accompanied with trade liberalization fostering mutual economic interdependence among countries has acted as a stimulant in removing poverty. Though this remains a truth, one cannot ignore the challenges posed by industrialization and urbanization in the form of

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2. Kandula, Kalyani. (2004). Environment and Development: The Links. In Kiran B. Chhokar., Pandya, Mamata, and Raghunathan. Meena (Eds.), *Understanding Environment* (pp.270-274). New Delhi. New Delhi: Sage Publications.

excessive exploitation of natural resources restricting the development of many poor countries. Many poor households earn their source of living from these natural resources, but the present environmental threats namely the decline of forests, loss of biodiversity, degradation of the marine and freshwater resources, climate change, increasing soil toxicity owing to the rising industrial wastes have been the primary reasons behind their social insecurity thereby forcing them to shift their homes to urban cities for their continued existence. Thus, the rural-urban divide as a matter of serious ecological anxiety, widely discussed in various platforms attempts to bring together concerted efforts of thenational and international organizations with the civil society who all have beenworking hard to achieve a enormous change through poverty eradication paving the way for a sustainable environment fit for us to live in.

Education as the Sustainability‘Enhancer’: A Bird’s Eye-View

Sustainable Development in order to flourish demands social unity leading to the growth of efficient institutions as promoters of economic responsibility and their application of technological innovations all possible through the “Education for Sustainable Development’ which finally culminating in the creation of a sound environment.Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) harps upon the focal areas of poverty, democracy, peace, citizenship,health, gender equity, secularism, social and economic improvement, human rights, rural-urban development, natural resource management linked to environmental protection and corporate responsibility to name a few.³

The framework of Sustainable Development Goal 4 encapsulates the notion of ‘education for all’ where stress has been laid on the need of the younger generations to receive and complete their basic education including the pre-primary level as well. Besides the above, the need of the hour was to enable them to experience good quality teaching and classroom practices that would as a result equip them with the various work skills therefore adding to a country’s social development as a whole. This entails the fact of educating the future generations on the one hand whereas on the other

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3. Scouillos,J., Michael. (2010). Education for Sustainable Development: The Concept and its Connection to Tolerance and Democracy. In Anastasia Nikolopoulou, Abraham Taisha, and Mirbagheri Farid (Eds.), Education for Sustainable Development (pp.47-63). New Delhi. New Delhi: Sage Publications.

hand it endorses the bonds of attachment between the children and their parents since the latter are extremely noteworthy in moulding a child's future. A very recent survey of 24 countries has shown instances of educational strength in a child-parent relationship⁴ whereas another assessment of nearly 56 countries held between 1990 and 2009 has made it evident that the growing levels of a mother's education has reaped immense benefits for education, the girls being in most numbers along with a rising addition of 0.32 years in a child's total span of education.⁵ The importance of a child's education has been rightly expressed by Dr. Jim Yong Kim, President of the World Bank Group. According to him,

*"Every child should have the opportunity not only to go to school but to acquire the knowledge and skills she needs to lead a healthy, productive life, care for herself and her family and become an empowered citizen. At the national level centres need work forces, with the skills and competencies required to keep farms and factories producing, create jobs, fuel innovation and competitiveness, and drive economic growth that benefits everyone."*⁶

An influential study for sustainable education was given by Stephen Sterling who referred to this period of living as the "Great Turning" which involved all the best qualities of leadership, collective compassion and resourcefulness all that could avoid this era being termed as the end of human civilization. Sterling's assertion in this regard deserves special importance according to whom education can only contribute to social transformation if it relinquishes the modernist agenda characterized by the mechanistic, managerial and transmissive approaches and comes to be informed by an ecological paradigm characterized by "whole-system thinking", participation, empowerment and self-organization.⁷ This confronts us with another vital

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4. Baslevent, C., and Kirmanoglu, H. (2010). Accounting for the heterogeneity in inter-generational links in educational attainment across Europe. *European Research Studies*, 13(3), 63-82.
 5. Bhalotra, S, Harttgen, K. and Klasen, S. (2013). Trends in intergenerational mobility in education. Background Paper for EFA Global Monitoring Report 2013/2014.
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concept of empowering the women. Education has served as one of the weapons in the hands of women hugely helping them in transforming themselves. Besides making them self-dependant by encouraging them to chiefly rely upon their own earnings education has inculcated the spirit within them to make their own choices as well as raise their voices in all the decisions pertaining to their lives. Moreover the emerging scenario guarantees the woman's need to rise above any forms of discrimination and achieve an equal status within this male-dominated society in this manner proving to be favourable for their children's lives apart from placing their foot firmly within the social setting. Thus, the concept of ESD as a whole, rightly acts as an enhancer for all the levels of the society especially the women and children therefore trying to reach the possible heights of expansion all inspiring the full-fledged growth of a sustainable society.

Agricultural Innovations: Transforming Lives

Agriculture forms one of the important sources of earning a stable livelihood in rural India. Though the process of agriculture essentially deals with soil cultivation and harvesting crops, it also combines a great deal of manual labour with an insightful understanding of the materials used for bringing in huge benefits. Education has sincerely worked towards the development of agriculture and consequently the latter's contribution to the country's total economic growth. The current scenario reflects the minimum amount of education for the farmers and others engaged in this process so as to train them with all such modern innovations and technological methods used for getting a good variety of crops. One of the commonly used terms in this regard refers to sustainable agriculture which mainly implies the participation of farmers and people from the rural backgrounds in matters of technology development, monitoring, evaluating and above all accelerating the spirit of self-reliance among them thereby laying the groundwork for economic fertility leading to socio-economic fairness.⁸

Besides this, education has given a fillip to sustainable development within the agricultural medium that can be witnessed in the cases of furthering soil fertility through an efficient use of manures, use of soil covers that lead to

8. Kandula, Kalyani. (2004). Agriculture. In Chhokar, Kiran. B., Pandya, Mamata, and Raghunathan. Meena (Eds.), *Understanding Environment* (pp.167-170). New Delhi. New Delhi: Sage Publications.

its protection. Adjacent to the backdrop it can be mentioned that a helpful understanding regarding the use of fertilizers, insecticides all meant to boost up soil productivity thereby to prevent unwanted harm to the crops have been instances of agricultural modernization immensely benefitting the rural households. All this has been made possible through education to a large extent which in turn has not only generated modern minds but contributed for the expansion of a country enabling it to secure a steady position worldwide.

Towards Sustainability: The 'Cultural' Prowess

We live in an age of globalization where we have been gifted technology that has spread its wings in almost each facet of our lives ranging from our daily routine to the maintenance of our social relationships. One must remember the twin packages of urbanization and industrialization which have generated substantial rewards within our lifestyles therefore making our lives easier. As against this setting, emerges the question of sustainability as an assurance for escalating a country's wealth without hampering its natural resources. Having said this, it poses a dilemma for sustainability and its ultimate realization when we deal with the occurrence of population growth eventually leading to added consumption, more use of natural resources all resulting in mass amounts of pollution and severe environmental damage.

Besides the above, the role of culture deserves a special mention for its role as a connecting link between the individuals and their environment. Culture contributes greatly in a country's economic upliftment. To be more specific, the cultural effect in the sectors of tourism, heritage and a sound cultural infrastructure accentuates a skilled labour force which has enormously affected a country's revenue generation. The weight of culture has been widely analyzed by the UNGA who through their agenda in September 2015 titled Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development sanctioned culture as a necessary prerequisite for sustainable development. Notable in this aspect are the numerous struggles for including culture within the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that have been clubbed under one common umbrella 'The Future We Want Includes Culture'. All the above have finally culminated in the framing of 4 documents including a manifesto and a declaration including culture,

indicators for measuring cultural aspects alongwith a final assessment of 2030 agenda between 2013 and 2015.⁹

The role of culture seems to be extremely urgent in achieving poverty alleviation through the exploration of heritage sites, services and their resultant investment which lead to economic development. One of the principal ideas surrounding culture is cultural diversity that allows the recognition of local languages, arts apart from imparting education to both the boys and girls irrespective of any gender discrimination with the sole purpose of weaving a global culture achieved through global citizenship. The 4th pillar of sustainable development or culture signifies motivations, ethical choices to achieve cultural change. In addition to this cultural diversity aims an equal participation of people from every strata including the marginalized ones who can express their rights within the decision making process. Beside the above, cultures also promotes sustainable development by acting as a connector between different cultures thereby furthering the spirit of an intercultural dialogue which can serve as a remedy for the diverse issues arising within the global platform.¹⁰ In a nutshell, it can be rightly said that sustainability requires education for its enlargement. This brings into the forefront the essential part played by the mass media in the form of television, newspapers, internet, social media etc, that have called for an successful participation engaging themselves in innumerable cultural activities all trying to solve the enigma of sustainable development and chalking out strategies for its accomplishment.

Summarily then, it can be said that education and culture serve as the motivators behind sustainable development. The educational prerequisite needs to reach each and everyone for enabling the people enjoy the fruits of development. Besides this, education would also stress upon increasing one's thinking capacity for a proper analysis of the numerous problems arising today. Culture, specifically the coming together of diverse cultures on a common platform proves useful for development. One can deeply know

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about a culture through its heritage and such other artistic facets can be good sources of investment therefore, these need proper conservation. Thus, what remains the need of the hour is to efficiently handle the environment and its related concepts besides striving hard to achieve the milestones within the educational and cultural scenario thereby promoting sustainability and enriching the position of a nation within the global podium.

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Educators as Tropes of the Nation- Mediators of Nation-State's Ideological Discourses in the Realm of Popular Hindi Films

Dr. Samarpita Ghosh Ray

ABSTRACT : Teachers are active human agents of educational system through whom knowledge is imparted to learners or recipients. This paper seeks to explore how the popular cinematic domain, qualitatively divergent from the prosaic pedantry and pedagogical gravitas of the educational system, have deployed heroes functioning as tropes of the nation who have articulated, or mediated ideological discourses in the roles of teachers, albeit in popular idiom. In other words the paper explores the narrative discourse of some chosen commercial Hindi films in which the role of the teacher acts as agents, embodiments or 'speaking subjects' of certain discourses of inclusive policy of education and secularism. These roles have become particularly significant as they are reminiscent of statist commitment to the ideals of inclusive welfare policies, democratization of educational opportunities, and an unified nationalist identity based upon secular ethos. These having been avowed political or Constitutional ideals at the statist level have waned under a retreatist state in its trajectory towards a neo-liberal regime or have been rendered fragile by political mobilization of religious identity. Resuscitating these ideals cinematically through the agency of star-power of the heroes allow them to assume a certain proto-statist status of guardianship.

Key Words : Discourse, Articulation, Inclusion, Secular, Teacher, Mediator

Introduction

A semiotic reading of heroes allow us to read them as signs who are discursively constructed or are located within the cinematic texts as tropes or embodiments of the nation's discourse. As tropes these heroic bodies have a trans-temporality that are discursively constituted, re-constituted and grow by accretion across an inter-textual domain wherein a tropic hero is uncontainable within films rather its discursive constitution place it in an inter-textual trajectory. (Mac Canell, 1982:10,27,62). The discursivity of the

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nation have sought personified articulations through valorised masculinity of heroics roles wherein heroes have been tropic devices or templates shaping the nation's history or fighting its enemies.(Viridi,2004:8-11;87-8)The mediation of the nation-state's discourse through the hero /stars (playing role of teachers , trainers or mentors or educators) are argued as per following analysis as embodiments of nation's discourses marked by its spatio-temporal verities and contingencies.

The paper discusses the role of Amitabh Bachchan in 'Black' (2004), as a maverick educator of a differently-abled girl, teaching her to cope with her limitations and circumvent those challenges, while in 'Mohabbatein' (2001) he is a disciplinarian, patriarchal neo-conservative institutional head and in 'Arakshan'(2011) seen as an educator empowering the socio-economically disadvantaged learners impeded by hierarchical and elitist educational system. It also explores the role of Aamir Khan in 'Taare Zameen Pe' (2008) as a capacity builder of a student with innate learning deficiency of dyslexia enabling him to hone his talent in art. Shah Rukh Khan's role in 'Chak De India' (2007) as a sports teacher/ hockey coach act as a secular, altruistic, pivotal force behind integration of a plural and heterogeneous team fractured and fragmented along parochial lines, personalised considerations and recurrent past failures. Exploring the roles of these characters allow us to read them as veritable heroic embodiments of nation's variegated discourses, though not in tandem, they act as tropes mediating 'on an enlargement of a progressive, inclusive, empowering and secular democracy addressing, through cinematic narratives, issues of special education, affirmative policy in education, incursion of right wing conservatism and reclaiming of a metaphorical secular, unified plane or a collective nationalist egalitarian competitive (sporting) space.

As human embodiments or agents of discourses these educators appear to act as invested plays a 'tactical elements or blocks operating in the field of force relations.' (Foucault,1979, 101-102).Discursively constructed cinematic texts embedded within the larger socio-political and economic framework are genealogical accounts of power that inform the narrative, whereby in the Foucauldian sense these educators as enunciators functioning within the field of discursivity are governed by historically contingent rules of formation. (Foucault, 1970, xiv) and act as 'Speaking Subjects' (Foucault, 1981,61-62) who through their actions validates their roles as carriers or

embodied agents of a certain discourse within a particular 'discourse community'. Hegemonic agents mostly, these roles as educators, while affirming the dominant politico-economic discourses have often espoused and articulated alternative discourses that are either 'inter-discursive' or 'intra-discursive' strands (Foucault, 1972, :45). . Hence, these discourses mediated through the performative rendition of heroes as agencies of education in certain films also quite differently espouse an alternative ideal within the popular cinematic domain; and emerge as registers of spatio-temporal realities or contingencies of the nation in the contested terrain of popular cultural space of commercial cinema- a site of interplay of competing discourses- hegemonic and contra-hegemonic as well,.

Mohabbatein (2000)-Contested Governmentality of Authoritarian Institutional Head and Rise of Free, Liberal Forces- Parallels to the Retreatist State and Neo-liberal Market-Driven Regime

Mohabbatein opens a field of discursivity within the popular domain allowing for a hegemonic contestation between conservative patriarchal agent seeking to repress and regulate sexuality of young students, wherein the role played by Amitabh Bachchan as the disciplinarian educationist and institutional head-master of a residential high-school represents the embodiment of a neo-conservative Right wing force. Uday Shankar, the role played by Bachchan wields and exercises authoritative, stern, coercive and disciplinary control over students, and his investiture with supreme institutional power and his hierarchical world-view along with his ageing monumental corporality function as a metaphor of the statist phallic regime zealously poised as a vanguard of institutional and conservative values. (Sen, 2011,:152) The grandeur and majesty of his persona corresponded to the architectural magnificence of the elitist institution 'Gurukul', and also represents the anxiety of a conservative discourse counterpoised against errant, transgressive and rebellious masculine bodies (of students) whose sexuality the master seeks to discipline through a vigilant governmentality by rendering them into 'docile bodies' in Foucauldian sense (Foucault, 1977:194). The fast declining phallic state regime comes under the two-phased challenge of Aryaan, (Shah Rukh Khan) who rebels as a student by asserting his libidinous freedom by romancing Uday Shankar's daughter Meghna while he was a student at 'Gurukul' and refused to be

reined by institutional discipline and later he graduated to become a teacher in the school allowed his transgressive strategies to enable students in romantic escapades. Aryaan's masculinity defined by the free, liberal spirit of an open market economy seeks to circumvent the rigidity of the statist/patriarchal discourse and usher a more liberated institutional regime and the school acts as a metaphorical site in this popular cinematic aspiration or impulse. The hegemonic conservative patriarchal statist force represented by the ageing head-master encounters an ideological assault and is seen ceding ground to a more liberal, uninhibited pliant and acquisitive masculinity played by the new-generation teacher- representing the market driven socio-economic neo-liberal regime invested with the permissiveness of market-driven capitalism and its seductive power of consumption. Aryaan represents the market forces that favours gratifying impulse of a consumerist society and signals the state's trajectory towards the neo-liberal regime. The latter's market driven imperatives corresponded to his attempts first as stealthy and clandestine ones that got foiled by the disciplining proto-statist regime of Uday Shankar and finally a more assertive and confrontational challenge emerged before a waning and retreatist statist regime which it no longer could contain. Aryaan's triumph vis-à-vis the conservative patriarchal Head Master is analogous to the protectionist Indian state reconciling to liberal democratic economic changes. Instead of disgracing the noble patriarchal stature of the proto-statist head-master, figuratively expressed and privileged by the towering symbolic star-power of Bachchan, is finally reconciled and negotiated with and with the mantle of guardianship bestowed upon Aryaan at denouement allow for an irretrievable retreat of the state and the pre-eminence gained by the liberal market driven forces. . This also enables an articulation of the two ideological strands of Hindu conservatism and neo-liberal democracy. The conjoining of the two discursive strands was secured to give credence to the liberal policy of the Hindu –Right Bharatiya Janata Party- led government in the early 2000s and represented a re-invented reconciliation of Hindutva conservatism to align with the liberal regime. (Sen, *ibid*). The apparent contingent re-aligning and articulation of the two apparently antithetical discourses is best explainable by the 'overflowing infinitude in the field of discursivity' where there is no 'closure' and the 'surplus of meaning secures partial fixation' through such articulations. (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985 :110-11, 113)

Taare Zameen Par (2008) and Aarakshan (2011)-Teacher as a Capacity Builder and Crusader of Change -Parallels the call for an Inclusive Educational Agenda within an Expanding Democracy of the Nation-State

The film *Taare Zameen Par* allows for a re-reading of Paulo Freire's celebrated work 'Pedagogy Of The Oppressed' (1970) wherein the little boy suffering from learning disability is the oppressed one within the discourse of mainstream school education and is subject to institutional and parental reprimands and sanctions. The mainstream system represents the 'structure of domination' (ibid, :29) Aamir Khan playing the role of Nikumbh an instructor for young children with developmental disabilities, has a teaching style that is markedly unconventional and his sensitivity allows him to motivate the reticent learner who suffers from dyslexia and as a good teacher he discerningly discovers the boy's extra-ordinary artistic brilliance. Rejecting the conventional notions on academic merit and proficiency, Nikumbh explains the syndrome not as a sign of poor intelligence rather a different ability of processing information that is distinct from other children. Mentioning names of several famous personalities who suffered from it, he brought to fore the extra-ordinariness of the child in his creative abilities despite his cognitive inability to cope with the demands of school curriculum. Seeking permission from the Principal Nikumbh tutors the child to improve his reading and writing skills using remedial techniques developed by dyslexia specialists. Ishaan, the boy, responds to this mentoring through enhanced grades and growing interest and win laurels for his artistic talent and finally his parents take pride in him..

Dyslexia and other learning disabilities are not just mentally pathological but also social constructions of assigning a label or stigmatizing those who suffer from the same. Learning disability is a measure of the advanced capitalist society geared towards producing citizens who can effectively contribute to the capitalist society and its material gains. A cultural premium is ascribed to efficiency and scientific ability and commensurately those displaying a proficiency in associated skills remain valued and rewarded in the prevalent knowledge regime. Such a rational and calculated measure of learning abilities or disabilities is attributable to an American obsession with individualistic self-reliance and success. (Ranganathan, 2014, :33). Such a concern for learning disability in post-liberalization popular film is indubitably a testimony of the middle-class parents' obsession with their

wards' future prospects and their apprehensions or fear of them being excluded by its competitive parameters. Here the role of the new teacher who challenges the parameters of conventional pedagogy of evaluating the differently-abled and his attempts directed at liberating the child from the oppressive schooling regime and enabling him to resurrect his creative abilities closely corresponds to Friere's idea of an escape from a dominant 'de-humanising' education and an experience of liberation for both the teacher and taught. Unlike a teacher who is complicit with the oppressive system the teacher charts a 'pedagogy of liberation' through a 'critical discovery' of the child's other abilities. (ibid,:30) Charting a different 'praxis' (ibid :33) of teaching and engaging the learner in a dialogical relation the teacher provides an 'affirmation of the need for critical intervention' .(ibid, ;35). Unlike treating the child as a 'receptacle' or a 'depository' of the 'banking' system of education to be 'filled' by knowledge disseminated by the teacher (ibid,:53), Nikumbh acts as a catalytic agent to 'stimulate' Ishaan's 'critical faculties' (ibid.:55,65.). without alienating and objectifying his learning experiences.

Here parenthetically mention of the film 'Black' (2005) is necessitated where the personal trainer/mentor/teacher of a visually challenged girl enacted by Bachchan re-affirms the salience involved in the role of a teacher in enabling a differently-abled student. The teacher here seeks to render the girl self-sufficient in terms of her livelihood skills and transcend her marginalization within her family. Bachchan as an empowering agent is himself ailing and is parallel to the limitations of waning welfare programmes of the state.

'Aarakshan' as the name suggests supports affirmative policies to enhance the educational prospects of the socially disadvantaged groups. In this film the role of Amitabh Bachchan is akin to that of a crusader and the ideological support extended via the role of the non-partisan educationist re-affirmed the political correctness in the policy of reservation and the agenda of inclusive education. The success of the teacher in equipping backward students who otherwise lacked the means to afford a capital-intensive education re-kindles faith in affirmative actions provided through supplementary support or remedial classes. The success of the poor working class lower caste students tutored by the master interrogates the linkages between differential educational attainment and class and ethnic subcultures.

The success of backward class/caste students devoid of 'culture capital' (Bourdieu, 1977) under the able tutelage of the master liberates academic ability from ascriptive, hereditary caste moorings. The film deploys the 'tabela' or cowshed (where the master fighting odds taught the backward caste/class students), as a metaphorical ploy to uphold the relevance of equalising educational opportunities for social mobility and by what may be also described as making it possible for all those who have the desire to be educated and the ability to benefit by that facility. (Gore,1994:29)

The presence of parallel educational system in the form of expensive coaching centres and its collusion with political groups while cinematically explored provides powerful insights into the power structure maintaining caste-class nexus and the various illicit practices that seeks to defeat inclusive education by propping the privileged and entrenched groups (upper caste/class) with an unfair competitive edge obtainable through financial prowess alone. Dr. Prabhakar Anand, the committed educationist played by Bachchan crusades against this collusion of power and capital risking his own job and finally stood vindicated in his combative stance with his mentored students succeeding and him resuming his lost position.

In both the films like 'Taare Zameen Par' and 'Aarakshan' we see the two teachers speaking against social exclusion, discrimination and indirect deprivation of two different categories of learners, viz. differently –abled and socio-economically disadvantaged respectively. The consequences suffered due to such exclusion in our society are inimical as '....discouragement and lower self-confidence results in poor performance, or through direct routes that limit access to income or education that is mobility enhancing'. (Rao, 2010: 3). The everyday forms of exclusion in Indian society are institutionalized and have deeply entrenched forms manifest in behavioural practices and attitudes (Darapuri, 2010,:32-33). And in these two films there is a call for an inclusive education couched in a popular idiom, envisaging the possibilities of inclusion via positive actions to achieve equality, improved rights of access to the social and economic world, new opportunities, recovery of status, reduced impact of disability, participation, social justice and so on. (ibid). The teachers in these films as redemptive agents or capacity-builders actively seek to challenge the stigma suffered by the excluded as 'inferior', 'incapable' or lower

The near-idealization of the teacher/mentor/educator across three films 'Black', 'Taare Zameen Par' and 'Aarakshan' is that of a facilitator, a capacity-builder and communicator who signals a distinct departure from the earlier paternalistic type. This becomes significant against the backdrop of liberalization in India with the retreat of the state from its paternalistic welfare policies and its role as a basic provider or guarantor of entitlements. The state does not cease to be important, instead in a neo-liberal regime it has re-negotiated with the varied expectations of its constituencies of citizenry and acquired a re-defined role. (Kaviraj, 2012 :45-6). The teacher here like the neo-liberal state bound by its trans-national financial commitments has no monopolistic control over its actions but rather copes and negotiates with multiple actors to secure the interest of its learners and the teacher here, is also in consonance with the attempts of the state and its expansive democratizing mandate as it seeks to secure for the weak, vulnerable and excluded viz. weaker sections, and differently-abled in 'Aarakshan', and 'Taare Zameen Par' respectively.

Chak De ! India (2007)-Mentor as an Unifying Agent and Mobiliser of an Unified National Identity-Parallels the Resuscitating Impulse of Secular Discourse

The sports coach or mentor in Chak De India, played by Shah Rukh Khan, seeks to redeem and exculpate himself and exonerate his nationalist, secular and patriotic credentials after a long exile and ostracization of seven years which he suffered for aspersions cast on him as a Muslim traitor, who as a coach of the national hockey team treacherously allowed Pakistan's victory over India. Taking up the challenge of coaching an under-performing and squabble-driven woman's' hockey team, the coach-mentor seeks to first unite the internally discordant fractious group by mobilizing it on the strength of national identity in a competitive bid against other nationalities. The marshalling of the team and forging of an unified spirit-a pluralist composition and a microcosmic nation was enabled through the pivotal role of the coach who came to re-affirm the idea of national community and unified national identity constituted through shared belief. (see, Miller 2000, :27-8) His unifying and motivational role allowed to envision the collective goal of securing victory of the national team in an international sporting arena and it corresponds to the principle of ideal nationalism where the national and the political units are congruent. (Wayne, 2006, :24). The hero is an

ideological antidote to the resurgent exclusionary rhetoric of Hindu revivalism or Hindu religio-cultural nationalism as it sought to de-escalate the brazenness of majoritarian hegemony and introduced a revised secular-nationalist rhetoric that seeks to assimilate the alienated, vilified and 'othered community' of Muslims. The assimilative tenor embodied by the trainer gives credence to what is '....in more progressive was that invite individuals from minority communities to integrate into cultural mainstream, perhaps by modifying or thinning out the majority identity in what that make it possible for all citizens of the state to feel a part of the national community.' (ibid) In this project of (popular) cultural politics played upon the cinematic site we see how the nation expands its secular borders and nationalism in a bid to redeem and reclaim and dis-alienate the marginalized 'muslim other'- via the hero. As international sporting events invoke nationalist sentiments and are sites to bolster national self-image, the hero emerges as a narrative ploy for the globalizing nation to imaginatively reproduce a competitive self-image in sporting arena in the guise of a renewed secularism.(ibid:25). Invested with agency the hero seeks to combat stereotypical construction of Muslim as potential terrorist or traitors and threat to the state. Fighting a battle of recrimination, suspicion or even accusation of transnational religious loyalties, the hero through his actions claims the centre-stage in the narrative of national identity building and reclaims the role of Muslims as equal stakeholders in nationalist secular projects, The film was a rebuttal to the contemporary spurt of cinematic narratives aimed to demonize Muslims as suspects of terror or treachery or constructed around Hindu/Muslim dichotomy or Indo-Pakistan discourse of animosity. In fact the ascendancy of Hindutva politics further bolstered by the electoral victory of the BJP in 1998 provided the right kind of political discourse that produced jingoistic films premised upon ethno-nationalism. Cinematic texts like 'Roja' stood as a precursor to this trend and later a continuum of narratives evolved on anti-Pak discourse beginning with Border (1997) and Sarfarosh(1999) and an exacerbated minoritisation and 'othering' of Muslims as terror suspects and the role of the anti-terror repressive and belligerent state became subsequent thematic concerns of films the followed like 'Mission Kashmir' (2000), Fiza(2000), Khakee' (2004), 'Fanaa' (2006)(Singh, 2008,114-15)

Opposed to the non-secular right wing rhetoric of militaristic films avenging terror unleashed by Muslim as alleged traitors or agents of Pakistan,

the film made under a changed political dispensation, with the nationalist Congress Party at the Centre was a significant departure towards a re-secularization of cinematic narratives. Shah Rukh's role although focuses on the vulnerability and marginalization of the community emerged as an embodiment of the secular discourse, albeit fragile and assumed an agentic role or a mobilizer for forging and reprioritizing national identity over all fissiparous tendencies expressed via other identities-religious, linguistic and regional. (Wayne, *ibid* 25-6)

The patriotic discourse in this gravitates from warring aggressive belligerence or militarism to a celebrator sporting prowess of the nation via the role of the mentor-coach. Nationalism, nation-building and national identity had now an altered space or locale within cinematic discourse- as the hero transported it from the borders and the battle field to the sporting arena. Re-visiting the post-colonial pride of defeating the 'White Team' of Australian women the hero figuratively de-colonized the game of hockey on White Man's colonized soil. Celebrating the national team's victory under the able guardianship of a patriotic Muslim coach, fictionally though, the film resurrected secular ideology within the diegetic scope of commercial Hindi films. Chak De reinvokes the collective memory of India's victory in 1983 at Lords in Cricket World Cup enabling a triumphant assertion of national victory in colonial sports to inform the cinematic text. The coach-mentor as an agent of this victory in the film rejuvenates this preserved memory of the nation in a global moment of nation's competitiveness and seeks to reclaim the unflinching integrity of Muslim subject/citizen.

Conclusion

The discussion on the roles of educators positioned within the rubric or grid of power and knowledge, as invested with epistemic knowledge and acting as an agent or disseminator of knowledge either dominant/hegemonic or alternative/oppositional across several films as embodiments or 'speaking subjects' of discourses allow applying the Foucauldian frame of analysis. The argument of this paper is best captured in quoting the following passage: '....it is in discourse that power and knowledge are joined together. And for this reason, we must conceive discourse as a series of discontinuous segments whose tactical function is neither uniform nor stable. To be more precise, we must not imagine a world of discourse divided between accepted discourse and excluded discourse, or between the dominant discourse and

the dominated one; but as a multiplicity of discursive elements that can come into play in various strategies....Discourses are not once and for all subservient to power or raised up against it, any more than silences are. We must make allowance for the complex and unstable process whereby discourse can be both an instrument and an effect of power. But also a hindrance, a stumbling block. A point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy. Discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it. (Foucault 1979:100-1).

The role of the stars/heroes as educators, trainers or mentor within the popular domain of cinematic space as 'speaking subjects' or embodiments of the nation's discourses are either hegemonic or contra-hegemonic and while being complicit to power structure in some cases also produces alternative discourses or exposes the fissures within the power structure. A discursive interplay of two discourse-receding and emergent discourse on state's role is played in the film *Mohabbatein* wherein the authoritarian and coercive state-hood is embodied by Amitabh Bachchan and conversely the role of Shah Rukh Khan in the same film is resonating in favour of the gratifying, uninhibited and acquisitive impulses of market-driven neo-liberal regime. The role of Aamir Khan and Amitabh Bachchan in 'Taare Zameen Par' and 'Aarakshan' respectively are embodiments of inclusive state policies and affirmative actions as part of an expansive democratizing mandate. The fragility of the secular agenda in face of secular-nationalism's failure to erase trauma of partition and mitigate communal animosity does not preclude the imaginative transcendence of communal divides through the role of Shah Rukh Khan in *Chak De* as he is seen to mediate the attempt of the secular discourse to re-occupy the political/statist ground ceded to right-wing parties and recuperate the secular credentials of the Muslims by contesting the appropriation of the patriotic nationalist discourse by Hindutva led religious-nationalists.

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Re-Constructing the concept of 'Man and Machine': An Ethnocentric practice under the light of Gendered Values

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ABSTRACT : Riding a motorcycle symbolizes freedom, independence, power and free thinking and youth culture, which should not be restricted towards the male sex. But the 'othering' of women via technical discourse is not a recent phenomenon as the link between man and machine is not exclusive, this gendered discourse should be applied to 'feminine' or 'masculine'. The present paper deals with the social acceptance of the women in the arena of motorcycling. Women motorcyclist continues to break stereotypes. In this paper the construction of gender is seen through motorcycle which is considered a part and parcel of hegemonic masculinity. I would also attempt to observe how women riders are feminizing this activity, which is socially labelled as masculine where women are constantly negotiating the meaning of gender in motorcycling activities. Masculine behaviours can be associated with ethnocentrism which mainly includes cooperation with members of the in-group, but not out-groups. Ethnocentrism in general is the widespread tendency of people to favour their own ethnic group over the other group with the notion that one's own group is superior to the latter. The paper relates the gender biasness that the masculine population holds over the motorcycling culture owing to the ethnocentric practices. It denotes a cultural narrowness in which a motorcycling group rigidly accept those of the in-group while ignoring those of the out-group. This paper also focuses on ethnocentric behaviour that can sometimes emerge from a simple local competition between individuals or motorcycling groups. Furthermore, ethnocentrism may have positive aspects in so far as it fosters a strong ego and the establishment of a sense of goodwill and trust in relationships within the in-group. It can be easily asserted that ethnocentrism gives individuals a strong sense of identity. It is an exploratory study on motorcycle riders residing in Kolkata, which include both male and female motorcycle rider.

Key words: *hegemonic masculinity, doing gender, femininity, brotherhood, ethnocentrism, muscular-ethnocentric behaviour, in-group, out-group, motorcycle subculture.*

Introduction

In the year 1927, in an issue of the Motor magazine, Ray W. Sherman wrote that “every time a woman learns to drive-and thousands do every year-it is a threat at yesterday’s order of things.” (Clarke 2007) Human world is strictly segregated by male and female. Beside the biological difference, the social construct of gender is distributed within the society and has been imbibed by people (irrespective of any gender) by the process of socialisation. In fact gender, as a social construct is not only limited to human entity but has also passed within the material aspects of culture. In past women primarily rode on the back of motorcycle driven my men, but motorcycling subculture includes a large number of women who own and ride their own motorcycle. Though women have been riding motorcycles for a very long time but the number of women motorcyclists has always been relatively small compared to that of male riders. A female motorcyclist cannot dress in lace or frills because she won’t be taking seriously. Many of these women know well and have clear ideas as to how they can express their femininity in this male dominated activity. In order to be accepted in this field women have to be ‘one of the boys’ or ‘social men’ (Kvande 1999). This clearly depicts how women embody the gender question in motorcycling. It is women always who have been considered to be more or less different from men, but not the other way, as not men from women. This reflects how masculinity is hegemonic (Connell 1995).

This is an exploratory study on motorcycle rider residing in Kolkata including both male and female. This includes purposive and face-to-face interviews. Firstly, I would draw light on the hegemonic masculinity and its relation to motorcycle; how riding a motorcycle becomes a part of hegemonic masculinity. Secondly, I would show how a woman feminizes the gender roles in a male dominated activity, motorcycling in this case; also how women are either challenging or confirming the gender order that already exists. Finally, this paper aims to draw attention to the sheer link between masculinity and ethnocentrism that has been created through such activity. This leads to the evolution of *masculine-ethnocentric* behaviours which can also include cooperation within members of the in-group, but not out-groups.

Hegemonic Masculinity

According to Connell (1995), gender can be defined as the ways in which the “reproductive arena”, which includes “bodily structures and processes

of human reproduction”, organizes practice at all levels of social organization from identities, to symbolic rituals, to large-scale institutions. Connell (1985) distinguishes between the culturally dominant forms of masculinity which is ‘hegemonic masculinity’ and ‘subordinated’ or marginalized forms. By hegemonic he means dominant cultural ideal of masculinity that need not be practised by the majority of men. It is rather a cultural way of life or a culture code or norms they practice in their day to day activities. This hegemonic masculinity is constructed in relation to femininities and in relation to subordinated masculinities (Kvande 1999). According to Connell the ideal hegemonic masculinity in current societies is a heterosexual, aggressive, risk taking, independent rational man. Hegemonic masculinity is constructed in relation to women and to subordinate masculinities. Riding a motorcycle is indeed considered and is closely connected to hegemonic masculinity due to the heavy representation of machine and technology. Powerful emotions and pleasure that is derived from the interaction with the machines, here motorcycle to be specific are important for the self- esteem and joy of the motorcyclists. Such emotional traits are culturally coded as masculine, and practising such emotions day to day is confirming the cultural coded norms of hegemonic masculinity.

Women technical skills are rarely defined as technical because technology is predominantly a masculine culture expression (Wacjman 1991) In other words, the relationship between men and technology runs too deep, both historically as explained earlier and also in contemporary societies. Gender is deeply embedded as a basis for stratification not just in our personalities, our cultural role even, or institutions in all these and in complicated ways. Social structure creates a gender behaviour as it shows and focuses on “doing gender” (West and Zimmerman 1987).

Feminizing Motorcycling: A Male Dominated Activity

Despite long term connection to the world of motorcycling women generally are not associated with the two-wheeled subculture except in the most stereotypical roles. Ilyasova noted “although times have changed with more and more people taking up riding- including women – one thing that has remained implicit in motorcycling is the association it has with masculinity”. The motorcycle groups or “brotherhood” of bikers always have included in women in western societies. In traditional biker culture especially in out-law groups which as claimed to be masculine, the role of women is

clearly defined: although they are equally tough as men, but they never having ridden a motorcycle. They were more considered as property to be used for sexual and servant posers, traded, and given or thrown away at bikers discretion (Thompson 1950). Even motorcycles advertisements often exploit women as sex objects and use 'biker babes' and other forms of blatant sexuality to recruit men in motorcycling subculture.

I started this article with a simple question - whether women in such male dominated activity as motorcycling, had become as Kvande (1999) calls 'one of the boys' or 'social men' though there are very limited ways of constructing femininities in this male dominated activity. However, constructing femininity is apparently important. They are constantly negotiating the meaning of gender in motorcycling activities. Social identities are repeatedly negotiated and renegotiated through historically specific situations. The same notion also applies to the women in motorcycling negotiating a variety of ways to 'do gender'. They have to negotiate whether the meaning of their gender identities should be same or different from that of the male motorcyclists. This leads them to construct different strategies in relation to the hegemonic masculinity in motorcycling. We see a lot of variations in the strategies.

Motorcycle attire tends to be masculine in appearances. Most women riders "feminized" their appearance in prominent ways. Some wore pink leather jackets instead of the traditional black and some even wore pink leather caps. Others wore leather jackets in white, blue or black adorned with floral patterns, butterflies and other decorations such as rhine-stones or fringes that determine them as women attire. Even the helmets they wore are not solid colour as black or blue but with different floral prints. Most of them have colourful graphics, some obviously chosen to match their motorcycles. Often ponytails, long hair, or various types of visible jewellery also served to identify the rides as women (Thompson 1950). Women do not or cannot take on a predetermined set of behaviour rules in motorcycling; rather they construct and reconstruct their notions of gender role. They basically are the participants of a construction process.

Women also tend to hide their identity with going on a long ride. Roads today are not considered safe for them at certain point of time as late at night. They usually tend to wear balaclavas, a kind of mask which are normally used to protect one from cold, covering almost all of the head and

face and leaving the only eyes open. Women generally use balaclavas inside the helmet mainly for hiding the length of the hair. According to a women respondent:

I usually try not open the riding jacket not even my helmet or balaclava, even if it is very hot, when I need to urinate in side of roads because of my safety. I don't want any attention from passers-by. It's inviting danger.

Women who ride also displays the symbol of machismo (as for eg. Chrome, leathers, tattoos, loud pipes etc.); however the symbols often are softened with the addition of pastel colours, floral motifs and other feminizing touches.



According to William (1950) many women rider seemed to go out way to accessorize and feminize their appearances in order to communicate unambiguous femininity and heterosexuality. Even the motorcycles the women ride hint at femininity. Although women ride large and powerful motorcycles of all makes and models, the majority of women seem to ride smaller motorcycle and less concerned about the macho image of the motorcycle than their male counterparts. Pragmatic reasons for the smaller motorcycle may be that because it weighs less, women believe in 'fits' them better and easier to control-although most riders discover that heavier bikes provide a much smoother ride and are much easier to control once moving. Symbolically the smaller motorcycles seem better for women motorcyclists, and manufactures now openly aim specific models at the emerging female market. The sexism and association with hegemonic masculinity that

pervades motorcycling subculture has not dissuaded women from being full participants.

Evolution of Ethnocentrism

Ethnocentrism implies a sense of ethnic superiority; ethnocentrism is the feeling that one's group has a way of values, living, and patterns of adaptation that are superior to those of other groups. It develops with the generalized scorn for members of other groups. It mainly denotes value reflecting the collective culture. Sumner (1906) first proposed this sociological notion to distinguish in-groups and out-groups and it subsequently became a major research construct in social sciences.

Motorcycle establishments appear to be, in a multiplicity of ways, highly and strongly bounded, certainly in the context of modern societies. The attitudes also include seeing one's own standard of value as universal. Membership in an ethnic group is typically evaluated in terms of one or more observable characteristics (such as language, accent, physical features, or religion) that are regarded as indicating common descent (Sumner 1906). The behaviours associated with ethnocentrism are cooperative relations with the in-group and absence of cooperative relations with the out-group. These ethnocentric behaviour is quite common in motorcycle communities in Kolkata. Membership in the motorcycle groups are mostly evaluated in terms of few important features such as the *similar brand of motorcycle, style of riding the motorcycle* as the most important feature for the membership. Candidates are treated as '*prospects*' initially for being potential members in near future. The candidates are evaluated through a tedious process. The evaluating process is mainly of three or four steps depending on that respective motorcycle establishment's rules.

Step 1: the '*prospects*' are initially preferred to just '*hang around*' with the respective motorcycle club members.

Step 2: The group leader or administrator would then evaluate the candidate's style of riding, attitudes of treating the other members both young and old in critical times while on short road trips.

Step 3: Prospects are then entrusted with handling some responsibilities which are quite tedious and which they have to carry around, with no questions asked. This step is sometimes skipped, depending on the particular motorcycle organisation's normative rules.

Step 4: Finally inclusion of prospects as members is based on the decisions made by the majority of group members eventually.

The major reason for the tedious process of selecting a member is making sure that the prospects have learnt the normative ways of behaviour eventually leading to ethnocentrism. The normative culture of any motorcycle establishment demands ethnocentric attitudes. The unique ways of inducing the ethnocentric behaviour differs from one motorcycle establishment from another.

Initially the social science research focus was on narrow or inappropriate cases of ethnocentrism, such as incidents involving neglecting human rights, racial discrimination, fascism, and cultural chauvinism. Therefore, ethnocentrism has generally been seen as negative (Booth, 1979). Ethnocentrism in motorcycle establishments has been implicated not only in this motorcycle group's conflict, but also consumer choice of selecting a brand of motorcycle. To some of my respondents the choice of motorcycle takes a major role in their motorcycle career as that choice helps them to differentiate between 'us' and 'them'. The major difference can be found in the respective genre of motorcycle one is denoted as 'plastic' (or non-metal) and other as 'metal'. 'Plastic' motorcycles are motorcycle with a plastic body specially the tank, and the both rear and front mud guards made up of plastic/non-metal parts. While the 'metal' motorcycle are motorcycles with metal tank, and mostly rear and front mud guards of metal. Metal motorcycles are generally Royal Enfield make, weighing at least 180 kgs and above while the plastics are non-Royal Enfield make, that is motorcycles such as those from KTM or Bajaj or Honda or Hero weighing at least 135kgs and above.



Bajaj Dominar 400cc (non-metal) and Royal Enfield motorcycle 500cc (metal)



Royal Enfield 411cc (metal) and KTM Duke200cc (plastic/non-metal)

A major conflict is centred on these two perspectives of motorcycles. The metal is the heavy one with at least 350cc (cubic capacity) and above which is considered to be superior and the other is the lighter one with at least 150cc and above which is considered to be inferior. Disagreements, fights are quite common and are easily found in groups over the same former issues. However things are much lucid nowadays with more people purchasing the 'other' category or motorcycle or non- Royal Enfield which is more cost effective according to my non- Enfield respondents. Even 180kgs or above motorcycles are quite difficult to maintain and ride it on a regular basis than the 'others'. These differences are now becoming more coherent as respondents reported of purchasing both the genre of motorcycle one (Royal Enfield) for long rides and other (non- Enfield) for daily city commuting.

However, ethnocentrism may have positive side as it fosters a strong ego and the establishment of a sense of goodwill and trust in relationships within the in-group (Hooghe, Reeskens, Stolle, & Trappers, 2006). Respondents maintain a strong we-feeling in between the group as it helps them to plan and decide the welfare of the respective groups. Riding together makes a group firm and it helps them to deal with other minor difficulties with ease. One of the response when asked about the how comfortable they are within the group.

We are bunch of patronizing all like minded people and like-minded fraternity we definitely gel well and there are always a lot of issues because its 10 boys you know so issues are normal but then we gel as well as we share the same kind of thoughts and that is the reason we are all together.

Developing ‘muscular-ethnocentric’ behaviour

Ethnocentrism is a nearly universal syndrome of attitudes and behaviours. Behaviour associated with ethnocentrism includes cooperation with members of the in-group, but not out-groups. We show that ethnocentric behaviour can emerge from a simple evolutionary model of local competition between individuals (Hammond 2013)

It could be argued that motorcycling activities represent one of the major sites where direct links between hegemonic masculinities and men’s bodies are devised. Indeed, it is the disciplining and control of the body and exposure to risk and sheer physicality that distinguishes many features of motorcycle rider from others. As masculinity continues to be identified with physicality, there are strong reasons for continuing to view such kind of lifestyle as an important site in the shaping and making of masculinities. However, this should not be amplified. There are several other activities where the links between physicality and masculinity may be stressed such as people working in military or in modern times, more leisure oriented society, other sports which are a major area linking embodiment with masculinities. Therefore the link largely establishes a definite behaviour which has in-built hegemonic masculine traits which finally results in ‘*masculine-ethnocentric behaviour*’ in men within these motorcycling establishments.

Furthermore, recent scholars have suggested that love and concern for one’s own country and people do not necessarily imply antagonistic, and dislike for, other countries and people (Balabanis, Diamantopoulos, Mueller, &Melewar, 2001). One can also imply the cooperation of the most motorcycle groups in motorcycle events like ‘Wheels United’ (WU) while organising it. Some events are one day events while a few are overnighner.s These motorcycle events are the heart of the communities also because it gives platform and brings together people from all backgrounds of various communities, different groups and ages and one will encounter versatile activities. A response when asked about the positive points about these events:

There is no end to learning as we get to learn from lot of people and these events bring communities together. We get to learn the ways one have ridden to some unconventional places and the hurdles they have overcome. On such events you forget everything and participate wholeheartedly or halfheartedly and the brotherhood comes out.

Events like WU, biggest motorcycle gathering of eastern India are the place of breeding grounds of 'muscular-ethnocentric' behaviours. A rally is organized with an amazing strength of 1200-1500 motorcycle riders riding 40-50kms (depending on the destination selected every year) together, till the event ground of WU. Rallies generally feature various motorcycle games and skill competition and concerts by well-known rock bands. Games such as carrying same genre of motorcycle from point A to point B, riding a motorcycle in a particular formation of '8' without putting one's foot down, slow race, drinking a bottle of beer in stipulated time etc. All these demand immense muscular strength which eventually generates muscular ethnocentrism among the participants as well as the onlookers. Moreover the concept of 'Men ride bullet (Royal Enfield) while boys ride plastic (non-metal)' are generated by the advertisement agency are quite common which eventually leads to *hegemonic masculine ethnocentrism*.

Seniority of motorcycle riders never comes through age but through the way or places they have visited or the bike they have ridden to such places. Experienced motorcycle riders generally portray masculine traits by narrating their stories of overcoming the hurdles. Members of motorcycle groups nevertheless narrate the same, portraying such dominant muscular ethnocentrism. This behaviour is essential to reinforce their identity; serves to bond members eventually distinguishing themselves from the other groups. Even the female riders are also not left out from this brotherhood, where their feminine traits are been always compared or related to masculinity. Certain 'muscular-ethnocentric' behaviour is always considered to be the yardstick of this muscular motorcycling subculture. Experienced women riders are always considered to be 'brothers' and are often referred as the same. Despite increasing number of women riders, today motorcycle subculture is still a male- dominated and somewhat macho domain. Usually I ask women at rallies about their notion of what they think of the male dominated and such sexist environment that dominates such events, a typical response:

It is no big deal; I have seen and dealt with a lot worse. I have met the most interesting and nicest people on motorcycles. Maybe it's like everything else in this world, you got to take the bad with the good and it's really worth it.

Nevertheless some women are offended or perhaps those most offended no longer participate. And to some the benefits of motorcycling outweigh the drawbacks.

Conclusion

Motorcycling values inherited a technological and cultural legacy from bicycling which is historically and socially embedded in the design of it. As a material creation of a masculine discourse, the symbolic qualifications that later marked the motorcycle as a hegemonic masculine subject, was established during the late nineteenth century.

Ethnocentric behaviour can emerge from a simple local competition between individuals or motorcycling groups. Ethnocentrism may have positive aspects in so far as it fosters a strong ego and the establishment of a sense of goodwill and trust in relationships within the in-group. It can be easily asserted that ethnocentrism gives individuals a strong sense of identity.

It can be aptly remarked that women motorcyclist are constantly challenging muscular-ethnocentrism. Motorcycle as an entity has always been associated with male folks and whenever a woman has tried to break this gender construct this has been regarded as a deviant behaviour on the part of the woman and has been judged by the society as an intrusion into the strict sphere of the patriarch. In order to stop this questioning of gender construction by the female folk, the patriarchal society has always taken resort to mocking, demoralising even going to the verge of isolation.

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Role of Education in Building Identities: A study among Transgenders in Kolkata, West Bengal

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ABSTRACT : Gender has been structured as a binary social construct with men and women framed as absolute and unchanging opposites. As the structuring principle of society, the social construct of binary gender identities serves to obscure gender diversity and erase the existence of people who lay claim to an alternate gender identity. However most people are socialised to adopt gender identities in accordance with one's assigned sex at birth. The existence of transgender people who do not identify with the gender they were assigned at birth, challenges the very idea of a single sex/gender identity.

Transgender people face multiple forms of oppression. They are targeted at the schools where they are humiliated and forced to drop-out of school, even though educating themselves have been their main objective to sustain themselves in the society. Even if the transgender manages to educate oneself, then she/he may face barriers in securing themselves employment as no employer would be ready to offer jobs. In India the life of transgender people is a daily battle as there is no acceptance anywhere and they are ostracized from the society. Extreme social exclusion diminishes self-esteem and sense of social responsibility. In this context the objectives of this paper are (a) to determine the educational status of the transgender; (b) to examine the role of education to build identity of the transgender in the modern society; and (c) to understand the extent new identities help transgenders fight social stigma. To fulfil the purpose of this research study both primary and secondary data has been used. To gather primary data from the field, interview method has been used. Therefore, in this paper the researcher has tried to understand the role that education plays so that the social identity of the transgenders are shaped and transformed within a predominantly hetero-normative society.

Keywords: Transgender, Education, Identity, Gender.

Introduction

Gender has been structured as a binary social construct with men and women framed as absolute and unchanging opposites. Such constructs reply on stereotypes thereby masking the complicated realities and variety in the realm of social identity. As the structuring principle of society, the

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social construct of binary gender identities serves to obscure gender diversity and erase the existence of people who lay claim to an alternate gender identity. Gender theorists, such as Judith Butler and Gayle Rubin, have argued that, the very notion that there is an underlying “sex” to a person is socially constructed (Kang, Lessard, Heston, Nordmarken, 2017). This illustrates the difference between, gender assignment, which doctors/society places on infants based on the appearance of genitalia, and gender identity, which one discerns about oneself. However most people are socialised to adopt gender identities in accordance with one’s assigned sex at birth and this further clarifies and strengthens gender as a social construct. The existence of transgender people, or individuals who do not identify with the gender they were assigned at birth, challenges the very idea of a single sex/gender identity. According to Sanger (2010), gender has been theorised in terms of maleness and femaleness with sexuality tending to be considered within a hetero-normative framework. The construction of gender and sexuality and the study of embodiment and intimacy have become more significant within sociological theory. Work on transgender subjectivities offers the researcher avenues through which one can explore the aspects of self and society.

Transgender studies emerged in the late 1990s as an academic field of study arising from the desire to study trans-genderism with an aim to engage with the diverse voices of trans-people in a critique of social norms relating to gender and sexuality. Trans-people are organizing themselves collectively so that they can gain a voice so as to challenge their exclusion from the society and transgender studies provide an exclusive platform for such discourse. It has also been argued that transgender studies have the potential to address emerging problems in the study of gender and sexuality (Sanger 2010).

Transgender people have existed in every culture, race, and class since the story of human life has been recorded. Transgender is not a term limited to persons whose genitals are intermixed but it is a blanket term of people whose gender expression, identity or behaviour differs from the norms expected from their birth sex. The literal meaning of transgender is beyond gender (Rajkumar, 2016). In contemporary usage, “transgender” has become an umbrella term that is used to describe a wide range of identities and experiences, including but not limited to: pre-operative, post-operative and

non-operative transsexual people (who strongly identify with the gender opposite to their biological sex); male and female 'cross-dressers' (sometimes referred to as "transvestites", "drag queens", or "drag kings"); and men and women, regardless of sexual orientation, whose appearance or characteristics are perceived to be gender atypical. A male-to-female transgender person is referred to as 'transgender woman' and a female-to-male transgender person, as 'transgender man' (UNDP, 2010). Therefore, a transgender means a person who is neither wholly female nor wholly male; or a combination of female or male; or neither female nor male; and whose sense of gender does not match with the gender assigned to that person at the time of birth, and includes trans-men and trans-women, persons with intersex variations and gender-queers (Transgender Persons Bill, 2016).

Transgender people face multiple forms of oppression. They are the target of unacceptance at the family level, with parents treating reversed gender attitudes with medical attention. Transgender persons are also targeted at the schools where they are humiliated and forced to drop-out of school, even though educating themselves have been their main objective to sustain themselves in the society. Even if the transgender has managed to educate oneself, then she/he may face barriers in securing themselves employment as no employer would be ready to offer jobs. In India the life of transgender people is a daily battle as there is no acceptance anywhere and they are ostracized from the society and also ridiculed. They face high levels of stigma in almost every sphere of their life such as health, schools/colleges, employment, social schemes and entitlement. Extreme social exclusion diminishes self-esteem and sense of social responsibility. The transgender community needs to be included in the mainstream development program of the country and be protected from all forms of abuse and exploitation (Rajkumar, 2016).

Arguments have also been placed by Babbar (2016), where she argues that despite the full rights and protections of citizenship, transgenders are subjected to shaming and assault. They have not only faced exclusion from the rights and privileges of marriage and parenthood, but also in the domains of personhood, education and employment, which curbs their rights of expression and association. There is absence of schooling which leads to a high drop-out rate, absence of sexual autonomy, along with demeaning stereotypical depictions in the media, harassment in everyday life and

marginalization in public spheres and deliberative bodies, all of which are injustices of recognition. (Babbar, 2016).

Unlike the past, when transgenders were considered as the excluded personality, transgenders too have realised their own rights and privileges nowadays. In India, transgenders were looked at as an underprivileged section. Society defines both male gender and female gender but is silent about the third gender i.e, the transgenders, have been constantly struggling to find a meaningful and respectable position for themselves (Sarada, 2016). They have always been portrayed as outsiders and excluded. Throughout India, the life of this transgenders is the same with much humiliating and painful incidents where they were compelled to leave their native place and disguised their body as they wish to live. Thus transgenders lead a life detached from family and society. The contemporary status of transgender is therefore characterized by their traumatic and violent experiences in the society. Individuality and sexual identity are under threat in such a society which imposes focus mainly upon the masculine and feminine gender. Indian society projects the meaningless existence of transgenders who lead a life of emptiness and social isolation. Everything seems a burden to transgenders in society such as family, job, career, education, marriage however hard they had tried, their endeavours are fruitless. Treatment of Indian transgender could be viewed in terms of their marginalized and sub-ordinate position. Therefore, in this paper the researcher has tried to understand the role that education plays so that the social position of the transgenders are shaped and transformed. The transgender community needs to be included in the mainstream development program of the country and be protected from all forms of abuse and exploitation. Lastly the paper also attempts to try map the extent of stigma that they face within a predominantly hetero-normative society.

Objectives

The main objectives of this paper are:

- (a) To determine the educational status of the transgender;
- (b) To examine the role of education to build identity of the transgender in the modern society; and
- (c) To understand the extent new identities help transgenders fight social stigma.

Materials and Method

The study has been conducted among the transgender community who are associated with various NGOs. Also such transgenders who are not members of any NGO were interviewed. The purpose of this research is to study the transgender community and gain insightful data on them. The current research is based on both primary and secondary data. To study the transgender community interviews have been conducted and for conducting the interview the researcher has taken the help of a schedule. The current study is a case study as it aims to identify the transgender as cases for a broader and sweeping investigation. The nature of the study is such that other methods cannot capture. So case study would be ideal as it is considered a robust research method entailing holistic in-depth investigation and would help focus on a broad area such as the subject’s (transgender person) relationship in a particular group, necessitating that the group (transgender community) also be examined.

Result/ Findings

For data collection, interviews were set up. The setup of the interviews ranged from private offices to public spaces; from the office room of the contacted NGOs to food court of malls, as per the suitability of the respondent and the researcher. To gain insights on the nature of the education that the transgenders have faced since their young days, which has paved a path to build a new identity, an interview guide was developed. Such an interview guide facilitated the data collection process to a great deal, as it allowed the respondents to talk more about the nature of education facilities that has been made available to them.

Table 1: Qualification of the Respondents

Class Standards	Number of respondents	Percentage
Class 8	1	10%
Matric	2	20%
Higher secondary	2	20%
Graduation	4	40%
Post graduate	1	10%
Total	10	

[Following the case study, it was revealed that out of the 10 respondents, 2 each of them had passed matric and higher secondary passed, while among the others 4 had completed their graduation and 2 others was post graduates.]

When questioned those respondents who were members of NGOs, about their educational qualification, it was known that all of them has passed their higher secondary examinations. But regarding others in their community it was a doubt because not all got favourable environment to continue their education. This was because once the society labelled them as different; there was a natural tendency of marginalisation. But they assured that given the opportunity to educate themselves, the transgender would avail the opportunity. The reason cited by them for being educated at the elementary level was that most of them were not aware of the differences prevalent in their bodies until they were of a certain age. But they were quite conscious that they looked different, had different likings, preferred to dress up like girls, loved dressing up and always saw themselves at the position of the female actress while watching any movie. Very few of the community got the opportunity to study further but they have been able to progress up to the graduation level only.

But on the other hand those respondents who were contacted independently, seem to be educated to a greater level. They cited that it was parental guidance and self-determination that has lead them this far. In their early childhood, they did face social stigma at school, but they managed to face the societal pressure and finish their education. They were of the view that education is the road to all success. If they can educate themselves then the society will not look upon them as weak. With better education they will be able to secure themselves good jobs and that will help them fight social stigma and gain a position in the society.

Following are a few excerpts of the many interviews conducted which reflect the amount of social stigma along with nature of the education that the transgenders have faced and how they have managed to fight that social stigma and built a whole new self, a new identity, that have helped them gain a position in this hetero-normative society.

Ananya: When I was a young boy studying in class 9, I realized that my body was developing in a different way, not in similarity with other boys in my class. Realising the abnormalities growing in my body, my parents got

worried. They immediately took me to the nearby SSKM hospital. But I could feel that my body was not responding to this treatment. When medicines were not making any impact on my body, what was the point in taking them! In such a way only money was being wasted; “poisa to r gache e fol e na!” My parents were also not that well off in terms of financial conditions. So I stopped taking medicines. I thought that it was time I let my body develop the way it wants. By the time I passed school and took admission in college, I had developed more self-confidence and decided that it was time I took decisions regarding my body, myself. Involving my parents meant adding to their distress. It was best I give time to my body and see how it develops. The recent developments in my body surprised me a lot. Along with developing breasts, which was a considerable size now, I realized that my voice had not cracked and I had not developed body hair. Like other boys in my college, I didn’t have a typical male hoarse voice nor did I have hair on my arms. Absence of moustache and beard added to the complications. I became the object of laughter and abuse at the same time. As a result I started to hide myself. Hiding not in the sense that I stopped going out of the house, but that I started to dress myself in such a manner so that the odd developments in my body were less visible. Such practices helped me to face the society and at the same time, it made my parents happy.

Bipasha: From the time I have known who I am, I was in Mumbai. When I came to Mumbai I was a very young. Even though my caretakers introduced me into the begging business, they also sent me to a school. I used to participate in the business only after I returned from school. Once at school I was asked which class I had been last, so that I could go to the next class. But I told them that I don’t remember going to any school in Bangladesh. But sadly I could not complete my education. I have received education till class 8 only. The reason for not being able to complete my education is that, I was packed off from Mumbai and sent to Kolkata. At Kolkata, I was never asked whether I want to finish my education or not. Rather I was asked to get to work immediately.

Riyaan: At school, when I grew a bit older, say for class 9 or class 10, I started developing likes towards girls. I found this quite weird, as why would I being a girl, love girls!! In fact I should be developing feelings for boys, just like other girls in my class! My feelings for girls went so far that I even

had a crush on one of my seniors. Though I never had the courage to go and speak to her or even talk about it with my friends, I made sure that I kept marked this incident in my diary. Questions of who I am, never left my mind. Even when I was in class 11 and class 12, I had likings towards girls, but I never had the courage to express myself entirely. Soon I finished school and I joined engineering. During my time at Engineering College I stay led in hostel. During my college days I was careful enough not to reveal my actual identity. I was never of that kind who would be wearing saree or salwar to college. I loved jeans. To make sure that people were not suspicious of my identity and also at the same time I can maintain my likes and dislikes, I started wearing the normal straight cut jeans to college. I used to team up such jeans with a kurti or t-shirts. I had developed an attitude that, “amar ja bhalo laage, at ami baki lokjon der bujhte debo na. Ami keno bujhte debo? Ora ki amake bujhbe?” Engineering studies demanded much concentration and effort that I was left with hardly any time to concentrate on mind. I started paying less attention to the development of my other self. Thus the first few years at college all my attention was focused in studies. Things started to change in the later years of my college life when I started liking a particular teacher of a call. The lady teacher was on strikingly beautiful and at the same time her classes were very interesting. She also took extra effort in making the class understand her paper. Her method of teaching was so unique that during her classes I was entranced most of the time. I could see that’s my masculine self was taking control of me once again. I could not let that happen. Parallel thought also started to occur, that my father would be retiring soon and I had to shoulder family responsibilities. My aim was that I had to finish Engineering with a good grade and then secure myself with a job. A good job therefore became my first priority. In a few more months the course got over, I should mention that our college follow the semester system and one course was for 1 semester only. In the next semester and make sure that I do not opt for any course of that particular female teacher as that would divert my attention once again. I have to focus myself on my studies. In the next semester one particular course demanded extra attention. Most of my friends joined a local tuition where the tutor would guide us through that course. I to join the same tuition. But they say, problems never cease to exist. That was also the case for me. At tuition there was this attractive girl who caught my attention. Soon we started talking to each other and we became the best of friends. But

I was careful enough not to engage myself deeply. I still do not know what I actually want. I still had to figure out whether I prefer hanging out with girls or boys. You see girl or boys as friends are different. What I mean here is a partner for life, with whom I can share everything, from one of the opposite sex. But I myself was confused of my identity I still did not know whether I am a boy or a girl. Soon we became so engrossed with our studies that the feelings of likeness for each other disappeared from our life.

Rahul: In school, I started liking a girl of my class and other boys started to create problems. For them I was not behaving normally and quite often commented, “mey hoye mey der sathe prem korche”! But I got deeply involved with this girl in my class and we expressed our love for each other. Then my class as well as those senior to me bullied me and embarrassed me both in the school as well as outside school. By the time I finished school and was deciding how to go about next my father passed away leaving me alone to take all my decisions. I could not handle the extensive amount of societal pressure as well as family pressure that was being created around me that I started taking sleeping pills to tackle the amount of depression. I said to myself that “if the society does not want him to live, I shall not live. But at the same time I will not allow the society to live either”. Amidst this tension, I finished my college but never could give away with the long list of female followers. That I always had girlfriend around me made my friends envious of me. They always try to harm me subject me to humiliation and harassment. This is when I realised that I have to fight and make my ground strong enough to answer the society back. I decided to cut myself off all relationships and devote myself to religion. I got myself blessed under Ramkrishna Mission, Belur Math and took time to try and understand myself, what I want, what I want to believe in and how I want to portray myself. Meanwhile I got myself work. I engaged myself under a doctor to learn physiotherapy strategies.

Raja: In school, I always loved the company of girls more than boys. In fact many boys did not talk to me as I preferred hanging out with girls rather than boys. When young I always had my own group of friends who always supported me and stood by me. Many even did not say anything when they came to know that I was different. But the case was different with my seniors at school. They never left any chance of teasing me or

harassing me. Support was also received from teachers at my school; especially the Geography teacher who when noticed that I was developing different sexual attitude and behaviour made me understand that I am not similar two other girls or boys. Not knowing how to deal with the differences being reflected in my body and behaviour at that time I was well confused and often asked my teachers as why I was such. It was when I grew a bit older, the time when I was in class 10 to be more precise, that I started to realize that I am different. My likes, dislikes, preferences and behaviour was not like it should have been, similar to other boys of my age. But rather more girlish. Since this feeling was new to me, I could not myself identify what was happening to me, but I could sense that things were not normal. Much later when I had passed class 12, I experienced very different attitude of boys around me. There have been many instances when I was sexually harassed. The fact that I was also of that age made me quite accessible to other boys of my age. It can be said that people used me to their benefits, "jake bole lokjon amar sujog niyeche".

Shefali never said much about her school days. She remembers her first day of school in the first grade. She was being led around the school yard by two girls, one on each side, each holding one of her hands. She felt a warm, pleasant sensation. Now she realizes those were sexual feelings. The next day she searched the school yard for the two girls, but they were no-where to be found and she never saw them again. Since her mother had raised her alone, she spent of the time alone, trying to understand herself and try new and different things to discover which way she felt best.

Tista: I never liked going to school much. The school that I went was a boys' school and I had not much friends. I never liked playing with other boys or hanging out with them. Most of the days I used to spend alone, be it school or home. At school when my feminine behaviour and attitude started to get noticed, I had a tough time. Since I went to boys' school, my actions became their stock of laughter and they used to refer to me as, "Oi dekh ladies jachche!!" Such comments used to disturb me a lot and this was one of the reasons that lead to my dropout from school. At that time my teachers did not provide me with adequate knowledge as to what were the changes that were going on within me. In fact the teachers added to the stock of laughter. I could find no reason to go to school anymore as my friends had decreased to a negligible number. There was a time when I did

expect support from my teachers as I thought that as teachers they will be able to provide me with guidance. There were times when no one used to talk to me; neither the students who had identified as my friends nor the teachers who I thought would empathize with my situation. It was during this time of growing that I found no one at school by my side. Since I showed different traits of growing, none of my friends accepted me as their friend. And my teachers themselves avoided me, leave alone making attempts to make my friends understand that they should also empathize with me. Such was the trauma experienced at school that later I never could manage up enough courage to finish my education. During my school days that is around 20 to 25 years back the notions of transgender lesbian and gay was not widely used. Teachers at school openly accepted that they are anti-gay and anti-transgender. Developing differently caused anxiety among my school friends and this was enough to make me feel exploited. As a result I never gave thought about going to college and getting myself educated.

Conclusion

Thus it can be said that the transgenders are a minority and hence they are ridiculed and exploited and have not been given fair chances of education. Radical activism has resulted in them being able to bring about social transformation so that they are not excluded from participating in social and cultural life. The transgender community is of the view that the only way people are going to be more open and accepting them is through education; education is the biggest key to anything. It has been seen that the transgenders has since a long time suffered a lot at the hands of the society in India, even though others in various parts of the world have lived a better life. It is now the duty of the society to take a stand for them, make life easier for them, so that they face fewer problems in the society. They too have the same rights and duties as citizens of India, the difference being that their gender orientation is different from other males and females. Just the way we humans seek to achieve higher positions and status in the society, in same way, the road to their achievement of a position should be made easier. If the extent of marginalization is reduced and their position in the society is made better, then a lot many problems that they are facing will be solved. When in one state of the country a transgender has been able to fight the problems that lay in her way and move a step ahead to achieve a better position in the society, it has paved the way for other such transgenders to break through

the problems and live a life of dignity, “where the mind is without fear and the head is held high; where knowledge is free; where the world has not been broken up into fragments; by narrow domestic walls.....”.

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Education, Culture and Youth Problem

Samip Sinchuri

ABSTRACT : In contemporary Indian society youth are undergoing psychological, social and cultural problem because youth in a life cycle has to pass through different phases and lot of changes occur in this process. In this transitional phases of life, like education, job, marriage etc, youth remains under constant pressure to meet the norms laid down by the society. With the 70% of the India's total population, aged less than 40, the level of rising competition within the youth to secure the better life resources has worsened the condition. Further, the new challenging criteria upon the youth to secure high grades and the constant societal pressure to excel in life surmount the problem.

This era demands a lot from youth, further challenges by present socio-culture environment leading to frustration and disappointment in them causing stress, depression, unhappiness, sickness and tendencies to commit suicide. The social situation breeds frustration among the youth. He must have a degree if he has to 'make it' is the culture of our society. There is a massive change in contemporary society.

This paper focuses to study the cultural transition on education among the youths. The researcher used questionnaire and interview method. The study is mainly based on collection of primary data through sampling 50 PG students of Jadavpur University using purposeful sampling and open interview method to collect data. I recommend this paper for publication.

Keywords: education, rising competition, high grades, societal pressure

Introduction

“Youth of the nation are trustees of the prosperity. Youth force is dynamic in nature as most skills and orientations are acquired in this age. Youth is the huge reservoir of energy which needs to be tapped and harnessed intelligently for the development of society. Policy makers all over the world formulate policies in respect of youth in order to enhance and streamline their energy”. (Prof T.C.A Anant, Chief statistician of India)

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The societal norms in India are of unique one as compared to the other countries in the world. In India, children are with their parents and continue to stay with them till the rest of their life. Parents nurture and care for their children. Then children become teenager, grows to become young adults and adults. During this period he moves from primary level of schooling to secondary and higher secondary level. Then he has to go college and university. By the time he graduates on an average he is already 20+. Then they require a job and get into profession to earn their living. Find a right partner and marry. It is not just that, further they must make family planning, taking into consider their financial condition. They have the babies. Buy a house, property, car, loan etc. Though, Life is a continuous struggle and goes on and on in one form or other. But one always thinks of making it better.

Today, one of our main focusl in our lives is to get a good education and have a sound career to lead a happy and content life. And, undoubtedly, today's education system caters to our needs of education and career very well. But, where is the happiness and satisfaction? Right from the childhood, it is fed into the minds of child that the only thing that they should know is that they are going to be a doctor, engineer, IAS and so on. Since beginning, they are pressurized to outperform others of their age. Once kids become old enough to enter a school, the struggle starts. They need to pass a number of tests even to get admission in nursery standard, because they are supposed to be in the best school. As soon as, he is admitted to a school, he comes under the scanner and is continuously evaluated on the basis of one parameter or the other. All that matters is your marks, your grade, your CGPA. Every parent wants to see their child at the top position. And automatically, others are receded to lower positions and suppressed. The child which is usually a stress buster and a source of happiness for everyone else in the home and surroundings, himself becomes tensed.

Even when the school is over, one ought to be in the best college. After that best college, best job offer matters. Then, again the same vicious circle of competing, excelling starts in that job surroundings to be one of the highest paid employee. Now, the evil one behind the curtains is, none other than, money. Conventionally, period from adolescence to middle age is termed as youth. Age constitute the determining characteristics in the definition of

Youth by various agencies. UN adopted the age group 15 to 24 for defining youth. The National Youth Policy initially (in 2003) defined the youth as in the age group 13-35. However, National Youth Policy, 2014 modified it and defined 'youth' as persons in the age-group of 15-29 years. In the paper, person of age 15-34 years as considered to define the category of youth. As per India's Census 2011, Youth (15-24 years) in India constitutes one-fifth (19.1%) of India's total population. India is expected to have 34.33% share of youth in total population by 2020. The share reached its maximum of 35.11% in the year 2010.

The education system in India puts more prominence on the theoretical knowledge than the practical knowledge. Most of the youth in India right from their beginning of their education they are forced to mug up the things rather than having free thoughts so, stress will be more on the ones who cannot memorize easily. At school there is a range of academic pressure they feel, derived from a need for perfection, worry over marks, parental pressure, competition, sports, or a tough class load. Academic pressure does not begin in college but from school itself. The nervous breakdowns, panic attacks, burnouts, and depression are also apparent in many younger students.

These problems that I have mentioned is the findings of a survey, of all it is the fact that problem is universal and majority of them feels and have experiences it. The same situation is not always stressful for all people, and all people do not undergo the same feelings or off-putting thoughts when stressed. It is not the always the educational factor that is the directly reason causing stress among youth but there are also some other factors that directly and indirectly leads to build pressure on them and ultimately it hampers their results.

The level of rising completion within the youth to secure the better life resources

With the limited resources available and maximum people to claim, the power to withstand others is reducing and thus, splitting apart the social arena. The inbuilt intelligence goes in vain. It is high time that the worth of a human being's own capabilities is realized and given proper space for development. The agenda of life should become living and not just existing.

When no two individuals in this world are made to be same, then the whole concept of competition put only single notion in their mind that is survival of the fittest.

External Factors

External forces also create academic pressure. Youth fail in the subject of time management and it is the hindrance to achieve excellence in future. The cure requires dedication and set up a schedule, but most often they fail to accomplish the task in the said time period and are at the 11th hour to complete, it is nothing but an invitation to stress.

Parents Pressure

Another kind of pressure is adult pressure, adult create many dilemmas in a youth's life. Adults tell teens what and what not to do. They make things harder of them as adult's pressure them into colleges, jobs, careers, and life over all. Adults also create self-esteem problems in youth by not respecting choices or decisions made by them. Adults pressure them into not doing things also. The style of clothes one wears is also a big disagreement among the two groups.

In a way adult pressure is worse than peer pressure. Adults control teen's lives until they are eighteen years old or older. Parents force a son or daughter to go to a certain college that they do not want to attend, or obtain a career that they don't want.

Friends and Competition

Peer pressure creates major dilemma among friends as person is forced to do what the majority does, whether an individual may like or not. Peers create some of the so-called rites, and then when one follows others also begin to follow. The logic of some teens indicates that if they drink or smoke they are considered an adult and accepted in the group. Therefore if one tries it than one is supposedly accepted as a more mature person, so more people follows.

Many adolescents fear their peers because of the fact that the peer group has set certain ideals yet the individual may or may not have the resources to obtain the ideals. If there is a lack of resources then the individual may have a very low level of self esteem. Many individuals do not care for the

ideals yet they allow themselves to be converted to the majority and this can also create a problem with one's self-esteem.

Youth in 21st century is trapped between traditional Indian socio-cultural norms and the influence of west and globalization. Young generation wants to move forward but they are drawn back by the shackles of social pressure. The comparison that parents, relatives and neighbors make between the two individuals and the sense of competitions that they instill in young mind has devastating effect like frustration, disappointment, stress, depression, unhappiness, sickness

Academic Pressure and Cheating

Cheating has become the method of survival, the only way to reach and maintain the top for many some students just want to take the easy way out and cheat. They may have jobs after school to support their family or themselves, which carries a higher priority for them than school work. In the same context, many students feel that excelling in sports is a higher priority than school. Others may resort to cheating to make up for their lack of academic motivation or live up to the standards set up by older siblings or parents.

Tendency to commit suicide

With all these pressure students may become so tense and many of the students express suicidal thoughts. A sample of data was collected among the individuals in the university to determine the increase in percentage of suicides due to increase in academic pressure and the outcome was as follows:-

- Is marks oriented education system creating high pressure over the students?

Out of 50 [71.8%] have agreed that marks oriented education system creates pressure over the students and the remaining [28.1%] have disagreed with this statement.

- The hype of examination pressure has contributed more number of teenage suicide cases.

Out of 50 [81.2%] have agreed that hype of examination pressure

contributed more teenage suicide cases but [18.7%] have disagreed with the above statement.

- Students undergo pressure in scoring high marks from the teachers, parents and also tuition classes.

Out of 50 [75.0%] have agreed that students undergo pressure in scoring high marks, but [25.0%] have disagreed with the above statement.

- Some children couldn't cope up with the pressure so they commit suicide.

Out of 50[93.7%] have agreed that some students end their life in middle due to academic pressure but [6.2%] have disagreed with the above statement

Growing completion among the peers, Fear of failure in examination and parent's pressures are the most common reasons why the students end up their lives. Over the sample of data collected 71.8% have agreed that there is pressure in Indian education system and 93.7% have agreed suicides are more in students due to this academic pressure. On the Other hand 28.1% have agreed that there is no academic pressure in Indian education system and 6.2% have agreed that there are no suicides.

The above graph demonstrates the co-relation between the academic pressure and the suicide's over the students. Suicide rate has increased due to tremendous increase in academic pressure. India stands highest in teenage suicides; Statistics reveal that suicides rates among teens increase almost 300 percent. People aged 29 or below are committing suicide every day and 51% of suicide victims are graduates, younger and the main reason for the self-harm is due to low-self-esteem, parents pressure, societies pressure over the student in order to score highly.

The above graphical representation presents the thoughts, ideas and attitude of the individuals in the university on academic pressure and self-harm.

Conclusion

Youth are under far more pressure in today's society than in any other previous generation. They are the generation whose obsession with image

and perfection has grown rapidly because of the rise of technology, social media and the celebrity culture depriving their actual desire and passion. Parents need to re-examine the notion of academic excellence as being the only measure of success. And they should give more credence to developing enhanced human values in them so they may apply themselves wholeheartedly to their various roles in society. the two pressures of peers, and adults are often conflicting. Sometimes neither are good, and other times both are good. Adult pressure is by far the worst creating many problems with youths today. The best thing to do is to respect one own decision for ones self and no one else's.

Suggestions

Youth these days are reluctant to solve their problem and sought for solution. Youth is the driving force who can turn the wheels of change. They should come out of their comfort zone and seek ways to achieve rather than to get stuck in the whirlpool

There are many healthy ways to deal with academic pressure. If you don't feel motivated about a subject, arrange a study group. Reward yourself after completing every section. Other ideas include time management: set up a schedule, or set a timer. When you watch T.V., play video games, or surf the web, set a timer for 30 minutes. Time allocation helps divide the hours to reasonable amounts so you are not left at the 11th hour to complete homework.

India is moving towards modernization and there is lot of competition over the children and there is peer pressure and parental pressure .With all these pressure students may become so tense and many of the students express suicidal thoughts. Parents need to encourage their children to follow creative pursuits and be involved in sports not just in academic circle as it is not only way to achieve success and recognition.

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