

# Journal of Humanities & Social Science

Vol.6 - No.2

Price : ₹ 50/-

November 2014

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## Tamil Nadu State Council for Higher Education

Chennai - 600 005

Half - Yearly

Annual Subscription : Individuals ₹ 90/-  
Institutions ₹ 150/-



**TAMIL NADU STATE COUNCIL FOR  
HIGHER EDUCATION, CHENNAI - 5**

Vol. 6 November 2014

No. 2 Price ₹ 50/-

ISSN 2277 - 7636

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**JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES  
AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**

A Half-yearly Journal of Higher Education published by  
Tamil Nadu State Council for Higher Education

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Original papers/ articles are invited for publication. An abstract of the article in about 200 words must accompany the papers. The length of research papers shall be between 2500 and 4000 words. However, short notes, perspectives and lengthy papers will be published if the contents could justify.

Notes should be placed at the end of the text and their location in the text marked in parenthesis. Superscript Arabic Numerals should cite references within the text.

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## TEACHING APTITUDE AND COGNITIVE STYLES OF B.Ed., STUDENTS

**D. Seetharaman\* Dr. S. Rajasekar\*\***

### **Abstract**

*The present study was conducted on 820 B.Ed student teachers of Kanchipuram Dist, and Chennai city of various college of education in Tamilnadu under Affiliated to Tamilnadu Teacher Education University. Gender, Subject Discipline, Type of management, Educational Qualification, Type of College, Place of residence, Nature of Institution, Place of locality, Medium of Instruction, Marital Status, Birth order, Fathers' occupation, Fathers' income, Fathers' education, Mothers' Education, Age group, Community, and Religion, and Type of Family were the entire sample taken for this study. Descriptive analysis, Differential analysis, and correlation analysis, were made. The cognitive style of entire sample of B.Ed student teachers are Field dependent. But majority of the B.Ed student teachers are below average of in respect of their teaching aptitude. Teaching aptitude are significantly positive correlated with cognitive style.*

### **Keywords**

*Teaching aptitude: Cognitive style Field dependent-field independent.*

### **Introduction**

Teacher is the backbone of our education system. In education, a teacher is a person who provides education to others. A teacher who facilitates education for an individual student may also be described as a personal tutor. The role of teacher is often formal and ongoing, carried out by way of occupation or profession at a school or other place of formal education. A good teacher inspires his/her students to explore their own potential. S/he know to create interest in the students and makes them like a particulars subject. The class is not boring and students pay attention to every word coming from the teacher's mouth. They are happy and comfortable. A teacher regularly reads books and professional journals on the subject. S/he has good relationships with students. A good sense of humor is another great tool that helps a teacher to simplify his/ her task. One of the most important

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attribute of a good teacher is to be a good communicator. A teacher should be a good leader and a good friend. S/he caters as much as possible to each student's individual needs. S/he is a good facilitator. A good teacher is a people builder. S/he builds character, trust, confidence, creates interest and has the capacity to turn a bad student into a good citizen.

In the Good's Dictionary of Education (1945) Aptitude is Described as a "Pronounced innate capacity for or ability in a given line of endeavor such as par particular art, school subject or vocation"

Academic qualification, interview or a combination of the two are used for selection of candidate for B.Ed admission . Sometime teaching experience and co-curricular activities are also given some weight age in some Institutions. But as there are variation in the academic standard and admission procedures of various universities and as interviews are genially subjective, there is need to device a test which can assess the qualities of a candidates which equip him to be a good teachers and which can ensure objectivity, equity and social justice for all the candidates.

Psychologists have used different approaches to study the thinking process or "How" and have identified different ways in which human beings perceive and categorize their environment in particular situations and their consistency of patterning in responding to various types of situations. These response pattern are given different names by different psychologists; Bruner "focusing and scanning"; pask and scott- "Serialism and holism" ; Witkin – " field-dependent and field-independent "; Guilford – " convergence and divergence". All these response pattern can be brought under the broad rubric "Cognitive style". Cognitive style is not concerned with how much is learnt but rather with how information is received and organized cognitively by learner.

The cognitive style of on individual affects the way in which the individual approach the learning tasks he performs, how he relates to other pupils, feels and behaves in situation while engaging himself in learning activities. Wikin and his associates (1962) described a cognitive style based on analytic and Global continuum and named them as field-dependent and field-independent This study tries to find out the relationship between teaching aptitude of B.Ed., students.

## **Objectives**

1. To find out B.Ed Student- teachers level of teaching aptitude.
2. To find out B.Ed student teachers of Cognitive style.
3. To study whether the B.Ed student-teachers belonging to different categories based on Gender, Subject Discipline, Type of management, Educational Qualification, Type of College, Place of residence, Nature of Institution, Place of locality, Medium of Instruction,

Marital Status, Birth order, Fathers' occupation, Fathers' income, Fathers' education, Mothers' Education, Age group, Community, and Religion and Type of Family differ significantly in Cognitive Style and teaching aptitude

4. To find out the relationship between cognitive style and teaching aptitude

### **Tools used**

1. Cognitive Style Inventory Group Embedded Figures Test (GEFT) constructed and Standardized by witkin et. al (1962).
2. Teaching Aptitude Inventory constructed and Standardized by Dr. S.C. Gakkar and Dr. Rajnish

### **Statistical Techniques**

1. Descriptive Analysis
2. Differential Analysis
3. Correlation Analysis.

### **Sample of the study**

The present study was conducted with 820 B.Ed student teachers studying in kancheepuram Dist and Chennai city of various college of education in Tamilnadu. under Affiliated to Tamilnadu Teacher Education University. The sample was selected by using simple random sampling Techniques. The sample forms a representative sample of the entire sample

### **Cognitive Style ; Group Embedded Figures Test (GEFT) Inventory**

Cognitive style is a “ term that refers to stable individual performance in mode of perceptual organization and conceptual categorization of the external environment”

Field-dependence has been defined by Witkin and his colleagues (1954) in terms of capacity to overcome embedding contexts in perception. Subjects who easily break up an organized perceptual field, who can readily separate an items from its context are called field-independent and subjects who readily accept prevailing field or context and who have difficulty separating an item from its context are called field-dependent.

The type of cognitive style taken in this study is the one proposed by Witkin et al. (1962) . Witkin describes cognitive style based on analytical- Global continuum. He determines the extent to which individuals are able to overcome the effects of distracting background element (the field)

when they are attempting to differentiate relevant aspect of a particular situation. The more independent the person is from the distracting elements the more analytic he is said to be conversely, the more dependent or incapable the individual is of being freed from the distracting elements. The more global he will be. Pupil who are able to operate in an analytic manner are said to be field-independent. The two types of pupils can be found out by using the Group Embedded Figures Test (GEFT)( Witkin 1950).

**Reliability and validity** The split half reliability for the test was estimated to be 0.825 significant at 0.01 level. The Test manual presents the validity between 0.63.

**Norms** The GEFT booklet was given to the pupils in the class and they were asked to complete the test within the given time . one mark was given for one correct answer. The total mark for the entire test was 18. Marks were awarded to the answer paper of all pupils. The means score 14.44 and median 15.00 and mode 15.00.since the median student who have obtained less than 15 are designated as field-dependent and those who have obtained more than 16 and above are designated as field-independent.

Showing the categorization of B.Ed student teachers based on Field- dependent and field-independent.

**Table -1**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Score range</b>	<b>Number of student</b>
Field Dependent	0 - 15	585
Field Independent	16 and above	235
Total		820

### **Teaching aptitude Scale**

This tool has been constructed and Standardized by Dr. S.C. Gakkar and Dr. Rajnish.(2010) It was observed that 35 Objective type statement were divided into six categories.

### **Reliability and validity of the tool**

Test –Retest method was used for finding reliability on a sample of 50 B.Ed student teachers. Reliability co-efficient was found to be 0.78 validity was found out by correlating the scores of Teaching aptitude test with that of Shah's Teaching Aptitude Test on a sample of 50 Student – teachers. Validity co-efficient was found out to be 0.78.

### Percentile Norm

**Table no.2 Percentile norms for the Teaching aptitude**

Percentile	Score Range	Norms
Below P25	4 to 20	Low Teaching aptitude
Between p26 to p50	21 to 23	Below Average
Between P51 to P75	24,25	Average
Between P76 to P90	26,27	Above average
P91 and Above	28 and above	High Teaching Aptitude

### Descriptive and Differential Analysis

#### Analysis of Mean and S.D scores of Teacher Effectiveness of B.Ed Student Teachers

The Teacher Effectiveness inventory has been administered 820 B.Ed student Teachers . The data were collected the Mean and Standard deviation were calculated for the entire sample and its sub-sample and are given in Table No.

#### The Mean and Standard Deviation of overall cognitive style Scores of B.Ed Student Teachers

**Table 3**

Sub Sample		N	Mean	S.D	t-value	F-value
Entire Sample		820	14.44	1.58		
Gender	Male	394	14.30	1.74	2.33*	
	Female	426	14.56	1.41		
Subject Discipline	Tamil	162	14.54	1.39		2.32*
	English	123	14.66	1.56		
	Mathematics	143	14.16	1.81		
	Bio-Science	82	14.67	1.31		

	Phy-Science	122	14.81	1.66		
	Humanities	72	14.06	1.51		
	Computer Science	116	14.47	1.62		
Type of Management	Government	120	14.33	1.42		
	Govt-Aided	139	14.89	1.53		0.34
	Self-Finance	561	14.44	1.62		
Educational Qualification	Graduate	608	14.42	1.61	0.60	
	Post Graduate	212	14.49	1.47		
Type of College	Boys	294	14.39	1.86		0.23
	Girls	212	14.49	1.50		
	Co-Education	314	14.45	1.33		
Place of Residence	Day Scalar	675	14.43	1.60	0.16	
	Hostel	145	14.46	1.50		
Nature of Institution	Autonomous	258	14.41	1.48	0.28	
	Non-Autonomous	562	14.45	1.62		
Place of Locality	Rural	522	14.47	1.51	0.72	
	Urban	298	14.38	1.70		
Medium of Instructions	Tamil Medium	546	14.40	1.55	0.99	
	English Medium	274	14.51	1.63		
Marital Status	Married	296	14.64	1.46	2.81**	
	Unmarried	524	14.32	1.63		
Birth Order	First Child	275	14.44	1.49		

	Second Child	265	14.37	1.69		0.45
	Third Child	152	14.44	1.49		
	Fourth and Above	128	14.56	1.64		
Father Occupation	Unskilled Worker	488	14.34	1.56		2.40*
	Semi Skilled	40	14.38	1.60		
	Skilled Worker	49	14.20	1.79		
	Clerical Worker	117	14.53	1.58		
	Professional	103	14.88	1.53		
	Higher-Professional	23	14.61	1.47		
Father Income	Below 10,000	461	14.37	1.58		1.77
	Between 10001 to 25,000	263	14.46	1.50		
	Above 25001	96	14.70	1.77		
Father Education	Illiterate	180	14.23	1.49		3.34*
	School Education	473	14.44	1.58		
	College Education	167	14.66	1.64		
Mother Education	Illiterate	410	14.17	1.58		13.27**
	School Education	369	14.74	1.45		
	College Education	41	14.37	2.10		
Age Group	Below 25	552	14.37	1.62		2.94*
	Between 26 to 30	142	14.42	1.54		

	Above 31	126	14.75	1.40		
Community	SC/ST	195	14.31	1.64		0.67
	BC	365	14.45	1.59		
	MBC	234	14.48	1.53		
	General	26	14.69	1.31		
Religious	Hindu	608	14.48	1.59		1.80
	Christian	161	14.22	1.47		
	Muslim	51	14.57	1.77		
Type of Family	Joint Family	256	14.43	1.62	0.08	
	Nuclear Family	564	14.44	1.56		

\*Significant at 0.05 level \*\* significant at 0.01 level

The Cognitive style of entire sample of B.Ed student teachers scores field – dependent ( $M=14.44$ ) and median value (15.00) mode value 15.00 and standard deviation value 1.58.

The mean value of B.Ed student teachers their Type of management, Educational qualification, type of college, place of residence, nature of institution, place of locality, medium of instruction, Birth order, Father Income, Community, religious, type of family indicate since the value is not significant at 0.05 level the formulated null hypothesis is accepted and it is concluded that there is no significant difference among the mean Cognitive style of B.Ed student teachers.

The mean value of B.Ed student teachers subsample Gender indicate 't' value is significant at 0.05 level. The mean value of sample marital status indicate 't' value is significant at 0.01 level. The above null hypothesis is rejected with respect to their cognitive style.

The mean value subsample subject discipline, father occupation, father education, Age group of student, indicate 'F' value significant at 0.05 level. Mother education indicate 'F' value significant at 0.01 level. The above null hypothesis is rejected with respect to their Cognitive style.

### Analysis of mean and S.D. Score of Teaching Aptitude of B.Ed student Teachers

The Teaching Aptitude Inventory has been administrated to 820 B.Ed student teacher. The data were collected. The mean and standard deviation were collected for the entire sample and its sub sample and are given in table No.5

#### The Mean and Standard Deviation of Teaching aptitude Scores of B.Ed Student Teachers

Sub Sample		N	Mean	S.D	t- Value	F-Value
Entire Sample		820	23.02	4.81		
Gender	Male	394	23.05	4.60	0.15	
	Female	426	23.00	5.00		
Subject Discipline	Tamil	162	22.72	5.22		1.12
	English	123	22.55	5.54		
	Mathematics	143	23.67	4.26		
	Bio-Science	82	23.71	4.74		
	Phy-Science	122	22.77	4.58		
	Humanities	72	23.21	4.30		
	Computer Science	116	22.82	4.60		
Type of Management	Government	120	23.89	4.80		3.02*
	Govt-Aided	139	22.44	5.32		
	Self-Finance	561	22.98	4.66		
Educational Qualification	Graduate	608	23.00	4.81	0.23	
	Post Graduate	212	23.09	4.83		

Type of College	Boys	294	23.09	4.49		6.34**
	Girls	212	23.89	4.56		
	Co-Education	314	22.38	5.17		
Place of Residence	Day Scalar	675	22.95	4.87	0.93	
	Hostel	145	23.34	4.52		
Nature of Institution	Autonomous	258	23.11	5.14	0.35	
	Non-Autonomous	562	22.98	4.66		
Place of Locality	Rural	522	22.95	4.76	0.60	
	Urban	298	23.15	4.90		
Medium of Instructions	Tamil Medium	546	23.23	4.68	1.68	
	English Medium	274	22.62	5.05		
Marital Status	Married	296	22.53	5.00	2.21*	
	Unmarried	524	23.30	4.68		
Birth Order	First Child	275	23.00	4.96		1.01
	Second Child	265	22.67	4.69		
	Third Child	152	23.43	4.73		
	Fourth and Above	128	23.33	4.82		
Fathers' Occupation	Unskilled Worker	488	22.99	4.90		1.23
	Semi Skilled	40	23.93	5.23		
	Skilled Worker	49	22.63	4.71		

	Clerical Worker	117	23.08	4.59		
	Professional	103	23.41	4.41		
	Higher-Professional	23	21.09	5.01		
Fathers' Income	Below 10,000	461	23.16	4.71		0.77
	Between 10001 to 25,000	263	22.96	5.04		
	Above 25001	96	22.51	4.69		
Fathers' Education	Illiterate	180	22.66	4.74		1.32
	School Education	473	23.26	4.86		
	College Education	167	22.75	4.75		
Mothers' Education	Illiterate	410	22.82	4.88		0.80
	School Education	369	23.26	4.82		
	College Education	41	22.90	4.00		
Age Group	Below 25	552	23.22	4.70		3.60*
	Between 26 to 30	142	23.20	4.87		
	Above 31	126	21.97	5.11		
Community	SC/ST	195	23.15	4.91	0.11	
	BC	365	22.92	4.84		
	MBC	234	23.08	4.70		
	General	26	23.00	4.87		

Religion	Hindu	608	23.20	4.62	1.57	
	Christian	161	22.51	5.44		
	Muslim	51	22.55	4.83		
Type of Family	Joint Family	256	22.82	4.77	0.80	
	Nuclear Family	564	23.11	4.83		

\*Significant at 0.05 level \*\* Significant at 0.01 Level

The Teaching aptitude of entire sample of B.Ed student Teachers Score Below Average (M 23.02)

The Mean value sample of B.Ed student teachers Gender , Subject discipline, Educational Qualification, Place of Residence, Nature of Institution, place of locality, Medium of instruction, Birth order, Father occupation , Fathers income , Fathers' education, mothers' education, Community, Religion, and type of family, indicate since the value is not significant at 0.05 level the formulated null hypothesis is accepted and its concluded that there is no significant difference among the mean Teaching Aptitude of B.Ed student Teachers.

The mean value sample of B.Ed student teachers marital status indicate 't' value is significant at 0.05 level.

The mean value subsample type of management, Age group indicate 'F' value is significant at 0.05 level . Type of college indicate 'F' value is significant at 0.01 level . The above null hypothesis is rejected with respect to their Teaching Aptitude.

The Teaching aptitude were correlated with the cognitive style of the B.Ed student teachers and 'r' value are given the table

Categories	Mean	Standard deviation	'R'	Level of significance
Teaching aptitude	23.02	1.59	0.14	Significant at 0.05 level
Cognitive style	14.44	4.81		

The 'r' values are significant 0.14 at 0.05 level at positive correlation. This shows that Teaching aptitude are significantly correlated with cognitive style.

### **Recommendation**

1. The study show that the Teaching Aptitude of entire sample of B.Ed student teacher is Below average. Hence the theoretical and practical orientation programme and differential Aptitude test training programme, and personality and communicating English knowledge, career guidance programe, are to be conducted to enhance teaching aptitude.
2. The study shows that the cognitive style of entire sample of B.Ed student teachers is field-dependent Those prone to respond regarding the external are referred to as Field-dependent . hence self-consistent mode of functioning which individual show in their perceptual and intellectual activities. Self confidence, writing practice, development of unfailing memory.

### **Conclusion**

From this investigation it can be inferred that the cognitive style of entire sample of B.Ed student teachers are field-dependent. Teaching aptitude of entire sample of B.Ed student teachers are below average. Cognitive style and Teaching aptitude are significantly related.

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## **A STUDY ON VALUE CONFLICT AND MENTAL HEALTH OF B.ED., STUDENT TEACHERS IN RELATION TO THEIR SOCIAL MATURITY**

**M.Kumar\***

### **Introduction**

Today's 'humanity' is perhaps sitting on the top of a volcano and is facing many challenges in bringing about a healthy society. Every one today appears to be more tense than in the past, either due to lack of understanding and confidence among themselves or because of psychopathic morbidities like parent-child relationship, loveless domestic life, broken families, global terrorism and narrow considerations. Values have sunken to gain their selfish motives. People can be both humanly pro-social and destructively anti-social as they are not necessarily aware of their values, some may even conflict with conscious values. The necessity of making a choice commonly leads to a specific 'cognitive strain' and it appears to be difficult to make up one's mind especially, when each alternative offers values that the other does not and the choice is an important one (Coleman, 1976). It is at times minimal or immense, at times ridden or open and at times constructive or destructive, any time in making a choice at the cost of another. Conflict is a perceived incompatibility of actions and goals that prevents, obstructs, interferes, injures or in some way makes another activity less likely or less effective (Myers, 1993).

### **Need for the Study**

The terrific advances in the field of preventive and curative medicine coupled with continual attempts in all countries, to improve the standard of living of its people have a large extent enabled us to eradicate most of the diseases of the body and helped to provide for longevity of human life with sufficient physical health. A sound body has now become an easy possibility within the reach of everyone and a sound body is basic to a sound mind and bodily handicaps, diseases do affect mental ability and outlook. But in contemporary society, mental health has become a major problem affecting almost every person. Mental health hazards significantly increased in number and complexity, but these have also affected the physical efficiency of individuals, causing a variety of psychosomatic disorders. So mental health is now recognised as an important aspect of an individual's total development and mental hygiene is accepted as an integral part of the college programme.

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The success and standard of education to a great extent depends on the quality of human resources. Mental health is a major contributing factor which makes an individual and projects him/her to the society. Good social maturity brings satisfaction to the individual concerned and social maturity also becomes the means by which the society can advance. The social maturity of a child is now being recognized as a precious source of development and survival for man. This study may also help teachers to conduct guidance and counseling programmes for better social maturity.

### **Value Conflict**

Whenever two or more incompatible principles, ideologies, religion, socio-political aspirations and cultural identifies are active at the same time, they are said to be as value conflicts. In this study, the Value Conflict Scale prepared by the investigator has been used to measure the level of value conflict among B.Ed., student – teachers.

### **Mental Health**

Mental health refers to a condition and a level of social functioning which is socially and personally satisfying in all aspects of life. In this present study Mental Health Inventory constructed by the investigator is used to measure it.

### **Social Maturity**

Social maturity is the final expected outcome of social development and socialization. A socially matured person knows his role as a member of the social group. In this present investigation, social maturity scale constructed by the investigator has been used to measure the level of social maturity among B.Ed. student – teachers.

### **B.Ed., Student – Teachers**

It refers to student – teachers studying B.Ed., Course in colleges affiliated to the Tamil Nadu Teacher Education University and Tamil University.

### **Objectives of the Study**

**The following objectives are set in the present study;**

1. To find out the level of value conflict of B.Ed., student teachers.
2. To identify the level of mental health of B.Ed., student teachers.
3. To find out the level of social maturity of B.Ed., student teachers.
4. To find the level of value conflict of B.Ed., student teachers in terms of the gender, age

group, educational qualification, marital status, subject of study, type of the college, location of the college, religion, residential locality, filial order, type of family, father's educational qualification, mother's educational qualification, father's occupation, mother's occupation and monthly income of the family.

5. To find the level of mental health of B.Ed., student teachers in terms of the gender, age group, educational qualification, marital status, subject of study, type of the college, location of the college, religion, residential locality, filial order, type of family, father's educational qualification, mother's educational qualification, father's occupation, mother's occupation and monthly income of the family.
6. To find the level of social maturity of B.Ed., student teachers in terms of the gender, age group, educational qualification, marital status, subject of study, type of the college, location of the college, religion, residential locality, filial order, type of family, father's educational qualification, mother's educational qualification, father's occupation, mother's occupation and monthly income of the family.
7. To find whether there is any significant relationship between value conflict and mental health among B.Ed., student teachers.
8. To find whether there is any significant relationship between mental health and social maturity among B.Ed., student teachers.
9. To find whether there is any significant relationship between Value conflict and social maturity among B.Ed., teachers.

### **Hypotheses of the Study**

1. The value conflict of B.Ed., Student teachers is high.
2. The B.Ed., Student teachers are having good mental health
3. The social maturity of B.Ed., student teachers is high.
4. There is no significant difference among gender, age group, educational qualification, marital status, subject of study, type of the college, location of the college, religion, residential locality, filial order, type of family, father's educational qualification, mother's educational qualification, father's occupation, mother's occupation and monthly income of the family of B.Ed., student teachers in their value conflict.
5. There is no significant difference among gender, age group, educational qualification, marital status, subject of study, type of the college, location of the college, religion, residential locality, filial order, type of family, father's educational qualification, mother's educational qualification, father's occupation, mother's occupation and monthly income of the family of B.Ed., student teachers in their mental health.

6. There is no significant difference among gender, age group, educational qualification, marital status, subject of study, type of the college, location of the college, religion, residential locality, filial order, type of family, father's educational qualification, mother's educational qualification, father's occupation, mother's occupation and monthly income of the family of B.Ed., student teachers in their social maturity.
7. There is no significant relationship between the value conflict and mental health of B.Ed., student teachers.
8. There is no significant relationship between the mental health and social maturity among B.Ed., student teachers.
9. There is no significant relationship between the value conflict and social maturity of B.Ed., student teachers.

## **Methodology**

### **Population and Sample**

The group of individuals or unit under study is known as population. Sampling is the process of learning about the population on the basis of a sample drawn from it. Only a small representative part is studied and the conclusion is drawn for the entire universe or the whole population.

In the present study the investigator has selected the sample from a small portion of a population selected for observation and analysis. From the total population the investigator has randomly selected 1000 student teachers and the sample from different college of education situated in the district of Thanjavur in Tamil Nadu for the study.

### **Development of the Tool**

#### **Value conflict, Mental Health & Social Maturity – Developed by the present investigator (M.Kumar)**

To measure the value conflict, mental health and social maturity the investigator prepared a scale by himself. While developing the tool, the investigator had to understand the construction in addition to have adequate knowledge of various steps in the development of the tool. The development of the tool included the following steps:

- a. Preparation of statements
- b. Screening of the statements
- c. Sample used for tryout

- d. The draft tool and its administration
- e. Instruction for scoring
- f. Item analysis.

### **Statistical Techniques used for Data Analysis**

**In the present study the following statistical techniques were used.**

1. Descriptive Analysis (Mean, Standard deviation).
2. Differential Analysis (t-Values, F-ratios),
3. Correlation Analysis (r – Values).

### **Findings**

1. The value conflict of B.Ed., Student teachers is moderate in nature.
2. The mental health of B.Ed., Student teachers is moderate in nature.
3. The Social maturity of B.Ed., Student teachers is high in nature.
4. The “t” value has been calculated as 3.887 which is greater than the table value of 1.96 at 0.05 level. Hence it is conclude that there is a significant difference between male and female B.Ed., student teachers in their value conflict.
5. The “t” value is calculated as 1.465 which is lesser then the table value of 1.96 at 0.05 level. Hence it is inferred that there is no significant difference between age groups of 21-30 and 31-40 among B.Ed., students teachers in their value conflict.
6. The “t” value calculated is 0.663 which is lesser than the table value of 1.96 at 0.05 level. Hence there is no Significant difference between U.G. and P.G. B.Ed., student teacher in their value conflict.
7. The “t” value calculated is 0.964 which is lesser than the table of value 1.96 at 0.05 level. Hence there is no significant difference between married and unmarried B.Ed., student teachers in their value conflict.
8. The “t” value has been calculated as 0.628 which is lesser than the table value of 1.96 at 0.05 level. Hence is no significant difference between arts and science B.Ed., student teachers in their value conflict.
9. The “t” value is calculated as 2.878 which is greater than the table value of 1.96 at 0.05 level. Hence it is a significant difference between Government and self finance college B.Ed., student teacher in their value conflict.

10. The “t” value calculated as 1.407 which is less than the table value of 1.96 at 0.05 level. Hence it is inferred that there is no significant difference between rural college and urban college B.Ed., student teacher in their value conflict.
11. The calculated “F” value of 0.129 with 2/997 degrees of freedom is less than tabulated value of 3.00 at 0.05 level of significance. It is evident that there is no significant difference among of hindu, muslim and christain B.Ed., Student teachers in their value conflict.
12. The “t” value is calculated as 0.854 which is greater than the table value of 1.96 at 0.05 level. Hence it is inferred that there is no significant difference between rural and urban B.Ed., student teachers in their value conflict.
13. The calculated ‘F’ value of 0.841 with 2/977 degrees of freedom is lesser than the tabulated value of 3.00 at 0.05 level of significance. It is evident that there is no significant difference among the of filial order B.Ed., student teachers in their value conflict with reference to their filial order.
14. The “t” value is calculated as 1.036 which is lesser than the table value of 1.96 at 0.05 level. Hence it is inferred that there is no significant difference between B.Ed., student teachers from nuclear family and joint family in their value conflict.
15. The calculated ‘F’ value of 0.604 with 2/997 degrees of freedom is lesser than the tabulated value of 3.00 at 0.05 level of significance. It is evident that there is no significant difference among B.Ed., Student teachers in their value conflict with reference to their father’s educational qualification.
16. The calculated ‘F’ value of 0.988 with 2/997 degrees of freedom is lesser than the tabulated value of 3.00 at 0.05 level of significance. It is evident that there is significant difference among B.Ed., student teachers in their value conflict with reference to their mother’s educational qualification.
17. The calculated ‘F’ value of 1.396 with 2/997 degrees of freedom is lesser than the tabulated value of 3.00 at 0.05 level of significance. It is evident that there is no significant difference among B.Ed., student teachers in their value conflict with reference to their father’s occupation.
18. The calculated ‘F’ value of 2.627 with 2/997 degrees of freedom is lesser than the tabulated value of 3.00 at 0.05 level of significance. It is evident that there is no significant difference among B.Ed., student teachers in their value conflict with reference to their mother’s occupation.
19. The calculated ‘F’ value of 3.502 with 2/997 degrees of freedom is greater than tabulated value of 3.00 at 0.05 level of significant. It is evident that there is no significant difference

among B.Ed., student teachers in their value conflict with reference to their monthly family income.

20. The “t” value is calculated as 0.759 which is lesser than the table value of 1.96 at 0.05 level. Hence it is inferred that there is no significant difference between male and female B.Ed., student teachers in their mental health.
21. The “t” value is calculated as 1.623 which is lesser than the table value of 1.96 at 0.05 level. Hence it is inferred that there is no significant difference between age group of 21-30 and 31-40 among B.Ed., student teachers in their mental health.
22. The “t” value has been calculated as 0.262 which is lesser than the table value of 1.96 at 0.05 level. Hence it is inferred that there is no significant difference between U.G. and P.G. B.Ed., student teachers in their mental health.
23. The “t” value is calculated as 0.233 which is less than the table value of 1.96 at 0.05 level. Hence it is inferred that there is no significant difference between married and unmarried B.Ed., student teachers in their mental health.
24. The “t” value is calculated as 0.156 which is lesser than the table value of 1.96 at 0.05 level. Hence there is no significant difference between arts and science B.Ed., student teachers in their mental health.
25. The “t” value is calculated as 2.782 which is greater than the table value of 1.96 alt 0.05 level. Hence it is inferred that there is significant difference between government college and self finance college B.Ed., student teachers in their mental health.
26. The “t” value is calculated as 0.657 which is lesser than the table value of 1.96 at 0.05 level. Hence it is concluded that there is no significant difference between rural college and urban college B.Ed., student teachers in their mental health.
27. The ‘F’ value is found to be 0.70 which is not significant. It is inferred that there is no significant difference among of B.Ed., student teachers in their mental health with reference to their religion.
28. The “t” value is calculated as 1.172 which is lesser than the table value of 1.96 at 0.05 level. Hence it is inferred that there is no significant difference between rural and urban B.Ed., student teachers in their mental health.
29. The calculated ‘F’ value of 1.435 with 2/997 degrees of freedom is lesser than the tabulated value of 3.00 at 0.05 level of significance. It is therefore inferred that there is no significant difference among B.Ed., student teachers in their mental health with reference to their filial order.

30. The “t” value is calculated as 1.036 which is lesser than the table value of 1.96 at 0.05 level. Hence it is inferred that there is no significant difference between B.Ed., student teachers from nuclear family and joint family in their mental health.
31. The calculated ‘F’ value of 0.608 with 2/997 degrees of freedom is lesser than the tabulated value of 3.00 at 0.05 level of significance. It is inferred that there is no significant difference and of B.Ed., student teachers in their mental health with reference to their father’s educational qualification.
32. The calculated ‘F’ value of 1.154 with 2/997 degrees of freedom is lesser than the tabulated value of 3.00 at 0.05 level of significance. It is inferred that there is no significant difference among the B.Ed., student teachers in their mental health with reference to their mother’s educational qualifications.
33. The calculated ‘F’ value of 0.522 with 2/997 degrees of freedom is lesser than the tabulated value of 3.00 at 0.05 level of significance. It is inferred that there is no significant difference among the of B.Ed., student teachers in their mental health with reference to their father’s occupation.
34. The calculated ‘F’ value of 2.051 with 2/997 degrees of freedom is lesser than the tabulated value of 3.00 at 0.05 level of significance. It is inferred that there is no significant difference among the B.Ed., student teachers in their mental health with reference to their mother’s occupation.
35. The calculated ‘F’ value of 0.196 with 2/997 degrees of freedom is lesser than the tabulated value of 3.00 at 0.05 level of significance. It is inferred that there is no significant difference among the B.Ed., student teachers in their mental health with reference to their family monthly income.
36. The “t” value is calculated as 4.832 which is greater than the table value of 1.96 at 0.05 level. Hence it is inferred that there is a significant difference between male and female B.Ed., student teachers in their social maturity.
37. The “t” value is calculated as 2.367 which is lesser than the table value of 1.96 at 0.05 level. Hence it is inferred that there is no significant difference between B.Ed., student teachers in their social maturity with reference to their age group.
38. The “t” value is calculated as 0.162 which is lesser than the table value of 1.96 at 0.05 level. Hence it is inferred that there is no significant difference between U.G. and P.G. B.Ed., student teachers in their social maturity.
39. The “t” value is calculated as 1.417 which is lesser than the table value of 1.96 at 0.05 level. Hence it is inferred that there is no significant difference between married and unmarried B.Ed., student teachers in their social maturity.

40. The “t” value is calculated as 2.372 which is greater than the table value of 1.96 at 0.05 level. Hence it is inferred that there is significant difference between arts and science B.Ed., student teachers in their social maturity.
41. The “t” value is calculated as 1.886 which is greater than the table value of 1.96 at 0.05 level. Hence it is inferred that there is no significant difference between government college and self finance college B.Ed., student teachers in their social maturity.
42. The “t” value is calculated as 0.53 which is lesser than the table value of 1.96 at 0.05 level. Hence it is inferred that there is no significant difference between rural college and urban college B.Ed., student teachers in their social maturity.
43. The calculated ‘F’ value of 0.444 with 2/997 degrees of freedom is lesser than the tabulated value of 3.00 at 0.05 level of significance. It is inferred that there is no significant difference among the B.Ed., student teachers in their social maturity in the reference to their religion.
44. The “t” value is calculated as 1.427 which is greater than the table value of 1.96 at 0.05 level. Hence It is inferred that there is no significant difference between rural and urban B.Ed., student teachers in their social maturity.
45. The calculated ‘F’ value of 2.796 with 2/997 degrees of freedom is lesser than the tabulated value of 3.00 at 0.05 level of significance. It is inferred that there is no significant difference among the B.Ed., student teachers in their social maturity with reference to their filial order.
46. The “t” value is calculated as 1.412 which is lesser than the table value of 1.96 at 0.05 level. Hence it is inferred that there is no significant difference between B.Ed., student teachers in from nuclear and joint families their social maturity.
47. The calculated ‘F’ value of 2.872 with 2/997 degrees of freedom is lesser than the tabulated value of 3.00 at 0.05 level of significance. It is inferred that there is no significant difference among the B.Ed., student teachers in their social maturity with reference to their father’s educational qualification.
48. The calculated ‘F’ value of 0.311 with 2/997 degrees of freedom is lesser than the tabulated value of 3.00 at 0.05 level of significance. It is inferred that there is no significant difference among the B.Ed., student teachers in their social maturity with reference to their mother’s educational qualification.
49. The calculated ‘F’ value of 1.696 with 2/997 degrees of freedom is lesser than the tabulated value of 3.00 at 0.05 level of significance. It is inferred that there is no significant difference among the of B.Ed., student teachers in their social maturity with reference to their father’s occupation.

50. The calculated 'F' value of 2.596 with 2/997 degrees of freedom is lesser than the tabulated value of 3.00 at 0.05 level of significance. It is inferred that there is no significant difference among the B.Ed., student teachers in their social maturity with reference to their mother's occupation.
51. The calculated 'F' value of 2.860 with 2/997 degrees of freedom is lesser than the tabulated value of 3.00 at 0.05 level of significance. It is inferred that there is no significant difference of among the B.Ed., student teachers in their social maturity with reference to their families monthly income.
52. The 'r' value is calculated as 1.00 which is greater than the table value 0.081 at 0.01 level. Hence, it can be concluded that there exist high positive relationship between value conflict and mental health of B.Ed., student teachers.
53. The 'r' value is calculated as 0.388 which is lesser than the table value 3.00 at 0.01 level. Hence, it can be concluded that there exist a low positive relationship between mental health and social maturity of B.Ed., student teachers.
54. The 'r' value is calculated as 0.422 which is lesser than the table value 0.081 at 0.01 level. Hence, it can be concluded that there exist a low positive relationship between value conflict and social maturity of B.Ed. student teachers.

## Conclusion

The purpose of the present investigation was to study the relationship among the variables, such as value conflicts, mental health and social maturity. The study is sure to find some usefulness in the field of education and the findings of the study can serve as a database for further research.

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## MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND CHILDREN DEVELOPMENT

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### **1. Introduction**

At the start of the new millennium, the world's governments signed the Millennium Declaration<sup>1</sup>, which aims at reducing global poverty and inequality, provides for a set of time-bound and quantified targets – the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), fixing the deadline for achieving them as 2015. The MDGs have been recognized as a gauge for measuring progress in achieving human development. Though the MDGs relate to all human beings, the priority is for goals related to children's development. Meeting these goals is most critical as they would change the lives of millions of children. Raising the level of wellbeing of children is one of the most important tasks to accomplish the Millennium Development Goals.

The main objective of the study is briefly sated as follows. As time line of 2015 for achieving the MDGs fixed in Millennium Declaration is nearing, the present study has been taken up with the following objectives: to identify appropriate MDGs and a set of targets within each goal those are very critical for child wellbeing; to make comparative study of progress of MDGs related to children among the geographical regions of the world; to review the status of MDGs connected to children in India; to suggest the policy reforms and measures for implementation needed for child development and also to accomplish MDGs targets related to children.

The paper is organized as follows: Section 2 discusses issues pertaining to Child Development in the Millennium Development and section 3 examines the MDGs and Global Development. Section 4 presents the MDGs and India and the last section, section 5, discusses the policy issues and concluding remarks.

### **2. Child Development and Millennium Development Goals**

Child development is a process every child goes through and symbolizes the increase in

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physical, intellectual and social abilities. Since children are productive assets and future human resources of the country, it is imperative that development of children is accorded the highest priority on the country's development agenda. This underscores the need for an in-depth study of the links between child development and millennium development goals for human and child development which could be useful for policy formulation and monitoring.

The Millennium Development Goals are the global promises made by world governments to eradicate human deprivation in 2000 by signing the Millennium Declaration. They agreed on eight Millennium Development Goals. These goals contain quantifiable targets which are measured by set of indicators.

It is noteworthy that although the MDGs Goals are for everyone, they are primarily about children and all of these goals impact upon children. Six of the eight goals relate directly to children. Even meeting the last two goals will also contribute to the overall well-being of children. Since children are most vulnerable when there is lack of basic needs like food, water and health care, the accomplishment of these Goals is extremely critical for child wellbeing. In fact, these interventions during initial of childhood years make huge impact on child's physical, intellectual and social development. As children constitute a substantial percentage of the world's poor population, investing in children will accelerate the achievement of MDGs and development goals.

The most important millennium development goals connected with children with the targets fixed and indicators for monitoring the progress of these goals include – Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger: Proportion of population below \$1 (PPP) per day, Prevalence of underweight children under 5 of age; Achieve universal primary education: Achieve universal primary education; Promote gender equality: Ratios of girls to boys in primary education; Reduce child mortality: Under-five mortality rate, Infant mortality rate, Improve maternal health; Reduce AIDS/HIV and diseases; access to improved water source and sanitation. In fact, above indicators are critical determinants of child development as well.

### **3. MDGs and Global Progress**

MDGs are to be met by 2015. Advances made to meet MDGs across the world have been varied. There have been considerable progress for some of the goals but also have serious set-backs in case of other goals. Global progress so far can be summarized as follows -

**GOAL 1:** Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger: This goal aim at cutting in half the proportion of people in the developing world living with less than \$1 a day by 2015.

Poverty and hunger have direct bearing on child development and its well-being. Children living in extreme poverty are more vulnerable to exploitation, abuse and discrimination and lack access to essential services as health care and education.

The present status and trends as per MDG Report, 2014<sup>2</sup> indicate that though the world has reduced extreme poverty by half and the MDG target has been met, 1.2 billion still live in extreme poverty and majority of which is in Southern Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. About one in five persons in developing regions lives on less than \$1.25 per day. In 2010, one third of the world's 1.2 billion extreme poor lived in India alone.

Though the overall achievement in poverty reduction has been made, it has been quite uneven across various regions of the globe. Eastern Asia and South-Eastern Asia have met the target of halving the extreme poverty rate, whereas other regions, such as sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia, still lag behind. According to World Bank projections, sub-Saharan Africa will be unlikely to meet the target by 2015.

Goal: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger.

The important facts indicating the present status as per MDG report 2014<sup>2</sup> are –

Hunger continues to decline. However, 842 million people, about one in eight people in the world, still suffer from chronic hunger and vast majority of them belong to developing countries. The progress in reduction of undernourishment has varied among different regions of the world. Appreciable reductions in both prevalence of undernourishment and the number of undernourished has taken place in most countries in South-Eastern Asia, Eastern Asia, Caucasus and Central Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean in which the target of halving the hunger rate has been reached / almost reached. On the other hand, sub Saharan Africa has shown little progress in recent years and continue to have high prevalence of undernourishment. Western Asia strangely reported increase in the prevalence of undernourishment compared to 1990–1992, and Southern Asia and Oceania have not shown adequate progress to meet the MDG hunger target by 2015.

Though the chronic under nutrition among youth has come down but one in four children is still affected. In 2012, 25% of all children under the age of five years were estimated to be stunted. Further, it is estimated that 15 % of children below age of five in the world are underweight (99 million) in 2012.

## **Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education**

Target for meeting this goal is ensure that all children able to complete a full course of primary schooling by 2015.

Children are future of a country. Education is a very critical for child development and every child should able to have access to education. The present status and trends as per MDG Report 2014<sup>2</sup> shows that substantial progress towards universal primary education has been made. However, High dropout rates remain a major impediment to universal primary education. There were still 58 million children, one in ten children of primary school age, out of school in 2012.

Thus there has been much better progress with regard to this MDG and some of the nations are nearing achieving universal primary enrolment. MDG: 2014 Progress Chart<sup>3</sup> indicates the progress shown by various regions with regard to targets pertaining to Universal Primary Education indicate that all regions of the world have achieved high enrolment except sub-Saharan region which has attained only moderate enrolment.

### **Goal 3: Promote gender equality & empower women**

Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015.

Gender equality is important for only for women, but for female child also. Equal access to education opportunities and other resources for both boys and girls are essential for overall of child well-being and human development. Educated women also have positive bearing on the upbringing of child.

The present status and trends on gender equality as per MDG Report, 2014<sup>2</sup> indicate that all developing regions have shown progress at all levels of education—primary, secondary and tertiary in gender parity index. However, gender disparities are more prevalent at higher levels of education.

MDG: 2014 Progress Chart<sup>3</sup> indicates the parity has been attained for gender equality in primary education in Eastern Africa, South Eastern Asia, Southern Asia, Oceania, Latin America / Caribbean and Caucasus & Central Asia. However, Northern Africa and sub-Saharan Africa, Western Asia and Oceania are still close to parity in achieving the gender parity in primary education.

### **Goal 4: Reduce child mortality**

Under this goal, the target is to reduce the under-five mortality rate by two-thirds, between 1990 and 2015.

Child mortality is a crucial determinant for child development. Children are the world future; yet child mortality continue to be crisis which is faced across the globe, albeit more so by poor and developing countries.

The present status and trends on child mortality as per MDG Report, 2014<sup>2</sup> indicate that there is considerable progress in child mortality and the global rate of under-five mortality has reduced its half in 2012 of its 1990 rate. But the MDG target is still quite far and most likely to remain unachieved.

Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest child mortality rate in the world; 3.2 million children under 5 years dying and one out of every ten child dies before 5 years of age in 2012. Southern Asia has also shown consistent progress in reducing child mortality and has able to halve its under-five mortality rate. However, about one third of child deaths still take place in this region. Highest number of child death in the world occurs in India with 1.4 million children dying before age of 5 years in 2012.

MDG: 2014 Progress Chart<sup>3</sup> indicates that except for sub-Saharan Africa which has still high child mortality, other regions of the world have either low child mortality (Northern Africa, Eastern, South Eastern and Western Asia, Latin America/Caribbean and Caucasus & Central Asia) or moderate child mortality (Oceania and Southern Asia).

Since four out of every five deaths of children under age five in the world continue to occur in sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia, it is critical to focus on reducing the number of child deaths in these regions.

### **Goal 5: Improved Maternal Health**

Reduce maternal mortality ratio by three quarters, between 1990 and 2015 is the target to meet this goal.

Maternal health has direct impact on children both at birth and subsequent childcare. Maternal mortality makes the children more vulnerable. Most of the developing countries continue to show high level of maternal mortality. 90% of the total maternal mortality deaths occurred in the developing regions, with sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia accounting for 86%. The present status and trends shows that MDG target of reducing MMR by 2/3<sup>rd</sup> is not likely to be met. (MDG Report 2014)<sup>2</sup>

Pregnancy at a young age has adverse affect the health of both young mothers and newly born child. This also results in loss of opportunities for education and work which leads to perpetuality of poverty. It is therefore necessary to protect girls from child marriage. Abuses against adolescent girls and sexual violence have a direct impact on maternal health.

It is utmost important to reduce adolescent childbearing as it impacts the achievement of other Millennium Development Goals on poverty, education, gender equality and child mortality.

**Goal 6: Combat HIV / AIDS, Malaria & Other Diseases**

The targets for this goal are- halt and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS by 2015; Achieve universal access to treatment for HIV/AIDS those who need by 2010; halt and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases by 2015.

Children are particularly vulnerable to these diseases and therefore their protection is of important. Almost 600 children died every day of AIDS-related causes in 2012. Though MDG malaria target is likely to fully met as per latest trends shown across the globe, an estimated 3.4 billion people are still at risk of infection. In 2012, 207 million malaria cases were reported and killed 627000 people. However, it is alarming to note that about 80% of them under 5 years. The prevalence rate / death rate from the tuberculosis are falling faster than its incidence and may reach target. In 2012, there were an estimated 11.0 million people living with the disease. (MDG Report 2014)<sup>2</sup>

MDG: 2014 Progress Chart<sup>3</sup> indicates that all the regions of the world have shown low mortality and low incidence with regard to targets pertaining to halt & reverse spread of HIV /AIDS and tuberculosis except for sub-Saharan region which still shows high mortality and high incidence.

**Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability**

Reduction in the rate of biodiversity loss; Halve the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation and improvement in the lives of slum dwellers are the connected targets of this goal.

The Millennium Goals recognize that environmental sustainability is part of global economic and social well-being. This also has implication on child well-being. Carbon dioxide emissions are continuing to increase (50% since 1990).

Though the world has already met the drinking water target but 748 million people still lack safe sources of drinking water of which 173 million have drinking water straight from rivers, streams or ponds. Forty-five countries in the world were not on track to meet the MDG drinking water target. Access to improved sanitation also impact on families including children and their well-being. Present trends shows that MDG target of 75 per cent coverage will not be met by 2015 as still a billion people still resort to open defecation. (MDG Report 2014)<sup>2</sup>

Slums are the areas where people live in non-durable housing and generally overcrowded. They do not have proper access to basic services like safe water and sanitation and thus have adverse effect on child well-being. Though MDG target has been met, the number of people living in slum conditions is growing.

## **Goal 8: Develop a global partnership for development**

Development of a country is necessary for overall human development. Child Development is precursor for human development and therefore also requires adequate resources and focus. Overall development of poor and developing countries would be possible if adequate financial assistance is given to them. Official development assistance stood at \$134.8 billion in 2013 which is now at its highest level, reversing the decline of the previous two years.

### **4. India and MDGs**

India has a very critical role play in achievements of the MDGs being having the population of 1.25 billion. The performance of India in respect of MDGs has been a mixed bag. The targets related to halving the percentage of population below the poverty line, net enrolment ratio in primary education, proportion of people with sustainable access to an improved water sources, halting / reversed the spread of HIV/ Aids, Malaria and TB have been achieved. However, progress pertaining to reducing by two-thirds the under five mortality rate, ratio of girls to boys in higher education, improving maternal health, to reduce by three quarters the Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR), access to improved sanitation etc. has not been up to the mark and likely to miss the deadline.<sup>4</sup>

As per latest MDG report 2014<sup>2</sup>, the India's performance has not been satisfactory with regards to critical indicators related to poverty, child and maternal mortality and access to improved sanitation. 32.9% of world's extremely poor (1.2 billion) lived in India alone in 2010. Highest number of children below five deaths (1.4 million) died in India in 2012. As regards maternal mortality ratio, India still accounts for 17 per cent of maternal deaths. India's MMR target for 2015 to reduce maternal mortality to less than 109 deaths per 100,000 live births remains a far cry as only three states viz. Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra alone have reached the target.<sup>5</sup>

According to the Global Hunger Index (GHI) report for 2014<sup>6</sup>, though India has improved with regard to child nutrition and hunger, it is still ranked 55th only out of 76 countries as far as hunger index is concerned. Despite progress made in bringing down the underweight children, India still has the highest number of underweight children under five in the world and 70% of children are anemic.<sup>7</sup>

Dismal picture is also evident in access to sanitation with 59.4% of rural population practice open defecation (NSS Survey, 2013).

### **5. Policy Interventions**

Considering the fact that time period fixed for accomplishment of MDGs by 2015 is fast

approaching and many goals / targets are not likely to be met, there is need for introspection on existing policies and also strategies for implementation to accomplish MDGs targets related to children and needed for child development.

Both at the global level and in most countries, there has been progress towards the MDGs. However, there have been still significant gaps in meeting the certain crucial goals concerning food, health and nutrition in many countries. Policy interventions like social protection and safety net schemes that ensure affordable access to food, nutrition and health care to the poorest and most vulnerable are required to be persisted.

The most critical area that require utmost focus and concerted efforts are - removal of hunger and poverty and also the child nutrition. Poverty is required to be tackled both in its economic and social terms with interventions focusing on poor and the socially disadvantaged groups.

Concerted efforts through Policy intervention and reforms are needed to reduce Child Mortality and Infant mortality. For this, specific schemes targeting children are required to be implemented. Accessibility and affordability of health services have to be ensured by strengthening the health infrastructure. Universal coverage of Immunization among children also requires focus. Introduction of special schemes targeting improvement of Child Nutrition status like Midday Meal Scheme of India would be needed, in case of absence of similar scheme. Focusing on preventing low birth weight is also important task to reduce infant mortality.

To meet the MDG targets related to primary education, public policies have to be redesigned to reach the poorest sections of the society. Constructing schools in uncovered areas with separate toilets for girls; providing free school meals; abolishing school fees, recruitment of women teachers etc. would be added incentive for increasing the enrolment and reduce the gender gap.

Safe drinking water from improved water source is essential to health. Children, being a vulnerable group, get affected with water borne diseases which could prove fatal. Hence, proactive action is called for in order to ensure universal accessibility to safe drinking water. Similarly, ensuring access to an improved sanitation will help in improving the health indicators.

As many of the MDGs are concerned with provision of basic needs and services, efficient implementation of prudent policies related to compulsory education, primary healthcare, universal access to safe drinking water and sanitation, and streamlining the public distribution system targeted to poor families etc., would be critical for achieving the MDG goals.

Adequate resource allocation for food, health and education sectors is necessary. For financing

the poor and underdeveloped countries, contributions by rich countries and international forums are needed to be stepped up.

India, too, would have to focus on the goals, where the progress is tardy, with new policies and strategies, targeted approach and efficient implementation.

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## SHASHI DESHPANDE'S A MATTER OF TIME: A READING OF WOMAN'S INNER LIFE

Ramana Devika\*

### Abstract

*Shashi Deshpande is one of the famous contemporary Indian novelists in English. She deals with the inner world of the Indian women in her novels. She portrays her heroines in a realistic manner. Basically she writes about the situation of women and their failures in the fast changing socio-economic milieu of India. She writes about the conflict between tradition and modernity in relation to women in the middle-class society. A woman is the centre of her fictional world. Her desires, efforts and failures in the traditional Indian society are the main points in her novels. She makes it clear that hers is not the strident and militant kind of feminism which sees man as the cause of all troubles. Her depiction of women's world is authentic, realistic and credible. She presents the middle-class women in her novels. In fact, the present article deals with in what way Shashi Deshpande's novel A Matter of Time is an exploration of a woman's inner life.*

### Introduction

Shashi Deshpande's novels generally explore a woman's psyche. *The Dark Holds No Terrors*, *That Long Silence*, *The Binding Vine* and *Roots and Shadows* deal with feminist issues. This novel too deals with the same subject. Yet a woman's inner life is not the only subject of this novel. Here the inner life of a woman emotionally isolated from her family is reflected and refracted in the embryonic women represented by her daughters. Deshpande does believe that she is a feminist and her concerns are universal. She writes about silent, sobbing women – mothers, grandmothers, aunts, sisters, grand-aunts, daughters and a whole lot of females. The concerns of women are primarily in the context of the family and the community. She has looked into women's changing perspectives and their search for bonding within family as a mode of strength. Since childhood, the psyche of a woman is moulded in a particular fashion to inculcate in her all types of feminine qualities. Simone De Beauvoir writes, "One is not born but rather becomes, a woman...; it is civilization as a whole that produces this creature...described as feminine" (*The Second Sex* 267).

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## Methodology

Deshpande in presenting women's point of view is mainly interested in the clash of tradition and modernity, as reflected in the generation gap and conflict between women. Her young heroines rebel against the traditional way of life and patriarchal values. Jaya, Sarita and Sumi perceive the structuring of men and women in gendered roles, restricting their human potentiality and fullness. They struggle to transcend the restrictive roles. They rebel, reject and seek freedom from the traditional norms and way of life. Shashi Deshpande's portrayal of the women of different generations presents the world of women divided into the traditional and the modern. Her female protagonists are from the middle class. Besides her class identity, she cannot betray her gender identity. She says, "As writing is born out of personal experience, the fact that I am a woman is bound to surface. Besides, only a woman could write my books, they are written from inside, as it were" (35).

## Discussion

The novel presents three generations of women in the same family living under the same roof. They have their own values and mindsets and a finely individualized unconventional relationship with each other. The novel begins with Gopal's walking away from the family, which Meenakshi Mukherjee finds "inexplicable and a major part of it is devoted to the attempts of the relatives to find out why Gopal deserted his family so irresponsibly" (*A Matter of Time* 45). This incident serves as the central point in the novel. It evokes different reactions from the three important women in the novel – Kalyani (Grandmother) Sumi (Mother) and Aru (Daughter), which reveal their personality.

Kalyani is one of the most important characters delineated by the novelist. She is presented as "a weak, feeble creature, who returned to her parent's home as a deserted wife and a disgrace to the family" (*A Matter of Time* 154). Kalyani herself admits to have been a great disappointment to her parents not only because she was a girl, but also because she was none of those things which her mother would have liked her daughter to be. Kalyani's marriage with Shripathi, her maternal uncle, was arranged purely on account of an expediency to prevent the property from going away. After their marriage Kalyani's mother (Manorama), felt secure and also felt that the property would remain in the family. Shripathi's unwillingness was softened by Manorama's appeal to his gratitude. Discerning both intelligence and ambition in him when he was a boy, Kalyani's parents had brought him up and educated him to be a lawyer. Kalyani was forced by her dreaded mother to "accept a feared uncle as a husband. All this was responsible for the hopelessness that lay within the relationship that doomed it from the start" (143).

While going to Bangalore to her parental home, Kalyani lost her four-year-old mentally

retarded son. This happened at the railway station. The son wandered away as she was attending to the crying baby and Shripathi had gone to check for reservations. In search of the lost son, Shripathi “went about the city like a madman” (140) but to no avail. This brought Kalyani’s marital life to an end. Shripathi stopped speaking to his wife “he has not spoken to her since the day it happened—about thirty-five years ago” (140). Even this oppressive silence could not kill Kalyani’s affection for the other members of the family. Her daughter Sumi recognizes the great contribution of this ‘self-punishing woman’ “In fact, noticing the complex net of relationships that Kalyani has with so many people, she (Sumi) is reminded of the spider she had seen one morning, scuttle from point to point, drawing silken threads out of itself, weaving in the process a web with a beautiful design” (185).

Kalyani is visibly upset when she comes to know about Gopal’s walking away on his wife and children. She will never like the tragedy of her life to resurface in the case of her daughter. “No, no, my God, not again, she cries pathetically, sounding so much like an animal in pain” (12). When she goes to meet Gopal she takes the entire responsibility of Sumi’s carelessness on herself. She says, “But... how could she have known what being a good wife means when she never saw her mother being one? I taught her nothing, it’s my fault, Gopala forgive me and don’t punish her for it.” (47) Kalyani’s character is a faithful representation of self-sacrificing women of the old generation. To them, marriage is the most important happening in a woman’s life. It is both a problem and a solution to life’s problems. Kalyani is keen on getting a good match for her granddaughter Aru, though they are amazed by her unusual interest in marriage, which was responsible for her own misfortunes: “How can she of all people, think of marriage with enthusiasm?” (124). Kalyani’s character is characterized by “superb authenticity and spites an unusual relationship found only in India” (Spivak 131-32).

Both Sumi and her husband Gopal are called unusual people. Sumi appears to be an epitome of silent suffering and passive resistance. But, the novelist feels, she is made of different stuff “She blocks out the unpleasantness. She has a good opinion of herself, she is more concerned with getting on with life, and she does not want pity. She would do anything for pride. She distances even her husband” (45). She does not ask any explanation from Gopal as to why he left them without any apparent reason. Even the one question she wanted to ask him remains unsaid:

...if I meet Gopal I will ask him one question...the question no one has thought of, what is it Gopal, I will ask him that makes a man in this age of Acquisition and possession walk out on his family and all that he owns? Because...it was you who said that we are shaped by the age we live in, by the society we are part of. How then can you, in this age, a part of this society, turn your back on everything in your life? Will you be able to give me an answer to this? (71)

All the happenings in this novel revolve round this very question. People make various wild guesses and suppositions. Even Gopal does not know the precise reason for this kind of behaviour on his part and seems to be gropingly moving towards his determination. The indecisiveness is so pronounced in the basic action in this human drama that a reviewer comes to the conclusion that the novel has “an unfinished feel and that the tragedies that occur towards the end are abrupt, which is true to life indeed, but not always desirable in literature.” (Latha 76-77)

Sumi's character has been conceived without a trace of sentimentality. Right from her childhood she has been “Beautiful, gracefully effortlessly, almost without wanting to, gathering friends around her” (104). Even in crisis, she can leave the impression of her grace and courage and her old vivacity. Gopal remembers when they meet later that her “body blocked out everything else about her” (223). What is even more beautiful in her is a series of rare qualities which she possesses. She has no trace of vanity; though she is proud of her husband she bows boundless patience. She accepts sympathy, loyalty and stupefied confusion makes her “an enigma” (23). She remarkably maintains her cool and matter-of-fact attitude. Gopal was amazed and awed by her ease with strangers. Her sister Premi speaks eloquently about Sumi's superiority over her: “she was ahead of me and I was forever trailing behind, never able to catch up with her” (17). Such is Sumi's nature that she cannot hate a person for long. She herself tells her daughter that she is not a good hater and that she cannot retain her anger or hatred for long. She is so self-controlled that she would not even talk about Gopal's act of desertion.

She tells Devaki, “I have never been able to cry easily, you know that. And what do I say, Devi? That my husband has left me and I don't know why and maybe he doesn't know, either? And that I am angry and humiliated and confused...? Let that be, we won't go into it now.” (107) Not that Sumi does not feel the wrench. In fact, sensitive and self-respecting persons like her feel their misfortune more keenly. Even in her parental house she has the air of being lost and of having no place. The purposeless extravagance about her movements and her stylized manner of walking are indicative of her agony. But she fully realizes that trying a lacerated heart to one's wrist as it were and showing it to the world is meaningless. She cannot help in bearing silently the absence of Gopal's reassuring presence. Her silent suffering assumes at times heroic proportion. She is not unaware of the bliss of human relationships, but she accepts the harsh facts of life boldly, maintaining that Gopal is going his own way and she has to go hers. She wants her daughter's life to be easy and comfortable “I want her to enjoy the good things in life, I want her to relish it and not spit it out because she finds it bitter” (220). She knows that life is not a bed of roses; and what pays in life is a sane and balanced attitude to it. It is a pity that Sumi dies of an accident suddenly, just before her taking up a job to support herself and her daughters.

Aru (or Arundhati) is to the novelist the focal point in the novel; she is an observer of the drama affecting the entire family. She is endowed with an “innate sense of order” (12), and given to withdrawal from others, she is ready to go ahead with “a purely impersonal search” (122). She seems to be holding a moral scale against which she would measure everyone, including herself. Aru is the heroine of this story, the novelist declares, basing her evaluation on the norms prescribed in the *Natyasastra*. She has youth and beauty and has the potential of having nobility and steadfastness. Above all, “she is trying to make sense of what is happening, her consciousness moving outside herself and reaching out to the others as well, embracing, in fact, the whole of what is happening” (185). It is hoped that true understanding would come to her in due course and her ambivalence would disappear. Her empathy makes her the most sensitive character in the novel who silently reaches out to others and feels their predicament keenly.

Another distinguishing quality of Aru is her rebelliousness. The “desire to rebel” is deeply ingrained in her (11). Gopal’s walking away on his family is, according to her, not just a tragedy; it is both a shame and a disgrace. Her reaction to her mother’s stoic acceptance of it is violent and sharp. Aru’s “hostility” is like “a weapon” of “an adversary” (49). She is no longer interested in Gopal’s answer, but she will not let him “get away scot-free” (137). She says: “He can’t get away like this! He has to give us maintenance”(61). She is pained by the disintegration of the family, but her self-respect would not let her stoop to self-pity. Even after the death of her mother and grandfather she is not prepared to seek any help from Gopal. She moves away from her father’s arms and says to him: “Yes, Papa, you go. We’ll be all right; we’ll be quite all right. Don’t worry about us”(246). She consoles Kalyani that she will be with the latter as her son, who is regarded as the protector in the Indian context after the father’s death and “the very reason of their existence” (71).

Marriage, which in India is considered to be the most coveted relationship, does not have a place in Aru’s scheme of things. “I’m never going to get married,” she declares (76). Her reading of Erica Jong has convinced her further of the futility of such human relationships. She is quick enough to perceive “new dimensions of betrayal and cruelty in the woman-man relationship” (145). She expresses her point of view to Premi: “I’ve been thinking about marriage a great deal. . . What’s there in it? I mean, look at Amma and now Sumi . . . . What do you get out of it?” . . . ‘And look at Goda-ajji and Bhauji-kaka—they ‘re always scrapping. At their age and after so many years of marriage!’”(138).

Aru, as the novelist suggests, fails to appreciate “the interplay of feelings in marriage” (Ramamoorthi 567), but this is so because of her want of maturity and her vicarious experience of marriages like those of Kalyani and Shripati, Sumi and Gopal and others. Probably the most important point about Aru is her finely individualized unconventional relationship with her grandmother, Kalyani.

The focus, says the novelist, is on two human beings, (and) not on the relationship being defined. Aru is said to have had originally a troubled relationship with Kalyani. With the passage of time, however, she changes and comes to have an “altered relationship” with Kalyani: “It has suddenly become evident to all of them that Aru and Kalyani have, at some time, without their having noticed it, forged a partnership” (197).

## Conclusion

Towards the end of the novel, Gopal notices “a curious resemblance” between the two of them: they both have “the steady watchful look in their faces, (and) the smile of encouragement” for him (246). The novel thus portrays the network of human bonds and affiliations obtaining between several persons in general and Kalyani-Sumi-Aru in particular. Other relationships are also there. There is, for example, the queer relationship between Kalyani and Shripati, and the one between Rishi and Charu, there being “nothing of the male-female in their relationship” (125). There was also “a queer sense of disharmony . . . a discord, a sense of something is missing” between Kalyani’s parents (120). But the relationship that has been reiteratively emphasized is that between Kalyani and Aru. Through Kalyani’s accounts Aru relates herself to their ancestors, realizing that the people Kalyani speaks about are a part of Aru’s life. The novelist has tried to show that human relationships tend to have continuity and human beings, despite inter-generational shifts, have potential of corresponding with each other in certain significant respects. It is this continuity of relationship that gives meaning to life in the long run.

The protagonists of Shashi Deshpande enter into marriage with the hope that the marriage would provide them respect, security and status in the society but unfortunately, they get disappointed and subsequently disillusioned. Deshpande celebrates the major exploration of her protagonists by transcending the boundaries of the female gender. Her characters experience the gravitational pull of patriarchy and tradition. “The women characters struggle to redefine their role and identity in the light of feminism” (Singh 43). The analysis of the feminism is of paramount importance to see how each of these protagonists starts to think and feel differently from other women and use their potentialities in a new perspective.

Shashi Deshpande’s novel *A Matter of Time* is a novel of human bonds and bondages. It is a very different reading experience from *The Binding Vine*. *A Matter of Time* has elicited a very fine response from foreign readers, Australian, English and American. Gopal-Sumi relationship is the most rewarding thing in it. The mother-daughter relationship is superbly authentic. Human relationship is the main theme of this outstanding novel, which also, in a way presents an exploration of woman’s inner life.

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## இந்திய உயர்கல்வி குறித்த ஒரு பார்வை

முனைவர் மா.இரா. இலட்சுமிநாராயணன்\*

### ஆய்வுச்சுருக்கம்:-

கல்வி என்பது ஒவ்வொருவரின் முன்னேற்றத்திற்கு மட்டுமல்ல நாட்டின் வளர்ச்சிக்கும் இன்றியமையாதது. குறிப்பாக தற்போது உயர்கல்வியானது அறிவியல் தொழில்நுட்ப வளர்ச்சி மற்றும் புதுமைகளுக்கு ஒரு கருவியாக விளங்கி வருகிறது. இருப்பினும், நாம் நம் மாணவர்களுக்குத் தரமான கல்வியினை அளிக்கிறோமா என்ற ஐயம் பெரும்பாலானோருக்கு உண்டு. ஏனெனில், நம் பல்கலைக்கழகப் பாடத்திட்டங்கள் பெரும்பாலானவை நம் நாடு சுதந்திரம் அடைவதற்கு முன்பு ஆங்கிலேயர்களால் உருவாக்கப்பட்டவையாகும். இவை அலுவலக குமாஸ்தா வேலைகளுக்குத்தான் பொருந்தும், இதனால் தரமான கல்வியினைப் பெறுவதற்காக ஒவ்வொரு ஆண்டும் இந்திய மாணவர்கள் வெளிநாடுகளுக்குப் படையெடுத்து வருகிறார்கள். நம் கல்விமுறை வேலைகளை உருவாக்கும் தொழில் முனைவோரை உருவாக்கவில்லை. வேலையினைத் தேடுபவர்களைத் தான் அதிகம் உருவாக்குகிறது. இதற்கு நாம் தரமான கல்வியினை அளிப்பது மிகவும் அவசியம். எனவே, இந்திய உயர்கல்வியில் புதுமைகளையும் தொழில்நுட்பங்களையும் புகுத்த வேண்டியது காலத்தின் கட்டாயமாகும். இதோடு, நம் பல்கலைக்கழகப் பாடத்திட்டங்களை சர்வதேச தரத்தில் அமைப்பதுடன் அதற்கேற்ற வசதிகளை நாம் இங்கு நம் நாட்டிலேயே அளிக்க வேண்டியது நம்முடைய கடமையுமாகும்.

**முன்னுரை:-** கல்வி என்பது நாட்டின் முன்னேற்றத்திற்கு மிகவும் இன்றியமையாதது. உலகத்தில் தற்போதுள்ள வளர்ச்சி அடைந்த நாடுகள் பெரும் முன்னேற்றம் அடைந்ததற்கு கல்வியே ஒரு முக்கிய கருவியாக இருந்துள்ளது. இது ஒரு

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நாட்டின் முதுகெழும்பு போன்றது. ஒரு மனிதன் வாழ இருதயம் எவ்வளவு முக்கியமோ அந்த அளவுக்கு ஒரு நாடு மேன்மேலும் வளர கல்வி மிகவும் அவசியமாகிறது. குறிப்பாக உயர்கல்வி இதில் மிக முக்கிய பங்கு வகிக்கிறது என்றால் மிகையாகாது. இருப்பினும், இந்தியாவின் உயர்கல்வி தரம் என்பது பன்னாட்டு கல்வி நிறுவனங்களிடம் போட்டி போடும் அளவிற்கு வளரவில்லை என்பதே உண்மை.

## இந்திய உயர்கல்வி நிறுவனங்கள்

120 கோடிக்கும் அதிகமாக மக்கள் தொகை கொண்ட இந்தியாவில் 600-க்கும் மேற்பட்ட பல்கலைக்கழகங்களும், 32000-க்கும் மேற்பட்ட கல்லூரிகளும் உள்ளன. இவற்றில் உயர்கல்வி பெறும் 120 லட்சத்திற்கு மேற்பட்ட மாணவர்களுக்கு 5 லட்சத்திற்கும் மேற்பட்ட ஆசிரியர்கள் கல்வி போதித்து வருகின்றனர்.

இருப்பினும் இந்தியாவில் 14.6% பேர் மட்டுமே உயர்கல்வி பெறுகிறார்கள் என்று சமீபத்திய புள்ளி விவரங்கள் தெரிவிக்கின்றன. நம்மை விட மக்கள் தொகை அதிகம் கொண்ட சீனாவில் 26.7% பேர் உயர்கல்வி பெற்று வருகிறார்கள். பிற நாடுகளான அமெரிக்கா 83%, ரஷ்யா 77%, பிரிட்டன் 57%, பிரேசில் 34% என அந்நாட்டு மாணவர்கள் உயர்கல்வி பெற்று வருகிறார்கள். உலக அளவில் உயர்கல்வி பெறுவோர் சராசரியாக 23% ஆகும்.

## தற்போதைய இந்திய உயர்கல்வி நிலை:

உயர்கல்வி நிறுவனங்களை அதிகமாகக் கொண்டிருக்கும் இந்தியாவில் நாம் நல்ல தரமான கல்வியினை நம் மாணவர்களுக்கு அளித்து வருகிறோமோ என்பது மில்லியன் டாலர் கேள்வியாகும்? உயர்கல்வியில் அமெரிக்கா, சீனாவிற்கு பிறகு 3-வது இடத்தில் இந்தியா இருந்தாலும் நல்ல தரமான கல்வி என்பது இங்கு கேள்விக்குறியாகவே உள்ளது.

2020-ம் ஆண்டில் இந்தியா ஒரு பெரிய வளர்ச்சியடைந்த நாடாக உருவாகும் எனக் கல்வியாளர்களும், பொருளாதார நிபுணர்களும் கூறி வருகிறார்கள். அவர்கள் கூற்றுக்குக் காரணம் என்னவெனில் அப்போது இந்தியா நிறைய இளைஞர்களைக்

கொண்டிருக்கும். (60 சதவீதம் பேர் இருப்பர்). இதனால் நல்ல மனித வளம் இந்தியாவில் இருக்கும் என்ற நம்பிக்கையில் அவர்கள் கூறியுள்ளனர்.

## இந்தியா உயர்கல்வி நிறுவனங்களின் தரம்

இந்தியாவில் அதிக உயர்கல்வி நிறுவனங்கள் இருந்தாலும், உலக அளவில் முதல் 300- இடங்களில் இந்திய தொழில் நுட்பக் கழகம் (Indian Institute of Technology) மற்றும் இந்திய மேலாண்மைக் கழகம் (Indian Institute of Management) ஆகியவை மட்டுமே இடம் பெற்றுள்ளன. மேலும், தரமான கல்வி இந்தியாவில் கிடைக்காத காரணத்தால் ஒவ்வொரு ஆண்டும் இந்திய இளைஞர்கள் அமெரிக்கா, இங்கிலாந்து, ஆஸ்திரேலியா, ரஷ்யா, நியூசிலாந்து போன்ற நாடுகளுக்கு தரமான உயர்கல்வி பெறச் செல்கின்றனர்.

முன்னாள் இந்திய நாட்டின் மனித வளத் துறை அமைச்சர் திரு. கபில்சிபில் குறிப்பிடுகையில் இந்திய மாணவர்கள் வெளிநாடுகளுக்குச் சென்று உயர்கல்வி கற்க செல்வது ஒவ்வொரு ஆண்டும் அதிகரித்து வருவதாகக் குறிப்பிட்டுள்ளார். தரமான கல்வி கிடைக்காத காரணத்தால் தான் இந்த நிலை ஏற்பட்டுள்ளது.

மேலும், இந்தியாவில் உள்ள சர்வதேச தரத்தில் அமைந்துள்ள இந்திய தொழில்நுட்பக் கழகம் (IIT) மற்றும் இந்திய மேலாண்மைக் கழகம் (IIM) ஆகியவற்றில் பயின்று கூடுதல் மதிப்பெண் பெற்ற மாணவர்களும் நிறுவன வேலைவாய்ப்பு வளாகத் தேர்வின் மூலம் தேர்ச்சி பெற்று வெளிநாடுகளில் பணிபுரியத்தான் அதிகம் பேர் விரும்புகின்றனர் என்ற தகவலும் சமீபத்திய புள்ளி விபரங்கள் தெரிவிக்கின்றன .

## இந்திய உயர்கல்வியில் உள்ள தற்போதைய பிரச்சனைகள்

1. பெரும்பாலான இந்தியப் பல்கலைக்கழகங்கள் வெறும் பட்டதாரிகளை மட்டுமே உருவாக்கி வருகின்றன.
2. தற்போதைய கல்வி முறை சுதந்திரத்திற்கு முன்பு ஆங்கிலேயர்களால் உருவாக்கப்பட்டது. இவை அலுவலக எழுத்தர் (குமாஸ்தா) வேலைக்கு மட்டுமே பயன்படும். இதே கல்வி முறையினையே நம் எதிர்கால சந்ததியினரும் பின்பற்றுவர்.

3. தற்போதைய பல்கலைக்கழகப் பாடத்திட்டம் வேலைகளை உருவாக்கும் தொழில் முனைவோரை உருவாக்கவில்லை. வேலையினைத் தேடுபவரையே உருவாக்குகிறது.
4. இந்தியாவில் உயர்கல்வி முறை ஏறத்தாழ 90 சதவீதம் ஆங்கில மொழியிலேயே பின்பற்றப்படுகிறது. இந்தி, தெலுங்கு, தமிழ், மலையாளம், கன்னடம், குஜராத்தி, மராத்தி, பஞ்சாபி போன்ற மொழிகளை முதன்மை மொழியாகப் பயின்று விட்டு புதியதாக உயர்கல்வியில் ஆங்கிலம் பயிலும் போது மாணவர்கள் சற்று திணறுகிறார்கள்.
5. இந்தியாவில் படித்து முடித்த பட்டதாரிகள் அதிகம்பேர் (பொறியியல் துறை உட்பட) வேலையில்லாத நிலையில் உள்ளனர். இதில், பலா வேலை வாய்ப்பில் கலந்து கொள்ளும் தகுதியினைக் கூட பெறவில்லை என்று ஓர் ஆய்வறிக்கை தெரிவித்துள்ளது.
6. பல்கலைக்கழக மானியக்குழு பரிந்துரையின் படி வருடத்தில் உள்ள மொத்த 365 நாட்களில் 180 நாட்கள் உயர்கல்வி நிறுவனங்களுக்கு (கல்லூரிகள் & பல்கலைக்கழகங்கள்) வேலை நாட்களாக இருக்க வேண்டும் என்ற விதிமுறை உள்ளது. இதில் மாணவர்கள் வகுப்புப் புறக்கணிப்பு, விடுமுறை எடுத்தல் மற்றும் வகுப்பு பாட நிறுத்தம் போன்றவற்றுடன் சம்பந்தப்பட்ட ஆசிரியர் விடுமுறையில் சென்று விடுவதாலும் கல்வியின் தரம் குறைவதுடன் குறைந்தபட்ச வேலை நாட்களும் சுருங்குகிறது.
7. தற்போது இந்திய அரசு மற்றும் சம்பந்தப்பட்ட மாநில அரசுகளின் மூலம் உயர்கல்வி ஆராய்ச்சிக்கு குறைந்த சதவீத நிதியே ஒதுக்கப்படுகிறது. இந்த நிதி ஆராய்ச்சியாளருக்குப் போதுமானதாக இருப்பதில்லை.
8. உயர்கல்வியில் அரசியல் தலையீடு, சிபாரிசு, பெரும் பணம் பரிமாற்றம், பழையப் பாடத்திட்டம் போன்றவற்றால் இதன் தரமும் வளர்ச்சியும் வெகுவாகக் பாதிக்கப்பட்டுள்ளது.
9. தற்போது இந்தியாவில் செயல்படும் பல்கலைக்கழகங்கள் சில மத்திய அரசின் கட்டுப்பாட்டிலும், சில மாநில அரசுகளின் சில தனியார் துறைக் கட்டுப்பாட்டிலும் இயங்கி வருகின்றன. இதனால் அனைத்து இடங்களிலும்

ஒரே பாடத்திட்டங்களுடன் கூடிய தரமானக் கல்வியினை அளிக்க முடியவில்லை. மேலும், நகரம், கிராமம் மற்றும் பணக்காரன், ஏழை என்ற பாகுபாட்டின் காரணமாகவும் கல்வியில் ஏற்றத்தாழ்வு நிலை உருவாகி உள்ளது.

## இந்திய உயர்கல்வியின் தற்போதைய தேவைகள்.

தற்போதைய இந்திய உயர்கல்வி போட்டிகளையும், சவால்களையும் எதிர்நோக்கியுள்ளது. பிற நாட்டுப் பல்கலைக்கழகங்கள் இந்தியாவிற்கு படையெடுக்க இருக்கும் நிலையில் நல்ல தரமான கல்வியினை நாம் அளிக்கத் தவறினால், மாணவர்கள் நல்ல தகுதியுடைய உயர்கல்வி நிறுவனத்திற்கு செல்ல வாய்ப்பு ஏற்படும். இந்திய உயர்கல்வியின் தற்போதைய இன்றியமையாதத் தேவைகள்:-

1. சர்வதேச அளவில் பாடத்திட்டங்களை அமைத்தல்
2. பாடத்திட்டத்தில் தொழில்நுட்பம் மற்றும் புதுமைகளைப்புகுத்துதல்
3. உயர்கல்வியில் ஆராய்ச்சி மற்றும் வளர்ச்சிக்கு அரசின் மூலம் கூடுதல் நிதி ஒதுக்கப்படுவதுடன், இதில் சேர அதிக மாணவர்களை ஊக்கப்படுத்துதல்
4. ஆசிரியர் தன் முன்னேற்றத்திற்காகவும், மாணவர் தத்தம் முன்னேற்றத்திற்காகவும் அவர்களுடைய திறன் மேம்பாடு அடையும் வகையில் சிறந்த கல்வியாளர்களைக் கொண்டு அவர்களுக்கு கருத்தரங்குகள் பயிற்சி முகாம்கள் போன்றவற்றினைப் போதிய இடைவெளியில் நடத்தப்பட வேண்டும்.
5. தற்போதைய கல்வி முறையினை மாற்றி மாணவர்கள் எதிர்காலத்தில் சிறந்த தொழில் முனைவோராக உருவாகும் வகையில் பல்கலைக் கழகம் மற்றும் கல்லூரிப் பாடத்திட்டங்களை ஒரு சீரான இடைவெளியில் மாற்றம் செய்யப்பட வேண்டும். இதன் மூலம் புதியவற்றினை சேர்க்கவும், தேவையில்லாதவற்றை நீக்கவும் முடியும்.
6. சீனா, ஜப்பான் போன்ற வெளிநாட்டு மாணவர்கள் தங்கள் உயர்கல்வியினை தத்தம் தாய்மொழியில் பயிலுவதால், அவர்கள் நன்குப் புரிந்து படிக்கின்றனர். அவர்களால் திறமை மிக்கவர்களாக உருவாக முடிகிறது. ஆனால் இந்தியாவில் ஆங்கில மொழி ஆதிக்கம் அதிகம் உள்ளதால், பெரும்பாலான கிராமப்புற மாணவர்கள், தாய்மொழியில் கல்வி பயின்றவர்கள் மற்றும் மலைவாழ்மக்கள் ஆங்கில மொழியில் சுணக்கமாக உள்ளனர். தொழில்முனைவோராக உருவாக

தாய்மொழிக் கல்வியே மிகச் சிறந்ததாக அமையும் என்று சம்பந்தப்பட்ட பல்வேறு துறைசார்ந்த வல்லுனர்களும், பெரிய அறிஞர்களும் கூறியிருக்கிறார்கள். எனவே, தாய்மொழி வழிக் கல்வியை ஊக்குவித்தால் புதிய தொழில்முனைவோர்கள் உருவாக வாய்ப்பு உண்டு.

7. பன்னாட்டு மற்றும் உள்நாட்டு நிறுவனங்களுடன் வேலை வாய்ப்பு வசதியினை ஏற்படுத்தும் வகையில் அவர்களுடன் இணைந்து புரிந்துணர்வு ஒப்பந்தம் செய்து கொள்ள வேண்டும்.
8. மாணவர்களிடம் ஒளிந்துள்ள தனித் திறமைகளை வெளிக்கொணரும் வகையில் அவர்கள் விரும்பும் துறையினைத் தேர்ந்தெடுத்து அதில் அவர்கள் வெற்றிபெறப் பேராசிரியப் பெருமக்கள் அவர்களை ஊக்குவிக்க வேண்டும்.
9. தனியார்மயமாதல், தாராளமயமாதல் மற்றும் உலகமயமாதல் காரணமாக தற்போதைய உலகம் மிகவும் சுருங்கிவிட்டது. ஆங்கிலம் மொழியுடன் சீன மொழி, பிரெஞ்சு, ஜெர்மன் போன்ற மொழிகளையும் கற்றுக்கொள்ள மாணவர்கள் முன்வர வேண்டும். இதனால் நம் மாணவர்கள் சர்வதேச அளவில் போட்டியினை எதிர் கொள்ள முடியும்.
10. கரும்பலகை & சுண்ணாம்புகட்டி (Black Board & Chalk Method) முறையினை மாற்றி பாடத்திட்டத்தில் கணினியின் தற்போதைய வளர்ச்சியான காணொலி கலந்தாய்வு (Video Conferencing), கணினி இணைப்பு முறையில் கற்பித்தல் (Online Teaching) போன்றவற்றினை காலத்திற்கு தகுந்தாற்போல் நம் கல்வி கற்பிக்கும் முறையில் மாற்றம் கொண்டு வரவேண்டும்.
11. இவற்றோடு தற்போதுள்ள உயர்கல்வி நிறுவனங்களை பழைய முறையில் இருந்து புதிய முறைக்கு நவீனமாக மாற்றம் செய்யும் வகையில் கல்லூரி மற்றும் பல்கலைக்கழகங்களில் நல்ல உள்கட்டமைப்பு வசதி, (Good Infrastructure) எண்கணிப்பொறி நூலகம் (Digital Library) திறமையான முழுத் தகுதியுள்ள பேராசிரியர்கள் (Good Skilled Faculty Members), மாணவர் பணி அமர்த்தும் துறை (Placement Cell), வளாக நேர்முகத் தேர்வு (Campus Interview) மற்றும் தொழில் நுணுக்கங்களை பரிமாற்றம் செய்யும் வகையில் தகுதிபெற்ற பன்னாட்டு நிறுவனங்களுடன் இணைந்து பரஸ்பர ஒப்பந்தம் செய்து கொள்ள வேண்டும்.

## முடிவுரை:

தற்போது இந்தியா தகவல்தொழில்நுட்பம், மருத்துவம், வணிகம். கலை, அறிவியல், பொறியியல், நானோ தொழில்நுட்பம், விண்வெளி, உயிர் தொழில்நுட்பம், உயிர் தகவலியல் (Bio- Informatics) போன்ற துறைகளில் உலக அளவில் உள்ள வளர்ச்சியடைந்த நாடுகளுடன் போட்டிப்போட்டுக் கொண்டு வருகிறது. தற்போது இந்தியாவில் மத்திய மற்றும் மாநில அரசின் கல்வி நிறுவனங்களை விட தனியார் கல்வி நிறுவனங்கள் அதிகம் நிறைந்துள்ளன. இந்தியாவில் பெரும்பாலான கல்வி நிறுவனங்கள் வெறும் பட்டதாரி மாணவர்களையே அதிகம் உருவாக்கி வருவதால் வேலையில்லாதவர்கள் எண்ணிக்கை ஒவ்வொரு ஆண்டும் அதிகமாகிறது. அனைவருக்கும் அரசு வேலை என்பது எந்த அரசினாலும் சாத்தியமாகாது. சமீபத்தில் நாட்டில் நடைபெற்று வரும் திருட்டு, கொலை, ஏமாற்றுதல் போன்ற சமூக விரோத செயல்களில் படித்த பட்டதாரி இளைஞர்களே அதிகம் ஈடுபட்டு வருவதாக செய்தித்தாள்களிலும் சில ஊடகங்களிலும் தகவல்கள் வெளியாகி உள்ளன. இதனால் சிலர் தீவிரவாதியாக உருவெடுக்கும் நிலையும் உருவாகும் என்ற பயம் நம் அனைவரிடத்திலும் தோன்றியுள்ளது. இதற்கு முக்கியமான காரணம் நம்முடைய கல்வி முறைதான். 120 கோடிக்கு மேல் மக்கள் தொகை கொண்ட இந்தியாவில் தலை சிறந்த கல்வி நிறுவனங்கள் இல்லாதது நம் துரதிர்ஷ்டம். இருப்பினும் தரமான கல்வி பாடத்திட்டத்தை நம் மாணவர்களுக்கு அளித்தால் அவர்கள் வெளிநாடு சென்று கல்வி பயிலும் நிலை ஏற்படாது. எனவே அனைவருக்கும் வேலைவாய்ப்பு உருவாக்கும் வகையிலும் தொழில்முனைவோராக உருவாக்கும் வகையிலும் தற்போதைய கல்வி முறை மாற்றப்பட வேண்டும் என்பதே பெரும்பாலான கல்வியாளர்களின் எண்ணமும், கோரிக்கையுமாகும்.

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## THE CHALLENGES IN ENHANCING QUALITY IN TEACHER EDUCATION

**Dr.M.Punithambal\***

### **Introduction**

Teachers play a vital role in helping people develop their talents and fulfill their potential for personal growth and well-being, and in helping them acquire the complex range of knowledge and skills that they will need as citizens and as workers. It is school teachers who mediate between a rapidly evolving world and the pupils who are about to enter it. The profession of teaching is becoming more and more complex. The demands placed upon teachers are increasing. The environments in which they work are more and more challenging. Teachers are supposed to be able to impart their knowledge through the many approaches, methods and techniques at their disposal. Students are no longer “containers to be filled”; instead they are curious people with potential to learn anything new. What is needed today is the cooperation between teachers and students in finding solutions to the problems of teaching and learning. Effective teachers are those who individualize instruction, interact with students, and keep students task-oriented (Waxman & Huang, 1997).

The chief task of education in present day should be to upgrade the technical and intellectual competency of the teacher. The teachers of today are in need of a new, constructive and spontaneous education. The success of an educational system largely depends upon the quality of teachers available to it and the quality of teachers depends upon the quality of teacher education.

Through teacher education the required knowledge, skills and attitudes of teaching are imparted to the pre-service teachers. The pre-service teachers, in turn, involve themselves in the process of preparing future citizens. The seed for nation-building is thus sown in teacher education institutions. Strenuous efforts have to be made for the expansion and qualitative improvement of teacher education. The quality of education depends to a great extent on the quality of the teacher education programmes.

Teacher education can be viewed as a service industry and it faces many of the same service quality challenges as other type of institutions. The teacher education institutions are influenced by

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the same organisational dynamics that have often led other organisations to become insulated from the needs and concerns of the community they serve. There is a growing feeling that it is not effective in turning out efficient teachers who should not only teach in the classrooms but also act as agents of social change. Hence, there is a vital need to strengthen teacher education in terms of quality and effectiveness.

### **Quality Concerns in Teacher Education Institutions**

New designs, new technology, new products, new services, new systems, new courses of study, new problems of educational institutions etc. are the order of the present civilisation. These new artifacts are the cause for, and effect of institutional change. Institution development initiatives are concerned with making the institution more effective in all dimensions. A well-developed institution has more strength, few weaknesses and more opportunities and few threats.

Teacher education institutions are under pressure to improve quality, increase efficiency and open up access. Internationalization, accountability and engagement are expected of them. Successful institutions are able to attract, retain, and motivate the best and brightest teaching faculty and researchers, and are supported by excellent technical and administrative personnel, maintenance staff, and a range of other workers. They operate in a world of rapid technological change, dramatic global population growth, and urgent demands for life and work skills that are changing constantly.

Technological societies now expect, and need, students not only to have domain-specific skills, but also the generic ability to adapt to new circumstances. Graduates can no longer thrive simply by knowing what, or even knowing how.

They will increasingly depend not on what they know but on their ability to find out, to learn. Students are to become active strategists of learning, engage in interdisciplinary problem solving, and develop the capacity to think for themselves with independence and integrity while acting within interdependent learning communities.

These changes in education and in society place new demands on the teaching profession. Teachers are called upon to help young people become fully autonomous learners by acquiring key skills, rather than memorising information; they are asked to develop more collaborative and constructive approaches to learning and expected to be facilitators and classroom managers.

These changes require teachers not only to acquire new knowledge and skills but also to develop them continuously. To equip the teaching body with skills and competences for its new roles, it is necessary to have both high-quality teacher education and a coherent process of continuous

professional development keeping teachers up to date with the skills required in the knowledge based society.

As with any other modern profession, teachers also have a responsibility to extend the boundaries of professional knowledge through a commitment to reflective practice, through research, and through a systematic engagement in continuous professional development from the beginning to the end of their careers. Systems of education and training for teachers need to provide the necessary opportunities for this.

### **Applying Quality Approaches in Teacher Education Institutions**

Quality approach is the process through which an institution develops its internal capacity to be most effective in its mission and to sustain itself over the long term. This definition highlights the explicit connection between the institution's development and the achievement of the institution's mission. It offers a way of addressing deficiencies in service quality and process.

To improve the quality, the institutions must start with reviewing the mission, vision and goals and the various academic and administrative units, moving to an assessment of current levels of performance, based on self studies, external reviews and strategic planning. Gaps that are identified between institutional mission, vision and goals on the one hand and the current performance on the other provide the agenda for quality improvement.

Teacher Education Institutions should,

- take a long-range approach to improving the institution's performance and efficiency
- focus on the total system
- have the support of top-management
- *increase institution's effectiveness and health*
- have proper preparation of the activities called interventions to make system-wide, permanent changes in the institution
- combine research and experience to understanding people, business systems, and their interactions.

### **Challenges in Implementing Quality in Teacher Education Institutions**

The major challenges before Teacher Education Institutions are:

## **The increasing intricacy of the education enterprise**

The educational systems and the administration of teacher education institutions are becoming increasingly complex because of the complex administrative arrangements like co-educational institutions, teacher-pupil interaction, re-streaming, shared services and flexible schedules. Different policies, theories, methods, subjects, and administrative strategies are being advocated in these institutions. This may influence changes in teacher education institutions.

### **Privatisation**

The ever growing demand and the increasing population seeking admission, the problems of providing adequate funds for higher and professional courses provided by the Central and State Governments made the government departments to allow the entry of private enterprises to set up self-financing institutions and this helps the Government to share the burden. Because of privatisation, the cost of education increases leading to demand by the public that the benefits measure up to the cost. Issues such as budgetary justification, cost analysis, cost effectiveness; accountability, facilities and programmes are demanded of institutional systems. Hence the teacher education institutions must respond to these demands.

### **The increasing politicisation of education**

Political leaders rely on education as the most important instrument for effecting the national development programmes. Educational administrators are, thus, torn between divergent loyalties to individuals, parents, government, and politicians who have often-divergent expectations, demands and values for the educational system. Political and legal systems have changed a lot. In India multi-party ruling at the Centre has become the order and a mix of political ideologies has been in vogue. Legal system is becoming transparent and speedier. Teacher education institutions better become politics-neutral and make their associations with the politicians transparent.

### **Impact of information communication and technology**

The last two decades have witnessed some remarkable innovations in the delivery of education. The technologies available today and those about to emerge have the potential to transform the nature of education and the roles of learners and teachers in the learning process. Educators have been talking about the enormous potential of electronics based education and training. Explosive growth of technology is fuelling a new wave of teaching tools. The extensive use of technology has enabled the teachers and learners to identify and use technologies that integrate with their teaching and learning process. Such developments have led to 'the knowledge explosion'.

Of the many technologies of today, the progress made in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is believed to be a revolution with profound influence on economic development. When one looks at teacher education, there seems to have been an uncanny lack of influence and far less change than other fields have experienced.

The teacher education institutions are therefore, forced to constantly update their roles and designs, strategies for identifying or competing with, accommodating, selecting, influencing or otherwise offsetting aspects of the impact of modern technology.

### **Growing Competition in Teacher Education**

Compared to the past, the teacher education institutions are in a fiercely competitive environment in all its activities viz. Education, Research and Services. There is competition to attract students, to recruit and retain faculty, to secure educational and research funding, to secure consultancy assignments and to provide technology as well as knowledge-based services. Hence there is a clear need for teacher education institutions to actively pursue strategic alliances with domestic and international organisations to improve competitive advantage.

### **Course of Action in Implementing Quality in Teacher Education Institutions**

In implementing quality, the first step is raising awareness that some change is needed. Change is inevitable in educational institutions, particularly in teacher education institutions irrespective of whether it is reactive or planned. It is of strategic importance that teacher education institutions anticipate the need for change and take the necessary steps to manage the situation before it is imposed on them (planned or controlled change), rather than only to react to the change when it occurs (reactive change). The concept of Organisational Change and Development (OCD) becomes imperative for the teacher education institutions to meet the challenges.

Development = growth + change says an author. Alvin Toffler in his book 'Future Shock' says 'Change is the process by which future invades our lives'. The field of teacher education has turned upside down and change seems to be avalanching down upon our heads. In an effort to cope with all the external and internal factors, institutions are to go through significant changes. In the highly stressful and turbulent environment of the 21<sup>st</sup> century it is often difficult to create and maintain an institution that motivates, enhances efficiency and delivers peak performance. In order to survive it seems imperative that teacher education institutions become learning entities that renew and transform themselves to meet the challenges of tomorrow.

Teacher Education Institutions are social sub-systems. As society changes, teacher education

institutions have to. It is a two way process. Teacher Education Institutions have to improve competitive positioning. They have to keep pace with the accelerated rate of innovation. Change is not an incidental outcome of accidental causes but a permanent and growing feature of the world we live in. Therefore, teacher education institutions have to consciously devise and implement a strategic programme,

- (a) to become more flexible,
- (b) to adapt to the changing environment,
- (c) to increase responsiveness to clients (stake holders),
- (d) to increase staff involvement and participation,
- (e) to increase staff morale and
- (f) to develop new managerial skills and strategies.

Teacher Education institutions which concern themselves with only hasty change, might get into a state of panic whenever the speed of the change which is required cannot be accommodated or it does not have the necessary resources to cope with this demand for change, the consequence of which might be ineffectiveness. A systematic operational review can signal the need for change when the teacher education institutions are in a flexible position and before it is 'cornered' by the imminent need for change. The teacher education institutions should address the following before implementing programmes to improve quality:

**Norms and goals setting:** A commitment to clearly and commonly identified norms and goals are the predominant function, since the institution's structure, activity portfolio, outlook and pace of progress etc are influenced by its goals.

**Collaborative planning, shared decision-making:** Teacher education institution's development and change must be a planned, deliberate, and conscious course.

**Shared vision:** For shared vision proactive leadership and administrative support from the entire system is needed. In addition to this the collaborative environment necessary for creating a shared vision is also needed to sustain that vision.

**Assessment:** There should be continuous assessment of the effectiveness of the strategies implemented to maintain quality. This continuous assessment should provide information regarding the strategies used, potential problems, and data for altering policies and strategies. This can be done by SWOT analysis. SWOT analysis is a careful evaluation of an organization's internal strengths and weaknesses

as well as its environmental opportunities and threats. In SWOT analysis, the best strategies accomplish an organisations mission by (1) exploiting an organisation's opportunities, strengths while (2) neutralizing its threats and (3) avoiding (or) correcting its weaknesses.

**Institutional culture:** Institutional culture is a powerful force in institutions. It shapes overall effectiveness and long-term structure of institutions. The ultimate aim of organizational change and development activities is to usher in an era of healthy work culture and that is what OCTAPAC culture stands for:

- Openness – Creation of a situation or evolution of a culture conducive to free flow of communication, upward, downward and horizontal.
- Confrontation – A healthy exercise for removing barriers to communication leading to prevention of conflicts on account of misunderstandings and distorted perceptions.
- Trust – Basis for all meaningful and healthy interpersonal communication.
- Authenticity – Facts supported by evidence.
- Pro action – An ability to draw right inferences and to start working for the desired future.
- Autonomy – The ultimate form of faith in an individual and the realisation that he/she is the basic component of a living organisation; and
- Collaboration – The best from each for the good of all.

**Relationship management:** A teacher education institution has to manage relations within and outside the institution. Within the institution there are students, teachers, administration staff members and the management. The external constituents are (1) parents (2) government (3) regulatory bodies (4) other peer institutions (5) suppliers of inputs (6) alumni (7) the society (8) industry and (9) employers. Relationships between different constituents must be a permanent one.

**Environmental Adaptation:** In general any institution functions in an environment. Environment is anything external. Environmental factors provide opportunities to draw resources, convert them into products and services to market these back to environment and to make profit and sustain. Right use of these opportunities spells growth and vitality to the institution. Environment also wields threats of withdrawal of support given to top resources of sanctions of certain technologies used. The environmental factors themselves keep changing. So opportunities change; so do the threats. Here is the need for adaptation on the part of the institution. Institutions that fail to adapt perish and go extinct. Major environmental constituents include Economic Environment, Socio-cultural Environment, and Competitive Environment.

**Manpower grooming (faculty development):** Any educational institution is known by its people and is made or marred by its people. Manpower grooming is vital for any institution. It is grooming of knowledge, skill, attitude, behaviour, character, motivation and orientation.

**Linkage with industry:** Teacher education institutions, through the intellectual resource sharing process can extend to the industry the benefit of knowledge, the fruits of their research findings, the academic infrastructure etc. On the other hand, the industry can help the institutions to promote a platform to testify whether the theoretical knowledge of the latter stands the test of time, besides supporting the activities of the institutions in different ways. By exchange of personnel, joint consultancy, sharing of resources, training of students, curriculum development, staff development, R&D collaboration, funding the teacher education institutions the industry can have an interface to make necessary changes in the teacher education institutions to face more competition at domestic and international markets.

**Devising strategies and models:** Policy makers in teacher education systems need to devise their own strategies and models to address the quality concerns. The key issues and concerns while developing such model for Quality Assurance that could be taken into account may include:

- Making teacher education sector competitive
- Increased priority to teacher education sector
- Bringing all teacher education institutions under the ambit of Quality Assurance
- Attitudinal changes – ‘Quality Mindsets’
- Protecting interests of students and stakeholders

### **Capacity Building of Teacher Educators**

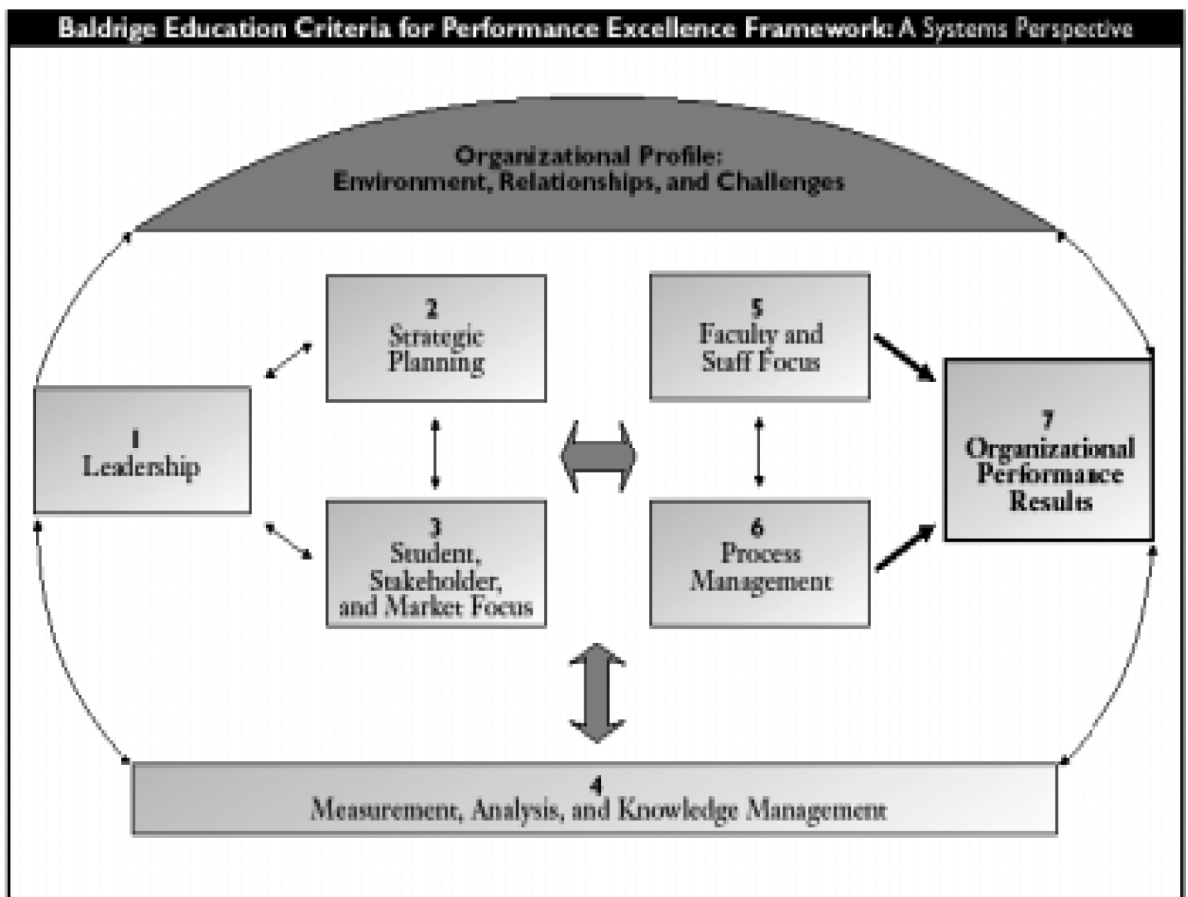
The teacher educators are charged with the daunting task of shaping and reshaping the attitudes, beliefs and knowledge of pre service teacher trainees. Revamping of teacher education programmes is impossible unless and until teacher educators’ skills and competencies are enhanced to national and international standards. To enhance skills and competencies of teacher educators the following aspects need to be considered.

- information and communication technology
- under taking research projects
- developing professionalism

- reflective practices
- understanding the educational needs of the challenged learners

## Conclusion

Enhancing quality in teacher education institutions require educational administrators to understand and manage their institutions as flow-through, cross-functional systems designed to produce assessable outcomes. The following diagram (Figure 1) from the 'Baldrige *Education Criteria for Performance Excellence: A Systems Approach*' replicates the Baldrige diagram in the Baldrige Principal Criteria for Performance Excellence for *business and industry*. This demonstrates the widely shared assumption that the teacher education programme can and should be managed as a system in the same manner as modern businesses and industries are managed.



**Figure 1**

Our environments are changing, and our teacher education institutions must also change to survive and prosper. We must change to survive, and we argue that we should attack the problems, not the symptoms, in a systematic, planned, humane manner. In addition to simply assessing information and communication technology needs, teacher education institutions should take a broader, deeper look, survey existing strengths and weaknesses not only in the infrastructure, but also in the uses of the technology and its impact on our profession and lives. The explosive growth in new technologies poses challenges and opportunities. Substantial investment in human capital and physical infrastructure, strong leadership, and coordinated campus-wide involvement is required in order to preserve the teacher education institutions' position of strength in all areas of research and teaching.

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## வாழ்க்கை நெறிமுறையில் யோகமும், யோகாசனமும்

முனைவர் ஜே. செல்வம்\*

அறிவு எல்லாவற்றிற்கும் ஆதாரம் நமது அனுபவமே தெரிந்ததைக் கொண்டு தெரியாததை ஊகிப்பது அனுமான ஞானம்.

மனத்தின் இயல்புகளை சரியாக கவனித்துப் பார்ப்பதற்கான வழிகளை இராஜயோகம் நமக்கு அளிக்கிறது. மனதை அளக்க மனமே கருவி கூர்ந்து கவனிக்கும் சக்தி நம்மிடம் உண்டு. மனதின் ஆற்றல்கள் சிதறிப்போன ஒளிக்கிரணங்கள் போன்றவை. அக்கிரணங்களை ஒன்று படச்செய்தால், சுடரொளி கிடைக்கும். இதுவே அறிவு கிடைக்க ஒரே வழி. புற, அக உலகில் இதனை அனைவரும் பயன்படுத்துகின்றனர். ஒரு விஞ்ஞானி வெளி உலகை எவ்வாறு கூர்ந்து கவனிக்கிறானோ அதே போன்று மனோதத்துவ நிபுணர் அகத்தை (உள்ளத்தை) கூர்ந்து கவனிக்கிறான். இதற்கு பயிற்சி வேண்டும்.

ஞானத்தை பெறுவதற்கான ஒரே உபாயம் மனத்தை ஒருமுகப்படுத்துவதே. மனத்தை புறப்பொருளின் மீது குவிப்பது எளிது. இயல்பாகவே மனம் வெளி நோக்கு கொண்டதாக இருக்கும். ஆனால் மத ஆராய்ச்சி, மனத் தத்துவம் இவற்றில் அவ்வாறு காண்பவனும், காணப்படும் பொருளும் ஒன்றே. மனத்தை நோக்கும் தன்மை ஆராய இராஜயோகப் பயிற்சிவேண்டும்.

யோகத்தை கற்க தொடர்ந்து நீடித்த பயிற்சியும் வேண்டும். பயிற்சியின் ஒரு பகுதி உடலைச் சார்ந்தது பெரும்பகுதி மனத்தினைச் சார்ந்தது. யோக பயிற்சிக்கு உணவு உண்பதில் கவனம் வேண்டும்.

\* நூல்கள் மற்றும் நூலகத் துறைத்தலைவர், ஆ. வீரையா வாண்டையார் நினைவுதிரு. புட்டம் கல்லூரி (தன்னாட்சி), பூண்டி, தஞ்சாவூர்.

உயிர் வாழ்வதற்கு உடம்பு அவசியம். இதனைக் கொண்டு இவ்வுலக இன்பங்களைத் துய்ப்பதுவே வாழ்க்கை என்று கருதுகின்றோம். நமது அனுபவத்திலேயே மூன்று விதமான தேகங்களைக் கருவிகளாக கொண்டு இன்ப துன்பங்களை அனுபவிக்கிறோம்.

நாம் உழைத்த பின் களைப்பு தீர உறங்கச் செல்லும் பொழுது பிருதிவி, அப்பு, தேயு, வாயு, ஆகாசம் என்ற பஞ்ச பூதங்களாலான ஸ்தூல (உடல்) உறங்கி விடுகிறது. ஆயினும் நமது மனது மட்டும் விழித்திருக்கிறது. கனவுகள் தோன்றி சந்தோஷம், பயம், துக்கம், கோபம் முதலிய உணர்ச்சிகளை நாம் அனுபவிக்கும்படி செய்கின்றன. இதனை, சூஸ்ம தேசம் என்றும், இது ஸப்த ஸ்பரிசு, ரூப, ரஸ, கந்தம் என்னும் பஞ்ச பூத தன்மாத்திரைகளாலும் மனம், புத்தி, அஹங்காரம் என்னும் மூன்று கரணங்களாலும் ஆகியது என்றும் கூறுகின்றார் கௌடபாதர் இதனை லிங்கதேசம் என்றும் புரியட்ட காயம் என்றும் அழைப்பார்.

காயம் (உடல்) ஆகிய இப்பையில் ஏழு தாதுக்கள் நிரம்பியுள்ளன. இவ்வாறு பல்வேறு தேகங்களைக் கொண்டு பல்வேறு அனுபவங்களை அனுபவிக்கும் நாம் இவற்றிலிருந்து விடுபடத் துடிக்கிறோம்.

எல்லாக் கலைகளுமே தவத்தின் வெளிப்பாடுகள் சிவபெருமான் ஞான திருக்ஷடியில் பதஞ்சலி முனிவருக்கு யோகக்கலையை வழங்கியதாகச் சொல்வார்கள். அவர் ஏதோ உடலை முன்பின் வளைக்கும் பயிற்சிகளை மட்டுமே சொல்லிருக்கிறார் என்று தான் மேலோட்டமாக கருதுகிறார்கள். ஆனால் பதஞ்சலி முனிவர் மன ஆரோக்கியத்தை மட்டுமே குறிக்கோளாக கொண்டுதான் “யோக அத்திரம்” படைத்து இருக்கிறார். மனதைப் பக்குவப் படுத்த உடலை ஒரு கருவியாகத்தான் பாவிக்கிறார். அப்பயிற்சியின் போது உடலுக்கு ஒரு ஆரோக்கியம் கிடைத்து விடுகிறது. மனதிலிருந்து தான் எல்லா நோய்களும் தோன்றுகின்றன என்ற உண்மை இதற்குப் பறைசாற்றுகிறது.

அண்டம் முழுவதும் அணுவிலிருந்து தோன்றி அணுவிலே முடியக் கூடியது அது எங்கே தோன்றி எங்கே முடிகிறதோ அதுவே மெய்பொருள்.

இதன் அடிப்படையில் தான் எல்லாமே திரும்ப திரும்ப நிகழ்கிறது. அதனால் தான் மனிதன் கடவுளிடமிருந்து தோன்றி கடவுளிடமே சேருகிறான் என்று சொல்லப்படுகிறது.

பகவத் கீதையில் உள்ள யோக சூத்திரத்தில் சமாதிபாதம், சாதன பாதம், விபூதிபாதம், கைவல்யபாதம் என்று நான்கு தலைப்புகளின் கீழ் 646 ஸ்லோகம் சொல்லப்பட்டிருக்கிறது.

இந்த விருத்திகளை ஒடுக்குவதே யோகமாகும். ஆத்மாவிலிருக்கிற அறிவே மனதின் மூலமாக ஒளிர்ந்து கொண்டிருக்கிறது. அந்தக் கர்ணத்திற்கு சித்தம் என்று பெயர், புறத்தில் இருப்பவை சித்தத்தில் படியும் பொழுது அலைகள் உண்டாகின்றன. அந்த அலைகள் 'விருத்தி' என்கிறோம். நமது சித்தத்தை உள்ளே திரும்பிப் போகும்படி செய்வது யோகத்தின் முதற்படியாகும்.

மனம் ஓய்ந்த வேளையில்தான் ஆத்ம சொரூபத்தை அடைய முடியும் அப்போதுதான் அதற்கு தன்னை அறியும் பக்குவம் கிடைக்கிறது. சும்மா இருத்தல் என்ற சான்றோர் கூற்று இதைதான் நமக்கு வலியுறுத்துகிறது.

பிரமாணம் என்பது மெய்ஞானம், ஞானத்தில் விபரீத ஞானமும் உண்டு ஒரு உண்மையை உணர்ந்து கொள்வதற்கு மூன்று விதப் பிரமாணங்கள் உள்ளன. நாம் நேரில் காண்பது பிரத்தியட்சப் பிரமாணம், அறிகுறியைக் கொண்டு தீர்மானிப்பது அனுமானப் பிரமாணம், புகை வருவதைக் கொண்டு நெருப்பு எரிவதை அறிகிறோம். நேரே கண்டதை மற்றவர்களுக்கு சொல்லுவது ஆப்தவாக்கியப் பிரமாணம்.

மனதில் பற்றில்லாமல் இருந்தால் யோக சாதனங்களை அப்பியாசம் பண்ணலாம். எந்த பொருளையும் அதன் இயல்பை அறிந்து பார்க்க வேண்டும். பொருட்களின் மீது கொண்டுள்ள பற்றை அப்பியாசத்தின் மூலம் தான் விடமுடியும். அதாவது பற்றின்மையை திரும்ப திரும்ப வளர்க்க வேண்டும். இதனால் சலனங்கள் போய்விடும் அதைத்தான் சம்ஸ்காரம் என்கிறோம்.

நாம் எண்ணுவதும், செய்வதும் நல்லதாக இருக்க வேண்டும். நாம்

பார்க்கும், கேட்கும் விஷயங்களில் உள்ள கவர்ச்சிகளை ஒழிப்பவனுக்கு மட்டுமே வைராக்கியம் ஏற்படுகிறது. அதைத்தான் தியாகம் என்பார்கள். அதாவது நம்மை இன்பமோ, துன்பமோ, பாதித்தாலும் யார் எது செய்தாலும், உறுதியோடு கலங்காமல் இருக்கவேண்டும். ஆசைகளை அனுபவிக்க உடலுக்கு இடம் தரக்கூடாது.

யோகிகளுக்கு ஞாபகசக்தி, வீரியம், சிரத்தை மன ஒழுக்கம், மெய்ப்பொருள், உணர்வு ஆகியவை சமாதிக் கு வழிவகுக்கும். ஈஸ்வரன் என்பவன் பரம்பொருள் அவன் துக்கம், கர்மம், கர்மப்பலன், வாசனை ஆகிய முக்காலத்தீண்டலும் இல்லாதவன். வேத சாஸ்திரங்களில் ஈஸ்வரனே பிரபஞ்ச சிருஷ்டியாக இருக்கிறான். மனிதனுடைய மனதிலே ஞானமானது ஒரு விதை போல் ஒடுங்கி இருக்கிறது. விதை எப்படி ஒரு பெரிய ஆலமரமாக மாறுகிறதோ அதே போல் ஞானம் ஈஸ்வரனிடத்தில் ஒளிர்ந்து கொண்டிருக்கிறது. ஈஸ்வரன் காலத்திற்கும், குருவுக்கும், அப்பாற்பட்டவன், குரு இல்லாத ஞானம் இல்லை குருமார்கள் அனைவருக்கும் பரமகுருவாய் இருப்பவர் பரம்பொருள் மனிதன் சிற்றறிவானவன், பரம்பொருள் பேரறிவானவர்.

‘ஓம்’ என்ற ஓசையை உச்சரிப்பவர்கள் ஓங்கார வடிவமாகி சிவனை உணருகிறார்கள். ஒரு மாம்பழத்தின் கொட்டைக்குள் அம்மரத்தின் இயல்பு மறைந்து இருப்பதுபோல் ஓங்கார ஓசையில் ஈஸ்வரனின் சொரூபம் மறைந்திருக்கிறது. பிரணவ மந்திரமாகிய ஓம் என்பதில் அகரம், உகரம், மகரம் என்ற மூன்று அட்சரங்கள் அமைந்திருக்கிறது. அதனால் அதை ஏகாட்சரம் என்று சொல்கிறோம். ஓசை எழுவதற்குத் துவக்கமாக அகரமும், முடிவதற்கு இடையில் சப்தமும், உருமாறுவதற்கு ஓங்காரமே வித்து ஆயிருக்கிறது. ஓங்காரத்தை உச்சரித்து (சொத்து) அதன் உட்பொருளை உணர்ந்து சமாதி அடையலாம்.

பிறவிப் பெருங்கடலைத் நீந்துவதற்கு உறிய படகான உடலை ஆரோக்கியமாக வைத்திருக்க வேண்டும். நோயாளியாக இருப்பவன் யோகியாக முடியாது. மனச்சோர்வு உள்ளவன் எதையும் சாதிக்க முடியாது.

எந்தவிதமான பற்றுதலும் இல்லாமல் தியானம் செய்ய பழகினால் நன்மை சித்தியாகும்.

தியானம் புரியும்பொழுது வேண்டாத எண்ணங்கள் தோன்றும். அவற்றை எதிர்க்க அவன் நாமத்தைக் கூறி தியானம் புரிந்தால் ஆற்றல் பெற்று சம்ஸ்காரம் பெற்று மற்ற எண்ண அலைகளை அடித்து விரட்டலாம்.

பிராணன் என்பது வெறும் மூச்சல்ல. பிராணாயமத்தில் ஒழுங்கு நீடிக்கும்பொழுது உத்காதம் ஆகிய குண்டலினி எழுச்சி அடைகிறது. ஆழ்ந்து சிந்திக்கும் பொழுது நம்மை அறியாமல் பிராணன் நமக்குள் கும்பகமாக அடங்குகிறது. சத்துவ குணமாகிய ஞானத்தை ரஜஸ்தமஸ் என்ற அறியாமை இருள் மூடிக் கொண்டிருக்கிறது. அவை பிராணாயமத்தால் நீங்கும்.

“நூலின் நுனி இழைகள் பிரிந்திருந்தால் ஊசியால் கோர்க்க முடியாது. இழைகளை முறுக்கி ஒன்று சேர்ப்பது போல மனதை யோகாசனத்தால் ஒருமுகப்படுத்த வேண்டும்”.

ஓதுகின்ற மலக்கட்டையொழிய வைத்தால்

உடலிலுள்ள வாதையெலா மொடுங்கி போகும்.

தாதுற்ற சிறுநீரைத் தெளிய வைத்தால்

சடலத்திலுள்ள வேகமெல்லாந் தணிந்து போகும்

கோதுற்ற உமிழ்நீரை முறிய வைத்தால்

கூட்டிலுள்ள பகையெல்லாங் குலைந்து போகும்

கோதடர்ந்த இவை மூன்றும் களங்க மற்றால்

கொல்ல வந்த காலனையும் வெல்லலாமே!

- அகத்திய முனிவர்.

தெய்வத்தன்மை வாய்ந்த உடலை யோக அப்பியாசங்களால் பக்குவப்படுத்துவதே யோக சூத்திரம் ஆகும்.

இராஜயோகம் என்பது தியானம் மார்க்கமாக இறைவனோடு நேரடியாக சங்கமிப்பது. ஹதயோகம் என்பது உடம்பை யோகாசனம் புரிந்து சுவாசப் பயிற்சியினால் இறைவனை சங்கமிப்பது. லயயோகம் என்பது ராகம் இசைத்து பாடி பக்தி செலுத்தி இறைவனோடு சங்கமிப்பது (தேவாரம், திருவாசகம், திருப்புகழ், திருவருட்பா). மந்திரயோகம் என்பது நாம் வணங்கும் நமச்சிவாய, நாராயண, சக்தி கணபதி, முருகன் போன்ற இறையை மனதில் நினைத்து உச்சரித்து சங்கமம் ஆவது!

நம் உடல் மனஒடுங்கி மனம் ஒழுங்குப் பெற்றால் வாழ்வில் நேய அமைதிப் பெற்று பெறுவாழ்வு வாழலாம்!

## **A DESOLATE CRY FOR HUMAN IDENTITY: REFLECTIONS ON SELECT TAMIL TRANSGENDER STORIES**

**Dr. J.G.Duresh\***

Literature and society are not in watertight compartments; rather they are mutually contributory and interlinked. Invariably, literature occupies the centre stage and plays a predominant role in social upheavals, freedom movements and the concerted effort of the oppressed for basic human rights. Be it the French Revolution or the American Civil War, the pivotal role of literature in inspiring human mind and instilling a sense of freedom cannot be brushed aside. Likewise, the task of literary writings in making the subaltern realize the exigent need for equality and raising the public voice in favour of their legitimate demands is noteworthy.

In the concurrent literary domain, accentuated by the post-colonial and post-modern theoretical underpinnings, there has been a torrential flow of the writings of subaltern authors across the globe. Due to the constant movement of the margin towards the centre, the suppressed voices of the silenced subaltern have begun to articulate and express their untold miseries in literary writings. The paradigm of subalternity has drawn much attention in the recent Indian literary milieu which resulted in the arrival of literary writings from authors of marginalized social groups who are bent on showcasing the hazardous existence of their community / race. Curious enough, along with the utterances of the marginalized authors, pops up a wail of anguish of the transgenders who are denied even the basic gender identity and treated worse than animals.

In this paper an attempt is made to evaluate two Tamil transgender stories: Aruna's "Kallippoo"(cactus flower) and Ashabharathi's "Tholaintha Mugham"(the lost face). Apart from the literary merits and stylistic features, what attracts/grieves the readers of these stories is the desolate cry of the transgenders who are pushed far behind the margin and destined to endure agony and exploitation all through their life.

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“Kallippoo” (cactus flower) narrates the story of Kalli, a school boy from a remote village, Tamil Nadu, who turns a transgender at the tender age of fifteen. Driven by strong feminine sensibility, Kalli leaves the family to join a transgender group. Later Kalli is taken to Mumbai only to lead a life as a sex worker. As two of the companions of Kalli fall prey to AIDS, they are thrown to the streets. Infuriated by the gross injustice meted out to her friends, Kalli pulls out the profession and commits herself to the liberation of the hapless transgender. Ashabharathi’s story “Tholaintha Mugham” (the lost face) sketches out the tormenting experiences of a transgender named Selva. Born in a large family with brothers and sisters, Selva has to undergo crude tortures and discrimination. Hard-pressed by unbearable persecution and abuse, she leaves the house and works as a menial worker in a hotel along with another transgender who becomes her intimate pal. Eventually, Selva and her friend are noticed by Lekshmi, a senior transgender who adopts them and takes them to her shelter. Ensnared by the highly sophisticated life of Deeba, a transgender, Selva and her friend follow her to Mumbai. After a brief sojourn in Mumbai as a sex worker, Selva is affected by AIDS and dies.

Simon de Beauvoir avers that “One is not born, but becomes, a woman” (293). Stroller further adds that gender is culturally determined” (IX). In confirmation of the viewpoint, Sarah Gamble opines that “gender can be viewed as a behavior, a learned or conditional response to a society’s view of how men and women should act” (38). In Aruna’s “Kallippoo”, the protégé Kalli is born as a male in a poor family. When he attains the age of fifteen he experiences strong finer feelings and longs to shed the masculine identity. Moreover, he has a staunch fascination to meet persons with similar emotional experiences. In the story “Tholaintha Mugham”, the central character, Selva, undergoes emotional shift and longs to dress up and behave like women. Both the stories drive home the ultimate fact that gender is determined by sociocultural factors.

The transgenders, overcome by intense womanly feelings, crave for association with people who have similar sensitivity. Kalli leaves her relatives and the family only to join a transgender community. When Selva walks out of her house, she is fortunate enough to get a job in a hotel and finds another transgender there. Eventually, Selva and her friend attract the attention of Lekshmi, who takes them to her place and adopts them as her daughters. In spite of her penury, Lekshmi gets Selva and her friend eatables and costumes. Fully clad in the attire of women with the help of Lekshmi, Selva and her friends find boundless joy and enormous satisfaction. Added to this, the change makes them feel that the very purpose of their birth is achieved.

The most important and valuable aspect which the transgenders dream of and hanker for is their gender identity. The conflicting question that dogs them is “who am I” (Bornstein 24) and always they ask:

What does a man feel like

What does a woman feel like

Do you feel 'like a man?'

Do you feel 'like a woman?'

I'd really like to know that from people. (24)

In both the stories chosen for analysis, the authors vociferously assert the legitimate need for gender identity and recognition in society as human beings. Ashabharathi in "Tholaintha Mugham" decries the mainstream society which "even denies the basic human recognition to the transgender" (243). Also she raises the pertinent question "Why should they be punished for the mistake of nature?" (240).

Aruna and Ashabharathi unmistakably expose the brutal inhuman treatment of the transgenders by human beings and the tortures and miseries they bear in society. It is extremely difficult for the transgenders to find jobs. Even if they get employed all they experience is abuse and ill-treatment. In "Tholaintha Mugham", Selva and her friend have to face acute miseries and grave misfortunes in a tea stall where they work. The customers make lewd commands and obscene gestures. One of the fellow employees in the hotel always calls them with the derogatory phrase, "dog come here" (240).

To keep the wolf from the door, the transgenders are forced to beg, the only profession available to them. Even when they beg, the shop owners abuse and upbraid them with vituperative words. On one occasion, a shop owner has poured hot water over Lekshmi. The hapless transgender reports the matter to police with the fond hope of getting justice but what she gets back are severe blows and filthy comments.

For the transgenders, all the doors are closed and avenues denied. Left with no means for survival, the transgenders turn to prostitution to feed their ravenous stomach. Aruna and Ashabharathi portray how the transgenders fall gullible victims to fulfil the carnal desire of devious men. It seems that both the authors want to edify the fellow transgenders regarding impending threat of AIDS to them. In Kallippoo, Kalli is forced to involve in prostitution. When she refuses, she is tormented by a senior transgender. Kalli becomes aware when two of her friends are affected by AIDS. As wish fulfilment of the author, she leaves the profession for good and dedicates her life for the upliftment of the transgenders. In "Tholaintha Mugham", Selva and her friend are carried away by the fashionable life of Deeba, another transgender. She also promises a cozy life for them in Mumbai and they will be

fully transformed as women. After three years of life in Mumbai as a sex worker, Selva becomes a victim of AIDS. The last days of Selva are so pathetic and agonizing. She is lamenting out of extreme pain and dies. It is most heartbreaking that when the corpse of Selva is brought to the cremation ground, the employees refuse to receive it and perform the last rites. In her wild rage following the blatant discrimination Ashabharathi wails, “even a street dog will eat whatever it gets and lies down under the shade of a tree. But the transgenders are chased and oppressed throughout their life and at last discrimination even in the funeral ground” (245).

As Gita Viswanathan has stated that literature is a site within which a community is not only reflected, but also constructed”(134), the stories of Aruna and Asha Bharathi throw a few glimpses of transgender culture and their life style. A common feature among transgenders in the beginning of their transition is a burning desire to meet persons of similar experience. Sarah Gamble remarks, “Loneliness and the inability to find partners is one of the best-kept secrets in the trans-community” (47). In “Kallippoo”, Kalli hates her family and yearns to meet partners. Deserting her family, blissfully she joins a transgender group. After leaving her house, Selva seeks job in a tea stall, where to her great surprise, she finds another transgender. They are enthralled at the meeting and passionately recollect the first day of their meeting. Most of the transgenders are men turned women and they have a longing to dress and behave like women. When Lekshmi makes Selva and her friend dress like women, they find enormous joy and feel elated. A common desire of transgenders is surgical intervention in order to become a member of the opposite gender. In “Tholaintha Mugham”, Selva and her friend follow Deeba to Mumbai, as she has promised to convert them into women through surgery.

The transgenders lead a hand-to-mouth existence in impoverished shelter in the outskirts of cities. They have mutual concern for each other and the very term transgender binds the members of the group together. When Selva and her friend are noticed by Lekshmi, she brings them to her shelter and feeds them. Lekshmi adopts them and treats them as her children. In order to make them happy, she makes them appear like women. She also promises them that she will save money for their surgery for gender transformation.

To crown it all, Aruna’s “Kallippoo” and Ashabharathi’s “Tholaintha Mugham” sound out the civilized society to render justice and treat the transgenders as human beings. The titles of the stories “Kallippoo” and “Tholaintha Mugham” are highly symbolic and endowed with intense meanings. Cactus flower is very beautiful like many other flowers, but its beauty goes unnoticed. It is unfortunate that nobody considers the cactus flower a flower as the transgenders are not at all considered human beings. What is the rationale behind the brazen discrimination? Ashabharathi

pleads with the society to look at the faces of transgenders who also have human faces and human attributes. She writes “. . . uncivilized people, look at our faces which are human. We are also born out of the union of two human bodies and souls” (241).

Both authors put forward the legitimate demands of the transgenders for basic human identity and convince the human society to realize the pressing need to treat the transgenders also as human beings. The reading of the stories of Aruna and AshaBharathi brings to the fore the genuineness and validity of the claim of the transgenders for gender identity and basic human rights to lead a normal life on a par with others. The stories pose a challenge to the mainstream society to alter its stereotyped views on gender. The emergence of the voice of the transgenders in the Indian literary milieu, though feeble, is a sure indication that there is light at the end of the tunnel.

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## HIGHER ORDER QUESTIONING IN SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING – A STUDY

**Beena Anil\***

### **Abstract**

*Learners are interested to explore new things if teachers switch on their creative mode button. Higher order thinking makes second language learners develop critical thinking and creativity. It cultivates confidence and motivation that will help them to enhance their language skills. Various studies prove that asking students higher order questions open many learning avenues. Higher order questioning (HOQ) influences the question types like test scores, amounts of language production for understanding the language abilities of students etc., The study showed that HOQ may be effective among college students as they are encouraged to think critically and creatively. A number of studies proved that HOQ positively helped learning process among students. In the Indian English language classrooms, sometimes teachers and students participate or sometimes both of them fail to participate in HOQ.*

### **Keywords**

*Higher-order questioning, perceptions, practice, critical thinking, creative thinking.*

### **1.0 Introduction**

Thinking is the prime source in learning a second language. When learners think dimensionally in the English language learning process, their proficiency in learning the language is appreciable. In this technology based world, education has become handy and tailor-made. Students learn lots of new things in different ways, but learning a language especially English is happening very slowly and ineffectively. Curricula should be designed and teachers should be given more opportunity to explore and create new avenues to learners in the classroom. Mark-based learning should be given a second-thought and learners should be allowed to understand, analyze and apply what they learn in their English learning classroom. Thinking skills are important for learning a language but English language learners rarely receive higher-order thinking instruction (Au, 2006; Darling-Hammond, 1995; Dong, 2006) required to pass high-stake tests (Raphael & Au, 2005), compete in a global job market (Au, 2006), and initiate social change (Freire, 2004).

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## 2.0 Literature Review

HOQ helps students to develop critical thinking and intelligence. It also helps to expand literacy success of students. HOQ are being asked of students to identify their level of confidence, in answering them which will help to understand the teacher and the institution. By examining the relationship between HOQ and student achievement, HOQ impacts learning in general and literacy achievement in particular.

L1 studies categorize questions as higher-order and lower-order, while second language studies examine questioning in terms of referential and display types. Brown (2001) shows that referential questions include the skills of application, analysis, evaluation and synthesis. When students break the jinx of memorization HOQ occurs in the learning process.

Many studies have shown that HOQ leads to more learner output than lower order questions (Brock, 1986; Farooq, 2007; Long & Sato, 1983; Shomoossi, 2004; Suk-a-nake et al, 2003). HOQ makes the language class more interactive than the lower order question classes. The studies claimed that student achievement, literacy achievement (Taylor et al, 2000), or language production (Brock, 1986), helped to find out how teacher behaviours impact student production. This type of research highlighted “strive to account for student outcomes as a function of teacher behaviors” (Carlsen, 1991, p. 157), which is termed as Process-product.

Students with high English proficiency level could answer all types of questions with confidence but students with less English proficiency could find difficult to answer any sort of questions due to lack of confidence. To overcome this problem, there should be a good rapport between the teacher and the students. If students feel uncomfortable and threatened, this may negatively impact students’ affective variables and hinder language acquisition (Krashen, 1985). Teacher’s perceptions play an important role in the delivery of challenging questions. Sometimes higher order questions help teachers to view students’ academic excellence rather than the cognitive skills which affect the teachers’ beliefs about students’ abilities.

HOQ gives learners many advantages. HOQ develops literacy levels, (Taylor, Pearson, Clark, Walpole, 2000), thinking skills (Dantanio & Paradise, 1988), more language production (Brock, 1986; Farooq, 2007; Shomoossi, 2004). Though HOQ offers many benefits, most of the teachers never encourage higher order questioning in the classroom, especially in second language classroom, because they preconceive the intellectual abilities of students before asking questions. This proves that some educators confuse language proficiency with cognitive ability (Harklau, 1994, 2000) and believe that second language [English] learners are unable to think deeply. The hypothesis of the

study explores English language learners' professed abilities to answer higher-order questions in the second language learning classroom.

### **3.0.Research Design**

This study employed qualitative and quantitative approaches involving classroom observations, interviews and questionnaires. Observations, interviews and questionnaire were used with the aim of seeking answers to the following research questions:

- How HOQ should be encouraged in the classroom?
- Is using higher order questioning in the classroom a beneficial?
- How do second language learners respond to higher order questions in the classroom?

### **4.0.Hypothesis**

The Hypothesis of the study is that using higher order thinking questions in English language class rooms helps learners to get good exposure to English language. HO questions assist and facilitate learners to learn English as a second language more effectively and English language is considered to be an essential language for a better prospect in their life.

### **5.0.Research Methodology and Sampling**

Fifty respondents were taken for the study from a semi-urban college, Chennai. Out of 50 respondents, 40 respondents studied English as a medium of instruction till higher secondary level from government / government-aided schools. 8 respondents had their schooling from semi-urban private matriculation schools and 2 respondents from city convent schools. All the respondents understand, write, read, English well but only a few respondents could speak English well. The purpose and significance of selecting this college is that this institution is situated on the outskirts of the city and it houses 85% first generation learners. Classroom observations, interviews and questionnaire were used to find out the use of higher order thinking questions in learning English in the classroom. The study was organized and conducted by employing both qualitative and quantitative research methods.

#### **5.1. Classroom Observations and Results**

4 classroom observations were conducted with the help of respective teachers of two classrooms. First professor was teaching a poem titled 'Solitary Reaper' by William Wordsworth and the second teacher was teaching a prose titled 'Father's Help' by R.K.Narayan. The classes were observed by the researcher and 4 items were identified by her to be used before the start of the classes:

- To give instructions about the lesson
- To explain expressions
- To make students learn at ease
- To make learners to understand the importance of learning English effectively

The observation of the researcher was that the teacher who instilled motivation and encouragement could aid learners to think widely and make them answer without hesitation. The level of understanding among students should be equal, and smart learners would gain the limelight that would leave a negative impact on others. As a result, learners would have a fear of learning English as a subject or a language.

During classroom observations, the teacher's questioning patterns were observed and recorded on mobile phone. Following the observations, questions and responses were transcribed from the mobile and questions were coded into HOQ or LOQ (lower-order questioning) categories.

The teacher's questions were categorized as HOQ based on the interesting and innovative information shared by the students. Although various coding schemes were used, this method was based on the recommendations in the literature. For example, Renaud and Murray (2007) note:

Perhaps the clearest distinction between lower- and higher-order questions, as noted by Bloom (1956), is that while lower-order questions are designed to elicit existing answers (e.g., from the textbook, directly from the lecture), higher order questions require novel answers in that they cannot simply be recalled (p. 322).

Asking questions to acquire information shows that they do not memorize answers. Higher order questions should make students think widely and derive answers relevantly. The confidence level of learners gets enhanced when they feel that they can think and talk in their second language. Precisely, if the teacher and students discuss and students ask questions and reproduce the information available from textbooks, it was coded as lower - order category.

After recording the teacher's questions to students it was transferred on to a questioning chart according to following concepts.

- Question types (higher-order or lower-order)
- Whom to ask questions to (basic, medium, high level of students)?
- Who answered the teacher's question (teacher, basic, medium and high level students)?

This sort of charts would provide a percentage in order to present a holistic view of what types of questions should be asked by teachers to what set of students. The teacher in the poetry class asked the students 7 questions, 1 question belonged to HOQ and the rest belonged to LOQ. All the questions were answered by everyone in the class sometimes in chorus and sometimes in a group. For HOQ, only three students responded and shared their views with confidence. In the prose class, the professor professed 6 questions and most of the students answered for 5 LOQ. Only one student responded to 1 HOQ in the classroom with confidence.

## 5.2.Distribution of questionnaire

After 6 hours of observation, a questionnaire was distributed to the same 50 respondents with a five-point Likert scale to understand the students' perceptions of HOQ. The questionnaire was administered to find out the level of comfort of students to face or answer HO questions. The questionnaire helped the researcher to find out the mentality of students regarding HO questions with survey statements by selecting SDA (strongly do not agree), DA (do not agree), N (neutral), A (agree) and SA (strongly agree). The questionnaire was piloted to ensure that the language was easy to understand for the respondents. The researcher cleared the doubts of the respondents, whenever they required.

**Table 1: Using higher order questions in classroom (Q 1-5)**

Item	No	SDA	DA	N	A	SA
Asking higher order questions is helpful in learning English in the classroom	50				7	43
Teacher should create opportunities for students to think and express innovative ideas and concepts	50			5	10	35
Teacher should have affinity while asking higher order questions	50				6	44
Questions should be asked to improve thinking and creative skills	50			5	10	35
I gain confidence to speak in English when I answer higher order questions in the classroom	50			3	10	37

This section highlights that the respondents' attitude towards higher order questions in the classroom was appreciative.

Table 1 has proved the hypothesis that students should be given practice and students talking time should be encouraged and motivated in the class. Many factors need to be evolved to understand the qualities of high order thinkers. Each student brings a unique personality to the classroom; it is often difficult to assess the factors involved. Students' confidence level is high when they feel that they could learn English in the classroom without any inferiority complex. This confidence increases and encourages them to learn English positively.

**Table 2: Thinking in English (Q6 – 10)**

Item	No	SDA	DA	N	A	SA
Teacher should make the lessons interesting so that I will be allowed to think widely	50				4	46
Teacher should discuss various interesting things other the subject	50	33	10	07		
Visiting library for self-study is essential for improving HO thinking in English, but I am lazy to do it	50		1	1	8	40
Critical thinking and conceptual related tasks are helpful to develop the thinking process in SLA	50	2	1	2	10	35
Media is helpful to develop English and making me to think sharply and widely	50				6	44

Desire to learn can come from many sources. When students love the subject and are highly motivated and have good exposure to the subject, they are inclined to answer higher order questions. Teachers should develop interest and involvement in the subject even though students lack interest in the subject. It is the teachers' attitude, classroom participation, their conscientiousness, their humor and seriousness that make the class lively, as a result students will be influenced by them. Teachers' behavior should inspire students to be attentive and learn more in the classroom. Having said that

teachers are not solely responsible for the motivation of the students, the real motivation comes from within each student. A sizeable percentage of time should be given to students for self-study. Students should be encouraged to go to library, refer to dictionary, grammar books, fiction, non-fiction etc., College students should go in to self-access centre for development of knowledge. They should take responsibility for their own learning. High order thinkers do not wait to be taught. In the technology-based world, even semi-urban colleges have self-access facilities. Though they are expensive, students should be aware that they can learn English if they are prepared to take some strain. Learning is a partnership between teacher and learner.

Table 2 helps the researcher to prove the hypothesis that Student community strongly believes that English is very essential in this world. Students, especially rural students, understand English but are unable to communicate confidently. They have fear of making grammatical mistakes, which has engulfed since their school days. Technology had helped the respondents to develop their English through TV, computer, mobile SMSes. The respondents had learnt English words even after their classroom through TV and mobile. The government college students were given a free laptop and all the households are provided with a free TV sets as a part of the election manifesto of the government. Above all, all the college students in Tamil Nadu have mobile phone through which they communicate in English or tanglish (Tamil and English) frequently.

### **5.3. Structured Interview with Professors**

To analyze the researcher's idea of framing HOQ, a structured interview was conducted with professors who handled the students. The idea behind the interview was to understand the level of intelligence, critical thinking and creativity of the students. The interview served as a possible link between the professors' questioning perceptions (and their questioning practice) and the researcher's analyses towards questioning. The interviews were scrutinized and proved that high order thinking questions were effective for learning the second language. A sample of the structured interview is given in appendix.

The interview shows that students of higher English proficiencies were not ready to participate in HOQ. 90.5 percent respondents claimed that their students were nervous and afraid to answer higher order questions though they knew the answer. The data shows a clear trend - 75.4 percent of the students became increasingly comfortable answering challenging question in small groups and 96.4 percent of the respondents were more comfortable in writing on paper. The survey clearly shows that not only students' perceived abilities impact their participation in HOQ, but the classroom setting in which HOQ takes place also matters.

The respondents felt that higher order questioning in the classroom would lead to opening up an avenue to learn English and could establish a good rapport between teacher and students. This rapport has improved the confidence level of the respondents in terms of learning English in the classroom. The interviews with the respondents made it clear that they felt that higher order questioning was essential for a productive learning process. Higher order questioning had helped students to improve their thinking and creative skills. The respondents also stated that higher order questioning had a negative effect on slow learners or lower order questioning learners as they would feel inferior and their learning process would become stagnant. .

## **6.0.Findings and Discussion**

The current study focused on three research questions. The aim of the study was to understand the HOQ contexts in learning English in the English language classrooms in a semi-urban college. The research questions are analyzed in this section.

Teacher should direct more of her questions to groups of students which comprise a higher percentage of the classroom's total population. The teacher should have equal number of questions to engage all sets of students in the classroom so that not a single student would feel distracted mentally. The percentage using HOQ in the classroom not only shows how to identify the types of questions to be asked in the classroom but also shows that HOQ involves students perceptions and the teacher's decisions.

Teachers' questioning is influenced by their perceptions of students' abilities and some teachers differentiate their questioning depending upon these perceptions. While the HOQ are exploited in the class, the so-called 'incompetent students' performance would be overshadowed by the perceptions of the teacher. Teacher's perception of the good English speakers in the classroom would to their being tagged as 'bright'. The brightness could be conceptualized as 'cause and effect' pattern of the students. The brightness is the keyword whereas 'thinking' is the yardstick of learning and understanding the second language in a classroom. Students should be taught to think through reading, writing, speaking and listening. Teachers should engage all learners, but see to it that high level learners should not be dragged to the level of low level learners at the teacher's convenience. HOQ or LOQ should be distinguished by the teacher among her learners based on their learning styles, abilities and the difficulty of the content. Teacher should change her questioning patterns according to the heterogeneity of the classroom. Teacher should not differentiate questions according to the perceived cognitive levels of the learners.

Some of the students are comfortable with HO questions in general, as the classroom settings

make them answer the questions. Teacher plays an important role to make students think with new concepts and new information. Most of the students have trouble in articulating answers in English so they deter themselves in participating. Teachers should encourage students' autonomy and they should be allowed to do various kinds of tasks like judging the picture, comparing and contrasting pictures etc.. Five essential points are to be noted by teachers and they should instill them into students so as to equip them with higher order questions in the classroom for learning English as a second language. They are

- willingness to listen
- willingness to experiment learning
- willingness to ask questions
- willingness to think about how to learn the second language
- willingness to accept correction

## **7.0. Conclusion**

The term 'difficult' or 'challenging' would yield difficult results pertaining to the cognitive levels of students in different environments. The generalization of this result is limited. HOQ takes place in a certain context and the perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs of the participants impact the products (Carlsen, 1991). Teacher gets a positive impact in the class when she simply changes the questions according to the meta-language competence of the students. Teacher should make students participate in HOQ successfully by keeping a number of teaching factors in the classroom.

Media helps learners to develop English as Brinton (2001) supposed that multimedia tools serve as an important motivator in the language teaching process because "media materials can lend authenticity to the classroom situation, reinforcing for students the direct relation between the language classroom and the outside world" (p. 461).

Media is a powerful tool in learning English and it is an emerging tool in higher education. Every student is confident enough to access to media, as a result, he or she has good exposure to languages. Advertisements play a significant role through which students learn new words and their pronunciation easily.

Teacher can have an 'observing' graph of her students by posing questions in small group, one-on-one or in pairs. After making students to gain confidence and language proficiency, teacher can pose HOQ to the students. Teacher should provide and improve all the four skills in students and by asking higher level questioning; she can improve the thinking skills of the students.

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### **Appendix -1**

A questionnaire was distributed to the respondents to understanding their language learning ability and the perception of HOQ in the classroom

1. Students are afraid to speak in English
2. They are afraid of answering difficult questions though they know the answer
3. Speaking in English make them nerves.
4. They answer easy questions in English
5. They answer difficult questions in English when Insisted
6. They are comfortable while answering in small group.

ISSN 2277-7636



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