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## **Integration of Human Values in the Educational Programmes**

**M. C. Reddeppa Reddy<sup>1</sup>**

### **Abstract**

It is the time to achieve the cherished objectives of education, termed by the UNESCO as four pillars, viz., “Learning to know, Learning to do, Learning to be, and Learning to live together”, by integrating the human values effectively in the present education system. There is a thrust on development of suitable curricular models and supporting activities such as incorporation of spirituality, effective pedagogical process, creating conducive constitutional environment, and above all, a rigorous faculty development programme. This requires a concerted all-round effort necessitating a dedicated R&D, resource development, teacher-orientation and implementation of experiments, finally stabilizing the inclusion of human values and its proliferation in the education system. The role of policy making and monitoring bodies as well as implementing agencies will also be vital to meet this challenge. The present paper focuses on the types of human values, destruction of human values in the society, factors responsible for the deterioration of human values and the need for imparting human values. It also underlines the need for promoting human values through education and various approaches to impart human values. Further, incorporation of human values in all the educational programmes is also highlighted in this paper.

**Keywords:** *human values: types; promotion in society; incorporation in educational programmes*

### **Introduction**

The salient universal human values include Honesty, Peace, Non-violence, Righteous conduct, Compassion, etc. Sincere efforts are needed to integrate these values through proper educational processes. In order to inculcate the above values among the learners, it becomes an imperative to introduce a well-designed foundational input as the first necessary intervention in the curricula.

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In addition to this, it will be necessary to make appropriate modifications in the content and teaching style of all other subjects to incorporate salient societal concerns conducive to promoting values, peace and harmony. Introduction of human values will affect consciousness development or the transformation towards holistic perception, and a well-designed curriculum has to be the first essential step.

An effective curricular model and pedagogy has to be sought to make a beginning in all the educational programmes. As stated, the present paper focuses on types of human values, destruction of human values, approaches to human values and promotion of human values by incorporating the relevant aspects in the curricular designs of all educational programmes.

### **Types of Human Values**

Human values, which are exhibited by our conduct and behaviour in our daily life, are categorized as personal, social, moral, spiritual and behavioural values. These values are described hereunder:

1. Personal values are those values which are desired and cherished by the individual irrespective of his or her social relationship. Ambition, cleanliness, courage, creativity, determination, honesty, punctuality, self-confidence, simplicity, etc., are some examples.
2. Social values are the values which are cherished and practiced because of our association with others. These are concerned with society and may change with the change of social circumstances. Examples: brotherhood, friendship, hospitality, justice, responsibility, sympathy, etc.
3. Moral values are related to an individual's character and personality, informing to what is right and virtuous. For example: honesty, integrity, compassion, etc.
4. Spiritual value is the ultimate ethical value. Ethical value can be defined as the perception "within" in man and it arises from the inner depth dimension of man. Some examples are devotion to God, japa, meditation, purity, scriptural study, etc.
5. Behavioural values refer to all the good manners that are needed to make our life successful.

Apart from the above values, there are several other types of values such as economical, political, aesthetic, religious, academic, cultural, etc.

### **Destruction of Human Values in the Society**

A science of values would be expected to specify the natural laws that govern human values and their effects on action. However, research in psychology suggests that values often are contextually determined, as socio-historical phenomena that can be created or destroyed (Schwartz, B., 1990). In the present day, we can observe that there is increasing strife in the family and society. Destruction of nature has significantly and potentially led to irreversible climate change. Some of the greatest achievements of Science and Industry have become the biggest threats to the environment and human existence. The political structure and marketing tendencies have led to the breakdown of community living.

We can find a number of paedophiles, fathers/brothers indulging in incest, forced homosexual acts, kidnapping of innocent children for ulterior motives, affluent children indulging in thefts for kicks, drugs and other substance abuse and rapes within closed doors. It has nothing to do with class, creed and status or education. Nowadays, farming is treated as unworthy and uneconomic. The rural youths give weightage to the value of what they are doing. The importance and necessity of physical labour for all, comes out as a corollary.

### **Factors Responsible for the Destruction of Human Values**

A range of factors are playing for the destruction or deterioration of human values in society. They include- Personal, Family, Social, Cultural and Financial factors.

1. Personal factors such as sex, age, behaviour, attitude, etc., are leading to confusion and unable to decide what is good and bad, or what is right and wrong.
2. False models observed in the family, and imitation of unacceptable behaviour are also deteriorating the values.
3. Values are changing due to the reducing distance between cultures within the country; it is a social factor for value deterioration.
4. With increasing education, awareness among people is increasing. But, they are not taking people at face value. In this process, many values are discarded.
5. Lack of harmony within the family, society and nation.
6. Negative correlation with the conformity, tradition, and security values.

**Need for Imparting Human Values**

People's values, like their needs, induce valences on possible actions (Feather, 1995). That is, actions become more attractive, more valued subjectively, to the extent that they promote attainment of valued goals. The erosion of values in almost every aspect of human life is a matter of universal anxiety and concern. Negligence of ethical and moral aspects of life by the people has caused severe imbalances in society. This is not desirable because in the absence of values, people have no principle or foundation on the basis of which they can face life situations, make choices and decisions. A life without proper values will become chaotic and disastrous. It will be like a boat without a rudder. To guide our life in the right path and to embellish our behaviour with good qualities, we need to keep up with set values. These values are chronic goals that guide people to seek out and address value relevant aspects of a situation (Schwartz, Sagiv & Boehnke, 2000).

Value-based education is necessary for developing human values. Education will prompt the people to raise their voice against the social evils. For attaining all-round development of the people, for developing democratic qualities, to promote individual and social welfare, imparting values is needed. Value education will help the individual to resolve value conflicts and fix the standard of his behavior. It inculcates the sense of co-operation and fellow wellbeing.

Values form the principal element of an individuals' personality, which influences their thought and behaviour in an unconscious manner. They are normative standards by which human beings are influenced in the choice among alternative courses of action. Education develops values in the students that guide them to become individuals of sterling character. Then, there is a great deal of talk of corruption and dishonesty in our official and business life. It is the students of today who are to be in charge of the various departments of life tomorrow and it is necessary they learn what real integrity is in their early years of life. Every effort must, therefore, be made to teach students the true moral values through their educational programmes.

**Promotion of Human Values through Education**

The need for integrating value education with the mainstream education curricula has been repeatedly and forcefully expressed by various Education Commissions and Expert Committees. They have also highlighted the need for developing materials and methods to take care of important societal concerns like democracy, secularism, social justice, social reforms, protection of the environment, national integration, etc.

It was also unanimously agreed that to fulfil this need, thrust on the development of suitable curricular models and supporting activities, an effective pedagogical process, a conducive constitutional environment, and above all, a rigorous teacher education programme was necessary.

The role of policymaking and monitoring bodies as well as implementing agencies like CBSE, NCERT, UGC, State Councils of Education, Academic Senates, and Boards of Studies in different disciplines in universities will also be vital to meet this challenge.

Generally, all human beings' thoughts and actions depend on their education. If their education is right, their thoughts and actions are fulfilling otherwise, they are not. To enable a student to lead a happy life, harmony with family, society and nature are needed. Educational experiences presumably promote the intellectual openness, flexibility, and breadth of perspective essential for self-direction values (Kohn & Schooler, 1983). These experiences increase the openness to non-routine ideas and activities central to stimulation values. There is a positive correlation between the years of formal education with self-direction and stimulation values. Similarly, there is a negative correlation with conformity, tradition, and security values. Education correlates positively with achievement values. The associations of education with values are largely linear. Universalism values are substantially higher among those who attend university. A university education broadens the horizons of knowledge.

### **Approaches to Promote Human Values**

Introduction of human values will affect consciousness development. For the transformation towards holistic perception, a well-designed curriculum has to be the first essential step. An effective curricular model and pedagogy has to be sought to make a beginning in the curriculum of any education programme. As pointed out in the Draft NEP, 2019, the human values will be promoted through direct as well as indirect methods. Besides these two methods, teacher in the classroom will integrate the relevant values in his daily lessons or in the activities outside the classroom through integrated and spiritual approaches. Thus, the curriculum can be organized in four ways viz., Direct approach, Indirect approach or Incidental approach, Integrated approach and Spiritual approach. These approaches are discussed below.

**Direct approach:** In the direct method, there will be classroom activities, discussions and readings specifically designed to address ethical and moral awareness and reasoning (MHRD, 2019). This approach is carried out through five techniques

of silent sitting, prayer, group singing, storytelling and group activities like role play, attitude development, motivational games, dramatics, etc. For inculcating moral and spiritual values, it is suggested that specific provision for direct moral instruction in the educational programmes is highly desirable. It is also suggested that the recommendations of the Sree Prakash Committee, where one or two periods a week should be set aside in the schedule/ timetable for instruction of moral and spiritual values (MOE, 1964).

**Indirect or incidental approach:** In the indirect method, the contents of languages, literature, history and the social sciences will incorporate discussions particularly aimed at addressing ethical and moral principles and values such as patriotism, sacrifice, non-violence, truth, honesty, peace, forgiveness, tolerance, mercy, sympathy, equality and fraternity (MHRD, 2019).

The teacher concerned will never lose a chance either in the class or on the play field to teach a value by correcting, praising or discouraging certain behaviour incidentally. Under indirect approach, either contrived or planned, the teacher could deliberately think upon such desirable values which could be developed among the students.

**Integrated approach:** Even when the teacher is not aiming at inculcating values through the direct or indirect approach, he has to integrate the relevant values in his daily lessons or in the activities outside the classroom. Values are hidden in all subjects. It is for the teacher to apply his mind and find out what are those values, and how they should be naturally intertwined in teaching. Under this approach, inculcation of values can be done through all academic programmes and activities. In other words, value inculcation remains a conscious aim of the teacher in or outside the class activities. Thus, the integrated approach should be practiced in both curricular and co-curricular activities.

**Spiritual approach:** People from different faiths - Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Islam and Christianity can practice and get deep into a process of self-exploration. The human values can be derived through this process of self-exploration by each one of the society and are the same as professed by their respective faiths. It springs all divine qualities such as love, compassion, service, purity, truthfulness, fearlessness, etc. Knowledge remains covered by ignorance. The moment we remove this screen of ignorance, the knowledge of Atman will shine forth, and then will manifest all the great virtues in our personality such as power, glory, goodness, purity, etc. Swami Vivekananda says: 'If the fisherman thinks that he is the spirit, he will be a better

fisherman; if the student thinks he is the spirit, he will be a better student'. Thus, some sort of spiritual therapy is needed for having a value-based society and this need can be fulfilled to a considerable extent through education.

### **Incorporation of Human Values in all Educational Programmes**

The salient universal human values include Honesty, Peace, Non-violence, Righteous conduct, Compassion, etc. Sincere efforts are needed to integrate these values through proper educational processes. In order to promote the above human values among the learners of all levels, it becomes an imperative to introduce a well-designed foundational input as the first necessary intervention in the curricula. While mentioning about the incorporation of certain subjects, skills, and capacities in the school curriculum, the NEP (2020) has stressed the need for the incorporation of basic ethical and moral reasoning throughout the school curriculum. Further, it is necessary to make appropriate modifications in the content and teaching style of all other subjects to incorporate salient societal concerns conducive to promoting values, peace and harmony.

The following modifications are needed by including the components in the curriculum and developing instructional designs to impart human values to the students in the educational institutions. The modifications include launching of new educational programmes, incorporation of knowledge of India and its traditions, teaching the importance of 'doing what's right', reforms in educational administration, introduction of courses in human values, introduction of religious and spiritual practices, introduction of social/community work, conduct of co-curricular and extra-curricular activities. The modifications to be made and incorporation of components relating to human values in the curriculum are presented below:

#### **1. Launching of New Educational Programmes**

New ideals of life must cultivate and develop appropriate values among the students by the educational institutions through their educational programmes. Some effective educational programmes include: Indian culture, heritage, tourism, human values, human rights and duties; Indian literature and traditions contain deep knowledge in a variety of disciplines, viz., mathematics, philosophy, art, logic, grammar, law, poetry, drama, astronomy, chemistry, metallurgy, botany, zoology, ecology, environmental conservation, medicine, architecture, water management, agriculture, music, dance, yoga, psychology, politics, fables, and education; and courses on Indian knowledge systems - folk arts, local oral and tribal traditions, serve to impart culture

as well as valuable knowledge (MHRD, 2019). These have to be developed and launched at all levels so as to inculcate human values, peace and harmony in the society. As we have accepted the democratic pattern of society, democratic values like justice, equality, liberty, and patriotism must be cultivated in the minds of students through education. To avoid value crisis, it is necessary to frame a bunch of moral standards. These moral standards or values can be developed through both formal and non-formal systems.

## **2. Incorporation of Knowledge of India and its Traditions**

Knowledge of India will include knowledge from ancient India and its contributions to modern India and its successes and challenges, and a clear sense of India's future aspirations with regard to education, health, environment, etc. These elements, particularly Indian Knowledge Systems, including tribal and indigenous knowledge, will be covered and incorporated into all the disciplines, viz., mathematics, astronomy, philosophy, etc., in an accurate and scientific manner throughout the school curriculum wherever relevant. An engaging course on Indian Knowledge Systems will also be available to students in secondary school as an elective. Competitions may be held in schools for learning diverse topics and subjects through fun and indigenous games. Video documentaries on inspirational luminaries of India, ancient and modern, in science and beyond, will be shown at appropriate points throughout the school curriculum (MHRD, 2020). These provide children with the required opportunity to read and learn from the original stories of the *Panchatantra*, *Jataka*, *Hitopadesh*, and other fun fables and inspiring tales from the Indian tradition and learn about their influences on global literature (MHRD, 2019).

Art and culture of India are to be offered as core or elective papers. They refer to the way of life of the people of India. India's languages, religions, dance, music, architecture, food, and customs differ from place to place within the country. The Indian culture is often labelled as an amalgamation of several cultures. These studies will enable the students to imbibe tolerance towards other cultures. Stories, arts, games, sports, examples, problems, etc., will be chosen as much as possible to be rooted in the Indian and local geographic context.

## **3. Teaching Importance of 'doing what's right'**

Students will be taught at a young age the importance of "doing what's right" and will be given a logical framework for making ethical decisions. In later years, this would then be expanded along with themes of cheating, violence, plagiarism, littering, tolerance, equality, empathy, etc., with a view to enabling children to embrace moral/

ethical values in conducting one's life, formulate a position/argument about an ethical issue from multiple perspectives, and use ethical practices in all work. As consequences of basic ethical reasoning, as pointed out by the Draft NEP, 2019, the traditional Indian values of *seva*, *ahinsa*, *swacchata*, *satya*, *nishkam karma*, tolerance, honest hard work, respect for women, respect for elders, respect for all people and their inherent capabilities regardless of background, respect for environment, helpfulness, courtesy, patience, forgiveness, empathy, compassion, patriotism, democratic outlook, integrity, responsibility, justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity, etc. will be inculcated in all students (MHRD, 2019). Scientifically speaking, these qualities are extremely important for society's and India's progress. Using dustbins, using toilets and leaving them clean after use, standing in queues properly and patiently, helping the less fortunate and conducting charity work, being punctual, and always being courteous and helpful to those around us in general even when we do not know them, are basic values of social responsibility that will be taught and inculcated in students early and throughout their school years.

#### **4. Reforms in Educational Administration**

Inculcation and promotion of values in curriculum and pedagogy as well as classroom and co-curricular and extra-curricular activities is essential. Similarly, promotion of good values in administration is also required. The administration must be transparent, and the decisions must be taken in a democratic way and in the interest of all stakeholders. The administrators should not carry their labels such as their castes, community, religion and language with them when they go to work. Corruption must be ruthlessly punished. Special privileges such as bungalow, car, phone, etc., should not be given to the officers.

#### **5. Introduction of Courses in Human Values**

Introduction of courses in human values and professional ethics have to start at certificate, diploma and degree levels. Now and then, the educational management can take initiatives to organize expert lectures, seminars, etc., by inviting noteworthy persons in the society. Further, they can also conduct panel discussions, and workshops for the students and teachers in the educational institutions. It is also suggested to establish a National Resource Centre for Value Education.

#### **6. Introducing Religious and Spiritual Practices**

Religion is the manifestation of the divinity already in man

(Swami Vivekananda).

Religion is the manifestation of the natural strength that is in man. Religion is the idea which is raising the brute unto man, and man unto God. Regular practice of *Bhakti Yoga* (devotion), *Jnana Yoga* (discrimination), *Karma Yoga* (selfless action), and *Raja Yoga* (meditation) will help us to manifest our Devine nature, removing all impurities from the mind. The practice of yoga helps us with the power to go beyond values and realize the Reality which they symbolize. Without yoga, values remain mere dreams of poets and preachers. Education – both teaching and learning – can be done as yoga. Pursuit of art can be done as yoga. Social service can be done as yoga. Education doesn't remove casual ignorance. Only transcendental knowledge gained through yoga can remove casual ignorance.

It is an invocation or act that seeks to activate a rapport with a deity, an object of worship, or a spiritual entity through deliberate communication. Prayer can be either individual or communal and take place in public or in private. It may involve the use of words or songs.

The universal prayer in the Vedas – Gayatri mantra should be repeated by all students in educational institutions. This may enlighten our intellect. With the regular practice of prayer, individual intelligence imbibes cosmic intelligence. It arouses the dormant powers of understanding in him or her. It inculcates certain good attitudes in the one who prays. Prayer may be directed towards a deity, spirit, deceased person, or lofty idea, for the purpose of worshipping, requesting guidance, requesting assistance, confessing sins or to express one's thoughts and emotions.

## **7. Introduction of Social/Community Work**

Introduction of social work in all the colleges and universities is needed. It is an effective way to obey the law of sacrifice. It seeks to improve the quality of life and wellbeing of an individual, group, or community by intervening through research, policy, community organizing. Teaching on behalf of those afflicted with poverty or any real or perceived social injustices and violations of their human rights will also promote human values. Research should be focused on areas such as human development, social policy, public administration, psychotherapy, programme evaluation, and community development.

## **8. Organizing Co-curricular and Extra-curricular Activities**

The co-curricular activities like NSS, NCC, scouts, guides, etc., or extra-curricular including sports, yoga, dance, music, drawing, painting, sculpting, pottery making, woodworking, gardening, and electric work play role in inculcating different values

among the students and also their all-round development of personality. Games and sports are essential parts of the curricula in educational institutions. They foster friendship and amity.

All students should play one game or another, not necessarily for achieving distinctions, but for the sake of sport. Participation in games and sports invariably ensures good health, fitness and generally, freedom from ailments of various types. Physical fitness is essential for proficiency in studies and for winning distinctions in examinations. The tendency to indulge in indiscipline and mischief is curbed. Playing games and the spirit of sportsmanship will help to inculcate lasting values and enables the students to be good soldiers, fighters and also makes them disciplined. Playing the game naturally instructs people to play the game of life in the right spirit.

All educational institutions should conduct such activities to give new dimension to the personality of the students.

- Activities such as adventure, appreciation of art and culture and visiting the places of historical values can develop team spirit and self-discipline among them. This can be achieved by making students participate in NCC, Scouting and guiding, NSS, field trips, yoga, etc.
- By organizing outreach activities such as observance of various festivals such as national/religious festivals, and birth/death anniversaries of great persons develop the value of appreciation of culture.
- Further, the other occasions like sports day, teacher's day, parent's day and annual day are to be celebrated to develop the qualities of leadership, competitive spirit, co-operation, teamwork, respect to others, etc.

### **Conclusion**

Teachers are the torchbearers of any move to bring about enlightenment and peace in society. We need a sound knowledge base, appropriate skills and methods to transcribe a blueprint for human values into action. This stupendous task requires us to build up a culture that epitomizes humanistic values both intrinsic and extrinsic. Teachers must give instruction to all the students at all times, both by examples and by precept. We must be constantly told that what hurts us hurts others too and we must behave towards others as we want others to behave towards us. To conclude, in this paper we have discussed the various types of human values, destruction of human values and the factors responsible for it. Further, the need for imparting human values and promotion of human values through education are presented. Finally, various approaches to imparting human values and incorporation of human values in the educational programmes are illustrated.

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## **Transmission of Citizenship Education across School and Community in the Light of Gender Equality: A Conceptual Study**

**Chaitali Chakraborty<sup>1</sup>**

### **Abstract**

The purpose of this paper in conceptual studies is to provide a scholarly discussion by reorganizing social science research phenomena into methodologies of conceptual analysis, given that it is particularly interested in the concept of education in citizenship. Understanding gender equality will be the focus of this conceptual study of citizenship education. This paper, therefore, is an attempt to see citizenship education within the gender equality package. The paper argues that there may be no meaning or representation in outside thought in relation to citizenship and citizenship education, but it must be articulated in context, and to this degree, concepts here are built in the process of gender equality.

**Keywords:** *citizenship education; gender equality; democratic citizenship; community; cooperation and citizenship; liberalism and neo-liberalism discourses; critical pedagogy*

### **Introduction**

From the experience over the years, it can be understood that conceptual analysis relates to differentiating concepts, scrutinizing the identifications which they are used to refer to and demonstrate. Concepts are some of the key phenomena connected to discipline (Cocchiarella, 1996). In a way, therefore, principles that apply to citizenship education in the context of gender equality can be understood in this paper. In conceptual studies, the aim is to provide academic debate by reorganizing the phenomena of social science research into methods of conceptual analysis, given the fact that it is particularly interested in the definition of citizenship education. This conceptual study of citizenship education will be focused on the background of gender equality. Hence, this paper is an effort to see citizenship education in the

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setting of gender equality. The paper argues that outside thinking, citizenship and citizenship education may not have meaning or representation, but it must be articulated in context, and to this degree, concepts here are built in the process of gender equality. The conceptual process of analysis may create a structure for understanding, making sense or significance of the real-world situation.

### **Citizenship education as a concept**

Citizenship is a dynamic, multi-dimensional concept. It must be considered in relation to the needs of society or the political system. Enjoying privileges and performing duties are subject to the requirements of commitment and obligation. And those are the characteristics that need to be learned and practiced. That means to be a citizen in the true sense of the term, citizens must be trained or informed about these qualities. Citizenship education is not a modern phenomenon. With the passing of time and the growing impact of globalization, people, cultures and nations are seeking to reassess their position in the world. Citizenship education has developed a global character in the phase of reassessment, where rights and obligations towards one another have become the principal areas of focus; with justice and fairness towards one another; equality and restraint; power and authority; equity and diversity; passive and active involvement (Green, 1997).

In this context, it would be necessary to list four key components of citizenship in relation to citizenship education (Sears and Hughes, 1996). Citizenship education operates with the goal of creating national citizens, in conjunction with the first aspect of citizenship, namely, national knowledge or identity. The goal of citizenship education is to achieve not only awareness, but also an emotional attachment to or affiliation with one's own country, a sense of loyalty and duty. It should also be borne in mind that this sense of national identity typically coexists with other identities such as geographical, cultural, racial, religious, gender, class identity and so on. A matter of significant concern in citizenship education is how these diverse levels of identity can be brought together under one umbrella.

Political literacy, understanding and dedication to the political, legal and social institutions of one nation constitute the second aspect of citizenship education. The act of voting is, no doubt, included within this framework but it also means something more than mere casting of votes. It needs an awareness of key political and social problems and therefore the possession of the skills and principles required for meaningful political involvement to take place. It can be argued here that there is no improvement in the social make-up of women in society, despite the presence of

a whole array of laws and legal procedures. Citizenship education should be used as a mechanism for solving these problems and paving the way for the involvement of the whole community in the development of society in an efficient way. Each educational activity is a kind of socialization; education is not only adjustment or transformation, but also empowerment and freedom.

The third aspect of citizenship education is the recognition of rights and duties. Citizens may respect the freedom granted to them while performing those responsibilities in the form of duties at the same time. The goal of citizenship education is to prepare people to overcome any potential conflict between rights and duties. Our impression has been that we are mainly interested in rights, but also seem to neglect the obligations associated with them. The fact that each individual tends to neglect that he/she has any responsibility in relation to his/her fellow person is evident in the irresponsible behaviour in society that is communicated toward each other, whether in the form of racial injustice or gender discrimination. Knowledge and adapting to one's own culture are focused on comprehension of how the group has grown through time and in reaction to the world's influences. It is difficult to discuss the awareness of how society works as a democracy and the growth of political literacy skills without taking into account the role of society in the international context.

The fourth aspect of education for citizenship relates to values. In relation to those in society, ideals such as equality, unity, autonomy and the like are of utmost importance that are required to be enjoyed and practiced. Apart from social values that are more or less common to a given community (often described in the Constitution or Bill of Rights), there are other universal values, specifically moral ones, which can override the claims of citizenship, as in the case of conscientious resistance to a particular rule. Values can produce dilemmas and disputes easily. Citizenship education tries to teach the knowledge and skills to deal with conflicts of value in effective ways.

Connolly (1974) pointed out that, not just because it is an internally dynamic concept, but also because it is a normative concept, issues with citizenship education occur. Normative terms generally do not have a widely shared meaning because of the fact that they explain things from a moral point of view. The definition of citizenship education, therefore, differs a lot. The narrow literal term of citizens is not so much concerned with citizenship education as the normative sense of good citizens (Hughes, 1994, cited in Sears and Hughes, 1996). From the debate, it is clear that citizenship education is a vast field that encompasses a wide variety of conceptual, political and

social views as well as pedagogical methods, priorities and practices. Underlying all these methods and viewpoints, there is a general consensus that the creation of good democratic people is the goal of citizenship education. Scholars have highlighted the fact that citizenship education has both conservative and progressive orientations, like other educational fields (Schugurensky and Myers, 2003).

Citizenship education can be seen as a viable tool for preserving the established order, in line with the conservative orientation, while at the same time being used to motivate individuals and organizations in line with the progressive orientation, with the goal of bringing about drastic changes. In accordance with the conservative orientation, the goals of citizenship education are, among other things, to instil a sense of national patriotism, adherence to authority, voluntary service and the like. Citizenship education is needed to work towards keeping the current social system in line and thereby maintaining social cohesion. Schugurensky and Myers (2003) pointed out that capitalism and democracy were ideal complements from the viewpoint of a conservative approach to citizenship education. Good citizens have been conceptualized by them as good producers, good consumers and good patriots. According to them, the ultimate model is a representative democracy, and the most essential expression of citizens' participation is voting.

Scholars (Kymlicka, 2002; Heater, 1999) also differentiate between two citizenship frameworks: civic republican discourse stressing universal active engagement and liberal discourse focusing on state-guaranteed individual rights. These two discourses, amongst others, play a powerful role in defining citizenship. Normally, the civic republican debate conveys the ideals of allegiance, loyalty and service to one's political party, whether at the local, state or national level. Debates on republican civil discourse highlight the need for civic literacy and the importance of good citizenship as a central body of civic knowledge. It seeks to foster the civic identity of young people, characterised by their loyalty to the democratic system, their reverence for its symbols and their active involvement in the common good, by cooperative participation in activities such as voting, political party membership and civic events, collectively referred to as pro-government events.

Abowitz and Harnish (2006) have pointed out that the nationalistic definitions of citizenship found in republican civic debate pose a direct challenge to our culture's more cosmopolitan and transnational views. People derived their self-understanding in Aristotle's Athens by association with and involvement in the polis or political group. Today, the political group is not just the state or government, but is more generally connected to civil society, described as the 'realm of non-privatized collective

action that is voluntary rather than compulsory and persuasive rather than coercive', providing 'a basis for criticizing the excesses of both the state and the market' (Galston, 2000 cited by Abowitz and Harnish, 2006: 169).

From a civic republican point of view, civil society is the now-neglected third domain of political life – the conceptual and discursive space outside markets and government – and the primary field of citizenship. Citizenship is conceptualized, especially in the civic Republican debate, as a matter of repairing our fractured contemporary civil society. A fragmented democratic society results in poor social capital in line with this debate, and this deficiency then becomes one of the key themes to be rejuvenated by civic education. The essence of citizenship includes recognition with the aims of the political community accomplished through the process of education and active involvement in the democratic process and commitment to them. The civic republican debate, notes Oldham (1998), largely retains the sharpest lines of inclusion and exclusion in its expressions of political affiliation – 'in choosing an identity for ourselves, we recognize both who our fellow citizens are, and those who are not members of our community, and thus who are potential enemies' (Oldham, 1998: 81). He made it clear that this notion of exclusive membership, which lies at the core of this particular practice, gives precedence over universalistic or humanistic ethics to the political and national culture.

On the other hand, liberalism is a discourse of individual liberty. It can be said that liberalism applies to a wide variety of government ideas and philosophies that consider the most significant political objective to be individual rights. It focuses on the equality or capacity of all individuals, especially individuals living in traditionally marginalised and oppressed groups, to fully exercise their liberty in society. The two prevailing discourses within the liberal discourse need to be listed - neo liberalism and political liberalism. Neo liberalism, a synthesis of the philosophy of the liberal economy and militant individualism, is not seen as an overt citizenship discourse, but educators argue that political liberalism can be connected to citizenship education ideas. As a way of fostering economic prosperity and securing political liberty, neo liberalism promotes economic liberalism. Man is basically an economic species, according to the neo-liberal discourse. Educators believe that the paradigm of homo economicus is incompatible with the civic values synonymous with democratic life (Abowitz and Harnish, 2006).

On the other hand, political liberalism has been seen as an omnipresent discourse forming citizenship's meanings. Political liberalism envisages a more confined political arena with a greater emphasis on procedures that ensure equal, inclusive governance

and policy debates (Gutmann, 1987). The resident, who is also the moral person, in exercising rights and discharging duties is free, self-originating and responsible. People should be free, according to the liberal conception, to choose their own ideals or to live without ideals. This, of course, does not mean that citizenship teaches, as one wishes, to use this right. It should be viewed as an effort to suggest that children should recognize that there are better and worse ways to use their rights and that no educational authority should rule them completely. In reality, political liberal discourse envisages a kind of citizenship that takes a critical attitude towards all force.

Citizenship involves an identity that is neither independent nor inherently distinct from the beliefs of one's family or faith, but that evolves on the basis of the principles and abilities required for critical consideration of those beliefs and others. Citizenship education is concerned with democratic rights and the capacities and arrangements for cooperation, deliberation and decision-making. Freedom from tyranny of authority and deliberative principles of debate, disagreement and consensus building, both considered central to democratic societies, are the two most significant principles that could be established in this discourse. Therefore, it calls for a forum where all people are regarded as equal participants in the process of deliberation. It can be argued that it is rooted in the idea that individuals ought to come together to deliberate on popular issues. Civic values like freedom, open-mindedness, the ability to distinguish and value the rights of others and the like entail the development of a democratic atmosphere. Gutmann (1987) calls democratic education a deliberate social replication, an attempt to replicate institutions, norms, and principles that are central to every generation's democratic governance.

John Rawls (1993) acknowledged the cooperative provisions and common interests of people in a democracy alongside constitutional and democratic rights. Liberal discourse claims to strike a balance between accountability education, duty and co-operation with individual and community rights promotion education. It focuses on acquiring the beliefs and abilities required to take part in a public life that is culturally diverse. It is evident from the current world scenario that multicultural citizens need a distinct degree of cultural competence and cultural awareness in order to preserve a highly complex collection of understanding that requires knowledge of people and their different facets. What is required to achieve this is training in citizenship education, in which students learn to think critically and engage with strength and precision.

### **Gender equality as a concept**

Throughout history, there has been an expansion in the definition of citizenship. Factors such as literacy, ethnicity, gender and economic status have limited previous

citizenship rights. In recent times, common struggles have led to the inclusion of historically excluded social groups within the arena of citizenship. The qualifications for citizenship are no longer literacy and economic status. And women today, at least on a theoretical level, are treated as people with full rights and responsibilities. However, the method of universalizing rights has not been an easy affair. Compared to men, women received the right to franchise in many countries at a much later date<sup>2</sup>. It can be noted here that in the year 1947 and in all elections held after independence in India, women had the right to vote<sup>3</sup>. A dynamic political life in which male and female people are equally involved in all facets of society is the hallmark of a mature democracy. A true democracy seeks to ensure that every person, male and female, is able to exercise equal rights and equal voices effectively. This is also a significant precondition for achieving and fostering social justice and human rights. This means that democracy must be inclusive of all people in society in order to be genuinely democratic. It is important for individuals, groups and communities to have access to and representation in governmental institutions and to be able to engage completely in the decision-making process in society.

Unfortunately, the truth remains that, in education, health and other fields, women are frequently denied access to basic services. Women are less well-nourished than men in most of the world today; they are less safe and more vulnerable to physical assault and sexual harassment (Nussbaum, 2002). The concept of individual autonomy implies that no one should be subject to the rules enforced by others; and, secondly, the principle of equality implies that everyone should have the same ability to influence the decisions that affect people in society. One of the most essential values of democracy is gender equality. Unfortunately, however, definitions of democratic citizenship frequently seem to exclude gender considerations and very little attention is therefore given to the gendered essence of citizenship. Arnot (2004) commented that citizenship debates are largely abstracted from real gender relations and very little consideration is paid as such to the gendered essence of citizenship ideals. It is commonly seen that women around the world do not have access to citizenship rights either because of their non-citizenship status or because of their lack of economic, social and cultural resources that deny them opportunities to engage in formal political systems, as in the case of unions, political parties and state institutions such as education, voting and civil societies.

Women's involvement in voting in many countries is low and, in some cases, even when decisions are made are not their own; many girls in developed countries

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<sup>2</sup><http://search.eb.com/women/article-9077370>, accessed 20.04.2008.

<sup>3</sup>[www.unescap.org/huset/women/reports/india.pdf](http://www.unescap.org/huset/women/reports/india.pdf), accessed 20.04.2008.

do not really have the opportunity to complete their education in terms of educational opportunities. Compared to boys of their age, the proportion of girls who are able to attend school in India is very poor. Around 70 percent of girls between the ages of 6 and 10 have been found to attend primary school in India, compared to 76 percent of boys in the same age group. The situation is getting worse at the upper primary level, with just 40 percent of girls attending school. Poverty and the social and cultural values that discriminate against girls are the key reasons behind this inequality<sup>4</sup>. Probably, the most common and socially accepted of human rights abuses is gender-based abuse. In the provision of human rights, ensuring gender equality is essential. In the sense that every person in the world holds these rights simply because he or she is a human being, human rights may be considered as moral rights. It is not possible to take away human rights from any individual or any government.

At the same time, it should also be noted that the idea that every person has fundamental civil rights does not grant an individual the license to behave exactly as he/she prefers. It only gives her/him permission to exercise human rights to the degree that this does not affect other persons' human rights. This establishes the fact that good citizenship consists of expressing respect for others' human rights. The importance of democracy lies in its willingness to foster values of human excellence. Citizens' engagement in state relations strengthens unity, respect for personal autonomy and independence, and inculcates behaviour that is equitable and inclusive.

If half of the population is excluded from participation and contribution to society, growth would make no sense. Men have held control of the instruments of power throughout history as a party, and women's political activities have been limited to promoting the political ambitions of men to a large degree, with small exceptions here and there. For the progress of every democratic order, the concept of equality and the right to non-discrimination are fundamental. In order to make democracy fully participatory, the equality of the voices of men and women must be ensured and, in this way only, sufficient benefits can be achieved from development initiatives. Fair distribution of public and private roles and a more equal representation of men and women in society are effective in resolving the imbalances in social representation, which are one of the most significant causes of violence based on gender. Gender-based violence, a consequence of this unequal balance of power between women and men, is a result of the prevailing gender norms in society. It is one of the clearest manifestations of the inequality of power between males and females. It both represents and increases inequality between men and women and threatens their victims' wellbeing, dignity, protection and autonomy (UNICEF, 2000).

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<sup>4</sup>[www.unescap.org/huset/women/reports/india.pdf](http://www.unescap.org/huset/women/reports/india.pdf), accessed 20.04.2008.

The disparity in gender power represents the inequality that exists in society. Gender-based violence can be defined as any form of violence that is used to create, enforce or perpetuate gender inequality and maintain gender orders in place. It has also been referred to as a policing system embedded in masculinity and femininity gender discourses or, in other words, how men and women are placed vis-à-vis each other and other male and female classes (Lang, 2003). As a woman, acknowledging these power dynamics is not really difficult for me. It has been found that the right to receive education is not adequate to achieve inclusive feminist objectives. Is it then possible to conclude that the particular type of citizenship education that addresses every person in the making as a citizen can be transmitted as an instrument to reduce the situation of injustice and pave the way for equality? In order to question the current norm, citizenship education has been taken up in this article.

The two concepts of 'sex' and 'gender' should be given due consideration in order to understand the problem of the dominant gender norm and the mechanism by which it functions in society and becomes integrated into the social pattern. 'Sex' refers to the features of biology and physiology that characterize men and women. 'Gender' refers to the roles, attitudes, actions and characteristics that are socially established, that a given culture deems suitable for men and women. Although the term 'sex' is related to anatomical structure, the word 'gender' is related to a social and psychological characteristic placed or adopted. The word 'sex' has been used since classical times to describe biology-related matters, while the word 'gender' has been commonly used in social and cultural contexts as distinct from biological ones. In this relation, reference can be made to a statement made by Justice Anthony Scalia (1994)<sup>5</sup> of the United States Supreme Court who, in an attempt to clarify the use of the terms said, gender has acquired the new and interesting meaning of cultural or attitudinal features distinctive to the sexes in an attempt to simplify the use of the terms. That is to say, gender is to sex as feminine is to female and masculine is to male.

Gender refers to the notion of society as to how boys or girls or men and women are supposed to act and should be handled. It has been said that one is sex, and one is gender. The role of sex typically involves acting out of one's genetic predisposition. In young boys, this is generally associated with their more violent, combative personality, while in young women, it is typically reflected in caring and compromising behaviour. Gender roles are certain actions enforced implicitly or explicitly by society. Gagnon and Simon (1973) found out that the roles of gender are actions that culture may consider to be 'scripted'. Gender has something to do with the culture in which one

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<sup>5</sup><https://ohrh.law.ox.ac.uk/justice-scalias-legacy-on-gender-equality-no-need-to-remember-the-ladies/> accessed 11/05/2019.

lives, and biology can or may not have anything to do with it (Gagnon and Simon, 1973).

These distinctions are important because, as soon as they are seen, there is an inclination to classify and categorize individuals. While sex factors do not vary much between different human societies, gender aspects may vary to a large extent. Simone de Beauvoir (1981) described this perception by saying that ‘... Woman has ovaries, a uterus: these peculiarities imprison her in her subjectivity; circumscribe her within the limits of her nature. It is often said that she thinks with glands. Man superbly ignores the fact that his anatomy also includes glands, such as the testicles and that they secrete hormones. He thinks of his body as a direct and normal connection with the world, which he believes he apprehends objectively, whereas regards the body of woman as a hindrance, a prison, weighed down by everything peculiar to it...’ (de Beauvoir, 1981: 15). Therefore, gender is a social construction that determines the condition of being male or female. It can be pointed out here that within feminist philosophy, the empirical distinction between ‘sex’ and ‘gender’ has been the subject of much discussion. While this distinction has been questioned by many, in discussing the socially constructed essence of masculinity and femininity (Oakley, 1997 cited in Mottier, 2002), the notion of gender perceived as the social definition surrounding ‘natural sex’ differences played a crucial role.

But, every convincing theorization of the gender order, along with an examination of gender control, must take into account the examination of gender inequalities. As Oakley (1997) has pointed out, however, speaking of women and men as ‘engendered’ means differentiation rather than an imbalance of control. And gender gaps alone can neither minimize nor explain power inequality. The origin of society itself is to be looked for. Sex and gender inequality are described by Bourdieu (2001) as being essentially socially constructed (Chambers, 2008). Men and women are biological beings, each individual being uniquely distinct; thus, masculinities and femininities point to discourses about men and women and how they should act in a given context.

As a social category and construct, gender partly restricts the choices of people by influencing their desires. It has, therefore, been said that women want manifestations and reasons of female inferiority, such as uncomfortable clothes and shoes or beauty practices that are ineffective or even detrimental to health. It has also been pointed out at the same time that even though women struggle for their liberation, the fact continues that ‘most women do not stop wearing makeup, taking on the lion’s share of the housework and childcare, wearing restrictive and uncomfortable clothes and

shoes which emphasize sexual availability, avoiding physical violence, or being attracted to men with characteristics of dominance such as a powerful physique or job' (Chambers, 2008: 4).

At the systemic level, gender-based violence is embedded in patriarchy, a structure that places men over women as well as other men, instilling in many men a sense of superiority and privilege. Gender-related violence at the personal level is often related to the stresses, fears and stifled feelings underlying many of the prevailing types of manhood embraced in various settings. The distinction made between those who hold various hierarchical positions is at the core of every structure of hierarchy. The system of male dominance owes its success to its provision of 'natural' biological reasons for hierarchy, at least to some degree. Bourdieu (2001) suggests that a key explanation for the success of the patriarchy lies in its ability to naturalise its distinctions. He continues that 'the dominated apply categories constructed from the point of view of the dominant to the relations of domination thus making them appear as natural' (Bourdieu, 2001, cited in Chambers, 2008: 4). Since gender positions are hierarchical, men and women are not equal in communicating their experiences of gender or recognizing and acknowledging them. Women are different from men, according to the patriarchal narrative, in that they have different bodies and different biological functions. In order to fulfil the reproductive process, they must be different from each other; sex differences cannot be removed because it would not be possible to sustain the species without them.

Gender inequality, as already mentioned, stems from unequal relationships of power between men and women based on the various positions assigned to them, and is recognized as being one of the underlying causes of violence against women (WHO, 2005). Bourdieu (1990) suggested that the girl child acquires the characteristics of femininity from an early stage of her life while the boy bears the features of masculinity 'due to their immersion within gendered practical schemes into which they are channeled from birth' according to their biological sex and class positioning dictates (Bourdieu, 1990, cited in Lovell, 2000: 8).

In order to understand the manner in which social values are rooted in people, Bourdieu has called this 'habitus'; it is not a matter of deliberate learning or ideological imposition, but is learned by experience (Lovell, 2000). Will a deliberate effort decrease this tendency? Over time, gender-specific roles evolve and are profoundly affected by age, race, class and ideals that are socially constructed. Beauvoir (1989) suggests that one is not a woman born, one becomes one (Beauvoir, 1989). Rigidly established gender stereotypes enable or facilitate violent actions for some groups of men within

a framework of perceived privilege and hierarchical control (UNICEF, 2003). Violence against women is one of gender inequality's most obvious manifestations. It was identified as a virus that consumes adults' and children's basic rights respectively. In order to eradicate violence against women, achieving gender equality and women's empowerment can be seen as essential. It is, therefore, possible to conclude that violence against women and gender inequality stems from a complex series of interwoven causes, including negative gender norms and customs, and societal approval of violence as an agreed means of dispute resolution that discriminates and legitimizes violence against women (WHO, 2005).

Patriarchy is seen by feminists as a system on which capitalist societies have been founded. Women also tend to be 'second-sex' members or even more precisely second-class citizens (Voet, 1998). Patriarchy has been defined as a collection of hierarchical social relations between men having a material basis and establishing or creating interdependence and solidarity between men, which allows them to dominate women. In their mutual relationship of supremacy over their women, men of various classes, races or ethnic groups are united. The theory of patriarchy thrives on the premise that the material foundation on which patriarchy is centered lies fundamentally in the dominance of men over the labour power of women. A significant requirement for reducing violence is a shift in the mindset of men towards women, who are the key perpetrators of violence towards women.

Unless women are equal at home, women can never be equal in their public lives; therefore, the issue of abuse carried on at home and outside by intimate partners of women becomes a critical issue (WHO, 2005). The patriarchal structure operates in such a way, that men restrict women's access to vital productive capital, and instil in them the illusion that, out of pure affection, it is necessary for women to participate in unpaid labour. In Rajasthan, an ICRW study on masculinity found that the functions and obligations of men in society are fundamentally understood through three primary roles of strength, protector and procreator (Kumar and others, 2002). Men often use violence to accomplish these tasks efficiently because the success of these roles and duties is a vital element in the conception of masculinity by men. Men are indoctrinated into violence as a way of asserting their perceived roles as men in the struggle of men to live up to these values, which has been dubbed as the 'crisis of masculinity' or 'paradox of men's power' (Kaufman, 1998 cited in Lang, 2003).

As a socially formed idea, gender thus determines the way both men and women think and act – 'I have always been astonished... that the established order, with its relations of domination, its rights and prerogatives, privileges and injustices, ultimately

perpetuates itself so easily, apart from a few historical accidents, and that the most intolerable conditions of existence can so often be perceived as acceptable and even natural. And I have also seen masculine domination, and the way it is imposed and suffered, as the prime example of this paradoxical submission' (Bourdieu, 2001, cited in Chambers, 2008: 2). Citizenship has been described as the responsibility of a man with women's lives made invisible in line with this gendered construct (Brindle and Arnot, 1999). Stereotypical male characteristics such as the characteristics of impartiality, dispassionate and unemotional conduct, defending one's country are correlated with active citizenship, while nurturing, love, feeling, or, to be precise, the terms commonly associated with femininity have not been found to be regarded as attributes in the active citizen (Sawer, 1996).

Catherine MacKinnon (1989) profoundly opposes the notion that gender definitions are solely biological, or that biological differences prevent gender discrimination. In her opinion, gender is a matter of politics and a matter of influence. In her own words, 'body or mind or action distinctions are referred to as cause rather than effect, with no realization that they are so fundamentally effect rather than cause that it is an effect to point to them at all. Inequality comes first; it follows the disparity' (MacKinnon, 1989: 219). MacKinnon points to the fact that efforts to differentiate between sex and gender are based on the premise that sexual distinction has nothing to do with the question of dominance, when the definitions of dominance and sexuality are in fact intimately intertwined. Therefore, sexuality can very well be claimed as the primary site of gender inequality; it is not the product of any biological imperative. Now the question is, should the school involve itself in the reduction of these indoctrinated ideas in the case of formal schooling or learning communities in the context of informal training?

### **Transmission of citizenship education at school and in the community**

Here, this study would argue that by learning from adults and from the environment around them, children become good people and good citizens. Even though parents and families are primarily responsible for the development of future citizens, schools are still said to play a fundamentally supportive role. '...it is next to impossible to separate the teaching of values from schooling itself; it is a part of schooling whether people are willing to acknowledge it or not. The question ... is how the educator can influence student's character development effectively so that the impact is positive' (Williams, 2000, cited in Alberta Education, 2005: 32-40). Schools can be identified as very significant socializing spaces that have a long-lasting impact on the lives of students.

Learning does not just consist of academic skills and knowledge, but it implies something more. Schools are assigned to teach the norms and values of culture and society, and in shaping the ideas of students about what constitutes good behaviour. In order to develop personally as well as academically, they make conscious efforts to give students the knowledge, skills and support needed (Alberta Education, 2005). Schools can play an important role in helping students develop civic accountability and a healthy attitude towards themselves and others. A student who is a potential citizen must recognize his/her responsibilities to others, to society and to the environment. In his/her personal, professional and public life, a student has to realize the importance of ethical behaviour. The interrelationship of their personal and professional activities with society and the environment should be examined.

Citizenship education can be defined as a conscious move that our society values to cultivate civility, ethical behaviour, self-management skills and individual characteristics. It represents a consensus on certain core values that transcend socio-economic and cultural lines, such as respect, responsibility, fairness, empathy and self-discipline. By consciously practicing these values in everyday action, citizenship education nurtures these attributes in an explicit, intentional, focused and systematic way. This implies that it is integrated for all students throughout the school activities and is incorporated into the curriculum and co-curricular activities. A school whose objective is to strengthen the capacity and desire of individuals to be active and to acknowledge in the other the same freedom as in oneself is a school of democracy, provided that it acknowledges that the rights of the individual subject and of intercultural relations need institutional guarantee which can be acquired only through democratic processes<sup>6</sup>.

In order to achieve the desired outcome, citizenship education will have an all-encompassing impact where all parties involved in making citizenship education successful should motivate themselves with all efforts towards that goal. In addition to having a sound citizenship education, if students are to become committed and constructive citizens, they must have a sound education. Personal growth, knowledge, understanding, values and skills associated with profitable lives should be involved in this education. School is a place where the personality is formed, and an individual as an active citizen can be brought up.

There are many other extremely important areas besides proper educational policies that need to be properly addressed. It is necessary to address the problems of exclusion, discrimination and racism in a proper manner. It would not be improper to

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<sup>6</sup><http://ecoledifferentes.free.fr/STARKEY.htm>, accessed 02.12.2007.

say that, if properly developed, education for citizenship can contribute to reducing the many vices that are widespread in society. Actions taken in the form of legislation to curb these inadequacies would have a profound impact on learners' minds. So, unless the values taught in the schools and inculcated in the minds of the students are matched in society as a whole, not much can be accomplished. The main idea behind this is that it is not possible to allow the things that are in the curriculum to remain limited to the curriculum alone. This establishes the fact that it is necessary to address the structural barriers and inequalities as well as curricular content and pedagogy in a wholesome manner.

Students in this fast and ever-changing world are required to appreciate that they will be citizens of the world in addition to being citizens of their community, province and country. Citizenship education, a world of expanding knowledge and technology in which new opportunities and challenges arise, would help prepare students for life in a rapidly changing world. Tomorrow's citizens will be required to fit themselves into a changing environment with such an educational background in which increasingly complex questions and issues need to be addressed. Citizenship education can be expected to help students acquire the attitudes, knowledge and skills necessary to function in cultural communities other than their own, which implies that they need to adapt within the national culture and community as well as within the global community. Consequently, the policies and decisions of the future citizens need to be based on awareness and understanding of their world, on the right to answer relevant questions, to look for answers for them, to identify problems and to find solutions for these issues, since the task does not end with the integration of citizenship education into the curriculum. It is about becoming a way of life; only then can its proper worth be realized.

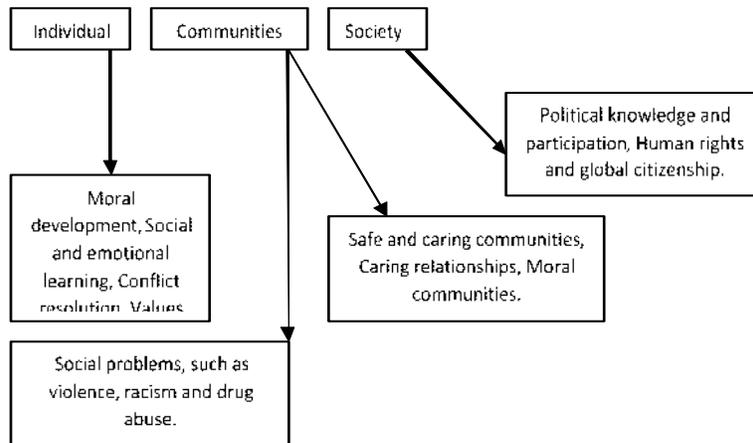
A comprehensive research review concludes that four of the most effective citizenship education promotion practices include:

- participation, discussion and collaboration among students;
- promoting autonomy and influence of students;
- training in social skills;
- helping and social service behaviour (Alberta Education, 2005).

Student education not only contributes to their personal growth and opportunities but also to their ability to fulfil their social and economic potential. Schools are required to play a crucial role, along with parents and community members, in strengthening essential values and preparing students to be productive and contributing citizens. The virtues of respect, responsibility, fairness, honesty, loyalty and

commitment to democratic ideals are recognized by citizenship education. It thus contributes to the positive development of future citizens in terms of character. Citizenship education can go a long way in helping their moral development by inculcating in students or learners the virtues of respect, accountability, honesty, loyalty, fairness and the like. It can contribute to the growth of community members and responsible citizens who are conscientious. It would be possible to create moral communities with an ethical commitment to address issues of violence, racism and other vices with morally committed and responsible individuals. In the end, such highly ethical communities will lead to a participatory society with sufficient knowledge to promote human rights and the global order (see Figure1).

**Figure 1. Global citizenship**



Source: Korsgaard et al. 2001.

Six essential characteristics of education for democratic citizenship have been identified in the Draft Declaration and Program on Education for Democratic Citizenship in April 1999 (Council of Europe, 1999, cited in Korsgaard et. al. 2001).

Democratic citizenship education:

- constitutes a lifelong experience of learning and a participatory process developed in different contexts;
- equips men and women to play an active role in public life and to shape their own destiny and that of their society in a responsible way;
- aims to instil a human rights culture that will ensure full respect for and understanding of the responsibilities that flow from those rights;
- prepares individuals to live in a multicultural society and to deal knowledgeably, sensibly, tolerantly and morally with differences;

- strengthens social cohesion, understanding and solidarity with each other; and
- entails that all age groups and sectors of society must be integrated.

The school is not just to be taken as a vehicle for transmitting a national ideology and a common historical memory through the curriculum. The school is to present itself at a deeper level as a constructed space in which students, like a nation's citizens, are treated equally regardless of their backgrounds. Gender, race and religion are no longer the driving forces of society. It is a place, both literally and as a concept, constructed in opposition to the inequalities of society that are truly present. Like the concept of citizenship, the concept of school is impersonal and formal. If the school appears as a society, then as they grow up, students will learn to understand and feel included in the community and thus in the political nation<sup>7</sup>.

Discussing the tradition of Freinet, the educational movement associated with Freinet in France, could be relevant to citizenship education. Basically, the catchword of the Freinet movement is 'cooperative'<sup>8</sup>, originally developed in response to the needs of rural masses where a small contribution from the family of each child allowed the poor learners to have basic learning materials in the class. The concept of cooperation which is central to this movement is promoted by two influential organizations, the *Office Central de la Cooperation a l'Ecole* (OCCE) founded in the year 1928 and the *Institut Cooperatif de l'Ecole Moderne* (ICEM) founded in the year 1947 by Freinet. Reference could be made to self-help groups (SHGs) in India in this context. SHGs are a voluntary association of poor people who come together through self-help or mutual assistance in order to solve their common problems<sup>9</sup>.

The self-help movement has taken the shape of a mass movement of women to shape their destiny for a better life through savings used for income generation operations. Participatory institution building in SHGs, often coupled with savings and microcredit loans, has been a noteworthy feature in many developing countries, particularly in South Asia. The Anand Milk Union Limited (AMUL) in India, a milk cooperative of village women owning cows and producing milk and milk-based products on a profit-sharing basis, is a popular example (Krishnaraj & Kay, 2002). In a group environment, SHGs allow the members to learn to cooperate and work. They have, along with that, been instrumental in empowering women. Here we can have a look at the general notion of women's empowerment. Empowerment has been described

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<sup>7</sup><http://ecolesdifferentes.free.fr/STARKEY.htm>, accessed 02.12.2007.

<sup>8</sup><http://ecolesdifferentes.free.fr/STARKEY.htm>, accessed 02.12.2007.

<sup>9</sup><http://megselfhelp.gov.in/faqs.htm>, accessed 06.03.2008.

as the process through which, by expanding their choices, women take control and ownership of their lives. Thus, in a context where this ability has previously been denied, it is a process of acquiring the ability to make strategic life choices.

Knowledge of gendered power structures, self-esteem and self-confidence have been defined as the core elements of agency (Kabeer, 2001, cited in Krishnaraj & Kay, 2002). Therefore, alongside the emphasis on cooperative efforts, SHGs have made it possible to create a new learning culture, a culture that decreases violence at home. Studies show that SHGs are increasingly being used to protect associations as well as to seek redress for women who are subjected to gender-based violence (Krishnaraj & Kay, 2002). Reports show that women who generated higher income through self-help schemes have gained greater respect within their homes; and men have been reported to generate little resistance to women's increased economic activity because such activities have been seen as contributing to household well-being (Krishnaraj & Kay, 2002). Women, although to a limited extent, have gained the capacity within the household to make decisions. Reports confirming that violence against women has decreased in the family since men have begun to realise the value of their economic contributions at home (Krishnaraj & Kay, 2002) may be mentioned.

Although citizenship is not specifically mentioned anywhere in the tradition of Freinet, this study would link the emphasis on freedom through community and cooperation with the fundamental principles of citizenship education, as well as with the cause of human rights. This is because when a person learns that his/her freedom of action is not absolute, it is expected that he/she will demonstrate some kind of restraint in his/her behaviour. The movement of Freinet emphasizes interaction with the community. It also emphasizes the process by which learners are encouraged to be active students working in collaboration with the learning community, far from being passive recipients of knowledge. And from this perspective, it can be assumed that citizenship education is essentially associated with it.

If citizenship education is merely an unreflective socialization of the political and institutional status quo, on educational as well as many other grounds, it may prove insufficient. It is doubtful whether citizenship education can be called 'education' at all, which does not involve critical reflection (McLaughlin, 1992). Therefore, it follows that citizenship education needs to focus on the development of critical faculties rather than reinforcing the influential tradition of sticking to the power structure. One of the two influential movements in educational literature is critical pedagogy; the other is critical thinking, which argues that education must be transformed to empower individuals and groups, as well as to change the core social, economic and political structures of society that promote oppression and injustice.

Based on the criticism of the Frankfurt School's capitalist society and Paulo Freire's pedagogical thinking (1993), critical pedagogy is based on the premise that there are certain fundamental injustices in society and points to education as a key factor in the perpetration and promotion of this discrimination. It is not attributed by critical pedagogy to a lack of rationality in people, but to the structures and practices of oppression by certain segments of society over others (McCowan, 2006). It is then essential to present specific forms of knowledge before the student in order to provide a counterbalance to the conventional educational pattern, which can offer students the opportunity to question dominant positions based on their power of judgement. This could potentially help a lot to change the status quo.

Democracy in the classroom; the democratization of campuses; debating societies; legal and human rights education and mock parliaments have been emphasized in the deliberative approaches to democratic education. The aim of service-learning pedagogy is to connect students with real community issues and to develop their knowledge and skills in the field of democratic participation (Sweeney, 1998, cited in Hebert, 1997). Four principles are proposed by the pedagogy of social participation and identity formation. These include: the cohesion of human rights and democratic responsibilities; the respect and acceptance of diversity; the formation of collective identity on a dialectical and participatory basis; and the development of cultural awareness and competence (Hebert, 1997). The intercultural and planetary approach focuses on the development of a better understanding of cultural groups, the formation of identities, social participation and awareness of the planet. More or less, all of these approaches focus on developing the pleasure of learning and self-development; the ability to learn; critical thinking; teamwork where all are teachers and learners in turn (The Delors Report, 1996, cited in Hebert, 1997).

Literacy is a double-edged sword for Antonio Gramsci (Freire and Macedo, 1987) that could be 'used for the purpose of self and social empowerment or for the perpetuation of relations of repression and dominance' (Freire and Macedo, 1987: 2). Freire (1987) calls for critical thinking, also referred to in education as 'pedagogy of knowing.' To be understood as something more than a system of oppression characterized by respect for human beings and respect for a plurality of voices, he has called this conscientization (*conscientizacao*) or critical consciousness. The notion of education, as an ideology, must be seen as a social construction that is always involved in organizing one's view of history, present and future; the notion of education 'needs to be based on an ethical and political project as a social movement that dignifies and extends the possibilities for human life and freedom' (Freire and Macedo, 1987: 2).

Through this form of education, individuals will be able to bring about a change in society. Within a concrete, practical pedagogy, Paulo Freire concerned himself with the emancipatory content of literacy. In his scheme of things, literacy is not to be approached as a mere technical skill to be acquired, but rather as a necessary basis for cultural action for freedom that implies a 'self-constituted and socially constituted agent' (Freire and Macedo, 1987). Men and women should not only assert their right and duty to read, understand and transform their own experiences, but also to reconstitute their relationship with society as a whole.

In this context, schooling can be seen as central to building one's voice actively as part of or in the empowerment process. It is then to be considered "one of the main vehicles by which 'oppressed' individuals can participate in their society's socio-historical transformation" (Freire and Macedo, 1987: 157). Education is not only linked to mechanical learning in this sense, but to a critical understanding of the norms prevalent in society. The false interpretations that seem to exist in society can 'demythologize' this new knowledge (Freire and Macedo, 1987). Education is, therefore, to be seen in the context of the social environment on which it is based. In today's context, the mere acquisition of bookish knowledge situated apart from the real state of things is no longer appropriate. Students or learners should be prepared to take up the challenges that affect their social lives. Therefore, in the sense of being a precondition for social and cultural emancipation, not only the mastery of specific skills, but education must also become a manifestation of the perfection already in man.

### **Conclusion**

This paper is an attempt to visualize an educational model for both boys and girls in which a firm commitment to the fact that women have a legitimate place as citizens in a democratic society would be the first and foremost step. One of the broad sets of common values and purposes that underpin the curriculum is equal opportunity. This also includes a commitment to value relationships, the broader groups to which we belong, the diversity of society and the environment, and above all, a belief in ourselves. It is to be seen in the course of empowering individuals whether boys can be empowered as learner citizens and adult citizens in ways that do not strengthen the power of men over women and contribute to women's male subordination. In schools built on gender dividing practices that prepare boys for male occupational status and hierarchies of power and girls marginalized in the home, financially dependent on men with almost complete responsibility for caring for the family and rated as second-class citizens, the normal course of action previously followed should no longer be justified on any basis.

It is now clear that, with all their associated antagonisms, the feudally assigned role for the sexes should no longer hold true. For and educational planners as well as teachers, it is a challenge to develop sustainable policies for gender equality through formal and informal teaching methods that lead all students to the path of educational achievement and pave the way for equal opportunities in the labour market and public sphere. A delicate form of citizenship education can concentrate on the real, but most often concealed gender injustices, making young men and women aware of the need to fight these evils in their communities. The demands of democracy and social justice must be matched by teaching and learning in the classroom. In order to address gender inequalities in public life and in the economy, the concept of citizenship education needs to delve deeper. To be given a due position in society, respect for difference and diversity is necessary.

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## **Participatory Quality Education and Active Citizenship**

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### **Abstract**

Education is one of the essential aspects of human beings. Education enables human beings to think, make decisions and act as a social entity. It ensures the integral development of a person. Realizing the importance of education, the Government of India promoted various measures to promote education for all. However, ensuring quality education has been a major challenge. Participatory Teaching and Learning approach is one of the key methods to ensuring quality education at the elementary level. “Participation” has been embraced as a way to build greater voice, accountability and trust in relationships between people and institutions, especially by strengthening citizen rights and voice. The education sector has also used a participatory teaching and learning approach to promote quality education. Participatory learning utilizes pedagogies and methods which create opportunities for the community- developers/ mobilizers, field practitioners, academics and students to work together and learn from each other, in order to become more effective jointly as “critical scholar practitioners”. So, the present paper is aiming to illustrate the Participatory Teaching and Learning issues and their implications to ensure the quality of education at elementary level.

**Keywords:** *quality education; participatory approach; society; learning; citizenship*

### **Introduction**

Education is a crucial development indicator, as it provides the individual with adequate knowledge, skill and attitude for participating in various social, economic and political activities. Education enables human beings to understand the interrelationship among the tangible phenomena surrounding them and give skill to translate the knowledge into action. Acquisition of education helps workers to take advantage of technical changes, which increases their productivity and earns

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livelihoods. Realizing the importance of education, the Government of India formulated various measures to promote education. Education has been given high priority by India's Central and State Governments and continues to expand fast. At elementary and secondary level, access to school has been expanded by investment in infrastructure and recruitment of teachers. In higher education too, the number of schools, teachers and other service providers continues to rise rapidly. However, high dropout rates and low attendance continues to be a major challenge at lower levels and enrolment at higher levels remains modest. As per the Report on Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+) 2019-20 Report, the Gross Enrolment Ratio increased from 87.7 per cent to 89.7 per cent at Upper Primary level; from 96.1 per cent to 97.8 per cent at Elementary level; and from 76.9 per cent to 77.9 per cent at Secondary level. However, at Higher Secondary level Gross Enrolment Ratio increased from 50.1 per cent to only 51.4 per cent. Poor learning outcomes amongst school students and mediocre higher education provisions call for more effective and efficient Government initiatives. Expanding resources will help but they need to be deployed more effectively, while incentives and professional development systems for teachers need to be strengthened.

Another challenging task of the Government is to ensure quality education, which is complex and changes according to the conditions and expectations of the context in which it operates. Several approaches and methodologies have already been adopted and practiced to ensure quality education. Participatory Teaching and Learning approach is one of the key methods to ensure quality of education at elementary level. The development sector has already used the participatory teaching and learning approach to recognize actual needs of the community and ensure quality service delivery to promote sustainable development. It is high time to promote participatory methods to ensure quality education at all levels. The present paper is aiming to illustrate the Participatory Teaching and Learning issues and its implications to ensure the quality of education at elementary level.

### **Quality Education and its Essential Elements**

Quality education is first and foremost a human right, agreed upon in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 26), and reinforced by a number of international conventions. The objective of quality education is to empower the individual and the community as a whole, to apply what they have learned in their lives as active and responsible citizens, to make their own choices and decisions, and to participate in democratic processes at local, national and global level. Quality education is based on the participant's own former knowledge, experiences, language, history and culture,

but it also expands participants' understanding, sometimes challenging in existing structure and views. This is achieved through active participation in the learning processes. Participation in formal education as a child or during adolescence is the most effective base for developing skills and values needed for adult life and future work. However, many children do not receive quality education, and this leaves young people without the desired skills they need. In addition to basic education, children and youth should be offered technical and vocational skill training to prepare themselves for earning livelihood.

Hence, the policy makers need to ensure the provision of some essential elements of quality education while developing its education policy. Some of the essential elements for quality education are mentioned below which need to be considered.

**Transformative Education:** Transformative education is one of the key elements of quality education. Transformative education empowers learners and enables them to constructively consider multiple viewpoints and perspectives in dialogue with others and give them the skill to engage in social action. From a transformative point of view, the student has a fundamental knowledge of reasoning and problem solving when joining any educational activity. The educator's role is to generate engaging and relevant learning experiences where students examine their knowledge and modify, review, affirm or change it into new knowledge, based on their interactions with the world and use of different learning resources. This is only possible through a participatory critical learning process. Interactive teaching can include activities focusing on soft skills like working in groups or pairs, journal writing, role play, drama, songs, dances, drawing, etc. Transformative education also includes active citizenship education, which aims at strengthening learners' inclination to participate in society and to engage in policy debates about issues of concern for them.

**Learner Centred Approach:** Learner centred approach is a key component of quality education. Learner centred approach believes that education must be driven by the role that the learner is to play in this process. By putting the learner at the centre of the education process, we provide them with the opportunity to take responsibility for their own learning; this, in turn, reinforces their confidence in their capacities and their motivation to learn. A learner centred approach also implies bringing the educational experience close to real-life concerns of the learner and their community.

**Well Educated and Motivated Teachers:** Quality education cannot be achieved without quality teachers. Teachers are the heart of achieving quality education. They are the role models and key to unlocking students' potential, whether these are

children, youth or adults. The relation between the students and the teacher is crucial in all types of education both formal and non-formal. Without a well-trained, committed and empathetic teacher leading the process of inquiry and investigation, education will fail to be either empowering or of high quality. The ideal teacher should also be able to create a safe and trusting environment in the classroom and know how to promote active citizenship, a democratic culture, and tolerance and respect, including gender equality, for all students.

**Inclusion and Gender Equality:** Quality education is inclusive because, it ensures that all, irrespective of sex, ethnicity, disability, sexuality, political orientation, religion, internal displacement, refugee status, geographical spread, etc., have equal access to quality education. To ensure effective access to quality education for all young people, the educational system must provide equal opportunities for all from the earliest years. They must ensure that neither personal nor social circumstances such as gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, disabilities, ethnic origin or family socio-economic background are obstacles to achieving educational potential, and that all individuals reach a level of competences that will allow them to become autonomous, motivated and responsible active citizens.

**Relevant Curriculum:** Quality education is characterized by a curriculum, content and learning materials that are inter-cultural and contextually relevant to all learners based on the learner's own experience, knowledge, skills, and culture.

**Proper Learning Environment:** Quality education is also characterized by an appropriate physical learning environment, containing all relevant external requisites (buildings, classrooms, toilets, water, books and learning and playing materials and outside space, etc.). A quality learning environment also includes an appropriate psychological and emotional environment, where the learners are respected by each other, by the teachers and by other school related staff.

**Proper Delivery Mechanism:** Quality education is also characterized by an effective and efficient curriculum delivery mechanism. Delivery mechanism should be more participatory and interactive so that learner can engage themselves in the learning process. It should be a two-way mechanism, i.e., both learner and education can communicate with each other and share their experiences and learning.

**Participation (of the Learner):** The learner has the right to take part in all stages throughout the educational process, from curricula design and shaping of the learning activity, to participation in any decision-making process both within a given education

system as well as in the wider framework of policy-making processes. In addition, peer learning should be fostered as a means to promote social interaction and a sense of responsibility and solidarity towards the other.

**Community Impact:** Education should respond to the specific needs of the learner and have a sustainable impact on the development of the community. This requires education to be an active part of the community and sensitive to its needs, while acknowledging the learners' socio-cultural circumstances and the environmental and economic context.

**Mother Tongue and Bilingual Education:** Mother tongue and bilingual education constitutes an important element in quality education. It is based on cultural and linguistic plurality, essential qualities for meeting the needs of peoples in different geographic locations of the country. Mother tongue instruction, combined with relevant methodologies aimed at active learning, has a number of advantageous results: increased access and equity also related to gender; improved learning outcomes; reduced repetition and dropout rates; socio-cultural benefits, and lower overall costs.

### **Principles of Participatory Learning Approach**

“Participation” has been embraced as a way to build greater voice, accountability and trust into relationships between people and institutions especially by strengthening citizen rights and voice. Education sector has also used a participatory learning approach to promote quality education. The Participatory Learning Approach was first promoted by Robert Chamber in 1988 as an approach to development planning and as a method of investigation. Participatory learning utilizes pedagogies and methods which create opportunities for community- developers/mobilisers, field practitioners, academics and students to work together and learn from each other. Participatory learning approach integrates all the potential stakeholders of the education system, i.e., educator/teacher, student/learners, community, leaders, administrators, researchers and others and makes them participate in the teaching-learning process. Over time, participatory learning approach has become a significant approach in education sector as:

- It values different kinds of knowledge and learning styles and creating a “learning environment” so that students and teachers can realize their full potential.
- It encourages dialogue and the exploration of different perspectives and experiences to generate creative thinking.

- It works collectively as it ensures engagement of all learners in the entire process, i.e., dialogue, sharing, questioning, practice and learning.
- It fosters leadership potential in the students and reduces distinctions and discriminations.
- It develops ownership among the stakeholders and makes community responsible.
- It improves the learning environment and makes education inclusive.

Participatory learning approach brings transformation in various levels of the learning process which helps to sustain the learning outcome and ensures quality learning. These transformations happen on a personal, social and universal level. At personal level, it brings changes in values, assumptions, attitudes, behaviour, lifestyles, etc. At social level, it brings changes in belief system, decision making process and cultural ethos at household and community level, and at universal level, it brings changes in values and worldviews. As a whole, it makes every learner more effective and efficient.

### **Participatory Learning Approaches and Quality Education**

There are a number of outcomes that are fundamental to the participatory work in educational institutions desired to improve the quality of education. These outcomes serve to encourage active participation, contribute towards a sense of ownership, and assist in developing a capacity to engage in educational improvement and confidence to do so. It also empowers students/community to express, share, enhance, analyze, monitor, and evaluate their knowledge. Listed below are the major outcomes of Participatory Learning Approach which ensure the quality education.

**1. Learn from and with the People:** Learning from and with the people is a crucial outcome of participatory learning approach. This outcome is based on the idea that all stakeholders in education have ideas and skills. Everyone has the potential to be a teacher in the broad sense and a learner at the same time. The participatory principle of learning from and with the people operates in a different manner because it places all people on the same plane. That means turning the traditional organizational hierarchy on its side, so that everyone is at the same level, i.e., parents, teachers and students are treated equally. If that is done, it indicates respect for all the people working directly or indirectly in education. The principle idea is that everyone can learn, and that learning does not take place only in the classroom. Learning also takes place in a variety of situations and contexts outside the school. Therefore, learning from whichever quarter ought to be recognized.

**2. Progressive Learning:** Participatory learning approach facilitates progressive learning outcomes. In progressive learning, there is no end to learning, and the rate of learning varies at different times and in different situations. It always increases learning for productive work for the benefit of the individual, and the society at large. This principle fits in well with the well-known thought, which advises teachers to teach from “the known to the unknown”. This not only maximizes learning potential possibilities but also builds self-confidence and self-esteem. That is, individuals and groups gain the courage and self-respect to believe in them and develop the power inside them to change for the better.

**3. Link learning to Action:** Participatory learning approach links learning to action. Every teacher or educator is eager to assess whether and what the learners have learned. So, the question is what indicators you would use to measure if learning has taken place. The most valid indicator used to measure learning is action. Participatory approach emphasizes action, which actually is a demonstration of learning. In addition, the change in knowledge, skill and attitude to perform a task can be assessed during the action. Therefore, action should not come as a surprise or by accident.

**4. Learner Sensitive:** Participatory learning approach is being learner-friendly in action. For example, a facilitator can be an outsider. As an “outsider”, one needs to build confidence among the people he/she is working with. This process takes time and varies from group to group, and from individual to individual. However, in participatory approach, it takes relatively short time. It has been found that when stakeholders understood the purpose of specific activities, they got involved and participated actively and consequently felt happy to be associated with the work. With time, the community and teachers might undertake participatory work on their own initiatives, which, in turn, ensures sustainability and ownership. This is so because stakeholders feel empowered.

**5. Flexible and Friendly Approach:** Flexibility and friendly approach are key characteristics of participatory approach. The participatory process rarely plays itself out the same way each time, and in every place and situation. Even with “expert” knowledge of a place and its people, and with good plans and organization, one may be caught by surprise with the unexpected. If so, there is a need to be open to new situations, challenges, or ideas. It is possible that the new situation reveals new opportunities and new ideas and may be the path to follow for success. There is a great diversity of people in terms of customs and behaviour and even these customs and behaviour have not remained constant all the time. Therefore, it is difficult to

say in advance what is the exact pathway one must follow. Further, a friendly and open environment makes learners more collaborative and cooperative in nature.

**6. Be Inclusive Among and Within the Group:** Every individual has different ideas and has something to offer to the society. The participatory approach offers everyone to explore and discuss different perceptions and opinions, which, in turn, broadens the opportunity for learning. For example, marginalized people in our society, such as women, children and non-literates have ideas and contributions to make to improve the education sector. But, because the dominant groups in society feel certain people have nothing to offer, the marginalized people are neither listened to nor given an opportunity to participate. Their good ideas and potential contributions go unnoticed, and unutilized, and are therefore, wasted. In participatory approach, everyone has an opportunity to explore his/her ideas for the sake of educational development.

**7. Non-formal Education Method:** The methods of non-formal education are more flexible, open ended and participatory which enable young people to engage more in their learning processes. The emphasis is put on experiential learning, thus building learning from practical experiences rather than from mere theoretical explanations. These experiences are extremely valuable in shaping transversal competences, preparing for and supporting young people's development throughout life. Teamwork, cooperation and interpersonal methods foster the learner's creativity, discovery and responsibility through a process of self-awareness and self-reflection.

### **Conclusion**

Quality education largely depends on the ownership, participation, cooperation, interaction and learning environment existing in and between the learner and educator. So it needs a more flexible and interactive delivery mechanism to improve the education outcomes. Participatory learning method is one of the emerging approaches in educational sector which enhances the quality of education by increasing the level of participation and ownership of both learner and educators and this will help the individual to become an active citizenship of a country.

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## **Right to Health and Healthcare in India: An Analysis**

**Arshi Pal Kaur<sup>1</sup>**

### **Abstract**

Right to health is an issue of fundamental importance in the Indian society. The responsibility to protect, respect and fulfil the right to health lies not only with the medical profession but also with public functionaries such as administrators and judges. The traditional notion of healthcare has now tended to be individual-centric and has focused on aspects such as access to medical treatment, medicines and procedures. The field of professional ethics in the medical profession has accordingly dealt with doctor-patient relationship and the expansion of facilities for curative treatment. In such a context, healthcare at the collective level was largely identified with statistical determinants such as life expectancy, mortality rates and access to modern pharmaceuticals and procedures. It is evident that such a conception does not convey a wholesome picture of all aspects of the protection and promotion of health in society. The Covid-19 Pandemic has exposed the inadequacy of private healthcare and the importance of spending and strengthening public healthcare. In the long-term, the government will have to re-evaluate and drastically improve upon the funding in public healthcare, and infrastructure. The manpower crisis plaguing the healthcare sector has to be managed with efficient and targeted vocational training. This present research paper highlights the Constitutional and legislative aspects of the healthcare system in our country especially during the period of COVID-19 pandemic.

**Keywords:** *healthcare; constitution; COVID-19*

### **Introduction**

Health is the most important factor in national development. It is a condition of a person's physical and mental state and signifies freedom from any disease or pain. Right to health is a vital right without which none can exercise one's basic human rights. The Government is under obligation to protect the health of the people because there is close nexus between health and the quality of life of a person. There

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are various provisions under the Constitution of India which deal with the health of the public at large. The founding fathers of the Indian Constitution rightly inserted Directive Principles of State Policy with a view to protect the health of the public at large. Health is the most precious prerequisite for happiness<sup>1</sup>. Right to health is an issue of fundamental importance in the Indian society. The responsibility to protect, respect and fulfil the right to health lies not only with the medical profession but also with public functionaries such as administrators and judges<sup>2</sup>.

The traditional notion of healthcare has now tended to be individual centric and has focused on aspects such as access to medical treatment, medicines and procedures. The field of professional ethics in the medical profession has accordingly dealt with doctor patient relationship and the expansion of facilities for curative treatment. In such a context, healthcare at the collective level was largely identified with statistical determinants such as life expectancy, mortality rates and access to modern pharmaceuticals and procedures. It is evident that such a conception does not convey a wholesome picture of all aspects of the protection and promotion of health in society. There is an obvious intersection between healthcare at the individual as well as the societal level and the provision of nutrition, clothing and shelter. Also, the term health has an inter-relationship with aspects such as the provision of a clean living environment, protections against hazardous working conditions, education about disease prevention and social security measures in respect of disability, unemployment, sickness and injury<sup>3</sup>.

Mental and Physical Health is the very basis of human personality. Diseases and mishaps must have had their grip over humans ever since they came into existence. The disablement, disfigurement and loss of life caused due to illness has alarmed human race. The multiple sources causing such agonies are both external and internal ranging from nature's wrath to lack of proper hygiene. If the human race is to survive and progress, preservation of good health is a must. Though personal hygiene can to a large extent ward off ordinary ailments caused due to lack of hygiene, there are many factors over which an individual can have no control, which causes health problems. The state agencies are in such areas better equipped to prevent the causes and deal with the ailments in a more regulatory, effective and authoritative manner. The legal responsibility of the state agencies is to take care of the individual's right to health in a welfare state. Every sovereign state has plenary power to do all things which promote health, peace, morals, education and good order of the people and tend to increase the wealth and prosperity of the state. Maintenance and improvement of public health have to rank high as these are indispensable to the very physical existence of the community and the betterment of these depends on the building of the society that the Constitution makers envisaged.

## **Indian Constitution and Right to Health**

The Preamble to the Constitution highlights some of the core values and principles that guide the Constitution of India. The Preamble directs the state to initiate measures to establish justice, equality, ensure dignity, etc., which have a direct bearing on people's health<sup>4</sup>.

Health is a vital indicator of human development and human development is the basic ingredient of economic and social development. In India, the right to health care and protection has been recognized, since early times. Independent India approached the public as the right holder and the state as the duty-bound primary provider of health for all. As our country is a founder member of the United Nations, it has ratified various international conventions promising to secure healthcare right of individuals in society. The Indian Constitution does not expressly recognize the fundamental right to health. However, Article 21 of the Constitution of India guarantees a fundamental right to life and personal liberty. The expression 'life in this article means a life with human dignity and not mere survival or animal existence. It has a much wider meaning which includes the right to livelihood, better standard of life, hygienic condition in workplace and leisure. The right to health is inherent to a life with dignity, and Article 21 should be read with Articles 38, 42, 43, and 47 to understand the nature of the obligation of the state in order to ensure the effective realization of this right<sup>5</sup>.

### **Article 21 of the Constitution and Right to Health and Health Care in India**

The Fundamental Right to Life, as stated in Article 21 of the Indian Constitution, guarantees to the individual her or his life and personal liberty except by a procedure established by law. The Supreme Court has widely interpreted this fundamental right and has included in Article 21 the right to live with dignity and "all the necessities of life such as adequate nutrition, clothing...." It has also held that an act that affects the dignity of an individual will also violate her/his right to life. The Constitution incorporates provisions guaranteeing everyone's right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. Article 21 of the Constitution guarantees protection of life and personal liberty to every citizen.

### ***The Constitution of India and Right to Health Care System***

The Constitution has made health care services largely a responsibility of State governments, but has left enough manoeuvrability for the Centre, since a large number

of items are listed in the Concurrent List. The Centre has been able to expand its sphere of control over the health sector. Hence, the central government has played a far more significant role in the health sector than demanded by the Constitution. The distribution of health care services is skewed favouring urban areas. Large cities, depending on their population have a few state-run hospitals (including teaching hospitals). At the district level, on an average, there is a 150 bedded Civil General Hospital in the main district town and a few smaller hospitals and dispensaries spread over the other towns in the district and sometimes in large villages. In the rural areas of the district, there are rural hospitals, primary health centres (PHCs) and subcentres that provide various health services and outreach services<sup>6</sup>.

The private health sector, especially the allopathic, constitutes an influential lobby in policy-making circles in India. There is virtually no regulation of this sector. The medical councils of the various systems of medicine perform only the function of registering qualified doctors and issuing them the license to practice. There is no monitoring, continuing education, price regulation, prescription vetting, etc., either by the medical councils or the government. It has not been possible to implement progressive policy initiatives, such as the recommendation of the *Hathi Committee Report*<sup>7</sup>. Pharmaceutical formulation production in India is presently worth over Rs. 280 billion and over 98 per cent of this is in the private sector. How does all this impact on health outcomes, especially among the poor? The Indian Constitution provides the people of India the right to health and healthcare. Articles 41, 42 and 47 of the Directive Principles of State Policy enshrined in Part IV of the Constitution provide the basis to evolve right to health and healthcare:

- **Right to work, to education and to public assistance in certain cases under Article 41 of the Constitution of India:** “The State shall, within the limits of its economic capacity and development, make effective provision for securing the right to work, to education and to public assistance in cases of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement, and in other cases of undeserved want.
- **Provision for just and humane conditions of work and maternity relief under Article 42 of the Constitution of India:** The State shall make provision for securing just and humane conditions of work and for maternity relief.
- **Duty of the State to raise the level of nutrition and the standard of living and to improve public health under Article 47 of the Constitution**

**of India:** The State shall regard the raising of the level of nutrition and the standard of living of its people and the improvement of public health as among its primary duties and, in particular, the State shall endeavour to bring about prohibition of the consumption except for medicinal purposes of intoxicating drinks and of drugs which are injurious to health.

Thus, social security, social insurance, decent standard of living, and public health coupled with the policy statements over the years, which in a sense constitutes the interpretation of these constitutional provisions, and supported by international legal commitments, form the basis to develop the right to health and healthcare in India. The only legal/constitutional principle missing is the principle of justifiability [enforceability or justiciability]. In the case of education, the 93rd amendment to the Constitution has provided limited justifiability. With regard to healthcare, there is even a greater need to make such gains, because often in the case of health, it is a question of life and death. As stated earlier, for a small part of the working population, the right to healthcare through the social security/social insurance route exists. This means that such security can be made available to the general population too. That a few people enjoy this privilege is also a sign of discrimination and inequity that violates not only the non-discrimination principle of international law, but it also violates Article 14 of the Constitution, Right to Equality, under the chapter of Fundamental Rights<sup>8</sup>.

*Apex Court recognizes that the right to health is essential for human existence and maintains his proper life to live with dignity*

The Supreme Court in *Bandhua Mukti Morcha vs. Union of India*<sup>9</sup> has held “that the right to live with human dignity, enshrined in Article 21 of the Constitution, is derived from the directive principles of state policy and therefore includes protection to health.” The Supreme Court has widely interpreted this Fundamental Right and has included in Article 21 the right to live with dignity and “all the necessities of life such as adequate nutrition clothing...The recognition that the right to health is essential for human existence and maintain his proper life for life with dignity so it evolves... the integral part of Right to life.” Supreme Court has also already upheld that Right to Health care is Fundamental Right involve [implicit] in the Right to Life. A perusal of the same reveals the following fundamental rights which are related to the health and health care of the people. Article 14 of the Constitution of India provides that the state shall not deny to any person equality before the law or equal protection of the laws within the territory of India<sup>10</sup>.

In *CESC Ltd. vs. Subash Chandra Bose*<sup>11</sup>, “the Supreme Court relied on international instruments and concluded that right to health is a fundamental right. It went further and observed that health is not merely absence of sickness”: “The term health implies more than an absence of sickness. Medical care and health facilities not only protect against sickness but also ensure stable manpower for economic development. Facilities of health and medical care generate devotion and dedication to give the workers’ best, physically as well as mentally, in productivity. It enables the worker to enjoy the fruit of his labour, to keep him physically fit and mentally alert for leading a successful economic, social and cultural life. The medical facilities are, therefore, part of social security and like gilt edged security, it would yield immediate return in the increased production or at any rate reduce absenteeism on grounds of sickness, etc. Health is thus a state of complete physical, mental and social well being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. In the light of Articles 22 to 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and in the light of socio-economic justice assured in our Constitution, right to health is a fundamental human right to workmen. The maintenance of health is a most imperative constitutional goal whose realisation requires interaction by many social and economic factors.”

### **Prisoner’s Right to Health**

Prisoners and under-trials are definitely denied some of the fundamental rights like freedom of movement, right to choose a profession, etc., but that does not mean that they lose all kinds of fundamental rights. Right to life is very much a part of a prisoner’s or under-trial’s right when they are behind the bars. There were many cases reported wherein these prisoners were denied basic fundamental rights like the right to health, food, clean drinking water, sanitation, etc., cases relating to prisoners’ right in relation to health are discussed.

In the case of *Hussainara Khatoon vs. State of Bihar*<sup>12</sup>, the Supreme Court ensured different rights of under-trial prisoners. The Court taking into consideration the plight of persons who are mentally unhealthy held that persons with unsound minds should not be kept in ordinary jails along with other under-trial prisoners.

Again, in the case of *Sunil Batra vs. Delhi administration*<sup>13</sup>, “guaranteeing the rights of prisoners, the Court laid emphasis that a prisoner does not lose all his rights when he is taken into custody or put in jail. In this case, a letter was written to the Supreme Court by a life convict, in which he alleged that the head warden had inflicted injuries in order to extract money from his relatives. The Supreme Court

considering the letter as a writ petition held that though a prisoner may be deprived of his right to movement, all other freedom belongs to him which includes the right to health.”

***Maintenance of health is a most imperative constitutional goal whose realization requires interaction of many social and economic factors***

The Apex Court in India has played a decisive role in the realization of the right to health by recognizing the right as a part of the fundamental right to life and issuing suitable directions to the State authorities for the discharge of their duties. The Court has recognized that maintenance of health is a most imperative constitutional goal whose realization requires interaction of many social and economic factors. Moreover, Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights States:

(i) *“Everyone has the right to a standard of living for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, and housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.”*

(ii) *“Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistances<sup>14</sup>”*

In the Constitution of India, in Article 47 of the Directive Principles of State Policy, there is a duty of the State to raise the level of nutrition and the standard of living and to improve public health. “The State shall regard the raising of the level of nutrition and the standard of living of its people and the improvement of public health as among its primary duties and, in particular, the State shall endeavour to bring about prohibition of the consumption except for medical purposes of intoxicating drinks and of drugs which are injurious to health<sup>15</sup>.”

***Judiciary have recognized the importance of health***

The judiciary has also, on many occasions, emphasized the relevance of health to human life. In *State of Punjab v. Ram Lubhaya Bagga*<sup>16</sup> case, “the Court said that it has time and again emphasized to the government and other authorities for focusing and giving priority to the health of its citizens, as it (health) not only makes one's life meaningful and improves one's efficacy, but in a true sense, it gives optimum output. While courts have recognized the importance of health to persons in general, in some cases, the significance of health to workmen in particular has been highlighted.

Maintenance of health has been held to be of the greatest priority. This obligation is further reinforced under Article 47; it is for the state to secure health to its citizens as its primary duty. No doubt the government is rendering this obligation by opening government hospitals and health centres, but to be meaningful, they must be within the reach of its people, and of sufficient liquid quality. Since it is one of the most sacrosanct and valuable rights of a citizen, and an equally sacrosanct and sacred obligation of the state, every citizen of this welfare state looks towards the state to perform this obligation with priority, including by way of allocation of sufficient funds. This in turn will not only secure the rights of its citizens to their satisfaction, but will benefit the state in achieving its social, political and economic goals.”

***It is the Obligation of State to provide medical Facilities***

In *State of Punjab v. Ram Lubhaya Bagga*<sup>17</sup>, “the court held that the state can neither urge nor say that it has no obligation to provide medical facilities. If that were so, it would be ex facie in violation of Article 21. Under a policy where medical services continue to be given, though an employee may be given a free choice to get treatment in any private hospital in India, the amount of reimbursement may be limited. Without fixing any specific rate, such a policy does not leave this limitation to the will of the director, but it is done by a committee of technical experts. The court further held that no state or country can have unlimited resources to spend on any of its projects. That is why, it only approves projects that appear feasible. The same holds true for providing medical facilities to its citizens. Provision of facilities cannot be unlimited. It has to be to the extent that finances permit. If no scale or rate is fixed, then in case private clinics or hospitals increase their rate to exorbitant scales, the state would be bound to reimburse the same. The principle of fixing of rate and scale under such a policy is justified, and cannot be held to violate Article 21 and Article 47 of the Constitution.”

*The paramount obligation cast upon member of the medical profession to provide medical assistances to the needy as Right to Health is a Fundamental Right.*

The Supreme Court in the case *Paramanand Katara vs. Union of India*<sup>18</sup> held “that every doctor whether government or private or otherwise has the professional obligation to extend his services with due expertise for protecting life. No law or state action can intervene to avoid delay. The discharge of the paramount obligation cast upon member of the medical profession or provide medical assistances to the needy as right to health is a Fundamental Right. The obligation being total, absolute and paramount, laws of procedure whether in statutes or otherwise which would interfere with the discharge of this obligation cannot be sustained, and must, therefore, give way.”

*The right to health and health care of a worker is a component of the fundamental right to life guaranteed under Article 21 of the Constitution of India.*

Again, in *CERC vs. Union of India*<sup>19</sup>, “the Supreme Court was dealing with the rights of workers in asbestos manufacturing and health hazards related to it. The Court was dealing essentially with private employers involved in asbestos mining and industry. To begin with, the Court noted that the right to health and health care of a worker is a component of the fundamental right to life guaranteed under Article 21 of the Constitution of India.”

### **Right to Healthcare is a Fundamental Right**

The issue of adequacy of medical health services was also addressed by the Supreme Court in *Psschim Bengal Khet Mazdoor Samity and ors. Vs. State of West Bengal* case<sup>20</sup>. “The question before the court was whether the non-availability of services in the government health centres amounts to a violation of Article 21. It was held that Article 21 imposes an obligation on the State to safeguard the right to life of every person. Preservation of human life is, thus, of paramount importance. The government hospitals run by the State and the medical officers employed therein are duty bound to extend medical assistance for preserving human life. Failure on the part of a government hospital to provide timely medical treatment to a person in need of such treatment results in violation of his right to life guaranteed under Article 21. Therefore, the failure of a government-run health centre to provide timely treatment is violative of a person’s right to life. Further, the Court ordered that Primary Health Care Centers be equipped to deal with medical emergencies. It has also been held in this judgment that the lack of financial resources cannot be a reason for the State to shy away from its constitutional obligation<sup>21</sup>.”

While widening the scope of Article 21 and the government’s responsibility to provide medical aid to every person in the country, the Court held that in a welfare state, the primary duty of the government is to secure the welfare of the people. Providing adequate medical facilities for the people is an obligation undertaken by the government in a welfare state. The government discharges this obligation by providing medical care to the persons seeking to avail of those facilities. Article 21 imposes an obligation on the state to safeguard the right to life of every person. Preservation of human life is thus of paramount importance. The government hospitals run by the state are duty-bound to extend medical assistance for preserving human life. Failure on the part of a government hospital to provide timely medical treatment to a person in need of such treatment results in violation of his right to life guaranteed

under Article 21. The petitioner should, therefore, be suitably compensated for the breach of his right guaranteed under Article 21 of the Constitution. After due regard to the facts and circumstances of the case compensation of Rs 25,000 was given<sup>22</sup>.

*Labonya Moyee Chandra vs. State of West Bengal*<sup>23</sup> “case reflected the lack of seriousness of the State in executing its duties and the implementation of the directions and recommendations in *Paschim Banga Khet Mazdoor Samiti case*<sup>24</sup>.

In *Municipal Council, Ratlam vs. Vardhichand & Ors*<sup>25</sup>, “the municipal corporation was prosecuted by some citizens for not clearing up the garbage by filing the Public Interest Litigation. The corporation took up the plea that it did not have money. While rejecting the plea, the Supreme Court through Justice Krishna Iyer observed: “The State will realize that Article 47 makes it a paramount principle of governance that steps are taken for the improvement of public health as amongst its primary duties.”

In *Unnikrishnan, JP vs. State of A.P.*<sup>26</sup> “the maintenance and improvement of public health is the duty of the State to fulfil its constitutional obligations cast on it under Article 21 of the Constitution.

In the case of *Peoples' Union of Civil Liberties vs. Union of India*<sup>27</sup>, “public interest litigation was filed against the Government for backing out of a project to build a psychiatric hospital-cum-medical college in Delhi. The plan had been approved but when it was found that over Rs. 40 crores would be the expenditure, the Delhi Administration expressed its inability to fund such a project and the Central Government refused to take on its responsibility. The Supreme Court held that setting up of a psychiatric hospital in the capital city was necessary. Once land has been earmarked and on principle a decision taken that hospital should be shifted and part of it should be converted into a teaching institution while the other part should be a hospital, funding should not stand in way of locating such a hospital. As it was difficult to fund such a huge amount in a single year, it was to be taken up as a continuous project spread over a period. Hence, the Central Government and the Delhi Administration were directed to recommence and finish the project.”

### ***HIV patients and their Right to health***

Persons suffering from HIV/AIDS have to face large levels of discrimination. “These people are often denied care and support and so their rights get violated. The courts have protected people with HIV/AIDS against discrimination in employment and services. The patients suffering from this dreadful disease deserve full sympathy.”

*The Disclosure of deadly disease does not violate the Right of Privacy of Patient in the public interest*

Another case, *Mr. X v. Hospital Z*<sup>28</sup> is a very famous case where the Court in order to protect public health violated the right of privacy of one Mr. X. In this case, the patient who is the appellant was tested HIV+ and had proposed for marriage and the proposal had been accepted. “The proposed marriage carried with it the health risk to an identifiable person who had to be protected from being infected with the communicable disease from which the appellant suffered. The doctor made the disclosure of the status of the patient. And so, the appellant approached the National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission for damages against the Doctor on the ground that the information which was required to be kept secret under Medical ethics was disclosed illegally. The Commission dismissed the petition on the ground that the appellant may seek remedy in the Civil Court. The court held that the Hippocratic Oath as such is not enforceable in a court of law as it has no statutory force. Medical information about a person is protected by the Code of Professional Conduct made by the Indian Medical Council Act. The court also referred the English Law which permitted such disclosure in very limited circumstances where the public interest so required. One of the circumstances wherein public interest overrides the duty of confidentiality is immediate or future (but not a past and remote) health risk to others.

Hence, the Code of Medical Ethics also carved out an exception to the rule of confidentiality and permitted the disclosure in the above circumstance. The court observed that such disclosure would not violate appellants right of Privacy as the lady with whom the appellant was likely to be married was saved in time by such disclosure. The court further observed that mental and physical health is of prime importance in a marriage, and one of the objects of the marriage is the procreation of equally healthy children. The court also emphasized Sections 269 and 270 of the Indian Penal Code and said that if any person suffering from dreadful disease like AIDS knowingly marries a woman and thereby transmits infection to that woman, he would be guilty of the above offences. These statutory provisions, thus, impose a duty upon the appellant not to marry as the marriage would have the effect of spreading the infection of his own disease, which obviously is dangerous to life, to the woman whom he marries apart from being an offence. The court stressed on the point that whenever there is clash of two fundamental rights as in the instant case appellant’s right to privacy and his fiancée’s right to lead a healthy life, the RIGHT which would advance the public morality or public interest, would alone be enforced through the process of law.”

## **India's Public Health Infrastructure is Overburdened**

The number of confirmed Coronavirus cases in India has been growing at a rate seen at the early stages in other countries where there was subsequently an exponential rise in infections in a matter of weeks. As a result, worries are beginning to mount whether India will also witness a significant outbreak in the days ahead. This is despite the sweeping measures put in place by governments at the Centre and in the states. "While India placed travel restrictions relatively early in the spread of Covid-19, and several states moved quickly to shutter public places, the country's high population density and the associated difficulty in practicing social distancing, overburdened public health infrastructure, high prevalence of non-communicable diseases and the prospect of transmission from younger people to the elderly in joint families all stack the odds against effective containment"<sup>29</sup>.

### ***India's health care system: A new deadly challenge of novel Coronavirus***

As the virus spread globally, India began bolstering its ability to test and detect the virus. While the National Institute of Virology at Pune remains the main testing facility, the government has identified 35 additional labs for testing. But concerns remain over India's overstretched health infrastructure - a single state run hospital for every 55,591 people on average and a single hospital bed for every 1,844 people. India needs about 10 times more doctors to meet the norms prescribed by the World Health Organization, a shortfall of at least 500,000 doctors. Experts fear that an epidemic would cause other routine health care functions to suffer. "Everything will become about COVID-19. And other routine services like immunization or taking care of maternal mortality would be affected," said Anant Bhan, a global health and policy expert<sup>30</sup>.

### ***Health Care Inequality***

India's health performance, an index that includes access to primary care, maternal mortality rates and child health, runs the spectrum, with some states outperforming others by almost 2.5 times, according to the government-run think tank NITI Aayog. The best performer was Kerala, the small state that found and treated India's first three cases. The worst was Uttar Pradesh, a state with roughly the population of Brazil that has detected at least six cases. Kerala has a doctor for approximately every 6,000 people, while Uttar Pradesh has one for every 18,000 people.<sup>31</sup> "The inequalities are further pronounced between urban and rural areas, with the bulk of the available beds concentrated in India's cities. India spent an average of \$62.72 per

person on health care in 2016, according to WHO, compared to China's \$398.33. Although India is the world's primary supplier of generic drugs, it relies on China for nearly 70 percent of the active pharmaceutical ingredients it uses for making medicines. India has said it has enough stocks, but the government's minister for chemicals and fertilizers told Parliament that there remains "an apprehension" that supplies of ingredients from China would be disrupted if the epidemic continues. Health Minister Harsh Vardhan met the management of India's top private hospitals to ask them to work with the government in dealing with the outbreak and urged them to prepare a pool of beds<sup>32</sup>."

As per the report of *The Caravan* magazine "through modern Indian history, the government's outlook on public health has largely been limited to damage control containing outbreaks of leprosy, for instance. As the example of tuberculosis makes clear, even at that, the government has very often failed. India's founding fathers prioritized such things as industrial growth and agrarian self-sufficiency at the expense of health and education. This set the course for the history of neglect we see today. The Indian government's outlay on health amounts to little more than one percent of the country's GDP far below the global average. India signed the Alma Ata Declaration at the World Health Assembly in 1978, promising *Health for All* by 2000. As a follow-up, the country unveiled its first ever formal health policy in 1983, a full thirty-six years after Independence.

After ignoring the health sector in all the decades since Independence, the government realized it did not have the hospitals to keep up with the burgeoning population. Through 1979 and early 1980, the Chennai-based doctor Prathap C Reddy did the rounds of the prime minister's office to get Charan Singh to sign off on his pet project, a hospital in his home city that he would call Apollo.

This would become the first of a new wave of private hospitals in the country, with numbers growing into the hundreds and then the thousands. Instead of investing in the public healthcare system, the government consistently chose exorbitant public-private partnerships with private health providers. A rising tribe of medical entrepreneurs such as Reddy, Naresh Trehan and Devi Shetty encouraged the government on this path." Now, public health "solutions" revolved around the state purchasing care from private hospitals and increasing cover on government insurance schemes, all at great cost. The government also offered massive discounts on land for private hospitals, as well as other subsidies and tax rebates. In effect, Indian taxpayers gave free funding to private hospitals where Indian taxpayers had to pay for care. Now, the Modi government is in the process of allowing the private sector

to take over government-run district hospitals, as laid out in a recent Niti Aayog document<sup>33</sup>.

### **Conclusion**

The movement of judicial view from the early discussions on health to the late nineties clearly shows that the right to health and access to medical treatment has become part of Article 21. A corollary of this development is that while so long the negative language of Article 21 was supposed to impose upon the State only the negative duty not to interfere with the life or liberty of an individual without the sanction of law, judges have now imposed a positive obligation upon the State to take steps for ensuring to the individual a better enjoyment of his life and dignity. The judicial activism shows that constitutional and human rights interpretation is a dynamic process that involves the creativity and commitment of individuals to the underlying values of society. In addition, the Supreme Court has shown that judges have the enormous potential to effect change in society when they so desire. Therefore, despite being non-justifiable in the Constitution, the social rights in the Directive Principles have nevertheless been made enforceable and have been treated as justifiable by the Supreme Court. However, the sad part is that the implementation of judicial orders still remains a big issue.

However, the present challenge before the Government of India is the pandemic of COVID-19. The Indian government finally allowed healthcare workers treating patients suffering from COVID-19, the disease caused by the Coronavirus, to be tested; it also only recently began testing those without travel history, a long overdue implicit admission that the virus was being transmitted locally; and it has just issued notices to private hospitals to submit tallies of the number of intensive-care beds and ventilators available and to cancel nonessential surgeries, and directed facilities nationwide to ensure those suffering COVID-19 are neither stigmatized nor turned away.

Even the measures the authorities have taken have had unintended consequences. The lockdown, for example, bars factory workers from going to work, leading to a shutdown of the medical device industry, and preventing truckers from transporting materials and stocks to hospitals. A 2016 Reuters report noted that India needed more than 50,000 critical-care specialists, but has just 8,350. In short, the country's healthcare system is in no position to cope with an avalanche of patients with a contagious respiratory infection in the manner that China and Italy have been doing. India's continued inability to deal with the epidemic of tuberculosis speaks to that struggle. This is a very serious situation before the world as well as before India<sup>34</sup>.

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- <sup>15</sup> Articles 47, 39(e), 41, 43 of the Constitution of India.
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<sup>21</sup> (1996) 4 SCC 37.

<sup>22</sup> (1996) 4 SCC 37.

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## **Lifelong Learning is a Way to Empowering Community Members**

**Dhananjay Lokhande<sup>1</sup>**

### **Abstract**

Today, the adult learner needs an understanding of the rapidly changing world and growing complexities of the society. Lifelong learning has been an integral part of Indian culture. The entire education system is designed to facilitate lifelong and 'life-wide' learning and the creation of formal, non-formal and informal learning opportunities for people of all age groups. Regardless of ideological or political persuasion regarding globalization and lifelong learning, there is consensus that it is vital that citizens learn to function in this new and dynamic world. Ensuring that citizens and employees are equipped with the skills and competencies needed to live and work in the 21st century is a matter of great urgency. The present research paper is an outcome of an original empirical research study on 'A Need Assessment Study on Lifelong Learning for Community Members' conducted by the author at Savitribai Phule Pune University, Pune, Maharashtra.

**Keywords:** *lifelong learning; continuing education; community empowerment; skill development; capacity building*

### **Introduction**

Literacy is an essential tool for learning, communication and acquiring and sharing of information. The importance of formal education, colleges, universities, etc., in this context needs no special emphasis, although this alone is not sufficient for the overall development of one's personality.

One of the best and most comprehensive understandings of lifelong learning has been offered by Peter Sheehan (2001) in his Foreword to the Kluwer International Handbook of Lifelong Learning. It is crucial to demystify the discourse around globalization and lifelong learning and focus on issues of social justice and equity (Hoogvelt, 1997; Marginson, 1999).

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Houle & Edmund Des Bruner (1958) identified adult education agencies developed primarily for the education of adults, such as university and agricultural extension and corresponding schools. Agencies and institutions founded for non-educational purposes have undertaken adult education in order to strengthen their major programmes and to do their job better, which also results in their overall empowerment.

### **Lifelong learning education**

In the context of non-literate adults, post-literacy education should be related to their everyday life situations, their needs and interests. It should guarantee them the retention of literacy skills and the development of other types of abilities. The organization that provides lifelong education, such as Continuing Education Centres (CEC) organized by the state governments under the aegis of Sakshar Bharat Programme or the CECs organized by the Departments of Adult and Lifelong or line departments of the governments with extension education and training like Agriculture, *Panchayats*, Health, etc., should have concern for clarity of values, purposes and commitment as well as more obvious matters of management, staffing, resources and appropriate methods (Padmanabhan, 1989). Determination of adult education needs thorough surveys and other statistical sources available in the locality.

According to Lalitha Lenin (2000), the special characteristic of the continuing education makes these services the backbone of continuing education. This will play a major role in knowing the upcoming areas for the acquisition of new knowledge, skills and methods that can be included in the curriculum of lifelong learning.

Post-literacy and continuing education should have aims to improve people's earnings and living, promote education, and provide people with knowledge and services in health care, including knowledge for environmental conservation for the public organization. It should be mainly aimed to extend and conserve culture, customs and tradition, etc.

### **Significance of the study**

The researchers have undertaken a detailed review of available literature and previous research articles in regard to the topic under enquiry. There is an acute scarcity of research on this topic, unlike in the area of formal education. According to our review, there is a lack of a focused study on the different dimensions of lifelong learning, which is the need for a progressive era.

Education for a more highly skilled workforce, has an economic justification for lifelong learning. It is instrumental to achieving an extrinsic goal, and it is a declared policy of international bodies (Aspin et al. 2001). It called for a new philosophy and re-conceptualization of education as a lifelong process, thus requiring constant reorganization or reconstruction of experience and knowledge. Inside the twenty-first century, this call is even more urgent.

Paucity of endogenous data on the subject under enquiry, and to add a new scientific dimension to lifelong learning literature are also part of the reasons for undertaking this study. It will add to the knowledge base of lifelong learning and may help our community members, organizations and academicians or even a layman to understand the importance of continuing education throughout life.

### **Objectives of the study**

1. To understand the role of lifelong learning in the context of community development.
2. To find out the needs for lifelong learning with regard to health, education, cultural and other social aspects of the community.
3. To assess the impact of the lifelong learning process on individual beneficiaries
4. To recommend the intervention strategy for lifelong learning to empower the community.

### **Method and material**

#### **Participants**

A sample of 55 respondents (25 social work field practitioners, 25 beneficiaries of different educational schemes, and 05 academicians from the extension education field) was selected for the present study from rural and urban areas of Pune district. They were selected on a non-probability sampling framework and a purposive sampling technique has been used for the same. The respondents were aged between 21 to 58 years and have working experience (field practitioner and academicians) ranging from 05 to 30 years.

#### **Procedure**

The participants selected for the study were contacted individually. After explaining the purpose of the study, they were requested to give consent for the same. After their consent, the questionnaire was given to them to fill up, they were also given enough time for returning it. Personal queries of the respondents after finishing

questionnaire have also been entertained to make them clear. Also, additional information was obtained through interviews, secondary data, focus group discussions, etc., of the stakeholders with the help of social workers working at different levels especially in NGOs.

### **Measures**

The questionnaire consisting of a series of demographic questions about participants' personal characteristics and items possibly reveal their understandings, experiences, and expectations about the need for lifelong learning and continuing education. The flows of questions, patterns and more importantly language have been pre-tested before giving them to the respondents. The data is analyzed by using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (16.0 versions). The simple frequency tables and cross-tabulation were made for analysis. Deductive method of qualitative analysis has also been used to reveal the qualitative aspects of lifelong learning and continuing education considering their importance.

### **Result and discussion**

#### **Characteristics of participants**

The socio-demographic characteristics of the participants reveal that some of them are already covered in the method part of this paper. Majority of the respondents (45.45%) were between 36 to 45 years and (60.00%) of them were females, mostly educated up to higher secondary level (38.18%).

#### **Employability and skills of the participants**

As regards the current status of employment, it was seen that 67.27% of respondents were employed who have given preference to the need, mastery and importance to gain computer skills in the job were 70.90%. About 38.18% of the respondents opined English communication, 25.45% rated for report writing skill, 58.18% identified marketing skills, and 23.63% of respondents shared that production/manufacturing skills are important to them for a better job and performance in their current employment. However, 07.27% respondents were unable to define the skill that would help them to do a better job.

#### **Necessity and Mode of learning for enrichment**

The responses to learning mode, most of the participants (67.27%) preferred distance mode learning, but surprisingly, 87.27% respondents have not attended web conference class yet. 34.54% of respondents preferred the summer and winter period

for attending the lifelong learning classes. According to 43.63% respondents, evening time will be the best time to attend the lifelong learning classes. To attend such classes, 69.09% respondents showed readiness to travel up to 05 km, and 61.81% express the necessity of a creche facility to attend lifelong learning education programme.

### **Components to be included in lifelong learning**

The participants also suggested the components that need to be included in lifelong learning programme. 92.72% of the respondents informed that computer education should be imparted through lifelong learning whereas 63.63% respondents suggested communication and personality development. 41.81% of the respondents asked for courses or modules on handicraft making. While 30.90% of the respondents demanded courses on fashion designing, 74.54% respondents asked for courses on food processing, 61.81% respondents were interested in courses related to local self-governance. At the same time, 72.72% respondents emphasize that these courses should be included in the lifelong learning programme conducted by different State and Central Universities.

### **Gaps you observed in present systems**

When the respondents were informed that there are centres already existing for enrichment of community members, they pointed out the following few gaps that exist in the system. 67.27% respondents feel that the number of existing centres is insufficient for the lifelong learning programme. 78.18% respondents found the lack of trained field level staff in lifelong learning programmes. 70.90% respondents felt that the present curriculum is improper and does not suit the needs of community members. 83.63% of respondents pointed out the lack of awareness about lifelong learning among the community members.

### **Conclusion**

Adult learners, particularly those with low skills, are more likely to participate in adult education and training when they believe their investment of time and money will benefit them in the labour market. This can mean improved job prospects for unemployed adults, or career advancement for adults who are already working. Yet adult learning providers face challenges in aligning their programming with labour market needs. Even when educational programmes respond directly to identified skill shortages, it can be difficult to predict whether there will be enough interest among adult learners in the community to deliver the programme.

The variety of non-formal education programmes like literacy and continuing education, vocational training, career guidance, health education, social awareness, sports and cultural activities, relevant knowledge to the target groups, positive changes in their attitude need to be developed yet. In addition to that, necessary skills for income generation and better lifestyle also need to be developed among certain target groups and it could be a major part of lifelong learning programme.

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## **Webinars as a Means of Professional Development of Teaching Community**

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• Neelu Verma<sup>2</sup>

### **Abstract**

This article examines the tools used by the teacher fraternity to ensure their students continue their learning despite the lockdown of educational institutions due to the Covid 19 pandemic. It also surveys the tools and technologies used by teachers during the lockdown period. The survey research shows that the teaching fraternity from urban areas attended more professional development programmes than the rural areas. The majority used social media like WhatsApp groups for communication, and for professional development activities, the platforms used majorly were Zoom, YouTube, Google Meet and many others. It also dwells on the challenges faced by teachers while attending Webinars on various topics like Digital Curricula, Personalized Learning, Google tools for educators, among many others. The article surveys their challenges and sources of their motivation to continue engaging their students and their learning. It suggests that Webinars should continue to be an official mode of professional development of teachers.

**Keywords:** *COVID 19 pandemic; educational technology; online platforms; web conferencing tools; e-learning tools; online courses*

### **Introduction**

The COVID 19 pandemic laid down many challenges for the entire educational fraternity. Teachers, many of whom belong to the digital immigrant community, found it challenging to deal with the so-called 'New Normal' brought in with the changing times. The educational institutions shut their shutters, but what was not affected was 'learning'. The most enthusiastic teachers, who vouched for their interactive classroom climate and discourses with the students, were in a fix! There were challenges and new ways to deal with those exceptional challenges. So, to say the least, teaching went on and is still going on, as smoothly as it should be.

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During the lockdown period because of the pandemic COVID 19, education, the only area which has not stopped the enthusiasm of teachers, has changed the world. The teachers were barred from entering the school and college buildings, but they have been working at the forefront from their homes. They have been learning new ways to engage students, and then they have finally tried all those new ways to teach the students. So, by the time the students woke up after a month-long lockdown period to witness another lockdown, the teachers were ready to face their students with fresh ideas, and fresh content to be imparted in newer ways. They happily started looking for new ways to engage with their students and fellow colleagues.

The institutions during the lockdown days, started offering or rather conducted webinars/training courses online, using multiple platforms. The majority of the online conferencing were conducted on ZOOM platform, Webex, GoToWebinar, Google Meet, Microsoft Teams and many others. The topics of the webinars are diverse digital curricula, educational technology, English language, arts, mathematics, Google tools for educators, personalized learning, science, social media, social studies, e-content development, online digital tools, educational research, journal publishing and so on.

Looking at the condition of the world, and the willingness of the teacher fraternity to continuously learn in spite of the challenges faced by them, the researchers thought it was apt to conduct a short survey of the tools being used by the teacher fraternity for professional development during the lockdown times.

### **Professional Development of Teachers**

Professional development is learning to earn or maintain professional credentials such as academic degrees through formal coursework, attending conferences, and informal learning opportunities situated in practice. Effective professional development is structured professional learning that results in changes in teacher practices and improvements in student learning outcomes from time to time. With the new lockdown conditions, teachers had to take up teaching on online platforms. Teaching online requires specialized skill sets including an understanding of how to conduct classes in a virtual environment, knowing when and how to use videoconferencing, share content, respond to students' submissions and more. Effective online instruction doesn't happen magically. The teachers have to get into place the devices needed to reach students now stuck at home, after knowing about those devices themselves. So, this was the call for duty and many teachers stepped up to lead professional development sessions on remote learning despite schools being closed. Others played the role of students

themselves to learn those aspects of technology that were needed to reach out to the students in their homes. Thus, the need for professional development was felt more than ever.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The study was conducted with the following objectives.

1. To identify the tools and technology used for professional development by teachers;
2. To examine the challenges faced by teachers to access the web conferencing tools for professional development.

### **Rationale for the Study**

The researchers living in the metropolitan city, sometimes fail to get access to technology due to low bandwidth, electricity and connectivity problems. The researchers also felt that many teachers are engaged in learning by attending webinars during lockdown. What motivated them to attend these webinars on various topics? Which age group of teachers is more interested in webinars? How many teachers have access to the internet and computers? How many teachers are organizing and participating in webinars? These were the questions that often made the researchers think about the feasibility of webinars in the professional development of teachers. It also made them contemplate how webinars had become a very important means of acquiring teaching skills of the new generation and developing professionally.

### **Literature Review**

Teachers have been away from schools and colleges, but education has not been on hold. Students are learning and teachers are still teaching in spite of not being in face-to-face contact situations. This pandemic has done a lot of damage to life in general, however, it could not sabotage the education sector. Those teachers, who could not contribute to online learning, actually learned first, then took life head-on.

The Commonwealth of Learning (COL) states that with an increasing number of states, provinces and even whole countries closing institutions of learning as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic, almost 70% of the world's students are not attending school (UNESCO, 2020). COL has shared its expertise and resources and has enabled stakeholders to keep the doors of learning open for all. Many teachers have done many courses and have learnt new skills needed in the online teaching scenario.

A module created by OECD for educators states that the COVID-19 Pandemic is a typical transformative challenge, for which there is no preconfigured manual that can guide appropriate responses. It is important that the education leaders design responses swiftly with specific contexts in mind as the pandemic goes on. It is also important to protect young people's educational opportunities during and following the pandemic. It has created a set of resources to help those collaborating institutions and countries in the important and urgent task of supporting students' opportunity to learn during this challenging crisis shared among humankind. It is true that students with access to digital devices and the internet may not be the majority in most countries. But, governments are trying to establish effective forms of online education that will free up institutional capacities. Teachers are creating online resources and redirecting their focus on delivering alternative learning methods for those students who do not have similar opportunities. The skills needed to be developed during these times through online mode include cognitive skills, interpersonal skills and intrapersonal skills.

World Economic Forum also has recognized the challenge of schools and colleges being shut across the globe and hence online learning could be one possible solution to continue engaging the children effectively. As per the surveys, even before COVID-19, there was already high growth and adoption in education technology, and global investments in education companies were high. The overall market for online education was gaining strength. All sectors including language apps, virtual tutoring, video conferencing tools or online learning software have been used significantly since COVID-19.

Many e-learning tools and companies producing those tools began offering teachers and students unlimited video conferencing time, in order to keep up with the times. This also proves that the business sectors have identified the challenge of online teaching and the need for teachers to keep up with the times. Cloud server companies have started expanding their storage capacities. Educational broadcasts and channels focused on different ages and a range of digital options are also powering virtual learning.

The World Bank is actively working with ministries of education in dozens of countries in support of their efforts to utilize educational technologies of all sorts to provide remote learning opportunities for students while schools are closed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Learning platforms like Moodle and LMS are being used, as well as cloud solutions from companies such as Microsoft and Google have been taken. However, all these changes require teachers to be professionally equipped with knowledge of technologies in the first place. In many countries, because

of school closures, the governments took additional efforts to improve the efficiency of digital learning environment services. As a result of this, teachers were expected to attend professional development workshops in order to keep themselves abreast with the latest advancements in technology, and also to update themselves with the learning systems that were required to keep the teaching-learning process going. Because of COVID-19, most professors and students suddenly found themselves forced to use technology for teaching and learning. Experts have explored how colleges and professors are reimagining how they teach and how students learn. This sudden, forced immersion and experimentation with technology-enabled forms of learning have had an impact on the status of online learning in higher education. The sudden explosion of remote learning that may be primitive and of dubious quality because of lack of appropriate skill sets to use it, could affect attitudes and impressions of learners. Further, it could also affect perceptions towards online learning - a mode of learning that already struggles to gain widespread faculty and student support.

### **Demographic Distribution of Respondents**

This article explores all these issues that have emerged due to the sudden pandemic and lockdown. The researchers collected data from 168 respondents. Out of 168 respondents, 37% were male and 63% were female. 70.2% respondents were Assistant Professors, 14.3% Associate Professors, 6.5% Professors and others were 8.9%. It was also observed that the majority of respondents who attended webinars are Assistant Professors, belonging to an age group of 31-50. Most of the respondents were located in an urban area during the lockdown period. However, two of the respondents failed to provide their location during the lockdown period.

**Table 1: Gender Distribution of the Sample**

	No	%
Male	62	36.90
Female	106	63.10
Total	168	100

**Table 2: Designation of the Respondents**

	Male	Male %	Female	Female %	Total	Total %
Asst Prof	42	67.74	76	71.70	118	70.2
Assoc Prof	13	20.97	11	10.38	24	14.3
Prof	4	6.45	7	6.60	11	6.5
Others	03	4.84	12	11.32	15	8.9
	62	100	106	100	168	100

**Table 3: Age Group of Respondents**

Age	Male		Female		Total	%
	No	%	No	%		
21-30	6	9.68	19	17.92	25	14.9
31-40	28	45.16	38	35.85	66	39.3
41-50	20	32.26	36	33.96	56	33.3
51-60	8	12.90	13	12.26	21	12.5
Total	62	100	106	100	168	100

**Table 4: Location during Lockdown**

Location	Male		Female		Total	%
	No	%	No	%		
Urban	42	70	79	74.53	121	72.9
Rural	18	30	27	25.47	45	27.1
Total	60		106	100.00	166	100

**Ownership of Devices**

The data collection form had questions pertaining to the ownership of technological devices by the respondents. Following was the data collected.

**Table 5: Ownership of Devices**

Technological Device	
Laptops, Smartphones	58
Smartphones	41
Laptops, Personal Computers, Smartphones	21
Laptops	13
Laptops, Personal Computers, Smartphones, Tablets/ iPad	12
Laptops, Smartphones, Tablets/ iPad	10
Personal Computers, Smartphones	9
Laptops, Personal Computers	2
Personal Computers, Smartphones, Tablets/ iPad	2
iPad	1

Of a total of 168 respondents, 116 respondents (68.6%) own a laptop whereas 46 respondents (27.2%) own personal computers. Majority of respondents (153) have smartphones (90.5%). 25 of them (14.8%) own either a Tablet or iPad. From Table 5, it is also evident that majority of respondents have multiple access (Laptop/ Personal Computer/iPad and Smartphone). 25% of respondents reported that they had only smartphones with them.

### **Internet Access to Respondents**

The internet accessed by a majority of respondents (89.3%) was data pack available through mobile devices. 33.9% respondents depended on wireless devices. Leased line is used only by 7.1% of the respondents.

**Table 6: Internet Access to Respondents**

Mobile Devices	150	89.3%
Wireless	57	33.9%
Leased Lines	12	7.1%
Any other	3	1.8%

### **Frequency of Accessing Internet**

About 99.4% respondents reported that they access internet daily. Only one out of 168 respondents (0.6%) mentioned that he accesses internet on alternate days. This shows that professionals depend on the internet to access data daily and keep themselves updated.

### **Attendance of Professional Development Programmes**

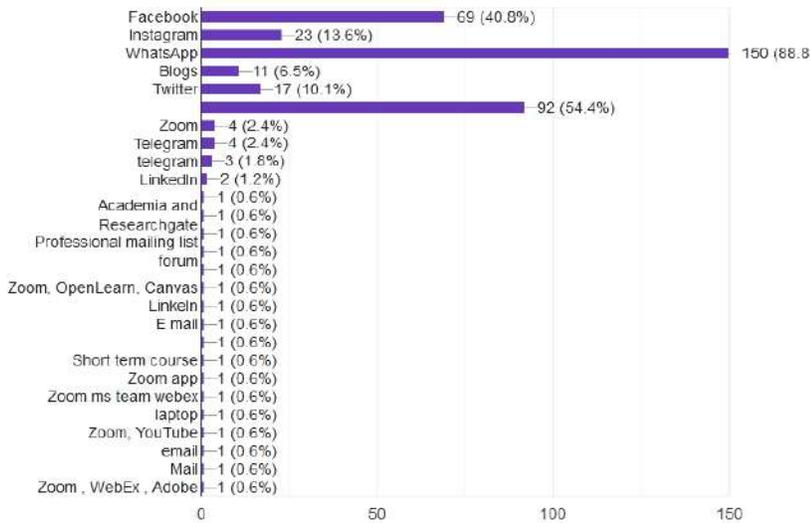
Out of 168 respondents, 152 (90.5%) attended webinars during lockdown period whereas 16 (9.5%) did not attend any professional development programme.

### **Social Media Platform Access**

Respondents were asked to mention the Social Media platform they have used to connect with fellow professionals during lockdown period. Fig 1 shows the data. Out of the 168 respondents, 150 have used WhatsApp (88.8%) to connect to people and learn. Facebook has been used by 69 respondent (40.8%). Google meet has been the choice of 92 respondents (54.4%). The table indicates that the respondents

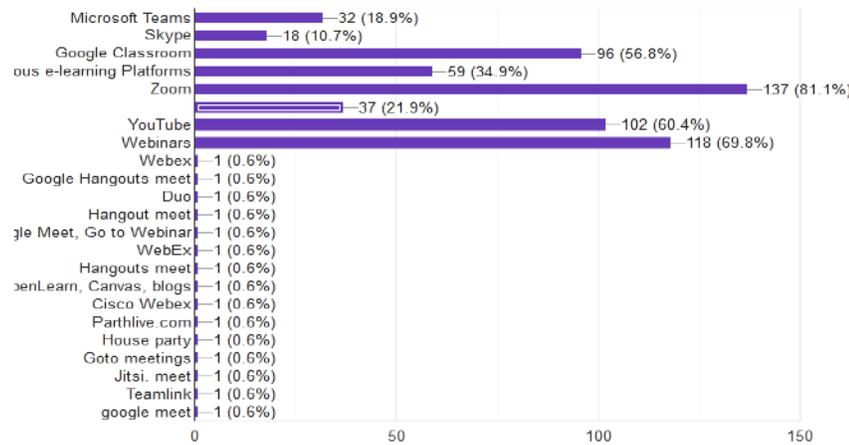
are using multiple platforms for communication. Messenger services like WhatsApp/ Telegram, etc., is mostly used by all along with Google.

**Fig 1: Social Media Platform Access**



**Tools and technology used to access professional content during Lockdown period**

**Fig 2: Tools and Technology used to access professional content**



From the analysis of the data collected, it is clear that Zoom platform, YouTube,

various e-learning platforms like Moodle, GoToWebinar, Google Meet, YouTube Live and Google Classroom were chosen by the majority for the various professional development activities to learn and disseminate content during the lockdown period.

### Webinar Themes

About 23.7% respondents mentioned that they have organized or conducted professional development activities during lockdown period, but 76.3% said that they have not organized any event.

The topics of the webinars related to a variety of themes and did not commonly relate to COVID19 theme. Only a few of the events were targeted on the typical case of the corona virus ailment.

**Table 7: Webinar Themes**

Themes	No	Themes	No
Aerobics for my friends	1	E learning	1
COVID 19 among Trainee Teachers	3	Educational Technology	1
Cinematography	1	Erudition Trends in Technologies - Blogging	1
Class marker test	1	Faculty Development Programme	1
Classes	1	Food technology	1
Classes for student	1	Holding companies	1
Classroom Interaction	1	Honing pedagogical skills	1
Constructivist Approach to teach English	1	ITR filing	1
Course content - Educational Management	1	Impact of Gat on Indian Economy	1
Income Tax Return	1	Insurance accounts	1
International conference NanoBio20 on Twitter	1	MOOC, Research, Innovation and Evolution of Education	2
intellectual property rights	1	Media economics	1
Learning Disabilities	1	Online Education - know how and what tools to use	1
Solar system	1	Research Methodology	
Virtual Science Fair for Student-teachers, Teachers and General Public	1	Research Methodology, Lectures for FY, SY, TY BA Education and MA Education, M.Sc Statistics	1
We conduct regular classes to my students through Google hangout meet app....	1		

Many of the topics were on inculcating technological skills and developing knowledge of the technological resources used for organizing teaching and learning activities. Some were related to managing accounts, filing ITR returns, insurance, and economy-related challenges. A lot of them were focused on research skills. Inclusion, Cinematography, pedagogies, Intellectual Property Rights, Plagiarism and management were also some topics mentioned by respondents.

### **Challenges Faced by Organizer**

The problem cited by organizers and takers of the online events and webinars included poor internet connectivity, teaching the participants about how to use technology and interruption in audio-video signal from the resource person. Apart from these major issues, slow speed of internet was also reported by many as a major challenge. It was also reported that reaching out to the desired audience was also seen a challenge. Number of participants was a problem in a few cases. Many zoom meetings allowed only 500 participants.

### **Time spent for developing or participating in any online programme during the lockdown period (per week)**

Respondents were also asked about the number of hours they spend online for professional development activities or to access internet to attend online programmes. 38 respondents (23.9%) mentioned that they spent 1-2 hrs. online. 38 (23.9%) spend 3-4 hrs. 25(15.7%) spend 5-6 hrs. for online learning. 17 (10.7%) mentioned that they spend 7-8 hrs. per week for the activities that they attend online. 32 (20.1%) accepted that they spend more than 9 hrs. for online learning. However, only 9 respondents (5.7 %) mentioned that they spend less than an hour on such online learning activities.

### **Member of Mailing List or Discussion Forum**

One of the questions put forth to the respondents was related to member of any discussion forum. 55 respondents (33.5%) said that they were a part of some discussion forum. However, 109 respondents (66.5%) said that they were not a part of any discussion forum. Out of those who said that they were a part of a discussion forum, 41 (25.3%) said that they have moderated a discussion forum also.

### **Working from Home**

Apart from attending professional development activities, respondents were asked

about their role as a faculty member in the institutions they were employed with. 151 respondents (91%) mentioned that they were working from home and doing some or the other official work of their institution.

The 'work from home' mode has affected the work efficiency of the faculty members in some way or the other. 18 respondents (10.9%) stated that their efficiency has remained almost the same. 16 respondents (9.7%) mentioned it has been adversely affected. 34 respondents (20.6%) reported increased efficiency during lockdown, however, maximum number of respondents (70, 42.4%) stated that their efficiency has been somewhat affected due to lockdown. 15 respondents (15.3%) reported that work from home situation wasn't applicable to them and they were reporting to their workplaces as usual.

### **Frequency of Attending Webinars**

Respondents were asked how often they attend webinars during lockdown. 96 respondents (57.5%) reported that they attend webinars daily. 42 of them (25.1%) mentioned they attend webinars every alternate day. 17 (10.2%) attend once in a week and 10 respondents (6%) stated they rarely attend webinars. 2 (1.2%) of them accepted that they have never attended any webinar during the lockdown.

### **Challenges Faced while Attending Webinars**

Since attending webinars was not the usual norm for teachers and faculty members, they faced numerous challenges during lockdown period. Most of them mentioned Network problems as their major challenge. Another very big challenge was the fact that mobile phones use a lot of data in order to cater to audio and video connectivity with the webinar organizer. Existing Internet Data Packs are not sufficient for attending such events.

Many technology platforms are new to users; hence they are not able to connect easily. Some of them reported less concentration in attending due to many other disturbances at home. Household chores became a priority for all, leading to difficulty in balancing domestic chores and online lecture timings.

Some people have no or limited access to computers making that a great challenge in online learning and professional development. Another challenge was the concern of security issues with some sites and also technical problems from host side.

**Table 8: Challenges Faced by Participants**

Major Challenges	No of Respondents
Network problems	74
Internet Data Packs are not sufficient	34
Many technology platforms are new to me, not able to connect	29
Not able to concentrate due to attending course from home	18
No access to Computers	2
Balancing domestic chores and lecture timings.	1
Household responsibilities	1
I don't face any difficulty	1
Making assignment due to poor network	1
Noises and unwanted sounds from opposite ends	1
Security issues with certain sites	1
Technical problems from host side, in spite of Registration sometimes we don't get invitation, so many webinar or FDP sessions on one day at same time, difficult to keep track of	1
Technical problems from host side, in spite of Registration sometimes we don't get invitation, so many webinar or FDP sessions on one day at same time, difficult to keep track of all	1
Too many being organized...sometimes not possible to attend at other times seats are filled up	1

**Level of Satisfaction**

How satisfied are you with the professional content received by you during lockdown? As an answer to this question, all respondents experience different levels. The respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being poor and 5 being highly satisfied). The table 9 below mentions the responses.

**Table 9: Level of Satisfaction with Professional Content Received**

Level of Satisfaction-	1	2	3	4	5
Number of Respondents	43	51	45	19	6
%of Respondents	26.2	31.09	27.4	11.6	3.7

It was noticed that there was a lot of variety in the responses about the level of satisfaction. This clearly indicates that the people using technology are in clear minority and those who have started using technological devices for professional development

are facing a lot of challenges. Only around 15% of the respondents mentioned that they were satisfied with the professional content received by them, rest 85% were not satisfied with the same.

### **Conclusion**

It is imperative that the government takes a note of these challenges faced by the educational fraternity and organize programmes and events in order to bring them to the expected level of technological integration. This study has also brought to fore the various issues people face in a work from home situation. Technology may be a boon to transform the education system but if the teaching community is not tech savvy, they may find it difficult to even cope up, leading to the greater challenge of decreasing standards of education.

This survey and its findings can be an eye opener to the educational fraternity that there are differences in the skill sets of people with respect to reliance on technology for learning as well as teaching. These differences pave the way for more rigorous trainings and active involvement of such teachers who have a hard time dealing with issues related to technology. While mobile phones are the easiest resources available to integrate technology into teaching, there are many who find it the most difficult to handle when they have to use it for teaching-learning processes.

The high level of satisfaction of the teaching community ensures positive impact on the students and future nation builders. Low satisfaction levels with the professional content received indicate poor performance of teachers on the technological front. These are issues that must be addressed immediately if this has to be taken as the 'new normal'. If teachers are to embrace technology for their professional development and also in the teaching learning processes, it is important that these challenges be dealt with, and appropriate technological aid be provided to the teaching community.

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## **Reverse Mentoring - A Twist on Teaching Practice to Developing Millennial Leaders**

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### **Abstract**

Reverse mentoring is an innovative way to encourage learning and facilitate cross-generational relationships. It involves the pairing of a younger, junior faculty acting as mentor to share expertise with an older, senior colleague as mentee. The purpose is knowledge sharing, with the mentee focused on learning from the mentor's updated subject or technological expertise and generational perspective. A model is developed that focuses on key variables to consider and how reverse mentoring may benefit individuals and Institutions.

**Keywords:** *mentoring; relationships; mentee*

### **Introduction**

Reverse mentoring is an innovative and cost-effective professional development tool that capitalizes on building bridges between generations. It's a faculty in his or her 20s or 30s who teaches an older faculty about workplace technology, to master in social media, know what younger people are thinking and doing, and keep job skills up to date. If the older people feel tentative about using Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook in their job, a reverse mentor can probably show you the ropes.

Traditional mentoring focuses on passing knowledge from professional to up and-coming stars. Reverse Mentoring feeds expertise up the corporate worlds. Under Reverse Mentoring, "a younger or less experienced Executive helps a more senior manager gain insight into areas, such as computers and changing IT technology,

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changing mindsets and expectations of the younger generation, new business concepts, thinking out of the box”.

## **Potential Benefits of Reverse Mentoring**

### **1. Improved Cross Generational Communication**

When companies pair younger and older personnel, barriers between the generations are broken down. Young professionals might be frustrated by what they perceive as outdated business practices put in place by senior leadership. Pairing young professionals with members of senior management gives both sides the chance to hear the each others' perspectives, reducing the "us against them" mentality that can exist amongst different generations.

### **2. Faster Adoption of Emerging Technologies by Senior Leadership**

Technology changes so rapidly that it can be difficult to stay at the forefront of the latest innovations. Younger personnel are often best positioned to bring new technologies to the attention of their senior faculty. People of all ages can learn new technologies, but some older workers don't immediately see the advantage of an untried technology. The faculty has the authority to direct change through an organization. So, when a tech-savvy younger professional shows a 60-year-old executive how to use, for example, social media for the company's benefit, it can accelerate the pace at which the new technology is used.

### **3. Advancement Opportunities for Younger Faculty**

Reverse mentoring provides the chance for senior faculty to interact with younger faculty in a more in-depth way, allowing up-and-coming faculty to showcase their abilities. Succession planning is vital to any organization and reverse mentoring allows faculty another avenue to assess their talent pool.

The Hartford, an insurance company, started a formal reverse mentoring programme and paired 12 high-performing young professionals with 12 faculty. Within a year of starting reverse mentoring, 11 of the young professionals in the programme were promoted. While Hartford company faculty stopped short of claiming that reverse mentoring was the sole cause of the promotions, they did acknowledge that the faculty benefitted from the increased exposure to faculty who had an impact on promotion decisions.

#### **4. Improvements in Company Procedures**

One of the most unexpected benefits of reverse mentoring is its potential impact on improving the way the company does business. In one financial services firm, the faculty considered conducting a phone survey with customers. When they mentioned this strategy to their younger reverse mentors, they were reminded that most customers in that market segment used cell phones rather than landlines. This small bit of information allowed the company to shift its communication strategy and save money that would have been wasted on calls to non-existent landlines.

Mentoring has been part of the human learning experience since the beginning of time. Recent innovations in the process have allowed talented young professionals to share what they know in an "upward" with those who are more experienced in tenure, but are still willing to learn new things. When companies implement reverse mentoring, there are unexpected benefits - both for the overall functioning of the company and for the individuals who participate.

#### **Five step reverse mentoring programme**

- (i) Developing a structured programme:** Either, assign mentoring pairs or, let participants find mentors/mentees they feel they will be comfortable with. What's important is to develop a set of goals, objectives and ground rules.
- (ii) Make the programme a priority:** Participants must understand the importance of a reverse mentoring programme and block time which mentors and mentees would spend with each other.
- (iii) Screen the members:** Being young doesn't automatically make a person an authority on what's "COOL". Mentors must have patience and temperament to work with senior faculty as the seniors may be reluctant to open up with someone so junior.
- (iv) Provide proper training:** Mentor must learn what's important and how to show patience and the mentee has to check his or her ego at the door, otherwise, the whole reverse mentoring programme may fall.
- (v) Solicit feedback and make necessary changes:** Reverse mentoring can require CORRECTION. By surveying participants it's possible to identify strengths and weaknesses and make the adjustment necessary to achieve success. By developing these qualities, the success of the reverse mentoring

programme can be ensured. But it requires a lot of motivation as both the parties must understand the importance of implementing this programme. Junior faculty must understand that senior faculty are much wiser and more experienced, and this programme should maintain the ego of the senior faculty intact.

### **Requirement for Successful Reverse Mentoring**

Both, the mentor and the mentee must have certain qualities and attributes. Both the parties have their share of responsibilities which when fulfilled can make a reverse mentoring programme successful. Following are the must have qualities for a mentor and his partner in a Reverse Mentoring Programme:

GOOD MENTORS- Listen and Understand, Challenge and Stimulate learning, Teach by example, Introduce to new technologies, Patient, Restricted advice

GOOD MENTEES- Listen, Act on advice, Show commitment, Ask for feedback, Open-minded, Willing to change and Act pro-actively

### **Most Important Key for Successful Implementation of Reverse Mentoring**

#### **It includes:**

- Training the mentor to be patient and restricting his or her advice to relevant topics only.
- Privacy and confidentiality are also important for seniors who don't wish to be seen as depending on the TIPS from the faculty with less experience.

### **Limitations of Reverse Mentoring**

“The idea of reverse mentoring is good, but should be used Judiciously”

- Senior faculty may not like taking advice from faculty who are juniors to them.
- It is not present formally, therefore, little Reverse Mentoring is found in Institutions.
- Reverse Mentoring programmes may wither if they lack clear and adequate goals.
- If not handled properly it can ruin the work atmosphere and discipline in the organization.

**Comparison between Reverse Mentoring and Traditional Mentoring**

<b>Reverse Mentoring Functions</b>	<b>Traditional Mentoring Functions</b>
Career Support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Knowledge sharing</b></li> <li>• Coaching*</li> <li>• Exposure and visibility</li> <li>• <b>Skill development*</b></li> <li>• <b>Challenging ideas</b></li> <li>• <b>Networking*</b></li> </ul>	Career Support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sponsorship</li> <li>• Coaching</li> <li>• Exposure and visibility</li> <li>• Protection</li> <li>• Challenging assignments</li> </ul>
Psychosocial Support <b>Support and feedback</b> Acceptance and confirmation Friendship <b>Affirmation and encouragement*</b>	Psychosocial Support Role modeling Acceptance and confirmation Friendship Counseling

“Reverse mentoring” popular in India

1. Nokia identified 8-9 domain specialists to "coach" seniors. In one-to-one formal sessions, these select juniors pass on their learning to the seniors. Country Head Shivakumar, Director, Operator Channel, and V. Ramnath are among those "reverse mentored". These young mentors are part of Nokia's strategy group.
2. Companies such as Hindustan Unilever, Bharti Airtel and Accenture are adopting "reverse mentoring" in India, where younger staff teach senior faculty about new trends and technology.
3. Hindustan Unilever, the FMCG giant, has pursued this strategy at the highest level, with Nitin Paranjpe, its CEO, receiving insights into social media from Karthik Perumal, who is 17 years his junior and the organization's media services manager. “The skills I grew with up as a marketer are dramatically different from the skills and capabilities needed in the future,” Paranjpe told the Economic Times.

"Reverse mentoring is important given the rate at which things are changing around us." Today, there is a generation of consumers that is growing up only in the digital space. As the CEO of a consumer company whose business revolves around

the consumer, how can I not be clued into it?" This process of learning is two-way, offering insights into how faculty work while informing them about new trends. "Both will benefit if we connect senior leaders with younger high performers," said Driscoll.

Reverse Mentoring Exchange	Traditional Mentoring Exchange
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shares technical or content expertise and enhances understanding of generational trends</li> <li>• Provides guidance and feedback on training and mastery of new skills and knowledge</li> <li>• Collaboration on projects and research that create contact with each other's colleagues</li> <li>• Demonstrates technology savvy and identifies opportunities to apply knowledge</li> <li>• Generates new approaches to problems and suggestions for implementing solutions</li> <li>• Teaches about social networking sites and social media; introduces to peers/colleagues to increase social integration and social capital</li> <li>• Provides support for learning and feedback on new knowledge and skill acquisition</li> <li>• Provides support and encouragement that enables mentee/mentor to experiment with new Behaviours</li> <li>• Mutual liking and sharing of life events through informal exchange; connecting friends across levels or divisions in the organization</li> <li>• Openly discuss developmental needs and encourage career and personal development</li> <li>• Offers fresh perspective on the organization and its business(es)</li> <li>• Demonstrates openness to new ideas innovation, and a global perspective</li> <li>• Shares willingness to learn</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public support for advancement in the organization</li> <li>• Enhances knowledge and understanding of how to navigate effectively in the corporate world</li> <li>• Create opportunities to demonstrate competence through contact with other senior faculty</li> <li>• Shields mentee from untimely or potentially damaging contacts with other senior faculty</li> <li>• Assigning challenging work, supported with training and ongoing performance feedback</li> <li>• Attitudes, values, and behaviour provide a model for mentee to emulate</li> <li>• Provides support and encouragement that enables mentee to experiment with new Behaviours</li> <li>• Social interaction characterized by mutual liking, understanding, and informal exchanges about work and non-work Experiences</li> <li>• Enables mentee to explore personal concerns that may interfere with a positive sense of self in the organization; talk openly about anxieties/fears</li> </ul>

4. Krish Shankar, head of human resources at Bharti Airtel, the telecoms group, also regularly meets with Ila Wadhwa, its business development head, global

voice solutions, who is 21 years younger than him." The future of technology will be defined by the youth, and unless we talk to the younger generation and observe them closely, we will not know their demands," said Shankar. "A programme like this sends a message that no matter how high up you are, you are never too old to learn." Among the schemes pursued following these efforts are the repositioning of Bharti Airtel's brand on university campuses and shifting its sponsorship focus from cricket to football.

5. Similarly, this kind of initiative has assisted many leading faculty at Accenture, the consultancy, in refining everything from decision-making strategies to in-house policies for new mothers returning to work. "This has helped me in my problem-solving skills. When I look at a situation, I also look at it from Gen Y's perspective – how they would look at that situation, and what could be a reverse solution to the problem," said Unmesh Pawar, Accenture's senior vice president, human resources.

### **Category of Generation**

1. Veterans, or the "Greatest Generation" born before 1945-75 million (25% still in the workforce).
2. Baby Boomers were born between 1946 and 1964 which holds nearly 80 million people.
3. Generation X, or Baby Busters who were born between 1965 and 1978 and they hold nearly 46 million people.
4. Millennials, or Generation Y, Nexters, Generation Me who are born between 1978 and 1999 and they hold 76 million people.

### **Reverse Mentoring Relationship**

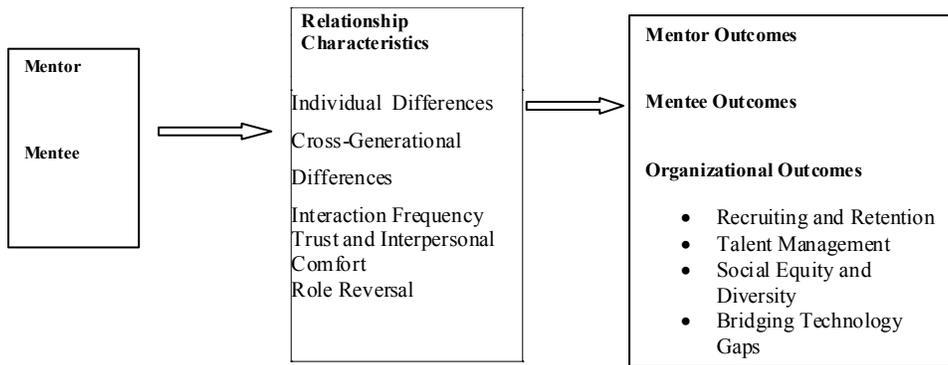
#### **Focus on Knowledge Sharing**

Learning from the mentors' expertise through knowledge sharing and skill development is the main focus for mentees in a reverse mentoring relationship. This ensures that both parties understand their goals. Wanberg, et al. (2003) define three types of learning through the knowledge exchanged in mentoring relationships, including (1) cognitive learning, which enhances declarative knowledge, procedural knowledge, strategic or tacit knowledge, knowledge organization, or cognitive strategies; (2) skill-based learning, which improves technical or motor skills; and (3) affective-based learning, which enables attitudinal or motivational changes.

## Emphasis on Leadership Development

In a reverse mentoring relationship, leadership development in the form of personal learning is particularly important for mentors because it can reduce role ambiguity and increase job satisfaction (Lankau & Scandura, 2002). This is especially helpful for millennial faculty who tend to be uncomfortable with ambiguity and have a desire for clear direction and immediate feedback in their professional experiences (Gerdes, 2007; Johnson & Romanello, 2005; Twenge, 2006). In addition, the development of relationships that enhance leadership skills, cross-generational communication, and professional understanding will benefit both participants as well as the organization.

### Variables in Reverse Mentoring Relationship



#### Individual Differences

Individual differences such as gender, race/ethnicity, and personality have long been acknowledged as a potential challenge in mentoring relationships (Ragins & Kram, 2007). Individuals tend to be attracted to those they see as similar to themselves (McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Cook, 2001), thus cross-gender and cross-race mentoring relationships may be challenging. Individuals' growth may be limited due to gender barriers.

#### Cross-Generational Differences

In the workplace, millennial faculty tend to be more assertive with a desire to "be heard" and to have an immediate impact (Twenge, 2006). Reverse mentoring capitalizes on these values by giving young faculty the responsibility of developing their mentees' skills. In traditional mentoring relationships, for mentors "a primary benefit is the sense of satisfaction and fulfilment from fostering the development of a younger

adult” (Ragins & Scandura, 1999. 20). While this may benefit reverse mentees, they will also learn how their millennial mentors prefer to teach and learn, as well as the way they approach work and life generally. Likewise, younger mentors will learn about baby boomers’ perspectives on work and gain an understanding of how to interact with more experienced professionals.

### **Interaction Frequency**

The time and energy involved in developing and nurturing a mentoring relationship is a potential challenge for both mentors and mentees.

### **Role Reversal**

Reverse mentoring provides an opportunity for early-career faculty to participate in a challenging professional development experience. In their role as mentors, junior faculty gain exposure to senior-level faculty.

### **Trust and Interpersonal Comfort**

Building trust and rapport in reverse mentoring relationships is critical since knowledge is absorbed faster and more completely when the connection between mentee and mentor is of high quality.

### **Outcomes of Reverse Mentoring**

A successful reverse mentoring programme offers several benefits for individuals’ learning and professional development. Many of these positive proximal outcomes have been discussed throughout this article, so they are summarized briefly here. The positive distal outcomes for Institutions that extend from individual participants are numerous.

### **Mentor Outcomes**

For mentors, the primary benefit of participating in a reverse mentoring relationship is their own leadership development and the experience of managing a professional mentoring relationship. Through interactions with seasoned faculty, young professionals gain organizational knowledge, such as insight into the leadership hierarchy of the organization and learning how to navigate and get work done in the

organization. The direct, one-on-one exposure to baby boomers in the workplace challenges mentors to understand differing work values and approaches and to communicate effectively.

### **Mentee Outcomes**

For mentees, the primary benefit of participating in a reverse mentoring relationship is the opportunity to learn the newest content knowledge or technical skills and gain exposure

### **Organizational Outcomes**

#### **Talent Management**

While Institutions may use a variety of tools to identify high-potential faculty including performance appraisal, personality instruments, cognitive ability measures, competency ratings, or situational judgment inventories, the reliance on such assessments for leadership development is still relatively rare (Konczak & Foster, 2009). Instead, organizations tend to rely on the subjective judgment of higher-level faculty to identify future leadership talent.

Reverse mentoring increases the frequency and quality of interaction that these high-level faculty have with young faculty, which should improve the accuracy and reliability of subjective assessments. In addition, young faculty have an opportunity to demonstrate their competence in the content that is shared (e.g., technology, subject matter, generational trends) as well as interpersonal and teaching skills. Thus, reverse mentoring may lead to earlier identification and development of high-potential faculty, also known as “talent management” or “succession planning.”

#### **Recruiting and Retention**

Reverse mentoring is one of several tools for Institutions that provide developmental opportunities as a strategy for recruiting and retaining talent. In particular, millennial faculty want personalized opportunities to contribute to the workplace and to feel that their ideas are being heard.

#### **Social Equity and Diversity**

As a formal initiative, reverse mentoring has the potential to enhance the access of young women and minorities to individuals in powerful organizational positions.

### **Bridging Technology Gaps**

Both individuals and employers increasingly use online social media, such as LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook (Zeidler, 2009) for multiple purposes, such as sharing information, networking, keeping in touch, and entertainment, among others. Through a reverse mentoring relationship, mentees will be exposed to the full range of uses and possibilities for technology as well as current and emerging trends.

### **Understanding Trends and Customers**

In the process of reverse mentoring relationships, senior members of the organization are exposed to the worldviews and desires of their younger colleagues.

### **Conclusion**

For Institutions, reverse mentoring is an innovative tool for talent management, recruiting and retention, improving social equity and diversity, bridging technology gaps among faculty, understanding trends and stakeholders, and driving innovation. In addition, the individual learning of participants may extend to organizational learning and promote a culture of continuous learning.

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## **Resurrecting Virtual Classrooms Responsibly amid Lockdown: Faculty Experiences and Challenges at Panjab University, Chandigarh**

• Shelly Aggarwal<sup>1</sup>      • Dazy Zarabi<sup>2</sup>

### **Abstract**

The digitalized modes of teaching have revolutionized the education scenario amid an inescapable COVID-19 curfew, whereby the teaching faculty has to take the front foot and confront the challenge of responsibly joining the students at virtual platforms and to accomplish the learning outcomes. The current study is an attempt to analyze the experiences and the challenges faced by the faculty at Panjab University, Chandigarh while administering the online classes. To conduct the study, a questionnaire in the form of Google form was sent via e-mail to one hundred and fifty faculty members from various departments at Panjab University and only eighty-nine responses were received. The majority of the respondent teachers were from Engineering and Technology, Education, Humanities and Sciences. The findings suggest that during the lockdown period, teachers have undergone the adoption of technology and are enthusiastically undertaking webinars, Faculty development programmes and Trainings to practice their hands on the latest tech-applications to administer online classes effectively. The most commonly used online platforms were found to be zoom, cisco-webex, Google meet, Google classrooms, Microsoft teams, Google forms, Microsoft forms, etc. The teachers are putting in their best efforts but, only three-fourths of the students were able to attend the class and lack of internet connectivity was the main issue being faced. Teachers were managing the practical work via simulation method, Virtual labs and receiving assignments via e-mail. A few teachers opined that it's the irony of time that they had to opt for online teaching, otherwise, classroom one to one teaching could never be replaced. Though Panjab University management system has been developed for managing classes, examinations, etc., still, a few of the teachers believe that there is a need to buy centralized licensed online platform so that the classes could be conducted safely as

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well as efficiently. Virtual learning has brought a revolution in the area of edification and has paved the way for opting Blended and Flipped modes of instruction, for enhanced learning outcomes in the post-lockdown era in India.

**Keywords:** *virtual classrooms; COVID-19; lockdown; online teaching*

### **Introduction**

The online modes of teaching have revolutionized the education scenario amid inevitable COVID-19 curfew, whereby the teaching faculty has to take the front foot and confront the challenge of responsibly joining the students at virtual platform and to accomplish the learning outcomes. In India, by the end of March 2021, there was complete lockdown and every sphere came to a standstill. There was a scenario of fear and apprehensions.

All the educational institutions were locked. The syllabus and classes came to a halt. Then, the situation was taken over by the online platform. The time was to unmask the new phase of education. This transition from traditional face-to-face classroom to computer supported learning has become the biggest educational experiment till date.

### **Objective of the Study**

- To analyze the experiences and the challenges faced by the faculty at Panjab University, Chandigarh while administering the online classes.

### **Research Design and Methodology**

To conduct the study a questionnaire in the form of Google form was sent via e-mail to one hundred and fifty faculty members from various departments at Panjab University and only eighty-nine responses were received.

The majority of the respondent teachers were from Engineering and Technology, Education, Humanities and Sciences. The Google form was based on the questions related to the online teaching experience of the teaching faculty at Panjab University, Chandigarh, India. The data received was analyzed and interpreted to reach the meaningful results.

### Data Analysis and Interpretation of Results

After the collection of data, the analysis and interpretation was done. The tabular representation of the data in the form of frequency and percentages is given below:

**Table 1.1: Responses of the Faculty with respect to the Online Classes**

<b>Age Distribution</b>		<b>How did you manage the Practical Assignments</b>	
	Percentage(frequency)		Percentage(frequency)
<i>Below 30 years</i>	7.87(7)	Simulation Method	16.7(13)
<i>31 to 40 years</i>	48.31(43)	Via Virtual Labs	19.2(15)
<i>41 to 50 years</i>	29.21(26)	Assignments via e-mail	71.8(56)
<i>51 to 60 years</i>	7.87(7)	Secondary Data used	12.8(10)
<i>Above 60 years</i>	6.74(6)	Google Classroom	2.6(2)
<b>Faculty/Department</b>		<b>Online ways used to contact students in lockdown</b>	
<i>Arts</i>	16.85(15)	<i>e- mail</i>	73(65)
<i>Science</i>	13.48(12)	<i>Whats.App</i>	93.3(83)
<i>Business Management</i>	6.47(6)	<i>You-tube</i>	21.3(19)
<i>Education</i>	12.36(11)	<i>zoom</i>	43.8(39)
<i>Engineering &amp; Technology</i>	29.21(26)	<i>Cisco-webex</i>	46.1(41)
<i>Language</i>	6.74(6)	<i>Webinars</i>	32.6(29)
<i>Law</i>	5.62(5)	<i>Google forms</i>	34.8(31)
<i>Medical Sciences</i>	4.49(4)	<i>Skype</i>	13.5(12)
<i>Multi Faculty Department</i>	1.12(1)	<i>Linkedln</i>	2.2(2)
<i>No Response</i>	3.37(3)	<i>Google meet</i>	2.2(2)
<b>Percentage of students connected with online classes</b>		<b>How was your Lockdown Teaching Experience</b>	
<i>Less than 50%</i>	13.48(12)	<i>Very Satisfied</i>	14.61(13)
<i>51 to 60%</i>	11.24(10)	<i>Satisfied</i>	49.44(44)
<i>61 to 70%</i>	13.48(12)	<i>Good</i>	29.21(26)
<i>71 to 80%</i>	21.35(19)	<i>Unsatisfied</i>	4.49(4)
<i>81 to 90%</i>	17.98(16)	<i>Very Unsatisfied</i>	1.12(1)
<i>91 to 99%</i>	17.98(16)	<i>No response</i>	1.12(1)
<i>100%</i>	4.49(4)		

As per the data received, majority (48.31%) of the respondent Faculty members were 31 to 40 years of age, and 29.21% were of 41 to 50 years age group. The majority of the respondent teachers were from Engineering and Technology (29.21%), Education (12.36%), Humanities (16.85%) and Sciences (13.48%). The students were joining the online classes in a considerable ratio but still, 100% target is yet to be achieved.

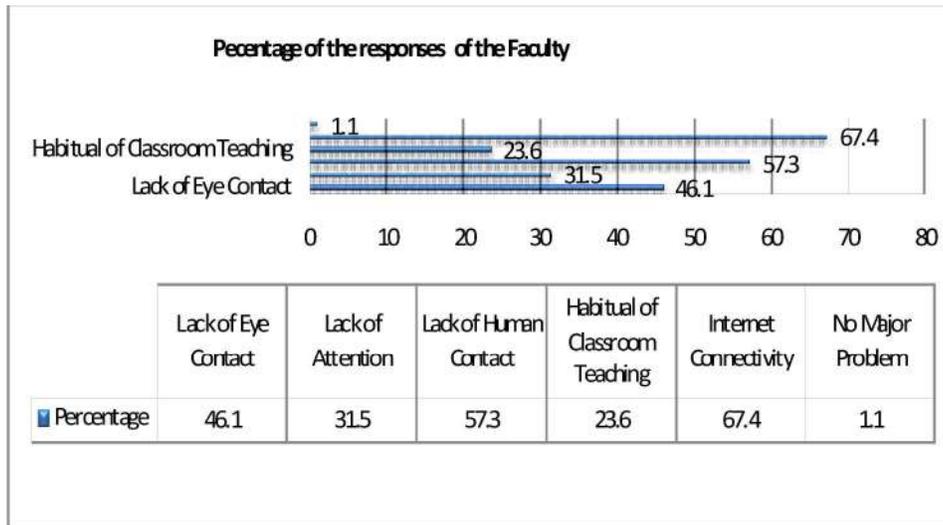
With respect to the practical work, the majority (71.8%) of the teachers were receiving the assignments in the form of e-mail and other methods like virtual labs,

simulation method and Google classrooms were also used for the practical assignments. The most commonly used online platforms were found to be zoom, cisco-webex, Google meet, Google classrooms, Google forms, Microsoft forms, etc. Majority (49.44%) of the faculty members at Punjab University, Chandigarh have a satisfactory experience with respect to online teaching.

**Table 1.2: Faculty Responses about the Problems in Online Teaching**

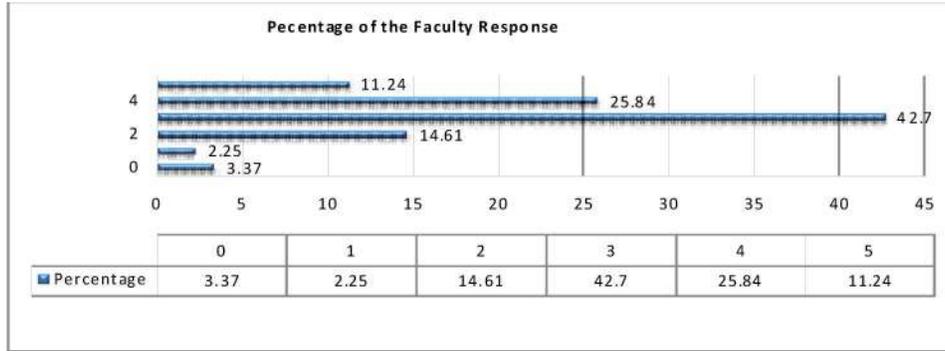
Problems faced	Response	
	Percentage	Frequency
Lack of Eye Contact	46.1	41
Lack of Attention	31.5	28
Lack of Human Contact	57.3	51
Habitual of Classroom Teaching	23.6	21
Internet Connectivity	67.4	60
No Major Problem	1.1	1

**Figure 1.1: Faculty Responses on Problems Faced in Online Teaching**



The responses from the faculty members reveal that the major problem faced by the majority (67.4%) of the teachers was the Internet connectivity issue. The other problems faced include lack of attention, lack of eye contact and the absence of human contact. Because of being used to classroom teaching, a lot of problems were faced while administering the online teaching.

**Figure 1.2: Faculty Response whether they would recommend Online Teaching (on a five-point scale)**



Majority (42.7%) of the teaching faculty members rated three points to online teaching on a five-point scale. 25.84% of the teachers gave four points and 11.24% of the teachers gave 5 points to the online teaching.

A few of the faculty members gave zero and one point for online teaching. The responses reveal that majority of the respondents are in favour of online teaching.

The actual responses of a few faculty members are as follows:

Response 1. “It was a phase of time that I would never wish to see again in my profession. Teaching is a passion for me and I could feel that students were not as interested in classes as they would have been in a proper classroom. The environment of homes was a major hindrance in making the teaching a successful one.”

Response 2. “In Pandemic, empowerment of teachers and learners is of utmost importance to motivate them for online classes as this is the most appropriate way to stay connected and collaborate. This would reduce the burden on university administration for regular sanitization, health check-ups, etc. Regulating social distancing would consume much of effort and time which otherwise could be utilized more productively in academics and research.”

Response 3. “Great thing about online teaching is that the students can view recorded videos anytime as per their convenience again n again n again!!”

Response 4. “It's the irony of the time that online teaching has become our

choice. But it's not an effective way to teach, because we are sharing only the information. There is no scope for skill development. These days, many more webinars have been organized by different educational institutions, but these are only to complete the courses, and there is no output of all this online propaganda.”

Response 5. “It is a high-risk time for students as well as for the staff. Online teaching mode or UMS (university management system) should be developed for managing classes, examinations, etc.”

Response 6. “We do not have access to all the tools of online teaching and learning. The drying tools need to be available at the university level. The evaluation is difficult for online teaching. Such issues need to be addressed.”

### **Suggestions and Conclusions**

The findings suggest that during the lockdown period, teachers have undergone the adoption of technology and are enthusiastically undertaking webinars, faculty development programmes and trainings to practice their hands on the latest tech applications to administer online classes effectively. The most commonly used online platforms were found to be zoom, cisco-webex, Google meet, Google classrooms, Microsoft teams, Google forms, Microsoft forms, etc. The teachers are putting in their best efforts but, only three-fourths of the students were able to attend the class and lack of internet connectivity was the main issue being faced. Teachers were managing the practical work via simulation method, Virtual labs and receiving assignments via e-mail. A few teachers opined that it’s the irony of time that they had to opt for online teaching otherwise, classroom one-to-one teaching could never be replaced. Though Punjab University Management system has been developed for managing classes, examinations, etc., still, a few of the teachers believe that there is a need to buy a Centralized licensed online platform so that the classes could be conducted safely as well as efficiently. Virtual learning has brought a revolution in the area of edification and has paved the way for opting for Blended and Flipped modes of instruction, for enhanced learning outcomes in the post-lockdown era in India.

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## **From Ethics in Education to Ethics in Governance: Crucial Challenges for India**

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### **Abstract**

This paper is a humble attempt to critically examine the need for ethics in education in school to make children conscious and sensitive citizens of the country. The education system of our country in general, and school education in particular, is the cornerstone of governance of any country. Hence, utmost care must be given to impart ethical issues in education to children from the very beginning, so that they can imbibe good ideas and virtues, and become conscientious citizens having sensitivity towards the community around them and the larger society. As a matter of fact, the crisis in governance in our country, and across the globe, clearly reflects the fact that there are some serious lacunae or problems in our approach to our education system. This prompted the authors to analyze and explore the complexities of ethical education to students in India and its linkage with governance issues. In times to come, India is likely to suffer if these issues are not taken care of by our policymakers, educationists, and policy implementers. Hence, it is the crying need of the hour to implement ethical issues in our education system, which ultimately going to affect our governance system.

**Keywords:** *crisis in education system; ethics in education; school education; education Policy*

### **Introduction**

When you open any newspaper in the morning on any given day, most headlines scream about robberies, murder and violence against women, children and elderly, the helpless and the downtrodden sections of our society. The other set of news narrates corruption, frauds and scams involving crores of rupees in various issues related to our governance system, which affects our day to day life, be it business,

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trade and or commerce, banking sector, civic administration, policing, law and order situation or education system, any examination, or any similar sphere. Even in the context of employment, recruitment or selection process, there are alleged malpractices. The number of elected representatives, bureaucrats, technocrats, policymakers declared corrupt, defaulters or parties for illegal activities is increasing day by day, and in recent times, it is common to find that a number of them are sent to jails for these odd activities. It has aggravated to such a level that recently, Union Public Service Commission (UPSC), which is instrumental in the selection of bureaucrats/civil servants for the Union and State governments, made it mandatory to include a paper on “Ethics in Governance” in the selection process of civil servants before being appointed. Not only that but also in the training programmes of probationary officers and in the MDP for mid-career development programmes, ethics along with efficiency is considered as one of the important factors or criteria for promotion.

However, it has not worked as a deterrent to going for corrupt practices by civil servants, resulting in several senior bureaucrats/civil servants getting convicted in a number of cases, sent to jail or suspended, demoted or dismissed from services. In the matter of politicians getting convicted by judiciary in cases of heinous crimes and sent to jails, there are large numbers in this country, cutting across party lines. A number of them are debarred from contesting elections. The Association of Democratic Reforms (ADR) reports clearly mention the candidates from various political parties contesting in India, their criminal antecedents, the number of cases involving proceedings against them and charges of heinous crimes against them. These reports came before each and every election in our country, such as the number of parliamentary committee reports, public accounts committee reports, CAG, CVC, Supreme Court, Election Commission, Transparency International and civil society organization reports. The Vora Committee mentions these. Even the UNDP and World Bank, in their various reports, discussed these crucial issues - corruption, nepotism, lack of transparency and accountability in the domain of governance, and termed them as factors leading towards ‘*crises in governance*’. This is not particularly applicable to India, as it is a common feature of many Third World countries, including some of the so-called developed countries of the contemporary world.

### **Crisis in Governance in our society**

It’s not uncommon to find the allegations and charges of corruption, which are primarily reflections of malpractices, nepotism and illegal activities. This has resulted in problems in governance, as there is a lack of accountability, transparency, social justice, proper allocation of resources to various sections of society and lack of

implementation of provisions of law of the land, which is the Constitution of India. Why is this happening? How does it happen? Who commits these crimes? This has resulted due to the crisis of governance in our polity, economy and society. This has led to a critical situation. In the post-Independence period, our country has witnessed the recommendations of the Santhanam Committee, Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC), Dharam Vira Committee, National Law Commission, Vohra Committee, National Police Commission, Riberio Committee, Malimath Committee, a number of judgments of honourable Supreme Court of India, which have amply demonstrated the lacunae and the necessity of reforms of governance in the ongoing crisis, owing to the lack of ethical approach in our governance system.

In recent times, if we microscopically examine the scams and corruption occurring in our society, it gives us a completely different picture. Nowadays, most of the culprits are well-educated men and women, or who are in high positions of power. In the pre-Independence era, when few people had access to formal education, most crimes were committed by illiterate people. It was given that educated persons would display decency, dignity and good manners. Although after Independence we have witnessed a rapid expansion of the education system, there is a considerable decline in the quality of education today.

In the contemporary milieu, the standard that is measured by the percentage of marks obtained in examination has been rising to unprecedented levels. Unfortunately, there is a marked decline in the character, moral values and general behaviour of students coming out of schools, colleges and Universities. It has resulted in a crisis in the education system, promoting scoring of marks as the main objective rather than learning the skills to live with dignity and labour. According to Swami Vivekananda, 'courage, faith, patience, trust and steady work are the ways to successes'. Having moral values and learning is just like a building having a strong root, similarly, mental health for the body. However, we are not at all bothered about inculcating qualities to build the strong moral character in our students. The root cause of this problem is deeply rooted in our value system and education.

### **Education and Ethics in Life**

According to Prof. S. Radhakrishnan, one of our former Presidents, a great philosopher and an outstanding teacher himself, "Education is that process which transforms the heart, changes the mind and moulds character of an individual". It helps an individual to grow from a bundle of flesh and blood to a person having compassion, love, fellow feeling, brotherhood, emotional attachment, sensitivity

towards the surroundings and makes him conscious of his duties and responsibilities in a given state and society. As Swami Vivekananda rightly said, "Education is the manifestation of perfection already in man." A fundamental part of the personality that defines behaviour and the way a person reacts or perceives things is 'ethics'. Ethics, like education, always remains with an individual as a very significant part of his/her moral character. 'Ethics' is a Greek word which means 'character or manners'. However, it is collapsing in each and every sphere of life and society today. Unethical practices may lead to major disasters. These manmade disasters are more dangerous than natural disasters like Tsunami. The increasing number of crimes in our society compelled us to think if we, at all, are left with any moral values today. There is not a single domain in our society that has not been affected by unethical practices. Hence, it is extremely important to understand the root cause of this crisis.

In most educational institutions, there is a total lack of the concept of character development and nation-building or state-building concept in the education process. This has resulted in the gradual erosion of values among children in our society. This trend needs to be reversed if India has to survive as a nation and acquire its due place in the world. The only way to address this is by providing value-orientation in our educational system. The term value may mean different things to different people. It is the responsibility of parents and teachers/educators and educationists to impart and transmit ethical values to the children or students. It is important to teach ethics at the school/college/university level to create better citizens and society. Ethical values do not allow anybody to act violently and unethically. Crimes against women, children and the elderly, and theft and other immoral issues in a society can be tackled by imparting ethical values. Some people might claim that ethics cannot be taught, so making these a part of the curricula is not the practical solution. What is right for you may not be the same for another person. Socio-cultural, religious, spiritual and many such factors define ethics differently, and it differs from person to person and community to community, depending upon a particular context, having universal applicability.

However, each and every student must be taught the importance of ethics in their day to day life. Students should participate in moral building activities. This should not be taught like science or math but must be gradually imbibed through interactive and innovative group activities, in an experiential learning manner. It is a continuous process. Student involvement and interaction can make this very interesting to learn. Schools can organize group discussions, talks, lectures, discussions by various speakers. It can be taught in the form of a story, rhyme, poem, drama or an act, and presented to clarify the concept of ethics. A young mind is like a clean slate, so

teaching ethics at such a tender age would be highly beneficial at a later stage. In case of children, there is a level in which right and wrong approach/situation is made to recognize by parents, teacher or senior family members. The most desired is the strong conviction within an individual, when no one can influence you, but your decision is based on universal ideas and your understanding of truth, righteousness, and social learning from the society. This is due to the impact of culture and socialization process.

### **Need for Ethics in School Education**

A prismatic look into our education system and course curriculum reflects the fact that in this contemporary time, students are much into studies and games but somehow moral teachings became compulsory, as it gives them a proper shape and direction to act or react during different situations. Moral values need to be inculcated in all age groups especially in young children, as it is said that young minds are just like blank sheets, so whatever mark we leave, the impression remains for years. When it comes to parents or teachers to inculcate a moral base in their students, it takes a lot more, as parents and teachers are the ones who shape our thoughts and mind to a large extent. Moral education means an ethical education that helps to distinguish between right and wrong. It comprises some basic principles such as dignity, compassion, fellow feeling, brotherhood, truthfulness, honesty, tolerance, pity, sympathy, etc. Moral education can lead a human being towards perfection, provided that whatever is learned in school, is applied by the student in his/her personal and professional life. Education is not aimed at obtaining only a degree; it includes necessary values-based teachings which result in the character building of the individual. And as a result, it will lead to the character building of a country. Which in return will strengthen our nation and state-building process in the end.

It is the need of the hour that schools today include the concept of a curriculum which refers to the transmission of concepts based on righteousness, truthfulness, values, and beliefs conveyed in the classrooms. An individual learns all these from one's social environment. It helps to reinforce the lessons of the formal curriculum. However, in the present juncture, in the name of modern anglicized education, there is focus on learning English or foreign language, computer science, animation, 3 D learning in smart classrooms, etc. We just promote scoring high in board examinations, IIT, NET, Medical, Law entrance –CLAT, CAT for IIMs, Civil Services - UPSC, PCS examination. If at all, these are achieved by not attending regular classes at school/college and only through coaching, for which parents are ready to sacrifice lakhs of rupees. Examination-oriented results and securing marks became a priority

for students, supported by parents. At the same time, it is observed that some students are leading to undesirable behaviours, whether it is cheating in exams or resorting to unfair means like creating a vicious environment inside the school. This type of education will not help a child to face life situations like opinion-making, making the right decision and choosing the appropriate course of action. To address this situation, schools can organize talks, lectures, videos, and discussions by eminent social thinkers, subject experts and educators who can help in incorporating 'value' into the curriculum in order to provide holistic development of a child. In subsequent life, it becomes the backbone of his life. It will deepen the democratic values, cultural assimilation and social improvement.

### **Critical Issues for our Society**

With the spread of so-called modernization, scientific advancement, technological progress, spread of industrialization and market outreach across the globe, the moral values of people are degrading day by day. Is there any co-relationship among them? Today, we are in a globalized world with access to the international markets and a worldwide flow of information and communication. However, an individual is not able to trust anyone, be it their relatives or friends. Integrity, love, brotherhood, compassion, and fellow feelings are fading with the passage of time. There is cut-throat competition everywhere, be it schools/colleges, offices, jobs or any other competition. Everything is measured in the parameter of success and money. In today's materialistic world, people are jealous of each other's progress. In this globalized era, most parents are working because of which they spend less time with their children. This led to a situation, where there is further deterioration of moral values and ethics to understand society. The complex process of so-called mainstream education, in both the spheres - private and public, has failed to address this serious concern. It requires serious interrogation to make a thorough and accurate diagnosis of the situation. On the one hand, the aim of education is to provide people with the necessary knowledge and skills to earn a livelihood and lead a dignified life in this society. At the same time, the purpose of education is to prepare essentially ethical human beings. However, it is observed that the more we became educated and technologically advanced, the more we became un-ethical in our approach.

### **Ethics - Theory vs. Practice**

The term 'ethics' has remained one of the primary concerns of philosophers, scriptures and religion, with seemingly more theoretical aspects rather than practical aspects. However, the need for ethics in all the spheres of our life is well recognized.

In our school curriculum, it has been given due importance at the primary level of the syllabi. It is extremely important for shaping the future of a student at least in the academic context. It is often presented in the form of study of religious scriptures and sermons, prevalent in the given society/country. The meanings of words often throw light on their significance and on the values that tacitly or explicitly inform our lives and guide our actions in our respective personal and professional life. In common parlance, the word 'ethics' is defined as the science of morals. Its root meaning is 'character' or 'manners'. 'Moral' is the Latin word corresponding to the Greek 'ethic' and its literal meaning is 'custom'. The English language retains this sense in the word 'mores', which means manners and character. So, these words point at the quality of a person's character, particularly to decide between right and wrong, good and bad, proper and improper, righteous and be god-fearing. So, an ethical education means an education aimed at building the right quality, virtue, conscience and character in an individual. This will lead to the making of national character, which will be ultimately reflected in our governance system.

The national character is simply not the sum total of individual characters, but also the reflection of justice, rationality, compassion, logical understanding of the happenings in our society and promotion of growth with distributive justice. It encourages sharing of the fruits of development among all communities in any given society. Education is meant to bring about ethical human beings that are considered consistent with and conducive to the right action. Ethical conduct is synonymous with responsibility. This has been reflected in various religious preaching as dos and don'ts codified into legal systems of various states as activities accepted by the law of the land. This means that ethical conduct is not only morally acceptable but also legally tenable and permissible. What is ethical is always morally right and legally approved. In this way, ethics, like any other science, could be a matter of the proper application of empirically verified or internally consistent knowledge. Any educational institution that aims to educate, must give due importance to our innate human nature, which is the controlling factor of outer actions and deeds.

There are a number of ways and means to increase the feelings and inculcate various aspects of ethical life with humanitarian values. With the spread of print/electronic media, it should be possible to develop audio-visual capsules based on clippings of films, and TV material depicting virtues like honesty, integrity, compassion and selfless service. In addition, short films on real-life examples from the lives of great personalities like Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela, Dalai Lama, Swami Vivekananda, Rabindranath Tagore, Mahatma Gandhi, Mother Teresa and Baba Amte, B.R. Ambedkar, will have much impact on young minds than simply sermons

on morality in the prayer class. The programmes for value inculcation can be further enriched by organizing periodic visits to slums, orphanages, old age homes, homes for destitute children, *ashrams* and places of great spiritual importance. That will lead to further enhancement of compassion and kindness. There should be community service by teachers and students that teach the dignity of labour, selfless service, fellow feeling and brotherhood among different communities in society.

### **Future Challenges**

In this context, a fundamental question comes to our mind – what is value? Without going into the debate about the definitional aspect of value, it is generally accepted that the universal values i.e. truth, righteous conduct, peace, love and non violence are directly linked to the physical, intellectual and emotional psyche, and spiritual aspects of human personality. These values are essentially acquired during childhood, first in the home and then at school. It has been discussed in different forums from time to time. National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, clearly mentions the importance of creating awareness regarding India's common cultural heritage, social justice and compassion, democracy and egalitarianism, secularism, gender equality, concern for the environment, social cohesion and national unity, and scientific spirit of enquiry. It suggested that learning material should be designed to equip students with the wherewithal to combat social evils like caste/class barriers, religious fundamentalism etc. on one hand, and inculcate the habit of logical and rational thinking on the other. Unfortunately, very little action was taken to implement this important part of the education policy. We need to take concrete action of framing curricula development and adoption of innovative methods to include values and ethics in our formal education system. It is important to mention here that informal ways of imparting these values will be more fruitful than formal ways. Informal method of instruction is more effective in building the character of students. The school atmosphere, the personality and behaviour of teachers is equally important in developing sense of values. The education policy in 1986 was also equally vocal about it. The other commissions like Radhakrishnan Commission, Muduliar Commission, Tapas Majumdar Committee also talked about this.

One of the most important issues which moulds and shapes the character of a child is the environment at home. This is where children observe the behaviour of their parents and siblings, seniors and other extended family members, whose influence is always imprinted on their mind. Values and habits once formed in childhood are difficult to change. Unfortunately in the present juncture, parents belonging to upper and middle-class families have very little time for their children. The present globalized

world is compelling both parents to earn their livelihood to lead a comfortable life. With both parents pursuing their own careers, they are unable to spend significant time with their children. This has led to problems in the socialization process. The emotional aspect is somewhere lacking. There is a void in the psychological aspects of the upbringing process, which resulted in serious repercussions in the future life of these children. A number of empirical studies have concluded that the child's performance in school and college is primarily determined by the environment at home.

Therefore, to begin with, parents' involvement in the learning process at school is a must. There is a need for frequent parent-teacher interaction at regular intervals. Through such interactions, parents can come to know certain undesirable traits in their child which can be traced to the root causes, well in advance. Once they come to know about it, they may be asked to modify their behaviour, before permanent damage is done to the child. This interaction should not be casual, limited to the exchange of pleasantries and informing some good points about the child. There should be systematic, serious interaction with records of discussion so that corrective action is taken, and progress is reviewed in subsequent interactions. Trained psychologists and educationists must be invited to render their professional support. There are a number of ways and means of developing innovative techniques for integrating values and ethics in the school education system- formally or informally. That would help in moulding the character of students to become good citizens, while they are being imparted knowledge for their intellectual advancement in the formative years of their life.

### **Conclusion**

How do we visualize the future of our country? In other words, what can be the possible future of our society? The root cause of this can be traced to our education system. The education system in our country is greatly influenced by the thoughts of *Satya, Ahinsa, Tyaga, Poropokar*, which means adhering - to truthfulness, preaching non-violence, self-sacrifice, helping others - all are part and parcel of preaching various religion and philosophy - Hinduism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Sikhism, etc. The noble ideas cherished by Mahatma Gandhi in his vision and philosophy in '*Nai Talim*', talked about creating a new education system and society. Rabindranath Tagore conceptualized Shanti Niketan - 'abode of peace', emphasizing the learning from 'nature and culture'. Sir Syed Ahmed and Zakir Hussain conceptualized modern education system along with cultural roots in socio-religious reform, reflected in AMU and JMI respectively. Swami Vivekananda, J. Krishnamurthy, Baba Amte and

others have tried to create a society, where true human beings will be created to serve society. We are emphasizing on character building of an individual, which is the cornerstone of nation-building and state-building process. How much progress we have made in the last 70 years is a crucial question we should ask ourselves. It is a matter of serious introspection. What is the way forward? In a recent UPSC examination, a candidate who scored the highest marks in the paper 'Ethics in Governance', was caught in the examination hall for unfair means, who himself is a bureaucrat. This has clearly manifested the serious nature of our governance system where there is an increasing gap between 'what we preach' and 'what we practice'.

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## **Role of Adult Education in Women Empowerment through Skill Development Programme**

**Shaikh Shakeel Abdul Majeed<sup>1</sup>**

### **Abstract**

The present study is focused on the Women Empowerment through Adult Education and Skill Development programmes implemented in India. The study is based on the secondary data which was obtained from various published and unpublished records, books, magazines and journals. This study seeks to review the various initiatives taken by Government of India, like the programmes conducted through public and private partnership, and the ways to increase the employability skills, and the challenges faced for the success of empowering women through skill development programmes. The study also discusses about the schemes, training and skills imparted through adult educational programmes.

**Keywords:** *adult education; women empowerment; women entrepreneurship; knowledge; skill development*

### **Introduction**

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru once said: “If you educate a man you educate an individual, however, if you educate a woman you educate a whole family. Women empowered means mother India empowered”. Education is considered a basic requirement and a fundamental right for all the citizens of any nation. It is a powerful tool for reducing inequality as it can give people the ability to become independent. Women, who come across discrimination in many spheres, have a particular need for this. Education of women in India plays a very important role in the overall development of the country. Women who constitute almost half of the population, if educated, can be empowered, which in turn will strengthen the national economy.

However, women in general, suffer from inequality, whereas their economic contributions are undervalued and not recognized within the society. Hence, there is

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a need to further develop and empower women to ensure the nation's global competitiveness. In the present scenario, it is found that most women are facing severe unemployment problems due to lack of skills and technical knowledge. Most of them are unaware of the developments taking place in the modern world. Therefore, the concept of empowerment of women in this study refers to equality between genders.

### **Adult Education**

Adult Education in any part of the world aims at extending educational options to those adults, who have lost the opportunity and have crossed the age of formal education, but now feel a need for learning of any type, including literacy, basic education, skill development (Vocational Education) and equivalency. "Adult Education specifically targets individuals who are regarded as adults by the society to which they belong to improve their technical or professional qualifications, further develop their abilities, enrich their knowledge with the purpose to complete a level of formal education, or to acquire knowledge, skills and competencies in a new field to update their knowledge in a particular field." UNESCO

### **World Perspective of Women Empowerment**

Empowerment can be defined in many ways, however, when talking about women's empowerment, "Empowerment means accepting and allowing women who are on the outside of the decision-making process into it." Women Empowerment is a long-drawn, conscious and continuous process comprising enhancement of skills, capacity building, gaining self-confidence and meaningful participation in decision-making. In achieving all these goals, education plays a pivotal role, it is the backbone of any society.

"Empowerment should mean that women gain the ability to challenge and combat their oppression. In practice, it has come to mean marginally improving their material circumstances." - Kate Cronin.

Women empowerment is one of the biggest issues in most of the developing countries and it has been one of the central agendas for both the Government and the NGOs. Women constitute half of the total population of every country. Therefore, their role in economic development cannot be undermined irrespective of culture and gender. Women empowerment is the process in which women elaborate and recreate what it is that they can do, and accomplish in a circumstance that they previously were denied.

**Skill Development**

Most of the women population who are in the work field belong to the unskilled category. Skilled labours earn more than unskilled labours. Thus, there is a greater gap in the earnings of women who belong to the unskilled labour force than that of the skilled labour force. Skill helps an individual in increasing chances of employment. Sustainable development through skill acquisition leads women to vertically rise and enter the organized labour force. Thus, skill development is an important driver to address poverty reduction by improving employability and productivity, and helping sustainable enterprise development and inclusive growth.

Skill development is a process of identifying the skill gaps and developing and honing these skills. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), “Skill development is of key importance in stimulating a sustainable development process and can make a contribution in facilitating the transition from an informal to formal economy. It is also essential to address the opportunities and challenges to meet new demands of changing economies and new technologies in the context of globalization”.

**Adult Education and Skill Development**

2011 Census recorded male literacy at 82.14%, while female literacy remained at an unacceptable level of 65.46%. Census also revealed that gender and regional disparities in literacy continued to persist. Therefore, to bolster Adult Education through skill development, Government of India introduced two schemes, namely Saakshar Bharat Scheme and Support to Voluntary Agencies for Adult Education and Skill Development.

Adult Education through skill development programme is intended to provide them with skill, opportunity and awareness to involve them in income generation activities. This intervention is aiming at providing opportunities for women to obtain equal education, employment opportunities, effective health services, property inheritance rights and other rights. Skill Development programme aims to make women independent in making their own choices, and also participate in family choices. It also seeks to increase the participation of youth, women, the disabled and other disadvantaged sections and to synergize efforts of various sectors and reforms.

**Women Empowerment through Skill Development Programme**

Government of India announced the Skill India campaign on 15 July 2015 with an aim to train over 40 crore people in India in different skills by 2022 for which

Govt. has launched a bunch of skill development initiatives aimed at skilling unemployed youth to make India the skill Capital of the world. As well Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) have been implementing several initiatives to achieve women empowerment through skill development. To increase the women participation in workforce, Skill India Mission aims to empower women with 10 initiatives in skill development and entrepreneurship.

### **1. Long Term Skill Development Training via Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs)**

Through a wide network of 15,042 ITIs, spanning the country, over 22.82 lakh candidates have been enrolled (in the trades of one year and two-year duration) and special focus is laid on enrolment of women. There is nearly 97 percent increase in admissions in 2018 which was 87,799, as compared to 173,105 women trainees in 2014.

18 National Skill Training Institutes (NSTIs) (for Women) are imparting skill training exclusively for women. Further, exclusive batches to provide basic/ theoretical training to women have been started under National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS) in all Centrally Funded Institutes (CFIs). The NSTIs organize NCVT approved skill training programmes under Craftsmen Training Scheme (CTS) and Craft Instructors' Training Scheme (CITS) in several areas such as Office Management, Electronics, Fashion Design & Technology, Computer Aided Embroidery & Designing, etc.

### **2. Short Term Skill Development Training**

The flagship programme of the Ministry, Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) strives to promote increased participation of women in the workforce through appropriate skilling and gender mainstreaming of skills. Close to 50% of the candidates enrolled and trained under PMKVY are women; out of the total 56 lakh candidates who have benefited from the scheme. Programmes under the Skill India Mission are designed to not only train women in relevant skills that are sought by employers, but they are also sensitive to their needs by providing safe transport, flexible schedules and childcare support.

While women dominate sectors such as Apparel, Beauty & Wellness and Healthcare, there is a significant presence of women in non-traditional roles such as those in Electronics and Hardware, with a large number of female enrolments under the Field Technician Computing and Peripherals job role in this sector. Skill India

has partnered with Government Initiatives like Ayushman Bharat, Swachh Bharat Mission, Smart City Mission, etc. to align skill development efforts to these national missions by ensuring a steady flow of skilled workforce.

### **3. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)**

Under the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) more than 4 lakh women candidates have been oriented in different skill areas, recognizing their existing skills through a formal certificate and giving them a means to earn better livelihood.

### **4. Apprenticeship Training**

The comprehensive reforms that have been made to the Apprenticeship Act, 1961 has opened opportunities for apprentices in the service sector. Skill India through National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) is conducting focused pilot programme with UNDP and Society of Development Alternatives (DA), to benefit more than 50,000 women in 7 states over a duration of 15 months. To further promote Apprenticeship training. Directorate General of Training, a wing under MSDE, is undertaking gender study to determine constraints for women in participating in ITI and Apprenticeship training and their transition into the labour market.

### **5. Policy Interventions**

The National Policy on Skill Development focuses on inclusive skill development with the objective of increased women participation for better economic productivity. To achieve this, emphasis has been laid on creating additional infrastructure both for training and apprenticeship for women; flexible training delivery mechanisms such mobile training units, flexible afternoon batches along with local need-based training to accommodate women; and ensuring safe and gender sensitive training environment, employment of women trainers, equity in remuneration, and complaint redressal mechanism.

### **6. Special Women-Centric Projects**

NSDC, through its training partners such as Mann Deshi Foundation, Shri Mahila Sewa Sahkari Bank Limited and Sri Sarada Math Rasik Bhita are working exclusively on skill development of women, especially in rural areas. The training constitutes imparting digital, accounting and entrepreneurial skills so as to facilitate the possibility of setting up their own business. NSDC in collaboration with the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation is also driving skill development of workers for Swachh Bharat

Mission and has roles such as mason training for twin pit toilets and *Gobar* gas which has seen encouraging participation from women.

### **7. Partnerships with Non-Government Organizations to boost Skill Development**

Some of the collaborative efforts with private players include organizations such as Airbnb to support homestay services by providing training in hospitality and tourism sectors. Under a PMKVY project, Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham is targeting remote villages to foster women empowerment through skill development and creation of occupational opportunities. The project is focused towards vulnerable and marginalized groups and tribal population, with over 50% participation from women.

Partnership with Humara Bachpan Trust in Odisha aims to give employment & entrepreneurship opportunities to about 1500 women belonging to the economically disadvantaged sections. All such projects must spread their wings in other uncovered areas to achieve the goal of equity. Partnership with Industries Crafts Foundation, is helping in training and supporting 1500 women in Karnataka.

### **8. Projects in Pradhan Mantri Mahila Kaushal Kendra (PMMKK)**

Recently, more than 6000 training targets have been allocated to train women in 4 PMMKs. The crèche facility is also available at these centers so as to facilitate the new mothers to take up skill training. Trainings are being conducted for Self Employed Tailor, Beauty Therapist, Customer Care Executive, Hair Stylist, Yoga Trainer, etc.

### **9. Future Jobs and Industry-oriented Courses**

Aligned to National Skills Qualifications Framework (NSQF), there are nearly 450 job roles that are concentrated on the skill training of women. Skill India is encouraging participation of women in new-age job roles aligned to industries such as Artificial Intelligence, 3D printing, Data Analytics, etc., and has witnessed increased participation of women in hard skills like welding, automobile mechanics, etc.

### **10. Entrepreneurial Initiatives**

MSDE is committed to facilitating the growth of women entrepreneurs in the country. National Institute for Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development (NIESBUD) under the MSDE has designed Entrepreneurship Development Programmes for the rural women with the objective to inculcate entrepreneurial

values, attitudes and motivation among the rural women, and to take up challenges to set up an enterprise/group enterprise. The Livelihood Business Incubation (LBI) approach is also used to promote women entrepreneurs by the Institute.

### **Conclusion**

The evils of poverty, unemployment and inequality cannot be eradicated by man alone. Equal and active participation of women is the need of the hour. Education is the key factor for women empowerment, prosperity, development and welfare. Women play an imperative role in making a nation progressive and guide it towards development. The lack of knowledge and skills becomes the obstacle to achieving empowerment. Seeing all the aspects it is realized that education is the only means for empowerment of women.

Under the aegis of Saakshar Bharat Scheme, the Government has launched a Scheme to Support Voluntary Agencies for Adult Education and Skill Development. This scheme aims at making women independent both socially as well as financially which will help in generating awareness and improving the efficiency of the delivery of welfare services meant for women. Therefore, Adult Education amongst women is crucial. The role of adult education is to provide essential information regarding the significance of women empowerment and how educated women can be assets to society. Adult education generates information among women to participate effectively in the development processes. Adult education has been regarded as indispensable in promoting empowerment opportunities among women. Promoting women empowerment through adult education is an important instrument in leading to progression.

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## **University-Corporate Partnership for Skill Development Initiatives of Gandhigram Rural Institute, Tamil Nadu**

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### **Abstract**

The Gandhigram Rural Institute (GRI), established in the year 1956 with the mandate of taking higher education to the doorsteps of the rural areas, has been providing education with a focus on skill development. It has rich experience with a good track record of organizing skill-oriented training programmes for a wide spectrum of rural clientele, especially school dropouts, non-student youth, women, artisans and farmers. The Institute has a Department of Lifelong Learning and Extension (DLLE) which was established as Department of Adult Education and Extension (DAEE) in 1981. The department has been working for imparting vocational training and skill development of rural youth. To provide vertical mobility and opportunity for higher education, the department has started providing vocational training to the youth. The youth groups who receive the training cover students of National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS), regular students and also non-student youth. In the process of making such efforts by the Gandhigram Rural Institute, four models have emerged which have been used for collaboration and collective endeavour for skill development. The present paper seeks to discuss Model 3 and Model 4 which involve an active partnership of the GRI with the corporate sector. The discussion highlights the processes and experiences which would also provide lessons for future course of action by any institution and also get feedback on the efforts so far made by the GRI. This paper also presents Case Studies to showcase the impact of the efforts made in the earlier stages by the DLLE on the vocational skills among the rural youth and also student youth will also be presented.

**Keywords:** *vocational education; employable skills; lifelong learning; extension; collaboration; partnership with corporate enterprises*

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Education has a significant role in shaping opportunities for the socio-economic development of individuals and groups. Education, in its broadest sense, is the most crucial input for empowering the people with knowledge, information and skills, providing them access to productive employment and improve their quality of life. The educational institutions have been making efforts to address the problem of dropouts and retain the students in the schools. With multiple approaches to impart basic literacy skills and adult education, focus has shifted to enable people with vocational and employable skills for their socio-economic development.

Improved vocational training for skill development is critical for providing decent employment opportunities to the growing youth population and necessary to sustain the high growth momentum. Although an institutional structure has been put in place, there is still a long way to go. While skill formation has to be mainstreamed in the formal education system right from class Tenth onwards, skill creation outside the formal education needs coordinated action and innovative approach (Government of India, 2011).

The Working Group on Vocational Education (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2011) has observed that the national policy planners have considered the higher secondary stage of school education as crucial. It is at this stage that necessary skills and competencies are acquired that enable the students to enter the world of work or to go in for higher education. Vocational education has been accorded a very high priority in the National Policy on Education 1986. The NPE, 1986 inter alia states that "...the introduction of a systematic, well-planned and rigorously implemented programme of vocational education is crucial in the proposed educational re-organization.... Vocational education will be a distinct stream intended to prepare students for identified vocations spanning several areas of activity". The NPE, 1986 set the target, to cover 10% higher secondary students under vocational courses by 1990 and 25% by 1995. The POA, 1992 reset the targets of diversification of students in vocational streams at + 2 level to 10% by 1995 and 25% by 2000. However, enrolment of only about 5% has been achieved.

Changes in technologies and financial markets, emergence of global economies, products and services, growing international competition, and new forms of business and management practices are creating new paradigms for the workforce. The technical education and vocational training system in India produces technical professionals for various sectors through a three-tier system:

- Graduate and post-graduate level specialists (e.g. Engineers and Technologists trained in IITs, and Engineering Colleges).

- Diploma-level graduates who are trained in Polytechnics as professional Technicians and Supervisors.
- Certificate-level craft people trained in ITIs as well as through formal apprenticeships as semi-skilled and skilled workers.

Vocational Training consists basically of practical courses through which one gains skills and experience directly linked to a career in the future. It helps students to be skilled and in turn, offers better employment opportunities. There are two types of vocational training available in India: (a) Formal, and (b) Non-formal. Formal vocational training follows a structured training programme and leads to Certificates, Diplomas or Degrees awarded by State/Central Government, Public Sector and other reputed institutions.

Non-formal vocational training helps in acquiring some marketable and employable skills, which enables a person to earn a decent livelihood. In a way, through such non-formal vocational training, a person receives vocational training through what is known as the inter-generational transfer of skills. Often non-formal vocational training is also received through other sources. In such cases, training received by a person to pursue a vocation, is not through hereditary sources and is different from the trade or occupation of his/her ancestors<sup>4</sup>.

According to a National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) report, vocational training is received by only 10% of persons aged between 15-29 years. Out of this, only 2% receive formal training, while non-formal training constitutes the remaining 8%. Out of the formal training received by that particular age group, only 3% are employed. The most sought-after field of training is computer related training. Only 20% of formal vocational training is received from ITI/ITCs.

Due to budgetary constraints and increasing students' demand for training, the need to introduce proprietary training institutes, frequently named Industrial Training Centres (ITCs) was recognized. They operate along common technical guidelines applicable for public ITIs. The ITCs are given freedom to offer any trades.

The total GDP contribution of manufacturing sector is 28% which engages nearly 17% of the total labour force. The basis of any manufacturing organization is governed by the amount it is willing to invest and the kind of people who are going to work for it. For transforming the health of the manufacturing sector and in order to make it the most preferred destination for domestic as well as foreign investors and industrialists,

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<sup>4</sup>Vocational Education in India. [www.nistads.res.in/indiasnt2008/t1humanresources/t1hr2.htm](http://www.nistads.res.in/indiasnt2008/t1humanresources/t1hr2.htm).

it is important to promote both fund-based and non-fund based financial services. Manufacturing firms to withstand the global competition, and to ensure their long-term sustainability, have to invest a sizeable amount in setting up and developing its infrastructure, raw material, skill development of its human resource, and R & D.

Data of World Bank suggested that in 2013, the contribution of manufacturing sector to Indian economy was 13%. India's contribution to world manufacturing is also very low, with a contribution of just 1.8%. These statistical data clearly indicate that India's stand in global manufacturing is very poor because of poor quality work force.

There has been emphasis on skill development to increase the employability of students and non-student youth in rural areas. It is possible with calculated intervention at higher education level that includes as first strategy of imparting training for skill development to the students of the University/College. The second strategy could be providing Vocational Education as special subject (inter-disciplinary subject), leading to the award of University Diploma or Degree. Therefore, the emerging situation in the society calls for determined intervention by the Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) to turn as Skill and Knowledge Providers.

### **The Gandhigram Rural Institute**

The GRI established in the year 1956 with the mandate of taking higher education to the doorsteps of the rural areas, has been providing education for more than six decades with focus on skill development. It has the uniqueness of being the first rural university in the country. It has rich experience with a good track record of organizing out-reach programmes at community level. The GRI mission is "Providing Knowledge support to the rural sector to usher in a self-reliant, self-sufficient and self-governed society".

The GRI developed academic programmes with inter-disciplinary approach in Rural Development to meet the needs of human resources for rural sector under various governmental and non-governmental schemes. It offers a total of fifty different programmes. The Institute has combined Teaching with Research and Extension in all courses. This three-dimensional approach has made GRI a pioneering model in rural higher education.

The Institute has been focusing to disseminate information resources for the development of rural community. The Institute is unique in its approach and strategy

by inculcating the culture of “learning by doing” and also educating the rural community through specific educational intervention.

The Institute has a Department of Lifelong Learning and Extension which was established as the Department of Adult Education and Extension in 1981. The department has been working for the vocational training and skill development of rural youth. The department has an accredited Study Centre of the NIOS. The study centre provides opportunities for the youth to complete their missed schooling at the secondary and senior secondary levels. To provide vertical mobility and opportunity for higher education, the department has started providing vocational training to the youth. The youth groups who received training mostly include students of NIOS, regular students and also non-student youth. In such efforts, the following models have been used in implementing vocational training programmes.

**Model-1: Collaboration with private Industrial Training Institutes (ITI).**

The department is working with two such ITIs for skill development. This has provided opportunities to the rural students to get trained in the areas of Automobile, Electrical Works, Mobile servicing.

**Model-2: Collaboration with Professional Associations.** The department is working with Dindigul District Videography and Photography Association. It has facilitated imparting training for the development of professional skills for Digital Videography and Photography. Now, the department is offering a one year Diploma Programme in Digital Videography and Photography.

**Model-3: Liaisoning with Corporate Skill Development Centre.** Under this model, the department is working with corporate sector industrial houses such as Murugappa Group. This arrangement acts as a suitable source of training providers in industrial manufacturing-related skill development. The department is working in partnership with corporate sector industrial houses to identify the needy rural youth, screening by test and interview, and finalizing the process of selection for the skill training.

**Model-4: Establishing Skill Training School.** This is being done with corporate/ industrial houses like Yamaha Motors. In this model, University-Yamaha together is setting up a training school to provide training in areas of two-wheeler servicing.

The present paper seeks to discuss Model 3 and Model 4 which involve an active partnership of the GRI with the corporate sector. The discussion centers around

the process which has evolved and the experiences gained. It would provide lessons for future course of action by any institution and also get feedback on the efforts so far made by the GRI.

### **Vocational Education and Training**

In this context, there is a lot of scope for the university system to intervene in the process of skill development by designing and running innovative programmes at the higher education level. Thus, in this kind of environment, there is a need for policy support and programme inputs that equip the university to introduce tasks and run the new programmes in the area of vocational education. The new framework would also pave the way for the students to exercise a proper choice for their vertical mobility in the field of vocational education covering different stages that include Certificate level to Doctoral programmes.

The Institute has been organizing skill-oriented training programmes for a wide spectrum of rural clientele, especially school dropouts, non-student youth, women, artisans and farmers. The DLLE (earlier it was called the DACEE) has been spearheading Vocational Education and Training (VET) for more than four decades with a view to making GRI students and the rural non-student youth entrepreneurs and employable. The areas of training imparted include organic farming, post-harvest technology, cost-effective construction technology, non-conventional energy, vermicomposting, mushroom cultivation, rainwater harvesting, waste water recycling, micro-enterprise, micro-credit management, rural enterprise, etc. The Institute with seven faculties and a strong footing in rural areas, provides an enabling environment to run skill-oriented training programmes relevant for human resource development in rural areas.

- Computer Hardware
- Desktop Publishing
- Cell phone mechanism
- Computer Networking
- Type writing
- Servicing of Domestic Appliance
- Household Wiring Coil Winding
- Digital Photography
- Digital Videography
- Multimedia Two-Wheeler Mechanism
- Four-Wheeler Mechanism

### Partnering with Corporate Sector: Partnership with Corporate Skill Development Centre

Under this model, the department is working with Murugappa Group. It is a group of Companies working in the manufacturing sector. The group has many industrial units across the country and overseas. They have established a Centre for Skill Development with a view to creating a cadre of trained human resources to enable and facilitate them to work in various industrial units of their group. This arrangement ensures suitable trained persons within their industrial and manufacturing setting. The Murugappa Group through one of its out-fits, viz., CUMI has the responsibility of managing the Centre for Skill Development (CSD), located at Hosur, Tamil Nadu. This Centre is fully managed from the resources allocated by the CUMI under Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

#### Number of Persons Trained under Vocational Training in GRI

	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Men	61	92	90	145	133	129	128	56	85
Women	58	118	222	282	371	381	394	100	75
Total	119	210	312	427	504	510	522	156	160

How Initiated: Initially, the CUMI CSD visited GRI in the year 2012 for a preliminary discussion. GRI has agreed to work with CUMI in the skill development programme. Later, a MoU was signed between CUMI and GRI for this purpose. The MoU clearly specified the role and responsibility of both the Institutions as also the facility provided for the trainees and follow-up by both the Institutions in respect of the trainees.

Task	CUMI	GRI
Preliminary work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Preparation of advertisement in consultation with GRI</li> <li>All expenses are met by the CUMI with regard to the preliminary work</li> <li>Explaining about the programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bring out the advertisement in the local news paper</li> <li>Campaign in the villages where GRI is working</li> <li>Providing venue for the interaction</li> <li>Facilitating the selection process</li> </ul>
Selection process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Designing the Screening test</li> <li>Assessment of the answer sheets</li> <li>Address verifying and visiting the residence of the selected trainees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conducting the screening Test</li> <li>Counselling the trainees and their parents</li> </ul>
Training programme	Conducting the training programme on various trades	Documentation of the programme
Follow up	Placement support for the Trainees	Impact assessment on the trainees

Roles and Responsibilities: The CUMI and GRI have agreed to undertake activities relating to four major tasks that include preliminary work, selection process, training programme and follow-up. The details are given in the table.

### **Facilities for the Trainees**

1. Those who have completed schooling under formal system and also open schooling are eligible for joining the training programme in the CUMI CSD. However, the trainees need to be of 17 years at the time of selection.
2. The selected candidates are admitted to a three year programme which is recognized by the National Council for Vocational Training.
3. Both boys and girls are eligible to opt for any branch of subjects out of a given set that includes electrical, fitter, turner, machine tool making and industrial manufacturing.
4. The trainees are provided with hostel facility with boarding in the CUMI CSD campus at Hosur.
5. All selected and admitted trainees are provided a stipend of Rs. 3000 in the first year, Rs. 4000 in the second year and Rs. 6000 during the third year of their training programme.
6. The trainees are provided with uniforms to maintain a dress code. They are also provided a bicycle for their local mobility.
7. Trainees are covered under Insurance provided by CUMI.
8. The trainees are supported to engage themselves in sports and cultural events. They are also given opportunity to play an active role in providing community services such as Swachh Bharat Mission and Traffic Regulations.

In a nutshell, the CUMI CSD is being run in line with an academic institution. Therefore, those who are undergoing training for three years are exposed to all kinds of personality development processes that include participation in the following extra-curricular activities which have been built-in into the training programme:

- Sports and games
- Cultural programmes
- Celebrating all nationally important days on campus
- Daily Yoga classes
- Annual meet of the trainees

During the last four years, the GRI has given counselling to many students of NIOS and also to those who have no access to higher education due to their socio-

economic conditions. During the last three years, about 90 students from villages of Dindigul, Theni, Madurai, Trichy, Karur and Tirunelveli districts have been selected under this programme for training in the CUMI CSD.

It is expected that all these students are to be absorbed in the Murugappa Group of companies as trained professionals in the area of their respective specialization. Therefore, this partnership under CSR helps the rural students to increase their employability and have an assured livelihood after completion of their vocational training. At the same time, the Murugappa Group is also enabled to have assured supply of trained manpower in different disciplines to work in their various units and factories. Partnership with Corporates for Establishing Skill Training School. This is being done with Corporates/Industrial Houses like Yamaha Motors. In this model, University-Yamaha together are setting-up a Training School to provide training in areas of two wheeler mechanism and maintenance.

**GRI's Community College - Background:** The GRI has established a Community College with financial support of University Grants Commission (UGC). The Community College aims at providing vocational courses to enlarge the areas of potential employment. This is a flagship programme of UGC under the banner of Skilling India in 2014 for establishment of Community Colleges. The GRI has invited industrial partners to offer various courses. Initially, the Community College has designed a diploma programme in Two Wheeler mechanism and maintenance. Many two wheeler dealers cum workshops have come forward to provide opportunity for hands-on-experience and on the job-training. In this process the Yamaha Motors have come forward with an idea of supporting to establish state-of-art workshop cum laboratory as part of Community College set-up. To start the process, the Yamaha Motors and GRI signed a MoU in March 2015 to work together for skill development among rural youths to enable them to have livelihood in providing services.

Tasks	GRI	YAMAHA
Preliminary work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Preparation of advertisement for the programme</li> <li>Admission of students</li> <li>Finalization of syllabus in consultation with Yamaha</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitating the selection process</li> <li>Make available technical manuals for training</li> <li>Teaching and learning materials</li> <li>Training of Trainers</li> </ul>
Training programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conducting the Training programme</li> <li>Documentation of the programme</li> <li>Monitoring the On Job Training</li> <li>Exposure Visits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing On the Job - Training in the GRI-YTS students</li> <li>Training in use of special tools by the Yamaha experts</li> </ul>
Follow up	Monitoring and impact assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment of the trainees</li> <li>Placement support for the trainees</li> </ul>

**Roles and Responsibilities:** The Yamaha Motors and GRI have agreed upon to undertake activities relating to four major tasks that include preliminary work, training programme and follow-up. The details are given the table.

### **Facilities Provided**

The GRI has developed infrastructure for setting up training workshop-cum-laboratory in its campus. Yamaha Motors has provided the required tools and equipment along with seven Yamaha bikes for demonstration purpose. Special tools and fuel injection system with computer system are also provided in the workshop.

Yamaha Motors have set up its own Training Academy at Bangalore. As part of this partnership, the Yamaha Motors and GRI established GRI-Yamaha Training School with the aim of imparting training to create professional two wheeler technicians. The students admitted are provided with uniforms to maintain the dress code, course materials and trained by automobile engineers in GRI-YTS.

These trainees are provided with on-the-job training in the Yamaha units and service stations; and on completion of 12 months of training, the students are provided with certificates by GRI, the Yamaha Training Academy and NCVT. At present, a first batch of 20 students are undergoing training. The trainers are also periodically trained in the Yamaha Training Academy.

### **Successful Case Studies**

#### **Case 1: Ramesh (25)**

Ramesh (25) belongs to the BC (Backward Caste) category. He has done diploma in electrical. His family has 3 members. Father: Velachamy, Age: 57, studied: 8th Standard and current occupation is weaver; Mother: Shanthi, Age: 45, studied: 10th Std, and current occupation is weaver; and Sister: Gayathri, Age: 21, studied: M.Sc (Physics), and current occupation is student.

Source of training, i.e., the idea and encouragement, was given by the family members, mainly father. Motivation for the course was given by the previous office staff in the department. The primary motive to participate in these courses is to gain knowledge with self-employment as the primary end product.

The training courses are meant to improve the quality of vocational education. For the category of students to which Ramesh belongs, this training programme will be a helpful one.

Current status after completing these courses: Ramesh says: “I am an entrepreneur running a shop in Chinnalapatti. I completed my course in the year of 2014. I started my shop in the year 2016 July. By the support of my family, I am running a mobile service, laptop service, and a studio. All these together have helped me in gaining a profit of around Rs. 40,000 per month. There are no employees or workers involved in my business. For making videos on occasions like marriage or any other such social event, my friends will help me. The future plan of my business is to build up a big and all-rounder shop in Chinnalapatti and make a branch in Dindigul. This is my future plan for harnessing my entrepreneurial skill after joining a training course in the department”.

### **Case 2: Gopala Krishnan (26)**

Gopala Krishnan (26) belongs to the OBC category and he has completed 12th Standard. There are 3 members in his family such as Father: Senrayan, Age: 52, studied: 4th Standard, and his current occupation is fancy shop/weaver. Mother: Saroja, Age: 49, studied: 2nd Std., and her current occupation is Housewife. Sister: Tamilarasi, Age : 24, studied: 10th Standard and her current occupation is housewife.

The responses are more or less the same in respect of all the cases, cited here, regarding the source of training, motivation, relevance of the course to the trade and GRI’s superior quality training and better job prospects and pay, compared to other institutions. Hence, this heading. viz, source of training, is not repeated.

Current status after completing this course: “I am an entrepreneur running a shop in Chinnalapatti. I completed my courses in the year of 2013. And the shop in Chinnalapatti was started by my father in the year 2010 and later I started mobile service as a part of the business. My family members constitute my main source of strength. There are no employees in my shop and my friends will help me in times of need in mobile servicing. This shop gives me a profit of Rs. 15000 per month. This shop has been financed through a business loan. My future plan is to make a big business by opening branches in nearby villages”.

### **Case 3: Mari Muthu (32)**

Mari Muthu (32) belongs to the SC category. He has completed 10th in NIOS scheme. His family has three members. Father: Manikandan, Age: 68, Education: 8th Standard, current occupation: farmer; Mother: Kamatchi, Age: 57, Education: 6th Std. Current occupation: housewife. Wife: Priyamani, Age:28. Education: B. Com, current occupation: housewife.

Current status after completing this course: “I am an entrepreneur running a shop in N. Panjampatti. I completed my courses in the year 2012. And the shop in N. Panjampatti was started by my father in the year 2013, later I started A/C & Refrigerator as a part of the business. My family members constitute my primary source of support. There are no employees in my shop and if there is a need then my friends will help me to run a business in A/C & Refrigeration service. The current occupation gives me a profit of Rs.15000 per month. This shop is under business loan. My future plan is to make a big business and to open branches in nearby villages”.

**Case 4: Vasanthi (35)**

Vasanthi (35) belongs to BC category. She has completed 10th Std in NIOS scheme in Gandhigram. Her family has three 3 members such as Father: Manikandan, Age: 68, Education: 8th Std. Current occupation: Farmer, Mother: Kamatchi, Age: 57, Education: 6th Std. Current occupation: Housewife. Husband: Mani, Age: 40, Education: 10th Std. Current occupation: Auto Driver.

Current status after completing this course: “I am an entrepreneur running a Canteen shop in Chinnalapatti. I completed my courses in the year of 2012. The shop in Chinnalapatti was started by me in the year 2015 and I started Canteen shed as a part of the business. My family members constitute my primary source support. There are two employees in my shop and if there is a need, then my friends will help me in the canteen business. The canteen shop gives me a profit of Rs. 10000 per month. The shop has been financed by business loan. My future plan is to make the canteen bigger and to make a studio in nearby village.

**Case 5: Lakshmi (37)**

Lakshmi (37) belongs to SC category. She has completed 10th Std in Girls’ high school, Chinnalapatti. Her family has three 3 members such as Father: Ganesan, Age: 68, Education: 8th Std. Current occupation: Petty shop. Mother: Vasugi, Age: 56, Education 8th Std. Current occupation: Housewife. Husband: Murugan, Age: 40. Education: 12th Std, Current occupation: Car driver.

Current status after completing this course: “I am an entrepreneur running a Canteen shop in Chinnalapatti. I completed my courses in the year of 2013. The shop in Chinnalapatti was started by my Father in the year 2012 and I started a provision store as a part of the business. My family members constitute my principal source of support. There are two employees in my shop and if there is a need then

my friends will help me. The shop gives me a profit of Rs.10000 per month. The shop is financed by business loan. My future plan is to make the provision store bigger and to make a studio in nearby village.

#### **Case 6: Gayathri (27)**

Gayathri (27) belongs to BC category. She has completed B.Com from Gandhigram University. There are 2 members in the family. Husband: Murugan, Age: 40. Education: 12th Std. Current occupation: Medical Representative. Daughter: Sheeba Age: 9, Education: Standard 4. Current occupation: student.

Current status after completing this course: “I am working in a computer institute in Chinnalapatti. The shop in Chinnalapatti was started by my father in the year 2015. I completed the course in Gandhigram University around the same time and now I am currently working in Kalvi Institute. My family members constitute the principal source of my strengths. My work gives me a profit of Rs. 5000 per month”.

#### **Case 7: Jeyaseelan (34)**

Jeyaseelan (34) belongs to BC category. He has completed 12th Std under NIOS scheme. His family has three members. It is a nuclear family. Father: Saravannan, Age: 60, Education: Nil. Occupation: Coolie. Mother: Sowriammal, Age: 50, Education : Nil. Occupation: Coolie. Brother: Sivamani, Age: 28, Education: B.A English. Occupation: Teacher.

Current status after completing this course, as Jeyaseelan admitted: “I am an entrepreneur working in house and has a branch in N. Panjampatti. I completed my course in the year of 2012. The shop in N. Panjampatti was started by me in the year 2015 and I started my career in Chinnalapatti as an assistant and now I am owning a own winding shop. Now the main process in this field is to coil wind the grinder, mixer and fan. I am now earning around Rs.10000 to 15000 per month. My family members constitute the principal source of my strength”.

#### **Case: 8 Muruga Pandi (25)**

Muruga Pandi (25) belongs to SC category. He has completed B.A English in Gandhigram University. He has a family of 3 members: Father: Yesuraj, Age: 55. Education: 6th Standard. Occupation: Fruit Shop. Mother: Parameswari, Age: 50 Education: Nil. Occupation: Housewife. Brother: Chellapandi, Age: 27, Education: 10th, occupation: Supervisor.

Current status after completing this course: “I am an entrepreneur and I am working in house and has a branch in Chinnalapatti. I completed my course in the year of 2012. And the shop in Chinnalapatti. was started by my father in the year 2015 and I started my career in Chinnalapatti as an assistant and now I am owning my own winding shop. Now the main process in this field is to electrical winding the grinder, mixer, and fan. And now I am earning around Rs.10000 to 15000 per month. And I support my father business. My full source support is my family members.

**Case 9: Parthipan (30)**

Parthipan (30) belongs to BC community. He has completed B.A English in Gandhigram University. There are 3 members in his family which is a nuclear family. Father: Ramraj, Age:65, Education: 6th Std. Occupation: Farmer, Mother, Diviya; Age: 58. Education: 7th Std. Occupation: Housewife. Brother: Vignesh Age: 25 Education: B.Com occupation: Accountant. Current status after completing this course: “I am an entrepreneur and working in my house and has a branch in Ramnad. I completed my courses in the year of 2013. The shop in Ramnad was started by my father in the year 2014. I started my career in Ramnad as an assistant around the same time and now I am owning my own winding shop. Computer service is the primary function of our shop. I am now earning around Rs.10000 to 20000 per month and thereby I support my fathers’ business. My family members constitute the principal service of my support”.

**Case 10: Sujatha (29)**

Sujatha (29) belongs to BC category with a rural background. She has completed B.Sc Computer Science in Gandhigram University. She has a family of 3 members and it is a nuclear type. Father: Kamalesh, Age: 60, Education: 8th Std. Occupation: provision shop. Mother: Jothi Priya, Age: 53. Education: 6th Std. Occupation: Housewife. Brother: Karthick, Age: 25. Education: B.Com. Occupation: student.

Current status after completing this course: Sujatha says: “I am an entrepreneur and working in my house and has a branch in Dindigul. I completed my courses in the year of 2013. The shop in Dindigul was started by my father in the year 2014. I started my career in Madurai as an assistant around the same time and now I am owning my own institute. Now the main process in this field is typewriting i.e. all data entry works undertaken by the typists. I am now earning around Rs. 10000 to 20000 per month. Being a marketing executive is my primary job and this Institute for typewriting is a side business typewriting work is being undertaken by my family. My family constitutes my principal source of support.

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## **Role of Life Enrichment Education of Jan Shikshan Sansthan in Changing the Attitude of Women in Delhi**

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### **Abstract**

Jan Shikshan Sansthans (JSSs) are vocational training institutions sanctioned to Non-Governmental Organizations under the Scheme of Assistance to Voluntary Agencies by the Ministry of Education, Government of India (MOE, GOI). The *Sansthans* were originally called Shramik Vidyapeeths. The *Sansthans* offer skill training in a variety of vocations in which the theory portion is limited to the core knowledge of the vocations and practical aspects are more so that they perform well in work situation. The JSSs also offer life enrichment education to change their attitude. The present paper is based on primary data. This is an attempt to study the social status of participants and the role of life enrichment education of JSS and its help to change their attitude. The JSSs not only provide self-employment opportunities, but also build the capability to exercise control over their personal and family life, make choices to improve wellbeing and take active role in decision making. This paper dwells on and highlights the life enrichment education of the JSSs.

**Keywords:** *life enrichment education; Jan Shikshan Sansthan; attitude*

### **Introduction**

The Jan Shikshan Sansthan is a unique scheme designed by the Government of India. JSSs are institutes of people's education focusing on the poor, illiterates, neo-literates, under-privileged and unreached. The JSSs are unique in that they do not provide just skill development, but link literacy with vocational skills and provide large doses of Life Enrichment Education (LEE) to the people. They do not work in isolation but aim for convergence with other stakeholders in the development of the

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society. It is an endeavour to shape their participants into self-reliant and self-assured employees and entrepreneurs. The JSSs are unique also because they offer quality vocational skills and technical knowledge at a very low cost. Their doors are open for everyone, and they reach out to their clientele groups by setting up sub-centres in the heart of the slum or in remote rural areas.

They are different from other vocational training institutions as they offer quality vocational skill; technical knowledge at such a low cost; provide need based and literacy-linked vocational training in most courses without insisting on age links or prior educational qualifications; reach out to the clientele in their areas unlike other institutions which the clientele has to access whether near or far; offer a multi-faceted skill-knowledge-awareness enhancement and outlook formation trainings and inputs and empowerment-oriented interventions in respect of social, economic and health status improvement of women and adolescent girls (Dutta, 1987).

The Scheme of JSS was initially launched in 1967 as Shramik Vidyapeeth, a polyvalent formulate faceted adult education institution, aimed at improving the vocational skills and quality of life of the industrial workers and their family members as well as those persons who had been migrating from rural to urban settings. The scheme of Shramik Vidyapeeth was renamed as Jan Shikshan Sansthan in April 2000. Along with the change in its name, its focus has also been changed. A scheme that was meant for the industrial workers and their families was expanded both in terms of its clientele and focus and was extended to the rural areas. There was the logic for its expansion.

The Total Literacy Campaigns launched after the setting up of the National Literacy Mission in 1988, had transformed the literacy landscape of the country and created an army of neo-literates who having realized the power of the written word, now wanted to use it to improve their livelihoods through skill development. The Post-literacy and Continuing Education Programme (CEP) had given a few of them the taste of vocational skills but the CEP promised to extend it to many more participants.

That became the rationale of setting up more JSSs, to match the needs of the districts. Today, there are more than 254 JSSs in the country and they are expected to act as district level resource support agencies especially with regard to organization of vocational training and skill development programmes for its target group. For the greater expansion of Skill India Campaign, the JSS Scheme has been transferred from MHRD to Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) on January 1<sup>st</sup> 2018.

**Life Enrichment Education of JSS**

Job-oriented vocational training programmes are of immense importance for one's life and it is more important to have life enrichment education along with job-oriented professional skills. As we know, JSS is a unique institution focusing on the poor, illiterates, neo-literates, underprivileged, unreached, women and youth. The JSS is unique in that sense they don't provide just vocational training/skill development but link literacy with vocational skills and provide large doses of Life Enrichment Education (LEE) to the people. They don't work in isolation but aim for convergence with other stakeholders in society. It is their endeavour to shape the participants into self-reliant and self-assured employees and entrepreneurs. The LEE provides specially designed instruction and related services in the JSSs. The curriculum focuses on personal management, communication, practical living skills, vocational skills, leisure and recreation activities and social skills. The LEE covers a wide range of subjects and all are designed to meet the physical, intellectual and social needs of the participants. The courses in LEE programmes are taught by the respective field experts. Value oriented education, discipline and character building are the major social benefits for all round development of the learners.

The LEE components are an integral of way of life to be practiced and the JSS has cooperation with educational, cultural and social organizations for meeting educational, vocational, socio-cultural and welfare needs of each target group. The objective of this approach is to make an individual not only capable of engaging in productive economic activity but also responsible citizen and a successful person.

**The LEE components include:**

- Health, nutrition and personal hygiene
- Population education
- Environment education
- Women empowerment
- Leadership skills
- Self-esteem
- Consumer education
- Uses of blood donation and blood banks
- Eye care
- Public relation skills
- HIV/AIDS prevention
- Home nursing

- Public relation skills
- Responsible parenthood
- Self-help groups
- Entrepreneurship development

The JSS has chosen to empower people by providing basic education, vocational preparation, life skills training and creative arts at both residential facilities and community day programmes. The programme encourages the participants to accept responsibility for what they have done and avoid harmful behaviours in the future.

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To study the socio-economic status of women participants.
2. To study the changing attitude of the women participants.

### **Research Methodology**

The investigator collected primary data during one year period (Jan.-December 2017) from JSS, Prayas, Jahangirpuri, New Delhi.

### **Data Analysis and Processing**

#### **Primary Data**

The procedure and processes of data analyses are pre-determined to a certain extent by the objectives of a study. The data analysis and interpretations were dealt in the light of the objectives formulated for the study. A general objective was formulated as formal affirmative statement predicting a single research outcome, a tentative explanation of the relationship between variables.

The present article deals with the distribution of the participants based on their age group, gender, religion, caste, state of domicile, marital status, educational qualification, type of family, type of house, occupation, family income and attitude of the participants. Keeping in view the objectives of the study, the collected data was analysed by using statistical methods like 'Frequency percentage', and 'Rank order'.

#### **1. Gender of the Participants**

The gender of the participants for the study is categorised into only female category.

**Table 1 - Gender of the Participants**

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Female	50	100%

Source: Primary Data

Table 1 shows that the 100% participants are the females because study was conducted on women participants. Women representation in the JSS' trainings is more probably because of a few factors like unwillingness of men to undergo training, the type of courses in which training is imparted is more suitable to women and a large percentage of women are only housewives who are able to allocate some time to undergo training.

## 2. Age Group of the Participants

Age is one of the important aspects of self-development since the resistance to change is relatively lesser at the young age compared to the older age. The youngsters are generally interested to learn new things and take the risk in life which is highly essential for entrepreneurship. The age group of the participants for the study was divided into 15-24 years, 25-34 years and 35 and above.

**Table 2 - Age Group of the Participants**

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage
15-24 Years	29	58%
25-34 Years	13	26%
35 & above Years	8	16%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Primary Data

The data in above Table 1.2 shows that none of the participants were selected below 15 years of age because JSS offers Courses only for the 15 and above year age group. The vast majority of the participants, i.e., 58%, belong to the 15-24 age group, while more than one-fourth —26% belong to the 25-34 age group and the remaining 16%% participants belong to 35 and above years.

## 3. Religion of the Participants

The participants in the study are Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs, i.e., three religions.

**Table 3 - Religion of the Participants**

Religion	Frequency	Percentage
Hindu	30	60%
Muslim	17	34%
Sikh	3	6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Primary Data

The data in Table 3 shows that the vast majority of the participants 60% belong to the Hindu religion, 34% were Muslims and remaining 6% participants were Sikhs.

#### **4. Caste of the Participants**

The participants for the study were divided into four groups based on caste and community, namely, General (GN), Other Backward Class (OBC) and Schedule Castes (SCs)/Schedule Tribes (STs).

**Table 4 - Caste of the Participants**

Caste	Frequency	Percentage
GN	11	22%
OBC	25	50%
SC/ST	14	28%
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Primary Data

Majority of the participants belong to OBC with 50%, followed by SC/ST, 28%, and remaining 22% GN castes.

#### **5. State of Domicile**

Domicile refers to the state in which a person has his/her permanent residence, as compared to where a person is living temporarily. The participants in the study are from the following States and Union Territories.

**Table.5 - State of Domicile**

State of Domicile	Frequency	Percentage
Delhi	19	38%
Bihar	13	26%
Uttar-Pradesh	9	18%
West-Bengal	4	8%
Rajasthan	3	6%
Haryana	2	4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Primary Data

## 6. Marital Status of the Participants

The participants were classified into four categories, such as Married, Un-Married, Widow and Divorced.

**Table 6 - Marital status of the Participants**

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
Married	15	30%
Unmarried	30	60%
Widow	2	4%
Divorced	3	6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Primary Data

As seen from the Table 6, 60% of the total women were unmarried, 30% were married, 6% was from the divorced group and remaining 4% were from the widow group.

## 7. Educational Qualification of the Participants

**Table 7 - Educational Qualification of the Participants**

Education Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Below Primary	2	4%
Primary	7	14%
Middle	13	26%
High School	14	28%
Intermediate	10	20%
Graduation	2	4%
Post-Graduation	2	4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Primary Data

Based on the educational qualification, seven groups were categorised, viz. Below Primary, Primary, Middle, High School, Intermediate, Graduation and Postgraduation.

As evident above, there are only minor gaps, viz., 2%, between high school pass out and middle school pass out categories: 28% were high school pass out followed by 26% were middle school pass out. 20% were intermediate, 14% were primary school pass out, 4% were below primary, 4% were graduate and same number of participants with 4% are post-graduate.

## 8. Type of Family of the Participants

The family type of participants was classified into two categories as nuclear family type and joint family type.

**Table 8 - Type of Family of the Participants**

Type of Family	Frequency	Percentage
Nuclear	29	58%
Joint	21	42%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Primary Data

It is clear that a great majority of the participants, i.e. 58% were living in nuclear families and 42% were living in joint families. The predominance of nuclear families may be an indication that freedom from constraints encourages employment-seeking behaviour.

### 9. Type of House of the Participants

Ownership of house is also an indication that they are permanent residents. The house types were classified into two groups, own house, and rented house.

**Table 9 Type of House of the Participants**

Nature of House	Frequency	Percentage
Own House	27	54%
Rented	23	46%
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Primary Data

Much importance is given by the people for having a place to stay of their own. They work hard for it and they acquire their own house. It is found that the majority of the participants, 54%, were living in own house and the remaining 46% were living in rented house.

### 10. Family Monthly Income of the Participants

The monthly income of the respondent's families is represented in Table 10. The income of the families for the study was classified into five groups as: up to - Rs. 5,000, Rs. 5,001 - Rs. 7,000, Rs. 7,001 - Rs. 9,000, Rs. 9,001 and above.

**Table 10 –Family Monthly Income of the Participants**

Monthly Income	Frequency	Percentage
Up to – Rs. 5,000	11	22%
Rs. 5,001 – Rs. 7,000	20	40%
Rs. 7,001 – Rs. 9,000	14	28%
Rs. 9,001 and Above	5	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Primary Data

Table 10 shows that the majority of the participants- 40% - were from Rs. 5,001 – Rs. 7,000 per month family income category, followed by 28% from Rs. 7,001 - Rs. 9,000 category, 22% from upto Rs. 5,000, and the remaining 10% were from Rs. 9,001 and above income category.

### **Changing Attitude of the Participants**

Attitudes are general evaluation of objects, ideas, and people one encounters throughout one's life. Attitudes are important because they can guide thought, and behaviour. Thus, change occurs when a person goes from being positive to negative, from slightly positive to very positive, or from having no attitudes to having one.

The present study was conducted on small group of women participants of the JSS and a total 20 statements were given to them to study the attitude. These statements were directly related to their daily life practices, i.e., change proneness, achievement motivation, credit orientation and risk orientation. The changing attitudes of participants were divided into four categories, viz., Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree.

Changing attitudes of participants contain 20 items with five-point response category. It is evident from Table 11 that, 42% participants were with “strongly agree” on item one “I try to keep the information about new methods of work used in daily life”, and only 38% expressed “strongly agree”, while 16% were with “disagree” category and remaining 2% were in the “strongly disagree” categories.

Majority of the participants, i.e., 38% were on strongly agree on item two “It is not necessary that I will use the information of all new approaches”, followed by 26% in the agree, 22% in the strongly disagree and the remaining 14% in disagree categories.

On item three “When I find out any new information about the works used in daily life, I am not comfortable until I take it for myself”, 50% participants were in the strongly agree, followed by 22% were in agree, 7% each in strongly disagree and disagree categories.

On item four, “Nowadays, new information about the methods of work used in daily life keeps coming, but who knows whether the new information is better than the original/old information”, 42% participants were in the agree, 30% on disagree, 18% on strongly agree and remaining 10% were on strongly disagree categories. As per the views of 34% participants, they were in strongly agree on item five “I take up

the methods of work used in daily life by thinking very carefully”, 32% were on agree, 26% on disagree and remaining 8% on strongly disagree categories.

**Table 11 - Changing Attitude of the Participants**

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I try to keep the information about the new methods of work used in daily life.	21 (42%)	19 (38%)	8 (16%)	2 (4%)
It is not necessary that I will use the information of all new approaches.	19 (38%)	13 (26%)	7 (14%)	11 (22%)
When I find out any new information about the methods of work used in daily life, I am not comfortable until I take it for myself.	25 (50%)	11 (22%)	7 (14%)	7 (14%)
Nowadays, new information about the work used in daily life keeps coming, but who knows whether the new information is better than the original information.	9 (18%)	21 (42%)	15 (30%)	5 (10%)
I take up the works used in daily life by thinking very carefully.	17 (34%)	16 (32%)	13 (26%)	4 (8%)
I want to earn money by hard work.	7 (14%)	43 (86%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
I want to get job by honesty.	8 (16%)	42 (84%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
I want to work according to my choice.	11 (22%)	25 (50%)	8 (16%)	6 (12%)
I like to use new things in my work.	28 (56%)	22 (44%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
My ambition is that I set a glorious record in my life.	21 (42%)	29 (58%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Loan is required to meet daily life requirements.	8 (16%)	25 (50%)	14 (28%)	3 (6%)
It is very easy to save money to meet the needs of daily life.	10 (20%)	11 (22%)	25 (50%)	4 (8%)
There is nothing wrong in taking loan from any institutional source to meet the needs of daily life.	8 (16%)	32 (64%)	7 (14%)	3 (6%)
I want to avoid taking a loan for personal activities, even if it does meet my personal needs.	11 (22%)	28 (56%)	4 (8%)	7 (14%)
It is very easy to take a loan from any government/co-operative councils.	8 (16%)	14 (28%)	21 (42%)	7 (14%)
To reduce the risk of failure of any work, there should be run more than one unit.	7 (14%)	32 (64%)	3 (6%)	8 (16%)
I want to take bigger risks and bigger profits than lower risks and small profits.	16 (32%)	14 (28%)	14 (28%)	6 (12%)
The one who takes more risks gets more advantages than the others.	4 (8%)	25 (50%)	7 (14%)	14 (28%)
It is good to take risk if you know that the probability of success is excessive.	14 (28%)	25 (50%)	7 (14%)	4 (8%)
I don't take the risk of using the new method, until surrounding of people didn't use it successfully.	12 (24%)	18 (36%)	14 (28%)	6 (12%)

Source: Primary Data

It is found in Table 11 that 86% participants were in the ‘agree’ category on item six “I want to earn money by hard work”, followed by 14% on ‘strongly agree’ category.

On the item seven “I want to get job by honesty”, 84% participants preferred the ‘agree’ category and remaining 16% were in ‘strongly agree’ category. None preferred any other options like ‘disagree’ and ‘strongly disagree’.

On item eight “I want to work according to my choice” half of the participants (50%) were on the ‘agree’, 22% in ‘strongly agree’, 16% in ‘disagree’ and 12% were in ‘strongly disagree’ categories.

In respect of item nine “I like to use new things in my work”, 56% participants were in ‘strongly agree’ and 44% in ‘agree’ category.

On item ten “My ambition is that I set a glorious record in my life”, 42% participants were in the ‘agree’ and 58% were in ‘strongly agree’ category.

On item eleven “Loan is required to meet daily life requirements”, 50% participants were in ‘agree category’, 16% were in ‘strongly agree’, 28% were in ‘disagree’ and only 6% were ‘strongly disagree’ category. Half of the participants (50%) were in ‘disagree’ on item twelve “It is very easy to save money to meet the needs of daily life”, 22% were in ‘agree’, 20% ‘disagree’ and remaining 8% were in ‘strongly disagree’ category.

On the item thirteen “There is nothing wrong in taking loan from any institutional source to meet the needs of daily life”, more than half of the participants, i.e., 64% were on ‘agree’, 16% were with ‘strongly agree’ option. 14% were on ‘disagree’ and 6% were with ‘strongly disagree’ option on item thirteen. Majority of the participants (56%) were in ‘agree category’ on item fourteen “I want to avoid taking a loan for personal activities, even if it does meet my personal needs”; 14% were in ‘strongly agree’, 14% were in strongly ‘disagree’ and only 8% were in ‘disagree’ category.

On item fifteen “It is very easy to take a loan from any government/co-operative councils”, 42% participants were in ‘disagree’ category, followed by 28% were on the ‘agree’, 16% were in the ‘strongly agree’ category, and remaining 14% were in ‘strongly disagree’ category. It has been found in the study out of total, 64% participants were ‘agree’ category on point sixteen “To reduce the risk of failure of any work, there should be run more than one unit”, 14% in ‘strongly agree’ category, 16% were in ‘strongly disagree’ and only 6% were ‘disagree’ category.

On item seventeen “I want to make bigger risks and bigger profits than lower risks and small profit”, 32% participants were in ‘strongly agree’, 28% in ‘agree’, 28% in ‘disagree’ and 12% were in ‘strongly disagree’ category.

Half of the participants (i.e., 50%) were in 'agree' category on item eighteen "The one who takes more risks that takes more advantages than the others", and 8% were in 'strongly agree', while 28% were in 'strongly disagree' and remaining 14% in 'disagree' category.

On item nineteen "It is good to take risk if you know the probability of success is excessive", 50% participants were in the 'agree', 8% in 'strongly agree', 14% in 'disagree' and the remaining 8% were in strongly disagree category.

Majority of the participants (36%) were in 'agree' category on item number twenty "I don't take the risk of using the new method, until the surrounding people not used it successfully", 24% were in 'strongly agree', 28% in 'disagree' category and 12% were undecided.

### **Findings of the Study, evident from the Tables**

- The study was conducted on only women participants of Jan Shikshan Sansthan, so the 100% participants were women.
- The study shows majority of the participants with 66% belong to 15 to 24 years age group.
- It has been clear that majority of the participants, i.e., 60% are Hindus. This religious character reflects the national scenario.
- A sizeable proportion, 50% of the participants belong to the OBC category, who constitute the single largest group in study.
- 38% of the participants belong from the National Capital Delhi.
- More than half of the participants (60%) are unmarried.
- 28% participants are high school pass out.
- 59% participants are in nuclear families and those owning houses is 54%. 40% of the participants of the JSS have family income between Rs. 5,001-Rs. 7,000.

### **Conclusion**

When we think the Jan Shikshan Sansthan, we tend to connect it with only vocational training programmes and how it helps in making the participants skilled. We tend to forget about another component of JSS i.e. Life Enrichment Education. We can say that many people don't know about it. So, the present study on Life Enrichment Education of the JSS and how it helps in changing the attitude of women participants and the study found that the maximum number of participants gave

positive responses. As evident from the Table 11 above, there were twenty items and eighteen out of twenty items have positive responses from the participants and in only two items i.e. twelve and fifteen, have negative response. We can conclude on the basis of the given responses that, the participants have a positive attitude.

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## **The Role of Rural Self Employment Training Institute (RSETI) in Employment Generation of the Rural People - A Study on Kerala**

A. S. Seetha<sup>1</sup>

### **Abstract**

Unemployment, mainly educated unemployment, is one of the major problems faced by the people in the country. As a solution, government has introduced training under RSETI, under lead banks, and these banks provide loans with lower rates of interest for starting new enterprises. This study is based on how the training from RSETI transformed the life of a set of people in Alappuzha district, Kerala, as they are provided with several employment generation programmes through these institutions. This study also focuses on how these institutes managed to develop the idea of self entrepreneurship among the rural people. A set of 10 people were met in person and case studies were made to make the analysis. Since it is presented as a qualitative analysis, no statistical tools were used. The study proves that there is a great role for RSETI in creating employment opportunities among the rural people and also in transforming their lives.

**Keywords:** *rural self employment training institute; skill training; entrepreneurial intention; employment generation; livelihood transformation*

### **I. Introduction**

India is a secular democratic country, that aims in the better development of its citizen in every sector and hence, the country is able to provide its people with proper educational facilities. Lakhs of youth are passing out with flying colours and entering the job market, hence, a great competition happens. Unemployment, mainly educated unemployment, prevails more in the country and in an addition to that, poverty prevails, migration from rural to urban areas is increasing and crime rate also is going up so that the whole development concept of the nation is falling down.

To stabilize this, both government and non-governmental organizations had taken initiatives and implemented programmes and schemes, mainly accessible by the rural

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people. Certain initiatives were taken to promote micro enterprises and also self-entrepreneurship, which was one of the best solutions for the problem. Women groups were created and were provided with micro financial support so that they could help themselves in building up a new future.

Such a programme was introduced through by RUDSETI, an organization started by Dr. D Veerendra Heggade at Dharmasthala, with the support of Syndicate Bank and Canara Bank. This was later replicated as RSETI and turned to be an initiative of Ministry of Rural Development. They started providing training to the unemployed youth, who didn't have access to higher education, mainly from rural and semi-urban background. Residential skill development training was provided with an objective of motivating, training and assisting the village youth to move on with self-entrepreneurship ventures that could lead to decrease in the unemployment status and to a better development of the nation.

Later, the institute - RSETI - spread in every district of the country under its lead banks and it started proving training to millions of youth across the country. They also started to organize RUDSETI bazaars during exhibitions and on special occasions in their correspondent areas. This paper investigates the role of RSETIs in promoting employment generation for the rural people. Since the rural people are affected more with the fall of GDP, their livelihood also is affected. Inequality will become more persistent and hence, employment is always a basic need for them. The better way to provide it is through skill development training, as, they can become self- entrepreneurs or job providers. For that purpose, RSETIs had taken greater initiatives.

### **Significance of the study**

Unemployment and underemployment have been a longstanding problem in the Indian economy. The report published by NSSO states that the male youth had an unemployment rate of 17.4 percent and 18.7 percent in rural and urban areas respectively, while women youth had rates of 13.6 percent and 27.2 percent in urban and rural areas in 2017-18.

SBI-RSETI, Alappuzha is one of the best institutions that can be shown as a good example for their training and services provided. The study has added to the existing information on the topic and provided a platform for further research. Findings that come from the study will provide as a springboard to prompt interest for further research into the other facets of the activities done by RSETIs across the country. The study will also provide an idea of how RSETI works in helping the rural poor,

earn their own livelihood, and starting new enterprises, which leads to their own financial security and the development of the country. The study will contribute to existing literature on the role of RSETI in rural entrepreneurship development and serve as a reference to the body of knowledge to the academia.

### **Literature Review**

In her study, viz., *‘Training at Rural Self Employment Training Institute (RSETI) and Its Influence on the Financial Literacy and Entrepreneurial Intention of Women*, Rathi K. N. (2019) reiterates that the financial literacy and good financial decision is very vital in the success of business life. The financial literacy and entrepreneurial intention of rural women of Palakkad district are studied here. The RSETIs are working in almost all the districts in India and they are providing several programmes to develop self-employment among the rural youth.

This study is intended to know the influence of these programmes in the entrepreneurial intention and financial literacy. The research was aimed to know the relationship between the two variables and collected data from sixty-two women by using the financial literacy test and entrepreneurial intention questionnaire. The research is hypothesized the significant differences of trained and untrained women in the entrepreneurial intention and financial literacy. The statistical techniques used are correlation, t test and chi square test. The study found there is a significant difference between the trained and untrained in their entrepreneurial intention and financial literacy, and there is a significant correlation between the entrepreneurial intention and financial literacy.

In Wang, Chang, Yoa and Liang (2015) study, the contribution of self-efficacy to the relationship between personality traits and entrepreneurial intention has been examined. This study observed the personality traits and entrepreneurial intention and their result indicated that the entrepreneurial intentions have two dimensions, namely, conviction and preparation. The dimensions of personality included big five personality traits. The study recommended that, in addition to adopting individual personality and enhancing student intention toward rural entrepreneurship, learning activities such as business-plan writing and entrepreneurial competence development should be embedded into agricultural curriculum and placement.

Aleesa’s (2019) study revealed that students’ personal attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control were significantly associated with each other. It also showed that personal attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behaviour alone could explain only a small portion of the variability of the entrepreneurial intention.

## **II. Objectives of the study**

1. To study the difference between the trained and untrained rural people.
2. To study the roles and functions of RSETI in Alappuzha district.
3. To present some Case Studies on the effect/role of RSETI in Alappuzha district.

## **III. Methodology**

The study was conducted as case study method in Alappuzha district, and the sample group consisted of 20 randomly chosen members, who had completed their training in Alappuzha RSETI, from 2010 to 2019. Personal meetings with them and qualitative analysis were the methods chosen for the study. The study was based on the role of RSETI in building up a secure life for the rural poor and in developing self-employment in the rural areas.

## **IV. Results and Discussion**

Employment status is a tool used to measure the health of a society on the basis of its economic status. An unemployed society will only lead to an underdeveloped nation with a vast decline in its GDP, GNP and NNP. This can result from increased population, lack of skills, lack of financial support, deficiency of resources and raw materials and so on. RSETIs bring a major solution for this problem. The study proves that the training under these institutes helps in promoting better self-employment generation for the people who were trained by the RSETIs.

The case study also proved that that 73 percent of the trainees after completing their training from RSETI have become employed in one way or the other. Most of them are self-employed or successful entrepreneurs and others, working in collaboration with other sectors. There is a follow up done properly by the institute and almost everybody says that the members in the RSETI, Alappuzha, maintained a very close contact with their trainees and that makes it more special.

## **V. Case Studies**

**Case:1.** Dharani. S. Dharan is a 46-year-old lady, the owner of “Dharani Enterprises” near Kanichukulangara, who is leading a successful life after starting her own enterprise. She had her training under RSETI in 2014 and after completing her training, with the support of her family, she planned to do her business in flour mill.

She is a fisher woman by caste, and she remembers that it was too hard to survive during her old days with the lesser amount that her father earned through fishing. She had studied up to 10<sup>th</sup> grade and had gone for selling fish with her mother.

It was after her marriage that she thought about the idea of establishing a flour mill as they had to walk very far to get fine flour for consumption. Her husband helped and supported her in starting her dream venture. With his support, she attended the class in RSETI. Then she got confidence that she will be able to go on with her dream. She remembers that her first investment was around 50-60 lakhs for the machineries and the building that they started their enterprise.

She got loan from the SBI (lead bank), which was helpful for her in building up her dreams. Since the loan was in connection with RSETI, she had a less rate of interest to pay and that got enough time for repayment. She has a well-developed business of rice flour. They started selling it in the nearby houses and now they take orders from hypermarkets and are selling in a bulk, necessary for the order that they get.

They sell their products in the name of *Aammeess*. They not only do the business, but also provide employment to nearly 3 people around the locality. Dharani is a successful entrepreneur, who has a well developed business and a successful woman in life. She says that the idea for the business and the confidence for starting it was achieved only from the 10 days training given from RSETI. She thanked the trainers and RSETI for making her life a successful one.

**Case 2:** Nadeshnan is running his own press and a DTP shop near Kanichukulangara temple along with his 3 staffs and wife helping him in his business. He had completed his training under RSETI before a year and now he is running his own shop and had given job for 3 other people.

He belongs to SC community and told that his family business was basket making. It was not enough for his family's survival and when the family was struck with poverty, he decided to go for another job.

It was then that he got job in a press where he used to print notices, flex and banners. Later he had thought of starting up a new venture and it was from the panchayat that he got information about the training in RSETI. He had joined training for printing and Photostat and with the help of the bank loan, he was able to set up his own DTP shop in one of the main marketing centre.

He had spent an initial investment of 3 lakhs on his DTP center for the machineries and the building rent. He is able to pay it back from the profit that he gains from the centre. He is still working in the press that had started around 10 years back and along with this DTP centre, he is able to manage his livelihood. He is happy with his life, and he is proud that he can earn his living and is also able to give a livelihood to 2 others.

**Case 3:** Minimol is a proud entrepreneur. She is able to earn on her own and is also able to provide job for three others in her own stitching center. She had completed her training a year ago from RSETI, and started a stitching center at Mannamcherry. She is also giving training to 3 people around her locality, and she is happy with her profession. She had invested around 3 lakhs for her stitching center as first investment and she is able to make a profit from the business.

She was born and brought up in a traditional Muslim family, where women were always considered only to be inside the rooms other than studies and work. Her family was poor and her father was the only earning person in the family. She was interested in tailoring and fashion designing but was not able to go for further studies on that area. After her marriage, she was like a typical Muslim girl who had worked for her husband and family. It was her husband, who found out the dream inside her and asked her to join the training for tailoring and embroidery in RSETI.

She had gone for the training with the support of her husband and after completing the training, within a month, she had set up a tailoring centre nearby her house and she had taken gold loan for the start-up. She is happy that she is able to earn and is able to repay the loan. She is also proud that she is able to help her husband for meeting their needs. She said that they are a joint family and now, she is able to give a hand for helping her husband manage the family. She is also able to manage her own needs without asking for a helping hand. She remembers that there was a follow up from RSETI and the help from the organization had made her life different.

**Case 4:** Rajashree has her own stitching and fashion designing center “*BRINJAL*” nearby Alappuzha town. She is able to manage the shop and has also started taking readymade clothes from wholesale dealers and selling it in the shop. Her mother is also a tailor, and she helps her in the shop. She remembers that she had studied both tailoring and fashion designing from RSETI and that helped her earn her livelihood. She remembers that she had spent around 5 lakhs as first investment for the rent and machines. She had 2 tailoring machines and she is able to earn around 10,000 per week.

She is a member of a middle class family whose father was a staff in a private company. After completing her higher secondary education, she was not able to continue with her studies as her father's death had affected the family. Her mother took care of her and her brother with the money that she got from tailoring. After her marriage, she wished to continue her studies but that was also not possible. It was then that she came to know about the training provided by RSETI. She had joined the training and had her certificate to open up a new venture.

She had not taken loan from the bank and had managed with her gold and other cash, for starting the venture. She said that the gold was taken back and there are no other burdens with the shop and they are able to have a living with the shop. They are planning for widening it as textiles so that she can broaden her entrepreneurship and can provide more for their livelihood. She is happy with her business and with the life that she has now. She thanked RSETI wholeheartedly as she says that it was because of the training that she had a better future. She is a successful entrepreneur.

**Case 5:** Priya, the 35 years old woman is moving successfully with “KASI DESIGNS” a designing centre at Barnad junction, Alappuzha. She has a group of friends to help for rent installment and machinery to run her shop. They are batch mates during the training period in RSETI. She started her shop on her own with an initial investment of 2 lakh. The finance was arranged with gold loan and she had taken it back with the earning that she got through the shop.

She is from a poor family where she was the eldest kid who had to take care of her two younger sisters and mother after the death of her father. She stopped her studies after completing her higher secondary education. She went for cleaning and helping in the nearby houses to take care of her sisters and making them study. She got her two sisters married and she was also settled. It was with the help of her mother-in-law, that she came to know about the RSETI and the training that they provide.

The shop is a stitching and designing centre, as they are also doing embroidery works and other fabric painting works on tops and *saries*. She had given employment for 3 of her friends and there are students coming for studying tailoring and embroidery. She is happy with the life that she has. She says that there were follow-ups from RSETI and they had helped her successful in the venture.

**Case 6:** After getting a class on loans and services provided by the lead banks from RSETI, Anas gained confidence to start a new venture. He was a tile worker

who was working under a contractor for the past 6 years. The salary that he got was not sufficient for the work that he did and that was the reason that he thought of starting a new paving block factory on his own. He attended the class at RSETI for 14 days and from there he got to know about the business tips and other important matters regarding loans and its repayments.

His family consists of his wife and three girls and his mother. They were doing agriculture, mainly vegetable cultivation and selling it, but it was a loss as they were not having their shop in a centre and many vegetables got damaged in meantime. It was then that he chose to go for tile work with a contractor.

After getting the training from RSETI, within a year, he started an interlock tile factory on his own with an initial investment of 17 lakhs which was a great success. Since he was working in the field, he was able to get works and thus was able to repay the loan within one year. He got the raw materials cheaply through contract and he had a group of workers in his factory. He is an established entrepreneur and is giving job to about 20-30 workers in his factory. He is running his family successfully, had brought a mini lorry for good transportation of the materials and he is proud that all the success happens after he got earned from the factory.

**Case 7:** Sumi, a 30 year old lady, started her cake making a year before and is running successfully with her business. She is interested in the field and is happy that she is able to earn for her needs. Her husband is working abroad, and she is able to help him making their both ends meet. Even though cake making takes more time, she is happy with the profession as she is much interested in it. She had attended the class for food making and preservation by RSETI and it helped her starting her own entrepreneurship.

She was born and brought up in a middle class traditional Muslim family, where the parents were very conservative and they had not let their girls go out to study more. Sumi, after her marriage, was in search of a job because they wanted money for her husband to go abroad. It was then that she came to know about RSETI and since she was interested in cake making, she joined for training. It was a 7 day training and she was given certificate and she says that it was one of the major turning point in her life.

She says that she has enough orders and is also planning to put a shop for cakes and pastries. She is doing it now in her house and there are orders from schools for celebrations and her friends and relatives also give orders for birthdays, anniversaries

and so on. She is able to earn the double that she spends for a cake. There are no advertisements till now and she is happy that those who buy the cakes from her recommends it to others and hence is getting orders by that way too. She is a successful entrepreneur.

**Case 8:** Nidas, the 40-year-old man, has his flour mill working very well with the help of his family and is happy that he is able to earn a better amount from the mill. He had repaid half of the amount that he had taken as loan from the bank within 6 months of starting the venture. He had oil mill also in connection with the flour mill.

He was from a poor family, where his father is a fisherman and mother, a home maker. He had completed his high school education and went with his father for fishing. Their family was surviving with his and father's earning. Two years after his marriage, he had met with an accident and was not able to go for fishing and the earning of the family decreased. It was hard for the family to make both ends meet and it was then that he heard about the training in RSETI.

He went for training in Flour making for 7 days and he got the certificate for that. After completion of the training, he planned to start a new venture. He had a first investment of around 30 lakhs for his flour mill, which he managed with gold loan and bank loan together. He has his machineries in his own building near by his house so that his family can also help him in the mill.

He is happy that he is getting enough work form the neighbourhood itself and is happy with the mill. He told that this was happened because of the help from the lead bank and RSETI. He said told that there was a follow up visit from the organization.

**Case 9:** Asmabeevi has a small bakery unit where she is selling her own home-made snacks. She had been in RSETI for food processing class in the year 2014 and is running her own shop. She gets orders from nearby areas for functions, and she is happy that she is able to pay her son's fees on time.

She is a member of a backward Muslim family where men always dominate as compared to women. She belongs to the fisher folk by caste and her husband was an auto driver. He passed away in 2009, and the family burden was on her head. She had her son to take care of and since she was the eldest daughter-in-law, she had to take care of his mother and his sisters. She went for house jobs but was not able to meet the needs. It was then that she got information about the training from one of her friends.

After the training, she was confused whether to start a venture or not. But the director of RSETI gave suggestions and helped her in starting up the new venture. She had a primary investment of around 50,000 for her shop as it is a room attached to her house. She is planning to expand it and she is sure that RSETI will help her because she believes that it was because of the support of this organization that she is able to come up from her problems that she had. She said that she had struggled before to meet the daily needs but now, she is happy with her life. She also says that the training under RSETI had changed her life.

**Case 10:** Ruby Antony is happy with her stitching centre and fancy store “*Kootukarees*” as she is able to earn a living from the shop. She had completed her textiles course from RSETI, 2 years ago and had taken gold loan for starting her new venture.

She is a fisherwoman by caste and she was married to a carpenter. They belong to the BPL category. She has a son and a daughter. His earnings were the only income for the family to survive. It was then that he met with an accident and to meet the hospital needs, they had sold their house and his two wheeler. After this accident, he was not able to work and it was her duty to make the family survive.

It was through her friend that she came to know about the training and since she was interested in textiles and fashion designing, she joined for the training. After completion of the training, she managed to set up a tailoring and fashion designing store including ladies’ store, and her husband also helped her manage there.

She is at present able to manage the store and tells that it was tough during the starting time to manage it because no one came there as it was new and people were new to the store.

Now, she says that she is able to earn around Rs. 20,000 during the festive seasons and around Rs. 10,000 during normal times. She is happy that she is able to help her husband for their family. Her daughter also helps her in the fancy store when she is free and she says that it was because of RSETI, that she is able to grow as a good entrepreneur.

## **VI. Conclusion**

RSETIs are unique skill development organizations operating at the district level across the country. The RSETIs are engaged in developing skills among rural youth and facilitating them in establishing rural enterprises and securing sustainable

livelihoods. Though RSETIs are sponsored and managed by different Banks, they have a common objective of promoting the creation of sustainable rural enterprises. To achieve the common goal, the RSETIs need to follow uniform practices, systems and procedures. RSETIs are also required to have standardized training infrastructure and training inputs to bring in a quality outcome.

SBI-RSETI, Alappuzha can be taken as a model for the better working of these institutions. They had created employment opportunities for 73% of members who had completed training under different courses in RSETI. From 2013-2018, RSETI, Alappuzha has been graded with **AA grade**, as they are able to complete more than their targeted programme and they are also able to give the maximum number of new entrepreneurs to the society that helps in the rural development in every perspective.

The most important thing and the biggest success of RSETI, Alappuzha is that in the past few years, it had created 6,111 entrepreneurs in the district. Among them, 2,364 members started their field of work by self-financing and 3,488 members had bank support as their financial assistance for entrepreneurship. They are also taking follow-ups of their passed-out trainees and helping them in every possible manner and supporting them. Thus, RSETIs can be considered one of the best programmes by the Ministry Of Rural Development for Entrepreneurship Development.

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## Understanding Socio-Demographic Factors Influencing Farmers' Financial Literacy

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### Abstract

The exploratory research design used to explore socio-demographic variables of farmers and its impact on financial literacy. Convenient sampling method has been used to collect data and using correlation, regression and ANOVA model to assess association between financial literacy variables with socio-demographic variables of farmers. Farmers have average financial attitude, financial behaviours, and financial knowledge. Hence, farmers have average financial literacy level. Socio-demographic variables like gender, education level and land holding are not statistically significant, while age, experience of farming and farmer wealth index is statistically significant with financial literacy. This research selected a sample from small geographic area as compared with large community of farmers of India and used qualitative variables. The questionnaire used in this research is prepared on guidelines provided by Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Farmers are the core of Indian agriculture industry and their contribution in Indian economy is on decline year by year. They face many problems, and this paper helps policy makers to understand farmer's financial literacy and its influence by socio-demographic variables. The research has implications to farmers, policy makers and society. Policy makers will give more focus on preparing financial literacy programmes for farmers community of India.

**Keywords:** *financial literacy; socio-demographic variables; farmer*

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## Introduction

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has developed financial literacy intended for five target groups, viz., farmers, small entrepreneurs, school children, self-help groups, school children and senior citizens, that can be used by the trainers in financial literacy programmes developers (RBI). Financial inclusion can be understood as a process that ensures ease of access, availability, and usage of financial services by the underprivileged and less qualified sections of society at an affordable cost. The term financial inclusion does not indicate merely microfinance but encompasses the usage of savings, insurance services, various loans, and remittances at an economical cost. The drive for financial inclusion needs to be tempered with an equal measure of financial literacy which includes awareness and knowledge to decide on savings, borrowings, and some planning for future income.

For financial inclusion in India, the Banking system is the most important pillar. Indian banking systems consist of 90,000 and more banks of various types like public/private banks, foreign banks, regional rural banks, urban/rural cooperative banks, in addition to cooperative credit institutions. From the lending and deposit part of banking, statistics of the financial year 2007-2018 said, total lending amplified at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 10.94%, and total deposits improved at a CAGR of 11.66 %, and, India's retail credit market position 4th largest in the emerging countries. It improved to US\$ 281 billion in December 2017 from US\$ 181 billion in December 2014<sup>3</sup>.

At the same time, India is also expected to achieve the goal of doubling farm income by 2020. The Indian agriculture sector is expected to generate better momentum in the next few years due to increased investment in agricultural infrastructures like irrigation, modern farming technology, warehousing, weather forecasting satellite, and cold storage facility. The Government provides various financial and technological assistances, using various programmes like e-Nam (The Electronic National Agriculture Market), PMKSY (Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojna), Subsidies for Farming Machinery, cash transfer in farmers account (Pradhan Mantri Samman Nidhi Yojna), Kisan Credit Card, etc. Farmer with sound financial knowledge directly impacts on his financial behaviours and attitude that can help him to take a suitable decision in his farming and allied activities. In this study, the researcher seeks to understand the influence of socio demographic variables on level of financial literacy of farmers of Sabarkantha and Aravalli districts of Gujarat (India).

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(<https://www.ibef.org/>, 2019)

## **Literature Review**

Financial literacy is mainly interpreted as the ability to make informed judgments and to take effective decisions on the subject of use and management of money and is a complex combination of a person's skills, knowledge, attitudes, and ultimately their behaviours concerning money. Financial literacy goes past the provision of financial information and advice. The focus of any discussion on financial literacy is primarily on the individual, who usually has limited resources and skills to appreciate the complexities of financial dealings with financial intermediaries on a day to day basis. Financial literacy is the aptitude to know, monitor and successfully use financial resources to augment the well-being and money-making security of oneself, one's family, and one's business. Hence, financial literacy is a person's ability to understand and make use of the financial concept.

The strategy of the Central Government and the RBI to include every citizen of the country in the formal banking fold needs to rest on two pillars. While humanizing infiltration is one, the other key component is making India financially literate. The principal reason for improving financial literacy is the impact it has on financial inclusion and stability. A higher degree of awareness and understanding about savings, banking, credit, and other financial products is the first step towards creating demand and increasing adoption. This gains dominant importance when only 5 percent of villages in India have brick-and-mortar branches (Nayak, 2012) and only 54.4 percent of households in rural areas are availing of banking services (Census of India, 2011). Financial literacy, therefore, must be the centrepiece of financial inclusion.

In the absence of adequate financial literacy, it would be unreasonable to expect individuals or households to weigh the risks and make responsible choices in an even more complicated financial market. This is true even in countries where consumers generally are familiar with financial instruments such as credit cards, mortgage loans, and perhaps private savings to "top up" social security plans (OECD, 2009). It is all the more difficult in emerging economies like India where rapid economic and financial development has provided access to a large number of simple and complex financial instruments. But at the same time, a significant proportion of the population has only limited experience with the formal financial system. In rural areas, this difficulty goes a few notches higher.

Financial literacy, therefore, is rapidly being recognized as a core skill, essential for consumers operating in an increasingly complex financial environment. At the same time, there is a growing concern, across a wide range of countries, about the

levels of financial capabilities of consumers. It is, therefore, no surprise that governments around the world are interested in finding effective approaches to improve the level of financial literacy amongst their population (Atkinson & Messy, 2012).

A large number of initiatives are, therefore, being developed to address this issue, and countries are increasingly rolling out national strategies on financial literacy. In India, the Reserve Bank of India has been aggressively working to increase the financial knowledge of the general population. The goal is similar to that set out by the OECD: to help consumers “develop the skills and confidence to become more aware of financial risks and opportunities, to make informed choices, to know where to go for help, and to take other effective actions to improve their financial well-being” (OECD, 2005).

Reserve Bank of India has also introduced Financial Literacy and Counseling Centres (FLCC) to provide consumers with the tools to make better credit choices (RBI 2008). However, an RBI study shows little awareness among people about these centres. The education material at these centres also goes little beyond the individual bank’s publicity material (Nayak, 2012). This implies that providing financial education effectively requires evidence on the current levels of financial knowledge, areas where financial capability is low and an identification of the extent to which these should be addressed by financial education. The measurement of financial literacy levels is, therefore, widely recognized as a priority for countries seeking to deliver financial education efficiently and evaluate its impact at a village and national level. Such a measurement exercise should allow policymakers to identify need areas concerning different aspects of financial literacy and provide information about which groups of people need maximum support (Atkinson & Messy, 2012).

On the other hand, it would be better to remunerate some prior research. In the absence of an exact or explicit definition, a few authors have identified this concept with its important aspects. To exemplify, Wachira and Kihui state that financial literacy helps consumers in being prepared for difficult times by determining risk mitigated strategies, and in using financial products effectively, most importantly in making plausible decisions (Wachira & Kihui, 2012). Also, in another study, becoming financially literate, refers to possessing knowledge and craft to handle money well (Howlett, Hogarth & Beverly, 2003). The study by Sobhesh Kumar Agrawalla, Samir Barua, Joshy Jacob, and Jayant Verma on financial literacy among working young in urban India, concluded that there is a significant positive relationship between financial knowledge and financial behaviour, and there is a significant negative relationship between financial attitude and financial behaviour (Sobhesh Kumar Agrawalla, 2013).

Financial literacy is associated with age groups. One would not expect to find many teenagers or old non-finance professionals and other senior citizens to have considerable financial literacy level. According to Lusardi et al. (2009) half of the Americans aged 50 and above are not able to answer two questions on simple interest and inflation. Same authors highlighted that the young aged (between 20 and 30 years) lack financial literacy. In an analysis made in 2008 by the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, it has been discovered that financial literacy is lower among young adults (Lusardi, 2008).

Maarten C.J. van Rooij, Annamaria Lusardi, and Rob J.M. Alessie, in a paper titled “Financial Literacy, Retirement Planning and Household Wealth” that relies on comprehensive measures of financial knowledge, provide evidence of a strong positive association between financial literacy and net worth, even after controlling for many determinants of wealth. They discussed two channels through which financial literacy might facilitate wealth accumulation. First, financial knowledge increases the likelihood of investing in the stock market, allowing individuals to benefit from the equity premium. Second, financial literacy is positively related to retirement planning and the development of a savings plan has been shown to boost wealth (Maarten C.J. van Rooij, 2012).

Contrary, Wagland and Taylor (2009), Alessie et al. (2011), Crossan et al. (2011), and Bharat Singh Thapa and Surendra Raj (2015) consider gender as a non-factor that influences the financial knowledge and financial decisions of the households (Bharat Singh Thapa, 2015; SO Wagland, 2009; Diana Crossan, 2011).

Financial literacy for farmers, as defined in the research paper “financial literacy: farmer’s perspective” is the ability of a farmer to understand the basic principles of agriculture and finance. This definition includes the ability of farmers to take agriculture as a business, and their awareness of financial management activity, starting from purchasing seeds, and fertilizer to the selling of finished products or crops (Mitesh, 2019). Agriculture with its allied sectors is the largest source of livelihood in India. 70% of rural households still depend primarily on agriculture for their livelihood. As per the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, in 2017-18, total food grain production was estimated at 275 million tonnes. India is the largest producer (25 percent of global production), a consumer (27 percent of world consumption), and an importer (14 percent) of pulses in the world. From 1951 to 2011, agriculture’s contribution to GDP has steadily declined (FAO).

Socio-demographics are nothing more than characteristics of a population.

Generally, characteristics such as age, gender, education level, social group, religion, income, years of experience, wealth, etc., are considered as socio-demographics. The Socio-demographic variable is very important in understanding farmers and its impact on financial knowledge, financial attitude and financial behaviour, and hence, financial literacy. The wealth index is a composite measure of a household's cumulative living standard. The farmers' wealth index is calculated using easy-to-collect data on a household's ownership of selected assets, such as televisions (TV) and bicycles; materials used for house construction like (*Kachcha or Pakka* House); and types of water access and sanitation facilities, motorcycle, car, gas stove, electricity facility, etc. (Rustein, 2013). Researcher assigns each variable equal-weighted and scores it out of 100 wealth index forms for farmer's wealth. Socio-demographic variables like age, gender, education level, experience of farming, agricultural land holding and wealth of farmers are studied to evaluate their influence on financial literacy among farmers of Gujarat.

### Objectives of the Study

This research seeks to pursue the following objectives:

- Determine the level of financial attitude, financial behaviours and financial knowledge of the farmer.
- Determine the socio-demographic variables like age, gender, and educational level, experience of farming, agricultural land holding and wealth index of farmers.
- To study the influence of socio demographic variable on financial attitude, financial behaviours and financial knowledge of the farmer.

### Research Methodology

Kothari and Garg defined research methodology is a way to scientifically solve the research problem (Kothari, 2014). Thus, this article sets out the rationale for choosing the research population and samples. It also includes the data collection process and the statistical technique adopted for testing the validity of the hypotheses.

### Hypothesis for the Study

Following hypotheses have been formulated for the study:

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant difference in financial knowledge among farmers of different demographic characteristics (age, gender, and educational level, experience of farming, agricultural land holding and wealth of farmers).

H<sub>1</sub>: There is a significant difference in financial knowledge among farmers of different demographic characteristics (age, gender, and educational level, experience of farming, agricultural land holding and wealth of farmers).

### **Research Design**

The exploratory research design used to examine the influence of socio demographic variable on farmers' financial literacy of Gujarat.

### **Research Population and Sampling**

The research population is the farmers of India. The researchers used a convenient sampling method of non-probability sampling and collected 450 farmers' responses with the help of the Sabarkantha District central cooperative bank limited (SK Bank).

### **Data Collection Instrument and Measurement**

A questionnaire was prepared on the basis of OECD's questionnaire for Measuring Financial Literacy: Questionnaire and Guidance Notes for Conducting an Internationally Comparable Survey of Financial Literacy (OECD, 2009). The first part includes demographic information including gender, age, farming experience, farming land and holding farming land, education level and farmers wealth. Farmers wealth related questions like household's ownership of selected assets, such as televisions (TV) and bicycles; materials used for house construction like (*Kachcha or Pakka House*); and types of water access and sanitation facilities, motorcycle, car, gas stove, electricity facility, etc. The second part includes ten financial knowledge questions. Questions include net worth, interest rate, cheque, loan and lease agreement, credit bureau, time value of money-related questions. All questions are evaluated based on percentage corrected score, where the correct answer gets 1 mark, and others get zero. And, the result converted to a percentage of the correct answer, then the average percentage corrected score gives results of farmers financial knowledge. The third part includes financial attitude questions using a Likert scale. The fourth part includes eight financial behaviour questions using a Likert scale.

### **Technique of Data Analysis**

Method of data analysis simply means the statistical total or technique utilized in processing the data collected, to arrive at valid conclusions. The statistical technique adopted for this study is the Correlation, regression analysis, Index number and

analysis of variance (ANOVA). Index number method used to create farmers wealth index using his basic household assets. Karl Pearson method of correlation is used to find correlation between various demographic and financial literacy variables. Regression analysis is a set of statistical processes for estimating the relationships between a dependent variable (often called the ‘outcome variable’) and one or more independent variables (often called ‘predictors’, ‘covariates’, or ‘features’). Regression analysis, a dependent variable as financial knowledge (FK\_Percentage) and independent variables as gender, age, education level, land holding, farmers wealth index and experience of farming (Predictors). Researchers used regression analysis with a 5% level of significance to evaluate the impact of financial literacy variables on farm management activities. Hence, the regression equation model with dependent variable financial knowledge is mentioned below

$$FK\_Percentage = \beta + \alpha_1 * Gender + \alpha_2 * Age + \alpha_3 * Education\ level + \alpha_4 * Lang\ holding + \alpha_5 * Experience\ of\ farming + \alpha_6 * Farmers\ health\ Index + Error$$

Where  $\beta$  is constant and  $\alpha_1, \alpha_2, \alpha_3, \alpha_4, \alpha_5,$  and  $\alpha_6$  are regression coefficients.

**Data Presentation and Analysis**

The researcher collected 450 respondents from various areas of Sabarkantha and Aravalli districts. Out of this, 27 questionnaires were not filled. Hence only 423 questionnaires were used for analysis.

**Farmers Demographic Information**

**Table 1. Farmers Demographic Information**

	Category	No. of Farmers	Percentage
Gender	Male	378	89.4
	Female	45	10.6
Age (In Years)	Below 20	6	1.4
	21-30	33	7.8
	31-40	105	24.8
	41-50	138	32.6
	Above 50	141	33.3
Farmers Education	Illiterate	30	7.1
	Up to 5 <sup>th</sup> pass	36	8.5
	Up to 10 <sup>th</sup> pass	129	30.5
	Up to 12 <sup>th</sup> pass	90	21.3
	Up to Graduate	97	22.9
	Up to Post Graduate	41	9.7
Experience of Farming (in Years)	0-2	22	5.2
	3-5	26	6.1
	6-10	69	16.3
	11-15	78	18.4
	Above 15	228	53.9
Land Holding (in Acre)	0-1	39	9.2
	1-2	105	24.8
	2-4	153	36.2
	4-10	88	20.8
	Above 10	38	9.0

The questionnaire includes 89.4 % of male and 10.6% female students. Majority farmers, 65.9% are from the above 41 years of age group. Educational level wise, 46.1% farmers studied up to 10<sup>th</sup> Standard. Farmers having 10 years and above of farming experience are 72.3%. Majority of farmers, 70.4%, have less than 4 acre of lands so majority of farmers are small (land up to 5 acre) and marginal farmers (land up to 2.5 acre) as per data.

**Analysis of Variance (Anova)**

ANOVA is used to test whether there is significant difference in financial knowledge among different demographic variables of farmers like gender, age, education level, land holding, farmers wealth index and experience of farming, and the result is shown below in Table with 5% level of significance. Hence, table shows that all demographic variables are significant with respect to financial knowledge.

**Table 2. Analysis of variance ANOVA**

		<b>S u m o f S q u a r e s</b>	<b>D f</b>	<b>M e a n S q u a r e</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>S i g .</b>
Gender	Between Groups	2.223	10	0.222	2.411	.009
	Within Groups	37.990	412	0.092		
	Total	40.213	422			
Age	Between Groups	24.038	10	2.404	2.460	.007
	Within Groups	402.515	412	0.977		
	Total	426.553	422			
Education	Between Groups	40.139	10	4.014	2.252	.014
	Within Groups	734.206	412	1.782		
	Total	774.345	422			
Experience of Farming	Between Groups	74.327	10	7.433	5.881	.000
	Within Groups	520.699	412	1.264		
	Total	595.026	422			
Land holding	Between Groups	24.978	10	2.498	2.166	.019
	Within Groups	475.168	412	1.153		
	Total	500.147	422			
Farmer Wealth Index	Between Groups	11443.893	10	1144.389	6.039	.000
	Within Groups	78079.511	412	189.513		
	Total	89523.404	422			

**Descriptive Statistics of Financial Literacy Variables and Farmers Wealth Index**

Farmers’ mean financial knowledge score is 63.66% with standard deviation of 16.79%, which is more than average score. Effect of financial knowledge seen in average of financial behaviour is 3.84 which is more than 2.5 with a standard deviation of 1.074. Farmers average of financial attitude on a scale of 3.38 out of 5 with a

standard deviation of 0.811. Hence, farmers have average financial literacy. Farmer’s wealth index average is 82.91 with standard deviation of 14.565.

**Table 3. Descriptive statistics of financial literacy variables and farmers wealth index**

	FK_Percentage	FinAtti	FinBeh	Farmer Wealth Index
Mean	63.66	3.38	3.84	82.91
Std. Error of Mean	.817	.039	.052	.708
Median	60.00	3.00	4.00	90.00
Std. Deviation	16.794	.811	1.074	14.565
Range	100	4	4	70
Minimum	0	1	1	30
Maximum	100	5	5	100
*Note: FK_Percentage - Percentage of Financial knowledge Farmers, FinBeh - financial behavior, FinAtti - financial attitude				

Karl Pearson correlation method is used to find correlation between financial knowledge with education level, experience of farming, and land holding and farmers wealth index with 5% level of significant. As per below table, financial knowledge has statistically significant correlation between farmers wealth index with partial positive correlation, while age, education level, experience of farming and land holding have no statistically significant correlation with financial knowledge.

**Table 4. Financial knowledge Correlations with Demographic Variables**

		Age	Education	Experience of Farming	Land Holding	Farmer Wealth Index
FK_Percentage	Pearson Correlation	0.077	0.040	-0.021	0.083	0.171
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.116	0.416	0.660	0.089	0.000
	N	423	423	423	423	423

**Regression Analysis of Financial Knowledge with Demographic Variables**

Regression analysis is a set of statistical processes for estimating the relationships between a dependent variable as financial knowledge (outcome variable) and one or more independent variables as like gender, age, education level, land holding, farmer’s wealth index and experience of farming (Predictors). Table above shows there is a significant impact of independent variables like gender, age, education level, land holding, farmer’s wealth index and experience of farming on financial knowledge at 5% level of significance.

**Table 5. Regression Analysis of financial knowledge with demographic variables**

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	5664.106	6	944.018	3.464	.002 <sup>a</sup>
Residual	113356.225	416	272.491		
Total	119020.331	422			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Farmer Wealth Index, Gender, Age , Land holding, Education, Experience of Farming

b. Dependent Variable: FK\_Percentage

**Table 6. Summary of Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Financial Knowledge**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1 (Constant)	37.952	7.517		5.049	0.000	23.176	52.728
Gender	2.300	2.617	0.042	0.879	0.380	-2.845	7.446
Age	2.768	1.074	0.166	2.576	0.010	0.656	4.879
Education	0.459	0.660	0.037	0.696	0.487	-0.838	1.756
Experience of Farming	-1.443	0.898	-0.102	-1.607	0.109	-3.208	0.322
Land holding	0.182	0.800	0.012	0.227	0.821	-1.391	1.754
Farmer Wealth Index	0.194	0.059	0.168	3.271	0.001	0.077	0.310

a. Dependent Variable: FK\_Percentage

As per the above table, a dependent variable as financial knowledge (FK\_Percentage) and independent variables as gender, age, education level, land holding, farmers wealth index and experience of farming (Predictors). At 5% level of significance to evaluate the impact of financial literacy variables, and financial knowledge on demographic variables like gender, education level and land holding are not statistically significant , while age in years, experience of farming and farmer wealth index are statistically significant with financial knowledge. Hence, regression equation with dependent variable financial knowledge is as below.

$$FK\_Percentage = 37.952 + 0.042 * Gender + 0.166 * Age + 0.037 * Education\ level - 0.102 * Land\ holding + 0.012 * Experience\ of\ farming + 0.168 * Farmers\ health\ Index$$

Independent socio-demographic variables predict financial knowledge as above equation with constant of 37.952.

### **Limitations of the Study**

This research has some limitation like:

1. The study is a limited Sabarkantha and Aravalli districts of Gujarat which is a small part of farmers of India.
2. Research primary data collected using questionnaires as a tool, which has its limitations.
3. A researcher has used qualitative variables like financial attitude, financial behaviour, and financial knowledge. And, the qualitative variable is difficult to measure.
4. The questionnaire used in this research is prepared on guidelines used by OECD – International network on financial education for measuring financial literacy. Each country or demography has its limitations.

### **Conclusion**

This study, based on field level data, found conclusively that: farmers have an average financial attitude, financial behaviour, and financial knowledge. Hence, farmers have average financial literacy. Farmer's socio-demographic variables like gender, age, education level, land holding, farmer's wealth index and experience of farming on financial knowledge have a significance at 5% level. Financial knowledge and farmer's wealth index have a partial positive correlation, while other demographic variables have no statistically significant correlation with financial knowledge. Hence, socio-demographic variables have influences on financial literacy.

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## Survey of Critical Thinking Skills of Postgraduate Students in Public Universities of Maharashtra

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### Abstract

Critical Thinking Skills (CTS) are widely acknowledged as employability skills and one of the essential 21st century life skills. Higher education in India is increasingly being looked upon as an instrument of skilling Indian students. The present study assessed the general critical thinking skills of science and social science postgraduate students in public universities of Maharashtra using Cornell Critical Thinking Test, Level Z (CCTT) to explore discipline-wise, university-wise and gender-wise significant differences in CTS. A cross-sectional survey design was employed. Total 593 science and social science postgraduate (PG) students from six public universities of Maharashtra selected through random sampling constituted the sample. Inferential statistics such as independent samples t-test and two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were employed for data analysis. Findings revealed that most PG students had below average level of CTS. The science students were found to have higher level of CTS as compared to social science students. The PG students influenced the level of CTS, but gender differences were not pronounced. The findings clearly indicate the need to prioritize enhancement of CTS at the tertiary level by bringing about substantive changes in the educational planning of public universities.

**Keywords:** *higher education; 21st century life skills; employability; critical thinking skills; public universities of Maharashtra; postgraduate students; Cornell Critical Thinking Test*

### Introduction

The demand for skilled and qualified labour is increasing globally (Khare, 2014). Even though Indian education system is one of the largest in the world (Ministry of Human Resource Development [MHRD], 2016), it is unfortunate that only around

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“25-30 percent of Indian graduates are employable” (Tilak, 2019: 4). This alarming fact points to many shortcomings in Indian education system seriously affecting the quality of education and thereby the employability skills of graduates. Quality education ensures the well-being of people, by enabling them to become economically productive and develop sustainable livelihoods. It also contributes to peaceful and democratic way of life (Luisoni, Zitterbart, Amadio, & Deluermoz, 2005), making quality education the most significant contributor to the economic growth of a nation (Tsui, 2002; Abrami, et al., 2008; Hanushek & Woessman, 2008), and also the focal interest of United Nation’s fourth Sustainable Development Goal (DESA, 2019).

Numerous studies and reports consistently indicate a lack of employability skills in many graduates from various disciplines in India (Wheebox, People Strong, CII, 2019). This is mainly because skill based higher education has been neglected in India (Mehrotra, Ankita, & Sahoo, 2013; Unni, 2016). Many studies have reported a serious ‘quality skill gap’ characterized by the skills the graduates or postgraduates possess and the skills required for the job they have been hired to perform (Unni, 2016). A few employers attempt to bridge the skill gap by training their employees in employability skills, categorized as functional skills and soft skills. However, soft skills take a longer time to develop. Therefore, the higher education sector must focus on developing these soft skills that are the general requirements of workforce (Khare, 2014). CTS are soft skills (Adnan, Ramalingam, Ilias, & Tahir, 2014) and are regarded as one of the 21st century life skills. But, before attempting to nurture CTS, it is important to assess these skills. Although recent surveys conducted by corporate companies (Wheebox, People Strong, CII, 2019) have revealed that graduates and postgraduates have low employability skills, there has been no empirical study conducted at the university level in India to corroborate that there is CTS deficit. Further, no research has been undertaken at the tertiary level to investigate the differences in CTS as an effect of academic discipline, university and gender.

The present study aimed to fill this gap by assessing the existing level of critical thinking of PG students in public universities of Maharashtra. The All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) revealed that there was highest enrollment of undergraduate and postgraduate students in Arts/Humanities/Social science discipline, followed by the Science discipline (MHRD, 2016; MHRD, 2017). Moon (2008) reports two major findings of Palmer and Marra (2004) in the context of epistemological development related to evolution of critical thinking of students studying science and social science. Social science often gives students multiple perspectives but does not generally provide curricular experiences that aid students to understand that knowledge is not static. In other words, science students often develop a single perspective but are well aware of the fact that knowledge has to be supported with

appropriate evidence. In this context, the present study focused on the two academic disciplines, viz., science and social science, with an aim to explore differences in critical thinking skills of students belonging to these two academic disciplines. The study also investigated whether there were differences in the CTS of postgraduate students with respect to their gender and university.

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To assess the existing level of critical thinking skills of science and social science postgraduate students;
2. To compare the university-wise level of critical thinking skills of PG students of science and social science academic disciplines; and
3. To compare gender-wise level of critical thinking skills of PG students of science and social science academic disciplines.

### **Previous Research**

There has been a long-raging debate about domain-general CTS and domain specific CTS. Proponents of the domain-general approach advocate assessing and enhancing general CTS of students as they do not require a discipline specific context and are assumed to be transferable to various real-life contexts. Proponents of the domain-specific approach advocate assessing subject-specific CTS and enhancing subject specific CTS (Liu, Frankel, & Roohr, 2014). The present study assessed the general CTS of PG students with a view that CTS are required in various domains of students' lives such as academic, personal, professional and public. Moreover, the nature of jobs in the future are mostly going to be multidisciplinary in nature, requiring a repertoire of general CTS leading to effective decision making as well as lifelong learning.

Although there is vast literature available on critical thinking, only a few studies have included the analysis of the effects of variables such as academic discipline, gender and university on the CTS of students. A few studies that included three academic disciplines such as science, engineering and social science (Rodzalan & Saat, 2015) or humanities (Aliakbari & Sadeghdaghighi, 2011) showed conflicting results with respect to the effect of academic discipline on CTS. Rodzalan & Saat (2015) found that social science students were better critical thinkers than science and engineering students because they were able to view a problem through multiple perspectives and approached problems more creatively. In contrast, Aliakbari & Sadeghdaghighi (2011) concluded that engineering students outperformed science and humanities students on CTS.

Similarly, university environment was found to be a determinant factor in improving or curtailing critical thinking of students (Schendel, 2015). In the context of assessing the quality of higher education and gauging whether the educational systems worldwide were equipping their graduates with CTS, many studies assessed the critical thinking of university students (Schendel, 2015). Most of the studies (Rodzalan & Saat, 2015) reported that graduates had low levels of critical thinking, often affecting their employability. This was a serious issue that demanded for educational reforms. Past studies conducted worldwide that included gender differences have reported mixed results (Bataineh & Zghoul, 2006). Gender differences were not found to be pronounced in studies involving students in Western countries. However, many of the studies conducted in Middle Eastern countries like Jordan (Bataineh & Zghoul, 2006), Iran (Aliakbari & Sadeghdaghighi, 2011), and Asia-Pacific countries such as Malaysia (Nagappan, 2010; Rodzalan & Saat, 2015) found that males outperformed females on CTS (Bataineh & Zghoul, 2006). This was interpreted based on marked cultural differences in the upbringing of boys and girls that, in turn, are assumed to lead to noticeable differences in their critical thinking abilities.

### **Methodology**

Cross-sectional survey research design was adopted to assess the existing level of CTS of postgraduate students in Maharashtra.

### **Population**

The target population consisted of all first-year science and social science postgraduate students in the traditional affiliating state universities offering arts, science, social science, commerce and professional education in the state of Maharashtra.

### **Sample and sampling technique**

Maharashtra is the third largest state in India. It consists of 36 districts grouped into six administrative divisions namely Aurangabad, Amravati, Konkan, Nagpur, Nashik and Pune. Overall, ten traditional affiliating public universities offering arts, science, social science, commerce and professional education (Pradhan, Stella, & Patil, 2004) in all the six administrative divisions of Maharashtra were listed. In the present research, one public university was selected randomly by lottery method from each administrative division for the survey of CTS. This was done to ensure that the sample was truly representative of the target population. The following universities got selected: Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University (BAMU)

from Aurangabad division, Sant Gadge Baba Amravati University (SGBAU) from Amravati division, University of Mumbai from Konkan division, Rashtrasant Tukadoji Maharaj Nagpur University (RTMNU) from Nagpur division, Kavayitri Bahinabai Chaudhari North Maharashtra University (KBCNMU) from Nashik division and Savitribai Phule Pune University (SPPU) from Pune division. Total six hundred and seventeen first year PG students from science and social science disciplines willingly attempted CCTT which was administered to them; but only 593 students constituted the sample for analysis as they gave a response rate of above 70% to test items on CCTT. The student participation from each university was in the range of 13 to 20 percent.

The final sample for data analysis consisted of 331 students from science (55.80%) and 262 students from social science (44.20%) disciplines. Students between the age of 21-24 dominated the sample while the remaining were above the age of 24. With respect to gender, more than half of the respondents were female students in the sample. The state of Maharashtra has a caste structure comprising of caste categories namely, Open, Scheduled Caste (SC), Scheduled Tribe (ST), Other Backward Castes (OBC), Special Backward Caste (SBC), Nomadic Tribes including NT – A, B, C and D. Minority communities like Sikhs, Parsis, Jains, Muslims, Christians and Buddhists also constituted a small part of the sample. A small percentage of respondents did not mention their caste category. Even though Maharashtra is regarded as one of the most progressive states in India, the caste category is an important demographic characteristic included in most of the studies. This is because the caste category of an individual often forms the basis of socio-economic discrimination (Sugandhe & Sen, 2015).

### **Data Collection Procedure**

The science and social science departments of each university were contacted over the phone and through e-mail for getting permission to conduct the survey. After briefing them about the purpose of the survey, a letter of consent for the survey was sent to the HOD of both sciences and social sciences of each university selected in the sample. After receiving approval for the same, suitable dates were given by the concerned HOD for conducting the survey. The criteria fixed by the researcher for selecting the science and social science departments were: hard pure science subjects such as Biology, Chemistry and Physics which were given first preference over applied science departments such as Biotechnology, Microbiology, Molecular Biology and Genetic Engineering and Electronics.

In universities that did not offer either Botany or Zoology at the master's level or

where consent could not be obtained from Botany or Zoology department, applied science departments such as Microbiology and Biotechnology were selected. Similarly, soft pure social science subjects in each university were listed alphabetically as Economics, History, Political Science, Psychology and Sociology. Depending upon consent from the HOD of these departments and the availability of students in the departments on the day of the survey, science and social science departments were chosen for the sample. One to three sessions of data collection were held at each university in order to include respondents from the two disciplines as per their availability at the university campuses.

Oral instructions were given before the test was administered (Ennis, Millman & Tomko, 2005). The PG students completed the test under the supervision of the researcher. The demographic information of the respondents was obtained by asking them to fill in the personal data sheet given to them along with the answer sheet of CCTT at the beginning of the data collection session. Apart from 70 minutes allotted for completing CCTT, ten minutes were assigned exclusively for completing the personal data sheet. Therefore, the survey duration was 80 minutes. The survey was conducted from 31st January 2018 to 28th March 2018.

### **Instrument**

The paper and pencil mode of the Cornell Critical Thinking Test, Level Z, a general critical thinking ability test in English, appropriate for graduates and adults was employed. The reliability estimates for CCTT with various populations lie in the range of 0.87 to 0.91 (Bataineh & Zghoul, 2006). The CCTT was shown to a team of experts from the Department of Education and Extension and Department of Psychology of Savitribai Phule University to find out if the test was appropriate for the sample chosen for the study. As per their opinion, no modification was required, and thus local validation of the test was established. The CCTT contains total 52 items and is divided into seven sections namely, Deduction, Meaning and Fallacies, Observation and Credibility of Sources, Induction (Hypothesis Testing), Induction (Planning Experiments), Definition and Assumption Identification and Assumption Identification (Ennis, Millman, & Tomko, 2005).

CCTT is intended to be taken in a 50-minute period. However, instead of 50 minutes, 70 minutes were allotted to students for completing the test based on the observations of the pilot study and experience of some researchers (Aizikovitsh-Udi & Diana, 2015) who gave individuals more than 50 minutes to complete this test. Each one of the 52 items on the test have three options A, B and C. The students had to circle one of these options given in the answer sheet of CCTT. The student

responses were scored manually by referring to the answer key in the test manual. The “rights only method” (Ennis, Millman & Tomko, 2005) was chosen, in which one mark is given for correct answer and zero mark is given for wrong answer. Thus, the total CCTT score of each student was calculated by counting the number of correct answers given by the student. Scores for seven sections of CCTT were also obtained for each student. However, since the seven sections represent subskills that overlap and are highly interlinked, only the total CCTT scores of students were the measure of their existing level of critical thinking. In real-life situations also, critical thinking is used as an integrated skill. Therefore, the total score of CCTT was a measure of their critical thinking skills (Liu, Frankel & Roohr, 2014).

### **Data Analysis**

The data from the personal data sheets and scored CCTT answer sheets of 593 PG students was entered manually into SPSS version 23.0. Each data entry was double checked. Descriptive statistics such as percentages, mean and standard deviation and inferential statistics such as independent samples t-test and two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were employed for data analysis. For detecting the differences between academic disciplines on CTS, independent samples t-test was used and for testing the effect of two independent variables, academic discipline and university on CTS, a Two-Way ANOVA was employed. Similarly, a Two-Way ANOVA was used to test the effect of two independent variables, academic discipline and gender on CTS.

### **Results and Discussion**

Though the CCTT is divided into seven sections, the overall CT scores of science and social science students are presented in Table 1. The subtest scores of the seven sections of CCTT corresponding to seven aspects of CT were not used to make individual comparisons because they consist of small number of items and are interrelated (Ennis, Millman & Tomko, 2005).

#### **(A) CTS Status of PG students in Public Universities of Maharashtra**

The current CTS status of PG students was assessed using CCTT. Interpretation of CCTT scores can be done in terms of grades or skill levels or percentiles. Since there were no norms available for critical thinking in the state of Maharashtra, a qualitative interpretation of scores was done in terms of skill levels and percentages of CCTT scores were found using SPSS (Paliya, 1999). The qualitative interpretation of the overall scores on CCTT was done in terms of skill levels. Table 1 depicts the

descriptive analysis of critical thinking skills done in terms of CCTT scores in order to assess the existing level of critical thinking skills of science and social science students.

**Table 1: Descriptive Analysis of CTS in terms of CCTT scores**

CCTT Scores	Interpretation of Scores in terms of skill level	Academic Discipline			
		Science		Social Science	
		Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
< 13	Skill Deficit	29	8.8	39	14.9
13 – 16	Very Low	77	23.3	59	22.5
17 – 20	Low	111	33.5	94	35.9
21 - 24	Satisfactory	81	24.5	45	17.2
25 - 28	Average	24	7.3	19	7.3
29 - 32	Good	8	2.4	5	1.9
33 - 36	Very Good	1	0.3	-	-
37 +	Outstanding	-	-	1	0.4
<b>Total</b>		<b>331</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>100.0</b>

It is evident from Table 1 that 90% of Science and Social Science PG students had below average level of CTS as their scores on CCTT were less than 26. The performance of approximately 7% of PG students was average. Only 2.7% of Science PG students fell in the Good and Very Good categories whereas 1.9% of social science PG students fell in the good category. Only one student out of 593 students who secured highest score of 37 on CCTT, stood in the Outstanding category. The overall distribution of assessment results outlined in Table 1 clearly indicates that the critical thinking skills level of PG students is below average.

The present study was carried out in public university departments which admit meritorious college students, so we can assume that they should possess a higher level of CTS than their counterparts in other tertiary institutions (Schendel, 2015). However, the findings of the present study give a strong indication that probably the level of CTS of PG students in other institutions may also be weak. The below average level of CTS among PG students can be attributed to many factors. The identification and assessment of these factors in the population was not the focus of the present study but needs to be nevertheless discussed in the context of the results of the present study.

Lecture method and demonstration method are the most widely used methods for transacting the curriculum at all educational levels (MHRD, 2019). These two instructional methods are largely teacher-centred and provide minimal opportunities

for interactions among students and teacher. Social interactions are known to play a crucial role in the learning process, particularly in learning critical thinking skills (Vong & Kaewurai, 2017). As highlighted in National Education Policy, 2020 (MHRD, 2020), the focus of Indian education system at primary, secondary and tertiary level needs to be on development of cognitive skills and learning outcomes as opposed to fostering a marks-oriented approach to learning largely based on rote memorization of facts. The students need to perceive knowledge not as static but dynamic – as an object that needs to be verified and supported by valid evidence. Active learning strategies that promote critical thinking such as questioning (Ikuenobe, 2001), discussion (Yeh, 2009), problem-based learning (Behar-Horenstein & Niu, 2011) and reflective learning (Yeh, 2009) need to be incorporated in the faculty's repertoire of teaching skills. The strategies can be incorporated in the classroom or in online mode using WhatsApp, YouTube, Google Classroom or more sophisticated learning management systems such as MOODLE and mograSIS.

Teachers who are either hesitant or unskilled in using educational technology can be trained to infuse these active learning strategies in their classrooms. The modifications in existing instructional methods need to be in conjunction with modified assessment tools. Assessment tools need to be self-reflective in nature. The role of assessment must primarily be diagnostic and emphasize acquiring competencies by students. This implies bringing about substantive changes in the planning of higher education in India. In the broader context of global economy, the present study urges us to reflect upon the importance of CTS in education for developing skilled human resources. Skilled human resources are required in various sectors. A few scholarly studies have found significant differences in CTS of PG students belonging to different academic disciplines and genders. Hence, the present study explored differences in critical thinking skills of PG students with respect to their academic discipline, university and gender.

### **(B) Discipline-wise differences on CTS**

Every academic discipline offers its own perspective on understanding the world (Nosich, 2012). However, the common factor underlying all disciplines is that the knowledge in a discipline is dynamic. It can be questioned. It can be challenged and modified in the light of available supportive evidence. Searching for evidence and making use of it to support one's point of view is an essential part of critical thinking. Also, selecting credible sources of evidence, drawing a conclusion based on observations, formulating hypotheses and identifying assumptions are all associated with the logic of a discipline. The present study aimed to explore this general critical thinking ability across the science and social science disciplines.

**H<sub>0</sub>1:** There is no significant difference in the mean CCTT scores of science and social science PG students.

**Table 2: Comparison of means of CCTT score by academic discipline**

Academic Discipline	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Science	331	18.75	4.60	2.551	591	0.011
Social science	262	17.72	5.20			

An independent samples t-test was used to investigate whether there was a statistically significant difference in the sample mean scores of science and social science PG students on CCTT. Table 2 reports the results of the independent samples t-test which reveal that science students ( $M = 18.75$ ,  $SE = 0.25$ ) had performed better on CCTT than social science students ( $M = 17.72$ ,  $SE = 0.32$ ). This mean difference was significant,  $t(591) = 2.551$ ,  $p < 0.05$ . Therefore, the null hypothesis **H<sub>0</sub>1** was rejected. It means that the science students were better at critical thinking than social science students. This is in accordance with the research findings indicating that science students are better at understanding that knowledge is relative and at looking for supporting evidence (Palmer and Marra, 2004, as cited in Moon, 2008, p. 106). Therefore, as hypothesized, academic disciplines contributed to a statistically significant difference in the CTS of students as it was found that the science PG students outperformed the social science PG students on CCTT. Significant differences between academic disciplines namely, social science and science including engineering on CTS have been found (Rodzalan & Saat, 2015).

### Effect of academic discipline and university on CTS

**H<sub>0</sub>2:** There is no significant difference in the CCTT scores of science and social science PG students.

**H<sub>0</sub>3:** There is no university-wise significant difference in the CCTT scores of PG students.

**H<sub>0</sub>4:** There is no significant interaction effect of academic discipline by university on the CCTT scores of PG students.

The two-way ANOVA studied the main effect and the interaction effect of the two independent variables – academic discipline and university on the dependent variable, CCTT scores. The results of 2x2 ANOVA are presented below:

**Table 3: ANOVA Summary Table for CCTT scores**

<i>Source</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Academic Discipline	81.08	1	81.08	4.01	0.046
University	1932.31	5	386.462	19.11	0.000
Academic Discipline x University	342.12	5	68.42	3.38	0.005
Within Groups	11748.11	581	20.22		
Total	212665.00	593			

Table 3 reports that a two-way analysis of variance yielded a main effect for the student’s discipline,  $F(1, 581) = 4.01, p < 0.05$ , such that the average CCTT score was significantly higher for science students ( $M = 18.75, SD = 4.59$ ) than for social science students ( $M = 17.72, SD = 5.196$ ). The main effect of university was also significant,  $F(5, 581) = 19.11, p < 0.05$ . The interaction effect was significant,  $F(5, 581) = 3.38, p < 0.05$ , indicating that discipline effect was the greatest in University of Mumbai compared to other public universities of Maharashtra.

University was included as a variable in the study because it was found to be a determinant factor in the enhancement of critical thinking skills (Schendel, 2015). Tsui (2002) found that the level of critical thinking skills of students was higher in educational institutions that fostered critical writing, class discussions and presentations. This can be a probable explanation for the significant differences in critical thinking skills of students from the six universities included in the present study. Another important factor that needs to be explored through further research is the teaching methods adopted at schools, colleges and universities that might impact the CTS of students at higher education level.

**Effect of academic discipline and gender on critical thinking skills**

**H<sub>0</sub>5:** There is no significant difference in the CCTT scores of science and social science PG students.

**H<sub>0</sub>6:** There is no gender-wise significant difference in the CCTT scores of PG students.

**H<sub>0</sub>7:** There is no significant interaction effect of academic discipline by gender on the CCTT scores of PG students.

The two-way ANOVA studied the main effect and the interaction effect of the two independent variables – academic discipline and gender on the dependent variable,

CCTT scores. The results of 2x2 ANOVA are presented below:

**Table 4: ANOVA Summary Table for CCTT scores**

<i>Source</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Academic Discipline	211.36	1	211.36	9.01	0.003
Gender	46.39	1	46.39	1.98	0.160
Academic Discipline x Gender	168.21	1	168.21	7.17	0.008
Within Groups	13812.91	589			
Total	212665.00	593			

Table 4 reports that a two-way analysis of variance yielded a main effect for the student's discipline,  $F(1, 589) = 9.01, p < 0.05$ , such that the average CCTT score of science students ( $M = 18.75, SD = 4.59$ ) was significantly higher than the average CCTT score of social science students ( $M = 17.72, SD = 5.196$ ). The main effect of gender was non-significant,  $F(1, 589) = 1.98, p > 0.05$ . However, the interaction effect was significant,  $F(1, 589) = 7.17, p < 0.05$ , indicating that discipline effect was greater in males than in females. It means that the male science students had better critical thinking skills than male social science students. The CTS of female science and female social science students did not show a stark difference. Gender was selected as a variable for study because unlike developed countries, there exists a difference in upbringing of boys and girls in India, especially in rural areas. Previous studies in Middle Eastern countries (Bataineh & Zghoul, 2006) have reported a significant difference in the critical thinking abilities of students as an effect of gender. However, in the present study, the overall performance of male and female students on CCTT was the same. An interesting finding was that the highest score on the test (viz. 37) was achieved by a social science female respondent.

### Implications

Although the present findings are not universally generalizable to the population of PG students of all academic disciplines in India, they have significant implications for supporting governments' educational reform efforts (MHRD, 2019) related to modifying the existing modes of instruction commonly used in the Indian higher education system. The Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) in higher education has increased from 25.8 percent in 2017-18 to 26.3 percent (MHRD, 2018). This implies that more students are opting for higher education in India. But an alarming fact is that it is still lower than other developed countries such as United States, Germany, Canada and United Kingdom. Nevertheless, a fairly large number of Indian students opt for higher education in these countries with the prospect of gaining a competitive edge

(Yeravdekar & Tiwari, 2014). But, often their CTS deficiency results in academic struggles at foreign universities (Shaheen, 2016). In this context, it is imperative that in order to reduce the outflow of students and to improve the GER in higher education, the higher education system in India needs to be proactively reformed. Another important reason for transformation of higher education system in India with a special emphasis on skilling students is the increased influx of international students in India, particularly from developing countries such as Iran, Nepal, United Arab Emirates, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Kenya and Oman to higher educational institutions in India (Yeravdekar & Tiwari, 2014). These international students aspire for a global career that can be tangible with enhancement of CTS of students at the tertiary level.

### **Conclusion**

The present study addressed the pressing need for assessment of CTS of PG students. It provided empirical evidence for the academic community in furthering their attempts to nurture these skills in students. The ensuing implications of the study clearly indicate a need for substantive changes to be made in educational planning of public universities so that the students can acquire critical thinking skills while pursuing graduate or postgraduate studies. These changes can transform the Indian society into a society with strong critical thinking skills ready to face global challenges.

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## **The Problem of Dowry and Domestic Violence and Response of Crime Against Women Cell**

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### **Abstract**

Indian society is based on patriarchal mindset. Women are facing many challenges due to patriarchal mindset, illiteracy, lack of legal awareness, less empowerment, economic vulnerability, etc. There are many crimes against women such as dowry, domestic violence, gender discrimination, eve-teasing, female foeticide, female infanticide, rape, sexual harassment, honour killing, witchcraft related murders, child marriage, forced prostitution, etc. The efforts of many government institutions and non-governmental organizations, such as Crimes Against Women Cell, Parivartan Cell (she to shakti), Rape Crisis Cell, etc. have helped to reduce such crimes. The present paper specifically focuses on the Problem of Dowry and Domestic Violence and Response of Crime Against Women Cell of Delhi.

**Keywords:** *dowry; domestic violence; crime against women cell; Patriarchy; counselling*

### **Introduction**

With the decline of the status quo from ancient times to medieval age, and the development of equal rights by many revolutionaries, the historical experience of women in India has been remarkable. Since independence, Indian women held senior positions including those of the President, Prime Minister, Speaker of Lok Sabha, Leader of the Opposition, Ministers of the Union and State Governments, Chief Ministers and the Executives. But still, Indian women continue to face a wide range of issues, including brutal beatings, stabbing, murder, dowry death, eve-teasing, domestic violence, and prostitution of young girls.

Dowry and domestic violence are such crimes that exist in Indian society. Women have been treated differently, because of certain beliefs, social norms, patriarchal

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thinking, stereotypes, etc., and men have demanded all the rights that women have been denied. Religion has also helped to perpetuate the deprivation of equal rights for women. They also face socio-economic and cultural deprivation. They have been at risk of exploitation such as abuse, torture, harassment, wife beatings, verbal abuse, rape, and psychological and physical abuse. In many countries, such as Chad, Iraq, some Asian countries like India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and some African countries like Somalia, Mali, etc., women are dehumanized to the extent that they are forcibly married, sold off, and subjected to all forms of subjugation, and, also in Developed Countries like France, Brazil, etc., they face such challenges.

The United Nations defines violence against women as any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.

### **Review of Literature**

In India, about half of the population are women. They have been subjected to constant mistreatment and deprivation of their right to life and personal freedom and liberty as provided under the Indian Constitution. Women are often considered to be weaker physically and emotionally than their male counterparts, but now, women have proven themselves in almost every aspect of life, and also proved that they are not inferior to men because of their hard work, either at home or in the workplace. Behind the closed doors of cities across our country, people are being tortured, beaten and killed. This is happening in all over the areas, including rural, urban, and also metropolitan areas.

These are prevalent in all social classes, gender, racial lines and age groups. It is becoming a legacy that is passed on from one generation to the next. But, cases against women reflect the sad reality that women are unsafe and not secure anywhere. According to a recent report prepared by India's National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), crimes against women are reported every three minutes in India. Every sixty minutes, two women are being raped in the country. Every six hours, a young married woman is found beaten to death, burned or driven to suicide.

The concept of dowry is one of the social acts where women are oppressed, abused and killed. Dowry is being exchanged for most of the Indian weddings as a part of tradition. Although this practice became illegal in 1961 by an Act, but still dowry is rampant among all the social classes. The families of the bride and groom

discuss the transfer of property to the groom and his family with the intention of marrying the bride, usually in the form of an arranged marriage. Dissatisfaction with the amount of money can lead to crimes against women, ranging from emotional abuse to physical abuse of the bride. In extreme situations, “dowry death” or the murder of the bride by her husband and family can be seen.

Even after the wedding, if the dowry promises are not fulfilled, the bride will be sent back to her parents' home. This is considered a disgrace to the bride's family but not to the groom's family. The system of dowry is brought to place a heavy economic burden on the bride's family. Payment of dowry is not permitted under certain Indian laws including, Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961 and subsequently by Sections 304B and 498A of the Indian Penal code.

There is no internationally recognized definition of violence against women, but in 1993, the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, provided this definition of domestic violence: “Violence against women is a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women which have led to the domination of women and discrimination against women by men and to the prevention of the full advancement of women. Domestic violence is perpetrated in all cultures whether it is developed, undeveloped or developing countries, in the poor or even the upper class, women and children face this violence everywhere. Its seeds lie naturally in practice of patriarchy.

Domestic violence is called domestic violence because it is often perpetrated by a family member or a close partner. A long time ago domestic violence was still regarded as a “domestic” issue that there were no legal sanctions against it. The state, by being patriarchal in character, has refused to accept the basic rights of women and children. Many countries still refuse to see it as a crime. So, in the current scenario, civil society organizations and human rights activists have been making the country identify domestic violence as a crime - a crime against women and children (General Assembly, 1993).

### **Effects of Domestic Violence on Women**

The effects of domestic violence on women and children can range from physical to psychological, depending on the type of violence perpetrated. Children who grew up seeing domestic violence in their households often show bipolar and delinquent behaviour and go through lot of harmful emotions like guilt, anxiety and fear. So, there are three types of abuse practiced:

### **Physical Abuse**

The most common form of abuse seen is domestic violence. In any case of violence, the first step is always physically abusing the victim. Slapping and hitting has been reported the most common forms of physical assault for both men and women, then followed by pushing, shoving and tugging of hair. Research shows almost 80 to 90 percent cases report of physical assault. The drive for physically abusing someone arises from the fact that the other person belongs to a weaker sex. Hence, the urge to abuse increases (Coomaraswamy, 2000).

### **Sexual Abuse**

In most cases, sexual violence usually follows physical violence. Here also, the same domination and power dynamics matter. When rape is committed by a family member or intimate partner (mostly husbands), then it is termed as 'marital rape'. Forced vaginal, oral and anal sex are the forms of sexual abuse meted out. But, most rape cases go unreported because in many countries, the law does not recognize marital rape as a crime.

The assumption is that once a woman enters a contract of marriage, the husband has the right to access excessive sexual activity from his wife. UK became the first nation to ban wife-beating, followed by the Scandinavian countries. In the US, in 1996, the act 'violence against women' was proposed, and in 1997 the act became a law (Coomaraswamy, 2000).

### **Psychological and Emotional Abuse**

Research unveils that victims or survivors report that the psychological or emotional torture and the "the thought of always living under terror" is more unbearable than the physical brutality. The mental stress is so much that many survivors commit suicide. In Sri Lanka the number of suicides by girls and women of 15-25 years of age is 55 times greater than the number of deaths due to pregnancy and childbirth. Other than that, the psychological effects that children face due to this are eating disorders, severe depression and anxiety difficulty in socializing, etc. Sometimes, they themselves exhibit violent and delinquent behaviour, and even show suicidal tendencies. Witnessing and experiencing violence as a child also affects cognition, learning.

### **Causes of Domestic Violence**

To understand the causes of domestic violence, (Choudhary, 2013) gave the

following factors that are responsible for causation of domestic violence, which can range from psychological to cultural to economic.

### **Psychological Factors**

- Psychological problems like post-traumatic disorder, anxiety, depression lead to domestic violence
- Those who have suffered violence in their childhood tend to carry the seeds of violence in themselves
- Most sufferers tend to be in the state of denial of leaving their batterer as they keep indulging in the “wishful thinking” that they will change

### **Cultural Factors**

- Belief in the inherent superiority of males
- Values that give men propriety rights over women and girls
- Customs of marriage like bride price/dowry

### **Economic Factors**

- Women’s economic dependence on men
- Discriminatory laws of marriage, propriety rights, inheritance
- Limited access to education, formal training and employment in formal and informal sector

In their paper, Arthur & Clark (2009) look at the causes of domestic violence at the individual and family level. They conducted individual and family level studies and outlined the five theories:

#### **1. Resource Theory**

This theory is given by Goode (1971). This theory says that, since the husband is the main bread earner of the family, so naturally his power over other aspects also increases (because of economic resources). But it is less likely that he will resort to violence. He resorts to violence only when he feels threatened by his wife’s growing economic resources. So, in order to re-establish his dominance, he uses domestic violence on his wife and sometimes even tries to control her resources.

#### **2. Exchange Theory**

According to this theory, domestic violence is high in those societies where the

perpetrators are benefitting in some way or the other, and low in those societies where the perpetrators do not enjoy such benefits. For example, cases of domestic violence are low in countries where there are strict laws against domestic violence whereas in countries that do not have domestic violence laws will have higher rates of domestic violence.

### **3. Culture of Violence Theory**

Many cultures seek violence as an appropriate way of conflict resolution. So, in those societies, domestic violence is something not seen as pathological. Violent societies are more likely to permit domestic violence than non-violent societies. Studies even show that the cases of domestic violence increase during times of war or internal strife.

### **4. Patriarchal Theory**

According to this theory, in our patriarchal milieu, men have every right over women, which means even on our bodies. Even in almost all religions, men are given the right to dominate women and their possessions. And even justify their use of violence on women.

### **5. Economic Dependency Theory**

This theory is a recent one. According to this theory, capitalism has made patriarchy even more pervasive than before, giving ways to newer ways of discrimination. Capitalism is inherently patriarchal in nature, with separation of the workplace from the 'house' to 'factory' also led to the division of labour which gave men the opportunity to go out into the factories and work, and on the other hand pushed women to the confines of kitchens. This reduced the role of women to nothing but a housewife. Hence, capitalism does not even consider housework as part of GDP. Whereas the job of a housewife is the most tedious and they are not even paid for it.

Studies show nations where their governments make the greatest concessions to corporate requirements for profitable ventures. In other words, those nations which have greater economic dependency, the higher are the levels of domestic violence. These nations can limit the freedom of both genders.

### **Legal Aspects**

Women's rights are secured under the Constitution of India — equality, dignity,

and freedom from discrimination; further, India has various statutes governing the rights of women. The Indian Constitution gives several rights to women such as fundamental rights that are Art 14, Art 15, and Art 16, and provision in Directive Principles of State Policy like Art 39, Art 42 and Art 243, etc.

One of the worst evils which is prevalent in Indian society is the dowry system. The word 'dowry' refers to the property, money and gifts that the bride brings to her matrimonial house during the time of her marriage. It is a custom that is prevalent in all the sections of our society in one form or the other. At first, it was voluntary, but over time, social pressure was the means by which very few could have escaped from this. It is a form of great financial burden on the bride's family.

In some cases, the dowry system can lead to crime against women, ranging from emotional abuse, trauma and injury to even deaths. The payment of dowry is not permitted under certain Indian laws including, Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961 and subsequently by Sections 304B and 498A of the Indian Penal Code. Section 2 of Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961 defines the term "dowry" and Section 3 explains the punishment of giving or taking dowry with an imprisonment of five years and with a fine of fifteen thousand rupees. Section-4 of this act is all about the demanding dowry and makes it a punishable offence of a term of six months which can be extended for two years with a fine of ten thousand rupees.

### **The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005**

In 1983, domestic violence was recognized as a non-cognizable crime under section 498-A of the Indian Penal Code. After that, many more acts and amendments were passed. But, the breakthrough role of The United Nations Committee on Convention of Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) consolidated the issue. As built due to the pressure among the different nations, in its General Recommendation no. XII (1989), it demanded for the protection of women against violence of any kind and especially that happening within the family should be taken care of by the State governments. So, came the 2001 bill, called the Domestic Violence Bill passed by the Central Government, under the Ministry of Women and Child Development, which was later transformed into an Act called, the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 (PWDV). This act came into effect on 26th October, 2006 (Mohanty, 2009).

In 2005, the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence, Act 2005 came up and according to the act, any conduct of the respondent shall constitute domestic

violence if he:

- (a) habitually assaults or makes the life of the aggrieved person miserable by cruelty of conduct even if such conduct does not amount to physical ill-treatment, or
- (b) forces the aggrieved person to lead an immoral life, or
- (c) otherwise injures or harms the aggrieved person.

The Act of 2005 provides many rights to the victim of domestic violence like, apart from protection, the magistrate has the duty to provide shelter homes to the aggrieved, medical facilities, counselling, the right to reside in a shared household and even monetary relief. Although this Act gives the aggrieved its rights, many criticize the Act that it still has many loopholes and has failed in its purpose to provide complete justice to the women. One reason is because of our delayed justice process, which is lengthy and time and money consuming. Through this act, many cases got registered but justice got served to very few, as each day, there are at least 1 or 2 cases registered. Also, there has been a lot of misuse of this right.

### **Response of Crime Against Women Cell**

Crimes Against Women Cell was established in 1983 at an intermediate level by Delhi Police. It was the first police response to directly target Indian women; and one of the first anywhere in the world. To date, crime, or other forms of violence against women, have been the subject of regular police stations, and also other legal issues to maintain law and order in the society.

The need for a police response to the gender sensitive area had been realized some time earlier because of the following reasons:

- (i) The status of women was low and there was very less tendency among them to bring their problems to police stations, as the staff were mostly male staff.
- (ii) There were some problems that women faced because of their low social status that could not get adequate care from the overworked and inefficient police.
- (iii) It was perceived that a more empathetic response was needed in this area than it had been received.
- (iv) The sensitivity of a police officer in dealing with an abused and vulnerable woman was not up to the desired level.

The Cell itself was also redefined as the "Crime Against Women Cell" to review the advanced field of its acts and programmes. In 1986, different Cells were set up in

the same lines in each district of Delhi. Most importantly, the central cell was given skilled workforce, infrastructure and responsibilities.

Family counselling became an integral part of the functioning of these cells. Although this was not the case at first and was widely criticized as not being the responsibility of the police, it is now officially recognized. It has now become the responsibility of trained and experienced workers and it has also gained the support of well-known non-governmental organizations.

The head of the crime against women cell is the Assistant Commissioner of Police. After that, Inspector and further Inquiry Officers are placed, and for their help, Constables or duty officers and sub-constable are also allotted to them. Inquiry Officers play the role of counsellors. They listen to the clients, their grievances and their issues. They counsel the clients as well, and the main purpose of the Crime Against Women Cell is to save the marriages.

A lot of domestic violence cases are filed, but most of the time, clients attached this with dowry cases. They solved their issues by talking to each other and by discussing with the complainant and the respondent. Those who solve their issues, live together; those who do not solve their disputes, decide to get separated by filing a divorce; and F.I.R is done by officers where settlement process is not possible.

The Crime Against Women Cell entertains the cases which are based on dowry and domestic violence. The writer herself had worked as a fieldwork trainee in one of the Crime Against Women Cells situated in Sabzi Mandi Police Station. As observed and learned by the trainee while working at CAW Cell, 90% cases are based on domestic violence and rest are on dowry. Example of three cases which are registered by the Cell:

**Case-1:** complaint against – Husband, Father-in-law, Mother-in-law and Sister-in-law.

Issue- Dowry demand, harassment, torture, abuse and not given '*stridhan*'.

Main issue which was observed by the trainee was alcoholism and unemployment.

Family tree: husband, mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister-in-law and one male child.

The complainant, respondent and in-laws all came to the cell. The counsellors gave counselling sessions to all and tried to solve the issue. The complainant told the problem that she was facing in the matrimonial home. She explained her grievances:

her husband misbehaved with her after drinking and beat her in a brutal manner. He did not have any kind of job. The complainant had no financial support. Her in-laws abused her and told that it was her responsibility to overcome his drinking habit; it was her duty to change his behaviour. Her in-laws gave money to their son for drinking.

Intervention- The counsellor called the husband, mother-in-law and father-in-law. He made them understand not to misbehave with the complainant. He told the respondent's parents not to give money to their son. The counsellor gave them a brief orientation on legal provision. The respondent was ready to do some work and take responsibility of his family. The aggrieved person and the respondent both were ready to live together. The aggrieved person closed her complaints temporarily. If she faces any problem in the future caused by her husband and in-laws, then she can reopen her complaint.

**Case-2:** The complaint was harassment, physical and mental torture, beating and abuse.

Complaint against- husband and mother-in-law.

The main issue observed by the trainee was- substance abuse and domestic violence.

The complainant, the respondent and mother-in-law came to the agency and the counselling took place. They told their grievances and shared their issues. They wanted to live together and resolve their issues. The respondent took several kinds of drugs such as smack, heroin and other paramedical drugs. The economic state of the family was affected since he was only earning member of the family. The complainant had two children and she was fed up with his behaviour. When she spoke against her husband or tried to make him understand that the family was in a financial crisis, she was harassed and tortured by her husband. He was not ready to understand his responsibilities and wanted to live his life alone.

Intervention- The counselling was given to husband, complainant and mother-in-law. The respondent used to drink alcohol and took drugs and after that he tortured or misbehaved with his wife. The counsellor gave proper assessment, and the respondent was ready to leave consumption of and drugs. The dispute was resolved and the aggrieved was resolved to live with her husband. The complainant closed her case temporarily. She can reopen her case if she will face problems. The cell works in favour of the aggrieved person. It gives best solutions to the aggrieved person.

**Case - 3:** complaint against- father-in-law and mother-in-law.

Issue- demanded dowry, harassment, torture and abuse.

Main issue which was observed by trainee- not to return the '*stridhan*' and abused her for bringing less amount of dowry.

The counsellor called the in-laws, complainant and her husband in the cell. He did counselling to all of them. The complainant told that her mother-in-law abused her for not bringing sufficient dowry amounts. Her father-in-law supported mother-in-law. They interfered in her personal life. The husband supported his wife and had some arguments with his parents so that the parents thrown them from matrimonial house.

Intervention- The counsellor made them understand not to interfere in her marriage life. The in-laws were ready to return the dowry articles. The couple wanted to live separately in a rented house. The complainant closed her complaint permanently.

**Case-4:** complaint against- Husband only.

Complaint issue- harassment, beaten, tortured and threat to life.

Main issue which was observed by the trainee- the respondent was an H.I.V. patient and his mind was not stable. He did not take his medicines and he threatened to his family and said that he spread it to all.

Family tree- the aggrieved person and her three children; one was boy and two were girl children, husband and mother-in-law.

The complainant was a laundry worker. So, she came home late. She took all the household responsibility. She only wanted her husband to restart his medicines and to not drink alcohol. The respondent had the issue of coming late of his wife. He agreed to restart his medicines and not to take alcohol and was ready to give the expenses of his children and his wife. They both wanted to live together.

Intervention- The counsellor did the counselling to both the parties and suggested them to live together. He made his effort in the area to save the marriage. The counsellor demanded the medical certificate of respondent and his medical booklet and asked his doctor's name or counsellor.

The counsellor made him understand to restart his medicines and not to drink alcohol. The respondent realised his responsibilities and wanted to live with his wife.

The aggrieved person was also ready to live with his husband.

**Case-5:** complaint against- Husband only.

Complaint issue- tortured physically as well as mentally, sexual harassment, abused and beaten.

Main issue which was observed by the trainee- the respondent did a second marriage. The complainant did not know anything about the first marriage of her husband. The aggrieved person imposed Sec-493, Sec 494, Sec 495, Sec 496 and Sec 420. The aggrieved person wanted her property right and also her children right in the property of her husband.

The complainant filed the complaint against her husband after twenty-nine years of the marriage. She said that her husband left the house after ten years of marriage and she had been living alone and took the responsibility of her children. Her husband was missing since 1997. But few days ago, she found her husband living with his first wife. After that incident, she filed a complaint against her husband in the CAW Cell. The respondent denied all the truths and said that the respondent knew about his first marriage and that the second marriage occurred with her consent.

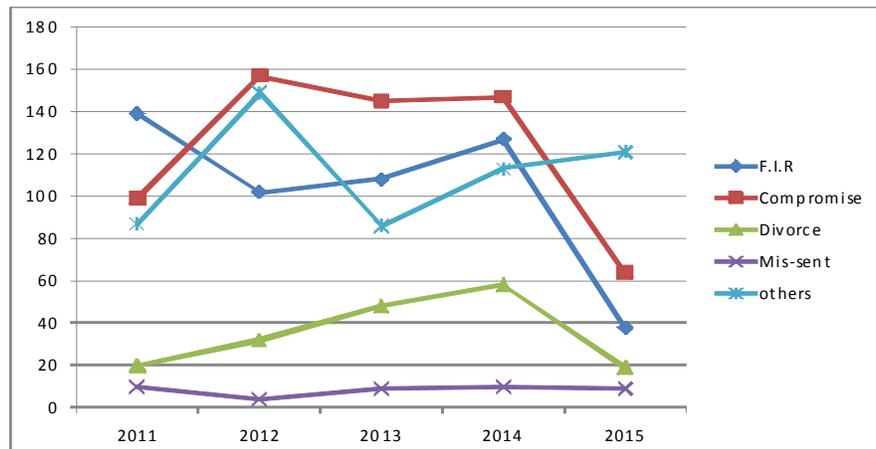
Intervention- The counsellor did the counselling of both the parties, but no result came. They did not want to live together. The complainant wanted to register an F.I.R against her husband but the counsellor did not do so because she had no proof to prove her statements. This case was presented in front of A.C.P of the CAW Cell and A.C.P decided this case was closed by the CAW, Cell because this case did not come in the area of Crime Against Women Cell and suggested the complainant that she could register the case in the court.

Reasons behind the registered complaints are very different. Some cases are genuine in nature and related to dowry and domestic violence and some are not. Some cases are manipulated by the third person like parents, lawyer, etc., but, they are registered by the cell. The Inquiry officers counsel the cases and get best result in the favour of aggrieved person.

**Case-6:** The complaint was about dowry demand, physical and mental torture, harassment, beating and abuse. The aggrieved person filed against the husband, father-in-law and the mother-in-law. Counselling started and new fact arrived. The CAW Cell settled the issue and looked into the facts of all this domestic violence. The reason behind the dispute was extramarital affair of the husband with the other woman.

The complainant and the respondent lived separately for the last six months. There was no involvement of in-laws. But the complainant manipulated the case under the influence of her parents. There arrived 40-50% cases which were manipulated by the third person that is the lawyer, family member or parents or any other person. The case was solved, and the complainant was ready to live with the respondent. And the case was temporarily closed. But after 15 days, she again came to the cell and reopened the case. The cell follows up the cases which are temporarily closed, and the procedure will be started if the complainant wants to do so.

**An overview of the handling of complaints by the Cell over the last five years is in Figure 1.**



The F.I.R cases were those where the clients did not solve their disputes, no settlements were occurred. The clients lived together in compromise cases, and in some cases, the clients got separated from each other or took divorce. Mis-sent meant that some cases are not under the area of this cell, so they sent to another cell which cover it. And the category of others are those cases whose clients did not come to the cell or might be other reasons, they were closed.

### Issues and Challenges

1. Lack of legal awareness
2. Patriarchal mindset
3. Interference of parents, in-laws and other relatives
4. Counselling method
5. Need to family counselling
6. Sensitization of clients
7. Mis-guided by lawyers

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## Book Review

*Internationalization of Higher Education in India* by Vidya Rajiv Yeravdekar and Gauri Tiwari, New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2017.

### Tina Thakur<sup>1</sup>

There are continuous and rapid developments taking place in higher education today. They present new questions, greater challenges and newer opportunities for institutions, policy makers, scholars and students. The book under review shares analysis of current trends in Higher Education and its implications for present as well as future policy and practice. India's higher education system is the third largest in the world. This places it at a very strategic position. The book provides a guide to understanding India's higher education system and how Internationalization can be a driver to take it to even greater heights. The authors make an attempt at clearing several associated myths and criticisms against the process of internationalization of higher education. Thereby, they contribute towards a better understanding of various facets of this phenomenon.

The book is an attempt at understanding India's positioning in the landscape of internationalization of higher education. Besides an Introduction, the book has eight chapters. Each chapter deals with different yet related concepts around internationalization of higher education in global as well as in Indian context. The introduction provides layout of the book. It briefly touches upon the themes discussed in the subsequent chapters. Chapter one "Indian Higher Education System" discusses the trends, key characteristics and emerging concerns it faced in the country. It begins by looking at the trajectory of the evolution of higher education system and, while doing so, it sheds light on the key policies and committees which have shaped it. The chapter provides the much-required background for further discussions. Chapter two "Globalization and Internationalization" engages with these two concepts theoretically. It provides an overview of internationalization by elaborating on its various approaches, characteristics, rationales and driving factors. Through a rich literature review, it discusses the possible obstacles and challenges that internationalization can pose.

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Chapter three “Cross-Border Higher Education: A constantly evolving international student market” looks at the various elements of cross border student mobility. It explicates how it is not limited to student mobility; instead, it also entails movement of faculty, academic programmes and institutions across borders. The emergence of branch campuses and education hubs in India is one such example, which has been further elaborated. Chapter four “Regulations and Reforms to Promote Internationalization” as the name suggests discusses at length the existing regulatory framework in the country within which internationalization of higher education is operating. While doing so, it discusses the shortcomings of the system and labels the existing regulatory structure as “obstructionist” (p.141). It also points towards the lack of political will and initiatives on the part of the Indian government which has further led to a delay in the investment by foreign universities in the country. Therefore, the authors underline the urgent need of bringing reforms in the policies and guidelines to make higher education system more conducive for foreign institutions investment.

Chapter five “Internationalization in a comparative context” presents a comparative study of Asian countries with respect to their efforts for internationalization of higher education. It highlights the stiff competition India faces from other Asian countries in attracting foreign students as well as foreign universities. Countries like China, Singapore, Hong Kong, Malaysia and South Korea are making consistent and consolidated efforts in strengthening its higher education system. In light of this, the authors stress on the requirement of similar kinds of commitment from Indian Government to ensure that India is not left behind in the international market of cross border students. Chapter six “International Student Mobility: Old and New Patterns” looks at the spatial distribution of international students in the world as well as within India. It underscores the uneven distribution and concentration of students in only few countries in the world. Similarly, such patterns can be seen in India, where only a few cities and subjects are preferred more by the international students. This chapter lays emphasis on the need to devise effective strategies and also suggests ways to balance the disproportionate ratio of inbound and outbound mobility in the country.

Chapter seven “India’s soft power and Internationalization” discusses the contribution of internationalization of higher education for the host countries in enhancing its soft power. India hosts international students especially from its neighbouring countries which has increased its prominence amongst its neighbours. The chapter explores the possibilities that internationalization of higher education can provide to India in enhancing its capacity to influence the relations with other countries.

The last chapter “Internationalization of Higher Education in India: a way forward” comprises of suggestions to improve the inbound mobility of the students in higher

education. The chapter brings together the discussions in the book. It identifies the major drawbacks, and also suggests its remedies to pave way for greater internationalization of Indian higher education.

The text succeeds in providing an overview of the phenomenon of internationalization of higher education in India. It is a meticulous work that helps in understanding the trends, approaches or issues in this field. It has presented the trajectory of reforms and policies in the Indian higher education system in an organized and systematic fashion, thereby making it easier for readers to comprehend. The authors attempt at touching upon various issues pertaining to internationalization with the help of rigorous literature review. The book, however, has focussed heavily on making India catch up in the race of internationalization by overlooking the dark side of this phenomenon. While internationalization indeed has the potential to generate greater opportunities, it has also led to serious challenges. The process of internationalization has come to be dominated by markets and corporate. Consequently, this has led to business in education and education as a business. Therefore, India must tread the path of internationalization cautiously to avoid such consequences. Despite these limitations, the book is an insightful reading for understanding India's higher education system and its approach towards internationalization.

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The Association co-ordinates activities of various agencies – governmental and voluntary, national and international – engaged in similar pursuits. It organizes conferences and seminars, and undertakes surveys and research projects. It endeavours to update and sharpen the awareness of its members by bringing to them expert views and experiences in adult education from all over the world. In pursuit of the policy, the Association has instituted the Nehru Literacy Award and Tagore Literacy Award for outstanding contribution to the promotion of Adult Education and Women's Literacy in the country, respectively. It has also instituted Dr. Zakir Husain Memorial Lecture, which is delivered every year by an educationist of eminence.

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The Association acts as the Indian arm of the International Council for Adult Education, International Literacy Association and the Asian-South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education. Its membership is open to all individuals and institutions who believe in the aims and objectives of the Association.

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## **Fadama III Project in Nigeria as Catalyst for Wealth Creation**

• Erharuyi Nosakhare Richard<sup>1</sup>      • Ifeanyi Ugweogbu<sup>2</sup>      • Helen Adebola<sup>3</sup>

### **Abstract**

This paper seeks to discuss the importance of Fadama III project in wealth creation. It examines Fadama III project in Nigeria as paradigm for wealth creation. The thrust of the paper is on the analysis of Fadama I, II and III projects. This is with a view to giving strong justification for the relevance of Fadama III project in national development. Hence, the general goal of this submission would be that if the nation is yearning for development, serious attention has to be given to agriculture.

**Keywords:** *Fadama III Project, wealth creation, catalyst.*

### **Introduction**

Agriculture is the mainstay of any progressive nation. It is the backbone of every economy and is crucial for economic growth. Agricultural development is one of the most powerful tools to end extreme poverty, boost shared prosperity and feed a projected 9.7 billion people by 2050 (World Bank, 2020). In all countries, the government regulates economic processes, which include agriculture. Government intervention in agriculture is different across countries and depends on various factors, such as increase in agricultural production, protection of farmers' income, national food safety and security, external effects and public goods, among others. Majority of the advanced countries were able to develop as a result of the contributions made by the agricultural sector. This enabled them to invest in other sectors that aided their development. The basic source of food supply to every economy is agriculture. If the demand for food production is not met in any country, it affects the growth rate of that country. Most countries export their agricultural products to other countries

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and in return, purchase goods and services from other countries which are vital for their national development. It also increases export earnings which help to balance the foreign exchange. Agriculture plays a great role in national development. It contributes to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth of every country. It creates employment, raises the standard of living, empowers the rural dwellers, provides food, sustains wealth, increases exports, provides basic infrastructure, which are significant to the improvement of the economy.

Agriculture as an indigenous occupation in Nigeria has gone through various phases of development. This development is an effect of government policies and state approach to agriculture which either demeans or heightens the impact of the sector in the nation (Christian, 2020). In Nigeria, agricultural policies and programmes have undergone changes. These changes have been a mere reflection of changes in government or administration. This is because these policies and programmes vary only in nomenclature and organisational network. They emphasise almost same objectives like: to provide food for the inhabitants of the nation (food security and sufficiency) and export excess to other countries, and to provide rural dwellers and farmers with extension services, agricultural support and rural development services. Despite all the laudable programmes with challenging objectives, Nigeria is yet to achieve food security. In a bid to solve the problem of food production in the country, the Federal Government of Nigeria has initiated different projects and programmes over the years; some were positively impactful while some made no difference.

In the 1970s and 1980s, the World Bank supported a series of Agricultural Development Projects (ADPs) in Nigeria. The mixed experience with ADPs during that period offered lessons for subsequent interventions, especially for the Fadama project. The World Bank in partnership with Nigeria Government developed Fadama programme to enhance productivity and market linkage of farmers through a new project on information and knowledge services (Egwu, 2015).

### **Fadama Project**

Fadama is an old tradition in Hausa, where flooded land is used for growing a variety of crops. Fadama is a six-letter word in Hausa which means “marshy terrain”. Such land is suitable for irrigation, fishing and providing food and water for livestock. The project builds upon two previous projects. The first National Fadama Project (NFP-I), implemented from 1992-1999 emphasised the use of simple drilling techniques to increase dry season crop production. Irrigation wells were also provided to crop farmers through a simple credit arrangement aimed at boosting the aggregate

crop output. NFP-I was implemented in 7 states. The lessons learnt in the NFP-I such as the success of community-driven development mechanisms, informed the design of the second National Fadama Project (NFP-II) to include beneficiaries, non-crop farmers, marketers and other stakeholders who are directly or indirectly affected by the Fadama resource (World Bank, 2016).

Fadama II (2003-09) fundamentally changed the project's delivery model, moving from a more traditional top-down approach to a more inclusive bottom-up model that cultivated community ownership and participation. Fadama-II also introduced an innovative local development planning (LDP) tool and built on the success of the community-driven development mechanisms. NFP-II adopted a community driven development (CDD) approach to provide productive assets to the poor and economically vulnerable groups and was implemented in 11 States. The States are Bauchi, Gombe, Adamawa, Imo, Kaduna, Kebbi, Lagos, Niger, Ogun, Oyo, Taraba and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT).

African Development Bank also supported the initiative in six more states (Borno, Katsina, Kogi, Kwara, Plateau, and Jigawa), bringing the total participating states to 18. Encouraged by the positive results of NFP-II, the Government of Nigeria decided to roll out the project to the entire country and sought World Bank assistance to finance the third phase of the project. To support the Government of Nigeria in increasing rural income and reducing poverty in rural areas, the World Bank approved The Third National Fadama Project (Fadama III) as a Specific Investment Loan (SIL) in June 2008.

Fadama-III's primary objective was to support the growth of non-oil sectors through the development of productive infrastructure aimed at enhancing agricultural productivity and the diversification of livelihoods. It involved building social capital of participating communities' and their capacity to provide rural services to the poor. The developmental objective of the NFP III was to increase the incomes of the farmers, reduce rural poverty, increase food security and contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Fadama-III project increased the average real income of 75% of targeted project beneficiaries by 40%.

Fadama-III project as approved by the World Bank's Board of Directors has six main components:

- i. Capacity Building, Local government and communication.
- ii. Small-scale community-owned infrastructure.
- iii. Advisory services and input support development.
- iv. Support the Agricultural Development Programmes.

- v. Asset acquisition for individual Fadama Users Groups.
- vi. Project management, monitoring and evaluation (World Bank, 2020).

The NFP-III was driven by the community. Local community members under the Fadama Users Groups (FUGs) and Fadama Community Associations (FCAs) oversaw the design and implementation of the project and were empowered through skills and capacity-building to improve their livelihoods by increasing income generating activities. According to the World Bank (2016), the basic strategy of the project was a Community Driven Development (CDD) approach, which placed beneficiaries in the driver's seat with strong emphasis on stakeholders' participation, especially at the community level.

Fadama-III Project has served as a catalyst in the agricultural sector since its inception. According to Macmillan Publishing Company (2002), catalyst is someone or something that causes something to happen or change. In many ways, Fadama has succeeded in "putting agriculture back on the map". Fadama has become what some might describe as an "island of success" in a country portfolio that faces frequent implementation problems (World Bank, 2016). It is hoped that the project's long process of evolution and continued analysis of the project's specific features and results will help other project teams which are seeking innovative ways to deliver developmental results.

The design of Fadama-III allows participating communities the flexibility to develop their own plans and choose their own local subprojects. Communities remain empowered to make decisions at the local level, and FUGs are responsible for identifying, preparing, executing, supervising, operating, and maintaining their subprojects (World Bank, 2016). Fadama-III had enhanced flexibility by expanding the types of products and investments that are eligible for financing under the project, thereby giving communities more choices in addressing local needs. The concept of Fadama-III was brought about by the need for government to fight the challenges of pervasive poverty in rural areas, thereby restoring the agricultural sector to its position in the economy (Effiong & Asikong, 2013).

The beneficiaries of this project were registered as Fadama Users' Groups (FUGs). FUG is a group of not less than 10 farmers, while a group of 15 FUGs formed Fadama Community Association (FCA). The FCAs in the community identified the sub-projects they needed Fadama- III project to support. Fadama-III project was initially designed to end in 2013. Prior to the end of the Project, the Nigerian Government requested additional financing. In consent to this request, a sum of US

\$200 million was approved in June 2013 as the 1st installment. The 2<sup>nd</sup> installment was US \$50 million, approved in 2016 by the board of the World Bank as additional financing to Fadama-III Project. The additional financing came as an extension of phase III of Fadama Project. Fadama-III Additional Financing (Fadama III - AF) was aimed at scaling up the impacts made under Fadama-III and also supported clusters of farmers in six selected states with comparative advantage and high potential to increase the production and productivity of cassava, rice, sorghum and horticulture value chains (World Bank, 2020).

Fadama-III National Project operated in all 36 Nigerian States and the Federal Capital Territory. Fadama-III Project was a tripartite funded intervention by the World Bank, the Federal Government of Nigeria and participating States with objectives targeted toward poverty reduction (Ike, 2012).

### **Unique Features of Fadama-III Project**

Firstly, Fadama-III project had a unique feature called Fadama User's Equity Funds (FUEF). The fund is financed and owned by the Fadama Users' Group, it is funded primarily from annual FUG contributions. The fund is to be invested by FUGs at the community level. The objective of this fund is to strengthen the commitment for maintaining local subprojects. The revolving nature of the fund ensures the continued circulation of financial capital in the community or investment in physical capital, depending on the decisions made by the FUGs. The fund constitutes the basis for developing a sustainable savings and loan scheme for FUG members. It has strengthened financial literacy among FUG members, assisted by the facilitators who help to manage the fund and identify opportunities to improve the sustainability of subprojects.

Secondly, the implementation strategy of the project was designed to support the financing and implementation of six main components: (i) Capacity building, local government and communication, (ii) Small-scale community-owned infrastructure, (iii) advisory services and input support, (iv) support for agricultural development programmes, (v) asset acquisition for individual Fadama Users Groups; and (vi) project management, monitoring and evaluation (World Bank, 2010). It was designed to transfer financial and technical resources to the Fadama Users' groups.

Thirdly, Fadama-III had Additional Financing (Fadama-III - AF) which was aimed at scaling up the impacts made under Fadama-III and also supported clusters of farmers in six selected states with comparative advantage and high potential to increase

production and productivity of cassava, rice, sorghum and horticulture value chains. Cluster farming refers to a group of smallholder farmers who collaborate on joint sharing of buying and using implements, negotiations and selling to the same buyers. Cluster farmers are usually in the same locality. Fadama-III - AF adopted this strategy because of the many benefits associated with it, such as strengthening linkages between farmers, agro-dealers, processing firms, off-takers and other private sector participants.

### **Need for Fadama-III Project in Nigeria**

Nigeria has a comparative advantage in the production of a variety of fresh and processed crops during the dry season. This also applies to livestock and fisheries production throughout the year (Apata & Saliu, 2016). It is imperative to note that incremental production necessary to sustain food production and guarantee national food security cannot be achieved without supplementing irrigation for major food production in the country. This is because Nigeria is endowed with underground and surface water reserves, rich pastures and favourable agro-ecological conditions.

The Fadama resources are largely wetlands all year round and since these resources are also potentially irrigable, they are vastly suited for crop production, fishing as well as provision of water and feed for livestock (EDSFCO, 2019). This enables farmers to carry out farming activities throughout the year. In the light of these potentials, the National Fadama Development Project was designed to promote simple and low-cost improved irrigation technology under World Bank Finance. The widespread adoption of the technologies helped farmers to increase production in some crops.

### **Fadama-III Project - a Panacea for Wealth Creation**

The project promoted growth in non-oil sectors by providing support to: develop productive infrastructure; access quality agricultural inputs, technology, and advisory services; and conduct on-farm adaptive research. Together, these interventions were designed to enhance agricultural productivity and diversify livelihoods. Below are the benefits of the Fadama-III Project (World Bank, 2016):

- Through the funding available, Fadama-III Project provided finance to rural farmers through the Nigerian Agricultural Co-operative and Rural Development Bank.
- It fostered the interest of the private sector in Agriculture, leading to partnership through advisory and technical services.

- It enabled rural communities to take charge of their development agenda. This is sustainable through their support by means of small-scale infrastructure.
- The Fadama-III Project helped the users to be proactive by selecting their preferred agricultural research and advisory services. They used the private sector in this regard instead of governmental services.
- The areas being served under the Fadama-III Project don't just assess financial services on the short term; but it is made available over a long period of time.

On the average, the project was intended to reach about 317,000 direct beneficiary households in clusters and 1.4 million indirect beneficiaries (National Fadama Coordination Office, 2019). Fadama-III project assisted more farmers than expected; it also benefited members of marginalised groups such as internally displaced people, women, youths, and physically challenged people, in addition to effectively targeting activities to the poorest beneficiaries. The target was for 75 percent of beneficiaries to increase their average real income by at least 40 percent. Project data from the results framework indicated that under Fadama- III the average real income of beneficiaries rose from ₦70,548.00 in 2008 to ₦184,240.96 in 2013 (the year that the project was originally expected to close) and ₦347,645.18 in 2019 (when the project closed), indicating that almost all project beneficiaries increased their real income by at least 40 percent (World Bank, 2020). This improvement in income is solely attributed to the project's interventions.

### **Conclusion**

Fadama- III project has been able to improve livelihoods through capacity building, job creation and empowerment amongst farmers in our communities. The project was designed to be socially inclusive. The basic strategy of the project was a Community Driven Development (CDD) approach, which placed beneficiaries in the driver's seat with strong emphasis on stakeholders' participation, especially at the community level.

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## **Essence of ICT in Total Literacy Campaign: Recapitulation of 2011 TLC In Thongju, Manipur**

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### **Abstract**

Providing an alternative system of education itself to people is considered as one of the basic attributes of quality enhancement of teaching-learning process in higher education sector. Adoption of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and its impact on teaching illiterate adults show far reaching achievement of targets by the end of the Total Literacy Campaign (TLC) programme. The TLC is about working with illiterate adults in real life situation with the mission to eradicate illiteracy in the society. The article deals with the importance of ICT; the need of providing proper ICT items by the implementing agencies, the need to innovate ICT by Student Volunteers for the programme and more importantly, the reactions of the adult learners in the use of ICT items such as for cell-phone literacy and use of calculator for their overall demand for improvement of standard of living of adult individuals.

**Keywords:** *Literacy as Extension Dimension of University; Total Literacy Campaign, ICT and Social Esteem Enhancement; ICT Literacy; Cell Phone Literacy.*

### **Introduction**

University as one of the agencies of adult education in India took up Total Literacy Campaign (TLC) which was the main approach and strategy of the National Literacy Mission under Ministry of Human Resource Development in India. It is an extension education module carried out in a time bound manner in the selected locality. The basic aim is to eradicate adult illiteracy in the locality with the responsibilities of providing post literacy, continuing education and extension education for the neo-literates. It is conducted in a mass campaign approach depending largely on the voluntary services of all educated people, government servants, students of

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colleges and universities, as part of their NCC, NSS, and such other national service programme (MHRD, 1988).

TLC is a nationwide campaign in India for the liquidation of illiteracy. It gives priority to the weaker sections of the society such as SCs, STs, OBCs, women and socially deprived sections of the society where the concentration of illiterates adults are maximum. It is through TLC that illiterate adults can be introduced to the ever changing world and can become better, successful and happier citizens. Illiteracy, is the greatest stumbling block in a country's equitable development, and therefore, it is considered a mission to eradicate illiteracy (NLM, 1994).

### **Theories and ICT Interwoven**

There are a variety of programmes available in adult literacy which can be grouped into general content areas in which general programmes are open to any adult focusing mainly on improving foundational content or core literacy skills such as reading, writing, spelling, numeracy and information and communication technology. Several philosophical theories have been propounded from which adult education sector can aptly be incorporated for the maximum achievement target of the adult education programme. Some of the interwoven theories from which the importance of ICT can be extracted are discussed here.

The humanistic philosophical orientation to education maintains that the purpose of education is to enhance personal growth and development and lead to a swing from teacher-centered to learner-centered learning environment. The principles of humanism are found most notably in the work of Abraham Maslow (1908-1970) and Carl Rogers (1902-1987). They centre on the learner as an individual and consider that learning is not just about the intellect, but also about educating the "whole person", taking a person's interests, goals and enthusiasm into account, so that full potential can be achieved. This approach to learning is student-centered, with learners encouraged to take responsibilities for their own learning and being intrinsically, rather than extrinsically motivated (Norbert. 2012).

The progressive philosophy of education holds that the purpose of education is to help the learner develop practical knowledge and problem-solving skills. The propounders include John Dewey, Spencer and Lindeman. Teaching methods used in this philosophy include problem solving, the scientific method and co-operative learning. Here, the educator is an organizer who guides learning instead of directing learning and evaluates the learning process.

Adult learners' willingness to learn more is strengthened when resources for learning are related to real life problems and to personal development goals. Such an assumption implies that adult educators or facilitators need to adopt techniques based on true assessment of their needs. Adult learners learn better and faster when they apply their learning efforts in context of real problem and their current developmental needs (Harry & others, 2002, as cited in Kumar, 2012).

Information literacy implies the ability to locate, understand, evaluate, utilize and convey the information at home, at workplace, and in the community. The Association of College and Research Libraries, Chichago, describes Information Literacy as “a set of abilities to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information”, to promote lifelong learning (American Library Association. 2000:2). Knowles (2011) states that, “Adult students seek learning opportunities because their life situation has created a need to know”.

According to Burge (1998) (cited in Rhoden, 2015: 29) adult learning is all about: construction (how adults create their own framework of knowledge) and confusion (when learners attempt to organize a mass of incoming information); achievement, affiliation and acknowledgement (feeling competent and being connected to others); relevance, responsibility and relationship (relating life experiences and personal knowledge to learning, accepting learner responsibility for learning and establishing a collaborative relationship which creates a climate that allows for talking in order to think, making mistakes, letting go of old ideas and attitudes and being open to anything new); and expression through which the learner is able to see himself perform, hear himself, compare thoughts and skills with those of his peers and open mind to feedback.

The work of Laura Rhoden (2015) also concludes that analysing specific information literacy instructional initiatives designed for adult learners serve effectively “meeting adult learners where they are” and advancing adult information literacy skills to competency. In another contextualized learning approach, it is taught in the context in which the learning outcomes would be useful in real life. The underlying assumption is that the context provides meaningfulness to abstract information, making it more concrete and therefore, easier to learn.

The whole learning objectives are needed to be reflected in the curriculum framework specially designed for adult learners emphasising on both the content (the material to be learned) and process of learning (the actions and resources involved in the teaching and learning). An adult centred curriculum and its first principle of andragogy focuses on the information literacy curriculum to be relevant, applicable and have a real-life focus (Knowles et. al., 2011:147).

In adult education and lifelong learning activities, various assumptions and theories could be executed only when there are means, agents and for good ends. In the same way, providing information is the means; providing communication and information for teaching-learning are the ends that are elaborately bridged by the available technologies as agents in all teaching and learning programmes.

### **Extension Education and Total Literacy Campaign**

The Total Literacy Campaign (TLC) approach and strategy is one of the ingredients of extension education under the third dimension of the university. In the context of rural community development, practitioners and scholars believe that extension education leads to changes in human behaviour in terms of attitudes, knowledge and skills. It makes rural people aware of their problems and shows them the ways and means by which they can solve them. It leads them towards positive actions.

Ensminger (1957) believes the purpose of extension education is to change the attitude and practices of the people, with whom the work is done<sup>4</sup>.

The Total Literacy Campaign programme is a form of extension education, a 'reaching out' to the local illiterate adults, youth and school drop-outs to once again receive the opportunity for education in an informal system and setting.

TLC is a nationwide campaign in India for the liquidation of illiteracy. It gives priority to the weaker sections of the society such as Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes, OBC, women and socially deprived sections of the society who constitute the maximum number of illiterates adult. It is through TLC that illiterate adults can be introduced to the ever-changing world and can become better, successful and happier citizens (NLM, 1994; UNESCO, 2000).

### **Method and Tools of the Study**

The study is a descriptive analysis and was conducted based on the field survey using the Village Survey Schedule and Interview Survey Schedule provided by the Department of Adult, Continuing Education and Extension, Manipur University (DACEE-MU).

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<sup>4</sup>Extension: Concept and Need | Education - Your Article Library <https://www.yourarticlelibrary.com>

### **Scope of the Study**

The present article deals with the TLC-2011 which was organised by the DACEE-MU in the selected locality called Thongju Part- 2 in Imphal East District, Manipur in 2011. The village has a population of 1,232 with 123 illiterates as per the village census survey conducted for the programme.

### **Duration of the TLC Programme**

The Total Literacy Campaign was conducted for 45 days as per the UGC norm from 1<sup>st</sup> April, to 15<sup>th</sup> May, 2011, under the strict supervision of the then Head of the Department, Smt. Potsangbam Jamini Devi, (DACEE-MU).

### **Aims and Objectives**

The TLC in Thongju, Manipur aimed:

1. To generate interests among the illiterates through motivation and various means and media to join the literacy classes.
2. To attain 100% literacy of enrolled learners in the specified time duration in cost effective ways.
3. To enable the learners to attain the three minimum level of learning as specified by in the NLM document for Level-1, Level-2 and Level-3.

#### **Level-1.**

- (a). Ability to read and write words and sentences using the most frequent letters and vowel signs.
- (b). Ability to read and write numbers up to 50.
- (c). Ability to write their own names.

#### **Level -2.**

- (a). Ability to read and write words and sentences having almost all the letters, all vowel signs and some conjunct letters.
- (b). Ability to read and write numbers up to 100 and do simple additions and subtraction.
- (c). Ability to write the names of the family members and their addresses.

#### **Level -3.**

- (a). Ability to comprehend a simple and unknown passage or text, newspaper headings, road signs etc.

- (b). Ability to compute simple problems involving multiplication and division.
- (c). Ability to apply skills of reading and numeric in day-to-day activities (NLM, 1998: 17).

### **Approach of the Study**

Development of an appropriate approach for conducive environment for learning is a primary asset of TLC. For this purpose, the attention and co-operation from family members are also necessary and their contributions are drawn. Motivation holds true for building a favourable condition to learning (IAEA, 2012: 453-54). A relationship satisfying both teachers and learners are established to make them enjoyable, satisfy their wants and to achieve the goals of 3R's (Reading, wRiting and aRithmetic). The interventional use of ICT materials in the learning environment also adds more ingredients and makes it satisfying and useful to them in their situations with certain aesthetic values.

### **Teaching-Learning Materials (TLM) Used**

The necessary teaching-learning materials and standard primers were supplied by the department for the TLC programme. They included:

1. Primer-1: Mayek Chattaba Ahalsinggi Tamnaba Ahaanba Lairik Book-1.
2. Primer -2: Mayek Chattaba Ahalsinggi Angka Mayek Chatnaba Lairik Book-2.
3. Literacy Kit.
4. Black Board.
5. Exercise books.
6. Pencils, erasers, chalks, duster.
7. Teaching aids and follow-up materials like supplementary books, content sheets, newspapers, calendars, posters, pictorial charts, magazines, flash cards, photographs and signboards.

These teaching-learning materials are categorized under non-projected teaching aids. These were made available and used for adult learners manually to learn the ability to attain 3R's in the literacy centre.

### **The ICT and the Projected Teaching Aids Used**

1. Movie Projector/Film Strip: Some sort of movies which are relevant to adults and the hurdles they face due to illiteracy were shown to them.

After viewing the movies, the learners were engaged in discussion and the ways they react to its theme were explained by the volunteer student teachers.

2. LCD Projector/Power Point Slide Show: Slides of different pictures of pet animals are prepared under which the names of the pets are written. With the pictures they are instructed to spell the words accordingly. Here, the learners developed the curiosity to know the constituting alphabetical letters of the shown pictures. Adults did learn faster and retain longer memories in following this method.
3. Radio Set Tuning: Practice of locating the pointer of radio station tuning exercises greatly helped adult learners to develop the habit of using radio set for information and communication tools. The bands inscribed at the backside of the radio set and the programme corresponding to each band, knowing to read numerals and choosing the preferred items were well acquired.
4. Calculator Operational Demonstration: Demonstration with the use of calculating machine and their know-how helped adult learners recognize the numerals and the basic signs of arithmetic, i.e., addition, subtraction, multiplication and division.
5. Cell Phone Operation Demonstration- Cell Phone Literacy was the most anticipated demand of adult learners and its uses in every day indoor and outdoor purposes. They are very curious to know how to use the cell phones. This made them to develop retention of regularity in their literacy classes.

These projected teaching aids are directly associated with ICT and the audio-visual essence and effects in TLC have special implications in teaching learning and achievements of adult learners. It is easily synchronized with the talks by facing the audience to observe their reactions. It further makes the programme more dynamic and sustained the interests of learners.

It is useful in such small group situation with maximum achievement results. They are concerned with an application of modern skills and techniques for the requirement of education. These materials involve the appropriate teaching strategies, techniques and tactics for generating desired learning structures. The radio-set tuning practices, electronic calculator operation and the cell phone operation abilities are the greatest and immediate demands of the everyday activities of the adult learners. These learning skills have been the immense contribution of the ICT in the lives of learners enrolled in Thongju Part-2 TLC of 2011 in Manipur, as evident from the tables.

**Table 1: Illiterate Population of Thongju Part-2 Ward No. 7, 8 and 9.**

Age group	6 – 35 years	35+ years	Total	% of illiteracy
Male	6	18	24	4.2
Female	8	91	99	16.04
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>20.35</b>

Source: Village Survey of Thongju Part-2, 2011 TLC.

**Table 2: Enrolment and Achievement of Neo – Literates in Thongju Part 2.**

Gender	Enrolled Learners	Achievement of Neo-Literates	Achievement %
Male	01	01	100%
Female	19	19	100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Evaluation of TLC 2011, Thongju Part-2.

As per the village survey report, the actual number of illiterates of the village numbered 123 of which 24 were males and 99 were females. Twenty learners have been enrolled for the programme and the remaining non-enrolment was mainly due to their critical old age, ill health, poor sightedness, general poverty and weakness. There were no dropouts during the programme.

The achievement of the programme was directly proportionate to the effectiveness of the working volunteers who were the actual ‘Doers’. All the adult learners who underwent the TLC programme have been able to do simple arithmetic in addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. The learners have been able to write names of their family members, read newspaper headings, signboards and names of markets. The overall achievement of the learners can thus be taken as 75.87%.

### Findings from the TLC Programme

There are some important aspects which emerged in the course of the TLC programme conducted in the adopted area. It deserves due consideration for all stakeholders in the mission.

1. There is difficulty in identifying illiterates as they have inferiority complex to disclose.
2. Most of the illiterates are in the age group of 35+ years.
3. Illiteracy of females was more than that of males.
4. Involvement of public leaders and participation from the community members created more enthusiasm and zeal among the learners.

5. Attendance of learners was directly proportionate to the achievement level of the learners.
6. Recreational and ICT related activities, ego involvement activities and perpetual motivation were the challenges for the volunteer teachers.
7. Teaching-Learning material printed in bold and impressive letters, with good illustration facilitates easy learning and retention of interest and learning.
8. The adult learners wanted to learn comfortably. Benches, desks and tables are needed to be provided to lessen fatigues.
9. The fast learners wanted to learn English so that they know how to operate cell-phones.
10. They wanted to learn further and developed interests towards post-literacy programmes.

### **Suggestions**

The student volunteers have encountered various challenges in relation to the TLC programme. Some suggestions are offered to address them:

1. For the observance of Annual World Literacy Day in a village, one such village can be selected, so that it can be adopted as the locality for TLC programme in the following year. This may to a great extent create awareness and the desire for the TLC in that area.
2. Contents of the text (Primers) may be improved.
3. Preparation of Primers in different languages including English and Meitei Mayek scripts are needed in respect of Manipur state.
4. More teaching aids, projected materials and ICT items are needed and should be made available.
5. Duration of the course may be extended to more days.
6. Post-literacy, extension education, follow-up activities and integrated ICT classes can be taken up for neo-literates.

### **Conclusion**

As per the survey report of Thongju Part-2, Imphal East, Manipur, the literacy rate has been raised from 89.64% to a higher level of 91.32% within a short period of time. The influence and its impact of the programme have been felt by all the enrolled adult illiterate learners. The people in the locality felt that participation in the literacy programme had become a catalyst in expanding the knowledge and raised their social status in the village. Eradication of illiteracy through a campaign approach,

with the involvement of all the stakeholders and making such localities and villages as role models in improvement of the learners. As borne out from Thongju Part-2, TLC, it also holds true in assuring neo-literates' enhanced social esteem in the community. These role model scenarios from the TLC approach remain a challenge beckoning the attention and involvement of all stakeholders.

## APPENDICES

### Appendix – 1. INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR ADULT ILLITERATE (Rural Areas)

Name of the correspondent:.....Age:.....Sex:.....  
Village:.....District.....  
Police Station.....

#### Part – 1.

Age.....Sex..... Religion.....  
Whether belong to Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe.....  
Married/Unmarried.....Occupation.....  
Residing in a town or village.....  
Whether attended any school before: Yes/No.....  
Educational Standard of: Father..... Mother.....  
Number of family members: Male.....Female..... Total.....  
Number of educated persons in the family: Male..... Female..... Total...  
Number of illiterate persons in the family: Male.....Female..... Total....  
Has he/she got himself enrolled in any A.E.C ? Yes/No.....  
If yes, how he/she came in touch with the A.E.C: Through the teacher/  
Friend/ any other Member of the family.....  
Why he/she felt it necessary to be enrolled in the A.E.C ?  
Name of the A.E.C.....

#### Part – 2:

Personal Income per month:..... Family Income Per month.....  
No. of earning members in the family.....  
If any landed property: Yes/No

If yes, are of agricultural land he owns.....  
If residing in a rented house. Yes/No.  
What is the source of Income:  
Cultivation/Service/ Business.....  
Having Children: Yes/No.....  
Number of Children: Male with age.....Female with age.....  
How many of them go to school? Male..... Female..... Total.....  
How many of them go to school regularly? Male..... Female..... Total.....  
How many of the stopped going to school? Male.....Female..... Total.....  
Why do they stopped going to school?.....  
Do you want your children to be educated? Yes/No.....  
If no, give reasons:.....

**Part – 3:**

Does he/she play games? Yes/No.....If yes, names of the games.....  
Does he/she sing songs? Yes/No..... Folk songs/ Film songs/Classical/  
Any other song.....  
Does he/she like drama? Yes/No. If he/she is an actor: Yes/No. If he/she  
got friends: Yes/No.....  
What he/she does during leisure time?.....  
Does he/she want to go to A.E.C. during leisure time? Yes/No.....  
What does he/she expect to learn from the A.E.C.?.....  
Who is the man/woman he/she respects most in the  
village?.....  
Why he/she respect him/her most?.....  
Does he/she have ambition in childhood? Yes/No... If Yes, what is that  
ambition?.....  
Could he/she fulfil the ambitions? Yes/ No.....  
If Yes, how?.....  
If No, why?.....

Date:

Signature of Interviewer

**Appendix – 2: VILLAGE SURVEY SCHEDULE FOR TLC-PROGRAMME**

1. Name of the village:.....  
 Name of the block:.....  
 Gram Panchayat:.....  
 District:.....  
 Police Station:.....
2. Name of the respondent:.....
3. Population distribution chart:

Age Group	6 – 10	11 – 14	15 – 35	35+	0 - 6
Literate Population					
Male					
Female					
Total					

4. Castes in the village and number of members belonging to the same:  
 Scheduled Castes:  
 Male:..... Female:.....  
 Total:.....Scheduled Tribes: .....  
 Male:..... Female:..... Total:.....  
 OBC: Male:..... Female:..... Total:.....  
 Other Weaker Minority section: Male:..... Female:..... Total:.....
5. Names of existing clubs (if any):  
 1..... 2..... 3..... 4.....  
 Registered/Not registered:  
 1. Yes/No. 2: Yes/No. 3: Yes/No. 4: Yes/No.  
 Name of the Club Secretaries: a):.....b):.....c):.....d).....
6. Local Sports(A short note on):.....
7. Local culture(A short note on):.....
8. Local seasons(a short note on):.....
9. Number of landless families:.....
10. Major occupation of the local people:  
 a).....b).....c).....d).....
11. Nearest market with distance:.....
12. Nearest bus stand and distance:.....

13. Nearest bank and distance:.....

14. Nearest Institution(s) details:

Nearest Institutions:	Names	Location	Distance
Primary/Junior Basic School			
High /Junior High School			
College			
Others			

15. Names of interested persons for TLC with parents' name and educational Qualification:

a). .....b). .....c). .....d).....

16. No. of houses:

in the village:.....

kutchra :.....

Semi pucca:.....

Pucca houses.....

17. Medical facilities available in the village:.....

18. Animal husbandry facilities in the village:.....

19. Electricity facilities:.....Drinking water facilities:.....

20. Any Co-operative Society opened/found:.....

If so, name of the President.....Secretary:.....

21. Resourceful person(s) in the village:.....

22. Total land holding/average holding:.....

Total area of village in Sq.km.....

23. Land /Area irrigated.....Land/Area non-irrigated.....

24. Type of Ashram works in the village:.....

No. of shops in the village:.....

25. No. of educated unemployed: Male.....Female..... Total.....

26. No. of employed persons: Male.....Femlae..... Total.....

27. Other developmental programme taking place in the village:

a).....b).....c).....d).....

28. Is there any village industry: If yes:

a). Name.....

b). Individual/Joint ownership:.....

c). No. of units/ items produced.....

d).No. of people involved in each unit/item: Male..... female..... total.....

- e). If closed down, give reason for closure:.....
29. Local administration:
- a). Chieftain system .....
- b). Relationship with Police/Revenue/any other.....
30. File Workers who live in the village:
- a). Give name, otherwise state number:.....
- b). Village level workers:.....
- c). Panchayat level:.....
- d). School teacher:.....
- e). Others:.....
31. Means of communication.....
32. Media Assessments:
- a). No. of radio:.....
- b). No. of TV:.....
- c).Newspaper:.....
- d). Library:.....
- e). others:.....
33. Full needs of the village:.....
34. Real needs of the village:.....
35. Any comment:.....

Date :

Signature of the Interviewer

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## Situated Cognition Learning as a Modus Operandi for Adult Education

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### Abstract

Psychologists who focused on learning, in general, made attempts to understand better how adults learn. Later, adult educators joined the efforts. Learning and knowing are inextricably intertwined with the activities of everyday life. To better understand how adults learn, situated cognition holds excellent promise. Knowledge and skills are acquired and applied in real-world situations using a situated learning approach. Instead of seeing learning as an individual's acquisition of general information from a decontextualized library, situated cognition theory sees learning as a social situation. Situated cognition in the context of adult education is discussed in this article. This study shows the mental activity outside of school has distinct characteristics that differ from typical schoolwork. Authentic activity requires actual cognitive processes rather than simulated ones like in schools. Utilizing the primary components of situated cognition, content, context, community, and participation, instructors can engage students in new and meaningful ways. Cooperative and participatory methods of learning are used in situated learning.

**Keywords:** *Adult learning, cognitive psychology, situated cognition theory, situated learning, authentic activity, adult classroom.*

### Introduction

For centuries, it has been widely accepted that learning and living are inseparable. Since formal educational activities have become so strongly associated with knowledge, it's hard for an adult to separate "taking a class" from the term "learning". Adults'

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ability to learn and their intelligence level have been questioned due to the growing trend toward formalizing education. Adult Learning by Thorndike, Bregman, Tilton, and Woodyard (1928) was a comprehensive primary study of adult education. This study discovered that teachers of adults aged twenty-five to forty-five should expect them to learn at nearly the same rate and in nearly the same manner as they would have learned the same thing if they were twenty years old. Adult test scores were only discovered later by Lorge (1944 and 1947) to be linked to previous education, and skill sets rather than age. As a result of a lack of formal education and limited opportunities to practice test-taking, older adults were perceived as less competent. Adults over the age of seventy performed just as well when Lorge emphasized their capability to learn rather than their learning speed (i.e., when time pressure was removed).

### Objectives of the Study

To better understand adult education, researchers have focused on determining what, if anything, distinguishes it from alternative modes of instruction. Indeed, adult education researchers and practitioners alike will undoubtedly continue their efforts to pinpoint what makes adult education distinct from other educational approaches. The following are the study's objectives:

1. To define adult learning.
2. To contrast school learning with other learning.
3. To exemplify the situated learning lies in authentic activity.
4. To discuss situated cognition and its components.
5. To apply situated cognition in adult learning.

### Research Methodology

The article is based on secondary data collected from various journals, reports, print media, and websites. The methodology comprises discussing situated cognition, its elements and how to apply situated cognition in adult learning.

### What Makes Adult Education Unique?

The concept of andragogy, which originated in Europe, was introduced to North American adult educators by Malcolm Knowles. Adult learning andragogy was contrasted with child learning pedagogy (Knowles, 1980: 43). The concept of andragogy set off an assembly point for those seeking to separate the study of adult learners from all other aspects of educational practice.

Pedagogy to andragogy shows a spectrum of learning from teacher-directed to student-directed. According to Knowles, both children and adults can benefit from both approaches. In the beginning, adults who have little or no prior knowledge of a subject advantage from the teacher-led direction have acquired sufficient information to take charge of their education. The term “andragogy” is used to describe a set of principles for teaching students who prefer to learn on their own rather than under the guidance of a teacher.

### *Learning, Experience, and Adult Education*

Philosophical and educational pillars of adult education in the twentieth century were the belief in the importance of hands-on experience in learning. An essential part of Dewey’s (1938: 25) educational philosophy is that all genuine education comes about through experience. The approach to adult education will be via the route of situations, not subjects because the resource of highest value is the learner’s experience, according to Lindeman (1926: 69). Experience is a central learning component in Knowles’s (1980) portrayal of andragogy. The emphasis on experience is clearly expressed.

It was not until Kolb (1984) that the significance of first-hand experience for learning was articulated. Kolb’s model is represented cyclically by concrete experiences, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization and active experimentation. No matter how he tries to defend his model, Kolb concedes that experience and observation are two of the most critical stages in any learning process. Learning is not just a psychological process that happens in splendid isolation from the world in which the learner lives. It is intimately related to the world and affected by it, argued Jarvis (1987: 11), in his development of Kolb’s model of reflection. Knowledge and learning are situated according to the situated perspective. Indeed, Jarvis’s argument is based on the same assumptions about how adult education is culturally organized. Indeed, his opinion is to highlight the fact that learning always occurs within a social context and that the learner is to some extent a social construct (Jarvis, 1987: 15).

### **How Schooling Differs from Other Learning**

Cognitive anthropologists, sociologists, and psychologists have conducted a small amount of recent research on how people perform cognitively in real-world situations. In a provocative article titled “Learning in School and Out”, Resnick outlined four facets of mental process outside of school that differ from typical schoolwork.

*Individual cognition in school versus shared cognition outside of school*

An individual's education and performance are the primary modes of schooling. Group activities are everyday in schools, but students are ultimately judged on their ability to perform independently. In addition, a significant portion of schoolwork is assigned to students individually as in-class and in-home assignments. For the most part, a student's performance on a task is unrelated to the performance of their peers. Outside of school, most activities are done in a group setting. Each person's ability to perform well in the workplace, in their personal life and in their recreational pursuits depends on the actions of others and how their mental and physical performances mesh.

*Pure thought in school versus tool manipulation outside*

When it comes to education, "pure thought" activities are given the highest priority without the aid of textbooks or other complex instruments. When it comes to exams and tests, students are rarely allowed to use these tools, even if they are allowed in class. Because it values independent thought rather than physical or cognitive aids, schools implicitly promote independent thought. But most mental activities outside schools are dominated by tools, and this results in a cognitive task that is both influenced by and reliant on the types of instruments accessible.

*School-based symbol manipulation versus real-world context reasoning*

There are numerous ways physical reality is incorporated into out-of-school thinking, including extensive use of tools. For those who aren't in school, actions and events have a strong connection; they are frequently used in reasoning without symbols to represent them. A school education relies heavily on symbols; in fact, many students cannot connect symbols to real-world events or objects.

*School-based general knowledge versus situation-specific skills*

Formal education's universality and transferability are frequently cited as significant justifications. Arithmetic is an excellent example of how school curricula don't seem to be directly linked to the kinds of knowledge and skills that people use in their professional or personal lives. Technical professional training also appears to fit this description. Situational learning, however, can be very restrictive. Extensive research has shown that people with little formal education are capable of performing complex mathematical calculations. Many people find it challenging to adapt to new situations,

such as construction foremen working with scales not utilized in their culture or bookies being questioned about accepting risk based on information that is impossible to compute on their tables (Carragher, 1986). As a rule, educated people perform better than those with no formal education. To solve the problem, they develop new methods tailored to the situation at hand.

An emerging cognitive psychology theory known as “situated cognition” can be seen clearly in Resnick’s thinking.

In adult education, Schon (1983, 1987) has acquired much recognition. When it comes to knowledge transfer, his work explicitly criticizes the concept of generalized principles being applied to specific situations. He bases his theories and research on the idea of reflection-in-action. In his view, professional practitioners learn by engaging in their profession in the real world. A case in point is Schon’s extensive documentation of discrepancies betwixt the systematized rationality and fundamental tacit theories used by professional practitioners in action. Instead of relying on well-developed ideas to solve well-understood problems, practitioners improvise instead. It means that professional practice isn’t just “instrumental problem solving made rigorous by applying scientific theory and technique.” (Schon, 1983: 21). Researchers like Lave and others have found that the tools and social interaction present in a learning environment are critical to success.

Examining human cognition in the context of authentic activity rather than school simulations is the best way to learn about human cognition and how it functions. Instead of the simulated processes required in schooling, the authentic activity must include situations that necessitate actual cognitive processes (Resnick, 1987). Knowing and learning are intricately a product of the activity they are produced, as demonstrated by Brown, Collins, and Duguid (1989: 33). We must be enculturated to learn; the conceptual structure cannot be meaningfully detached from its contexts or practitioners.

According to them, learning is an enculturation procedure. Rather than acquiring abstract knowledge that can be applied to any situation, people develop skills specific to a particular culture. Since childhood and throughout one’s life, people adopt the behaviour and beliefs of new social groups both consciously and subconsciously. It is when people are allowed to observe members of their own culture’s behaviour in action that they can pick up relevant vocabulary, mimic behaviour, and gradually adapt to the culture’s standards (Brown, Collins, and Duguid, 1989: 34). Thus, the best way to describe authentic activity is to think of it in everyday cognitive practises which are situation-defined, reliant on a tool, and socially interconnected.

### **Situated cognition theory**

According to conventional psychological theories, which see learning as a process based on mechanisms and individual differences, situated cognition theories represent a significant shift in learning theory toward emergent and social perspectives on learning. As a result of their work, Brown, Collins, and Duguid (1989) are often acknowledged for creating situated cognition or learning theory. Situated learning is acquiring knowledge in situations similar to those in real life (Collins, 1988: 2). That's why students should be taught in an environment that mimics the real-world application of their new knowledge and skills, according to the situated cognition theory (Schell & Black, 1997).

The goal of the cognitive apprenticeship is to place learning in the context of the student's immediate surroundings (Brown et al., 1989). Aside from rehearsing and practicing fundamental skills such as a serving technique or a backhand technique, tennis students can see professional players demonstrate these skills in action and receive guidance from an expert coach, as well as put these skills into practice by participating in matches.

Situated cognition theory's view of learning is based on sociology and emphasizes the importance of dynamic communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Various people are involved in learning beyond the teacher and student: experts from the school, district, and the Internet. To make matters more interesting, members of learning communities can take on various responsibilities at any given time, depending on the circumstances. For instance, during a learning episode, a student can be a learner, an instructor, or a coach. If a student has already mastered the scanning and uploading of images to a project website, they can teach and coach others (such as classmates, parents, or friends) on how to do it.

Learning can benefit from situated cognition, according to Collins (1988). To begin, students study the conditions under which knowledge can be used. When students learn in novel and diverse environments, they tend to be more inventive and problem-solving oriented. Third, students can see how their newfound knowledge affects their lives. When students learn in context, they can better organize their ability to be put to use in the future.

### **The concept of situated learning**

Situated cognition has long been advocated as a teaching strategy because of its potential to connect the material to student's actual needs and concerns (Shor, 1987).

Making sense of what we do daily is fundamental to how we learn. Transferring classroom knowledge to the real world is facilitated by providing students with opportunities to apply what they've learned. Putting one's thoughts and actions in a specific location and time is what situated learning means. To situate is to include additional students, the surrounding conditions, and the various tasks in the learning process. Placing experts in a specific context allows us to see how they think and act when tackling complex problems (Lave and Wenger, 1991). To situate learning in the adult classroom, it is necessary to create a learning environment in which students can experience the complexities and ambiguities of real-world learning. A community's social structure, interactions with other members and environmental cues all serve as raw materials from which participants build their knowledge and understanding.

Cooperative and participatory methods of learning are used in situated learning. The learner's interactions with others and the environment create or negotiate knowledge. The learning community's conversation and the environment's cues shape the course of study. The experience itself provides the framework for learning rather than the predetermined curriculum laid out by the teacher. The 'way in' and 'practice' processes are how knowledge is gained. After observing an expert, students are encouraged to try out some of their learned techniques.

The acquired knowledge can only be used effectively if it is put to use in practice (Lave, 1997: 21). When it comes to the classroom, situated learning involves more than just reflecting on and drawing conclusions from previous experiences.

### **Components of situated learning**

Learning takes place in a context that includes content, context, community and participation (Brown, Collins, and Duguid, 1989; Lave, 1988). To learn, one must interact with others in a context as similar to the execution condition as possible. Situated learning in the classroom includes all of these components.

*Content.* In a context-free learning environment, higher-order thinking processes take precedence over rote memorization (Choi and Hannafin, 1995). Reflective thinking is made possible by using content that is rooted in the daily lives of students (Shore, 1996). Learning is not about retaining information. In a conversation with students, the instructor explains the material, structures it in the word of the matter to the students and gives them opportunities to work together on solving problems. The content is then tailored to the way students will interact with their surroundings. A successful educational encounter focuses on application rather than retention.

*Context.* “Learning in context” mentions creating an educational climate that is tailored to the needs of students to help them succeed in the workplace. The learner’s relationship to a group, organization, or family’s values, norms, and culture is examined through the prism of context (Courtney, Speck, and Holtorf, 1996). According to Boud (1994), context is how learners engage and intervene in their social, psychological, and material surroundings. Students learn better when they are allowed to relive events from various perspectives. Instead of being on the sidelines, students actively participate in the event (Wilson, 1993). Learning is shaped by the context in which it occurs and by the community in which it takes place.

*Community of practice.* A sense of belonging is essential for helping students make sense of their experiences. Social interaction, which is necessary for exploring different points of view on a subject, is fostered by one’s local community (Brown, 1994; Lave and Wenger, 1991) Sharing tacit knowledge and creating a community of learners results from practice, analysis, and reflection. An individual’s contribution to a community of learning is also referred to as a contribution to the community. When a new member joins a community, they must learn to interact with other community members to learn how to perceive, interpret, and communicate their own experiences, according to Jacobson (1996). Participation gives the experience meaning for the learner because of the opportunities for interaction provided by the community.

*Participation.* As a concept, “participation” refers to how students interact with one another and the materials they are studying, including exchanging ideas and working through problems together. Meaning systems are created and solidified in the context of social interaction. In the context of situated cognition, learning is facilitated by interacting with others in the community (Lave, 1988). To learn is to reflect, interpret, and negotiate meaning within a community of learners. The narratives that a group of learners create and share make learning possible.

### **Situating learning in the adult classroom**

Schell and Black (1997) designed a collaborative classroom for doctoral-level organizational behaviour students to foster organic learning processes. Students compared and contrasted their findings with those of experts through group discussions, role-playing, and articulation-reflection. Schell and Black initiated that the level to which knowledge and competency were transferred from the simulation to the real world varied depending on the level of involvement with the simulation as accuracy and the limitations of the simulation itself. ‘Natural’ learning environments are more conducive to learning retention, according to Courtney and Maben-Crouch (1996).

In the context of a natural learning setting, students solve real-world, non-routine problems that they will face when they return to the workplace. Solving problems is a group effort where everyone contributes to the discussion and comes up with new ideas. For students, this means questioning the values and assumptions that underlie other people's suggestions for solutions. Problems are better understood when framed in terms of the kinds of situations workers are likely to face on the job.

Young (1993) recommends that situated learning in the classroom should be designed with critical tasks in mind by teachers. Learners should be placed in challenging, real-world situations that help them acquire the desired skills. Instructors need to know how much and what kind of help new students need to help them succeed in the course. Less assistance will be required as students' abilities grow. Learners' progress is tracked, their products assessed, and they are encouraged to reflect on their learning. Instructors help students become more aware of their surroundings to understand better and apply what they've learned (Ottoson, 1997).

The final step is to monitor each student's and the group's progress intellectually regularly. Learning through cognitive apprenticeships is encouraged in an adult education classroom (Brown, Collins, and Duguid, 1989). Through observation and imitation, students learn how to solve problems independently. Discussion, evaluation, and validation of the community's point of view are some of the cognitive apprenticeship tools.

### **Conclusion**

Is there a bright future for adult education? Work in various disciplines will continue to influence adult learning theory, resulting in the ability to comprehend how adults learn and the conditions that encourage it. Regardless of the setting, the underlying assumptions of andragogy provide clear guidelines for adult education programmes in various locations, from community programmes to higher education to lifelong learning. Situated learning methods can develop a complete theory of adult learning. Situated cognition's main components - content, context, community, and participation, allow trainers new and meaningful ways to interact with students. A key takeaway from the study of situated cognition is that adult students can be great diverse sources of stories, data and interpretations that modify the classroom into a place where ideas can be discussed, challenged and created. Students' daily lives can be affected by their interactions with the surrounding environment, whether at home, in the neighbourhood, or in the workplace.

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## **Effectiveness of Teaching through Concept Maps on Achievement in Science of Secondary School Students**

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### **Abstract**

Constructivists say that learners construct new knowledge from previous learning. It means knowledge is built instead of innate or passively obtained. A concept map is a pictorial tool for visual organization and representation of information. It starts with a specific point or concept and then is diversified to exhibit how that main idea can be broken down into distinct topics. The present article is based on a master-level research work. In this research, the researchers attempted to teach through Concept Maps and study the effectiveness of Concept Maps on Science achievement of secondary class students of Gujarat. Researchers had selected five chapters from ninth class science book published by NCERT and taught through concept maps. Simultaneously, they taught another control group through traditional teaching methods (due to COVID 19, both through online mode), for comparing the effectiveness of teaching through concept maps. The present study was experimental in nature. All the students studying in class IX in the session 2020-21 affiliated to Central Board of Secondary Education, Gujarat formed the universe. The sample size of the present research was 68. Duration of treatment was for 60 days. Data were collected through self-developed pre, and post-test questionnaire, developed by the researchers. For data analysis correlated 't' test has used. The findings indicate clearly that Concept map is the effective way of teaching rather than traditional method for teaching concepts through constructivist approach.

**Keywords:** *Concept Map, constructivism, effectiveness.*

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## **Introduction**

School students are generally curious, which makes science the perfect subject for them to learn. Science permits students to explore their world and discover new things. Science is an active subject, including activities such as hand-on labs and experiments. This makes science appropriate to active younger children. Especially,

Science helps to generate problem-solving skills in students.

Science makes us aware about technology.

Science makes us responsible to conserve natural resource.

Science instils survival skills.

Science helps develop literacy and language.

Science helps to separate fact from fiction and develop process and experimental skills.

Science Education and recommendations in various commission and committees.

According to Kothari Commission, Science plays an important role in accelerating the economy of the developing nation like India. It said that to boost the economy of the country, Science, Technology and Research should be given most important consideration. For this, subjects like Science and Mathematics should be a mandatory for school stage education (Ministry of Education, 1966).

The National Policy of Education, 1986 (NPE, 1986) focuses on new advancement and how Science and Technology play a significant role in achieving this goal. It states that Science plays a vital role in inculcating values like the spirit of scientific inquiry, logical and analytical reasoning, and curiosity among students. The NPE 1986 declared that Science Education will be designed to provide the ability to the learner in obtaining problem-solving and decision-making skills and adopt the multidisciplinary approach to associate science's relationship with health, agriculture, industry, and other aspects of daily life (MHRD, 1986:20).

The National Policy of Education 2020 advocates that for students whose medium of instruction is the Regional language will start to learn Science bilingually in class 8 or earlier, and in English after end of class 10 so that they can speak about science both in their Regional language and English (MHRD, 2020: 43).

Primary science education is mandatory because it provides a framework for developing children's inner curiosity about their natural environment. It nurtures habits of careful observation and investigation. Science promotes critical thinking, discovery-based, discussion-based, and analytical-based learning.

## **Constructivism and Learning**

Constructivism says that people build their own understanding and knowledge of the world. Constructivism implies that learners construct new knowledge from previous learning. It means knowledge is constructed instead of being innate or passively obtained. The second belief is that learning is an agile process rather than a submissive process. In the passive perspective of teaching vision, the learner, as an “an empty vessel” has to be charged with knowledge, whereas constructivism means that learner builds meaning only through dynamic participation with the world. Information may be statically received by the learner, but comprehension cannot be, for it must derived from making relevant connections between previous understanding, updated knowledge and the processes intricate in learning.

Constructivism’s focus is that human knowledge is built, that humans build new knowledge upon the base of prior learning. This previous knowledge impacts what new or modified knowledge learner will build from new learning experiences (Phillips, 1995).

## **Concept Map**

Concept maps were evolved in 1972 during Novak’s research programme at Cornell University where Novak looked to understand modifications in children’s understanding of science (Novak & Musonda, 1991). In this research, Novak and his colleagues questioned many children, they found it was hard to find out specific changes in the children’s understanding of science concept. Novak defined that the concept are objects and events designed by a scientist by a scientific level. Concept map is a visual representation of a domain that contains concepts represented as nodes that are interlinked to each other by arcs and links.

## **Meaning of Concept Map**

Concept map is a pictorial tool for visual organisation and representation of information. It starts with a specific point or concept and then becomes diversified to exhibit how that main idea can be broken down into distinct topics. Concept map shows concept and ideas and the relationship among them. Concept map can be written by writing key words (sometimes inserted in shape such as circles, boxes, triangle, etc.) and then drawing arrows between the ideas that are linked. Concept maps are shown in a hierarchical manner with the more common facts at the top of the concept map and the more important, less common facts arranged hierarchically down.

### **Definitions of Concept Map**

1. “A Concept Map is a tool utilized to represent facts, thoughts and ideas. Concept maps shows a domain of understanding, explain patterns and relationships among concepts” (Novak, 1972).
2. “Since individuals have peculiar sequences of experiences leading to unique total sets of hypotheses, all concept maps are to some extent peculiar (Novak, 1990: 29-31).

### **Features of Concept maps**

1. Concepts maps pictorial representations that exhibits meaningful relationship between concepts.
2. Generally, concepts are written inside a circle or a box, interconnected by lines with connecting words.
3. Concepts are represented in a hierarchical sequence from top to bottom, placing the most common concepts at the top and less common concept at the bottom.

### **Importance of Concept Map**

- A concept map aids visual learner catch the content easily.
- It helps students to visualise relationship between ideas and facts.
- Makes use of the entire range of the left and right hemisphere of the brain.
- Concept maps help in recalling previous knowledge.
- It helps to clarify ideas and structuring facts.
- Concept map encourages learners to think creatively about the subject.
- Concept map helps in developing higher-level thinking skills among learners (create, analyse, evaluate)
- Concept maps can be used as information organising tools, meaningful learning tool, and assessment tool.
- Linking concepts and visualising their relations may assist explore new problem-solving abilities.
- Concept maps has arisen from the learning movement called constructivism.

### **Objective**

- To study the effect of methods of teaching, gender and their interaction on achievement in science when pre-test of science has been taken as covariate.

### Hypothesis

There is no significant effect of method of teaching, gender and their interaction on achievement in science when pre-test of science has been taken as covariate.

### Methodology

#### Population and sample

The present study was experimental in nature and it was conducted in one school. All the Students studying in class IX in the session 2020-21 affiliated to Central Board of Secondary Education, Gujarat formed the universe. From the population, the school was chosen using Random Sampling technique. The randomly selected school was Chaitanya School. From the selected school, class IX students were taken up for this study. The total number of students in the sample was 68. The selected school was assigned randomly to the two levels of Treatment, i.e., instruction. Chaitanya School has 2 Sections in class IX, from which Section A was taken as Control Group that was given instruction through Conventional Method, Section B was taken as Experiment Group and was given taught by Concept Mapping Strategy.

#### Research design

Present study was experimental in nature in which pre-test and post-test control group design were used, its layout is-

O .....X..... O  
 O .....• ..... O

(Campbell & Stanley, 1963)

O = Observation

X = Treatment

• = Traditional Method (Lecture Method)

#### Tool

For the assessment of achievement in science, a self-made achievement test, developed by the researchers, was used in which all the items were related to all covered topics in the research.

### Data collection

At first, consent for conducting the research was taken from the Principal of the selected school. Permission for selecting Chaitanya School was taken from the Dissertation Supervisor. Due to the COVID-19 situation, data was collected online through Google form and classes had been taken in online mode. Before starting the class, the researcher had a formal conversation with all the students and conducted a pre-test in both Sections. After that, Section A of Class IX was taken as Controlled Group and Section B was taken as Experimental Group. The students of Experimental Group were treated with teaching by using Concept maps and students of Controlled Group was taught through lecture method. Duration of treatment was for approx. 60 days. The researcher has taken five chapters for the treatment. Both conventional and Concept maps were used for treatment in Section A and Section B respectively. After the treatment, post-test was operated on both groups

### Data Analysis

#### Data Analysis, Result and Interpretation

The objective of the research was to study the effect of the method of teaching, gender and their interaction on achievement in Science while pre-achievement were taken as covariates. For analysis of data related to the objective 2 x 2 ANCOVA (Two-way Analysis of covariance) was used, whose results are shown in Table 1

**Table 1: Source, df, SS, MSS, F, and Sig values**

Source	df	SS	MSS	F	Sig
MOT	1	186.17	186.17	10.86	0.002*
Gender	1	0.008	0.008	.008	.983
MOT x Gender	1	1.721	1.721	.100	.752
Error	60	1028.58	17.143		
Total	65				

\*sig. at 0.05 level

It can be observed from Table 1 that the value of F for Methods of Teaching (MOT) is 10.86, df= 1 and P- value (2-tailed) = .002 which is smaller than 0.005 level of significance that means significant. In the light of this the null hypothesis “There is no significant effect of method of teaching on Achievement in science of class IX students is rejected. Further, the value of adjusted mean scores of Lecture method and Concept maps are given below in Table 2 for comparison.

**Table 2: Comparison between Means of Lecture Method and Teaching through Concept Maps**

M O T	M e a n
L e c t u r e	12.657
C o n c e p t M a p s	16.909

From Table 2, it is clear that the adjusted mean scores of achievement scores of concept maps group (Experimental group) are 16.909 which is significantly greater than the adjusted mean scores of achievement scores of Lecture method group (Control group). This implies that the achievement of Concept map group in Science is better than Lecture method group. So, we can conclude that the Concept map is more fruitful than lecture method in terms of achievement in Science for class IX students.

The possible reasons behind those results may be due to the fact that more variety of senses are involved in concept map learning, as compared to traditional method. Apart from this, here visual representation of the concepts or facts helps in easy understanding of the facts. Studies conducted by Ghorai and Guha (2018), Ahuja (2013), Barouch, et. al. (2011), Somers (2009), Rao (2003), Jackson & Trochim (2002) also support this result.

In Table 1, the value of F for Gender is 0.000,  $df = 1$ , and P value (2-tailed) = 0.983 which is Greater than 0.05 level of significance; hence, it is not significant at 0.05 level of significance. In the light of this, the null hypothesis “There is no significant effect of Gender on achievement is taken as covariant is not rejected. So, we can say that there is no difference between adjusted achievement mean scores of male and female students and we can conclude that there is no effect of Gender on achievement of Science taught by Lecture method and Concept maps, and both methods were equally effective.

The possible reasons for getting above results may be due to the fact that learning has no effect on Gender, and both the Gender has equal chance of getting knowledge through Concept maps rather than conventional/ traditional method.

From Table 1, it can be observed that the value of F for Method of Teaching and Gender’s interaction is 0.100,  $df = 1$  and P-value (2-tailed) = 0.752, which is greater than 0.05 level of significance; hence, it is not significant at 0.05 level of significance.

In light of this the null hypothesis “There is no significant effect of method of teaching and Gender interaction on achievement in Science in secondary classes”.

The possible reasons for above results may be due to the fact that learning is transmitted equally to both the gender and both the gender learn equally through Concept maps and from traditional method.

### **Conclusion**

The result clearly indicates that Concept maps is the effective way of teaching rather than conventional/traditional method. Before the treatment, the mean-score of the students was 9.73 and after treatment, the mean-score of the students was 14.73. The possible reason behind this may be that in Concept maps more senses are involved to grasp the concepts. Vygotsky's constructivist theory also says that children acquire knowledge more when they establish knowledge by their own. Constructivist learning is underpinning a range of student-centered teaching approaches and strategies that contrast with traditional education, in which professors simply pass on knowledge to pupils. Bruner defines constructivism as a learning principle in which learning is seen as an active process in which learners build new ideas or concepts based upon their current and past knowledge.

### **Educational Implications of the research**

#### **1. For Teachers**

This strategy will help the teachers in shifting teacher-centred classroom to learner-centred classroom, and also shape their student's attitude and learning from rote memorization to concept formation. According to NCF-2005, the role of teacher is a guide, facilitator rather only content delivery in the classroom. Concept maps will help the teachers to improve the retention of the concepts in the students as well as it will help the teachers to get attention of the students.

#### **2. For students**

Concept maps will truly help students in not only to construct knowledge by themselves, but also to clarify concepts, ideas and help in retention of the concepts and facts. Teaching by Concept maps promotes creative thinking to develop interest in the learners, and while generating ideas and relationships between different facts and concepts, it helps the learners to think discerningly. We can say that Concept maps are a boon for both slow and fast learners. This is because sometimes slow learners generally are not able to recall long sentences, but in this process, they may be able to do because here, there is no memorization of the facts. and only key words are enough for understanding the whole concept.

### 3. For Curriculum developers and policymakers

This method will be helpful for curriculum makers as they know the strength and weakness of students so that it will give feedback about the intended objectives, the outcome, and the implementation efforts needed for achieving a good outcome. It will help curriculum developers in proper planning and giving individualised consideration. Curriculum developers should be imbued with the idea that they should include self-learning, through the constructivism approach in the curriculum making process.

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## **A Study of Self-Leadership among University Students in Shillong, North East India**

- **Md. Nawaz Sarif<sup>1</sup>**

### **Abstract**

Our views of who we are, what we are capable of, and how we can communicate with others have an effect on our lives. Self-leadership is characterized as the ability to control one's own thoughts, actions, and attitudes in order to achieve personal or institutional goals. The aim of this study was to determine the degree of self-leadership among university students. Its goal was to see if a group of M.A. and M.Ed. students varied in their self-leadership abilities. A descriptive research design was used in this study, and the data was collected using a revised self-leadership questionnaire developed by Houghton & Neck, 2002. The percentile norms, mean, correlation matrix, and independent-sample analysis were used to complete the data analysis. Overall, students had a high degree of self-leadership ( $M=123.80 > \text{Mid-value}=87.5$ ), according to the results. They had a higher level of self-leadership skills in the dimension of natural reward strategies ( $M=3.82$ ) and was followed by constructive thought ( $M=3.52$ ) and behaviour-focused strategies ( $M=3.47$ ). There was also a strong association ( $p < 0.01$ ) between these aspects of students' self-leadership. Furthermore, there was a substantial difference in constructive thought strategies ( $p < 0.05$ ; small Cohen's  $d$ ) between M.A. and M.Ed. students, but no significant difference in behaviour-focused and natural reward strategies ( $p > 0.05$ ). Also, students' chronological age, educational attainments, and training-based experience have all been identified as possible influences on their self-leadership. Finally, the study concluded by outlining its consequences and suggesting directions for further research on self-leadership at university levels.

**Keywords:** *academic streams, self-leadership, constructive thought strategies, natural reward strategies, behaviour-focused strategies.*

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## **Introduction**

Students' self-management, self-functioning, progressive achievement, and performance outcomes may benefit from self-leadership (Neck & Manz, 1992; Carmeli et al., 2006). It is a critical construct that allows students to be aware of themselves, regulate themselves, manage themselves, drive themselves, and maintain the desired behaviour needed to meet set goals. It is critical for developing leadership skills and psychologically empowering people (Prussia et al., 1998; Houghton & Yoho, 2005). Self-leadership is based on theories of self-regulation and social cognition (Neck & Houghton, 2006). It is the organization's theoretical expansion of self-management theory (Manz & Sims, 1980; Manz, 1986; Neck & Houghton, 2006). Behavioural-focused strategies, natural reward strategies, and constructive thinking strategies are some of the sub-constructs that are often theorised as an organisational construct (Anderson & Prussia, 1997; Prussia et al., 1998; Manz & Neck, 1999).

Unlike leadership, which is the ability to persuade a group of individuals to achieve a common goal in an organisation, self-leadership is the ability to persuade one's own ideas, habits, and attitudes to achieve personal or institutional goals. Unlike traditional leadership, which affects followers, it is the process of influencing oneself (Manz, 1986; Neck & Manz, 1992). Self-leadership is defined by Malmir and Azizzadeh (2013) as the process of knowing oneself, self-management, self-motivation, and self-discipline. Similarly, Bryant and Kazan (2012) defined self-leadership as a developed cognitive and behavioural sense of who we are, what we can do, and how we can influence our communication, emotion, and behaviour in order to achieve our goals. Thus, herewith, self-leadership can be defined as a set of cognitive, affective, and behavioural strategies that have a positive impact on an individual's effectiveness (Mans & Houghton, 2006). It's also a self-influencing process in which a person tries to control their thoughts and actions in order to achieve their objectives (Manz, 1986; Manz & Neck, 2004).

In this study, self-leadership is characterised as the intentional use of one's own cognitive, affective, and behavioural resources to achieve a specific goal. It is divided into three categories: behaviour-focused strategies, natural reward strategies, and constructive thought strategies. (a) As sub-elements, behaviour-focused techniques included self-goal setting, self-reward, self-punishment, self-observation, and self-cueing. It is a person's goal-directed behaviour towards a goal and related activities. It is an individual's engagement in one's own self, in which the individual keeps motivating (self-incentives) or de-motivating (self-punishments) himself/herself depending on the circumstances in order to achieve the set-target. Individuals who

use behaviour-focused strategies can better manage themselves and maintain the consistency of behaviour needed to meet a specific goal. (b) Natural reward strategies are intertwined with affective and motivational components. It refers to a person's objective involvement and participation in works and activities in which they have a vested interest and can enjoyably work. Individuals who use natural reward strategies are often motivated at work and prefer to engage with people and activities in which they are interested. (c) Constructive thought strategies, which included individuals' perceived ability to visualise successful performance, engage in self-talk, and continually evaluate self-beliefs and assumptions for effective performance and self-functioning toward goal achievement.

Studies on self-leadership have been conducted in both business and academic institutions over the last few decades. Recent studies have primarily focused on how self-leadership affects individuals' attitudes, behaviour, and performance-related outcomes. Furthermore, these studies identified various self-leadership correlates and antecedents. The components of self-leadership, according to Bandura (1991), have a direct effect on individuals' cognitive, affective, and behavioural aspects. Prussia et al. (1998) discovered that students' self-leadership had a direct impact on self-efficacy beliefs and performance. Separate studies by Prussia et al. (1998) and Türköz et al. (2013) found that self-leadership skills have a significant impact on students' learning outcomes in institutions. Ay et al. (2015) discovered a strong link between self-leadership and critical thinking, finding that self-leadership skills (i.e., constructive thought and natural reward strategies) have a positive impact on critical thinking. Carmeli et al. (2006) found a link between self-leadership skills and innovative behaviours at work, with self-leadership positively influencing individuals' innovative behaviours.

University life necessitates a great deal of adjustment. Self-motivation, determination, and goal-persistent behaviour were found to have a positive impact on students' adaptation to the university environment. Won (2015) discovered significant relationships between students' self-leadership skills, stress-coping skills, and college life adjustment, and concluded that self-leadership components, such as goal-setting, self-reward, and constructive thoughts, affected students' college life adjustment. Lee (2016) revealed that self-leadership is linked to students' resilience and college adjustment, with behaviour-focused strategies and natural reward strategies having a direct impact on students' college adjustment. Self-leadership skills alleviated stress levels in students, according to studies conducted by Houghton et al. (2012) and Maykrantz and Houghton (2020), and can be used as a tool to reduce stress in students. Furthermore, Ramos-Villarreal and Holland (2011) and Houghton et al.

(2012) found a strong link between emotional intelligence and self-leadership strategies, with the findings indicating that the various components of emotional intelligence positively contributed to the development of self-leadership skills in students.

Also, the development of self-leadership is critical for the institutional empowerment of individuals (Anderson & Prussia, 1997; Prussia et al., 1998). Recent research has identified a variety of factors that have affected the development of self-leadership in students. For example, Neck and Manz (1996) found that individuals who participated in self-leadership training programmes had improved mental work performance, positive effects, job satisfaction, and reduced negative effects. Experience, awareness, and debate were highlighted by Tat & Zeitel-Bank (2013) as key factors in the development of self-leadership skills such as self-knowledge, self-regulation, self-motivation, and constructive thoughts. Similarly, Houghton and Yoho (2005) suggested that certain difficult factors, such as follower growth, situational urgency, and task structure, may lead to the development of self-leadership. Students' participation in monitorial activities had a positive impact on their level of self-leadership at the university, according to Lee and Hur (2015). Similarly, Hilliard (2010) found that early participation in leadership tasks and activities, as well as exposure to experiential activities, teamwork, civic activities, and internship programmes, had a significant impact on the development of self-leadership skills among students.

Based on the above analysis, it can be concluded that self-leadership research is still in its infancy and is being conducted in a variety of business and educational settings. It demonstrated the link between students' leadership abilities and their academic adjustment and outcomes. In addition, various factors such as emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, institutional environments, and others had an impact on students' self-leadership abilities.

The university year is regarded as critical for students' progress in a variety of ways. Self-leadership has been shown to benefit students' self-functioning, self-management, performance outcomes, and institutional adjustment in previous research (Neck & Manz, 1992; Carmeli et al., 2006; Won, 2015; Lee, 2016). However, it was pointed out that self-leadership research has yet to be properly identified in educational institutions (Lee & Hur, 2015; Kyguoliene & Ganusauskaite, 2017). Besides, further research is needed to determine whether students' self-leadership skills differ across academic streams and to identify the underlying factors that may affect their level of self-leadership skills at university levels. Thus, the current research was conducted to fill a gap in the literature by investigating self-leadership skills among university students from various academic streams.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study have been:

1. To investigate university students' self-leadership and assess their levels of behaviour-focused, natural reward, and constructive thought strategies.
2. To determine whether M.A. and M.Ed. students have significantly different levels of self-leadership.
3. To determine whether M.A. and M.Ed. students vary significantly in terms of behaviour-focused, natural reward, and constructive thought strategies.
4. To look into the connections between behaviour-focused, natural rewards, constructive thought strategies, and collective self-leadership among students.

### **Hypotheses**

The investigator's goal in this study was to test the following hypotheses:

1. H1: The level of students' self-leadership in behaviour-focused strategies, natural reward strategies, and constructive thought strategies is low, collectively and dimension-wise.
2. Ho2: The mean difference in self-leadership between M.A. and M.Ed. students is not statistically significant.
3. Ho3: Between M.A. and M.Ed. students, there is no statistically significant mean difference in behaviour-focused strategies, natural reward strategies, or constructive thought strategies.
4. Ho4: Students' behaviour-focused strategies, natural reward strategies, constructive thought strategies, and collective self-leadership have no meaningful relationship.

### **Design of the Study**

A descriptive research design was used in this study. The following research processes and methods were included:

#### ***Methods***

In this study, a survey method was used. To assess students' self-leadership and determine whether there is a substantial difference in self-leadership skills between M.A. and M.Ed. students, the researcher used a quantitative research approach.

### ***Samples and Data Collection***

A non-random purposive sampling technique was used for the selection of the M.A. and M.Ed. first-year students, 2017-18 academic session, at the Department of Education, North-Eastern Hill University in Shillong. Eighty-seven out of total ninety-seven enrolled students had participated voluntarily in the present research. The questionnaire was administered to students at two different points of time for M.A. and M.Ed. students separately and the response-based questionnaires were collected accordingly on the same day. Before data collection, the purpose of the study was informed to the students, and confidentiality was assured.

### **Instrument and Data Analysis Procedures**

In the present study, data collection was done using the revised self-leadership questionnaire (Houghton & Neck, 2002). The scale has a five-point Likert response anchor, ranging from 'not at all accurate' (1) to 'completely accurate' (5). It has nine sub-scales consisting of a total of 35 items and all are positively worded. The statements were incorporated into three different dimensions of students' self-leadership: (a) behaviour-focused strategies (18 items) with five sub-scales of self-goal setting (5 items), self-reward (3 items), self-punishment (4 items), self-observation (4 items), and self-cueing (2 items), (b) natural reward strategies (5 items) with no sub-scale, and finally, (c) constructive thoroughness strategies (5 items) with no sub-scale (4 items). The investigator calculated the scale's overall reliability, which was Cronbach's Alpha.804 (>.7), indicating high scale reliability in the context of this study. The scale score ranged from 35 mb to 175 points, with a high score indicating high self-leadership and a low score indicating low self-leadership. Furthermore, the dimension-wise range of scores for behaviour-focused strategies was 18 to 90, for natural reward strategies, 5 to 25, and for constructive thought strategies, 12 to 60. The composite score of the scale, as well as the individual composite scores of its three sub-scales, were used to assess students' levels of self-leadership and its three dimensions in the current study.

### ***Statistical Design***

Based on the data normality, the statistics used in this study were both descriptive and inferential in nature. The Shapiro-Wilk test yielded a p-value of .465 indicating that the data had a normal distribution. Based on this, descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentiles, and mean were used for descriptive analysis, while differential analysis was done with an independent sample t-test and Pearson's correlation using

IBM SPSS 22 software. The percentile analysis was used to assess the students' level of self-leadership skills, while the mean and Mdn-value were used to calculate their score distribution in various dimensions of self-leadership. The mean was also used to compare differences in student self-leadership across streams. A statistically significant difference in self-leadership and its dimension between M.A. and M.Ed. students was also discovered using an independent sample t-test.

**Results and Analysis**

The investigator has completed data analysis and interpretation in this section, which includes the following statistics and diagrams:

**Student Demographic Characteristics Analysis**

Table 1 showed that 87 students took part in the study, with 46 from M.A. and 41 from M.Ed. In terms of age, educational qualifications, and training exposures, there were differences between these two groups of students. In contrast to M.A. students, who were 22 years old on average, with a maximum of 25 years and a minimum of 20, M.Ed. students were 28 years old on average, with a maximum of 48 years and a minimum of 20 years. Only a few students (N=2, 4.35 percent) had graduation+B.Ed degrees, while the majority of M.A. students (N=46, 100 percent) had graduation degrees. On the other hand, all M.Ed. students received a diploma, and the majority of them had a masters+B.Ed. (N=27, 65.85%) followed by a graduation+B.Ed. (N=14, 34.15%). As a result, M.Ed. students were found to have higher educational attainments and training-based experience than M.A. students. Furthermore, M.Ed. students were older on average than M.A. students.

**Table 1: Descriptive of Students' Demographic Characteristics**

Students	N	Mean Age	Age Range	Qualifications (N)		
				Graduation	Graduation +B.Ed.	Masters +B.Ed.
M.A.	46	22	25-20	46	2	-
M.Ed.	41	28	48- 20	41	14	27

**Self-Leadership of Students - A Descriptive Analysis**

Percentile statistics have been computed and presented in table 2 to understand students' scores on the self-leadership scale. It was found that fifty percent of the

students scored less than 126.00 weighted average values on self-leadership. The dimension-wise analysis of percentile showed that fifty percent of the students scored less than 64.00, 19.00, and 43.00 weighted average values in behaviour-focused strategies, natural reward strategies, and constructive thought strategies respectively.

**Table 2: Percentile Norms for Self-Leadership Scores**

Percentiles	P <sub>5</sub>	P <sub>10</sub>	P <sub>25</sub>	P <sub>50</sub>	P <sub>75</sub>	P <sub>90</sub>	P <sub>95</sub>
Self-Leadership	93.20	100.40	114.00	126.00	137.00	143.20	148.60
Behavior-focused strategies	44.00	50.00	58.00	64.00	69.00	74.00	77.20
Natural reward strategies	14.40	15.00	17.00	19.00	22.00	23.00	24.00
Constructive thought strategies	30.40	31.80	37.00	43.00	47.00	50.00	53.00

In the present study, the mid-point was considered to determine the level of students' self-leadership skills. The scale's maximum and minimum scores were 35 and 175 respectively, while the scale's midpoint score was 87.5. The students' mean score was 123.80 (SD=16.67) in table 3, which was higher than the scale mid-value of 87.5. (fig.1). As a result, the researcher disproved the hypothesis and found that first-year university students have a high level of self-leadership.

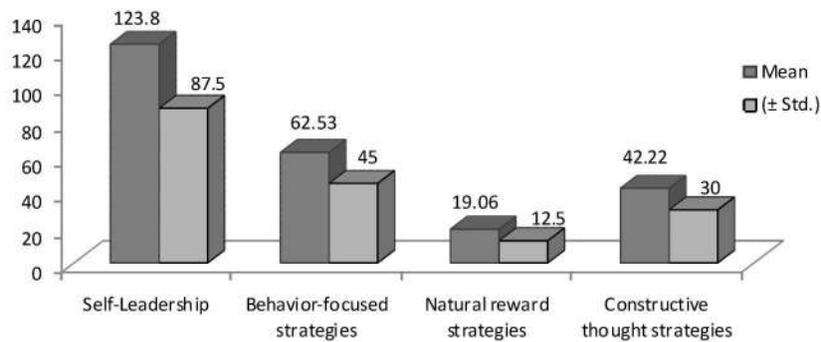
In addition, the dimension-wise analysis revealed mean scores of 62.53 (SD=9.30), 19.06 (SD=2.97), and 42.22 (SD=6.60) in behaviour-focused strategies, natural reward strategies, and constructive thought strategies, respectively, that were higher than their respective mid-values of 45, 12.5, and 30. (fig.1). As a result, the researcher dismissed the hypothesis and concluded that students had high levels of self-leadership in behaviour-focused strategies, natural reward strategies, and constructive thought strategies.

Further, in order to comprehend the relative mean scores of students' self-leadership in its dimensions, table 3 found that students' mean score of self-leadership in natural reward strategies was 3.82, which was comparatively higher, followed by 3.52 in constructive thought strategies and 3.47 in behaviour-focused strategies.

It meant that students were more likely to use natural reward strategies, such as objective participation in study-related activities, self-interested tasks, and intrinsic motivation, which were accompanied by constructive thought strategies, such as visualising effective performance, self-talk, and assessing beliefs and assumptions strategies. Furthermore, it meant that students were less likely to use behaviour-focused techniques such as self-goal setting, self-reward, self-punishment, self-observation, and self-cueing.

**Table 3: Sample Descriptive of Students’ Self-Leadership**

Variable and Dimensions	N	Mean	Std.	Scale mean	Mid-Value (± Std.)
Self-Leadership	87	123.80	16.67	3.54	87.5
Behavior-focused strategies	87	62.53	9.30	3.47	45
Natural reward strategies	87	19.06	2.97	3.82	12.5
Constructive thought strategies	87	42.22	6.60	3.52	30



**Figure 1: Mean and Mdn-Value of Students’ Self-Leadership and its Dimensions. Differential Analysis for Students’ Self-Leaderships**

The descriptive analysis table 4 showed that the mean score of M.A. students was 120.30 while the mean score of M.Ed. students was 127.73. It was statistically evident that in comparison to M.A students, M.Ed. students had a higher level of self-leadership skills including behaviour-focused, natural reward, and constructive thought strategies collectively (Fig.2). By implication, it is Inferring that M.Ed. students had a higher level of self-leadership skills in directing their own cognitive, affective, and behavioural resources to achieve their set-goals than M.A. students, this meant that M.Ed. students had a higher level of self-leadership skills in directing their own cognitive, affective, and behavioural resources to achieve their set-goals.

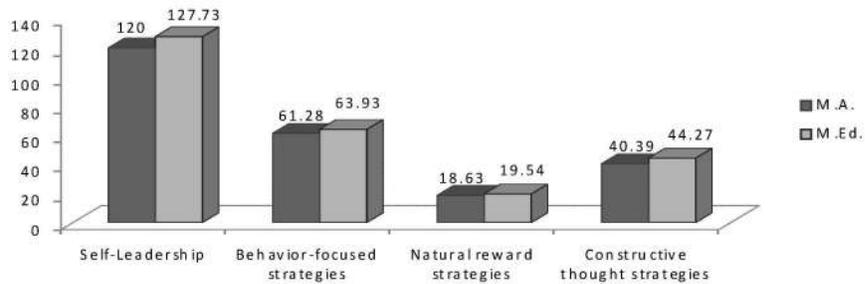
Furthermore, the dimension-wise analysis, Table 4 showed that the mean score of M.A. students was 61.28 while the mean score of M.Ed. students was 63.93 in behaviour-focused strategies. It was found that though not statistically, but M.Ed. students had a higher level of self-leadership skills in behaviour-focused strategies as compared to M.A. students (Fig.2). By implication, it connoted that M.Ed. students had more leadership skills than M.A. students in terms of setting academic goals, engaging in goal-relevant activities, and using self-reward and self-punishment strategies to sustain a coherent study-relevant behaviour for the achievement of the set goal.

Similarly, Table 4 showed that in natural reward strategies, the mean score of M.A. students was 18.63, while the mean score of M.Ed. students was 19.54. It was evident, although not statistically significant, M.Ed. students had a higher level of self-leadership ability in natural reward strategies than M.A. students (Fig.2). It implied that, in contrast to M.A. students, M.Ed. students possessed higher leadership skills in engaging themselves with study-related activities in which they have interests and enjoy doing them through intrinsic motivation.

Table 4 shows that the mean score in constructive thought strategies for M.A. students was 40.39, while the mean score for M.Ed. students was 44.27. It was statistically evident that M.Ed. students had a higher level of self-leadership ability in constructive thought strategies than M.A. students (Fig.2). By implication, it was evident that M.Ed. students had better leadership skills than M.A. students in terms of visualising successful performance, effective self-engaged talks, and assessing self-beliefs and assumptions for effective performance toward goal achievement.

**Table 4: Sample Descriptive of Students’ Self-Leadership Using t-Test**

Variable and Dimensions	Students	N	Mean	S.D.	SE <sub>M</sub>	df	t-value	Sig.
Self-Leadership	M.A.	46	120.30	16.38	2.41	85	-2.117	.037
	M.Ed.	41	127.73	16.30	2.55			
Behavior-focused strategies	M.A.	46	61.28	8.95	1.32	85	-1.330	.187
	M.Ed.	41	63.93	9.59	1.50			
Natural reward strategies	M.A.	46	18.63	2.95	.44	85	-1.431	.156
	M.Ed.	41	19.54	2.94	.46			
Constructive thought strategies	M.A.	46	40.39	6.78	1.00	85	-2.846	.006
	M.Ed.	41	44.27	5.81	.91			



**Fig. - 2: Mean Scores of M.A. and M.Ed. Students in Self-Leadership and its Dimensions**

**Correlation Analysis of Students’ Self-Leadership**

The analysis Table 5 showed the coefficient of correlation among students’ self-leadership skills and its three components. The coefficient of correlation between behaviour-focused strategies and self-leadership was found to be .929, indicating a strong relationship. Similarly, a high correlation was found between natural reward strategies and self-leadership, with an r-value of .754. Furthermore, at the 0.01 level, an r-value of .878 was discovered, indicating a strong correlation between constructive thought strategies and self-leadership (2-tailed).

Much like the above, an r-value of .669 between behaviour-focused strategies and constructive thinking strategies was found in the inter-dimensions coefficient of correlation matrix, indicating a mild correlation. A mild correlation was also observed between behaviour-focused strategies and natural reward strategies, with an r-value of .597. Similarly, a mild correlation was found between natural reward strategies and constructive thought strategies, with an r-value of .615 recorded. As a result, the hypothesis was refuted, and it was concluded that self-leadership and its three dimensions have high to moderate positive correlations.

**Table 5: Inter-Dimension Correlations for Students’ Self-leadership Skills**

Correlation		1	2	3	Self-leadership
<sup>1</sup> Behavior-focused strategies	Pearson Correlation		.597**	.669**	.929**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
	N	87	87	87	87
<sup>2</sup> Natural reward strategies	Pearson Correlation			.615**	.754**
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.000	.000
	N			87	87
<sup>3</sup> Constructive thought strategies	Pearson Correlation				.878**
	Sig. (2-tailed)				.000
	N				87

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**Findings and Discussions**

The current study discovered that first-year university students have a high level of self-leadership. Students’ self-leadership in behaviour-focused, natural reward, and constructive thought strategies was found to be high in the dimension-wise analysis. The results of this study are supported by previous research, such as a study conducted by Tuovinen (2010), which found that students with a reasonably high level of self-leadership would effectively use self-leadership strategies. Similarly, Ay et al. (2015) discovered that student self-leadership is high.

Besides, the current study's results showed that students were more likely to use natural reward strategies, which were accompanied by constructive thinking and behaviour-focused strategies. Visualizing successful performance, self-goal setting, and self-observation are more likely to be appropriate strategies among students than self-punishment, self-talk, self-cueing, and assessing beliefs and assumptions, according to a study conducted by Kyguoliene and Ganusauskaite (2017).

A statistically significant difference in self-leadership was discovered between first-year M.A. and M.Ed. students in this study. When compared to their M.A. counterparts, M.Ed. students were found to be more effective in self-leadership. Also, a statistically significant difference in constructive thinking strategies was discovered between M.A. and M.Ed. students ( $p < 0.05$ ; small Cohen's  $d$ ) in the dimension-wise analysis. However, there was no statistically significant difference between these two groups of students in behaviour-focused and natural reward strategies ( $p > 0.05$ ). As a result, while there were differences in mean scores for different dimensions of students' self-leadership, the only substantial difference was found in constructive thinking strategies, where M.Ed. students outperformed their M.A. counterparts in self-leadership skills.

However, the investigator has not found any previous studies on self-leadership that are based on academic streams. As a result, an effort was made in this study to identify possible factors based on students' demographic characteristics that could explain the disparity in their levels of self-leadership skills. When comparing, it was discovered that M.Ed. students had higher educational attainments and had more training-experience from the B.Ed. programme. Also, M.Ed. students were found to have a higher mean age than M.A. students. When comparing M.A. and M.Ed. students, it is clear that M.Ed. students had the potential benefits of having a higher level of educational attainments, training exposures, and age-based life experience, resulting in higher levels of self-leadership than M.A. students. As a result, the current research has proved chronological age, educational achievement, and training-based experience as key factors that may influence students' self-leadership abilities in higher education institutions.

Finally, the current study found a moderate level of positive correlation between the dimensions of self-leadership among students. It also discovered a strong positive relationship between self-leadership and each of the three dimensions. This finding is in line with previous research, which found that the components of self-leadership have a strong positive correlation (Anderson & Prussia, 1997; Malmir & Azizzadeh, 2013).

### **Delimitations and Suggestions**

The current research focused on first-year university students at North-Eastern Hill University, especially M.A. and M.Ed. students in the Department of Education. The study focused on students' self-leadership and found that they possessed higher levels of self-leadership abilities. As a result, a study may be conducted to investigate the factors that influence students' self-leadership in higher education institutions both positively and negatively. A further investigation into the statistical relationships between students' self-leadership and their chronological age, educational attainments, and training-based experience could be undertaken. Only 87 people were chosen for the study, which used a non-random sampling method. As a result, the same study may be conducted with a larger sample size to increase the external validity of the findings.

### **Conclusion**

The current research provided a descriptive and exploratory backdrop for students' self-leadership abilities in higher education institutions. Through the successful use of behaviour-focused, natural reward, and constructive thinking strategies at university levels, it opened up a new window to understand students' evolving state of self-knowing, goal-directed behaviour, self-management, self-motivation, and self-regulation skills. Students had a higher level of self-leadership, and they were more likely to use natural reward strategies, which were accompanied by constructive thinking and behaviour-focused strategies, according to the study. Therefore, the implication goes to the academic stakeholders especially university teachers and administrators. They must give emphasis on training of self-leadership skills amongst university students in their academic, social, and personal lives. Teachers should encourage students to engage in monitoring, situation urgency, and civic-related activities on campus to help them develop self-leadership skills. Experiential learning, participatory activities, debates, and conversations should also be made available to students.

In the same way, each of the three dimensions of students' self-leadership was found to have a strong positive correlation in the current study. There were mild correlations between behaviour-focused, natural rewards, and constructive thinking strategies, according to the study. As a result, the study highlighted the interactional impact of self-leadership and its dimensions on cognitive, affective, and behavioural aspects of students. Further, the findings encouraged stakeholders to acknowledge the academic stream as a significant influence on students' self-leadership. Students' chronological age, educational attainments, and training-based experience have all been identified as potential factors. As a result, it is critical to address these factors in

terms of both understanding the influencing factors and developing intervention training programmes that may will directly enhance students' self-leadership abilities. Furthermore, the results of this study may be helpful in grounding self-leadership research and initiating new research on student self-leadership at the university level.

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## **Youth Participation and Empowerment: A Tool for National Development**

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• V. Mohankumar<sup>2</sup>

### **Abstract**

Youth are an important human resource for development of a nation and agents of social change, economic development and technological innovation. No nation can translate its vision and progressive dreams into reality without the potential and vigour of the youth. They represent the culture and hope for the future because of their unbounded energy and enthusiasm. Youth constitute an important asset of any society and the investment made for their development is an investment for the future. They are the leaders of tomorrow. Youth is the period everyone wants to maintain and desire to project the same when they grow old. Hence, this article examines and highlights the different facets of youth development and the need to empower them for the better future of nation. It identified a few areas which are important for youth empowerment which includes literacy, education, skilling, employment and governance.

**Keywords:** *Youth population, ageing population, human resource, human capital, quality of life, wealth of nation, sustainable development.*

### **Introduction**

Human resource is considered as an important asset for the progress of a country and for economic development. In case the human resource is not educated to get useful engagement or not having the expertise to offer, or a substantial number is illiterate, or has very little vocational skill in their hands, then such a resource is useless for the country. This, as among the factors, often contributes to poverty, and is responsible for unemployment and underemployment. In human resource, youth

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population is a separate segment which is considered the backbone of the country, as the future of the nation depends more on them, apart from their being in the productive and reproductive age group.

The word youth has a biological as well as a sociological implication. In general, the term youth is classified separately on the basis of age, which is a biological factor that contributes to social differentiation. It also distributes privileges and responsibilities, rights and duties in terms of their separate status. In almost all societies, five age groups are recognised distinctively and they are - *infancy, childhood, adolescence, adulthood* and *old age*. Youth refers to the period between childhood and full manhood or womanhood. Since the Second World War, there is a growing emphasis in many countries on youth as a special category and young people between the ages of 12 and 20 have acquired a distinctive social identity.

Sociologically, the term youth has specific characteristics that include psychological and biological state of any personality. There cannot be any firm plinth to lay down the world's lineage in an endeavour to define Youth. Youth is a subjective and relative term. Kerchoff and Jackson (1982) have given a wider range to the age of Youth. In their study, persons of the age group of 15-33 years were considered as youth. (Naidu, 1983) studied Youth of 15-29 years of age groups viewing them as a distinct social category, which has promise and potentially for future. Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan<sup>3</sup> was established in 1972 and in 1987 became an autonomous organisation of Govt. of India catering to the needs of non-student rural youth in the age group of 15-35. In our society, adulthood is considered to be attained when a person can support himself or herself entirely independent of the parental family. Full adulthood also implies the ability to form a family of one's own. Adolescence is the stage during which young is ordinarily more and more emancipated from parental control. The crisis of the period is precisely the strain produced by much greater demands for independence. At the same time, the adolescent is still controlled to some extent by his/her parents in many activities in which he/she might like greater freedom. This is especially true, perhaps, of sexual activity. The most important sociological issues concerning youth cultures are their relationship with their parents.

According to the United Nations (UN), the term youth refers to people who are aged between 15-24 years. In the third world countries, about 20% of the population belongs to this age group. In India, the National Youth Policy 2001 covered all the youth in the age group of 13-35 years while in the National Youth Policy 2014 (Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, 2014), the age group of youth was revised to

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<sup>3</sup><https://nyks.nic.in/aboutus/About-nyks.html>

15-29 years. As per Census 2011, the youth population in this age group was 333 million (27.53%) of the total population of 1210 million. Hence, India is considered to be a youthful nation while Japan, a well-developed country is an aging nation as it is experiencing a “super-aging” society both in rural and urban areas, as according to 2014 estimates, 33% of the Japanese population was above the age of 60 years. However, the population of India of 60 years and above (called senior citizens) was 8.95%. So, for the future of the country, the youth population of India needs to be empowered so that the nation is in the safe hands of the next upcoming generation.

**Table-1: Youth Population in Age Group 15-29 Years**

Age group	Male (In millions)	Female (In millions)	Total (In millions)
15 – 19	63.9	56.5	120.4
20 – 24	57.5	53.8	111.3
25 – 29	51.3	50.0	101.3
Grand Total	172.7	160.3	333.0

Source: Census 2011

### Why do youth need to be empowered?

Each and every action of the world today, directly or indirectly, is ultimately stimulated or guided by the ‘progress phenomenon’. Equipped with their strength and weaknesses, this phenomenon has around 193 players (nations) excluding those few which are yet to be recognised by the United Nations. 193 players represent the sovereign states and have equal representation in the UN General Assembly New York Times columnist Thomas L. Friedman (2005) in his famous book ‘The World is Flat’ claims that in the global economic and political arena ‘the playing field is levelled now’ but for all practical purposes, we know that even among these 193 players there exist different categories.

Some constitute the wealthiest and highly advanced/developed world, some others are the part of underdeveloped world and the rest are struggling even to cater to the minimal human needs of their respective countrymen. In this world where there exists huge imbalances regarding the share of the accumulated world resource, India is fortunate enough to have certain strategic advances over other countries. One of those rare advances include the presence of a higher population of youth which is expected to continue till 2050. It is to be mentioned here that some of the well-developed countries in the world face the worst problem of an ageing society.

The UN Report on World Population Ageing 2015 presents information for all

the world countries of the percentage of population aged 60 years not only for the year 2015 but also the projection for 2030 and 2050, as below.

**Table-2: Percentage of world population aged 60 years and over**

<b>World</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2030</b>	<b>2050</b>
More developed regions	23.9	29.2	32.8
Less developed regions			
(a) Least developed countries	5.5	6.7	9.8
(b) Other less developed countries	10.7	15.9	22.7
(c) Less developed regions, excluding China	8.2	11.4	16.5
Sub-Saharan Africa	4.8	5.3	7.6

Source: United Nations (2015), World Population Ageing 2015.

The proportion of elderly in the more developed regions of the world in 2015 was 23.9% which is expected to increase to 29.2% in 2030 and 32.8% in 2050. The poverty stricken Sub-Saharan Africa (54 countries) was having the lowest elderly population, with 4.8% in 2015, which is expected to go up to 5.3% in 2030 and 7.6% in 2050<sup>4</sup>.

**Table-3: Percentage of population in different areas of world aged 60 years and over**

<b>Area</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2030</b>	<b>2050</b>
Africa	5.4	6.3	8.9
Latin America & the Caribbean	11.2	16.8	25.5
Asia	11.6	17.2	24.6
Oceania	16.5	20.2	23.3
Northern America	20.8	26.4	28.3
Europe	23.9	29.6	34.2

Source: United Nations (2015), World Population Ageing 2015.

Table-3 indicates that Europe was having the highest percentage of elderly people with 23.9% in 2015 which is expected to increase to 34.2% by 2050. Again, the lowest was Africa which was 5.4% in 2015 and expected to move forward to 6.3% in 2030 and 8.9% in 2050.

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<sup>4</sup><https://blogs.worldbank.org/opendata/number-poor-people-continues-rise-sub-saharan-africa-despite-slow-decline-poverty-rate>.

**Table-4: Percentage of population aged 60 years and over in countries**

Countries	2015	2030	2050
<b>Africa</b>			
Western Africa	4.5	4.9	6.6
Middle Africa	4.5	4.9	6.6
Eastern Africa	4.8	5.3	8.2
Southern Africa	7.5	9.9	14.7
Northern Africa	8.0	10.9	16.7
<b>Asia</b>			
Central Asia	7.9	11.9	17.7
<b>(India)</b>	<b>8.9</b>	<b>12.5</b>	<b>19.4</b>
Western Asia	7.9	11.6	18.3
South Eastern Asia	9.3	14.7	21.1
Eastern Asia	16.7	26.4	36.9
<b>Europe</b>			
Eastern Europe	21.5	25.7	31.9
Northern Europe	23.4	28.0	30.7
Western Europe	26.0	32.7	35.2
Southern Europe	26.2	33.9	40.0
<b>Latin America &amp; Caribbean</b>			
Central America	9.3	14.2	23.2
South America	11.7	17.7	26.7
Caribbean	13.3	19.2	25.4
Northern America	20.8	26.4	28.3
<b>Oceania</b>			
Melanesia	5.8	7.7	11.1
Micronesia	9.7	15.6	19.3
Polynesia	9.8	15.6	20.4
Australia/ New Zealand	20.4	25.0	28.5

Source: United Nations (2015), *World Population Prospects: the 2015 Revision*

From Table-4 above, one can find that among the African countries, Northern Africa (Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Sudan, Tunisia and Western Sahara) have the highest number of elderly populations. It was 8% in 2015 and may go up in 2030 to 10.9% and 16.7% in 2050.

In Asian countries, Eastern Asia (China including Special Administrative Regions of Hong Kong/Macao/Taiwan Province of China, Democratic People's Republic of Korea which is also called a North Korea with capital at Pyongyang, Japan, Mongolia, the Republic of Korea which is also as South Korea with capital at Seoul) has the highest number of elderly population. It was 16.7% in 2015 and may go up in 2030 to 26.4% and 36.9% in 2050.

In European countries, Southern Europe (Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece, Italy, Malta, Montenegro, Portugal, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, TFYR Macedonia - Former Yugoslav Republic) has the highest number of elderly populations. It was 26.2% in 2015 and may go up in 2030 to 33.9% and 40.0% in 2050.

Countries in Northern America (Canada, United States of America) have the highest number of elderly populations. It was 20.8% in 2015 and may go up in 2030 to 26.4% and 28.3% in 2050.

In Oceania, Australia and New Zealand, the proportion of elderly populations in 2015 was 20.4% and expected to reach 25.0% in 2030 and 28.5% in 2050.

### **Advantage of youth over others**

Everyone in this world would like to maintain youthfulness as it is the best period in one's life. This is precisely the reason that even people getting old always try to conceal age-related changes in the body and project before others that they are still young. Every individual wants a prolonged share of youthfulness because this is the period full of abilities, energy and spark which gives a person to imagine, acquire vision and also can translate the same into action. There is a famous proverb 'Vir Bhogya Vasundhara', which means 'Only the able can enjoy'.

Youth is a major human resource for development and key agent of social change, economic development and technological innovation. No society can hope of translating its dreams and visions into reality without utilising properly the potential and vigour of youth.

Youth is also the backbone of any culture upon which the future of a nation depends. Youth are reservoirs of unbounded energy and enthusiasm. History shows that they have always been in the forefront in building political, social and economic orders of a society. They play a positive role in the cause of a nation and its national integration. For this, their energy, skills and talents have to be properly harnessed, channelised and put to use for the common good of the country. Youth constitute an important asset of the society and any investment in their development is the investment for future. Hence, today's youth are tomorrow's leaders and pace setters. However, there is much to be accomplished in this direction and they have to be empowered so that they play their role well.

Youth can be empowered in many ways but some of the important areas they need empowerment are literacy, education, skill training, employment and governance.

### **Literacy**

Literacy is the fountain of human capital for a better quality of life. It is the wealth of nation in respect to economic, political and social transformation. Literacy

and grassroots democratic participation mutually reinforce each other. Together, they enable people and communities to influence factors that affect their lives. Lack of universal literacy has been a major factor in restricting the total development in India since independence. Functional literacy is most effective when it becomes an instrument to liberate people from restrictive beliefs, and creating among them an awareness of their potential. Empowerment is a very popular concept in the contemporary development discourse. In relation to literacy, it has two dimensions - psychological and political. Psychological is connected with individuals and groups gaining mastery and control over their own lives and political refers to the democratic participation in the life of the community. The linkage between literacy and empowerment has three stages, viz., (i) positive idea of the self, (ii) development of more critical understanding of a political or social environment, (iii) and the move toward collective endeavor for social and political action. It is believed that a literate man can transform his own realities. Thus, literacy has transformative dimensions.

Though literacy rate is increasing in every Census, but still, India is not able to reach the stage of a country of a reading society due to regional, religions and caste variations. Poverty also plays a major role in India for increase in the number of illiterates. As per 1951 Census, the literacy rate of India was 18.33% with male literacy being 27.16% and female literacy as low as 8.86%. This increased to 73% overall with 80.90% male literacy and 64.60% female literacy in Census 2011. However, the absolute number of illiterates also increased along with the increase in population and as per Census 2011<sup>5</sup>, it stood at 282.70 million which is more than the total population of some of the countries of the world.

It is not that India did not plan and implement any adult education programme. In fact, adult education was included in all the Five-Year Plans, though in different names, but unfortunately, none of the programmes had any assured post-literacy for guided learning and continuing education for independent learning. Every new programme for adult education started with basic literacy in which most of the time the learners who have already acquired basic literacy in earlier programmes have become learners again as they have forgotten the literacy skills acquired and relapsed into illiteracy. Hence, this problem needs to be addressed afresh and every single individual in India should get not only basic literacy but also an assured continuing education in a well-planned institutional set-up so that they become self-learners. SDG 4 also wants the UN member countries to '*ensure that youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women achieve literacy and numeracy by 2030*'.

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<sup>5</sup><https://censusindia.gov.in/census.website>

## **Education**

Education is an important tool for development. It is a process of acquisition of knowledge as well as its effective execution. Therefore, it should not limit to merely literacy but also include awareness and functionality. India had the distinction of having the best educational centres, which attracted a number of scholars from all over the world. The centres of learning/higher learning, which were famous then have now become a part of history. What is called the scientific advancement today was already there in use in our country. Unfortunately, many were not explained properly or kept as a closed secret, and not even revealed to the family members. Hence, they did not come under the framework of science. Strict social structure prevailed in those days, and provided an opportunity for education only to a privileged few, as a result of which a large section of the society could not get education. This situation was aggravated when the population increased enormously.

The progress made by India in the recent past shows that India is slowly moving from the position of 'developing country' to 'developed country' but, as a nation with 282.70 million illiterates, it is still struggling to increase the pace of moving forward. Hence, education needs to be given much more importance as it encompasses everything which influences human personality and the driving force for social development which brings improvement in every aspect of the society. In the last many years, the educational status of India changed a lot with primary schools in almost every village, secondary and senior secondary schools even in small towns, colleges in towns, cities and mega cities and universities in many mega cities, cities and big towns. Every stream of education is in mission mode today. The Right to Education Act 2009<sup>6</sup> reinforces free and compulsory education for children in the age of 6 to 14 years. Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA)<sup>7</sup> started in 2009-10 has further strengthened Secondary Education, and Rashtriya Uchchattar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA)<sup>8</sup> was initiated in 2013 with the aim of providing strategic funding to Higher Educational Institutions. But, even with all these efforts, we could not prevent school dropouts and ensure quality and content in education. This is because most of our education centres emphasise more on acquisition of knowledge (theory) and very less on its execution (practical).

The Indian system of education in olden days was basically for knowledge building but today education is pursued as a matter of routine with no goal setting. Most of the youth do not even know what they want to do after getting educated. Both boys

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<sup>6</sup><https://dse.education.gov.in/rte>

<sup>7</sup><https://www.education.gov.in/en/rmsa>

<sup>8</sup><https://www.education.gov.in/en/rusa>

and girls in the early stage wish to complete secondary/senior secondary education and once it is over, they go to degree courses in colleges. After passing degree course even with minimum eligibility marks/grades, they go for PG admission and further to M.Phil. or PhD. Finally, they land in the big pool of unemployed as in today's world, degree matters less and skills matter more. Very rarely, people know that National Education Policy 1986 proposed delinking of degrees from employment which is happening in reality in the electronic sector where hands-on is much more important than the qualification. There was a time when government was the major employer, but now, it is not. Private enterprises, national and international companies give a lot of importance to skills, meaning performance/delivery which no one teaches in schools or colleges but need to be acquired by oneself. Hence, youth should be properly guided in this area so that they pursue such education which gives proper return afterwards.

### **Skill Development**

Developing skill in young people is the age-old tradition of India which was transferred from the family elders to the generation next. This ensured not only learning the skill in perfect form under the close watch of the elders but also increased employability at an early stage of life and kept the family profession intact. In foreign countries also, it is practiced and many times the names of individuals carry the name of vocation like – Blacksmith, Brickman, Carpenter, Goldsmith, etc. Unfortunately, in course of time, family tradition in India slowly disintegrated and new generation youngsters want to do what others do, i.e., clamouring for white collar jobs. While a large number of students come out of schools and colleges every year, only limited jobs are available to offer and hence, unemployment. This creates ill will, depression and anger. Why is the young generation not interested in learning vocational skills? Because of the mindset that such training programmes are for less educated people.

In this regard, Chetan Bhagat has penned a four column note in Times of India, dated August 5, 2019, under the heading “India's Anti-Vocation Mindset” which everyone should read, especially young people. He says that the harsh reality is that the simple graduate will have to struggle to get a job, but an electrician would have to turn off his phone because too many people would be calling him for work. This is the reality. Fortunately, skill training is getting more priority today and the state and central governments have taken a number of steps which will enable the youth to acquire one or more skills leading to economic empowerment. The Skill India<sup>9</sup> Campaign launched on July 15, 2015, is to train 400 million people in India by 2022

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<sup>9</sup><https://www.msde.gov.in/>

under different schemes like PMKVY and Skill Loan Scheme, etc. It is important that balance is maintained between the traditional and new age skills right at the district level and also target a shift from the unorganised to the organised market through recognition of prior learning.

### **Employment**

The ultimate aim of education is to get knowledge and values of life which once used to be transmitted by the elders in the family in a non-formal way and teachers in the schools through formal education. In modern days, the students do get knowledge and values through their textbooks, but the ultimate aim of this gain is more linked to get employment. Unfortunately, today's education testifies the students for their memorising power and capacity to reproduce in the examination. The question here is, do all who are educated get employment? The answer is a big 'No'. When the answer is 'No', then one must know the reasons.

India is a country with large number of rural areas, and the Indian society is basically an agrarian one. Traditionally, majority of the population depend on agriculture-based occupations. Even after a great deal of industrial development, non-profitable agricultural occupation, dwindling of job opportunities in the field of agriculture, migration of rural people to cities and towns in search of better employment opportunities continue. The field of agriculture till date is the major employment provider to the rural population. Over the years, due to population increase and the need for a greater number of houses, fertile agriculture lands are converted into housing plots with the result, there is a considerable reduction in the occupational opportunities in the area of agriculture. Hence, people in rural areas started looking for greener pastures outside the rural areas.

The villages of India also had the tradition of division of labour in which families/ persons specialised in particular jobs which almost became traditional occupations of the generation next, such as washer man, barber, potter, cobbler, tailor, carpenter, agricultural labourers, etc. When children grew, they were involved in the family occupations which provided a lot of opportunities for guided training under the close watch of the elders. This also enabled the younger generation to get the best of the training and assured employment/self-employment. After attaining independence, the country started growing in almost all the fields including education. The end result was that many who are educated did not want to be in villages and do the traditional jobs, instead started moving to other places looking for white collar jobs. This almost made the original self-contained villages to depend on outside help even for small things.

In view of the vast expansion of government machinery to plan and implement programmes and activities, many departments were created which provided abundant employment opportunities for the educated people. As the government jobs not only provide regular monthly salary but also permanency, career promotion and post-retirement benefits, the educated youth preferred government jobs. This trend continued for long. However, when globalisation came in due to technical advancement made by telecommunication and computers, the trend started reversing and educated youth started looking for jobs in the private sectors (including multinational companies) as it offered huge sum as salary and other privileges.

The educated youth almost shun their preference for permanency of the jobs to immediate gain of getting hefty pay packets. However, the recruitment in the private sector is strictly based on merit and efficiency in which many could not get in. In the meantime, administrative reforms in government sector took place and the government introduced computers in large numbers in the administrative machinery which almost took over the workload of many individuals. Also, economists started advising the government to minimise the administrative expenditure to increase more allocation for projects and programmes. As the governments are interested in development economy, they started adopting downsizing of the administrative structure by keeping a large number of sanctioned posts vacant so that they are abolished subsequently. Hence, recruitment in the government sector started dwindling. The result was unemployment or underemployment. Now what is the way out for people who want employment for living? The sector left is self-employment for which mere educational qualification is not enough. What is needed is skill and entrepreneurship. Some have these things in an inbuilt way and for some others they need to be acquired.

Unemployment or underemployment is not the problem of individuals alone but of the government also. Unless able-bodied persons work and earn their livelihood, the country cannot progress well. That is precisely the reason government brought assured employment scheme for a certain number of days in a year through Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme (MNREGP) which benefit a lot both men and women in rural areas. Simultaneously, government also started providing support for skill development programmes so that the Indian population, particularly youth, are trained in chosen vocations which enable them to get employment or give way for self-employment. Most of the young people today look for employment opportunities rather than going for self-employment. The main reason for this attitude is the feeling of security once you are in paid employment and always self-employment is connected to risk taking and time consuming. It is not that everyone desires to go for self-employment has entrepreneurial skill inbuilt in them. It is only the wings of the fire which ignite the persons and many times skills are developed as an ongoing process. In this the desire to acquire stability gets primacy.

## **Governance**

Youths in all ages have been in the vanguard of progress and social change. Thirst for freedom, impatience for a quicker pace of progress and a passion for innovation, coupled with idealism and creative fervour saw the youth in the forefront of the freedom struggle. Today when everybody is talking against corruption and good governance to ensure increased pace of progress, the presence of effective youth elements certainly becomes essential. On one hand, participation of young people in decision making will give the best inputs for their empowerment and, on the other hand, presence of considerable proportion of youth population in governance will refresh and revitalise the entire structure of the government. Youth participation can create enormous effect at three different levels which will favourably change the entire scenario, and they are:

- At a personal level, the participation can increase young people's knowledge and practical skills that come from real life problem solving. It can also strengthen their social interest and nurture long term commitment to self-fulfilment. It enables young people to think critically and actively challenge the circumstance.
- At the organisational level, it enables the organisation to make informal decisions regarding the need of young people.
- Finally, at the cultural level, it can increase youth friendliness and result in structures, policies and procedures that are demand driven to address the needs and rights of the young people.

## **Youth involvement in Governance**

In a democracy, the Parliament plays the vital role as it is one of the three pillars of governance. The Indian Parliament has two chambers - the lower chamber, Lok Sabha for which members are elected directly by the people and the upper chamber, Rajya Sabha which is the Council of States in which members are elected indirectly apart from nominated members. Both the houses play an important role in governing the country. If we look into the statistics of Lok Sabha in table - 5 below only in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Lok Sabha 31.92% of the members were in 25-40 years. Thereafter, almost in all the elections this age group has not got adequate representation. While the youth are involved in election related mobilisation work right from pasting the posters to arranging the stage for meetings, they are not given priority to contest the election as a candidate. The lowest turnout was the 16<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha with 8% which has increased in the present one (17<sup>th</sup>) to 12.35%. This trend needs to be reversed as it is not enough that the government lowering the voting right to youth from 21 years to 18 years but

ensure that they sit in the lower house of Parliament and be a part of the policy making process<sup>10</sup>.

**Table – 5: Members of Lok Sabha in 25-40 years age group**

Lok Sabha	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup>	10 <sup>th</sup>	11 <sup>th</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup>	13 <sup>th</sup>	14 <sup>th</sup>	15 <sup>th</sup>	16 <sup>th</sup>	17 <sup>th</sup>
No. in 25-40 age group	112	151	98	105	90	88	114	96	72	82	65	68	78	60	63	47	55
Total No. of MPs in the House	434	473	464	474	488	501	510	524	508	497	505	524	540	543	543	543	545
Percent	25.8	31.92	21.18	22.15	18.44	17.25	22.35	18.32	14.17	16.49	12.87	12.97	14.44	11.04	11.06	8.0	12.35

Source: <https://prsindia.org/parliamenttrack/vital-stats/profile-of-the-newly-elected-17th-lok-sabha>

## Conclusion

Everyone talks about the importance of the youth population for the future of the nation but rarely the does the elderly population impose full confidence in them. Unless they are given the freedom to think and act and brought into the mainstream activities, they will not be having any opportunity to show their strength. A few opportunities provided or a few used the opportunity usefully cannot be taken as full involvement. The progress of the nation cannot be judged only by strengthening or developing infrastructure but by strengthening the society. Unless inclusive growth is ensured, the nation cannot grow fast and finally it will take more than the period required for reaching the desired goal. We all know that almost all political parties state in their election agenda that youth will be given priority but most of the time this is in only on paper. Hence, youth should be given their place, pride, involvement, encouragement and appreciation so that they can lead the nation when the opportunity comes to them.

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## **Pandemic and Old Age: Investigating the Issues and Challenges of Elderly People**

• Pankaj Das<sup>1</sup>

• Bhagwan Ji Gupta<sup>2</sup>

### **Abstract**

The outbreak of COVID-19 posed a severe threat to each and every section of society in one way or the other. The elderly population being the most vulnerable section of the society bore the brunt in a wide spectrum of their lives. Lack of digital literacy amongst elderly people resulted in challenges and trust issues while using different online platforms for various utilities such as banking, telemedicine, online medical consultation, etc. Sudden shrinking of socialisation impacted their psychosocial well-being during the pandemic. Availability of digital devices is not found to be sufficient but digital literacy will play a crucial role. Incidences of losing near and dear ones affected the elderly people with a severe level of mental trauma. They lived a life filled with a fear of getting infected themselves and family members. They are still in a phase of recovery from that mental trauma. It is reported that to meet the financial needs during pandemic, many of them had to break their fixed deposits or savings that depicts the financial crisis during the pandemic. Family support, NGOs, government policies and communities have a crucial role in helping elderly people to overcome all these challenges.

**Keywords:** *Old Age, pandemic, challenges, Digital Divide, Mental Trauma, Covid-19.*

### **Introduction**

Outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic across the globe posed a severe threat to human beings and challenged every aspect of human life. There were many waves reported at different times in different countries with different levels of intensity. The health infrastructure of all the countries experienced an extreme level of pressure. In

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addition to it, its impact was not limited to health services but all the sectors and every aspect of human life experienced its toll. Marathe & Shukla (2021) find that during the second wave, India almost crumbled under pressure in dealing with medical facilities, in terms of beds in hospitals, oxygen support, medicines, and availability of doctors and other resources.

During the pandemic, all sections of society were heavily impacted. Chaturvedi *et al.*, (2021) has clearly pointed out that the pandemic had taken a toll on the education, social life and mental health of children. Other research studies find the severe impact of COVID-19 and lockdown on the mental health of children as well as adolescents (Singh *et al.*, 2020; Cheung *et.al*, 2020). The whole education system had to change to adapt and meet the needs and demands of the current time. Use of technology helped the system to adapt to the new learning environment, but its sudden excessive use impacted the social and mental health of teachers as well as learners. Kalenkoski, Pabilonia, & Wulff (2020) in their reports have examined the impact of COVID-19 on adults and their jobs, business and employability along with the quality of life. The fact that cost cutting, salary deduction, etc., impacted the life of adult people was clearly evident.

Confinement and isolation due to the pandemic affected women's situation in more adverse ways. An increase in domestic violence cases was reported during this period. Their emotional health suffered severe negative impact. Power's (2020) study concludes that the pandemic has increased the care burden of women and families. Martins (2020) explains that the impact of COVID-19 further extended to the elderly people and the challenges they faced during pandemic.

COVID-19 almost entirely stopped social and physical contact because of which many activities shifted to the digital mode. Differential access of digital tools for the elderly people posed a tough challenge before them to adjust to a completely new situation. During this pandemic, many challenges such as digital divide, access to medical facility, mental trauma, and psycho-social problems arose before them. Banerjee (2020) explains that the impact of COVID-19 in various aspects of life in isolation and collectively took a very disastrous toll on the physical, mental, social and economic aspects of their life.

This study has assessed and investigated the challenges of the pandemic on the lives of elderly people in different dimensions, like digital divide, access to regular medical facility, mental trauma, psycho-social impact and personal issues. This study is important because old people are the most vulnerable and ignored section of society.

So, this study will identify the areas where challenges exist, suggest improvement strategy and recommend measures to overcome these challenges.

## **Review of Related Literature**

### ***Digital divide - differential access to old and young people***

The term *digital divide* is employed to explain the existing gap between different groups of individuals in accessing new technology. Such digital diversity can be in many respects such as gender-based (men and women), class (upper class, middle class), established area (rural and ethnic), literacy based (educated and uneducated category) and age (new generation and older generation). Technology has become a driving force in itself. As technology advances and becomes more ingrained in our daily lives, the pace of digital divide is becoming increasingly complex. The fact is that older generations are either unfamiliar or uncomfortable while using gadgets, apps and the use of internet while the younger generations have taken a leap with technology. This widening digital divide may lead to various social and economic issues. Many studies have shown that the lowest use of technology comes from the category of older adults, which is usually 65+ years, if we look at this issue with respect to age demographics (Martins, 2020; Smith, 2014; Pew Research Survey, 2017).

Lack of digital literacy poses another serious challenge among older people. As per an article in *The Indian Express* (2021, June 7) only 7% of the older population use smart phones in India. Another fact is that among this segment, the digital literacy rate is also low which further limits them in accessing various technological platforms for various purposes.

### ***Disruption of routine healthcare services of senior citizens due to the pandemic***

A research by Falvo *et. al.* (2021) talks about the lived experiences of older people during the pandemic. It recognizes the detrimental effect of labelling older people as the most at-risk age group. This caused their unintentional stigmatisation and isolation. Older adults, especially those living on their own had to face serious consequences as they were not allowed to carry out their daily health routines such as taking a jog at the park or purchasing their diabetes medicine in time.

According to the recent United Nations (2020) study report, during the peak months, when all hospital beds were occupied by the COVID affected, the elderly

were marginalised and faced challenges in obtaining treatments for their already existing health conditions. Moreover, they were not given an opportunity to give consent to medical treatment or put under pressure to withdraw treatment in advance by signing the do-not-resuscitate orders before being admitted. An article published by the *Hindustan Times* (2021) talks about the increasing gap between the COVID shadow and the treatment of general ailments of countless elderly individuals.

### ***Trauma of getting isolated after being infected with corona virus***

Jassim *et al.* (2021) expressed that seclusion and quarantine both include the partition of a person from their friends and family, typical exercises, and schedules with the end goal of contamination anticipation. The mental effect was exasperated by the destructive impact of restricted actual work and changes in diet. These progressions came about in sensational and durable mental effect. It was very clear that clinic confinement was more discouraging than home separation. Darira (2020) in her paper expressed how the confinement due to COVID has affected the patients and driven them to some injury. Many individuals subsequent to recuperating from COVID choked in 'after disconnection trauma, which dialled back their recuperation speed. The research paper demonstrated that the guardians experienced post-hospitalisation side effects, both intellectually and in general. COVID has affected all individuals' psychological wellness as nobody was ready for a particularly crushed circumstance. Banerjee and Rai (2020) expressed that the world has confronted worldwide general well-being emergencies both actually and just as intellectually.

### ***Psycho-social Impact on the Elderly Population during the Pandemic***

Cheung *et al.* (2020) in their study examined the impact of COVID-19 on the health and psychosocial status of vulnerable older adults. The aim of this study was to track the spread and the impact of COVID-19 on self-reported, self-rated health, other health and psychosocial indicators, and health services utilisation by people who have an inter-rail assessment during the first year of COVID-19. The results of the study show that older people were facing mental health issue about the Covid virus, much more than the children. Additionally, they faced hardships during the lockdown especially with their daily life.

### ***Economic Problems of Elderly People during Pandemic***

Subedi (2020), in her paper, pointed out that the impact of pandemic was more devastating on the elderly group than any other age group. Many older people working

on the frontline as health care professionals succumbed from contracting the virus. COVID-19 protocols like physical distancing, restrictions on movement and home-quarantine led to social isolation, specifically for this age group. Most of the elderlies faced financial problems due to lack of steady income and insufficient savings.

Joshi (2020), in his study indicated that the elderly population faced severe economic crisis during COVID-19. This study also reflects that most elderly people are forced to work in the labour market to reduce their financial crisis and to meet their daily needs.

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To assess the challenges of growing digitalisation on the daily lives of elderly people during pandemic.
2. To investigate the challenges of accessing medical and regular check-ups of older people during pandemic.
3. To examine the mental trauma of older people during the pandemic.
4. To explore the psycho-social conditions of elderly people during pandemic.

### **Research Methodology**

The present research design is an exploratory survey research. The survey instrument of this research is based on the interview method. The method of data collection was structured in the form of interview technique. The questionnaire contains five major sections i.e., digital divide, regular medical check-up during pandemic, mental trauma during pandemic, psycho-social impact and economic status and livelihood. Since the study was basically targeted towards the older population, the target sample consisted of people of 60 years or more. The respondents were from different backgrounds like retired government employees, businessmen, and householders. There were total of 43 respondents from the areas of Delhi-NCR region with whom the interviews were conducted.

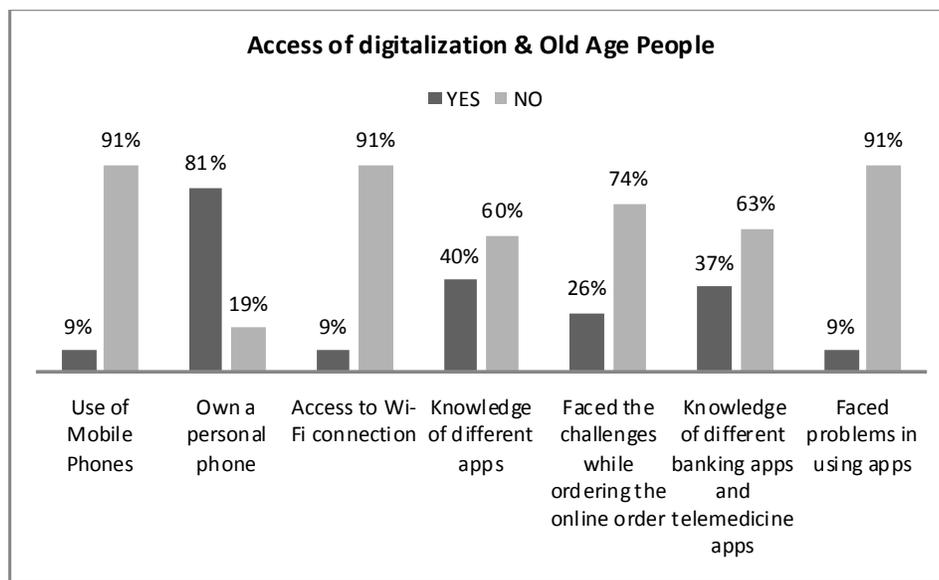
### **Results**

#### ***Digital Divide and Elderly People***

One of the major objectives of this study was to assess the challenges of growing digitalisation on the daily lives of elderly people during the COVID-19 pandemic. Although we all have seen that the pandemic has affected people of all ages in almost

every sphere of life, the impact on the daily lives of elderly people was huge, especially when it comes to using smart phones and digital platforms for availing different services online. The data of the study indicates, as evident from Graph-1 that majority of the respondents were having personal phones and they were using it as well. But despite using smart phones in large number, they have limited access to Wi-Fi connection. Similarly, a large chunk of around 60% of elderly people were not even aware of using any mobile apps during pandemic. So, it can be concluded that digital awareness among the elderly people is lacking and is a matter of concern.

**Graph-1: Access of digitalisation on daily lives of elderly people during pandemic**

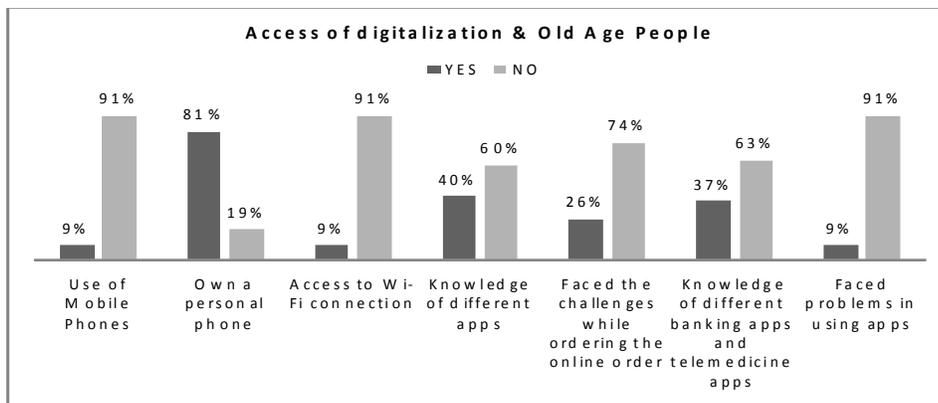


**Regular Medical Check-up during the Pandemic**

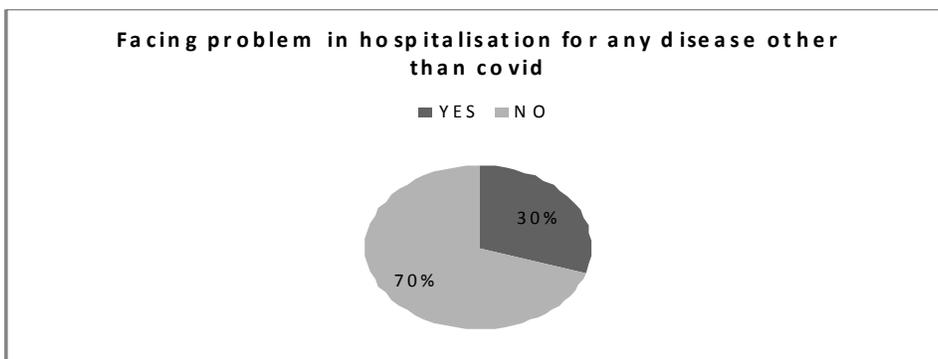
The pandemic period saw serious disruptions in regular and non-emergency medical services. Ignorance of access to prevention and treatment of chronic illness, cardiac illness and other diseases that need regular care has caused the morbidity and mortality rate to increase. Countless senior citizens who were in need of regular check-up and medicines had to face a number of disruptions and their health was under constant risk of deteriorating throughout the COVID period. From the Graph-2, it can be observed that few elderly people visited their doctors for regular health check-ups during the pandemic. They preferred to stay indoors at home during that time of crisis. However, those who visited the doctors regularly for their health

check-ups preferred to visit the same doctors instead of any other doctors. In fact, they had some kind of comfort and easy accessibility to meet and discuss their health issues with the same medical practitioner. A majority of our elderly respondents faced the problems of accessing the family/regular doctors during pandemic. The kind of problems they faced ranged from unavailability of transportation services to get the prior appointments, waiting in the long queue and many other miscellaneous issues. The most interesting facts that surfaced from the field data is that despite the physical restrictions during the pandemic, a very small number of respondents had consulted a doctor online. Many of elderly people had in fact consulted the doctors in person in assessing their regular medical health check-ups. And those (a very few in numbers) who had consulted the doctors even online faced problems in online consultation.

**Graph-2**



**Graph-3**

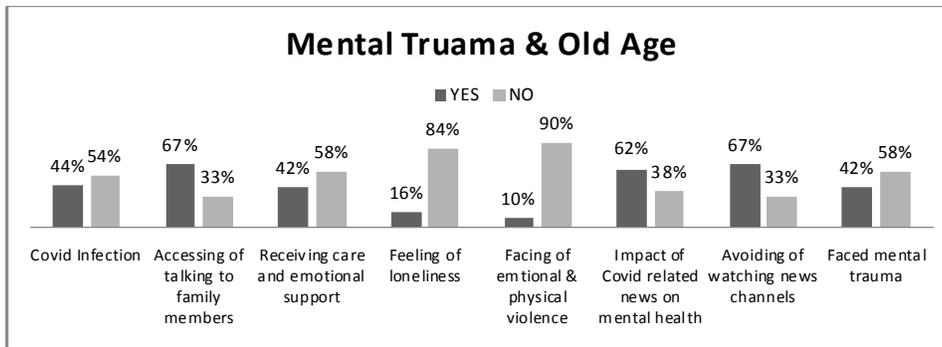


As evident in (Graph-3), 70% of elderly people did not face any kind of problem in getting access to hospital admission other than COVID disease. At the same time, it cannot be denied that 30% of our respondents, which is quite a sizable chunk of the elderly population faced problems with regard to hospitalisation for any disease other than COVID during the pandemic.

**Mental trauma during Pandemic**

Graph-4 illustrates that elderly people faced a lot of mental trauma during the pandemic. It had a great impact on their mental and physical health as well. 44% of the elderly people got infected by COVID. But majority of them got the chance to talk to their relatives and family members. Even during pandemic, it was reported from the respondents that majority of them were taken care of by the family members and received emotional support from their family members while the other 15% did not receive any support or care from family members. Similarly, only 15% of them suffered from loneliness during their COVID infections. Though the figures are less (10%), a few of our elderly respondents revealed that they had experienced the increase of emotional and physical violence by the near and dear ones during the time of pandemic. Further, it was observed that majority of respondents regularly watched news channels that created a sense of extreme fear and anxiety among them. This led to mental trauma among our respondents. Almost 42 % of respondents faced such kind of mental trauma during the pandemic.

**Graph-4: Assessing Mental Trauma of Old Age during Pandemic**



**Psycho-social impact**

One of the objectives behind the survey was to explore the psycho-social impact

of pandemic on the elderly people (aged 60 and above). The results show that majority of elderly people did not feel like meeting people frequently during the pandemic as they feared contracting the virus. They followed COVID restrictions and did not indulge in any social gatherings. Due to this, majority of the elderly people felt emotionally anxious when they could not meet people in person. In our interviews one of the respondents replied, *“I was more worried about them if they were alright or not”*. Similarly, another respondent expressed, *“I felt like a bird in a cage”*. These views of respondents throw light on the situations of the psycho-social impact of pandemic on the elderly people. In rare instances, they used mobile phones to communicate with others but for a short duration. Sometimes, the impact of pandemic on the psyche of the elderly people created feelings of frustrations and anger. According to one respondent: *“Yes, because of being inside the house for a long time feels very frustrating”*. This also had a negative consequence on their sleep order. They woke up in the middle of the night and faced difficulty in falling asleep again. Further, it was found from the data that most of the elderly people admitted not being a member of any social community. They were left out. Their socialising with others had curtailed during the pandemic. However, some of them were a part of social groups and communities like RWA and club members of the society.

## Discussion

According to the 2011 Census, India has about 104 million people of above 60 years of age. When it comes to usage of online platforms by elderly people, the condition is not satisfactory, considering the digital era that is prevailing now-a-days. Most of the elderly people had to suffer even for trivial activities which could have been avoided easily had they been aware of the convenience of these online platforms. For example, they had to stand in long queues for medicines in hospitals or shops. One of the respondents said that he had to visit the bank consecutively for 2-3 days to get a single work done. Even while visiting banks offline, bank officials were not very friendly. During the pandemic, since banks were temporarily closed, work related to cheque books and cash withdrawals were delayed. The most remarkable scenario that came into the picture was that even though there were many ATMs available, they were more comfortable to withdraw their money by visiting banks in person. This indicates mainly two things—one, they do not know how to operate ATMs and second, they still do not trust such platforms.

We need to work on this issue very seriously if we want to convert our dream of digital inclusion into reality. Though the government is trying to empower at least one

person per household through its National Digital Literacy Mission (NDLM), it does not give any priority to senior citizens. In 2018, a survey conducted by an NGO named Agewell Foundation in Delhi-NCR, revealed that out of 5000 senior citizen respondents, 86% of them were digital illiterates. Therefore, it may be said that in this rapidly growing digitalisation era, the governance spaces and policies of the government have not been quite able to achieve the aspect of digital equality in the life of an older person. At this juncture, conducting many digital literacy workshops for senior citizens may improve such situations. Patience holds the key for the trainer to train elderly people as they may keep asking the same questions many times. Different NGOs and the younger generation need to come forward to help them to get acquainted with the fast-growing technology environment.

The pandemic not only impacted the health of the people around the globe, but its advent caused depression and fear to everyone including elderly people. Some of them having no technological access, suffered from loneliness and anxiety in isolation. Most of them avoided social gatherings, clubs and even meeting their loved ones. They were locked in their houses with many of them having no one to take care and fulfil their basic needs (Jassim *et.al.*, 2021). According to the survey conducted, most of them had stopped meeting people frequently during the pandemic and lack of digital access had shut down alternative ways of reaching out to the loved ones.

The pandemic had an even worse impact on their psyche. Majority of them accepted that they at one point or other, felt left out and completely cut off from the world. This caused emotional turmoil in most of them. As per this study, many of them felt frustrated and annoyed when they could not meet their loved ones.

The stress level was high during the pandemic among the elderly people. They felt frustrated and started getting angry without any genuine reason. The sleeping pattern of most of them was affected during the pandemic; they observed change in their sleeping pattern, with most of them spending more hours sleeping. Some of the elderly people felt alone during the pandemic with no one to take care of them. Others had their families and their children and grandchildren around.

After completing data collection, we came to know and understood that senior citizens faced many problems in medical check-up during this pandemic period. According to the data, most of the senior citizens are not able to visit the doctor for regular medical check-up; almost all the senior citizens were visiting the government hospital during this pandemic. Most of the people consulted the doctor in person because they did not believe in online consultation and these people do not even get

satisfaction in online consultation. But, there were some who did not have any problem in online consultation (Cheung *et al.*, 2020). Maximum number of people said that they had to face the problem of medical facilities and had a lot of problems in availing regular medical service as well. People lost a lot of their close ones or near and dear ones during this pandemic.

It was found in this study that 44% of the total respondents suffered from COVID. Most of them were able to talk to their near and dear ones when they were infected.

When asked whether they felt alone while they were infected with the virus, as was the case with the majority of them, they said that they did not feel alone because most of them lived in joint families. But, a few of them shared their feelings about being alone in the hospital and not getting the proper attention from the doctors. One of them said that as he did not know how to use mobile phones and other technologies, it became very difficult for him to communicate with his family and hence resulting in loneliness (Banerjee, 2020). Some of the respondents shared their experience on how watching the news related to COVID created a sense of fear and anxiety (Chaturvedi *et al.*, 2021). One of them said that it created extreme fear and they started wondering what would happen if they die, or lose their job. Most of them were worried about their grandchildren, work and thought that they would never get better. Some respondents believed that getting a minor cold and cough made them worried if they catch the virus, ultimately, they too will die as shown in the news channels. On being asked whether they suffered from any mental trauma during the pandemic, one of the respondents said she lost her husband due to COVID-19 and suffered from mental trauma.

The fear of losing anyone in life made her not do anything for a while and she was afraid to go to the hospital after this incident. One of the respondents said that she was very scared as her son was having symptoms and she could still feel that fear whenever she thinks about it. Some say that not being able to communicate with anyone and being alone made them suffer from anxiety.

### **Suggestions and Conclusion**

The challenges faced by older people during the pandemic affected a wide spectrum of their lives. It includes their inefficiency to use digital platforms that resulted in poor time management and posed difficulty in accessing different facilities. Lack of digital literacy resulted in lack of trust in using digital platforms and so, they

tried to access every facility in offline mode that gave them some unpleasant experiences from workers and officials of different organisations they visited. Availability of mobile phones and computers inside the house is different from the ability to use it efficiently. Younger members of the family, NGOs and government initiatives need to work upon the digital literacy of the elderly people actively but patiently as they may require training more than just one time.

Psycho-social well-being of the elderly was severely affected during the pandemic. Like other studies (Banerjee, 2020; Bhatt, 2020; Martins, 2020), this study also reported that most of the people had access to communication modes but not being able to meet people in face-to-face often frustrated them. On the other hand, it was found that many people got the opportunity to spend more time together and felt happy while spending time together during pandemic. People's jobs were affected in cost cutting measure by companies such as deduction in salary and layoffs. People who were financially stable, could enjoy spending time altogether but those who lost their jobs and deduction in salary and income faced difficulties in managing their expenditures. In the case of the elderly who received pension, it was found that they did not find much difficulty in availing pensions as they were in government jobs. Some senior citizens had to break their FDs to meet the daily expenditures that depict the difficulty in earning required amount of money during pandemic.

The elderly people faced trust issues in online medical consultation and tried to meet the doctors in person. In this, they found it very difficult to meet the doctors in person as hospitals were flooded with COVID patients and they could not access the doctor's consultation in person for regular medical check-up. Many elderly people lost their loved ones and these losses affected them for a very long time. They lived in fear and trauma of getting infected again and also the fear of losing near and dear ones. Family members of many infected persons helped them in dealing with the trauma of loneliness. They served food wearing PPE kits and talking over phones but, at the same time, many old people faced a span of extreme loneliness. Therefore, to overcome these types of stress and anxieties arising out of the pandemic, it can be suggested that the elderly people must be involved in group-based activities like cooking, sharing sweet memories with family, enjoying songs, movies and similar uplifting activities. Further, it is also noticed that older people suffer in a major way by psycho-social trauma. Not meeting people and friends, not being allowed to visit any tourist places, only living in their homes impacted their minds a lot. They can be introduced to apps where they can watch movies or media that will help them overcome and reduce the psycho-social trauma faced by being alone.

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## Single Parent Families and their Social Ties

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### Abstract

The purpose of the research study was to highlight the experiences of single-parent families in a metropolitan city in India. The objective was to study closely the social groups that the single-parent families belong to and the support they derive from the other members. A case study approach was used to understand minutely the nature of the relationships the single-parent families had with different entities in their social system. The focus was also on how these associations and relationships affected the children within single-parent families. Given that there are no formal avenues of support for single-parent families, it is imperative to study the naturally formed social support systems that single-parent families develop independently. These support systems play a crucial role in providing mental, physical, psychological, financial, and social support to single-parent families. Therefore, it was essential to analyse the relationship between single-parent families and their social groups.

**Keywords:** *single parents, social ties, social groups, single-parent families, children, social network.*

### Introduction

Edwards (2009) defined the *single-parent family* as having “either a father or a mother who is singly responsible for raising a child. The child can be by birth or adoption. They may be a single parent by choice or by life circumstances. The other parent may have been part of the family at one time or not”.

According to a report by the OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development), released in 2014, 17% of children aged 0-14 live in single-parent households worldwide. Women are heads of approximately 88% of these households, and contrary to popular belief, the majority of the single parents in the study were

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employed. Woessmann (2015), says that in the 28 countries that he studied, “on average across all 28 countries, the share of single-parent families is 14 percent”. The article also states that a “vast majority of single-parent families are families with a single mother”. Across the study, in many countries, single mothers headed 86 percent of the single-parent families.

There are several social consequences attached to belonging to a single-parent family. Single-parent families might become isolated from society and suffer from loneliness. The single-parent family is presented with difficulty of managing the day-to-day activities without another spouse in the picture. This puts all the pressure of child-rearing and managing occupational responsibilities on one person’s shoulders. Most single-parent families are women-headed, which adds the gender dynamic to the inequality faced by being a part of a single-parent family. This is reflected in limited job opportunities and societal bias against women “neglecting” their children and working.

The social support that single-parent families receive is of great consequence as it helps in balancing out the disproportional disadvantages the family has to deal with. Coleman (1988) suggests that the physical absence of a second parent in single-parent families represent a deficiency in the “social capital” available to the child (Asmussen & Larson, 1991). Therefore, the social network of the single parent comes to play an important part. This network is defined as those people outside the household who engage in activities and exchanges of an effective and/or material nature with the immediate family members (Cochran & Brassard, 1979). This could include the grandparents, the neighbours, close family friends, or other relatives. The social support that these individuals provide is influential in the operation of the day-to-day activities of the single-parent family.

Child rearing and household management have never been a solitary activity, but in single-parent families, the responsibilities are shouldered by one individual alone. However, external agencies that can take care of at least a portion of these responsibilities have also developed. Access to these external agencies can be facilitated through the parents’ social network, or rather the members of the network themselves could be instrumental in sharing the burden. The parents’ social network may include neighbours, voluntary associations, colleagues, extended family members, peers, and even religious associations. The support received from these groups could be mental, physical, or social and have a significant impact on the functioning of the single-parent family.

The “additional adult” hypothesis (Stolba & Amato, 1993) states that children in single-parent families are seen to benefit from the presence of other adults within the household. Studies suggest that the parent-child relationship is often threatened by the multiple responsibilities that the parent has to juggle. There is only a limited amount of time and attention that the parent can give their children. The development of children from single-parent families itself is affected by a multitude of factors. Depending on the cause of being part of a single-parent family, the child’s development could get hampered due to lack of attention, stress, and added household responsibilities at an early age. During major life events like divorce, death, or separation, constant support and attention should be given to the emotional and psychological needs of the child. A robust support system of individuals from the social network would be beneficial in situations like these.

### **Significance and Scope of the Study**

The research conducted on single-parent families has been very limited in India, although their existence is not a rare entity within the Indian society. There are various reasons why a single-parent family comes into being. It could be formed due to the death of a spouse or partner, divorce, separation, or simply an individual’s decision to raise a child independently. All the previous research conducted on single-parent families has brought forward that most of these families are economically weak. This is usually because the burden of running the household falls on one person. It is usually not easy to find a suitable job for parents who do not have adequate qualifications. Finding a suitable job is even more difficult for women heading a single-parent family because of the lack of job opportunities. Even when women manage to find jobs, the pay gap with their male peers impacts them negatively. Additionally, there is no alternate assistance available for single-parent families from the government’s side.

All the research done prior to this has primarily focused more on the challenges of belonging to a single-parent family, and not much has been explored concerning how the parents’ social network has an impact. The single-parent family is usually considered a vulnerable unit. Therefore, researchers need to know how these families cope with their situation and modify circumstances to suit their needs and how the people around them are helping them achieve this. The scope of this study would be to encompass a broader understanding of single-parent families themselves and a further understanding of how they cope with their lives within a metropolitan set-up. The study’s main aim is to establish the importance of the influence of members outside the immediate family have and the role they play in providing support to the

single-parent family unit and understand the kind of interaction the single-parent family has with people beyond the extended family.

Mila Tuli (2012) has said, “Children in India grow up in a network of multiple interactions with members from within and outside the family”. Raising children in India has predominantly been a “shared experience with family, friends, and others in the neighbourhood”. Even though the family size has grown significantly smaller, the involvement of extended kin members has not lessened. The family in India is still characterised by a certain degree of “jointedness”. Great value is attached to “being connected”, The relationships are maintained “across distances and changing aspirations, occupations and lifestyles”. Changes in family and childcare are evident in “the altered patterns of family interaction, evolving role expectations and renewed ideas about motherhood and fatherhood”.

Single parent families would then be one of India’s altered forms of families. According to Nieuwenhuis and Maldonado (2018), “the terminology of single parenthood is complex, and what it means to be a single parent has changed over time and varies across the single parents’ life course.” The term ‘single parent’ (or single-parent household) refers to those parents who raise their children independently; they do not reside in the same household as their partner. This term is not used to differentiate single parents from those who separated or were bereaved when they had their child. The authors also state that “Single parents can live with other adults in the same household, such as grandparents, but not with a (new) partner. We refer to ‘coupled parents’ (or coupled-parent households) to reflect that either or both of the adults in the household are the biological parent of the child or children and to include re-partnered parents”.

A study conducted in the UK by the collaborative efforts of an organisation called Gingerbread and the University of Sheffield stated, “Experiencing single parenthood is more common than typically reported. While surveys typically suggest that a single parent heads one in four families with children at any time, longitudinal data suggests that one in three families with children will have been a single-parent family over six years” (Rabindrakumar, 2018). The study attempted to acknowledge the significant numbers of single-parent families in the UK and to do away with the perception that belonging to a single-parent family should be viewed as a “problem”.

The same study, for which data was collected in the UK between 2009 and 2017, also analysed the impact of single parenthood on children’s wellbeing. They measured wellbeing by looking at life satisfaction, feelings about their family, and the

quality of relationships with peers. One of the study's main findings was that no evidence of a negative impact of living in a single-parent household on children's wellbeing was found in self-reported life satisfaction, quality of peer relationships, or positivity about family life. Children living or living in single-parent families score as highly, or higher, against each measure of wellbeing than those who have always lived in two-parent families (Rabindrakumar, 2018).

Single-parent families do not function in isolation. Various entities help them fill the gaps in their functioning. Grandparents often serve as a positive influence in the lives of their grandchildren by taking on various roles such as caregiver, playmate, adviser, and friend (Attar-Schwartz, Tan, Buchanan, Flouri, and Griggs, 2009). Wan Chi Chen (2015) also states that "intimate relationships" with grandparents are positively linked with adolescents' "levels of happiness". The positive impact is more prominent in single-parent families. The active involvement of grandparents or co-residence also improves the relationship the single parents share with their children; for example, they get more time involved in their children's lives and interact more with them.

Institutions in the larger society also have a role in recognising the different needs of single-parent families. Stefanski, Valli, and Jacobson (2016), in their study of the role of the family in school-community partnerships, found that much research indicates that a close relationship between the schools and the larger community helps in student learning, improved schools, and stronger families and neighbourhoods. The school and the larger community have an essential role in single-parent families. According to Oyebade (2013), whose work centred on the necessity for building healthy and supportive environments for single-parent families, "School culture and climate must be welcoming to diverse family structures and accommodating to their families".

### **Theoretical Framework**

The *Social Capital Theory* of James Coleman is critical to studying human relations, especially in the context of their social network or social ties. Coleman defined *social capital* as "a variety of entities with two elements in common: They all consist of some aspect of social structures, and they facilitate certain action of actors-whether persons or corporate actors-within the structure" (Coleman 1988a: 98; 1990: 302). Coleman's theory has a structural-functionalist base. Tzanakis (2013), in his article, says, "For Coleman, social capital is *productive*, i.e., it is used so that actors can achieve particular ends that would have been impossible without it. So it

has a clear instrumental purpose. In lines similar to Bourdieu (one of the first theorists to systematically analyse social capital), Coleman defines *social capital* as “a collective resource utilisable by actors who are goal-oriented”. Social capital requires an element of *embeddedness* in the social structure (Granovetter, 1985). Also similar to Bourdieu is Coleman’s idea that social capital essentially resides in the “social structure of *relationships* among people”. This dimension sets it apart from financial and human capital (Tzanakis, 2013). Coleman differs from Bourdieu only in his view of social capital as a *bonding* mechanism that adds to the *integration* of social structure. For Coleman, social structure predates the agent who can use embedded social capital as a resource (Tzanakis, 2013).

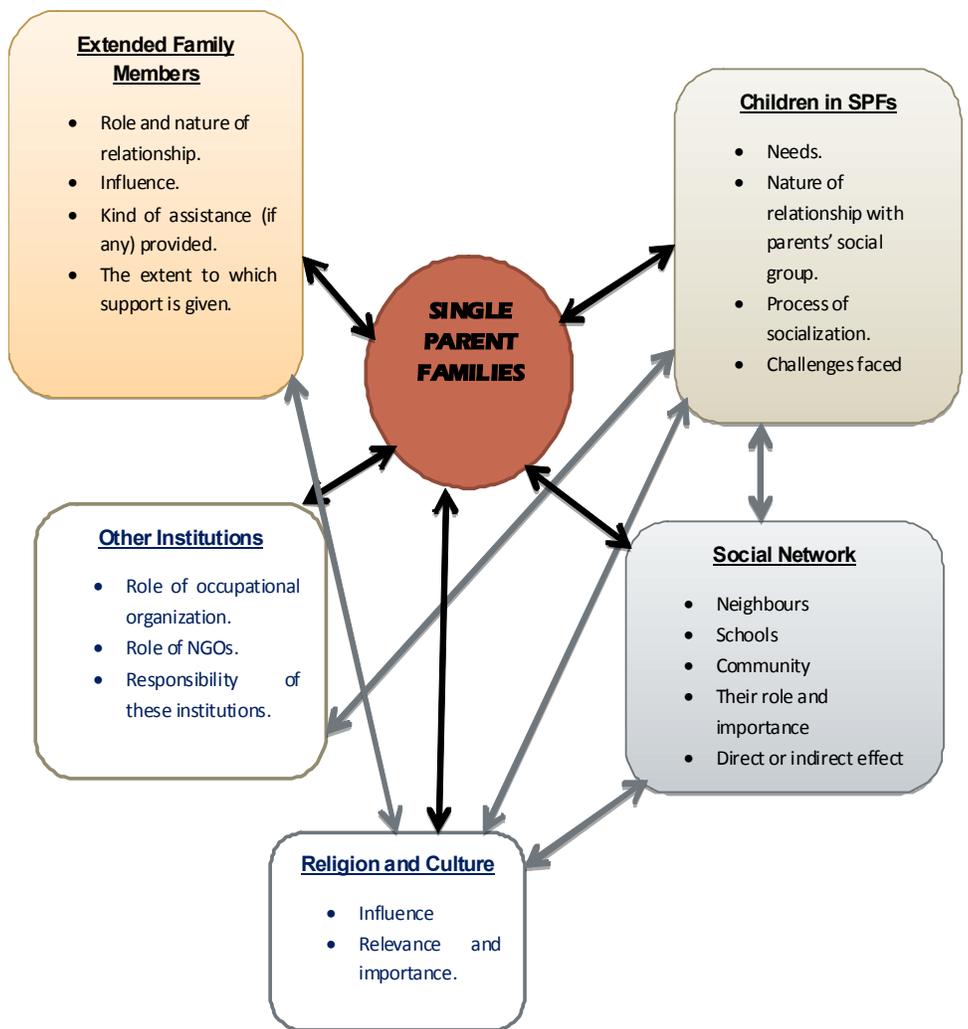
Within the single-parent family, the social capital of its members can be studied at various levels. For the children, their parents’ physical presence and attention will be crucial social capital for them. Social capital would also include a relationship with members of the extended family. The single parent’s social circle beyond the extended family would also count as their social capital. Therefore, the social capital theory creates a strong base for studying single-parent families’ social ties and networks and how they positively influence them.

The Ecological Systems Theory developed by American psychologist Urie Bronfenbrenner explains how human development is influenced by different types of environmental systems (Ettetal & Mahoney, 2017). This theory stressed the importance of studying a child in multiple environments, also known as ecological systems, to understand his development. A child typically finds himself simultaneously enmeshed in different ecosystems, from the most private home ecological system moving outward to the more extensive school system and the most comprehensive society and culture system. Each of these systems inevitably interacts with and influences each other in every aspect of the child’s life. There are four interrelated types of environmental systems in Bronfenbrenner’s classic rendition of ecological systems theory, namely, the (1) micro-, (2) meso-, (3) exo-, and (4) macro systems. These levels range from smaller, proximal settings in which individuals directly interact to more extensive distal settings that indirectly influence development.

Thus, one can place the single-parent family and the relation between the parent and children within the micro system for this research. In the mesosystem, one can place the extended family members, school, teachers, classmates, friends, neighbours, and religious groups. In the exosystem, the employers of the single parent can be placed. In the macro system, the focus would be on the popular beliefs about single-parent families, government policies for single-parent families, and the class and

economic status of the single-parent family. These are some of the critical aspects that affect single-parent families on which the research study shall be focusing. It is explained more clearly in the Concept Map given below. Therefore, the ecological systems theory of Bronfenbrenner provides an essential base for conducting the present research on single-parent families and their social ties, especially in surmising how the children in these families perceive these relationships.

**CONCEPT MAP**



### **Objectives of the Study**

- To study the role of other family members in single-parent families.
- To understand the role of the other social ties of single parents beyond their extended family.
- To understand the kinds of relationships the children of single parents have with these additional adults.

### **Methodology**

The research study undertaken was qualitative. The data was collected using qualitative methods. The research focused on an in-depth study of 5 single-parent families. The sampling method used for selecting the five single-parent families was purposive snowball sampling. The criteria for choosing the participants for the sample were any individual who is a single parent. The ideal tool for this study was considered to be an unstructured in-depth interview guide with open-ended questions. No particular order of questions was followed during the interviews.

### **Key Findings**

#### **Profile of research participants**

The findings of the research study were categorised based on the conceptual framework. As mentioned before, the data collected from the multiple cases, being contextual, were compared and analysed. The following are the major findings from the five cases.

Among the extended family members of the single-parent families under study, the parents and siblings of the single parent had the most important role to play. One of the research participants shared, that her cohabiting with her parents was an important source of support in managing her professional and familial responsibilities. She also felt a sense of responsibility in caring for her parents as they were helping her cope with being a single parent. For one research participant, the role of his deceased spouse's parents and sisters was crucial in the rearing and caring of his son. The assurance of their assistance was crucial in the research participant's ability to maintain the balance between his work and home life. For the research participants under study, monetary support was also mostly received from their family members and the other forms of support they could provide. Therefore, immediate family members were deeply involved in four out of five of the cases in providing support to the single-parent family in managing the challenges of their situation.

Beyond the extended family, the school, the neighbours, the employers, and the religious affiliations of the single parents had an important role to play in the functioning of their families. For one of the research participants, their relationship with their religious group and “guru” helped them cope with the trauma of divorce and fight to survive for their children. For two of the research participants, their employers were important in providing them with financial support.

The neighbours of some of the research participants were crucial entities for providing emotional and physical support in times of crisis and being important participants during times of joy. The social network that the single parents have built through their daily associations with their neighbours, colleagues, employers, and religious groups has helped them access important resources, whether financial, emotional, physical, or psychological.

The children of the single parents had extremely close relationships with their grandparents (in cases where there was direct involvement) and parents’ siblings. In one case, the research participant’s son was extremely close to the parent’s sister and the sister’s husband, going as far as calling them “Maa” and “Papa”. For one research participant, her close association with her children’s school helped her teachers and headmistress play a crucial role in providing psychological and emotional support to the children due to their awareness of the family’s circumstances.

The neighbours were also an important group that had close relationships with the children of the research participants. One research participant shared that she was secure in knowing that if she had to go somewhere, she could keep her son with them. The social network that the single parents have built plays a crucial role in the socialisation of their children as well as their upbringing and the shaping of their worldview.

## **General findings**

### ***Concern about children’s future***

One of the most common factors across all the five cases was the overriding concern of the single parents to settle their children. Almost all their worries and stress, whether economic or otherwise, are related to their children’s future. The parents are focused and dedicated to earning money to ensure a proper education for their children, which they feel will assure them a good job. This is in the larger hopes of their children leading independent lives and not having to rely on anyone else for their sustenance.

### ***Fear of society's judgement***

All the single parents interviewed expressed a need not to create any instance where people in the society could judge them negatively. They felt that being single parents opened them to a lot of scrutiny and criticism, which generally would not have happened if they had been a two-parent family. They stress a lot about their children behaving appropriately and performing well in academic and extra-curricular activities. This is to ensure that the people in the society do not judge them for not fulfilling their children's needs.

All the research participants stressed that they did not want society to raise any questions about the way they conducted their familial and professional duties. This is why they feel a constant need to be in an equal setting as two-parent families.

### ***Conscious maintenance of relationships***

Another common factor among the five cases was the awareness of their status as a lone parent. The research participants mentioned that they are conscious of the need to maintain good relationships with their extended family members, neighbours, and friends because they were very intrinsically aware that they needed the support that these individuals could provide them. This is not a calculated move but a passive acceptance of the lack of other support mechanisms in their lives. This prompts them to maintain relationships with people in their social networks and groups. Therefore, their social network and groups are the most essential point of contact for support in all its forms.

### ***The key role of social groups in providing social support***

The support the single parents are receiving from the different social groups varies across the five cases. For example, some of the research participants shared the support they receive from their neighbours in times of crisis. They feel strengthened by the mere assurance that their neighbours will be with them through the difficult times even though they cannot help them financially. Financial support is primarily given by extended family members or the single parents' employers.

The important point to note here is that no group exclusively provides a particular type of support. It is very subjective to the context of each family. It is also possible for one social group to provide multiple types of support to the single-parent family.

### *Conclusion and Discussion*

The focus of the study was on five single-parent families in Kolkata. Each case was carefully studied, keeping the standard parameters in mind. These parameters included the job status of the single parent, the economic condition of the family, the reason behind them being a single parent, their relationship with their extended family and their spouse's extended family, role in the larger community, their children's school and the single parent families' coping mechanisms. The research study also focused on the single-parent families' neighbourhood, area of residence, and proximity to extended family. What emerged from collecting and analysing this data were the common struggles of single parenthood, the immense attention that single parents gave to their children, the almost obsessive need to not let society's perception of them be negative, and the focus on securing their children's future. These were the common threads between the five case studies.

Despite the struggle being the same for all the single parents, the five cases also presented many instances of diversity. All the five research participants have engaged in different occupations, and the family income of all the participants varied greatly. However, even in the case where the monetary conditions were stable, there was still a fear of not having enough to provide for their children. The fear was the same across the cases, but the coping mechanisms for dealing with the stress were different. For someone, it was being closely involved with their faith, conducting activities related to their faith, exploring their interests, or engaging in recreational activities with their children and other family members.

As mentioned, many times before, the main concern for all the single parents was to protect and provide for their children till they were settled. They felt a deep sense of duty and responsibility. One can assume that this need to see their children well settled comes from the fact that they do not want to provide society a chance to question their ability to care for and provide for their children. This is due to their status as single parents, which is considered inadequate by a large majority of the people even today, stemming from the belief that every child requires two parents. But through the course of this research study, the one thing that has been proven is that there are a lot of people involved in providing a child with the most productive environment to grow and develop. So, it does take a village to raise a child.

In the study conducted, one of the major things that emerged from the findings is the sense of fear and the constant pressure the single parents feel with regard to the stability of their life. Despite having jobs and being able to provide for their family,

they are extremely conscious of the consequences of suddenly finding themselves without any source of income. In a situation such as this, it is important to have mechanisms that could act as a safety net for single parents and help reduce their anxiety and stress.

However, India does not have policies, schemes, or programmes specifically for single parents. Apart from the Widow Pension Scheme, which provides a very minimal sum of money, there are no other assistance programmes that could potentially benefit single parents. There is a dearth of data on single parents in the country in terms of their number. There is no separate data collected on the total number of single-parent families in the country, and they are therefore invisible. This does not insinuate that they are less in number in India. It shows that their needs and requirements have not been given separate recognition.

Not a lot of studies have been conducted on single-parent families in India either. Neither the single parents nor the children from single-parent families have found adequate representation in the research studies undertaken in India so far. There is a need to encourage more research on the lives of single-parent families because if we are not aware of their lifestyles, it will be difficult to understand their needs and provide for them. It is also important to put their stories forward to realise that they are not alone in their struggle and that a platform can be created for single parents to collaborate and share their experiences with another.

In the study conducted, the researcher has aimed to understand the social network of single-parent families and their support systems. Single parents are largely able to form such networks naturally; it is done most of the time unconsciously. However, they need to be aware that this is a positive thing for them to do. Of course, they have to be careful about which persons they can trust. However, that mistrust of the unknown should not act as a barrier to their socialisation with the world and then negatively impact their children's socialisation process. The importance of social networks and social support systems must be made known to all single parents.

The media also has a vital role in giving adequate representation and visibility to single-parent families and their problems. The movies and series we watch and are exposed to do not adequately represent single-parent families, nor are they being mainstreamed. The notion of single-parent families continues to be as a rare occurrence. Other countries have been documenting single-parent families for decades, and in India, it is not even being discussed in the larger scope of things. It is then the responsibility of the media to refine the content they are sending out to people and ensure that single-parent families are not looked at as the exception.

Most research studies have looked at single-parent families from a very negative lens. A lot of the focus has been on the negative impact it has on the children who belong to single-parent families and how single parents are not able to cope with the responsibilities alone. But this is not the truth in so many cases, as “most single parents are able to provide the structure, values, and nurturance their children need despite the challenges and criticisms they face from society” (Quinn, 2011; Hawkins & Eggebeen, 1991). A lot of the research conducted on children from single-parent families has shown that they are eventually able to develop despite the crisis type situation like divorce or death of a parent might create. Although the incident remains a traumatic experience, the children have shown resilience in coping with the situation positively.

There is much scope in terms of studying single-parent families. There are so many aspects of their lives that need to be explored and looked at in detail. Close attention needs to be paid to the children of single parents. There are no particular trend within the society that can be attributed to them like it is done in other countries, as there is no data or information on them. The development and growth of the children in single-parent families are affected by a multitude of things and these need to be studied and analysed; the findings will add to the knowledge in the sphere of child development. It is important to focus on the attributes, problems and needs of children of single parents and understand their perceptions and ideas.

The experiences of single parents and their children need to be given a voice and must be studied in greater detail. Their problems and needs cannot and should not be ignored any longer. Combined efforts of non-governmental organisations and governmental institutions are required to understand and provide assistance to single-parent families in India. This is the only way single-parent families will get the recognition and representation that has been denied to them for so long.

### **Recommendations**

Four different stakeholders like policy makers, researchers, schools and civil society organisations need to play their roles that would enhance the wellbeing of single parent family. The areas of their engagement and contribution respectively are as below.

#### **For policymakers**

Recognising that single parenthood is shared and consciously works towards addressing their needs through policies and schemes targeted towards helping them;

to think beyond the household, and to work towards creating networks of single-parent families so that they can connect and form support systems of their own.

### **For Researchers**

They are providing more data on single-parent families and creating awareness regarding their lives and the different mechanism they use to manage their day-to-day lives. Increasing the visibility of the single-parent families through wider representation in the media and studies and reports focused on them. They are acknowledging and addressing the needs of the children of single parents. Extensive longitudinal analysis of children living in single-parent families should be done to understand long-term outcomes and the effect of other additional factors.

### **For Schools**

Identifying the needs of the children from single-parent families and recognising the difficulties of the single parents and working with them in the child's best interest.

### **For Civil Society Organisations**

Recognising single-parent families as a vulnerable and marginalised group, especially the children, and working towards their empowerment. Creating avenues for single-parent families with meagre incomes to sustain themselves without compromising their children's future.

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## **Effectiveness and Health Challenges of Online Education faced by College Students in COVID-19 Pandemic**

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### **Abstract**

The physical “brick and mortar” classroom is starting to lose its monopoly as the place of learning. The Internet has made online learning possible and many researchers and educators are interested in online learning to enhance and improve student learning outcomes while combating the reduction in resources, particularly in higher education. It is imperative that researchers and educators consider the effectiveness of online learning compared to traditional face-to-face format and the factors that influence the effectiveness of online courses. Technology is a proven teaching aid, and online teaching has facilitated teaching across borders; however, although technology has proved to be an effective teaching aid, it cannot replace a teacher. There are many reports that discuss the constraints of only using online classes, and, as a result, the use of both online and face to face classes has been advocated. The COVID-19 pandemic, however, has forced teachers and lecturers to rely solely on online classes. This study attempts to find out the effectiveness and health challenges which include the physical, psychological and social health of the college students in time of COVID-19.

**Keywords:** *effectiveness, Online education, health challenges, COVID-19.*

### **Introduction**

The physical “brick and mortar” classroom is starting to lose its monopoly as the place of learning. The Internet and the World Wide Web have made significant changes to almost all aspects of our lives ranging from a global economy, personal, and professional networks to sources of information, news, and learning. The Internet

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has made online learning possible, and many researchers and educators are interested in online learning to enhance and improve student learning outcomes while combating the reduction in resources, particularly in higher education (Nguyen, 2015). Moreover, there have also been increases in demand for online learning from students from all walks of life. Given the exponential some would say precipitous growth of online education and its potential in higher education, it is imperative that researchers and educators examine the effectiveness of online learning in educating students compared to traditional face-to-face learning. Thus, the question of “To what extent does the body of work on online learning indicate that online learning is as least as effective in educating students as the traditional format. The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in schools to shut all across the world. Globally, over 1.2 billion children are out of the classroom. As a result, education has changed dramatically, with the distinctive rise of e-learning, whereby teaching is undertaken remotely and on digital platforms.

### **Research Suggests Online Efficacious**

Learning has been shown to increase retention of information, and take less time, meaning the changes coronavirus have caused might be here to stay. While countries are at different points in their COVID-19 infection rates, worldwide there are currently more than 1.2 billion children in 186 countries affected by school closures due to the pandemic. In Denmark, children up to the age of 11 are returning to nurseries and schools after initially closing on 12 March 2019, but in South Korea students are responding to roll calls from their teachers online. With this sudden shift away from the classroom in many parts of the globe, some are wondering whether the adoption of online learning will continue to persist post-pandemic, and how such a shift would impact the worldwide education market. Even before COVID-19, there was already high growth and adoption in education technology, with global edtech investments reaching US\$18.66 billion in 2019 and the overall market for online education projected to reach \$350 Billion by 2025.

Whether it is language apps, virtual tutoring, video conferencing tools, or online learning software, there has been a significant surge in usage since COVID-19. The World Health Organization has declared COVID-19 as a pandemic that has posed a contemporary threat to humanity. This pandemic has successfully forced global shutdown of several activities, including educational activities, and this has resulted in tremendous crisis-response migration of universities with online learning serving as the educational platform. The crisis-response migration methods of universities, faculty and students, challenges and opportunities were discussed, and it is evident that online learning is different from emergency remote teaching, online learning will be more sustainable while instructional activities will become more hybrid provided the

challenges experienced during this pandemic are well explored and transformed to opportunities. In this study, the researcher explores the effectiveness of online classes for college students and what are the challenges faced by them, which can be physical, psychological and social challenges.

### **Review of Literature**

About online education, Harasim (1996) commented that human communication over distributed computer networks, developed in the early 1970s has within its short history contributed to launching a new environment for educational delivery and interaction: Online Education. Computer networking and conferencing have found important practical application in education with such innovative developments as online delivery of courses, networked classrooms, and knowledge networks linking peers and experts. The benefits have been powerful and compelling and have contributed to a paradigm shift in education. This shift is especially evident in higher education. This chapter examines key dimensions of the online educational paradigm shift and explores the implications for the future of educational computer networking.

Harasin (2000), addresses a paradigm shift: online education as a new paradigm in learning. It begins by presenting an overview of the history of online education as a context and framework for understanding the state of the art today, especially the use of network technologies for collaborative learning in post-secondary education. Beginning with the innovations of early pioneers as contributing to the paradigmatic shift, it provides a framework for understanding this new field. The article then focuses on the Virtual-U, a Web-based environment especially customised to support advanced educational practices. The Virtual-U research team hosts the largest field trials in post-secondary education in the world with empirical results and insights generated from over 439 courses taught by 250 faculty to 15,000 students, attesting to what works in online education. This article concludes by discussing the signposts to future advances that these data suggest.

Mashile and Pretorius (2003) present the challenges of online education in a developing country: research in higher education. A case study is presented of endeavours to forge ahead with online education, given the constraints of the digital divide. The results of this case study indicate that digital divide considerations can undermine the provision of enhanced pedagogies in distance education programmes and thus contribute to non-development of individuals from low socio-economic backgrounds. Consequently, it is proposed that online education should be incorporated in distance education programmes should the need arise, in part to address the digital divide and in part to enhance learning.

Palvia et al., (2017), online education: Worldwide status, challenges, trends, and implication. Online education in its various modes has been growing steadily worldwide due to the confluence of new technologies, global adoption of the Internet, and intensifying demand for a workforce trained periodically for the ever-evolving digital economy. Online education is on track to become mainstream by 2025. This presents country-level factors that impact quantity and quality of online education. Such factors include industry (business); governments at local, state, and federal levels; country laws; ICT capacity; Internet/mobile technology diffusion; and income and digital divide. We provide implications for country and world organisations concerning online education.

Baber (2020) discussed determinants of students' perceived learning outcome and satisfaction in online learning during the pandemic of COVID-19. The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted the normal functioning of various activities across the world, including learning and education. The shift towards online education during the pandemic of COVID-19 has led many studies to focus on perceived learning outcomes and student satisfaction in this new learning environment. This study aims to examine the determinants resulting in students' perceived learning outcomes and their influence on student satisfaction. The data was collected from undergraduate students in both South Korea and India to gain a cross country study. The study found that the factors—interaction in the classroom, student motivation, course structure, instructor knowledge, and facilitation positively influence students' perceived learning outcome and student satisfaction. There is no significant difference in the students' perceived learning outcome and student satisfaction in the two countries. The study will be helpful for the educationists and academics to identify the factors which will enhance student learning outcome and satisfaction level in online classes during the coronavirus pandemic.

Muthuprasad et al., (2021), describes students' perception and preference for online education in India during COVID-19 pandemic. Educational institutes across the world have closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic jeopardising academic calendars. Most educational institutes have shifted to online learning platforms to keep the academic activities going. However, the questions about the preparedness, designing and effectiveness of e-learning is still not clearly understood, particularly for a developing country like India, where the technical constraints like suitability of devices and bandwidth availability poses a serious challenge. In this study, we focus on understanding Agricultural Student's perception and preference towards online learning through an online survey of 307 students. We also explored the student's preferences for various attributes of online classes, which will be helpful in designing an effective online learning environment. The results indicated that majority of the

respondents (70%) are ready to opt for online classes to manage the curriculum during this pandemic. Majority of the students preferred to use smartphones for online learning. Using content analysis, we found that students prefer recorded classes with quizzes at the end of each class to improve the effectiveness of learning. The students opined that flexibility and convenience of online classes makes it attractive option, whereas broadband connectivity issues in rural areas makes it a challenge for students to make use of online learning initiatives. However, in the agricultural education system where many courses are practical oriented, shifting completely to online mode may not be possible and there is a need to devise a hybrid mode, the insights from this article can be helpful in designing the curriculum for the new normal.

### **Research Methodology**

The study is based on data collected from Don Bosco Arts and Science College and De Paul Arts and Science College in Kannur district, Kerala. The study is in quantitative in nature and the information is collected through self-made questionnaire. The study mainly examines the effectiveness and health challenges of online education faced by college students, who are the final year undergraduate students in the time of COVID-19 pandemic. The selected descriptive research design describes events, phenomenon and situations. This method is used for fact finding. The researcher used stratified random sampling techniques to identify the final year undergraduate students. The sample size of the study was 80 and the researcher collected the information from the unaided management colleges of Kannur district. The researcher collected the consent from each respondent before filling the questionnaire. The responses were then represented as percentages, and statistical analysis was conducted to find the degree of agreement. The data has been analysed with the help of SPSS.

### **Effectiveness of Online Classes**

The study examined the effectiveness and health challenges of online education faced by the college students during the COVID-19 pandemic. The respondents attended the online classes through Zoom and Google Meet. While assessing the effectiveness of online education, researcher found that the students were not very satisfied with the online classes and they are not willing to attend the classes due to lack of exploration and they developed boredom quickly. Most of the students put more efforts towards online classes comparing to the regular offline classes, the reason was that they did not have any previous experience of attending online classes and they were worried about their future. Around 76.3 percentage of the students have network issues during the classes, so they are unable to watch the classes

properly. While assessing the level of understanding online classes, students were unable to understand and follow the classes properly, because they were unable to receive the education completely in an online mode. Students also felt exhausted while attending the online classes because they did not have any exploration and were unable to interact with their teacher and friends and they missed interpersonal interaction which was enjoyed in college with their friends. The students are not satisfied with classes and class materials provided through online medium; they are unable to understand the classes and class materials provided by the teachers. As a conclusion, one can say that the online classes are not significantly effective for the students, as evident in the table below.

**Table-1: Efficacy Levels of On-line Classes**

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Effectiveness of online classes	18	22.5
Satisfaction of online classes	27	33.8
Willingness to attend classes	36	45

### **Health Challenges due to Online Classes**

Health challenges faced by college students due to online classes include physical health, psychological health and social health. Online classes effect the health of students negatively. When discussing the physical health challenges, 67.5 percentage of the students have physical health challenges due to online classes. The continuous use of mobile phones, the sitting position while attending the classes, the effort they take for the online classes leads to these health issues. The respondents mentioned suffering from headaches, vision problems, neck pain, back pain due to online classes. Headache and vision problems are major two physical health challenges due to online classes. The online classes lead to loneliness, depression, anxiety and moods changes. The students experienced loneliness during the COVID-19 pandemic as the colleges were closed and they felt trapped or locked in confined in their rooms and did not have any exploration, interaction with teachers or friends and which led to loneliness and sometimes this loneliness led to depression.

Another issue was the feeling of anxiety and worry for the future. They became anxious and worried about their future, which is due to pending classes and exam and also due the current situation. Some students faced mood changes due to online classes, it's pressure and fear of future. The mood changes can be anger and worry with any reason and tiredness and dysthymia. These are the psychological health challenges due to online classes. The online classes create social health challenges, such as losing interaction with families and friends. They were always in front of the mobile phone for attending the classes and after that they have plenty of work to

complete so they do not get time to spend with their families and friends. Lack of communication is another social problem faced by college students. Sometimes online classes lead to phone addiction among students. These are the health challenges faced by the college students during COVID-19 pandemic are evident in the table below.

**Table-2. Health Challenges of College Students in COVID-19 Situation**

Variables	Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
Headache & vision problems	80	72	90
Depression	80	53	66.3
Anxiety and worry	80	51	64.4
Loneliness	80	73	91
External disturbance	80	53	66.3
Phone addiction	80	57	77
Social isolation	80	75	93.8

### **Evaluation and Suggestion for Online Classes**

While evaluating online education, 78 per cent of the students are not satisfied with online classes. They are not happy or interested in attending the online classes, but they attended the classes only because of the pandemic scenario. They wished to go back to colleges and explore their college life and have fun with their friends. Some students have an opinion that online classes may lead to professionalism loss, because the classes are not structured as compared to regular classes and they cannot be so attentive in online classes. When the students evaluated the education of Kerala during the COVID-19 pandemic, they felt that education was pathetic or pared down in the given conditions. They opened up that the education was below the line due to lockdown and closing of educational institutions and the launching of online classes was not very effective for them. On the other side, odd family attitude toward the online classes is not encouraging. They are not impressed with online education. Suggestion for online classes is to be more effective and in attractive way.

### **Conclusion**

Education provides knowledge and training for the future. Education plays an important role in the development of person's career. Technology plays a vital role in education now. With the help of technology, regular classes changed to online classes or distinct education. In online classes the students can access information from anywhere in the country. Education is a process of learning and knowing, which is not restricted only to textbooks. It is a quiet process and continues throughout our life. Online education is an education that takes place over the Internet.

It is often referred to as ‘e-learning’ among other terms. Computer based training, web-based training, internet-based training, e-learning (electronic learning), m-learning (mobile learning), computer based aided distance education. We all know that COVID-19 pandemic has affected educational systems worldwide, leading to the near total closure of schools, universities and colleges. Most governments around the worlds have temporarily closed educational institutions in an attempt to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Globally, over 1.2 billion children are out of the classroom. As a result, education has changed dramatically, with the distinctive rise of e-learning, whereby teaching is undertaken remotely and on digital platforms. Online learning has been shown to increase retention of information, and takes less time, meaning the changes coronavirus have caused might be here to stay. With this sudden shift from the classroom in many parts of the globe, some are wondering whether the adoption of online learning will continue to persist post pandemic, and how this shift would impact the worldwide education market.

Due to the sudden shift to online education, students faced many difficulties such as physical health problems, psycho-social problems among others. This study attempted to understand the effectiveness and health problems of online education among college students in Kannur district. Findings show that online education does not make an indelible impact on the students, the effectiveness of online education is not very successful and the students undergo many health problems which can be physical health problems such as headache, back pain, vision problems, sleeplessness and psycho social problems which can be stress, tension, anxiety, depression, social isolation and social distraction. The suggestion is to make online classes more effective and attractive, and ensure that everyone has the facilities to attend the classes. The institutions also need to provide recreational programmes to the students to overcome stress or other psychological problems faced by them.

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## **Optimism, Religiosity, Coronavirus Anxiety and Death Anxiety among Adults**

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### **Abstract**

The purpose of this research is to study the influence of religiosity and optimism on Coronavirus Anxiety and Death Anxiety among adults. The need for this paper stems from the existing unavailability of adequate empirical evidence on the relationship between an individual's belief in a religion, their tendency to be optimistic, and their levels of anxiety towards the prospect of contracting the coronavirus and death in the Indian context. The sample for this paper includes 230 individuals above the age of 18 from different religions in India. Life Orientation Test-Revised, The Centrality of Religiosity Scale, Coronavirus Anxiety Scale and Death Anxiety Scale are the tools used to collect data. The results of this study indicate that there exists a relationship between Religiosity and Optimism, and Death Anxiety and Coronavirus Anxiety.

**Keywords:** *optimism, religiosity, Death anxiety, Coronavirus anxiety.*

### **Introduction**

The global scenario since the commencement of the pandemic has become such that the novel coronavirus has become a part of every human being's life to a large extent. It presents itself as an unprecedented challenge to everyone's livelihood and health—a challenge that we don't fully comprehend to the depth of its impact. Like most things new, there can be a tendency for every individual to feel uncomfortable or afraid of the novel coronavirus. And this could lead to some stress/unsettling around the virus. Hence, understanding the factors associated with coronavirus and its consequent anxiety is much needed. Coronavirus anxiety comprises extreme psychological and physiological stress caused by the virus, whether in terms of

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contracting the virus or its impact on one's health or its consequences in different dimensions, such as financial, social, etc. **Coronavirus Anxiety** is the term used to describe dysfunctional anxiety associated with the coronavirus crisis.

Another related fear that people often have could be associated with their mortality or the prospect of facing death, which in these times could also be the result of the aforementioned coronavirus-related anxiety. Death anxiety is a feeling of dread or discomfort due to the constant worry associated with the thought of dying or losing a loved one.

**Death Anxiety** is a collection of death attitudes characterised by fear, threat, unease, and discomfort with death (Neimeyer, Moser, and Wittkowski, 2003). Lonetto & Templer (1986) defined death anxiety as an individual's unpleasant thoughts and feelings about his/her death. Khalek and Neimeyer (2017) describe it as a relatively stable personality trait referring to a negative attitude towards and negative affect and cognitions concerning death and dying, whether of self or significant others or the idea of death in general.

**Coronavirus anxiety** and **Death Anxiety** are not inherent characteristics or concepts. They are a product of societal influence and the information acquired via various means, such as the press, film and television, social circles, and to a large extent, social media. The intensity of these two concepts and their perceptions varies from person to person and mainly revolves around fear.

Optimism is a trait that can be a protective factor and coping mechanism. Religiosity can be a source of hope and strength for those who practice the same. Optimism can be either dispositional or situational. We will be focusing on dispositional optimism as a whole. Dispositional optimism is a generalised expectancy of positive future outcomes (Scheier & Carver, 1985). It has proven to be of value for individuals suffering from a variety of mental health issues.

Religiosity is a multi-layered notion consisting of motivational, emotional and behavioural characteristics as well as different religious activities, commitments, beliefs and religious practices in organised institutions such as masjid, church, mandir, etc. Religious belief may provide greater purpose and believes in immortality. Religious texts and leaders often discuss those topics in great detail, guiding religious followers. There are several ways to assess the level of religiosity in different religious individuals. Glock (1962) proposed a multidimensional model of religiosity, which includes: Ideological (belief), Intellectual (knowledge), Ritualistic (religious behaviour, e.g., church attendance), Experiential (feeling, emotion), and Consequential (the other

four dimensions' secular effect) dimensions. Huber later revised this model. This model included dimensions of **Intellect, Ideology, Public Practice, Private Practice and Religious Experience**.

According to Huber & Huber (2012), the Centrality of Religiosity Scale makes use of these dimensions. The dimension of **Intellect** refers to “the social expectation that religious people have some knowledge of religion, and that they can explain their views on transcendence, religion and religiosity”. The dimension of **Ideology** refers to “the social expectation that religious individuals have beliefs regarding the existence and the essence of a transcendent reality and the relation between the transcendence and human”. The dimension of **Public Practice** refers to “the social expectation that—religious individuals belong to religious communities. And this is manifested in the public participation in religious rituals and communal activities”. The dimension of **Private Practice** refers to “the social expectation that religious individuals devote themselves to transcendence in individualised activities and rituals in private space”. The dimension of **Experience** refers to “the social expectation that religious individuals have “some direct contact to an ultimate reality which affects them emotionally” (Huber & Huber, 2012).

Most of the existing literature covers these variables extensively on an individual basis or in different combinations. Some literature state that optimism has a negative relationship with death anxiety (Brown, 2011). Previous research has also established that optimism is associated with adaptive outcomes and well-being and that optimism would mediate the negative impacts of coronavirus stress on adults' optimism and pessimism. This could indicate the reason that people with high levels of coronavirus stress report greater psychological problems is because they have high levels of psychological inflexibility and lower levels of optimism. The theoretical underpinnings of this prediction are that stress may lead to greater psychological inflexibility and pessimism. Lower optimism may lead to greater psychological problems (Barnett et al., 2018). Previous research also states that age, gender and religiousness were significant predictors of death anxiety. Besides the literature we have reviewed, there doesn't seem to be much research that studies all four variables together which further contributes to the need to conduct this study.

The *purpose of this research study* is to investigate the influence of religiosity and optimism on Coronavirus anxiety and death anxiety. With levels of global anxiety on the rise since the spread of the novel coronavirus (Salari, et al., 2020), the need for this study is to identify if traits like optimism or belief in and practising religion can help individuals deal with adverse/unforeseen situations like the pandemic and/or death.

This emergence of the unforeseen pandemic is a phenomenon that affects everybody, regardless of their age or gender. Therefore, we also wanted to examine whether, in this situation of an imminent coronavirus pandemic, participants would find themselves thinking about death (more than usual). And we wanted to investigate if that could lead to having anxiety around the potentiality of dying.

## **Method**

### **Objectives**

- To explore the relationship between optimism, religiosity, death anxiety, and Coronavirus anxiety.
- To study the influence of optimism and religiosity on death anxiety and Coronavirus anxiety.

### **Hypotheses**

- H1:** There would be no significant relationship between an individual's optimism and religiosity.
- H2:** There would be no significant relationship between an individual's optimism and death anxiety.
- H3:** There would be no significant relationship between an individual's optimism and Coronavirus anxiety.
- H4:** There would be no significant relationship between an individual's religiosity and death anxiety.
- H5:** There would be no significant relationship between an individual's religiosity and Coronavirus anxiety.
- H6:** There would be no significant relationship between an individual's death anxiety and Coronavirus anxiety.

### **Tools Used**

1. Life Orientation Test-Revised (Scheier, Carver & Bridges, 1994)
2. The Centrality of Religiosity Scale (Huber & Huber, 2012)
3. Coronavirus Anxiety Scale (Lee, 2020)
4. The Death Anxiety Scale (Templer, 1970)

### **Methodology**

The data for this research study was collected online. The criteria included individuals above the age of 18, inclusive of all genders. A Google form consisting of

the participants' consent, a basic demographic details sheet, and questions from the previously mentioned tools was circulated. Data was collected from two hundred and thirty individuals above the age of 18 via the convenience sampling method. The responses were scored and then analysed using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation, independent sample t-Test, and One-Way ANOVA, with the help of SPSS software.

## Results and Discussion

**Table 1. Correlation between Religiosity, Optimism, Death Anxiety, and Coronavirus Anxiety**

	Optimism	Coronavirus Anxiety
Religiosity	0.176**	-0.104
Death Anxiety	-0.059	0.369*

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**Table 2. Correlation between Optimism and Dimensions of Religiosity**

	Religiosity	Intellect	Ideology	Public Practice	Private Practice	Experience
Optimism	.176**	.121	.177**	.118	.057	.250**

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

This study aimed to investigate if optimism and religiosity can help individuals in dealing with the anxiety that is experienced with regard to adverse or unforeseen situations like the coronavirus pandemic or death. Most of the existing literature covers these variables extensively on an individual basis or in different combinations. There is not much research that studies all four variables together, thus the need to conduct this study. Analysis of the data collected has provided us with results that leave room for several interpretations and a wide range of possibilities to carry this study forward.

As per the results of the correlation, it is indicated that there is a significant relationship between optimism and religiosity. So, H1 is not accepted. These findings corroborate with previous theoretical and empirical work which suggests a positive association between optimism and religiosity (Mattis et al., 2004). The study adds further proof to the existing literature. This finding enhances that optimism cultivated

from and combined with religiosity conveys protection. It could help the individuals foster positive orientations thereby nurturing personal growth through an optimistic outlook. The assuring believers of a particular religion could have a sense of consolation that they receive from following the said religion. They could have a sense of community that could foster this tendency to have a positive expectation of future success.

As per the results of the correlation, there is no significant relationship between **Optimism** and **Death Anxiety**. So, H2 was accepted. This result also echoes those of the other studies whose results suggest that death anxiety is not strongly associated with optimism (Barnett, 2018). This finding could enhance the inevitability of death. And this could indicate that an individual's death anxiety level is not contingent on or influenced by the individual's tendency to have a positive outlook on life.

As per the results, there is no significant relationship between **Optimism** and **Coronavirus Anxiety**. So, H3 was accepted. There is no significant relationship between **Religiosity** and **Death Anxiety** and there is no significant relationship between **Religiosity** and **Coronavirus Anxiety**. So, H4 and H5 were also accepted.

Previous literature has indicated that higher optimism may lead to better functioning in the face of negative or unforeseen life events or changes like the pandemic or death (Nes, 2016; Taylor and Armor, 1996). However, the results of our study were not congruent with previous research. It is also expected that those who engage in religious practices might have lower levels of death anxiety or fear of death because of their strong beliefs or enlightened mindsets, our findings did not indicate the same. When it comes to religiosity and Coronavirus anxiety, there are many ways that the two might be interlinked. But primarily, those who are religious and believe in God might perceive the pandemic as the wrath of God on humanity, or as a test even, which in turn, might keep their anxiety at bay.

However, the scores from the findings indicate no relationship between the two variables, thus implying that this association does not necessarily exist. The above-mentioned findings of the study could be due to the timing in which the research was conducted. The study was conducted at a time when India was experiencing a rapid spread of the coronavirus and the death toll was shooting up. So much so, that almost every family had people who had died due to the virus or were affected by it. On a daily basis, they were hearing of friends, well-wishers and acquaintances losing their lives. So, at a time like this when coronavirus disease and death was all around and it was a universal phenomenon that they were witnessing, they were quite anxious about it. They were grateful about being fine today but uncertain as to what tomorrow

may bring. Though they resorted to divine intervention, they were still anxious about the disease and death as these were incomprehensible and unintelligible.

And finally, we sought to understand the relationship between **Death Anxiety** and **Coronavirus Anxiety**. As per the scores, there is a significant relationship between these two variables and hence H6 was not accepted. This is most likely because the coronavirus has brought about feelings of doom and despair all around the world, with its rate of infection and the initial lack of knowledge surrounding this. Considering that it is an infection that grossly affects one's physical health condition, it only makes sense that it would make people fear for their lives and the lives of their loved ones.

### Implications of the Study

- This area of research has great potential to be explored further. The data surrounding the combination of these four variables is inadequate and adding new contextual and relevant findings can help to understand a presently under-investigated theme.
- In a world where mental health plays an important role, exploring traits, states, and other concepts that may aid in psychological well-being could help. Thus, further digging into the variables touched upon in this paper could yield information that benefits society in the form of theories, interventions, and numerous opportunities and possibilities for individual and social welfare.
- The interventions that aim at reducing the anxiety of individuals may focus more on cognitive and behavioural aspects where they are provided with scientific evidence on how to combat the disease.

### Conclusion

To conclude, the results of this study indicate that there is a relationship between optimism and religiosity and between Coronavirus Anxiety and Death Anxiety. These results suggest that the levels of Coronavirus Anxiety and Death Anxiety in a person are independent of their belief in a religion or their tendency to be optimistic.

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## **Stress of Parents with Differently Abled Children in Kolkata District of West Bengal**

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### **Abstract**

The present study deals with the identification of stress levels of parents with differently abled children ('Divyang') in greater Kolkata District, West Bengal. The conceptual framework of the study was based on two theories of stress: General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS, Hans Selye, 1956) and Appraisal Theory of Stress (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984). The investigators have adopted Proportional Stratified Simple Random Sampling Technique for the purpose of the sample. The sample size was restricted to 400 parents raising four types of differently abled children (ID, VI, HI and ASD). The study found that among the five sub-scales of parental stress of parents with differently abled children, stress in daily hassles was highly significant ( $p=0.004^{****}$ ), followed by stress in Family Functioning ( $0.012^{***}$ ), stress in Social-Support ( $0.028^{**}$ ), Parent-Related Stress ( $p=0.040^{**}$ ) and Child-Related Stress ( $p=0.049^{**}$ ). Statistically significant differences were also observed in Parental Stress Levels among the different groups of parents with differently abled children (ID, VI, HI and ASD).

**Keywords:** *Autism, Disability, Hearing Impairment, Intellectual Disability, Visual Impairment, and Stress.*

### **Introduction**

The birth or diagnosis of a differently abled child in a family leads to a situational crisis. The parents face a great challenge in tackling the problems associated with disabilities in their children. It creates an unanticipated, traumatic event beyond the parents' control (Hoff, 1978). They suffer from emotional disturbances, physical and psychological stress and anxiety, and subsequently develop depressive symptoms.

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Emotional pressure, depressive symptoms, and stress have been cited by WHO (2001) as having the highest burden among parents having differently abled children impairing their psycho-social and physical functioning. These even lead to panic situations such as suicide, parental separation, increased health care costs, morbidity, and mortality.

Parents with differently abled children also experience fatigue in family life, low satisfaction in professional and social life, and resign in the early phases of career (Krauss, 1983). They experience great physical as well as psychological stress as they demand various psychological strategies for effective coping. Stress levels of the parents also increase because of elevated medical expenses, time demands, physical care, and worry about the child's future (Brehaut et al., 2011; Weiss, 2002).

Further, increased exposure to stress can exhibit serious health threats and potentially increase the risk of poor health outcomes for parents (Hung et al., 2010; Thurston et al., 2011; Witt, 2009). Studies also have reported that Parents with differently abled children experience higher level of stress, anxiety, depression, stigma, guilt, shame, etc. and have lower levels of self-confidence, self-esteem and harmony in marriage than parents who do not have any differently abled child (Glidden and Schoolcraft 2003, With et al., 2003, Uguz et al., 2004, Ali et al., 2012, Cantwell et al., 2015). The mental health of the parents of children with intellectual disability has higher stress level than the parents of children without a disability.

In addition, parents of the children with autism have also reported higher stress levels in several studies. Moreover, mothers of the children with a disability have been reported greater stress level than their husbands since mothers demand more social-support and improve relationship coping (Romans-Clarkson, Clarkson, Dittner et al., 1986). A study again noted that children with severe behaviour problems and poor communication skills place a very high demand on the parents as well as on the family members, and the care load falling substantially on the mother rather than their fathers (Sanders and Morgan, 1997). Marital problems such as divorce or separation creep in a greater degree due to the lack of time for nurturing their sexual life as well as for maintaining the needs of the children with disabilities.

Another source of tension is that single parents or divorced parents are often plunged into a typical situation in handling the abnormal behaviours of children with disabilities. Tension may have arisen from socio-economic hardship. A significant stressor is a challenge of finding a proper service that is flexible by nature and offers them enough time to maintain their children with disabilities. Sometimes chronic

stress may arise from the disruptive behaviours of the differently abled children (e.g., tantrums, aggression anxiety, including fearfulness, obsessions, and trauma-related anxieties). In fact, stress may be accompanied by depression and it causes high levels of irritability, communication difficulties, and self-absorbed behaviours in the parents with differently abled children.

### **Conceptual Framework of the Study**

General Adaptation Syndrome (Selye, 1956) and Appraisal Theory of Stress (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984) serves for the conceptual framework of the study. Selye (1956) in his GAS model considers stress as a dependent variable as well as a physiological response pattern. It also hypothesises that stress is a defensive mechanism and it follows the three stages of alarm, resistance, and exhaustion. According to Appraisal Theory, there are two types of appraisals: 'Primary Appraisal' and 'Secondary Appraisal'. Primary Appraisal determines the severity. It is the individual's evaluation of an event or situation as a potential hazard to his or her well-being. Secondary Appraisal is the individual's evaluation of his or her ability to handle the event or situation. Finally, 'Reappraisal' effectively controls the aversion effects of the stressors.

The Parental Stress Index (PSI) was developed on the theory that the total stress a parent experiences is a function of certain salient child characteristics, parent characteristics, and situations that are directly related to the role of being a parent. The PSI identifies dysfunctional parenting and predicts the potential for parental behaviour problems and child adjustment difficulties within the family system. Although its primary focus is on the preschool child, the PSI can be used with parents whose children are 12 years of age or younger.

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To explore the stress levels of parents with Differently Abled Children with respect to:
  - i. Child-Related Stress
  - ii. Parent -Related Stress
  - iii. Stress in Family Functioning
  - iv. Stress in Social-Support
  - v. Stress in Daily Hassles

## **Hypothesis**

The following null hypothesis was formulated for conducting the study:

H<sub>0</sub>1: There exist no significant differences in Parental Stress Levels among the different groups of Parents with differently abled children (ID, VI, HI and ASD).

## **Research Design**

### **Population and Sample**

The population of the study comprised of parents of students with disabilities enrolled in eight (8) special schools in Kolkata, West Bengal (India), including Asutosh Institution for Mentally Retarded, Behala Bodhayan, Calcutta Blind School, Voice of World, Calcutta Deaf and Dumb School, Ideal School for the Deaf, Pradeep Kendra, and Mentaid Special School. The total number of population comprised of 826 sets of parents (both father and mother), a total of 1652 respondents. Parents of four (4) types of differently abled children (MR, VI, HI and ASD) was enlisted in the population. The children were studying in class-IV to X in different special schools in greater Kolkata. Single parents and orphan children were excluded from this study. For the purpose of the sample, the investigator adopted 'Proportional Stratified Simple Random Sampling' method. The total sample size was restricted to 400 parents only. (Parentswith ID/MR children - 36, Parents with VI Children: 46, Parents with HI children: 83, Parents with ASD children: 35). By following Yamane (19670: 886-87) formula, the sample size 322 or more was enough for conducting the aforesaid survey.

$$N = \frac{N}{1 + n(e)^2}$$

### **Tools used - Revised Parenting Stress Index (Abidin, 1983) and its Construction Process**

To explore the Stress Levels of Parents having differently abled children, the researcher adopted the revised version of Parenting Stress Index (Abidin, 1983). The Parental Stress Index-Long Form (PSI-LF) consisted of 120 items representing child and parent characteristics domains (101 items) and an optional stressful life events scale (19 items). AMOS-21 version was used in this study because it is quickly emerging as a powerful approach to measure unobserved variables using the Structural Equation Modelling (SEM). The researcher calculated Exploratory Factor Analysis

(EFA) to summarise data by grouping together variables that were inter-correlated. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) necessitates the estimation and specification of one or more hypothesised models of factors structure, each of which proposes a set of latent variables (factors) to account for covariance among a set of observed variables. Referring to Table 1, we can see the accounted cumulative variance with the 72 items PSI scale.

As directed by Munro (2005), the researcher utilised the Kaiser–Meyer–Oklin (KMO) test to compare the zero-order correlations to the partial correlations between pairs of variables. Kaiser (1974) argued that if KMO is greater than 0.50, it is acceptable. The KMO in EFA in the study model was 0.91. The closer the KMO to one (1), the better the correlations between pairs of variables that can be explained by the other variables. The Cronbach’s alphas for the 72-items eleven-factors model of PSI scale in the current study were estimated as equal or higher than the 101-item.

To examine the multivariate normality of the data Analysis of Moment Structure (AMOS, version 21.0) software was utilised (Arbuckle 2012). Normality assessment was usually rejected on the ground that the ratio of skewness was higher than -1 and/or, kurtosis was higher than -2 (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994). The 72 items’ distribution in the current study was accepted as none of them departed from normality. Following the guideline of AMOS analysis (Arbuckle 2012), items (observed indicators) were enclosed in rectangles. Factors (latent variables) were enclosed in circles, whereas measurement errors were enclosed in ellipses. The structural model is identified by eleven interrelated constructs, connected to each other with double-headed arrows representing a pattern of inter-correlations. The single-headed arrows leading from the circles to the rectangles are regression paths representing the link between the factors and their respective set of observed variables; these coefficients represent factor loading. Moreover, the single-headed arrows from ellipses to rectangles represent measurement error associated with observed variables.

Confirmatory factor analysis was performed using the estimation method of the Maximum Likelihood over the variance-covariance matrix for the three-factor model through the AMOS 21.0 statistical package (Arbuckle, 2012). To achieve model identification, regression coefficients of the error terms over the endogenous variables were fixed to 1. The CFA was performed in order to determine whether the hypothesised statistical model fits the actual data set.

A number of ‘goodness-of-fit’ statistics were used on the three-factor models derived by means of EFA. It is recommended to consider a variety of fit indices so that the weakness of a particular index is counteracted by the strength of another

(March et al., 1996). The commonly used fit statistics include the comparative fit index (CFI), goodness-of-fit index (GFI), and incremental fit index (IFI), all with a range 0–1 and with values greater than 0.90 indicating a good fit (Wang et al., 1996). The root means square error of approximation (RMSEA) of 0.05 or less indicates a ‘close fit’, while values of more than 0.1 justify rejecting the model (Browne and Cudeck, 1989). The goodness-of-fit indices of the 72-item model were exceeding the 101-item model in most of the indices (See Table 2).

**Table 1. Cronbach’s Alpha, Reliability for the 2 Sub-Scales in 72 Items and 101 Items**

Model	Child-related Stress	Parent-Related Stress	Total Scale
101 items	47 items: 0.89	64 items: 0.92	90.5
72 items	35 items: 0.91	37 items: 0.94	92.5

**Table 2. Goodness-of-Fit Indices for Two Models**

Model	X <sup>2</sup> *	d.f.*	P*	X <sup>2</sup> /d.f.*	GFI*	AGFI*	CFI*	IFI*	RMSEA
101 items	3486.7	1784	<0.1	1.954	0.87	0.94	0.92	0.79	0.07
72 items	2445.8	1202	<0.01	2.034	0.92	0.98	0.96	0.87	0.07

\* x<sup>2</sup>/d.f.: relative chi-square.

*GFI, Goodness-of-fit index; AGFI, Adjusted GFI; CFI, Comparative fit index; IFI, Increment fit index; RMSEA, root mean square error of approximation.*

**Parental Stress Index (PSI) Administration and Scoring**

The PSI can be administered and scored by individuals without professional training, but interpretation of the measure should involve an individual with graduate-level training in tests and measurement. Most parents completed the questionnaire in about 20 minutes, though no time limit was given. Respondents were asked to read the instructions on the first page of the item booklet and then respond to each item by circling SA (strongly agree), A (agree), NS (not sure), D (disagree), or SD (strongly disagree) on the answer sheet. The respondent’s answers are recorded on the scoring sheet via carbon transfer (if the EZ score form is used). The Child Domain sub-scale and the Parent Domain factor scores are calculated by summing the appropriate sub-scales within each domain.

To obtain the Total Stress score, users sum the Child Domain score and the Parent Domain score. Percentile scores corresponding to each of the sub-scale raw scores are provided on the profile page. Percentile scores are derived from the frequency distribution of the normative sample. Sub-scale scores may be interpreted individually; however, scores are best considered in relation to each other. The Total Stress score can be used to gauge whether professional intervention might be warranted. Total Stress raw scores greater than 60% suggests a need for referral to an appropriate professional for consultation. The revised PSI consists of 72 items. It yields a Total Stress Score, plus scale scores for both child and parent characteristics, which pinpoint sources of stress within the family. The child characteristics are measured in six sub-scales: Distractibility/Hyperactivity, Adaptability, Reinforces Parent, Demandingness, Mood, and Acceptability. The parent personality and situational variables component consists of seven sub-scales: Competence, Isolation, Attachment, Health, Role Restriction, Depression, and Spouse.

### **Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scales III:**

To assess the stress in Family Functioning of Parents having differently abled children, Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scales III (Olson, Bell, and Portner, 1982) was also attached to the revised PSI scale. This scale composed of 20 items, each measured using a 5-point Likert scale, that covered parental perception of the degree of emotional cohesiveness and the degree of adaptability within the family, with higher scores indicating greater amounts of the descriptor. (Almost never=1, Once in a while=2, Sometimes=3, Frequently=4, and Almost always=5). FACES-III obtained enough internal/consistency values that are fairly high ( $r=0.68$ ) as well as high test-retest reliability ( $r=0.80$ ). The very low correlation between scales ( $r=0.03$ ) provided that it has sufficient validity to utilise in measuring family functioning in parents having differently abled children. Over 500 research projects had already adopted the FACES scales.

**Stress in Social-Support-** To assess the stress in Social-Support, an Interview Schedule had been administered, including two sub-domains: Helpfulness of the Network (Qs No-1- 7) and Size of Network (Qs.No.8-13). This Interview Schedule followed the following five points scoring system: 5=Strongly Agree, 4= Agree, 3=Undecided, 2= Disagree, 1=Strongly Disagree.

**Stress in Daily Hassles-** To identify the stress in Daily Hassles in Parents with differently abled children, an Interview Schedule had been administered including 15 items. This Interview Schedule followed the following five points scoring system: 5=Strongly Agree, 4= Agree, 3=Undecided, 2= Disagree, 1=Strongly Disagree.

### Statistical Procedure

To understand the Stress Level of Parents with Differently Abled Children, the investigators calculate Mean and SD value of each item of research question, Percentage of Means and SDs and p-values. Minitab-20 version has been applied to find out the statistical scores rapidly. The test is statistically significant if the calculated p-value is  $\leq 0.05$  (5% level of significance). Statistically low significant level (i.e., \* $p \leq .1$  or, 10% level of significance) is also reflected in the analysis of the data. Each sub-scale of Parental Stress in the Parents with differently abled children has differently criteria for measuring their stress values and significance of each sub-scales is estimated through their PMS values and p-values, not on the basis of total Mean scores. In the study, Mean scores reflect the average responses of parents having children with disabilities with reference to their stress level. On the other hand, converting Mean scores to percentages indicates the average percentage of the score relative to the total score.

### Analysis and Interpretation of Data

Parental stress scores are represented under the five sub-scales of the Parenting Stress in parents with differently abled children: Child-Related Stress Scale, Parent-Related Stress Scale, Family Functioning Scale, Social-Support Scale and Stress in Daily Hassles.

Referring to Table No. 3, we can observe the stress levels of parents with differently abled children. The study reveals that majority (54.5%) of parents raising differently abled children have experienced severe parental stress (total Mean score  $438.70 \pm 194.60$ , PS 72.60), 30.5 % have moderate parental stress (mean score  $418.20 \pm 178.46$ , PS= 58.34) whereas only 12 % of parents have mild parental stress (total mean score is  $398.04 \pm 165.00$ , PS =40.44). Roughly, 3% of the Parents with differently abled children do not have experienced stress in their parenting process (total mean score  $230.60 \pm 78.28$ , PS = 31.60).

**Table 3: Levels of Stress among Parents with differently abled children**

Levels of Stress	% of Parents with differently abled children	Mean (Total Sample)	SD (Total sample)	Percent Score
Severe	54.5%	438.70	194.60	72.60
Moderate	30.5%	418.20	178.46	58.34
Mild	12.0%	398.04	165.00	40.44
Nil	3.0%	230.60	78.28	31.60

Referring to Table 4, we can see that parents with autistic children experience a higher level of stress (PMS = 69.64), followed by parents with ID children (PMS = 65.50), parents with VI children (PMS = 58.45) and parents with HI children (PMS = 54.73). The total mean value of all five sub-scales of parenting stress among parents with autistic children is significantly higher than other three types of parents with differently abled children (ID, VI and HI).

Referring to Table 4, we can claim that the highest type of Child-Related Stress among the parents with differently abled children falls into Distractibility (PMS = 68.12), followed by Demandingness (PMS=66.50), Reinforces Parents (PMS=56.80), Adaptability (PMS = 59.22), Mood (PMS=46.05±12.27) and Acceptability (PMS = 42.86).

The Mean and SD values of different parameters of the Child-Related Stress Scale of the parents with differently abled children are as follows: (i) Distractibility (26.60±11.60) (ii) Demandingness (25.06±11.90) (iii) Adaptability (23.70±9.20) (iv) Reinforces Parents (19.80±7.58) (v) Acceptability (17.15± 10.20) and 6. Mood (16.56±8.80). Thus, the highest Mean value goes to Demandingness of the Parents with differently abled children and lowest Mean value goes to their Mood.

The total percent score of the Child-Related Stress of Parents with differently abled children is high (PMS=52.48) but not more than the Parent-Related Stress (PMS = 56.40) (See Table 4.49-4.50). The large value of SD (Total Mean = 63.28) of the Child-Related Stress indicates that responses are more spread out over the Mean as four types of Parents with differently abled children are included in the study based on their different criteria.

Now, p-values of different parameters of Child-Related Stress sub-scale reflect the statistical level of significance. As mentioned in the following table, the lowest p-value falls into Distractibility of Parents with differently abled children, which is statistically significant at near about 0.8% level of significance ( $p = 0.008^{****}$ ). Demandingness of Parents of children with a disability is statistically significant at nearabout 7% level of significance ( $p=0.07^{**}$ ). Both Adaptability ( $p=0.024^{**}$ ) and Reinforces Parents ( $0.09^{**}$ ) are statistically significant at the 5% level. But, Acceptability ( $p=1.008$ ) and Mood ( $p= 1.78$ ) of Parents having differently abled children are found to be statistically not significant. The Child-Related Sub-Scale of Parents with differently abled children is statistically significant at 5% level of significance ( $p = 0.049^{**}$ ).

**Table4. Mean, SD and Percent Score of Means and p-value of the Child-Related Sub-Scale of Parental Stress among the Parents with Differently Abled Children**

Child-Related Stress	M ±SD (128.87± 63.28)	Percent Scores of Means and SD (52.48± 19.70)	p-value (0.049**)
1.Acceptability	17.15± 10.20	42.86±21.80	1.008
2.Adaptability	23.70± 9.20	59.22±12.27	0.024**
3.Demandingness	25.06±11.90	66.50±26.70	0.07**
4.Distractibility	26.60± 11.60	68.12±23.34	0.008***
5.Mood	16.56± 8.80	46.05±12.27	1.78
6.Reinforces Parents	19.80± 11.58	56.80±22.38	0.09**

Statistically significant at \*\*p ≤ .05, \*\*\*p ≤ .01, \*\*\*\*p ≤ .005

As illustrated in Table No. 5, the highest stress in Parent-Related Stress Scale of Parents with differently abled children is identified as Sense of Competence (PM =66.20), Relation with the Spouse (PMS= 61.50), Restrict Role (PMS =56.35), Depression (PMS =54.29), Attachment (PMS = 52.20), Parents Health (PMS= 50.90), and Social Isolation (PMS =39.56).

From this table it is also evident that Parent-Related Stress (Total Mean = 137.71, total PMS = 56.40) of the parents with differently abled children is statistically higher than their Child-Related Stress (Total Mean= 128.87, PMS = 52.48). With respect to Mean scores of Parents with differently abled children, we find that Sense of Competence is identified as highest Mean value (30.56), Relation with the Spouse (22.28), Depression (PMS =22.80), Restrict Role (19.60), Parents Health (17.40), Social Isolation (12.87) and Attachment (12.20). The total SD values of the Parent-Related Stress among the Parents with differently abled children is estimated at 68.30 which was higher than children-related stress sub-scale.

The lower p-value of Parent- Related Stress Sub-Scale of the Parents with Differently Abled Children indicates that it was statistically significant at the 5% level (p = 0.04\*\*). Among the seven parameters of Parent-Related Stress, Sense of Competence is identified as lowest p-value (0.002\*\*\*) and it is statistically significant at the 0.5% level of significance. Depression is identified as statistically significant at the 5% level (p= 0.04\*\*). Relation with the Spouse is identified as statistically significant at the 1% level (p= 0.018\*\*\*). Statistically not significant results are found with respect to Attachment (p= 2.78), Parent Health (p= 1.18). Social Isolation (p = 1.68) and Restrict Role (p= 1.28) of Parents raising children with disabilities.

**Table 5. Mean, SD, Percent Score of Means, and p-value of Parent-Related Stress Sub-Scale of Parental Stress among the Parents with Differently Abled Children**

Parent-Related Stress	Mean $\pm$ SD) (137.71 $\pm$ 68.30)	Percent Score (56.40 $\pm$ 23.44)	p-value (0.04**)
1.Attachment	12.20 $\pm$ 7.78	52.20 $\pm$ 28.78	2.78
2.Sense of Competence	30.56 $\pm$ 10.12	66.20 $\pm$ 22.28	0.002****
3.Depression	22.80 $\pm$ 10.50	54.29 $\pm$ 17.34	0.04**
4.Parent Health	17.40 $\pm$ 9.58	50.90 $\pm$ 23.30	1.18
5.Social Isolation	12.87 $\pm$ 9.78	39.56 $\pm$ 16.60	1.68
6.Restrict Role	19.60 $\pm$ 12.28	58.35 $\pm$ 18.40	1.28
7.Relation with the Spouse	22.28 $\pm$ 8.26	61.50 $\pm$ 20.15	0.018***

Statistically significant at \*\* $p \leq .05$ (5%), \*\*\* $p \leq .01$ (1%) \*\*\*\* $p \leq .005$

As mentioned earlier, Family Functioning Sub-Scale was also attached to the framework of Parental Stress Scale of the Parents with differently abled children. It can provide us the more accurate picture of their stress level.

Referring to Table 6, we can claim that among the two parameters of the Family Functioning sub-scale of Parental Stress, Cohesion represents highest stress (PMS = 69.80) and it is statistically significant at the 1% level ( $p = 0.010$ \*\*\*). Contrary to this, Family Adaptability of Parents raising children with disabilities falls into second position and it is statistically significant at the 1% level ( $p = 0.016$ \*\*\*). The SFS sub-scale is statistically significant at the 1% level ( $p = 0.012$ \*\*\*).

The large Percent Scores of Mean (59.07) represents that Family Functioning is one of the significant burdens among the Parents with differently abled children, that leads to several types of stress in their family life. The total Mean value of SFF sub-scale is estimated at 82.81. The Mean score of Cohesion is comparatively higher than Adaptability (52.75  $\geq$  30.06).

Another important aspect of the Family Functioning Stress scale of parents with differently children is that the total SD scores (17.06) are more spread out over the Means. It indicates that Family Functioning in Parents with differently abled children depends on the category of Parents, types of disability as well as severity of disability among the children.

**Table 6. Mean, SD, Percent Scores of Means, and p-value of Family Functioning Sub-Scale of Parental Stress among the Parents with Differently Abled Children**

Stress in Family Functioning	Mean ± SD (82.81±17.06)	Percent Scores (59.07±7.24)	p-value (0.012**)
Cohesion	52.75±10.02	69.80±9.60	0.010***
Adaptability	30.06±7.04	52.10±6.82	0.016***

Statistically significant at \*\*\*p ≤ .01 (1%)

Referring to Table 7, we can demand that the Social-Support sub-scale of Parental Stress among Parents with differently abled children is statistically significant at the 5% level (PMS = 54.62, p = 0.028\*\*). It is evident that Helpfulness of Network of Parents with differently abled children is statistically significant at the 5% level of significance (PMS = 57.60, p = 0.026\*\*). But, Size of Network is statistically not significant (PMS=42.10, p = 1.68).

The total Mean and SD scores of the Social-support sub-scale of the Parental Stress Scale was estimated at 37.90 and 11.70, respectively. The small percent score of the SD (15.37) of SSS sub-scale of the Parents with differently abled children indicates that Parental Social-Support System scores are not significantly spread out over the Means.

**Table 7. Mean, SD, Percent Score of Means and p-value of Social-Support Sub-Scale of Parental Stress among the Parents with Differently Abled Children**

Stress Related to Social-Support	Mean ± SD (37.90 ± 11.70)	Percent Score (54.62 ± 15.37)	p-value (0.028**)
Helpfulness of Network	28.8±8.30	57.60±22.36	0.026**
Size of Network	9.10±5.40	42.10±12.38	1.68

Statistically significant at \*\*p ≤ .05

Referring to Table 8, we can claim that the Daily Hassles Sub-scale of Parental Stress among the Parents with differently abled children was statistically highly significant at the 0.5% level (p = 0.004\*\*\*\*). The total Mean and SD scores of the SDH sub-scale was estimated at 54.31 and 28.41, respectively. The PMS value of the SDH sub-scale of the Parental Stress was estimated at 66.08. Among the 21 items of SDH sub-scale, we find that only nine (13) items are statistically significant. Other 8 items of the SDH sub-scale of Parental Stress of Parents with differently abled children are statistically not significant. As investigated by Kanner et al., (1981), daily hassles are a source of stress that include irritating, frustrating and distressing

demands that people face on a day-to-day basis. In the current study, examples of daily hassles of Parents with differently abled children could include frequently talk about family problems ( $p=0.002^{****}$ ), problems associated with the child's school ( $p=0.043^{**}$ ), lack of confidence ( $p=0.058^{**}$ ), too much responsibilities ( $p=0.006^{****}$ ), rising price about the common goods ( $p=0.007^{****}$ ), concern about owing money ( $p=0.009^{****}$ ), worry about the sexual satisfaction with the spouse ( $p=0.028^{**}$ ), worry about property, investment and taxes ( $p=0.019^{***}$ ), home maintenance ( $0.038^{**}$ ), problems arises due to using alcohol/tobacco ( $p=0.039^{**}$ ), health of a family member ( $p=0.038^{**}$ ), thinking about the future of differently abled children ( $p=0.016^{***}$ ), etc. As reflected on the study, the *hassles scale* was mainly focused on daily annoyances and frustrations. However, the theoretical problems have not gone away. Someone may argue that the items on the scale remain rather vague and arbitrary and more likely to assess neuroticism rather than stress. In turn, this leads to problems in how to properly interpret the results of such a scale. The discussion on the results may justify this problem elaborately, suggesting possible interpretation to minimise this vagueness.

**Table 8. Mean, SD, Percent Scores of Means and p-value of Daily Hassles Sub-Scale of Parental Stress among the Parents with Differently Abled Children**

Daily Hassles	Mean $\pm$ SD (54.31 $\pm$ 28.41)	Total Percent Scores	p-value (0.004 <sup>****</sup> )
1.Frequently talks about family problems	4 $\pm$ 1.2	66.08	0.002 <sup>****</sup>
2. Problems associated with child's school	3.2 $\pm$ 1.3		0.043 <sup>**</sup>
3. Lack of confidence	2.57 $\pm$ 0.8		0.006 <sup>****</sup>
4.Misplacing/losing things	2.1 $\pm$ 1.5		1.860
5. Too much responsibilities	4 $\pm$ 2.3		0.006 <sup>****</sup>
6. Inability to express yourself	2.4 $\pm$ 0.6		1.060
7. Lack of confidence	2.0 $\pm$ 1.06		0.058
8.Rising price about common good	4.3 $\pm$ 2.6		0.007 <sup>****</sup>
9.Concern about owing money	4.04 $\pm$ 2.8		0.009 <sup>****</sup>
10.Having to wait	2.6 $\pm$ 1.05		1.006
11. Laid off or out of work	1.0 $\pm$ 0.6		2.350
12. Thinking about the future of the Differently abled child	4.0 $\pm$ 2.2		0.016 <sup>***</sup>
13. Worry about the Sexual satisfaction with the spouse	2.8 $\pm$ 1.2		0.028 <sup>**</sup>
14.Crime	1.9 $\pm$ 1.6		2.380
15.Home maintenance	3.2 $\pm$ 2.3		0.038 <sup>**</sup>
16.Traffic jam			3.040
17. Health of a family member	3.0 $\pm$ 2.2		0.038 <sup>**</sup>
20.Worry about property, investment and taxes	2.6 $\pm$ 0.9		0.019 <sup>***</sup>
19. Dependency of using tobacco/alcohol	2.2 $\pm$ 1.5		0.046 <sup>**</sup>
21.Problems arises due to using alcohol/tobacco	1.8 $\pm$ 0.7		0.039 <sup>**</sup>

Statistically significant at \*\* $p \leq .05$ , \*\*\* $p \leq .01$ , \*\*\*\* $p \leq .005$

Referring to Table No. 9, we can see that Stress in Daily Hassles represents highest Percentage of Means (Total Mean 54.31, PMS = 66.08) among the five sub-scales of Parenting Stress in Parents with differently abled children, followed by stress in Family Functioning (Total Mean 82.21, PMS = 59.07), Parent-Related Stress (Total Mean =137.71, PMS= 56.40), stress related to lack of Social-Support (Total Mean = 37.90, PMS = 54.62) and Child-Related Stress (Total Mean = 128.87, PMS= 52.48). The Mean total of each sub-scales of the Parenting Stress Scale denotes the values inscribed into the total number of questions. Here the total number of questions as well as the procedure of inscribing values was different for each sub-scale of Parenting Stress.

The lowest p-values falls into Stress in Daily Hassles and it was statistically significant at 0.5% level of significance ( $p = 0.004$ ). Stress in Family Functioning was statistically significant at the 1% level ( $p = 0.012^{***}$ ). Parent-Related Stress of Parents raising children with disabilities are statistically significant at the 5% level of significance ( $p = 0.040^{**}$ ). Stress in Social-Support of Parents with differently abled children are statistically significant at the 5% level of significance ( $0.028^{**}$ ). Lastly, Child-Related Stress of Parents with differently abled children was also statistically significant at the 5% level of significance ( $p = 0.049^{**}$ ).

These results are based on a statistical level of significance only, not in a practical sense. In other words, we may claim that the statistically significant level of measurement with respect to stress in Daily Hassles, Family Functioning, Social-Support, Parent-Related and Child-Related aspects of the Parents with differently abled children are ‘determined’.

**Table 9: Mean Differences among the Five Types of Parental Stress Sub-Scales for Parents with Differently Abled Children**

Sub-scales of Stress	Mean ± SD	Percent Score of Means (Total Sample)	p-values	Ascending order based on p-value and Percent Scores of Means
<b>Child-Related Stress</b>	128.87± 63.28	52.48	0.049**	5
<b>Parent-Related Stress</b>	137.71±68.30	56.40	0.040**	4
<b>Family Functioning</b>	82.81 ± 17.06	59.07	0.012***	2
<b>Social-Support</b>	37.90 ± 11.70	54.62	0.028**	3
<b>Daily Hassles</b>	54.31 ± 28.41	66.08	0.004****	1
<b>Total Stress Score</b>	<b>435.79 ± 187.75</b>	<b>58.90</b>		

*Statistically significant at \*\* $p = \leq .05(5\%)$ , \*\*\* $p = \leq .01(1\%)$ , \*\*\*\* $p = .005(0.5\%)$*

## 7. Hypothesis Testing

Referring to Table 10, we can see that Parents with Autistic children experience higher level of stress (PMS = 69.64), followed by Parents with ID Children (PMS = 65.50), Parents with VI Children (PMS = 58.45) and Parents with HI Children (PMS = 54.73). The total Mean value of all five sub-scales of Parenting stress among Parents with Autism children was significantly higher than other three types of Parents with differently abled children (ID, VI and HI).

**Table 10. Distribution of Stress among the different types of Parents with Differently Abled Children**

Types of Parents	% of Parents with Differently Abled Children	Mean± SD	Percent Score
Parents with ID Children	18	452.69 ± 185.25	65.50
Parents with VI Children	23	429.90 ± 188.72	58.45
Parents with HI Children	41.5	413.20 ± 169.19	54.73
Parents with Autistic Children	17.5	474.11 ± 198.54	69.64

As highlighted in Table No. 11, Parents having children with autism experience more Parenting Stress for all five sub-scales than other three type of Parents with differently abled children and it was statistically significant at the 6% level of significance ( $p=0.006$ ). Parents with Intellectually differently abled children also experience much Parenting Stress and it was statistically significant at the 1% level of significance. ( $p=0.18$ ). The Parenting Stress scores of other two types of Parents with differently abled children (VI and HI) are statistically significant at the 5% level of significance. The p-value for Parents with VI and HI children are 0.025 and 0.031, respectively.

With respect to Child-Related Stress, Parents with Autistic children rank the first (Mean= 134.07), followed by Parents with ID Children (Mean = 131.70), Parents with VI children (Means = 125.80), Parents with HI children (Mean = 122.80). With respect to Parent-Related Stress, Parents with Autistic children experience much stress (Mean= 145.75), followed by Parents with ID Children (Mean = 142.74), Parents with VI children (Mean= 135.61), and Parents with HI children (Mean= 131.25). With Respect to Stress in Family Functioning, highest stress falls into Parents with Autism children (Mean = 86.70), followed by Parents with ID Children (Mean = 82.81), Parents with VI children (Mean = 81.20), and Parents with HI children (Mean = 76.60). Concerning Stress in Social-Support, highest stress score falls into

Parents having children with Autism (Mean= 42.05), followed by Parents with ID Children (Mean = 39.26),

Parents with VI children (Mean = 35.05) and Parents with HI children (Mean = 32.65). Finally, with respect to Stress in Daily Hassles, the highest stress score falls into Parents with Autism children (Mean = 58.54), followed by Parents with ID Children (Mean = 56.18), Parents with VI children (Mean= 52.24) and Parents with HI children (Mean = 49.90).

**Table 11. Comparison of Total Score of Stress and Different Aspects of Parental Stress among the Three Main Groups**

Types of Parents	CRS	PRS	SFF	SSS	SDH	p-value
Parents with ID Children	131.70±60.13	142.74±70.10	82.81 ± 16.06	39.26± 10.70	56.18± 28.26	.018*
Parents with VI Children	125.80± 64.50	135.61±66.40	81.20 ± 18.26	35.05 ± 12.50	52.24± 27.06	.025**
Parents with HI Children	122.80± 56.40	131.25±62.90	76.60 ± 15.28	32.65 ± 9.05	49.90± 25.56	.031**
Parents with Autism Children	134.07± 65.35	145.75±70.60	86.70 ± 18.70	42.05 ± 14.05	58.54± 29.84	.006****

Statistically significant at \*\*p= ≤ .05(5%), \*\*\*p=≤ .01(1%),\*\*\*\*p= .005(0.5%)

(The p-values are related to comparing the mean score of total stress and different aspects of parental stress among the four Parental groups).

From the above-mentioned analysis and interpretation, Null Hypothesis-1(N<sub>0</sub>1) has been rejected with respect to all five sub-scales of Parenting Stress as the test statistics are below the critical values in upper tailed tests for all cases. Thus, we can claim that there are significant differences in Parental Stress Levels among the different groups of Parents with Differently Abled Children (ID, VI, HI and ASD).

### **Discussion on the Findings**

The study confirms that the highest type of Child-Related Stress among Parents with differently abled Children fell into Distractibility (PMS = 68.12), followed by Demandingness (PMS=66.50), Reinforces Parents (PMS=56.80), Adaptability (PMS = 59.22), Mood (PMS=46.05±12.27) and Acceptability (PMS = 42.86). In this case, the parents’ cognitive appraisal towards their children characteristics may become

the determinants of their Parenting Stress. However, considerable research elucidates that parenting stress is related to the child's temperament (such as demandingness, adaptability, acceptability, mood, hyperactivity/distractibility), often appears to be higher in the families with a differently abled child (Dyson, 1997; Barker et.al., 2002). McBride, Schoppe, and Rane (2002) highlight another significant way in which child characteristics, particularly temperament, may influence parents through increased or decreased parenting stress. By following Belsky's (1984) model of the determinants of parenting, Mash and Johnston (1990) propose that child characteristics such as temperament have an influence on parent-child interactive stress.

In this case, the parents' cognitive appraisal towards their children's characteristics may become the determinants of their stress. However, considerable research elucidates that parenting stress, especially stress related to the child's temperament (such as demandingness, adaptability, acceptability, mood, hyperactivity/distractibility), often appears to be higher in the families with disabled child (Dyson, 1997; Barker et.al., 2002). Another study by McBride, Schoppe, and Rane, 2002 highlighted another significant way in which child characteristics, particularly temperament, may influence parents through increased or decreased parenting stress. In a model of parenting stress analogous to Belsky's (1984) model of the determinants of parenting, Mash and Johnston (1990) proposed that the child's characteristics such as temperament have an influence on parent-child interactive stress. In support of this notion, research indicates that mothers of temperamentally difficult children report higher stress levels of parenting stress (Gelfand, Teti, and Radin Fox, 1992) more psychological problems including doubts about their parenting competence and feelings that are parenting restrictive (Sheeber and Johnson, 1992) and higher levels of depression.

The results show that the highest stress in Parent-Related Stress Scale of Parents with differently abled children was identified as Sense of Competence (66.20), Relation with the Spouse (PMS= 61.50), Restrict Role (PMS =56.35), Depression (PMS =54.29), Attachment (52.20), Parents Health (50.90), and Social Isolation (39.56). As stated by Abidin (1995), beside child characteristics and situational life stress as sources of stress, parent characteristics in which parents' personality, competency, and other dimensions as measured by PSI also may link to the parenting stress. High scores in Parent domain imply that the sources of stress and potential dysfunction of the parent-child system may be related to the aspects of parent's functioning. McBride (1989) illustrates that fathers having children with disabilities experience less stress when they feel more competent in their parenting role. In support of this notion, research indicates that mothers of temperamentally difficult children experience higher stress levels (Gelfand, Teti, and Radin Fox, 1992) as well as more psychological

problems including doubts about their parenting competence and feelings that parenting restrictive (Sheeber and Johnson, 1992) and higher levels of depression.

As stated by Abidin (1995) beside child characteristics and situational life stress as sources of stress, parent characteristics in which parents' personality, competency, and other dimensions as measured by PSI also may link to the parenting stress. High scores in Parent domain imply that the sources of stress and potential dysfunction of the parent-child system may be related to the aspects of parent's functioning. In a study based on 94 fathers, Mc Bride (1989) illustrated that these parents experienced less stress when they feel more competent in their parenting role. On the other hand, wives' employment was linked to the higher levels of stress, as related to the Role Restriction, Depression and Demandingness sub-scales score. The fathers' depression and their perception of their children as demanding were the best predictors of parental competence (Abidin, 1995).

Results from the study have led to deeper understanding about the role of Family Functioning among Parents having children with disabilities. Among the two parameters of the Family Functioning sub-scale of Parenting Stress, the current study shows that Cohesion represented highest stress (PMS = 69.75) and it was statistically significant at the 1% level ( $p = 0.010^{***}$ ). Contrary to this, Family Adaptability of Parents raising children with disabilities fell into second position and it was statistically significant at the 5% level ( $p = 0.016^{***}$ ). Family resilience research (e.g., McCubbin and McCubbin, 1996; Patterson, 2002; Walsh, 1998) provides a broad framework for understanding the protective factors that enhance families' adaptation to difficult life experiences. Many researchers (e.g., Beavers and Hampson, 1990; Patterson, 2002; Walsh, 1998, 2003) emphasise that one of the most essential factors that contribute to family resilience is connectedness or family cohesion.

According to Walsh (2003), family resilience is strengthened by mutual support, collaboration, and commitment in the face of stressful life events. Family cohesion has been found to be significantly related to the adjustment of the individuals who experience a major life crisis (e.g., Friedman et al., 1988). Although it has been reported in the previous literature that family cohesion is related to increased life satisfaction in fathers (Boyras and Sayger, 2009), it appears that there is no study in the literature examining the role of family cohesion on the well-being of the fathers of children with disabilities. Because family cohesion is one of the key protective factors in the family, it may be an important variable that contributes to well-being of fathers in both groups.

In addition to family cohesion, family adaptability is considered one of the core processes of resilience. Walsh (1998) suggests that families may not return to normal life easily after a major life crisis. Indeed, having a child with a disability may require major changes in the roles of parents as well as siblings. According to Patterson (2002), it is important for families to find a balance between maintaining a stable family structure while also allowing for change in response to developmental and environmental demands. In other words, while accommodating to new circumstances, families should retain their stability through maintaining a healthy balance between changed routines and the prior stable routines and rituals.

Family resilience theories suggest that family crises can become an opportunity for reappraisal of priorities and the development of meaningful relationships and personal resources (McCubbin and McCubbin, 1996; Patterson, 2002; Walsh; 1998). Parents' initial reactions to having a child with a disability is usually associated with negative feelings such as anxiety, shock, despair, avoidance, anger, guilt, and helplessness (Fortier and Wanlass, 1984). However, long-term impact of a highly challenging event, such as having a child with disability on a family depends on several factors including the characteristics of the event, prior stressful events that the family experienced, internal and external resources that the family has, and the meaning ascribed by the family members to the event (Cmic, Friedrich, and Greenberg, 1983; McCubbin, 1979; McCubbin and McCubbin, 1996; McCubbin and Patterson, 1982). Several factors including the family members' reactions to the additional stressors of having a child with a disability and the communication patterns of the family members play a crucial role in determining whether the family will derive benefits from this experience or will disintegrate (e.g., Dickman and Gordon, 1985).

The present study also shows a significant negative relationship between social-support and parental stress, where higher level of social-support resulting in lower level of parental stress. This result is consistent with many previous studies as social-support has long been recognised as an important component in stress process and a predictor of psychological well-being (Cohen and Wills 1985; Pearlin 1989). Social-support is believed to help parents in coping with the hardship of raising their children with disabilities (Abidin, 1992). SimanTov and Kaniel (2011) view social support as one of the personal resources that can predict the adjustment of parental stress among parents of autistic children. Their study showed that social-support increases parents' ability to cope with parenting stress. Similarly, Lai (2013) in her study among parents of children with autism in Taiwan shows a strong negative correlation between social-support and parental stress.

Lai (2013) reports that her findings support Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) model of social-support, which suggest that social-support provides a buffer against stressful life events and is related to well-being for individuals under stress. The result also contradicts to the findings of Tehee et al., (2009). They view that larger support networks can expose parents to more information, and more information can educate parents on how to obtain support that can help them to cope effectively and mitigate the negative effects of stress.

Parents of children with ASD experience tremendous pressures from the demands of child rearing and require support for their overall well-being. Past studies have showed that social support can moderate the negative impact of crisis and change on individuals and has been included in studies of adaptation in parents of children with ASD (Boyd, 2002; Meadan, Halle, and Ebata, 2010). Pain (1999) claims that information helped parents of children with disabilities to adjust emotionally, to access services and benefits, and to improve overall management.

A study by Tehee and colleague (2009) shows a significant positive relationship between support and information, where a greater support network may expose parents to more information, and more information may educate parents on how to obtain support to aid effective coping and reduce negative effects of stress (Tehee, Honan, and Hevey, 2009). Moreover, Siman-Tov and Kaniel (2011) view social-support as one of the personal resources and predictors in the adjustment of parental stress. The path analysis from their study shows that social-support increases parent's ability to cope with the stress in parenting a child with autism (Simon-Tov and Kaniel, 2011).

In the current study, the daily hassles Sub-scale of Parental Stress among Parents with differently abled children was statistically highly significant at the 0.5% level ( $p = 0.004^{***}$ ). The irritating and annoying demands of everyday life, termed daily hassles, seem small in isolation but are cumulative in their impact (Kanner et al., 1981). Researchers have documented a link between elevated daily hassles and lower perceived marital quality (Harper, Schaalje, and Sandberg, 2000). Crnic and Greenberg (1990) find that the heightened occurrence of minor parenting hassles among parents of typically developing young children predicted less positive family well-being.

Although the relationship between daily hassles and marital adjustment has not been studied among families of children with disabilities, associations have been found between daily hassles and lower mental health (Wallander, Pitt, and Mellins, 1990) and between stressful life events and marital adaptation (Florian and Findler,

2001) for mothers of children with disabilities and between general parenting stress and negative marital adjustment for both mothers and fathers of children with disabilities (Fisman et al., 1989). The result of the study indicates that heightened daily hassles would be associated with lower marital adjustment in mothers and fathers of young children with disabilities.

### **Delimitations**

1. This study only includes such type of Parents who had Children with ID, VI, HI and ASD. Results may differ among Parents of Children with Down Syndrome, Multiple Disabilities, Physical Disabilities, etc.
2. Single parents of differently abled children were excluded from the study as different studies have already identified their severity of stress level and useful coping strategies.
3. Due to the complex nature of Stratified Proportional Simple Random technique, sample characteristics for comparison groups (i.e., parents having children with ID, VI, HI and Autism) could not be precisely matched to minimise secondary influences from demographical variables.
4. Null Hypothesis Significance Testing (NHST) has been criticised for using arbitrary cut-off levels. Many of the null hypothesis tested in the research literature is false only in the statistical sense of the word, but as a practical matter could be treated as if they were true with little likelihood of any negative consequences. Most of the experts agreed with the fact that it is the size and direction of observed differences that ought to be reported not only p-values (level of significance). McKeachie (1997) reported that effect sizes are mostly useful for directing toward decisions with some immediate practical consequences. Nickerson (2000) rightly added that the researcher should not be bounded by the claim of  $\alpha = .05$ .

### **Suggestions**

The following suggestions are given on the basis of objectives of the study as well as well on the basis of the problems realised by parents with differently abled children:

1. Family Counselling Programme need to be handled carefully with special emphasis on identifying the problems of all family members. Parents as well as all family members may be aware of the merits and demerits of disability in the family. Parents may be encouraged in maintaining equality in caring for the child with disability without any gender bias. Focus should be given on Problem-Focused Coping strategies and various ways in solving problem

and family conflicts' resolution rather than exchanging blame between parents for insufficient performance in caring the child with disability.

2. In order to minimise the 'internal stress', parents with differently abled children must learn how to develop realistic expectations about their life and how to recognise when negative self-talk defeats effective coping. Father of the differently abled children must be sympathetic towards his wife as she is experiencing more stress as revealed in the study. They must boost their own self-confidence by noting and using personal strengths and talents. In addition, parents with differently abled children can identify and list their own self-defeating assumptions and think of alternative messages. They may renounce love, affection, and approval from children as needs rather than bonuses. They may be encouraged to see the positive sides of stress. They may control anger by controlling wishes and try to use to it constructively. Different Family magazines may be read time by time in to understand the significance of marriage life and family planning. Positive thinking by daily affirmations need to ushered. Developing a positive belief can control their destiny. They should be healthily selfish, free from needing outside approval. They may try to develop a support system by sharing honestly their feelings of frustration and anger. They may cope with a situation in the presence of imperfection. They must learn to tolerate change as children change often.
3. Both Parents and differently abled children should change their moods and feelings. Dealing with external forces may lead to 'external stress' in the parents with differently abled children, that is very difficult to overcome sometimes. Neighbours, friends, and relatives don't understand why such a normal-acting man /women behave cruelly towards them. Teachers frequently don't fully comprehend the ramifications of a differently abled child's problem. Parents are called upon by the school to help make decisions about their differently abled child's school programme. Parents often feel helpless as the child's advocate because of their own lack of understanding. External Stress Factors may be resulted from dealing with school about child's placement or programme, coping with difficult child behaviours, helping siblings understand the problems associated with disabilities, educating neighbours and relatives about the child's problems, getting child in right school, helping child with homework, working with spouse on child management and financial pressures in the family. The following guidelines may be helpful for the parents with differently abled children to overcome their 'external stress':

4. As external stressors are situational by nature, and often involve relationships with others, parents with differently abled children are advised to develop assertiveness skills. Problem-solving techniques, time management, and goal setting are helpful while dealing with external stressors. Since coping with a differently abled child is so emotionally draining, parents are encouraged to develop intimacy skills as well as a support system.
5. Analysing problems thoroughly may help the parents with differently abled children to overcome their external stress in the family. They may describe the problem with a specific statement, state how it could be worse and how it could be better. They need to determine what is keeping it from getting better. Propose solutions for the things over which they have control. Proper planning can also help them tackle the difficult situation.
6. Time management is also another strategy to fight with external stress. Parents with differently abled children may list priorities both short and long terms. They can do a time using audit. 'Compare time use with priority of goals' is also another strategy by which they can effectively manage the time.
7. Developing an assertiveness can also help them to tackle the external stress while raising a differently abled child in the family. Parents should know their limits and be realistic about what they can accomplish. They must neglect unreasonable demands.
8. They may learn about their differently abled child's problems and needs so that they can be an active participant in meetings with school personnel. The schools may encourage the parents to offer their suggestions to teacher and coaches. In order to replenish energy, parents with differently abled children need to be sure they get sufficient rest, eat well balanced meals, and exercise vigorously. They may practice meditation or relaxation techniques when they feel stressed, anxious, or fatigued. Physiological Stressors can be minimised with the help of proper diet, exercise, rest and recreation.

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## **Mobile Phone Applications addressing Mental Health Literacy: A Systematic Review**

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### **Abstract**

The aim of this paper is to systematically review literature based on Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and Mental Health Literacy with the objective of understanding the uses of ICT-based technologies, like mobile phone applications, in promoting mental health literacy. To conduct this review of literature, the authors systematically searched relevant databases with the key terms such as mental health literacy, ICT-based interventions, mHealth, mobile phone applications and mental health in India. The articles were filtered based on their relevance and access. This paper highlights the concept of mental health literacy and its promotion in using ICT-based interventions, ICTs in health and specifically in mental health, mHealth, specifically mobile phone applications in mental health literacy, advantages of mHealth and mobile phone applications and the limitations of the same in mental health literacy.

**Keywords:** *Mental health literacy, Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), mHealth, Mobile phone applications.*

### **Introduction**

The World Health Organization (2001) defines Mental Health as “a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope up with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make contribution to his or her community” (as cited in Gaur & Ram, 2016). Mental health is the maintenance of daily activities that are productive for the person and relationships with people around the individual. One is said to be mentally healthy if he/she is able to manage the stresses and adapt to the change around them. Promotion of well-being, preventing mental health disorders and the treatment of people suffering from mental health disorders – this is what mental health comprises of (Sharma & Srivastava, 2013).

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Mental Health Literacy refers to “knowledge and attitudes regarding mental health that aid in recognition, management and prevention of mental health issues” (Jorm, Korten, Jacomb, Christensen, Rodgers & Pollitt, 1997). According to Jorm et al. (1997), mental health literacy includes knowledge related to prevention of mental disorders, recognition of when a mental disorder is developing, knowledge of self-help strategies for mild mental disorders, knowledge of help-seeking and treatment options available and skills for providing first aid to people who are developing a mental health problem or are going through a mental health crisis.

Jorm et al. (1997) present seven attributes of mental health literacy – knowing ways to seek mental health information, ability to recognise specific mental disorders, knowledge of risk factors and causes of mental disorders, knowledge of self-help strategies, knowledge of available professional help and treatment and attitudes that promote recognition and help-seeking for specific mental disorders (as cited in O’Connor and Casey, 2015). Further, the concept of mental health literacy may also include right to a conducive environment for recovery from a mental disorder, respect for self-determination in treatment, freedom from degrading and inhuman treatment, freedom from exploitation, abuse and violence as well as to be able to live independently and be socially included in their communities (Mathur-Gaiha, Sunil, Kumar & Menon, 2014).

People with limited mental health literacy showcase limited understanding of mental disorders, lack of skills for prevention as well as indecisiveness for accessing treatment for mental disorders (Ogorchukwu, Sekaran, Nair & Ashok, 2016). Numerous studies have stated that having a de-stigmatised society, where people do not discriminate against a person with a mental illness and mental health is a topic for open dialogue and conversation. this will ultimately increase help-seeking behaviour for appropriate treatment as well as lead to a society with better mental health. Thus, there is a need to increase mental health literacy of the society at large. This will help in increasing the demand for mental health care services, increased support for persons with mental illnesses, overall increase in the knowledge around mental health, increased sensitivity towards mental health and ultimately upholding the rights of persons with mental illnesses (Mathur-Gaiha et al., 2014; Ogotchukwu et al., 2016; Kermode, Bowen, Arole, Pathare & Jorm, 2009). It would further help in assessing improvement of individual and population mental health outcomes (Kutcher, Wei & Coniglio, 2016).

Armstrong, Kermode, Raja, Suja, Chandra & Jorm (2011) state that many studies have observed that India needs an intervention for increasing mental health literacy due to poor knowledge and understanding of mental disorders in many communities. Information and communication technologies (ICTs) are a promising

way of providing mental health literacy to people due to easy accessibility, acknowledging privacy and confidentiality, cost-effectiveness and ability to reach a large group of people at the same time (Tennant et al., 2015; as cited in Tay, Tay & Klainin-Yobas, 2018). Videos, PowerPoint slides, online websites, information through online medium, and courses and games were some of the ICT-based interventions that have contributed to increased levels of mental health literacy for specific disorders. Having reduced levels of stigma as well, informational ICTs were proven good for increasing mental health literacy around Anxiety whereas videos and quizzes were proven effective for increasing mental health literacy around Depression (Tay et al., 2018).

### **ICTs in Health in India**

Kharade and Sharma (n.d.) state that the public health system in India is overburdened and collapsing. Many factors such as poverty, lack of resources, lack of funds in the healthcare department, illiteracy, inaccessibility, lack of transport facility and increased population density have been responsible for the pressure on the Indian public health system. Thus, the government has also incorporated ICTs to strengthen its healthcare system. Web services for organization of healthcare facilities, increase in the awareness level of citizens of the country by providing them with information about their own health and healthcare system and communicating important health-related messages to people are some of the uses of ICTs in the healthcare system.

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, in collaboration with Ministry of Communication and Information Technology have created a national infrastructure for gathering information on health and then disseminating it to the people. The Government of India recognizes ICT as the most efficient tool for enabling achievement of the health goals of the country. It has the desired trickle-down effect and several state governments have taken up e-Health monitoring and reporting systems for their public health programmes (Kharade & Sharma, n.d.). The increase in the ICTs has led to rapid improvements and innovations in the behavioural healthcare system (Breslau & Engel, 2016). Telepsychiatry has been found successful in places which have a low population density. It helps in crossing geographical barriers, lack of a communication system and the professionals who would want to travel to remote areas (McLaren, 2005).

### **ICTs in Mental Health**

ICTs in mental health care can be used to give information to the patients for the

treatment process, provide therapy and moreover, help in adhering to the treatment provided. There has been an increasing number of innovations in the field of ICTs for mental health, which had expanded its reach to a large number of people and added facilities such as improving the quality of mental health service provided, reducing stigma around mental health and increase access to knowledge regarding mental health (Breslau & Engel, 2016).

According to Breslau and Engel (2016), there are mainly two types of ICTs in the field of mental health – ICTs for prevention and ICTs for clinical treatment. ICTs for prevention use features such as educating users online, provide therapies, using email or text for communication and using multi-media as support tools. ICTs for clinical treatment are used for educating patients, improving decision making of doctors, providing therapy to patients, monitoring and adherence to the treatment, among other features. ICTs are a promising solution to the address the mental health issues faced by people. It can facilitate communication between the patient and the doctor and provide internet-based therapy. ICTs represent a strategic opportunity to improve the mental health services and the access to information regarding mental health (Breslau & Engel, 2016). ICTs have the potential to deliver mental health services and interventions, which would decrease the amount of face-to-face interaction needed for the completion of the treatment (McLaren, 2005). It is also found that ICT-based therapy of depression and anxiety showed superior results in comparison to people who did not receive the ICT-based therapy (Shen, Levitan, Johnson, Bender, Page, Jadad, & Wiljer, 2015).

### **Challenges faced by ICTs in Health**

As stated by Breslau and Engel (2016), ICTs are a medium to extend healthcare services in the world, but it has a few challenges associated with it. One of the major challenges with ICTs is that they are large in number, and there is no guidance provided to the user so as to choose the most promising one out of the ones available.

A growing gap exists between the availability of ICTs and scientific evidence to inform the use of these tools in mental health service delivery (Breslau & Engel, 2016). Divisions between health professionals, the levels of government and the cultural communities of the country are another set of challenges that are faced by ICTs (Kharad & Sharma, n.d.).

### **mHealth – Mobile Healthcare Facility**

A smartphone gives its users access to mobile applications that can generate,

reward and maintain strong habits in people, due to its accessibility and influence. According to Bakker, Kazantzis, Rickwood, & Rickard (2016), a smartphone is an advanced mobile phone whose function is same as of a handheld computer capable of running software applications. There has been a significant increase in the usage of smartphones in the world. Smartphone usage in India has been increasing rapidly and might cross the United States in the coming years, with respect to the smartphone usage (Yellowlees & Chan, 2015).

Smartphone technologies enable transfer and tracking of information, quick and easy access as well as interactive displays (Boudreaux, Waring, Hayes, Sadasivam, Mullen, & Pagoto, 2014). The portability of smartphones and its capabilities (such as its sensors, cameras, etc.) enhance the healthcare services provided through the smartphone (Stoyanov, Hides, Kavanagh, Zelenko, Tjondronegoro, & Mani, 2015). Smartphones and applications provide all facilities comparable to computers with the advantage of portability (Mani, Kavanagh, Hides, & Stoyanov, 2015).

The development of devices such as smartphones and tablets has led to a rapid growth in the field of mobile health (mHealth), the use of mobile applications for healthcare information and data (Sama, Eapen, Weinfurt, Shah, & Schulman, 2014). Sood, Chadha, & Singh (2016); East and Havard (2015) state that mHealth is a part of e-health. It is supported by mobile devices such as mobile phones, patient monitoring services, patient digital assistants, etc.

Price, Yuen, Goetter, Herbert, Forman, Acierno, & Ruggiero (2014) state that mHealth relies on mobile applications for delivering health care services. Mobile phone applications for health (mHealth) can be used for user engagement, means to facilitate treatment process, maintain anonymity and most importantly, be accessible to any individual who has a smartphone. The potential for mobile phone applications to impact populations has increased, due to the increase in smartphone ownership and number of health applications (Payne, Lister, West, & Bernhardt, 2015).

WHO have stated that mobile technologies have the “potential to transform the face of health service delivery across the globe”. The mHealth report of WHO indicates the application of mobile phone technologies in diseases, access to emergency and general health services and treatment enhancement. The report also mentioned that mHealth has been included as a key innovation for women and children’s health programmes of the United Nations (as cited in Shen et al., 2015).

Mendiola, Kalnicki, & Lindenauer (2015) state that mobile applications on health should have three important features, namely, autonomy, competence and relatedness.

Autonomy refers to the individual's desire to modify their behaviour based on their own interests and values. Competence refers to the need of an individual to feel confident and able to change or modify their behaviour. Relatedness refers to connectedness that individual feels with others.

### **Advantages of mHealth**

Donker, Petrie, Proudfoot, Clarke, Birch, & Christensen (2013); Giota and Kleftaras (2014); and Grist, Porter & Stallard (2017) list out some of the advantages of using mHealth. It helps in improving the accessibility of the treatment to the user, monitoring the activity of the user, tracking treatment progress, ensure anonymity, provision of personalized feedback and motivational support. Apart from these, mHealth has the advantage of portability and flexibility of use.

Yellowlees and Chan (2015) mention that mHealth services are cheaper in comparison to the traditional facilities. Wang, An, Lu, Chen, Li, & Levkoff (2014) discuss about the economic benefits that mobile technologies have to the people who live in remote areas. As mobile technologies require low level of infrastructural provision, it enables the usage of these technologies in remote areas of the country. Sama et al., (2014); Shen et al., (2015); Grist et al., (2017) observe that mobile phone applications provide an opportunity to customize and tailor the features of a mobile phone application, according to one's needs and issues.

The National Mental Health Survey (NMHS) of India, conducted by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India and National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences (2016), states that technology-based application can be used to follow-up on the patients going under treatment, evidence-based clinical support systems and home-based care using smartphones. It was suggested that it could be done by aligning it to campaigns such as Digital India. Yellowlees and Chan (2015) maintain that India has an added advantage to deliver health services, especially mental health services, through mHealth. They state that as most of the population in young, they are technologically sophisticated and are equipped with using the smartphones for handling such applications.

### **Mobile Phone Applications on Mental Health Literacy**

Over the last few years, numerous mental health applications have been developed to improve mental health of its users and their well-being. Under mHealth, mental health services are being primarily expanded through mobile phones (Sood et al., 2016). According to Donker et al., (2013), as of 2012, 6% of the applications on the

Apple AppStore were on mental health and 18% were on related health issues such as sleep, relaxation, etc. These applications on mental health can serve as the first step towards getting treatment for people who are not quite ready to seek medical help (Anthes, 2016).

Payne et al., (2015) stated that interventions as part of the mobile phone applications addressing the depression-related issues saw a significant decrease in the depression levels of the people who used it, at the follow-up, with better stress ratings and life satisfaction. One of the two applications addressing addiction showed a significant improvement in the drinking pattern of its users. Shen et al., (2015) comment upon the user behaviour when it comes to choosing an application. Consumers look at their own experiences and information rather than ratings and reviews when it comes to choosing an application that is paid. They highly consider complaint reviews and low ratings when they have to pay for an app.

### **Uses of Mobile Phone Applications on Mental Health Literacy**

Mental health applications can act as a communication medium between patients and doctors, can help in extending treatment services and can monitor relapse, symptoms and activities of users (Yellowlees & Chan, 2015). They help in the recovery of the person to encouraging habits that promote well-being. It makes mental health more accessible and reduces barriers for seeking help (Bakker et al., 2016; Grist et al., 2017). Barriers that are overcome by mobile phone applications include geography, treatment costs, low mental health literacy, cultural beliefs and socioeconomic status (Shen et al., 2015).

Applications on mental health promote self-management in individuals, a component of mental health literacy, who face any mental health problem. It not only helps people to seek help, it also helps in making people understand the problem by giving them information on the disease (Bakker et al., 2016), thereby promoting mental health literacy. Mobile phone applications on mental health are useful for enhancing monitoring and self-help for individuals suffering from mild to moderate common mental health disorders (Donker et al., 2013). But Giota and Kleftras (2014) state that new technologies cannot replace the face-to-face interaction between the doctor and the patient. The technology can expand this service and improve the quality of the service.

But more importantly, in a country like India where the providers of mental health services are scarce, mobile applications can connect patients with other patients,

families and supporters, through social networks, and improve medication adherence and provide social support and therapy (Yellowlees & Chan, 2015).

Sama et al., (2014) highlights that the greater user engagement provided by mobile applications is a critical feature for behaviour change that is required for improved outcomes. These applications are capable of implementing behaviour change interventions, which also leads to improving users' physical health (Bakker et al., 2016). The apps not only provide information to its users but ensure symptom monitoring, tracking treatment progress, training and two-way communication with health providers (Hind & Sibbald, 2015).

The users wanted the mobile phone applications on mental health to be discrete in terms of the interactions on the application. This was due to the stigma attached around mental health. Also, users wanted applications that were fast, easy to use, raise awareness of certain behaviours, and should provide potential cues to action (Payne et al., 2015; Giota & Klefтарas, 2014). Games are used in mobile phone applications on mental health for more than entertainment purposes. It helps people get information on mental health and help them cope up with their mental health issues (Giota & Klefтарas, 2014).

### **Limitations of Mobile Phone Applications on Mental Health Literacy**

The applications on mental health have the potential to create a significant improvement in the effectiveness and accessibility of treatment. However, the majority of the applications do not provide the source of their information, thus lacking 'evidence' about their efficacy and credibility. The users need to be made aware on how to identify the applications that cater to their needs and are accurate in terms of the information they provide. The digital-placebo effect is one of the reasons why people continue to download applications even without the evidence-based information (Donker et al., 2013; Boudreaux et al., 2014; Shen et al., 2015; Bakker et al., 2016; Price et al., 2014; Stoyanov et al., 2015; Anthes, 2016; Grist et al., 2017).

Healthcare organizations and providers need guidance on identifying and understanding applications that provide accurate information, are user-interactive and are effective (Boudreaux et al., 2014). The developers of the mental health applications rarely conduct or publish an experimental validation of their applications. Due to this, many applications lack the features that would improve their functionality (Bakker et al., 2016). Also, there are a lot of applications on mental health that are developed by institutions or individuals who are not mental health researchers or professionals (Giota & Klefтарas, 2014).

Technically, mHealth can have a few shortcomings. Battery failure, lack of network connections, data breach, privacy and security of the patient and spontaneous management of crisis are some of the issues that need to be kept in mind while designing an application (Donker et al., 2013; Sood et al., 2016; Giota & Kleftaras, 2014). Hind and Sibbald (2015) talk about the issue of long-term adherence. Many of the interventions in mobile applications were short-term and thus, experienced high dropout rates. Arean, Hallgren, Jordan, Gazzaley, Atkins, Heagerty, & Anguera (2016) note that the dropout rates for applications on mental health has been high as the application did not dynamically adjust to the users' needs and interests. Thus, engagement to the applications on mental health are highly dependent on whether the needs of the users are satisfied or not.

Despite the increase in the mobile phone applications on healthcare, a gap still exists between available applications and the demands of the user. The developers of these applications do not make quick informed decisions, which leads to wasted time and resources on the part of the developers of the applications (Wang et al., 2014). Anthes (2016) states that the mobile phone applications need to be translated in local languages, keeping in mind the local culture of the area, so as to make them ethnographically relevant to the users.

But for a country like India, these applications offer the option of accessing mental health care over many hurdles and of substantially improving the mental health of the country, and in particular of the youth of the nation (Yellowlees & Chan, 2015).

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## **Academic Stress, Depression and Wellbeing among Students Pursuing Higher Education: A Cross Sectional Study**

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### **Abstract**

The purpose of the present study is to examine academic stress, depression and wellbeing of students pursuing higher education. The study also attempts to assess the link between academic stress, depression and wellbeing of the students and to ascertain whether academic stress and depression are correlated with each other or not. The study was conducted in Tripura state and the students were selected purposively from various Govt. higher educational institutions of Agartala, the capital of Tripura. The sample consisted of 285 students and all of them were in the age group of 18-22 years. Academic Stress Scale, the Satisfaction with Life as a Whole and PWI Scale (Written Format) and Depression Anxiety and Stress Scale (DASS) were used to measure academic stress, depression and wellbeing of the students. The findings reveal that male and female students differ significantly in their feeling of depression and wellbeing. Further, academic stress and depression are negatively correlated with wellbeing of the students, indicating that students with more academic stress and depression have low wellbeing. The findings also indicate that with the increase in depression, there is also an increase in the academic stress of the students and vice versa. The present article highlights the importance of studying academic stress, depression and wellbeing among the students pursuing higher education particularly in the Northeastern region of India, as there is scarcity of research work in this area. Further, the study lays emphasis on introducing a positive approach towards exams, taking up effective learning feedback, and having open communication with the students for improving overall wellbeing of the students.

**Keywords:** *academic stress, depression, wellbeing, students, higher education.*

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## Introduction

Mental health issues are increasing day by day among the student population, especially adult students, because it is a transitional stage from academic life to work life. This period brings a lot of emotional turmoil among the youths, causing various severe mental health issues like stress, depression, anxiety, etc. Stress can lead to many serious mental issues as well as physical issues, if not managed effectively (Auerbach and Grambling, 1998). Over emphasis on high academic achievement can lead to academic stress among the students (Sasilumar and Bapitha, 2019). Studies showed that half of the mental health disorder begins in adolescence and early adulthood (14 to mid-20s), i.e., the transitional period of life (Kessler, et al., 2007; Fusar-Poli, 2019). That is why, suicide is the second leading cause of death among youths (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2018; WHO, 2019). Academic stress is one of the main reasons behind such alarming scenarios (Reddy, et al., 2018). Academic stress has become a matter of serious public concern globally and it is increasing day by day (Sangma, et al., 2018). Previous studies indicated that academic stress led to depression, anxiety, stress and poor academic performance (Pascoe, et al., 2020; Subramani and Kadharivaran, 2017). Not only this, moderate to high academic stress was found to hamper the wellbeing of the students (Glozah, 2013). High parental expectations, fear of failure, comparing one's achievement with others, unhealthy grade competition, excessive academic tasks are the leading causes of academic stress among the adolescent students (Subramani and Venkatachalam, 2019).

Hence, academic stress and mental health issues go hand in hand, which requires further preventive measures and therapeutic intervention to boost their well-being and that would further promote mental health of the students (Pedrelli, et al., 2015). Academic stress is one of the chief risk factors of heightened anxiety and depression among students, whereas parental support acts as a protective factor against it (Leung, et al., 2010).

## Review of Related Literature

Academics is an essential part of the students pursuing higher education and having a negative attitude towards it can cripple the students with academics-related stress, depression and other mental health issues (Kumaraswamy, 2013). The prevalence rate of stress was found to be 38.58% among students of higher education in Saudi Arab, and 85% of the students reported it as academic-related stress. Beiter, et al. (2015) revealed in their study that around 38% of college students have significant amount of stress and the main cause was academic stress. Similar studies in India

showed that the main cause of stress among the medical students was academic stress (Abraham, et al., 2009; Sivan and Rangasubhe, 2013).

Academic stress can be defined as the body's reaction to extreme pressure pertaining to excessive demands in academics and high achievements (Lee, et al., 2011; Wilks, 2008). Depression is a severe problem among the students pursuing higher education (Sarokhani, et al., 2013). Numerous studies have consistently proved that prolonged academic stress is highly associated with negative emotions like depression, anxiety and even addictive behaviours among the college and university students (Alsulami, et al., 2018; Barker, et al., 2018; Jun and Choi, 2015; Schraml, et al., 2011).

According to Bhujade (2017), at any point of time, there are always at least 10% to 20% students of higher education suffering from depression and stress. Taneja, et al. (2018) found that there was a prevalence rate of 32% depression, 40% of anxiety and 43.8% of stress, respectively among the medical students of India. Similar studies have found higher than average prevalence of depression, i.e., 27.79% and 26.9% among students pursuing higher education in India (Raghunathan, et al., 2019; Dave, et al., 2018). Liu and Lu (2012) in their study highlighted that 90% students had academic stress, followed by depressive symptoms, which immensely affected their well-being. Higher level of academic stress among the students is accompanied by academic burnout, which further leads to higher level of depression (Jiang, et al., 2021). Again, depression also adversely affects the academics of a student and can lead to academic stress and diminished overall health and well-being of students (Bernal-Morales, et al., 2015).

It is clearly evident that there is an association between academic stress and the severity of depressive symptoms (Romo-Nava, et al., 2016). Recently, a study involving 72 countries by Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2017) revealed that around 66% of students worldwide worry about their exam and grades, and suffer from academic stress and anxiety. Girls seem to have greater exam related anxiety in comparison to boys. It portrays a clear picture of how academic stress is disastrous for the mental health of the students and their well-being (OECD, 2017; Pozos-Radillo, et al., 2014). Ribeiro, et al. (2017) revealed that students pursuing higher education have higher level of academic stress and poorer overall well-being. Studies further revealed a strong negative relation between academic stress and well-being of the students (Bernstein and Chemaly, 2017; Zhang, et al., 2016; Poots and Cassidy, 2020). Similarly, depression and any kind of stress found to take a lot of tolls in the well-being of students (Alorani and Alradaydeh, 2017; Areba, et al., 2018; Yu, et al., 2014).

It is clearly evident from the previous studies that academic stress, depression and well-being of a student are correlated. Therefore, to uplift the careers of the students pursuing higher studies, who constitute the future of a nation, it is important to study the role of academic stress and depression in their overall well-being so that suggestions can be made in order to protect them from any menaces of mental health issues.

### **Problem**

Academic Stress, Depression and Wellbeing among Students Pursuing Higher Education: A Cross Sectional Study

### **Objectives of the Study**

- To study academic stress, depression, and well-being of the adult students of Tripura.
- To understand the gender difference of the students in their academic stress, depression and well-being.
- To assess the relationship between academic stress and well-being of the adult students.
- To determine the association between academic stress and depression of the adult students.
- To ascertain the link between feeling of depression and well-being of the students.

### **Hypotheses of the Study**

Ha<sub>1</sub>: Male and female students differ significantly with respect to (wrt) their academic stress.

Ha<sub>2</sub>: Male and female students differ significantly wrt their depression.

Ha<sub>3</sub>: Male and female students differ significantly wrt their well-being.

Ha<sub>4a</sub>: Academic stress is significantly correlated with well-being among the adult students.

Ha<sub>4b</sub>: Academic stress is significantly correlated with depression among the adult students.

Ha<sub>5</sub>: Depression is significantly correlated with well-being among the adult students.

## **Methodology**

- ***Sample***

The current study consisted of 285 students and they were selected using purposive sampling technique from different higher educational institutions of Agartala, the city of Tripura. Out of the 285 students, 100 were male students and 185 were female students. All of them were in the age group of 18-22 years.

- ***Tools Used***

1. *Academic Stress Scale*: It was developed by Kim (1970) originally. The scale was adopted later on to the Indian conditions by Rajendran and Kaliappan (1990) and Rao (2012) and the Indian version has been used in the current study to estimate the source of stress. The test-retest reliability of the test was found 0.799.

2. *The Satisfaction with Life as a Whole and PWI Scale (Written Format)*, developed by International Wellbeing Group (2013) has been used in the study. The validity of the scale was found to be 0.84 and validity was estimated as well.

3. *Depression Anxiety and Stress Scale (DASS)*: The scale was developed by Lovibond and Lovibond in 1995. For the current study, only the depression subscale has been used. Cronbach internal consistency of the entire scale was 0.89. The DASS scale has been established as valid and reliable instrument.

- ***Methods and Procedure***

First, permission was taken from the authorities of the educational institutions. Then rapport was established with the students and the objective of the study was explained. Then, the questionnaires were given to the participants and they were requested to fill the form. All the ethical concerns were followed during data collection.

## **Results and Interpretation**

For statistical analysis and interpretation, independent t-test and Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient has been calculated using IBM SPSS version 24.0.

The data was analysed through percentages and the statistical results obtained was tabulated and interpreted as follows:

From Table 1, it is apparent that out of 285 PG students, 35.1% were male and

the rest 64.9% were female; 48% were tribal and rest were non-tribal. 40% PG students live in rural areas whereas 60% live in urban areas. 47.7% of students are Hindus, whereas the rest are Muslims, Christians and other religions. Most of the student's family income is Rs. 10,000/- per month. 62.5% has nuclear families. Most of the students' parents studied till school level. The demographic parameters of the PG students of Tripura are given below:

**Table 1: Demographic parameters of PG students of Tripura**

Characteristics of Students		Total = 285	
		Frequency (n)	Frequency (%)
Gender	Male	100	35.1
	Female	185	64.9
Community	Tribal	140	48
	Non-tribal	145	51
Area of Living	Rural	115	40
	Urban	170	60
Religion	Hindu	136	47.7
	Muslim	83	29.2
	Christian	56	19.6
	Others	10	3.5
Family Income	Below Rs. 10,000	135	47.4
	Rs. 11,000 – Rs. 20,000	89	31.2
	Rs. 21,000 and above	61	21.4
Type of Family	Nuclear	178	62.5
	Joint	107	37.5
Father's Educational Qualification	Illiterate	76	26.7
	School Education	158	55.4
	Higher Education	51	17.9
Mother's Educational Qualification	Illiterate	89	31.3
	School Education	150	52.6
	Higher Education	46	16.1

**Table 2. Comparison between male and female students wrt their academic stress**

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	S.D.	t
Academic Stress	Male	100	62.18	27.42	-1.05
	Female	185	65.6	26.48	

\*p>0.01

From table 2, it is revealed that the mean score of academic stress of students is 62.18 and for female students, it is 65.6. It is quite evident from the mean values that there is no significant difference between male and female students in terms of their academic stress. Hence, the 1<sup>st</sup> hypothesis has been rejected. However, from the mean value it can be said that female students have more academic stress than their counterparts.

**Table 3. Comparison between male and female students wrt their depression**

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	S.D.	t
Depression	Male	100	16.72	8.28	-5.34
	Female	185	22.09	8.01	

\*p<0.01

Table3 showed that the mean depression score for male respondents was 16.72, while for female respondents, it was 22.08. The results clearly show that female students have higher level of depression in comparison to male students. The t-value was -5.34 (with df= 283) which was significant at 0.01 level. Therefore, as per the data in Table 3, the 2nd hypothesis has been accepted .

**Table4. Comparison between male and female students wrt their well-being**

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	S.D.	t
Well-being	Male	100	63.13	12.95	-2.719
	Female	185	58.76	12.94	

\*p<0.01

Table 4 narrated the descriptive statistics and t values for wellbeing of male and female students. The results showed that male respondents had better well-being (63.13) than their female counterparts (58.76). The t-value was significant at 0.01 level of significance and so hypothesis 3 has been accepted.

**Table 5. Correlation between academic stress, well-being and depression**

Academic Stress	Well-being	Academic Stress
r	-.597	.547
p	p<0.01	p<0.01
N	285	285

Table 5 highlighted the correlation between academic stress, well-being and depression among the students of Tripura. The result indicates that there is a significant negative correlation between academic stress and well-being among students, which means that with increase in academic stress of the students, their well-being would decrease. Hence, the 4a hypothesis has been accepted. The results further reveal that there is significant positive correlation between depression and academic stress among the study subjects. So, hypothesis 4b has been accepted. From the result, it can be said that with the increase in depression, there is also an increase in the academic stress of the students and vice versa, as evident from Table 5.

**Table 6. Correlation between depression and well-being**

Depression	Well-being
r	-.687
p	p<0.01
N	285

Table 6 shows that there is significant negative correlation between depression and well-being among the students. So, the 5<sup>th</sup> hypothesis has been accepted.

## Discussion

Academic stress among students has been researched quite well since decades by the researchers and if the intricate environment in colleges and universities are not dealt with properly by the authorities, it can lead to severe mental and physical health problems among the students (Agolla and Ongori, 2009; Misra and Castillo, 2004).

The present study revealed that male and female students do not differ significantly in terms of their academic stress. However, from the mean scores it is evident that female students have higher academic stress compared to the male students. There are innumerable studies which are contradictory to the current results (Dhulland Kumari, 2015; Karaman, et al., 2019). However, there are also a few studies which reveal that there is no difference in academic stress between male and female students (Calaguas, 2011; Khan, et al., 2013; Madhyastha, et al., 2014; Reddy, et al., 2018).

The present study shows that male and female students differ significantly in their feeling of depression. It further reveals that female students feel more depressed compared to male students. The prevalence rate of depression or anxiety among UG and PG students were found to range from 13% to 15.6% (Eisenberg, et al., 2007). There have been numerous studies which also revealed that female students have higher prevalence rate of depression in comparison to male students studying in both college and universities (Dahlin and Runeson, 2005; Ibrahim, et al., 2013; Roberts, et al., 2010; Song, et al., 2008).

Well-being is a psychological state of being happy and satisfied in our own life, with lower levels of stress and an overall good quality of life. When we talk about adult students, they basically undergo a transitional stage and it becomes very important for them to maintain a good health and wellbeing (Ullah, 2017). Several previous studies have revealed that gender is strongly associated with the well-being of the students and there is a noteworthy difference between male and female students in their well-being. However, male students always tend to have better wellbeing in comparison to their female counterparts (El Ansari, et al., 2013; Ludban, 2015; Ridner, et al., 2015; Skromanis, et al., 2018). The previous findings corroborate with the results of the current paper.

Findings of the present study reveal a negative correlation between academic stress and well-being of the young students. Preoteasa, et al. (2016) mentioned that students who had higher academic stress not only scored poorly in their exams, but they also had poor mental health. Similarly, many other studies have highlighted that academic stress has significantly decreased the mental, spiritual and emotional well-being and deteriorates the overall mental condition of the students (Javeth, 2018; Ofori, et al., 2018; Preoteasa, et al., 2016; Yovita and Asih, 2018; Zhong, 2009).

Depression is considered as the negative aspect of well-being and the results of this study revealed that there is a negative correlation between depression and well-being. It signifies that if someone has depression, then he/she will have poor well-

being. Previous studies also supported the same trend among students pursuing higher studies (Alorani and Alradaydeh, 2017; Lee, 2014; Tiwari and Tripathi, 2015; Yüksel, et al., 2019; Zheng, 2016).

Students with academic stress have a high risk of suffering from depression by 2.4 times more than those who don't have any academic stress (Jayanthi, et al., 2015). Similarly, depression among the students can also produce academic stress (Barker, et al., 2018; DeRoma, et al., 2009; Iorga, et al., 2018; Kamble and Minchekar, 2018). The current study has also backed the results found in previous studies among adult students.

### **Conclusions and Implications**

The findings of the study indicated the importance of studying academic stress, depression and wellbeing among the students pursuing higher education. It underlines the need to study the relationship between these three mental health variables among students, as well as the importance of examining gender role in academic stress, depression and well-being of students. It revealed significant gender difference in depression and well-being indicating poorer mental health status of female students. When it comes to academic stress, the study showed no significant difference among the students. Finally, the present study showed significant relationship between academic stress, depression and wellbeing and how academic stress and depression negatively affect the wellbeing of students of higher institutions.

Based on the current findings, it is suggested that the policy makers, educational authorities, and teachers must organize more and more training programmes and sensitize the students about academic stress and depression. Introducing a positive approach towards exams, taking up effective learning feedback, and having open communication with the students can improve their overall wellbeing. Different intervention and relaxation techniques should be introduced to reduce stress and promote positive mental health and for that every academic institution should have proper arrangement for mental health screening and counselling for each and every student of that institution.

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## **Human Rights Awareness among Undergraduate Students of General and SC Category**

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### **Abstract**

Human rights awareness through education is the ultimate solution against human rights abuses. In the present scenario, human rights is a burning issue, as corruption and crime are increasing day by day. People cannot raise their voice against violence due to lack of awareness. The present study about human rights awareness of undergraduate (UG) students will help to understand and to expand the knowledge up to their progeny. The study was conducted to investigate the awareness of human rights among UG students of General and Schedule Caste (SC) category. 80 UG students were selected as sample through stratified random sampling method from the Campus colleges of Kumaun University, Nainital. They were identified on the basis of academic and socio-economic factors i.e., gender, area of residence, academic stream, and family income. For data collection, a standardised Human Rights Awareness Test by Vishal Sood and Arti Anand (2012) was used, and data was analysed through mean, standard deviation and t-test. The finding of the study reveals that majority of the students in both the category (Gen-65 percent and SC-85 percent) fails to be in average category. So there is a need to provide human rights education in schools and colleges.

**Keywords:** *Human rights, human rights awareness, undergraduate students.*

### **Introduction**

Human rights have been a burning issue around the globe for the last few years. With time, the need for protection of human rights became persistent and for achievement of the same, various steps were taken and human rights were declared

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legal. The present study sheds light on human rights awareness, need and awareness among UG students. Human beings possess certain basic and inalienable rights which are commonly known as human rights. There are numerous theoretical debates surrounding the origins, scope and significance of rights in political science, moral philosophy, and jurisprudence. Roughly speaking, invoking the term “human rights” (which is often referred to as human rights discourse or human rights talk) is based on moral reasoning (ethical discourse), socially sanctioned norms (legal/political discourse) (Marks, 2016). Human rights are essential for all the human beings because these are consonant with their liberty and dignity and are conducive to moral, social and physical welfare (Agarwal, 2014). According to Prabhakaran and Shrivankumar (2020), these rights cover all men and women across the globe. These are the basic rights that protect a human from inhuman behaviour of others and are helpful in the survival of every human being.

Human rights approved by the Declaration of the UN General Assembly are comprehensive and detailed. This declaration starts with the Preamble and has 30 articles. The rights included in the declaration are universal in nature. Every individual without any discrimination of caste, colour, creed, religion is entitled to enjoy these rights. The purpose of these rights is to protect human beings living in every corner of the world from exploitation and to create necessary conditions for their development (Nivedita and Rani, 2015).

According to the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, World Conference on Human Rights, 1993, all human rights are universal, indivisible and interdependent and inter-related.

The international community must treat human rights globally in a fair and equal manner, on the same footing, and with the same emphasis. Education is a source through which values of human rights awareness can be imparted directly or indirectly. So, education for human rights awareness is of great importance. All human beings are equal in self-respect. Education is the only means for self-realisation. An educated person in the true sense will always make an effort to educate others. Being educated does not only mean having formal degrees from educational institutes. Even a person without any formal education, who is aware of himself is also an educated being (Padmavathy and Pallai, 2015).

Amnesty International defines Human Rights Education as a “deliberate, participatory practice aimed at empowering individuals, groups and communities through fostering knowledge, skills and attitudes consistent with internationally

recognised human rights principles”. It explains that the goal of Human Rights Education is to “empower yourself and others to develop the skills and attitudes that promote equality, dignity and respect in your community, society and worldwide.”<sup>3</sup> It refers to the fundamental freedoms and basic liberties without which men, women and children cannot live with self-esteem and pride. Human rights are the natural rights of a human being which means the right to guarantee dignity as a person. Most of the human rights violation cases are seen in case of deprived sections of society (Padmavathy and Pallai, 2015). The main reason for occurrence of incidents of exploitations is the lack of awareness among large masses about their basic human rights (Sood and Anand, 2012). All human rights are equal in importance and are inherent in all human beings.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights enumerate that human rights are of two types — Civil and Political Rights and Economic, Social and Cultural Rights<sup>4</sup> (Agarwal, 2014).

**(i) Civil and Political Rights:** Civil and Political Rights (First Generation Rights) are mentioned to be those rights which are related to the protection of the right to life and personal liberty. These are essential for an individual to live a dignified life. Such rights include right to life, liberty and security of persons, right to privacy, home and correspondence, right to own property, freedom from torture in human and degrading treatment, freedom of thought, conscience and religion and freedom of movement. Political rights refer to those rights which allow a person to participate in the government of a state which are, right to vote, right to be elected at genuine periodic elections and right to take part in the conduct of public affairs<sup>5</sup>.

**(ii) Economic, Social and Cultural Rights:** Economic, Social and Cultural Rights are related to the guarantee of minimum necessities of life to human beings. Right to adequate food, clothing, housing and adequate standard of living and freedom from hunger, right to work, right to social security, right to physical and mental health and education are included in this category of rights. These rights are included in the international covenant on economic, social and cultural rights.<sup>6</sup>

All rights and responsibilities have been given to man in a democratic system that are not being followed by man. It seems that man has become lax about his

<sup>3</sup><https://www.amnesty.org/en/human-rights-education/>

<sup>4</sup><https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>

<sup>5</sup><https://www.coe.int/en/web/compass/the-evolution-of-human-rights>

<sup>6</sup><https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/international-covenant-economic-social-and-cultural-rights>

rights. On one hand, corruption and crimes are increasing day by day. Even children and women are not safe in their homes. In such a situation, people are not conscious of the violence being committed on themselves, because they are unable to raise their voice due to lack of awareness of human rights. The most disadvantaged groups are women and children who have been compelled to face exploitation and violation<sup>7</sup>. Their awareness for the human rights is important in transferring the same to the future citizens. Hence adequate awareness can help to create a sensitive, informed and enlightened society.<sup>8</sup>

### **Studies on Human Rights Awareness**

Katoch (2011) conducted a study on college students' human rights awareness and found that there was a significant difference on the level of human rights awareness among the college students with regard to gender and locality. The study also revealed that male and urban college students were found to be more aware about human rights. Sarate (2011) in his study on senior secondary school students based on Gender, Area, Academic stream and personality make up found out that senior secondary students possessed an average level of human rights awareness. A study to compare the human rights awareness among the tribal and nontribal senior secondary school students was conducted by Barwal (2014) on a sample of 200 secondary school students from five senior secondary schools of district Kinnaur and Mandi. It was found that there was no difference in human rights awareness between tribal boys and girls, and non-tribal boys and girls at the senior secondary level. There existed significant differences in human rights awareness among tribal science students and tribal arts students and nontribal science students and non-tribal arts students of senior secondary schools.

Nivedita and Rani (2015) compared the level of human rights awareness among B.Ed and B.A students of Sirsa district. A non-significant difference was reported between awareness among B.Ed. and B.A. students regarding human rights awareness.

Humtsoe et al. (2019) attempted to find out the level of human rights' awareness among the post graduate students studying in Assam Don Bosco University. It was found out that the majority (61.73%) of the students possess average and below average level of human rights awareness, and only about 3.70 % of students have a high level of human rights awareness. No significant difference was found in relation

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<sup>7</sup>[https://www.unodc.org/lpo-brazil/en/frontpage/2019/12/corruption-and-gender\\_-\\_women-and-men-affected-differently-by-corruption--but-no-evidence-women-or-men-are-less-corruptible.html](https://www.unodc.org/lpo-brazil/en/frontpage/2019/12/corruption-and-gender_-_women-and-men-affected-differently-by-corruption--but-no-evidence-women-or-men-are-less-corruptible.html)

<sup>8</sup>[https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Publications/ConstitutionMaking\\_EN.pdf](https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Publications/ConstitutionMaking_EN.pdf)

to gender and place of residence, but significant difference was found in relation to stream of study.

In Guwahati, Balgari (2021) found that secondary school students had no in-depth knowledge of human rights, its broad areas as well as applicability. This was in spite of the fact that 40% of the students had Human Rights as a subject and 51% of the students have Human Rights Education in Syllabus.

### **Objectives of the Study:**

- To study the level of human rights awareness among UG students of General and SC category of college campuses of Kumaun University, Nainital.
- To compare the human rights awareness along with its various dimensions among students of General and SC category.
- To study human rights awareness among UG students of General and SC category on the basis of academic and socio-economic factors.

### **Hypothesis of the Study**

- There is no significant difference between UG students of general and SC category, regarding various dimensions of human rights awareness.
- There is no significance of difference in human rights awareness among students of general category and SC category on the basis of gender, academic stream, area of residence and family income.

### **Methodology**

The present study adopted a descriptive survey method of educational research as the purpose of the study is to find out the present status of human rights awareness among the UG students. The study is quantitative in nature. A standardised Human Rights Awareness Test (HRAT) developed by Vishal Sood and Arti Anand (2012) was used to measure the level of awareness of UG students. The test was classified into three dimensions: (i) Knowledge of Human Rights related documents, (ii) Knowledge and Understanding about Human Rights Concept, (iii) Understanding of Situations involving Human Rights Violation/ Non-Violations consisting of 50 statements with three alternatives i.e., true, undecided and false. A sample of 80 UG students, from both the campus of Kumaun University (40 students from DSB Campus and 40 from Sir J.C. Bose campus, Bhimtal) was selected by using simple random sampling technique. Both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were used to analyse the data such as mean, standard deviation and t- test.

**Results and Discussion**

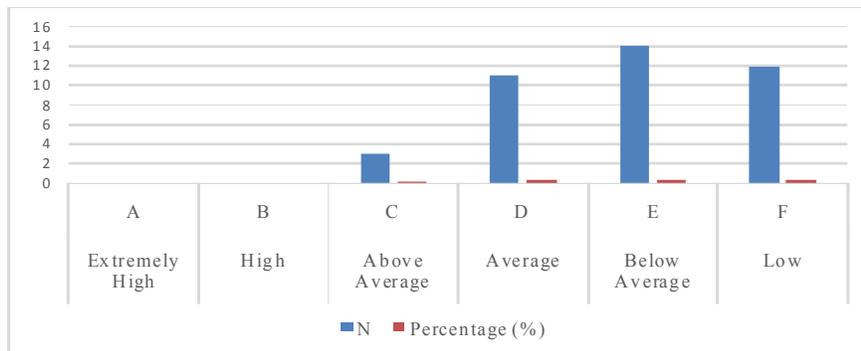
After analysing the data, the level of human rights awareness among UG students of General category is presented in Table-1.

**Table -1: Human rights awareness level among UG students of General category**

S. No.	Degree of Human Rights Awareness	Grade	N	Percentage (%)
1	Extremely High	A	Nil	0%
2	High	B	Nil	0%
3	Above Average	C	3	7.5%
4	Average	D	11	27.5%
5	Below Average	E	14	35%
6	Low	F	12	30%

Table-1 reveals that none of the students fall in category A (Extremely high degree of HRA) and category B (High degree of HRA). Only 7.5% of the general students classify under the above average level of human rights awareness. 27.5 % students fall in the average level of human rights awareness category.

Maximum number of students, i.e. 35% come under the below average category (E), while 30% of the students displayed low level of human rights awareness with F grade.



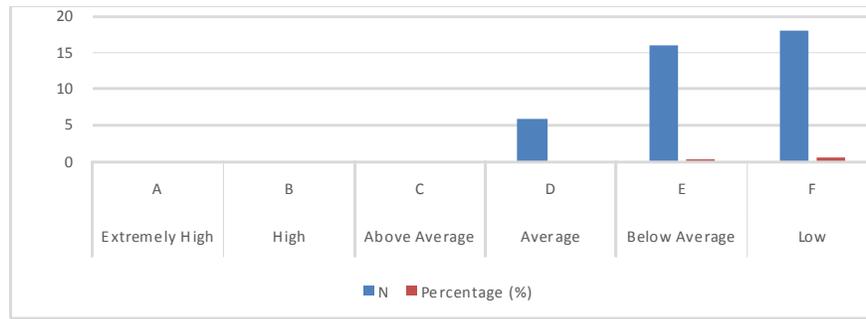
**Fig.1 Human rights awareness level among UG students of General category.**

Level of human rights awareness among UG students of SC category is presented in Table 2.

**Table- 2: Human rights awareness level among UG students of SC category**

S. No.	Degree of HRA	Grade	N	Percentage (%)
1	Extremely High	A	Nil	0%
2	High	B	Nil	0%
3	Above Average	C	Nil	0%
4	Average	D	6	15%
5	Below Average	E	16	40%
6	Low	F	18	45%

Table-2 shows that none of the UG students of SC category came to the level that could be categorised as having extremely high, and high and above average degree of human rights awareness. Only 15% students have an average level of awareness about human rights. It is also clear from the table that 40% of the students of SC category displayed a below average level of awareness. In the category of low degree HRA, maximum number of students, i.e., 45% qualified in F grade.

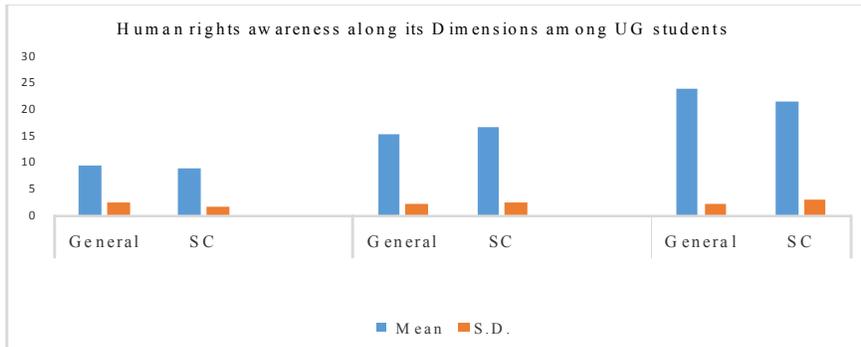
**Fig.2. Human rights awareness level among UG students of SC category.**

Dimension-wise Human Rights Awareness among General and SC category students is presented in Table-3

**Table -3: Dimensions of Human Rights Awareness among General and SC category students**

S.N	Dimensions of Human Rights awareness	Categories	N	Mean	S.D.	t-value
1	Knowledge about human rights Documents	General	40	8.67	1.80	0.41
		SC	40	8.75	1.55	
2	Knowledge and understanding of human rights concepts	General	40	15.22	2.29	0.01
		SC	40	16.62	2.68	
3	Understanding of human rights violations/non – violations	General	40	23.9	2.35	0.46
		SC	40	23.85	2.32	

Analysing data on different dimensions of human rights awareness, it is found that computed t-value for first dimension is 0.41, for second dimension is 0.01 and, for third dimension is 0.46, which is lesser than the table value (1.98). Therefore, the computed t-value for all the dimensions, as presented in Table 3 and Figure 3, has not been considered significant. As per formulated hypothesis, there is no significant difference on human rights awareness among UG students.



**Fig. 3 -Dimensions of Human Rights awareness among General and SC students**

Based on gender, it was found that the mean score of general male UG students is greater (58.64) than male UG students of the SC category (56.5). The standard deviation of the general male is calculated at 5.87 and the value of SD for SC males was found 5.9. t-value is 0.20, which is not significant. On the other hand, the mean value of general females is greater (59.09) than SC females (56.07). The standard deviation of general females is 7.08 and 6.32 is the SD value of SC female students. The calculated t-value is 0.05. This is lesser than the table value (1.98), and therefore, it has not been considered significant.

Based on the area of residence of UG students, the mean score of general urban UG students is greater (59.14) than SC urban UG students (57.29). The standard deviation of general urban was calculated at 6.26 and the value of SD for SC urban was found at 5.51. Calculated t- value is 0.22, which is lesser than the table value (1.98) and not been considered significant. On the other hand, the mean value of general rural students is greater (60.25) than SC rural students (56.07). The t-value is 0.06 is not found significant.

Awareness level of General and SC category UG students on human rights on the basis of gender, area of residence, academic stream and family income is presented in the table below.

**Table -4: Awareness level of General and SC category UG students on human rights**

S.N.	Category	Sub-Categories	N	Mean	SD	t-test
1	Gender	Male (General)	11	58.64	5.87	0.2
		Male (SC)	12	56.5	5.9	
		Female (General)	29	59.09	7.08	0.05
		Female (SC)	28	56.07	6.32	
2	Area of residence	Urban (General)	17	59.14	6.26	0.22
		Urban (SC)	20	57.29	5.51	
		Rural (General)	23	60.25	7.29	0.06
		Rural (SC)	20	55.15	6.4	
3	Academic stream	Arts (General)	13	59.56	6.65	0.32
		Arts (SC)	20	56.36	6.26	
		Science (General)	22	60.23	6.39	0.41
		Science (SC)	10	57.36	6.4	
		Commerce (General)	5	58.5	8.85	0.64
		Commerce (SC)	10	53.83	3.19	
4	Family Income Group (Per month)	Low-income group (General) -1000-20,000)	17	58.36	7.59	0.35
		Low-income group (SC) -1000-20,000)	27	56.14	5.64	
		Middle-income group (General) - 21,000 -50000)	18	58.64	6.2	0.52
		Middle-income group (SC) -21000 - 50,000)	5	54.86	7.24	
		High-income group (General) - 51,000 -100000)	5	63.4	3.71	0.46
High-income group (SC) - 51000 - 100000)	8	58.8	6.69			

While comparing human rights awareness based on different academic streams, it was found that general category of Science stream students had more awareness with mean value 60.23, which was highest among Arts and Commerce stream students of general and SC category. The t-value came out 0.41, which is lesser than the table value (1.98). Therefore, the computed t-value (0.41) has not been considered significant between General Science students and SC category students. Likewise, General Arts and SC Arts students' t-value was found 0.32. Students of the General category in the Commerce stream were found to be more aware with a mean value of 58.5. The calculated t-value (0.64) is not significant.

Students of the general category who belonged to the low-income group, scored a mean value of 50.36 which is greater than students of the SC category from the low-income group of families (56.14). The calculated t-value was 0.35; it was lesser than the table value (1.98). So, it was not found significant. In the second family income group, i.e., the general middle-income group, t-value was 0.52 and it was

found to be non-significant. The high family income group of general category students scored 63.40 as a mean value which was greater than the mean value (58.28) of students of the SC category. The calculated t-value (0.46) was also found to be non-significant.

### **Findings**

- It is found that the maximum number of General category students (35%) have a below average level of awareness while 7.5% students have an above average level of awareness. On the other hand, 40% students of SC category have low level of awareness and only 15% students have average level of human rights awareness.
- There is no significant difference between General and SC category students in awareness regarding different dimensions of human rights.
- It is found that in comparison to the General male and SC male, general female and SC female UG students do not differ significantly in their human rights awareness. This finding is similar to that of Padmavathy and Pallai (2015).
- There is no significant difference among students of General urban and SC urban, General rural and SC rural students in their human rights awareness. This finding is similar to the studies of Sasikala and Francisca (2016), Vimal Kumar (2014), Baljit Singh and Tirath Singh (2012).
- Between the General and SC category of students, in respect of human rights awareness, there is no significant difference in the Science courses, Arts and Commerce courses. This finding is similar to the findings of Padmavathy and Pallai (2015).

### **Conclusion**

An educated person in the true sense will always attempt to educate others. Even a person without any formal education, who is aware of his self is also an educated being (Nivedita and Rani, 2015). The 1986 National Policy on Educational (NPE) suggested various measures to bring equality through the system of education. It recommended the reshaping of the curriculum, textbooks, training of teachers and administrators to remove gender bias from textbooks and bring change in the status of women and educational development of the SC/ST population at all stages and levels of education (MHRD, 1986). Educational activities can endow approaches and provide long-lasting solutions for any problem. Knowledge on human rights can develop awareness and sensitivity in terms of the rights and responsibilities among all

individuals. The knowledge of human rights makes them well fortified to face the challenges of future too. Hence, human rights awareness through education is the ultimate solution to achieve long-term and permanent solution against human rights abuses and establishing peace all over the world (Dayal and Kaur, 2015).

From the above findings, it is clear there is a need to promote and create human rights awareness among the UG students. The result of the present study shows that majority of the students' awareness level on human rights was below average and low. Hence, the curriculum planners should review the curriculum of the entire discipline so that contents on human rights education can be integrated into the teaching-learning process. The gap between theory and practice should also be evaluated so that human rights education will find its rightful place in the curriculum of UG programme as well as in other levels of education and bring transformation in the movement of 'all human rights for all' for excellence of life and peaceful cohabitation for all human family through education.

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## Digital Technology among Students: Issues and Concerns

• Surendra Kalet<sup>1</sup>      • Saswat Chandra Pujari<sup>2</sup>

### Abstract

The advancement of digital technology is one of the greatest gifts to the modern world. Although technology could have a good influence on the planet, it is also an indication of its ability to cause detrimental impacts and its abuse. Overuse of digital technology can cause major behavioural problems and extend difficulties in concentrating on crucial activities. It also has a greater influence on growing children and teens. Thus, this paper attempts to highlight how the internet plays a key factor in encountering students in a state of deprivation. It is mainly focused on to show how these technical gadgets are used during the time of online classes, and being used for playing online video games, it become the prime reason for committing suicide among students.

**Keywords:** *Technology, students, depression, suicide.*

### Introduction

Access to digital technology has become a necessity in students' daily lives. This seems to be the sole means to reach children throughout lockdown, but it also presents its own set of issues. Students and instructors have faced difficulties owing to poor internet and communication concerns (Mitra, 2020). As the usage of computers and internet networking grows and becomes more integrated into everyday life, it may also be harmful to one's health and well-being (Haythornthwaite, 2005). Smartphones, televisions, game consoles, media players, and other devices waste the time of majority of individuals. Many young minds are technologically obsessed. As a result, it has caused a distraction in learning and working, diverting individuals' attention away from their hopes and aspirations. Furthermore, excessive usage of technology may

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cause social exclusion and alienation among relatives and lead to depression. Depression covers a wide spectrum of emotions, including mild melancholy to compulsive suicidality, and is also a significant cause of mortality globally. It is a part of the growing problem of a reduction in social, vocational, and psychological relationships (Kaur et al., 2014).

Following the COVID-19 epidemic, children all across the world were pushed to transition to a digital type of education. While the transition has always been relatively simple for wealthy students, it creates issues for the majority of our society, as they are unable to access the proper internet due to a lack of infrastructure facilities and digital gadgets to attend online classes (Jain, 2020). Also, instructors are indeed having trouble producing everyday tutorial videos. Due to unanticipated technological encounters, many people are concerned that the situation will worsen during the rainy season, resulting in the maintenance of fallen power lines, inverters, and power poles being delayed (Reporter, 2021). Moreover, conducting exams, on the other hand, has become more difficult. The majority of certification and entrance exams have been extended or cancelled, disrupting the educational schedule. Children who are certainly scheduled to take the board examinations this year or next, for example, have already wasted class time (Sudevan, 2020). On account of this situation, children of this generation have come to their senses in the age of digital innovation, surrounded by laptops, computers, touch-screen smartphones, and tablets, which enable the students to play console games to keep them busy. It is difficult to protect children from these devices. Their entire focus shifts away from schoolwork and toward gaming, and this over-addiction to gaming and technology can sometimes ruin their lives and become the prime cause of suicide among them.

### **Theoretical Framework**

According to Emile Durkheim's theory of suicide, individuals who are not fully integrated into society commit egoistic suicide. Social relationships are weak, and individuals feel excluded and as if they are not a part of the community, which also implies that the community is not a part of the person. Individuals who are overly integrated commit altruistic suicide. It is a part of traditional civilizations that have a high level of mechanical solidarity. Anomic suicide occurs whenever social control fails and people fail to adhere to norms and ideals. Anomie is caused by abrupt shifts that lead to circumstances of distress or depression. People are no longer subject to social control. Fatalistic suicide is the outcome of general societal excess influence over a person, which is an act of overregulation. Individual abuse results in suffocation and weakness. Thus, according to Durkheim, people's emotions forcibly crushed by

repressive regulation are more inclined to commit suicide (Coser, 1977). The altruistic theory of suicide is more relevant to the present type of technological suicide. It has been observed that students have committed suicide as a result of the over addicted to online gaming activities. Students are deeply immersed in technology and devote a significant amount of time to it. As a result, it has a significant influence on their health.

Furthermore, mostly the games like PUBG and Free Fire have had both direct and indirect effects on the individual. They are spending and losing money on it, which becomes a factor to make them feel depressed; further, it turns into a leading cause of suicide among students. Also, during the time of COVID-19, the sudden transition from the physical mode of teaching to the online mode of teaching creates suicidal tendency among the students. This is because the students from the lower economic class could not afford to buy a smartphone to attend the online class, and it became the reason for committing suicide among them. Furthermore, the over-addiction to this leads to several health hazards and risks to the students. According to Leiss (1994), Ulrich Beck's theory of risk society contends that the inherent danger in contemporary society will eventually lead to the establishment of a global risk society. There is technical progress in human civilisation. And, as technology develops, new types of dangers emerge, and we must continually adapt and adjust to these developments. He claims that society encompasses a wide range of interconnected changes in modern society, not just environmental and health problems. In the modern era, students have become the sole reason for their existence. They have spent significant time in the technological field without contemplating its effect, which has further resulted in depression and put them into several diverse behavioral disorders.

### **Internet and Connectivity: Reason for Depression Triggers**

Nowadays, social networking raises students' depression (Krishnamoorthy, 2020). Gambling, particularly among teens, is becoming a significant cause of depression and suicide, compared to other sources of addiction.

The internet is a new and exciting platform that is quickly becoming an indispensable part of students' daily lives all across the world. It has created a new arena in social interaction with the potential to increase efficiency and identify common ground through specifically designed tools to aid research, information seeking, interpersonal connection, and economic transactions. Excessive internet use is now becoming increasingly common in humanity as the internet's relevance grows and online usage grows dramatically. Dr. Ivan Goldberg coined the term "Internet addiction" (Nalwa & Anand, 2003).

Further, depression is quite common among students. Engineering students have a greater prevalence of depressive symptoms than medical students. Children who have unsupportive families, do not comprehend their difficulties, and have parenting disagreements that are more likely to have depression. Not following a path of one's own choosing and discontent with one's existing path predisposes to sadness (Kaur et al., 2014). Moreover, based on the geographical region, those who live in the hilly area are unable to reap all the benefits of internet connectivity. Due to a lack of infrastructure, students are having difficulty accessing the internet, are unable to attend online classes, and must travel outside of their home region to obtain adequate connectivity. But simultaneously, the majority of the students who are from a good social class are nowadays getting more and more addicted to the use of the internet. Consequently, internet addiction can be detrimental to some mental diseases and addiction issues, such as sadness, low self-esteem, and isolation.

As India battles the long-term COVID-19 epidemic, the enormous impact on the psychological health of young people aged 15 to 29, who make up approximately 27.5 percent of our population must be addressed. According to the National Crime Records Bureau, one-third of all suicides in the country in 2020 will be committed by young people. The disturbance to their lives resulted in the loss of in-person schooling, routines, and social events, which led to high-stress levels, sadness, and the integration of illnesses. As per the 2021 State of the World's Children Report, 1 in 7 youth aged 15 to 24 in India revealed getting upset during the epidemic (Chauhan & Bhan, 2022).

### **Technology-driven Suicidal Tendency**

In the COVID-19 pandemic, the teaching-learning process has been moved to an online platform, but the majority of students do not have reliable internet service or access to digital gadgets. As a consequence of the scarcity of these materials, many students are still unable to attend lessons, thus lagging behind in being awarded a degree. Another leading issue, PUBG, is a South Korean company's game mode in which gamers are placed upon an island and must exterminate each other. Since its initial release in 2017, it has amassed a massive worldwide audience across PCs, consoles, and mobile applications. Due to not being able to attend online classes during the COVID-19 pandemic, and online gaming factors have become a major aspect among the students who have committed suicide in recent years, which has been highlighted below-

A student committed suicide in Kerala and was reported on 2<sup>nd</sup> June, 2020. An academically inclined 15-year-old girl in Grade X who also had achieved a school

award for her “academic brilliance” attempted to commit suicide as she was unable to participate in courses online or watch TV lectures due to a broken television set in the family home and a lack of access to a smartphone. Her father was a daily wage labourer who had not received any money for two months. Thus, it put their children in economic difficulty. According to media sources, the girl attempted suicide herself because she believed her educational attainment would suffer as a result of missing class lectures owing to her difficulty in accessing the internet or broadcasting learning materials. Before finishing online classes, she became depressed and died by suicide. This circumstance, i.e., a lack of knowledge owing to a lack of adequate infrastructure, is far from uncommon, and it highlights the necessity for preventative measures to stop similar incidents from happening again in the future (Lathabhavan & Griffiths, 2020).

In one terrible example, a 15-year-old girl deceptively struggled herself because she could not have a cellphone to pursue online classes. On September 23, the tragedy occurred at Ond village, 10 kilometers from Karad town in Maharashtra’s Satara district. The victim was studying in a high school and had been told to attend online tutorials in view of the Corona virus epidemic for the previous several months, the District Attorney Balkrishna Jagdale told IANS. The deceased minor’s mother, a local farm labourer, couldn’t even obtain a cellphone for her child since the family income seemed scarcely enough to subsist (Desk, 2020).

A 16-year-old class 10 student is alleged to have committed suicide after missing online lessons due to the absence of a mobile device. The tragedy occurred in the Nischinda region of West Bengal’s Howrah district. There was no suicide note found in the suspect’s room. The youngster went to an English-medium school. Following the lockdown in response to the coronavirus outbreak, most schools throughout the country have begun offering online lessons (Mirror now digital, 2020).

A Class 11 student in Tamil Nadu committed suicide because he was unable to handle the stress of online lessons that were still running owing to the coronavirus-induced shutdown. The youngster was attending school in Trichy but came home to the Theni area during the COVID-19 lockdown. As per *India Today*, he began having trouble grasping online lessons following the beginning of his online learning. As per the statement, he informed his family about his struggles with virtual classrooms and how challenging it was for him to follow lessons. As per the report, the boy had been having “severe difficulties” understanding its online courses. He gradually became concerned that he was unable to realise his parents’ expectations of schooling him. When he couldn’t deal with the pressure, he wanted to hang himself while his parents

were at work, according to the story. His siblings hurried him to the clinic, but he just could not be rescued (Money Control News, 2022).

A boy's death in southern India after his mother chastised him for enjoying a popular internet game has sparked a nationwide discussion over whether the game should be banned. According to Indian news sources, the 16-year-old father urged a ban on Player Unknown's Battlegrounds, or PUBG, after his son hung him from a ceiling fan at their Hyderabad house after becoming reprimanded for squandering time online rather than preparing for an English test. Parents want their children, many of whom remain with them long into adulthood, to focus on schooling and practical endeavours. In March, two men in their twenties were killed by an oncoming train while enjoying the game on smartphones along railway lines in Maharashtra state (Gulfnews, 2019).

In Joda, Odisha's Keonjhar district, a class VIII boy hanged himself, after his parents reproved him for spending a long time playing computer games for huge sums of cash. According to authorities, the parents gave him a smartphone for an online course during the COVID-19 confinement period. He did, however, spend much of his time on the smartphone enjoying a game online termed "Free Fire." While enjoying the sport a few days ago, he lost a total of Rs 96,000, including Rs 61,000 from his father's account and Rs 35,000 from his mother's account. When he inquired at the bank, the bank officials informed him that the money had been withdrawn from his account as a result of online games played on his mobile phone. Because of his father's unpleasant response to his son's conduct, the tiny boy hanged himself inside the toilet. The kid was retrieved by close relatives and brought to a nearby hospital, where he was pronounced dead. "His parents gave him a phone for educational work, but he largely used it to play online games." Thus, his parents lost around Rs 1 lakh from their account. They learned about it from the bank and questioned him about it as well. "He turned really distraught and took his own life," his father explained (Sahoo, 2020).

In a terrible and terrifying incident, a 13-year-old boy is accused of committing suicide after suffering from depression related to a cellphone game. According to authorities, the boy hanged himself to death in Madhya Pradesh's Chhatarpur district on Saturday, dipping under a suicide letter in which he stated that he was taking dramatic action after losing Rs. 40,000 on an internet platform (Zee Media Bureau, 2021).

A boy disappeared from his home on Tuesday evening. His parents reported it to the police as a consequence. The police launched an inquiry and started searching for

him. On Wednesday, investigators reportedly located the boy's shoes and bicycle near the pond in that location. A second scan assisted authorities in retrieving his corpse from the pond. According to the *New Indian Express*, his father chastised the boy, who had been in class IX, over wasting the cash on mobile games such as "Free Fire." Given this, the youth chose the dangerous option. According to some sources, the boy lost a substantial amount of money on the smartphone version and chose to terminate his existence out of regret (Online Desk, 2021).

A young man is allegedly killed in Kuttichal, Kerala, after incurring massive debts as a result of his addiction to an online game. According to authorities, the victim was recognised as an ISRO contract worker. On December 31, he was discovered dead. His father said that his son was hooked on an online rummy game. He acquired more than 20 LPA from his pals to play it (Reporter, 2021).

A 25-year-old boy said in his suicide letter that he had been hooked on the online video game Teen Patti. To obtain 'quick money in order to relieve his family from the poverty line, he took out loans through an internet app and gambled on an internet game called Teen Patti. But he was defeated. He would be unable to repay the loan. "They are harassing me with frequent WhatsApp calls. They are said to have begun sending threatening texts to others on his contact list," in the suicide letter, he stated. As per the initial investigation by the police, the boy bought over one lakh rupees via the Loan App and lost almost all the money in the game. According to the examining officer, Vaskale, a native of Bistan in Khargone district, was taking PGDCA from a state college and sleeping in a boys' hostel in Indrapuri Colony. He was discovered hanging from the stairwell railing. He has also been employed as a security guard somewhere in town. In the suicide letter, the boy apologises to his mother for playing an internet game. He said that he hoped to earn enough money to buy a house for his parents. He further asked the cops to make sure his parents were not mistreated because of the outstanding debt (Reporter, 2022).

According to authorities, an 11-year-old kid from Madhya Pradesh's Bhopal allegedly killed by hanging himself with both strings from a punching bag erected on his home's rooftop. The Additional Commissioner of Police in Bhopal released a statement wherein he claimed that a teenager was recovered dead in his home following a suicide. As per the statement by his parents, the boy spent over sixty thousand on online video games, which is beyond their capacity. Parents have previously uninstalled the app. The investigation still seems to be underway. As per authorities, no suicide note was discovered at the scene of the boy's home. The boy was a class 5 student from Shankaracharya Nagar, Bajaria. His father informed investigators that his son

was hooked on an internet game on Wednesday afternoon. According to the police, his relatives took him to a private hospital, but the doctor confirmed his death after a serious examination (APN Live, 2022).

A 14-year-old Mumbai youth is accused of committing suicide on February 13, 2022 when his parents declined to fulfil a task in the Garena Free Fire game. According to ANI, the crime is being investigated by the Bhoiwada police. The youngster was addicted to the online game Garena Free Fire, as per investigators. "A further investigation revealed that the boy was addicted to the Free Fire online game, but what exactly pushed him to execute such a severe step remains uncertain," police said in the report (Yadav, 2022).

On January 12, 2022, a 12-year-old boy committed suicide at the end of his addiction to the game Free Fire. In view of this occurrence, the Madhya Pradesh government has decided to pass an act governing online gaming shortly. Not just the 12-year-old, but many more youngsters keep on losing their lives as a result of playing online games. As per the IANS report, the government will soon introduce legislation to limit internet gambling (Edex Live, 2022).

A 13-year-old boy obsessed with the gaming console Free Fire committed suicide in his Dadar home, exposing the hazards of playing online games once again. He had supposedly spent the previous two to three months playing these games, which were again prohibited in India on the day following his death, with six of his school buddies.

The authorities reportedly enlisted the help of cyber specialists to check his smartphone. According to the Bhoiwada police, Tirthesh Chetan Khanolkar's death had nothing to do with Free Fire, but his mobile phone has been transferred to cyber specialists for a thorough examination. They now record the remarks of Tirthesh's six pals who were also participating in the event (Vaktania, 2022).

On March 1, 2022, a 19-year-old and two young boys were detained in connection with the killing of his 22-year-old friend in an incident over the online computer game PUBG. On Monday, at 9 p.m., the trio stabbed their friend to death with a sharp knife at the Little Flower School in Vartak Nagar. Locals reported seeing the four companions near the school numerous times in the preceding several days. They used to drink alcohol, play online games, and argue frequently. On Monday night they all got into a fight about the game after drinking, and the three mates, including the two minor lads, allegedly stabbed their friend with a sharp weapon (Singh, 2022).

Another heartbreaking incident occurred in Lucknow on June 8, when a 16-year-old boy became deeply addicted to online gaming, specifically PUBG, and as a result, he shot his mother ever since she denied him from playing the video game, and he chose to keep her mother's body in their own Lucknow home for two days by terrifying and locking up his younger sister in the room to ensure she did not notify anyone at all (HT Correspondent, 2022).

### **Need for Reform**

Many students lag behind because of the lack of facilities that are needed to teach digitally. If we want to close the digital gap, we need to offer greater facilities to children like continuous web access and technological gadgets (Jain, 2020). Certain elements, such as parenting and educational counselling should be prioritised among students in order to reduce the frequency of anxiety among children.

New policies and initiatives must be implemented, focusing on a certain group based on their needs. Special consideration should be paid to family connections and enabling one to adopt a path of one's own choosing (Kaur et al., 2014). There is a general lack of understanding of anxiety. Stigma over psychological health exists not just in the general public but also in the medical community. Additional difficulties, such as the scarcity of skilled mental health practitioners cause depression to remain unnoticed and untreated in India.

Technologies have several great effects because when it comes to detrimental consequences, they may be quite detrimental to a human's life and should not be ignored. It could completely detach the children from the use of innovation. Instead of doing this, make them well aware about their present predicament, caution them about its limited use, and do not even over depend on them. Instead of engaging them in the online service, start engaging them in the exercise that can temporarily differentiate them from the use of technology. They are also relieved of stress and tension by engaging in well-planned exterior action. It is extremely beneficial to all individuals when they use a beneficial method (Suri and Ramnath, 2021).

Playing outdoors will divert their attention away from these internet games and redirect them to more creative endeavors. Otherwise, consult a psychiatrist or a psychologist. They may assist these children and persuade them to participate in outside activities, which may change their positive approach. However, regular access to these mobile games is harmful, not only for children but also for families, since the influence of certain games is horrific.

## **Conclusion**

The advancement of technology has already dominated several sections of human beings, and its influence has been felt mostly among the student category. Children of today have gone through the digital age, and by the time they hit adulthood, they are typically addicted to these electronic tools, which only further expose individuals to a variety of bad repercussions. The concept of a digital divide also develops, although a lot of students can enjoy all of the benefits of technology while another lot of students cannot because of inadequate basic infrastructure. It further pushes them towards deprivation. Additionally, owing to poverty, some children were unable to access it, which is also a leading reason for committing suicide. Besides, the gaming aspect has been identified as a significant way for students to commit suicide. They left their family and world before enjoying it. So it is up to parents, instructors, and, most importantly, the peer group to engage them with both the beneficial aspects of these technological advancements and help them escape the harmful ones.

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## **Book Review**

***“Blended Learning”*: A Model for Developing Entrepreneurial Skills**, by Navnath Tupe, Pune: Universal Prakashan Press, 2022.

### **Pooja More<sup>1</sup>**

The book under review - *Blended Learning Model” for Developing Entrepreneurial Skills* - provides a new vision, and an innovative drawing on the new intellectual framework of Techno-Pedagogy for improving entrepreneurial capabilities for learners. The main focus of the publication is to present and discuss ways in which to use to Technology with the open and flexible means of delivery to help learning in different settings and enhance learning opportunities, highlighting the need for successful entrepreneurship development.

A blended approach to learning which is the need of the art is about the design that enhances the teaching and learning experiences for students, teachers, instructors, entrepreneurs, e-learning developers, designers, lifelong learners, trainers, and trainees, by combining face-to-face learning activities with online learning components.

The author has conducted extensive research and has proposed the blended learning model for entrepreneurship which provides women with the opportunity to enjoy the models of learning. For example, a student might attend classes in a real-world classroom setting and then supplement the lesson plan by completing it on online multimedia coursework.

Studies have shown that because blended learning incorporates multiple methods of instruction from an assortment of perspectives, it proves to have an effective learning outcome for most involvement. By incorporating technology into classroom instruction, teachers can reach more students.

The overview offers that in the age of Science and Technology and with Innovation made in the multifaceted society, women empowerment plays an important role in

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the development of the nation. There is a need to change the perception, attitudes, behaviors, social norms and stereo types towards women in society. This book through blended learning provides women entrepreneurs with the skills, resources and networks needed to start and scale successful businesses. The delivered online and face to face mode of two phases are designed to fit the demanding schedules of entrepreneurs. It allows participants : to develop the skills and tools to adapt their business to changing conditions; ensure profitability; connect to a network of regional and global stakeholders; gain access to local talents; and showcase their business attitude.

Blended learning helps students to explore technology and use different tools or techniques for learning, like, PowerPoint, Virtual classrooms, Video lectures, etc. Blended learning improves the quality of education and information assimilation while making teaching more efficient and productive. It gives students more flexibility to customize the learning experiences.

Dr. Navnath has constructed the Entrepreneurial Skill Matrix, which not only benefits in organizing the various entrepreneurial skills but also facilitates in developing a pedagogical base for learning the entrepreneurial skills. HE tried to develop skills for creative entrepreneur through the theories of creativity, along three essential elements, viz., Expertise, (knowledge & skills), Intrinsic Motivation and Thinking Style.

Creative Entrepreneurs	Managerial Skills			Employability Skills			Evaluating Skills
	Communication	Decision-Making	Self-Awareness	Organization	Team Work	Problem Solving	Market Evaluating
↓ Expertise	Knowledge of content	Reducing wastage	Self-Development	Ethical Practices	Dynamic Leadership	Problem Realization	Market Trend
	Multimedia skills	Scrutinizing Alternatives	Self-Actualization	Maintaining Control	Sense of Responsibility	Generating Potential Solutions	Analytical Skill
Intrinsic Motivation	Keeping active	Initiative Tendency	Self-confidence	Resourceful & Persevering	Emotional Stability	People Concern	Influential Ability
	Readiness for conversation	Risk taking	Self-Commitment	High Expectation	Work ownership	Setting goal and interests	Customer Satisfaction
Thinking Style	Interaction for solving problems	Exploiting opportunities	Divergent thinking	Raising Financial Capital	Synergic Approach	Ignition for Execution	Reflective Marketing
	Feedback	Conflict Resolution	Flexibility	Social Capital	Division of Labour	Testing of effectiveness	Branding

As mentioned in the book Figure N0.3. 4: Entrepreneurial Skills Matrix (p. 76), Entrepreneurial skills are shown in columns and Expertise, Intrinsic Motivation and Thinking Styles are the three layers of each entrepreneurial skill are shown in the Rows. All the aspects of entrepreneurial skills of girl students were assessed through

self-assessment scale based on entrepreneurial Skills Matrix in the present study. Blended Learning Model explores the entrepreneurial skill matrix which provides an authentic and reliable pedagogy to develop entrepreneurial skills among learners (p.77).

Rapid technological, environmental, social and workplace changes require innovative responses towards workplace skills and business development. Transformative entrepreneurial skills and competencies are important for entrepreneurship qualities like problem solving, initiative, teamwork, creativity, emotional intelligence and other soft skills, along with generic skills.

This book emphasizes the teaching of entrepreneurial skills in the mindsets to prepare modern employees and potential future entrepreneurs. A main challenge for embedding entrepreneurial learning is the development of curricula that provide students with real life, active learning experiences to acquire entrepreneurial skills. Market evaluation skills and Managerial skills for work progress act as catalyst in entrepreneurship development.

The case studies demonstrate some of the ways in which different entrepreneurs in civil society are using technologies and methods to increase the reach to become successful and motivate others to become entrepreneur. With improved learning outcomes and their services, a new paradigm is established and an environment favorable for developing the knowledge and skills is built, as required for tomorrow's world of work.

Empowering and encouraging entrepreneurship is one of the most impactful steps we can take in addressing some of the disparities we see today. Steps are needed for empowering women to become not only to be wage earners but also job creators as well as expanding the pool of human resources and talent available. Take the risk and invest money, time and passion to empower to be entrepreneurs. The shared experiences and recommendations for promoting and motivating women to become entrepreneurs is very inspiring. It is becoming increasingly clear that women are and will continue to be powerful drivers of development.

Employing these technologies in the structures optimally and effectively also requires teachers and trainers who can apply appropriate technologies in the facilitation of training and teaching of curriculum, while also fostering their own professional learning. Thus, any substantive value addition requires that the appropriate technologies be fully integrated in the curriculum design, pedagogy, and learning and assessment.

Entrepreneurial competences can be viewed as a mix of knowledge, skills and right attitudes, including self-confidence, networking, understanding risk, working with others, creativity, a sense of initiative, problem-solving, the ability to marshal resources, and financial and technological knowledge. A case study of the competency of Mrs. Suman (p. 114) revealed that in order to achieve the goal, one must possess the highest quality, competency, responsibility, and professionalism in performing their duties.

The author should be congratulated for commending the “Blended Learning Model” for the development and enhancement of entrepreneurship skills which consists of seven chapters and provides a vision for creative design with entrepreneurial skill matrix. There is a wealth of information presented in an engaging and thought-provoking style. A few minor quibbles include no obvious description of the terminologies and definitions of Concepts by different researchers for comparative purposes and easier reading, and the unavoidable typos. One of the more interesting and useful aspects of this book that I found was the highlighting of gaps in our traditional learning system. Rethinking traditional pedagogical approaches and practices is needed to making teaching and learning entrepreneurship practical and relevant to real life. It will not be realistic to shape the minds of future generations using traditional methods and settings. Innovation is a must, particularly in education.

Academic scholars and professionals will, undoubtedly, find this book a necessary addition to their library.

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**Dr. Lakshmidhar Mishra**, Former Union Labour, Employment and Parliamentary Affairs Secretary, Government of India, New Delhi.

**Dr. K.V. Easwara Prasad**, Process & Institutional Development Consultant & Evaluation Specialist, Bangalore, Karnataka.

**Dr. V. Mohankumar**, Former Director, Indian Adult Education Association, New Delhi.

**Dr. A. Mathew**, Former National Fellow, National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration, New Delhi.

**Dr. Ajay Kumar**, Associate Professor, Group of Adult Education, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

## GUIDELINES FOR SUBMISSION OF MANUSCRIPT

The manuscripts should be in ENGLISH. The length should be around 3000-4000 words for articles and 700–800 words for book reviews. All research articles should provide an abstract in 200-250 words, stating aims, objectives, methodology and main finding of the study with 4-6 keywords. The abstract should be written clearly avoiding long, complicated sentences and jargon. Citations should not appear in the abstract. The references in the main text should appear, for example, as (Shah, 1999) or (Shah, 1999: 109). In the Reference, for books, include surname, followed by first name/initial of the author, year of publication in brackets, title of publication in italics, place of publication and name of publisher. For articles, include surname, followed by first name/initial of the author, year of publication in brackets, complete title of article, name of the journal in italics, volume number, issue number in brackets and page number as follows:

### Book

Shah, S. Y. & Choudhary, K.C. (Eds.). (2016). *International Dimensions on Adult and Lifelong Education*. New Delhi: International Institute of Adult and Lifelong Education.

### Article

Sork, Thomas J. (2016). The Place of Ethics and the Ethics of Place in Adult and Lifelong Education. *Indian Journal of Adult Education*, 77(3), 5-18.

### Chapter in a Book

Subha Rao, I.V. (2002). A New Approach to Literacy Assessment in India. In Madhu Singh (ed.) *Institutionalising Lifelong Learning* (pp. 270-91). Hamburg: UNESCO Institute for Education.

### Online Resources

While quoting online sources, source of documents and date of retrieval should be given.

For further information on citing references, follow the guidelines provided by *the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (APA 7th edition) which is commonly used in education, psychology and other social sciences. For details, see - [apastyle.apa.org](http://apastyle.apa.org).

The manuscript should be word processed (MS Word) and double-spaced throughout in a 12-point serif font (e.g., Times New Roman), including quotations and references with sufficient margin on all sides on an A-4 size paper. The references should be listed in alphabetical order at the end of the article. Acknowledgment if any, should be mentioned before the references.

The cover page should contain the following information:

1. Title of the paper, author's name, designation, official address, contact number and e-mail.
2. A declaration that the article is an original contribution and has not been published earlier or under consideration elsewhere.
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The receipt of the manuscript will be acknowledged within 30 days and the decision regarding acceptance of the manuscript for publication will be communicated within 3-6 months.

Articles will be peer reviewed by independent anonymous experts. The accepted article will be published within 6-12 months. The author of rejected articles will be informed by e-mail in due course. Please do not send the hard copy by post. The manuscript should only be submitted electronically (by e mail) to the Editor - [professorsyshah@gmail.com](mailto:professorsyshah@gmail.com) with a copy to the I/C Director, Indian Adult Education Association - [ijae1939@gmail.com](mailto:ijae1939@gmail.com), [directoricae@gmail.com](mailto:directoricae@gmail.com)

## Indian Adult Education Association, 1939

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The Indian Adult Education Association founded in 1939, aims at improving the quality of life through education, which it visualizes as a continuous and lifelong process. It directs its efforts towards accelerating adult education as a process, a programme, and a movement.

The Association co-ordinates activities of various agencies – governmental and voluntary, national and international – engaged in similar pursuits. It organizes conferences and seminars, and undertakes surveys and research projects. It endeavours to update and sharpen the awareness of its members by bringing to them expert views and experiences in adult education from all over the world. In pursuit of the policy, the Association has instituted the Nehru Literacy Award and Tagore Literacy Award for outstanding contribution to the promotion of Adult Education and Women's Literacy in the country, respectively. It has also instituted Dr. Zakir Husain Memorial Lecture, which is delivered every year by an educationist of eminence.

The Association has brought out many publications on themes related to adult education, including Hindi editions of several UNESCO publications. It brings out the Indian Journal of Adult Education, Proudh Shiksha and IAEA Newsletter.

The Association acts as the Indian arm of the International Council for Adult Education, International Literacy Association and the Asian-South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education. Its membership is open to all individuals and institutions who believe in the aims and objectives of the Association.

Its headquarters is located in Shafiq Memorial, IAEA House at 17-B, Indraprastha Estate, New Delhi - 110 002.