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This issue of the Journal is dedicated to Shri K. L. Zakir on the occasion of his birth centenary year. He was born on April 7, 1919 and died on August 31, 2016. Shri Kashmiri Lal Zakir by given name was famously known as K.L.Zakir for some and Zakir Saheb for many others. He was a multi-faceted person with bright colours as a writer, social activist, educationist and strong supporter of literacy and adult education programmes in the country.

Shri Zakir was born in a village called Qunjah, now in Pakistan. He had his school education in Ranbir Pratap Singh School, Jammu and graduation from Prince of Wales College, Jammu in Geology. Subsequently, he obtained Post-Graduate Degree in English Literature from Panjab University. In his professional career he served in the Education Department of Punjab and Haryana Governments until 1977. Thereafter, he became the Director of Regional Resource Centre for Adult and Continuing Education, Panjab University, Chandigarh and subsequently he served as the Director of Shramik Vidyapeeth (now known as Jan Shikshan Sansthan), Chandigarh. He was also Chairman of Jan Shikshan Sansthan, Chandigarh for 12 years. During his tenure the Jan Shikshan Sansthan received 'NLM-UNESCO Award' in 2007. He also served as the Secretary of Haryana Urdu Akademi for more than 20 years and left the Akademi in 2013 as the Deputy Chairman.

Right from his young age his inner urge was to become a writer which was kindled greatly by the influence of Nawab Jafar Ali Khan Asar, an eminent poet and critic of that time due to which his first story book 'Alag Alag Raste' was published in *Humayun*, Lahore in the year 1942. The literary journey of his life has taken many turns in which he joined the Progressive Writers' Movement which was inspired by Munshi Prem Chand's writings.

As a writer he has to his credit around 150 books which included novels, short-stories, plays, travelogues and anthologies. Some of his works are - *Karmanwali*, *Samandari Hawaon Ka Mausam*, *Agni Pariksha*, *Yeh Subha Zinda Rahegi*, *Samandar Ab Khamosh Hai*, *Angoothe Ka Nishan*, *Dharti Sada Suhagin*, *Doobte Suraj Ki Katha*, *Black Box*, *Iss Sadi Ka Akhri Grehan*, *Chinar Chinaar Chehre*, *Dard-E- Be Zabaan*, *Lal Chowk*, *Mere Hisse Ka Kashmir*, *Hubba Kadal Ke Be-nawa Prindey*, *Katha Damini Ki*, *Sheesha Badan Khawab* (an anthology of poems) and his classic novel *Karmanwali* was published in Urdu, Hindi, Punjabi and English. A number of his books also had been translated in regional and foreign languages. *Karmanwali* was also staged as a full-length play by the National School of Drama throughout India. His writings benefited a lot the field of literacy and adult education. He wrote a number of books for neo-literates like '*Chaar Meel Lambi Sarak*' in Punjabi, '*Nai Lehar*', '*Hum Se Hamara Bachpan Matt Chheeno*', '*Goldy and Kalia*' in Hindi and

'Teen Chehre Ek Sawal' in Urdu. As an acknowledgement to his rich contribution to Urdu literature, a number of Ph.D thesis have been produced in the universities including the University of Kashmir.

Shri Zakir received a number of awards, fellowships, distinctions for his rich contribution to literature and education. He had been honoured with 'Ghalib Award' (1986), 'Nuqoosh Award' from Pakistan (1990), 'Hindi-Urdu Sahitya Award' (1993), 'Rama Krishna Jaidyal Harmony Award' (1998), 'Vijay Rattan Award' (2005), 'Life Time Achievement Award' from Pakistan (2005), 'Shiromani Urdu Sahityakar Award' from the Government of Punjab (2006), 'Sahir Ludhianvi Award' (2007), 'Fakhar-E-Haryana Award' (2009), 'Vayoshreshtha Samman' by Government of India (2010). Awarded 'UNESCO Fellowship' (1968 & 1970), 'Nehru Literacy Award' by Indian Adult Education Association (1991), honoured by the Chandigarh Administration in recognition of his long and consistent contribution to literature (2004) and finally conferred '**Padma Shri**' by the Government of India in **2006**.

Shri Zakir was the Life Member of Indian Adult Education Association from May 1974 and served as a member of the Executive Committee, Associate Secretary and Member of the Editorial Boards of Indian Journal of Adult Education and Proudh Shiksha for few years.

The Indian Adult Education Association fondly remembers Shri K. L. Zakir on his birth centenary year and reminiscent his association with the organization with all pride and contribution to the field of literature and adult education.

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A Model of Citizenship Education for the Indian Sub-Continent

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Abstract

This paper deals with the importance and objectives of citizenship education and develops a model of citizenship education for the Indian sub-continent, with special reference to India and Bangladesh. In order to do the same, the paper researches on the status of citizenship education in UK and other European countries, experience of India in this sphere including its colonial days which involved Bangladesh, views and approaches of UNESCO and other domain experts. Against this backdrop, the paper seeks to address issues like (a) which is the appropriate forum for citizenship education: Schools or Learning Communities? (b) what should be the components of citizenship education we are envisaging? (c) can citizenship education be embedded in adult literacy programmes? (d) who could be the target learners and the educators of such blended programmes? and (e) is it possible for India and Bangladesh to jointly develop and implement such citizenship education programmes? The paper concludes with specific responses on each of the issues and consequent recommendations, the foremost of which is collaboration between India and Bangladesh in the fields of citizenship education and lifelong learning.

Keywords: Democracy, Human Rights, Neighbourhood, Political Literacy, Conservative, Progressive, Citizens, Trade Unions, NGOs, Adult Literacy, Lifelong Learning, Curriculum.

Citizenship Education in UK Schools

With the above objective in mind, since the year 2002 United Kingdom (UK) has incorporated citizenship as a statutory subject in the National Curriculum in the Government secondary schools although the same is treated as a non-statutory subject with a national framework in the primary schools. The main features of citizenship education as taught in British schools are as follows:

- a) Explore issues on democracy, justice, equality and the governance structures,

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- b) Learn to work in groups and create a solution framework for the challenges being faced by the immediate neighbourhood as well as the broader communities,
- c) Imbibe political literacy so as to contribute positively to the governance of the society by being informed and responsible citizens.

Status of Citizenship Education in Other European Countries

Let us now turn our attention to a few other countries of Europe to see how citizenship education is implemented in those countries.

Foremost among them could be France, where a new plan was introduced to reintegrate citizenship in the French educational system following Paris terror attack of January 2015. The Plan aims to reinforce the values of the Republic and promote community values and service and correspondingly equips the teachers with requisite training and authority for successful implementation. Citizenship is offered as a subject in the middle and high schools of Ireland while in Poland, it is part of the secondary school exit examination. In Norway, citizenship education is the primary mandate of social studies. On the other hand, Spain is reported to have removed the same from the school curriculum. Thus the subject of citizenship education and its treatment varies even within Europe. Prima facie, it appears that the subject receives more seriousness in the large multicultural and multiracial democracies like United Kingdom and France.

Experience of India

Citizenship education as is understood and discussed globally now was not part of the Indian traditional educational system till the arrival of the British as colonial masters of the sub-continent, which includes Bangladesh also. As a natural corollary of the colonial administration, the British educational system as practised in India aimed to create 'subjects' owing loyalty to the Empire rather than 'citizens' participating in the active governance of the country. Things started changing as India achieved independence from the British rule in 1947 and embarked on becoming a secular, socialist and democratic republic by ensuring universal adult suffrage. In course of time, universal adult suffrage has percolated down to the local self-government level of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI) even and not confined only to the levels of federal and provincial governments. However, citizenship education is confined mostly to some historical and contemporary facts of the structures of governance and some basic knowledge about the Indian Constitution in the middle school level.

Educationists' views on Citizenship Education in Schools

Educationists' views on the subject can be broadly classified into two categories. According to one set of experts, citizenship education in schools aims to develop

specific dispositions conducive to political participation and solidarity while the teachings should encompass a broader canvass by inculcating open-mindedness and critical outlook. Another set of experts believes that the schools are basically undemocratic institutions and hence could not be an appropriate forum for teaching of the subject unless they reform themselves and allow students to have greater say in the decision-making processes in the schools.

UNESCO on Citizenship Education

According to UNESCO, citizenship education is based on the distinction between

(a) the individual as a subject of ethics and law, entitled to all the inherent rights as a human being, i.e. human rights, and (b) the citizen's rights (civil and political) recognised by the national constitution of the country concerned. Any human being is both an individual and a citizen of the society he or she belongs to. In the process, human rights and citizen's rights become interdependent and complementary. UNESCO believes that all human beings are treated as equals and the same has been made possible due to exhilarating progress of human rights movements across the globe.

Citizenship education requires ethical and moral qualities from every citizen. Hence it aims at inculcating respect for others and recognition of equality of all human beings. The objective is to prevent all forms of discrimination, viz, class, caste, creed, religion, gender, etc. and promote tolerance, peace and democracy. Following the interdependence and complementariness between citizens' rights and human rights as indicated above, citizenship education refers to not only 'educating citizens', but also 'training children for adulthood and citizenship'. Accordingly, we can outline three main objectives of 'citizenship education' as spelt out below:

- a) Educating people in citizenship and human rights,
- b) Learning to exercise one's judgement and critical faculty, and
- c) Acquiring a sense of individual and community responsibilities.

The above objectives lead us to four sub-themes of 'citizenship education' which can be listed as follows:

- (i) Relation between individuals and the society
- (ii) Relation between citizens and the government
- (iii) Relation between the citizen and democratic life, and
- (iv) Responsibility of the individual and the citizen in the global community.

UNESCO believes that the world is getting increasingly globalised on all economic, environmental and cultural matters. Thus the challenge before citizenship education

is to provide each individual citizen across the world with an avenue to understand the issues of peace, democracy and human rights in such a globalised context. Sustainable development of human beings and the world is inextricably linked to the quality of education. Hence it is just appropriate for the contemporary world to incorporate citizenship education as an integral part of any teaching programme across all the formats, viz. formal, informal and non-formal.

Other Views on Citizenship Education

There are two broad approaches to the issue of citizenship education, viz. conservative and progressive. 'Conservative approach' argues for continuation of the existing socio-economic order as it perceives capitalism and democracy being perfect complements to each other. This approach emphasises on national loyalty and obedience to authority and conceives good citizens as good producers, good consumers and good patriots. This approach believes that citizen participation in the society is manifest best through exercise of franchise, thus leading to 'representative democracy' as the ultimate model.

'Progressive approach', on the other hand, aims at human emancipation through societal transformation and social justice. This approach diagnoses an inherent tension between capitalism and democracy. The reason is that capitalism gives rise to inequalities and exclusion, but democracy endeavours to reduce them. 'Progressive approach' mandates critical analysis, political engagement, cosmopolitanism and mutual respect. According to this approach, 'good citizens' have to be compassionate and concerned with social justice and must participate actively in public life towards that end, rather than just exercising franchise every few years. So the progressive approach focuses on complementariness and integration of participative and representative democracy.

Daniel Schugurensky and John P. Myers of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (University of Toronto) have delineated seven propositions which can serve as the cornerstones of citizenship education in the 21st century. The seven propositions are:

- (i) Passive to Active Citizenship
- (ii) National to Planetary Citizenship
- (iii) Not Just Cultural Diversity, but Intercultural Societies
- (iv) From Preparation for Public Domain to Inclusiveness
- (v) Not Fundamentalism but Peace-building
- (vi) From School-based Citizenship to Learning Communities
- (vii) From Formal to Substantive Democratic Citizenship

Model Citizenship Education for the Indian Sub-continent

In the previous paragraphs, we have tried to capture the status of citizenship

education in different countries in their schools, the views of UNO on the subject and the emerging approaches towards citizenship education for the 21st century. Keeping all these experiences in the backdrop, we shall formulate a proposal for citizenship education in India which may apply to Bangladesh also, being part of the sub-continent and sharing similar historical, social and cultural legacies. This proposal wants to address the following issues:

- a) Which is the appropriate forum for citizenship education: Schools or Learning Communities?
- b) What should be the components of citizenship education we are envisaging?
- c) Can citizenship education be embedded in adult literacy programmes?
- d) Who could be the target learners and the educators of such blended programmes?
- e) Is it possible for India and Bangladesh to jointly develop and implement such citizenship education programmes?

(a) Appropriate Forum for Citizenship Education

We have discussed in the paper earlier that many experts feel that schools are basically undemocratic institutions and not a suitable forum for citizenship education. Further in many countries school-level citizenship education seeks to inject specific dispositions for political participation at the cost of a broader critical outlook. So the schools need to reform themselves by facilitating more active democratic participation of the pupils and the teachers alike in the school affairs if they have to be considered as a proper forum for citizenship education in the 21st century. But more importantly, there is a genuine need to move away from exclusive focus on schools and expand the pedagogic space in the 21st century. We need to consider some out-of-school sites also for the purpose. These could be senior citizens' associations, neighbourhood clubs, sports academies, offices of political parties, trade unions, mass organisations, NGOs, etc. Inclusive learning communities for citizenship education may be set up in such out-of-school sites. These learning communities can network with the neighbourhood schools also by establishing horizontal and not hierarchical relationship.

(b) Components of Envisaged Citizenship Education

This citizenship education is developed and disseminated beyond the strict regimen of the school environment. So this has got to be more flexible and inclusive. The foremost objective of this education should be active citizenship revitalizing democratic public life every day. On the one hand, it should not be confined to national citizenship issues only, but should deal with the entire world including the issues of disarmament, peace, non-violence and harmony and promotion of multi-ethnic and intercultural societies to sustainability of the planet earth from the ecological perspective as well.

On the other hand, it should concern itself with the issues of day-to-day life of the surrounding communities which could be termed as sub-national. The issues can range from the most basic human right, i.e. right to livelihood and equity through creation of quality jobs and promotion of productive entrepreneurship to the 'mundane' issues of garbage disposal, clean pavements, sidewalks and dedicated cycle tracks alongside major roads, orderly movement of traffic and a host of such issues faced by the citizens in a developing country like India. These issues, I believe, can be of equal importance for Bangladesh as well. Thus this citizenship education has to weave a broad inclusive canvass spanning across planetary (global), national and sub-national issues. This citizenship education can really be considered as 'lifelong learning' as the two most important dimensions of 'lifelong learning' are 'learning for life' and 'learning throughout life'.

(c) Embedding Citizenship Education in Adult Literacy Programmes

We have just explained how our envisaged citizenship education falls into the domain of 'lifelong learning'. It is also amply clear that 'lifelong learning' in a meaningful sense remains outside the ambit of the adult illiterates and the neo-literates. Unfortunately, India accounts for roughly one-third of the world's illiterates, primarily because of its vast population. As of the year 2017, Bangladesh with a population of 165 million and an illiteracy rate of 27% also has a large chunk of illiterate population. In India there have been serious efforts to address the problem of adult illiteracy, the foremost among these being National Literacy Mission (NLM) launched in 1988. NLM succeeded in achieving the highest decadal increase in literacy rate (13%) as it moved from 52% to 65% between 1991 and 2001. However, currently the programme runs in a diluted and modified version, although there are many non-govt. agencies also running adult literacy programmes.

Primary and secondary survey on the quality of adult literacy programmes reveal that the traditional study material focussing on basic literacy through the knowledge of alphabet cannot create enough interest among the adult illiterates. In the process, many of them drop out from the programmes and they could be repeat drop-outs having dropped out from schools earlier. Based on the pedagogic approach of Paulo Freire, Cynthia Brown has described a methodology for imparting literacy skills in her book titled "Literacy in 30 hours". It is suggested that some sub-national base-level issues of citizenship education described in the previous paragraph can be culled out and be conveyed to the adult illiterates as part of adult literacy programme through pictorial presentation in 'reverse engineering' mode. It is felt that the learners of the adult literacy programmes will be in a good position to appreciate these issues concerning their surroundings and this is expected to make the programme lively and reduce drop-out rate.

(d) Target learners and the educators of blended programmes

We have explained the rationale of the blended programmes. The idea is to move away from the traditional alphabet-based format of the adult literacy programmes and make the programmes more down-to-earth by picking up issues from the daily lives of the target adult learners. As most of these adult learners belong to bottom-of-the-pyramid (BoP) in the society, I choose an issue from the Indian context (may be relevant for Bangladesh and other developing countries as well). We find encroachment of space on the pavements and sidewalks by the street vendors who belong to BoP and many adult learners come from such families. Here is a conflict between individual's right to livelihood (human rights) and the right of free access on the roads (citizen's right). Citizenship education becomes relevant here to resolve the conflict. In the process, I like to bring in educated senior citizens and homemakers as educators in such blended programmes. Both India and Bangladesh have vast human resources available in terms of 'educated senior citizens and homemakers' who can be roped in as 'volunteer educators' in such blended programmes. The advantage of such an arrangement is that these target volunteer educators will mostly belong to the better-off segments of the society and will be in a position to put forth the citizen's rights vs. human rights in the right perspective.

(e) Possibility of cooperation between India and Bangladesh

This brings us to the last leg of our proposed approach towards development and implementation of appropriate citizenship education in the Indian sub-continent. India and Bangladesh share similar historical, social and cultural legacies. Even in terms of socio-economic parameters like literacy rate, senior citizen population share, female labour participation rate, etc. there is striking congruence. Even within India, the state of West Bengal particularly has stronger similarities with Bangladesh as they share the same native language and consequently literary and musical traditions. This kind of comparability and compatibility makes a case for development and implementation of model citizenship education on the lines suggested above which could be suitable for both the countries. Contextually, it may be mentioned that India and Bangladesh are already cooperating considerably in the fields of trade, commerce, economy, industry, infrastructure and even culture. It is most appropriate that this cooperation is extended to the social sector as well including citizenship education.

Recommendations

The model of citizenship education suggested above leads to the following recommendations for actualising the same:

- (i) There could be collaboration between International Institute of Adult and Lifelong Education (New Delhi, India), Bangladesh Institute of Lifelong Learning, Dhaka and the Departments of Lifelong Learning/Adult Education

- of some select universities of India and Bangladesh to develop a curriculum of citizenship education for 'out-of-school' sites.
- (ii) Such a curriculum can be considered as part of lifelong learning and be offered to adult citizens.
 - (iii) In order to implement citizenship education on the ground, arrangements can be made with the govt. agencies dealing with citizens' issues and civic functions (viz. police and municipal authorities) for their sourcing of volunteers out of the qualified lifelong learners at (ii) above.
 - (iv) Such volunteers can be engaged in adult literacy programmes also as they incorporate citizenship issues as a gateway to adult literacy promotion.

This paper was presented by the author in the 'International Conference on Lifelong Learning in Developing Countries with special reference to Bangladesh' held in Dhaka on February 22 - 23, 2019

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Role of Academic Institutions in Extension Activities for Adult Literacy by Dipankar De

**Traditional Medicines and
Healing Practices in Khasi
Culture: Strategies for Lifelong
Learning for Traditional Healers**

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Abstract

Traditional medicine has been gradually forced underground in many societies due to pressure from allopathic system of medicine which brings quick relief to the patients. However traditional medicines have proven to be quite effective in treating certain chronic diseases, psychological disorders and psychosomatic illnesses. Many practitioners of traditional medicine have good knowledge of herbs and of their effects in healing organically based illness. Most of the traditional healers utilize a holistic approach which deals with a wide variety of problems on three levels: physical, emotional and spiritual. Holistic treatment emphasizes disease prevention and positive changes in lifestyle to ensure a balance among these three aspects of life. In light of the benefits of traditional medicine, India has adopted AYUSH system of medicine in which individuals can choose whether to visit traditional or Allopathic doctors. The same individual may choose one type of clinic for some diseases and another for other diseases. There is wide spread use and acceptance of herbal medicines through traditional healers in the capital city of Shillong. It is not known how many traditional healers are practicing in the city as they don't have any registration system. Very few have their own clinics and some sit in the markets without clinics. Traditional healers are important as they know the herbs which have medicinal properties. They also know the location where these plants or herbs are found in the forest. Some of them grow these herbs or plants in their own backyard or in the garden. It is more so important that they preserve these herbs from extinction and they have the knowledge of the plants which have become endangered because of the rapid depletion of forest and Jhum cultivation. With this background the investigator intends to bring to light the herbal plants which are used for traditional medicines in Khasi culture. The investigators for the purpose of the study adopted case study method for the traditional

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Healers and interview method for the patients coming to the clinic with a semi-structured interview schedule to document the plants and the diseases which are cured by these herbal medicines.

Keywords

Traditional medicines, Spiritual holistic treatment, AYUSH system of medicine, Herbal medicines.

Culture refers to the beliefs and practices people undertake daily, contributing to the way they view the world, and providing a point of reference for comprehending health, illness, life and death. It refers to the shared patterns of beliefs, feeling and behavior and the basic values and concepts that members of the group carry in their minds as guides for the conduct of behaviour. Culture is the way that life is viewed and lived. Culture is thus best conceptualized as a totality, composed of a complex system of symbols possessing subjective dimensions such as values, feelings, and ideals and objective dimensions including beliefs, traditions, and behavioral prescriptions, articulated into laws and rituals. Inherent in these beliefs and traditions are the information about health and livelihood, which has been passed on through generations. Utilization of traditional health and herbal medicines is reported to be common among 60 – 80% of the population of non – industrialized countries and around 40% of the population of industrialized countries (Syiem, et.al, 2006).

The impact of cultural factors on health has been investigated extensively. Currently, health is viewed as encompassing not only physical health but also the social, spiritual and emotional well being of an individual. Understanding the impact of culture on health has become necessary due to current globalization and advancement in technology. The world is becoming smaller; there is a move towards global efforts in alleviating health concerns; and the multidisciplinary approach to treatment of illness are some reasons that promote better comprehension of cultural aspects of health. Further, medical science is going beyond the foreign and alien explanations of health as health professionals are travelling to remote areas where culture plays an important role in way that people deal with ill- health. Health professionals are now faced with important decisions when treating patients from multi- cultural backgrounds. The competency of health services lies more in understanding the etiology of ill-health rather than on merely prescribing medication. This very important aspect of health has been the focus of medical and paramedical training programmes. As mentioned earlier etiology of ill- health has its roots in the cultural beliefs of a particular society. In mental health the emergence of Culture Bound Syndromes has given a new perspective to how illness can be specifically shared only within a certain community. Further, the emergence of allied medical sciences has further brought about the need to view a holistic treatment where cultural perceptions and cultural practices are important in understanding the health concerns of a society. The various aspect of culture can be discussed in terms of Cultural Beliefs, Cultural Perceptions and Cultural Practices.

Indigenous societies place an emphasis on the myths that are prevalent in various cultures. "Myth" usually refers to a story of forgotten or vague origin, basically religious or supernatural in nature, which seeks to explain or rationalize one or more aspects of the world or a society. The study of myth must not and cannot be separated from the study of religion, religious beliefs, or religious rituals. Cultural Belief is a conviction of the truth of a proposition without its verification; therefore, a belief is a subjective mental interpretation derived from perception, contemplation (reasoning), or communication. Belief is always associated with a denial of reality. The belief that mental illness is incurable or self-inflicted can also be damaging, leading to patients not being referred for appropriate mental health care. Myths and misconceptions about mental illness contribute to the emergence of stigma. Stigma is something about a person that causes her or him to have a deeply compromised social standing, a mark of shame or discredit (Kishore, et. al. 2011). Most illnesses in traditional societies are denied or misunderstood due to the stigma one attaches to the illness. Janardhana, et.al (2003) cites social effects of stigma which refers to how the patients are subjected to a variety of social restrictions due to the disease. Epileptic patients reported feeling of rejection and withdrawn social relations due to restrictions imposed by others due to illness.

1.1: Need and Justification of the study

The knowledge of medical value of plants in Indian culture can be traced back to the time of earliest settlers. The process of exchange and assimilation continues in every culture, and today there is growing awareness among the scientific community and the general public about the intrinsic value of traditional medicines. The challenge today is to integrate the best of the different healing traditions to meet the health-care needs.

And therefore the need of the study to document the traditional medicines used in Khasi culture for the scientists to experiment and come out with the value of these plants for treatment of different diseases. The impact of cultural factors on health has not been investigated extensively. Currently, health is viewed as encompassing not only physical health but also the social, spiritual and emotional well-being of a person. Understanding the impact of culture on health has become necessary due to current globalization and advancement in technology.

1.2: Objectives

1. To document the herbs which are used for traditional medicines in Khasi culture.
2. To find out which ailments and diseases are cured by these herbs.
3. To explore the prevailing attitude of the people for these traditional medicines.
4. To find the opinion of the traditional healers for use of the herbs for treatment of different ailments/ diseases.

1.3: Research questions

1. What are the traditional healing systems prevalent in Khasi culture?
2. Is there any scientific basis for this type of traditional healing system?
3. What are the traditional herbs which are widely used for traditional healing?
4. What is the success rate for such type of healing?
5. Which are the ailments/ diseases these type of treatment are effective?
6. How many people rely upon this type of healing system?

1.4: Research methodology

The study was a micro level study based on field survey method for collecting information's from traditional healers from Shillong city and also from the people those who avail the services of traditional healers. Field survey method was adopted as it is best suitable for studying practices and beliefs.

Universe

The universe of the study comprises of all the traditional healers practicing the traditional medicines in Shillong City and the people who are availing these services.

Sample

Five traditional healers and twenty patients visiting traditional healers on any particular day constitute the sample of the study. For the purpose of the study purposive sampling procedure for traditional healers and simple random sampling procedure for the patients was adopted.

Tools Used

For collection of data, face to face interview method for the traditional healers and interview method for the patient's was adopted by the investigators.

1.5: Analysis and interpretation of data

Section A:

The various treatment method followed with the plants are depicted below along with their local name, common name and botanical name.

Table - 1: Plants used by the traditional healers for treatment

LOCAL NAME	COMMON NAME	BOTANICAL NAME	USES
Gathymmai	Fire weed	Grassocphalum-crepidioides	Leaf paste is applied on cuts and wounds
Jiew Lyngskaw	Golden Arch Orchid	Dendrobiumchrysanthum	Stem paste is mixed with little water and applied externally on injuries and after setting a fractured bone.
Kynbatbudam	Button Orchid	Dischidianummularia	Leaf pastes are applied on wounds , injuries and bone fractures.
Kynbatthalap	Potato weed	Drymarca cordata	Whole plant paste is applied in case of leprosy and in snakebite.
Diensong	Flame tree	Erythrinaarborescens	Smoke from burnt stem pieces gave relief from toothache.
Sophlang	Tuberous root	Flemingcaprocumbens	Tuber skin is taken for de-worming.
Lathynrait	Fragrant Wintergreen	Gaultheria-Fragrantissima	Leaf juice is massaged over the body of persons suffering from rheumatism and paralysis.
Baltmeing	Nepal geranium	Geranium nepalense	Leafs are chewed for relieve from toothache and bleeding gums.
Bat iong	Lawn daisy	Hedyotis uncinella	Leaf paste is applied for insect bite/ stings. It is also applied for skin diseases.
Gamyrdoh	Bishop's weed	Houttuynia cordata	Leaf paste is used for cholera, dysentery, curing of blood, deficiency and purification of blood.
Gyllang	Garlic Chives	Allium tuberosum	Leaf decoction is given in urinary problems as diuretic
Ryniaw	Sweet Flag	Acorus calamus	Leaf decoction is taken daily in cases of paralysis. Decoction of underground plant part is fomented on the body of paralytic patient.
Kynbat myngai	White weed	Ageratum Conyzoides	Leaf paste is applied on cuts and wounds.
Kwai	Acreca nut	Areca catechu	Nut chewed with lime is applied on cuts.
Gajew Jybwang	East Himalayan Begonia	Begonia roxburghii	Leaf decoction is used for bathing a person with measles for quick relief. Rootstock is taken in bile dysentery.
Gahy mwet	Self-heal	BrunellaVulgaris	Tender leaf paste is applied on cuts and wounds for quick healing
Khliangsyiar	Asian Coinleaf	Cantella Asiatica	Leaves are taken to cure blood deficiency and helps in purification of blood.
Jyrkhanglieh	White ferns	Cheilanthes Albomarginata	Ground frond is applied over boils
Garem	Bleeding heart	Clerodendrum	Leaf decoction is taken against high –blood pressure malaria and liver ailments.
Sohriew	Adlay millet	Coixlacyrma-gobi	Leaf is taken in diarrhoea dysentery, fever, small pox and as tonic

Section B:

The data below is analyzed and interpreted according to the opinion of the patients who visited the traditional healers for treatment of different ailments or diseases.

Table - 2: Availing/Practicing of Alternate Medicine System (Multiple responses)

SI No.	Belief/Availing Of Alternate Medicine System	Yes	No
1	Availing alternative health – treatment along with allopathic medical care	20 (100%)	Nil (0%)
2	Practicing Yoga	13 (65%)	7 (35%)
3	Practicing Body Massage	12 (60%)	8 (40%)
4	Going for acupuncture	7 (35%)	13 (65%)
5	Practicing meditation	15 (75%)	5 (25%)
6	Using herbal medicines	20 (100%)	Nil (0%)
7	Practicing aromatherapy	2 (10%)	18(90%)
8	Avail homeopathic treatment	17 (85%)	3 (15%)

The data was collected from 20 patients who visited the traditional healers. It was observed from the data that 100% of the respondents availed alternative health treatment along with allopathic medical care, 65% of the respondents practiced yoga, 60% of the respondents go for body massage and 35% of the respondents go for acupuncture. On the other hand 75% of the respondents go for meditation and 100% of the respondents use herbal medicines. Aromatherapy was practiced by only 10% of the respondents and 85 % of them availed homeopathic treatment.

Table-3: Benefits of Meditation

SI No.	Benefits of Meditation	Yes	No
1	Relaxing the body	4 (26.67%)	11 (73.33%)
2	Relaxing the mind	7 (46.67%)	8 (53.33%)
3	Both (i) and (ii)	4 (26.67%)	11 (73.33%)
4	None of the above	Nil (0%)	Nil (0%)

From the data given above it can be observed that out of 15 respondents, 26.67% of the respondents believed that meditation helps in relaxing the body, 46.67% of the respondents believe that meditation helps in relaxing the body whereas 26.67% of the respondents believe that meditation helps to relax the body and mind.

Table-4: Diseases/ailments treated by the traditional healers

SL No.	Diseases/ailments treated by the traditional healers	Percentage
1	Rheumatism	12 (60%)
2	Cancer	3 (15%)
3	Orthopaedic problems	16 (80%)
4	Arthritis	12 (60%)
5	Burns	17 (85%)
6	Diabetes	12 (60%)
7	Paralysis	7 (35%)
8	Fractures	18 (90%)
9	Stroke	3 (15%)
10	Asthma	9 (45%)
11	Kidney stone	12 (60%)
12	Coughs	18 (90%)
13	Low and high blood pressures	11 (55%)
14	Hepatitis	12 (60%)
15	Hyper acidity	17 (85%)
16	Acne	10 (50%)
17	Conjunctivitis	11 (55%)
18	Chronic Bronchitis	17 (85%)
19	Lung congestion	6 (30%)

A question was asked regarding the diseases that are cured through traditional healing using herbal medicines. It was found from the opinion of the respondents that mostly the patients avail traditional healing methods for fractures (90%), cough (90%) followed by chronic bronchitis (85%), hyperacidity (85%), burns (85%), orthopedic problems (80%), rheumatism (60%), arthritis (60%), diabetes (60%), kidney stone (60%), hepatitis (60%), conjunctivitis (55%), low and high blood pressure (55%), acne (50%), asthma (45%), paralysis (35%), lung congestion (30%), stroke (15%) and cancer (15%).

Table - 5: No of times visited the traditional Healers in last one year

SL No.	No of times visited the traditional Healers in last one year	N	Percentage
1	One time	6	30%
2	Two times	5	25%
3	Three times	7	35%
4	More than four times	2	10%

The given table reflects the number of times the respondents visited a traditional healer. It was found that 30% of the respondents visited the traditional healer once in a year, 25% visited two times in a year, 35% of the respondents visited the traditional

healer three times in last one year and the rest (10 %) of the respondents visited the traditional healer for more than three times in a year.

1.6: Major Findings

The Indigenous traditional healers living in Meghalaya have knowledge about the medicinal plants which are found in forests. They are known in their own local names. They are important for the people as they know the medicinal value of the plants. These traditional knowledge needs to be conserved for sustainable use through accurate information, and experimentation. The cultural significance need immediate scientific investigation in terms of Ayurveda as practiced in India. However due to rapid deforestation and climatic change, many of the medicinal plants are in the verge of extinction. There is no scientific system of collection or regeneration as a result of which many of these plants have become endangered. The demand in the local market for these medicinal plants has increased causing a threat to these wild species. An effective way of giving protection to this biodiversity and ethno-medicinal plants is to provide a legal cover to the habitat or the species to enable enforcement agencies to have authority to control/regulate their enactment.

1. From the data collected it was found that 80% of the respondent had knowledge about acupuncture.
2. More than 60% of the patients afflicted with fracture, cough, chronic bronchitis, hyperacidity, burns, orthopedic problem, rheumatism, arthritis, kidney stone and hepatitis visit the traditional healer for traditional healing.
3. It was found out from the data that more than 60% of the patients visited the traditional healers for more than three times in last one year.
4. It was found from the data that majority of the people (more than 60%) those who believe in herbal health care also practice yoga, meditation, body massage and avail homeopathic treatment. However all the people/respondents go for allopathic treatment along with other system of health care.
5. Only 46.67% of the respondents believe that meditation relaxes the mind and 26.67% respondents believe that it is useful for relaxing both the body and the mind.

1.7: Discussion of the results

The study focused on the traditional herbs used for the treatment of different diseases and ailments by the traditional healers. It was found from secondary source that there are nearly 120 herbal medicinal plants in Khasi Hills. It was also observed that people in East Khasi Hills besides availing allopathic treatment, avail traditional healing treatment with the help of traditional healers. The traditional healers prepare the medicines from the herbs which are either grown by them in their own garden or collected from the forests or acquired through other healers. There are number of diseases which can be cured by the usage of these herbs. The different parts of the

plants are used to prepare these medicines like the roots, stems and leaves.. Though curing diseases with traditional methods by using the traditional herbs may involve a long process but subsequently these medicines diminish the root of the disease which in turn keeps a person away from a disease for a much longer time. But most of the medicinal plants are in the verge of extinction because of environmental degradation, shifting cultivation, burning of forests, exploitation of forests, sand and coal mining and other developmental activities. Mostly, the traditional healers pass on their knowledge from one generation to another through oral means. The treatment success rate as claimed by them is above 70 % for the treatment of various chronic diseases. Just that they require is patience and regularity from the patient for the treatment of the disease.

Conclusion

As India undergoes health care reform, it's important to consider what "Universal Access" means for a country which is undergoing significant demographic changes. It is well known that there are considerable health care disparities in India between the rich and the poor along with regional disparities. Majority of population in India, in particular, the people living in hilly and mountain areas including villages continue to lag behind in number of areas in our health care system. These include quality of health care, access to health care, timeliness of treatment, and outcomes of treatment. In Indian system of medicine, AYUSH is widely followed in the health care system. People are widely dependent upon these systems of medicines for treatment of minor ailments and diseases. There is also shortage of doctors and doctors are just not willing to work in rural areas.

The knowledge of medical value of plants in Indian culture can be traced back to the time of earliest settlers. The vast amount of knowledge that has come down from generation to generation from diversity of communities and regions through trial and error has given rise to Ayurveda, Unani and Siddha. The process of exchange and assimilation continues in every culture, and today there is growing awareness among the scientific community and the general public about the intrinsic value of traditional medicines. The challenge today is to integrate the best of the different healing traditions to meet the health care needs of the contemporary society. And therefore the need of the study to document the traditional medicines used in Khasi culture for the scientists to experiment and come out with the value of these plants for treatment of different diseases.

The problems related to traditional healers are manifold. They lack proper education to prepare the medication for treating the patients. It may be mentioned that they are guided by the cultural practices and rely on the knowledge transmitted from one generation to another. However the treatment of the patients goes sometimes concurrently with the allopathic treatment. Exclusive treatment also does occur and if the patients are cured by the medication provided by the healer, it should be

recorded in the record of the traditional healer. Further labeling of the contents of the medicines prescribed should be clearly mentioned in the pattern of Ayurvedic Medications before providing it to the patients. As there is no registration of these traditional healers, some mechanisms should be available in this regard and steps should be initiated by the state government. Otherwise spurious people may enter into the area of traditional healing as it has happened in other parts of the country and they are commonly known as Quacks. Further, in collaboration with the research institutions, the medicines can be patented to provide confidence to the people.

The study is a micro level study and confined to only to traditional healers and patients who visit the traditional healers. The medicinal plants which are available in Khasi and Jaintia Hills along with the disease(s) it cures are well documented. The findings regarding its usage by the traditional healers cannot be generalized as and it requires a scientific approach. Further their usages for the patients have not been patented. There is problem in the scientific validity as the traditional knowledge that is passed on from one generation to the others through oral means. It can only be said that the medications provided by these healers are safe as it doesn't have any side effects. Finally the findings of the study cannot be generalized on whole population of different Hill District's of Meghalaya.

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**SDG India Index: Baseline Report
2018 - Leaving Adult Education
from the Agenda**

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“I should like to state to this General Assembly, on behalf of my people and my Government, that we adhere completely and absolutely to the principles and purpose of the United Nations Charter and that we shall try, to the best of our ability, to work for the realization of those principles and purposes.”

- Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru

Abstract

Progress is and will remain the buzzword for the academicians and policy planners, whether engaged at local or global level as they need to chalk-out a holistic course of development for their targeted populace while ensuring no harm is caused to the biodiversity. In general, development requires vision, planning, approach, policy and programme and essential instruments for the execution of the same. Development, unlike growth, needs to be anchored by academicians, intellectuals, leaders and concerned authorities so that discrimination of all sorts, either willfully created or unnoticed for long and became a way of life for certain sections of the human society is mitigated within stipulated timeframe and a dignified living to every individual is ensured. Today the global population is about 7.2 billion and the United Nations being a collective formation of all the nations owes the responsibility towards them. Hence, UN periodically comes forward with different programmes which are unanimously accepted by the member countries for implementation. In this regard the one which is now being implemented is Sustainable Development Goals 2030 to end poverty, achieve food security, promote well being, equitable quality education and lifelong learning, gender equality and strengthen global partnership. This paper analyses two recently published interim reports of India regarding the achievements made and traces the unmet target so far.

Keywords: Poverty, Food security, Quality education, Lifelong Learning, Gender equality, Global partnership.

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In his address delivered in the third session of the General Assembly in Paris on November 3, 1948, India's first Prime Minister Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru proclaimed the adherence of India, completely and absolutely, to the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter and its commitment to work for the realization of those principles and purposes. True to what he promised in the General Assembly of United Nations in 1948 at Paris, India has always supported firmly the purposes and principles of the UN and has made significant contributions in implementing the goals of the UN Charter both in and outside the country. It has also played an important role in shaping the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which has a reflection of India's own development agenda being enshrined in the expression "Sabka Saath Sabka Vikas," which translates as "Collective Effort, Inclusive Growth". Representing nearly 17.49 percent of the world's population, India has accorded top priority to both rounds of development initiatives be it MDG 2015 or SDG 2030. This paper attempts to understand the unfinished agenda of MDGs implementation in the country which sets the national milieu for SDG implementation, to trace India's overall preparedness towards implementing SDGs, the role of legislation, NITI Aayog and State governments. It also seeks to study and analyze the SDGs National Indicator Framework Baseline Report, 2015-16 and SDG India Index: Baseline Report 2018 and its bearing upon the overall agenda of adult and lifelong education in the country.

Perspective

The "SDG India Index: Baseline Report 2018" was released on December 14, 2018 by NITI Aayog, Government of India which highlights the performance of India as a nation and its states with respect to 13 out of total 17 select SDG targets based on 62 indicators identified by the agency for which it has gathered sufficient data from the States as well as Centre in collaboration with the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI). Sustainable Goals 2030, the second spell of development initiatives under the guidance and monitoring of the United Nations is based on a series of continuous and comprehensive deliberations on crucial agenda of environmental sustainability and global progress held through global conferences such as the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development; United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) and the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (Addis Ababa). SDG 2030 shows the affirmation of world nations on their political commitment to address the challenges of financing and creating an enabling environment at all levels for sustainable development in the spirit of global partnership and solidarity. It came into force on January 1, 2016 and has the deadline of 2030 for their completion.

Revolving around five 'areas of critical importance'; sometimes known as the 5 'P's i.e. people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership SDG 2030 is a collective commitment to end poverty in all its forms everywhere; end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture; ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages; ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all; achieve gender equality

and empower all women and girls; ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all; ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all; promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all; build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation; reduce inequality within and among countries; make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable, ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns; take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts; conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development; protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss; promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels and to strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets demonstrate the scale and ambition of a new universal Agenda which seek to realize the human rights of all and to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls. These targets are integrated and indivisible and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development: the economic, social and environmental. The SDGs are both broader in scope, more collective in action, and more detailed in content, including a clear message that every nation must act if success is to be realized. Build upon the success and momentum of the MDGs it goes much beyond the scope and reach of MDGs and promises to address the root causes of poverty and the universal need for development that works for all people. These new global goals cover more ground, with ambitions to address inequalities, economic growth, decent jobs, cities and human settlements, industrialization, oceans, ecosystems, energy, climate change, sustainable consumption and production, peace and justice and have universal applicability.

The Unfinished Agenda of MDG that forms the working backdrop for SDG Implementation

Being a founding member of the United Nations, India has always worked in tandem with the principals and policies adopted by the UN. The country made an all out effort to realize the commitments of MDG, the first spell of global development initiative by the UN, which helped it to register notable success on many counts till 2015. As the unfinished agenda of MDG provides the working background for the implementation of SDG it become essential to underline the achievements, failures, learning experiences and drawbacks of MDG before moving towards analyzing the state of implementation of SDG in India. The UNDP India rated country's performance against 12 indicators covering all the 8 major goals of MDGs on a three point scale - slow, moderate and on-time. India's performance was rated as "On-time" for Goal No. 1(1), 3, 6(1) and 8. On Goal No. 2, 4, 6 and 7(1,2) its performance was evaluated

as “Moderate” while for the remaining goals i.e. 1(2), 5, 6(2) and 7(2) India’s performance was considered to be “slow”.

India’s Progress towards Achieving the Millennium Development Goals
[Key: Slow, Moderate, On-Track]

GOAL-1: ERADICATE EXTREME POVERTY AND HUNGER	
1. Halve, between 1990 and 2015, proportion of population below national poverty line	On-Track
2. Halve, between 1990 and 2015, proportion of People who suffer from hunger	Slow
GOAL-2: ACHIEVE UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION	
3. Ensure that by 2015 children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary education	Moderate
GOAL-3: PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWER WOMEN	
4. Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015.	On-Track
GOAL-4: REDUCE CHILD MORTALITY	
5. Reduce by two thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under five mortality rate	Moderate
GOAL-5: IMPROVE MATERNAL HEALTH	
6. Reduce by three quarters, between 1990 and 2015 the maternal mortality rate	Slow
GOAL-6: COMBAT HIV/AIDS, MALARIA AND OTHER DISEASES	
7. Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS	On-Track
8. Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incident of malaria and other major diseases	Slow
GOAL-7: ENSURE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY	
9. Integrate the principle of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources	Moderate
10. Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation	Slow
11. By 2020, to have achieved, a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers	Moderate
GOAL-8: DEVELOP A GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR DEVELOPMENT	
12. In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communication	On-Track

Source: UNDP INDIA

Although India has made notable progress towards reaching the MDGs, its achievement across the eight goals varies state to state, region to region and even at the national level. A candid look into the post MDG implementation phase reveals that as a nation India still needs to traverse a long path to realize the goal of an egalitarian, empowered and just society. The last poverty estimates was carried out way back in the year 2011-12 and was based on Tendulkar poverty line. According to this estimate nearly 25.4 percent of India’s rural population and 13.7 percent of urban population was living below poverty line while the overall percentage of people living below poverty line was 21.9 percent only. The corresponding poverty levels as per the estimates being carried out in 2004-05 was 41.8 percent, 25.7 percent and 37.7 percent. This way, India could reduce its poverty level by nearly half (Goal-1) during the MDG implementation phase.

Head Count Poverty Rate (%)			
Year	Rural	Urban	Overall
2004-05	41.8	25.7	37.7
2011-12	25.4	13.7	21.7

Based on Tendulkar Poverty Line

Gender Parity Index (GPI) is a socio-economic index usually designed to measure the relative access to education of males and females. It also serves as a significant indicator of the gender equality and women empowerment. The GPI for all the students at Primary level in the year 2000-01 was 0.82 which the country was successfully able to narrow down up to 1.03 in the year 2014-15. Hence, the target of achieving gender parity in primary school enrolment (Goal 3) was realized by India within the stipulated timeframe. It may be noted here that a GPI value between 0.97 and 1.03 signifies that there is no difference between girls and boys for a given indicator. A GPI of less than 0.97 indicates gender disparity in favour of boys, while the opposite is true for values exceeding 1.03. This change in the GPI was visible across the societies. The GPI for SC students at Primary level in the year 2000-01 was 0.80 which reached to 1.02 in the year 2014-15, at Upper Primary level was 0.70 in 2000-01 which reached to 1.09 in the year 2014-15 and for the entire Elementary section it was 0.78 in the year 2000-01 which witnessed a very welcoming change and reached to 1.04 in the year 2014-15. Similarly, for ST students the GPI at Primary level in the year 2000-01 was 0.73 which reached to 0.98 in the year 2014-15, at Upper Primary level it was 0.66 in 2000-01 which reached to 1.02 in 2014-15 and the same for the overall Elementary segment was 0.70 in 2000-01 which reached to 0.99 in the year 2014-15.

Level	All		SC		ST	
	2000-01	2014-15	2000-01	2014-15	2000-01	2014-15
Primary (I-V)	0.82	1.03	0.80	1.02	0.73	0.98
Upper Primary(VI-VIII)	0.75	1.09	0.70	1.09	0.66	1.02
Elementary(I-VIII)	0.80	1.05	0.78	1.04	0.70	0.99

India also achieved gender parity in secondary school enrolment (Goal 3) by the year 2015 as well. India's GPI for secondary education for all the students in 2005-06 was 0.80 and for SC and ST students it was 0.74 and 0.69 respectively. Specific interventions like Mahila Samakhya, Mahila Shikshan Kendra, Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya categorically sorted out the problems faced by the girl students in furtherance of their education post elementary level which decisively helped in curbing the dropout of girl students. This resulted into the increase in the number of girl students perusing secondary education and completing it successfully. Consequently India reached the GPI of 1.01 for all the students at secondary level and a GPI of 1.06 and 0.99 for SC and ST students respectively by the year 2015.

Level	All		SC		ST	
	2005-06	2014-15	2005-06	2014-15	2005-06	2014-15
Secondary (IX-X)	0.80	1.01	0.74	1.03	0.74	1.01
Senior Secondary (XI-XII)	0.80	0.99	0.75	1.03	0.61	0.95
(IX-XII)	0.80	1.01	0.74	1.06	0.69	0.99

In 1990, when the MDGs were formulated, 53.5 percent of all Indian children were malnourished. Efforts were made to curb the menace as a result the proportion of underweight children below three years could decline marginally between 1998-99 and 2005-06 to 46 percent. In 2015, malnourishment further declined to 40 percent. This although helped India to achieve the set target of reducing hunger by half (Goal 1) however it was still below the target of reducing malnourishment to 26 percent.

From a Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) of 556 per 100,000 live births in 1990-91, India was required to reduce MMR to 139 per 100,000 live births by 2015. Between 1990 and 2006, it improved its Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR), which got declined to 167 per 100,000 live births in 2009 and further inclined to 130 per 100,000 live births by 2016 and this way India could achieve the Goal 5 of MDG of reducing maternal mortality by three quarters of MDG almost by the end of 2016.

Goal 6 of MDG vouched for controlling the spread of deadly diseases such as HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis. As the targets for this goal was based on trend reversal and not on base year value, it can be said that India could successfully mend its way towards achieving this goal, since HIV, malaria and tuberculosis prevalence was started declining rapidly. India could also make significant strides in reducing the prevalence of HIV and AIDS across different types of high risk categories. The Adult prevalence of HIV/AIDS came down from 0.45 percent in 2002 to 0.36 in 2009. Malaria consistently came down from 2.12 per thousand in 2001 to 0.72 per thousand in 2013 while tuberculosis prevalence per lakh population reduced from 465 in year 1990 to 211 in 2013.

To increase the forest cover was one of the very important aspects of achieving the 7th goal of MDG which talks about ensuring environmental sustainability. India could made a headway progress in this regard as the total forest cover reached to nearly 701673 sq.kms i.e. 21.34 percent of its total geographical area in 2015 which was only 653898 sq.kms in 2001. India was also on-track for achieving the MDG target for sustainable access to safe drinking water. The overall proportion of households having access to improved water sources increased from 68.2 percent in 1992-93 to 90.6 percent in 2011-12. So far as universal primary school enrolment is concerned India's achievement was considerable which got a place in the EFA 2015 report which announced that by 2015 India was close to achieve it by reducing its "out of school" children over 90 percent.

However, this reflects upon only one side of the picture. The other picture says that India was still lagging behind on targets such as achieving universal youth literacy by 2015 (Goal 2); empowering women through wage employment and political participation (Goal 3); reducing child and infant mortality (Goal 4); and improving access to adequate sanitation to eliminate open defecation (Goal 7). To finish this

unfinished agenda of MDG implementation which have definitely been accommodated in the new set of development targets of SDG forms the very backdrop of SDG implementation in India.

Foreseeing the way SDGs need to be implemented

The world has learnt a lot of lessons from the implementation of MDGs for 15 years. It has been realized that evaluation and accountability, the two major components of programme implementation were largely missing from the strategy adopted for the implementation of MDGs and hence, both of these dimensions have been now made an integral part of the implementation of SDGs. Apart from these procedural elaborations a lot of focus has also been given to include and ensure active participation of major stakeholders like the parliament, NGOs and other grassroots level organizations and institutions in the strategy to be adopted for SDG implementation. While elaborating the way SDGs need to be implemented, the UN has reiterated that “every nation must act if success is to be realized” and acknowledged the essential role of national parliaments through their enactment of legislation and adoption of budgets and their role in ensuring accountability for the effective implementation of this global commitments. While adopting “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” the UN has also desired that Governments and public institutions across the world should work closely on implementation with regional and local authorities, sub-regional institutions, international institutions, academia, philanthropic organizations, volunteer groups and others. In its publication entitled “Implementing the SDGs in an Inclusive, Comprehensive and Integrated Manner so as to achieve Sustainable Development and enhance the Rule of Law” by Rob Wheeler the Institute for Planetary Synthesis, Global Ecovillage Network and Commons Action for the United Nations has further stated that “There would probably be no better way to ensure the SDGs will be developed and implemented, particularly at the national and sub-national level, in a coherent and integrated manner.” To conclude the UN seeks a pivotal role to be played by the nation states towards the implementation of SDG goals. The Parliament of India was already playing a pro-active role in this regard and consequently the process of implementation of SDG here started with the policy interventions of the parliament.

Parliamentary Preparedness towards SDG Implementation

The Parliament of India being the prime mover in setting the development priorities of the nation started the process of understanding SDGs much before they were formally adopted in September 2015. On August 5 and 12, 2015 there held a discussion on Sustainable Development Goals in Lok Sabha (Lower House of Parliament) in which a few members like Dr. Kulmani Samal, Mr. M.B. Rajesh, Mr. Tej Pratap Singh Yadav, Mr. Jayadev Galla and Mr. Abhijit Mukherjee expressed their opinion over the impact of demographic factors, unequal distribution of land and other assets, decline

of village industries, immobility of labour, lack of employment opportunities, lack of quality education, practice of caste system, social customs, etc. on the realization of SDG. Members of Parliament (MPs) were of the view that public investment in social sectors need to be enhanced in a massive manner, particularly in the sectors like health and education, which are crucial for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Further more on 23rd July 2015, Hon'ble Prime Minister launched Speaker's Research Initiative (SRI) which was followed by a workshop in which it was pointed out that despite remarkable achievements MDGs remained an unfinished agenda for India as, around 260 million Indians are still remained tapped in extreme poverty, India is home to over a third of the world's underweight children and around 6 million (2.97%) children remain out of school. Participants underlined the need of building a national consensus to pursue SDGs to provide a life of dignity to its entire population. Subsequently, a series of workshops have been organized as part of the SRI work programme to sensitize the parliamentarians on various aspects of the agenda of the SDGs so that they are able to play the role of development agents and bring development to their constituencies. It was also put forth that besides the Government, the MPs, the civil society, research institutions and corporate sector can play major role in achieving SDGs and hence all such stakeholders should be well enlightened and efforts should be made to ensure their adequate participate in this regard.

A National Conference of Women Legislators was organized in New Delhi on March 5-6, 2016 with the theme 'Women Legislators: Building Resurgent India'. The aim of the conference was to discuss developmental issues and explore the areas where the women legislators can act as catalyst of socio-economic development. Discussions have also been held in Lok Sabha on ways and means for implementing the agenda of SDGs. In order to connect SDGs at its global deliberations such as BRICS Women Parliamentarian Forum the theme coined was "Women Parliamentarians-Enablers for Achieving SDGs" at Jaipur. Thereafter, India also hosted the South Asian Speaker' Summit on Sustainable Development Goals at Indore in collaboration with Inter- Parliamentary Union (IPU).

On 2nd August 2016 SRI organized another workshop on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which was participated by MPs from across the country and discussed thoroughly how the global success of SDG implementation depends upon the extent to which India achieves it. Emphasizing upon the inter-connectedness of the world today it was observed that unlike MDGs which were mostly of quantitative nature, the SDGs have been framed by focusing on both the qualitative and quantitative approach as well and are guided by global level of ambition where national circumstances must be taken into account.

One more workshop was organized by SRI on the theme "Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Poverty Alleviation through Skill Development and

Employment Generation” in the Parliament Complex on 7th December 2016. The workshop focused on Goals 1, 4 and 8 of SDG relating to poverty alleviation through skill development, and employment generation and quality education. It was pointed out that skilling must result in poverty eradication and education must generate a quality outcome so that on the employment front people have a marketable talent. It was also highlighted that skill development initiative should spread to different parts of the country to provide the rural people with good employment opportunities. These workshops have proved to be beneficial to the MPs by providing a platform to interact with the domain experts on the various facets of the SDGs.

A workshop on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) pertaining to Health Sector under the auspices of Speaker’s Research Initiative (SRI) was also organised on 28th March, 2017 in the BPST Main Lecture Hall, Parliament Library Building. This was 4th in the series of workshops on SDGs encompassing various goals and targets. Participants there discussed in details the significance of Sustainable Development Goal for Health and its implications for India, National SDG Framework for Health, Key recent approaches towards SDG3, Progress and updates in roll out of SDG-3 agenda, Key Interventions, National Health Policy-2017 and the opportunities, Way Forward to “Swasth Bharat Sashakt Bharat”, Access to Universal Health Care, India’s performance in Health Sector, Need for Inter-sectoral Coordination at Core of SDG, Impact of Non Convergence of issues relating to potable water, sanitation, nutrition and education, Inter-State Disparities in health indicators, Importance of primary care and Strengthening Regulatory Framework etc.

India’s Response towards Second Spell of UN development initiatives (SDG)

The efforts made by India to realize the various goals of MDG could certainly propel the country and its populace in a much better position as compared to what it was at the beginning of the MDG implementation. Almost all the developmental indicators were indicating upward movement but they were still away from the desired level which has been promised in the SDG 2030 to make the world a better place for living for each and every individual. In order to achieve the SDG targets within its stipulated timeframe GOI came with concerted efforts and identified NITI Aayog as the prime planning, implementing, monitoring and motivating agency which has been mandated to oversee the progress of the nation along the Sustainable Development Goals and the Agenda 2030. The aim was to identify indicators comprised of a concise list with widely available official data for all States and UTs which can suitably capture the essence of the SDG goals, and also to bring the SDGs on the table for policy dialogue, formulation and implementation among the Central ministries and the States/Union Territories, within the framework of cooperative and competitive federalism.

SDG Implementation: First Review at UN (2016)

Review of any project, programme or policy plays a very important role in assessing the progress made in a particular span of time. The first review of the cumulative efforts being made by different countries towards the implementation of SDG 2030 was done on July 11-20, 2016 by the UN convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council, on the theme "Ensuring that no one is left behind". In that Voluntary National Review organized at the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at UN Headquarters in New York 22 nations which included China, Colombia, Egypt, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Madagascar, Mexico, Montenegro, Morocco, Norway, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Samoa, Sierra Leone, Switzerland, Togo, Turkey, Uganda and The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela presented their report describing the steps being undertaken by them. India did not present its Voluntary National Review (VNR) that year due to non-availability of goal wise data at that stage. However, Mr. Arvind Panagariya, Vice Chairperson of NITI Aayog, participated in the High Level Political Forum and assured the global community that India will present its review report very soon, probably the year next.

Role of NITI Aayog and MoSPI

As mentioned earlier the Development Monitoring and Evaluation Office (DMEO), an attached office under NITI Aayog is the nodal organization for the implementation of the SDGs by the Government of India for which it started working simultaneously on many fronts by adopting a synergistic approach, involving central ministries, States/ Union Territories (UTs), civil society organizations, academia and business sector to achieve India's SDG targets. Information available in public domain says that in order to deal with the matters relating to Sustainable Development Goals, such as examining the data sheet prepared by DMEO on mapping of Central Sector/Centrally Sponsored Schemes ('Core of the Core' and 'Core' indicator) and other initiatives NITI Aayog within its framework constituted a dedicated team for SDGs vertical which included Mr. Anil Srivastava (DG, DMEO), Ms. Sanyukta Samaddar (Officer on Special Duty, Sustainable Development Goals Vertical), Mr. Sunder Narayan Mishra (Consultant), Mr. Dinesh Dhawan (Deputy Advisor), Mr. Charanjit Singh Bhatia (Senior Research Officer), a group of young professionals along with the top functionaries of the Aayog. To accomplish the assigned task NITI Aayog organized a series of consultations involving all the identified stakeholders. These consultations were focused on different goals, capacity building, evaluation framework, sharing of new knowledge and best practices, and progress mapping. So far, 22 such national and regional consultations have happened to cover all the 17 verticals referring to 17 major goals identified by the UN under SDG 2030. Some of them are as follows:

	Topic of Consultation	Date	Venue
1	National Consultation on Road to Sustainable Development Goals, with focus on Health and Education (SDG 3 and 4)	February 9-10, 2016	New Delhi
2	Seminar on Sustainable Development Goals and their Evaluation	February 25, 2016	New Delhi
3	National Consultation on SDG 9 – Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation	August 2-3, 2016	New Delhi
4	National Consultation on SDG 8 – Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	August 2-3, 2016	New Delhi
5	National Consultation on SDG 6 – Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all	August 9, 2016	New Delhi
6	Regional Consultation on SDG 11 – Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable (SDGs for Human Settlements in Himalayan Region)	December 14-15, 2016	Guwahati
7	Regional Consultation: From Vision 2030 to Planning and Implementation for North Eastern States	December 19-20, 2016	Shillong
8	National Consultation on SDGs Sustaining Life: Integrating Biodiversity Concerns, Ecosystems Values and Climate Resilience in India's Planning Process Focus on SDG 13, 14 and 15	February 8-9, 2017	New Delhi
9	National Consultation on SDG 7 "Affordable and Clean Energy"	February 23, 2017	New Delhi
10	National Consultation on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) SDG 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls)	April 11, 2017	New Delhi
11	National Consultation on the SDG 2 (Zero Hunger)	April 13, 2017	New Delhi
12	Workshop on SDG 14 – Conserve and Sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development	July 4-5, 2017	Kochi
13	National Consultation on SDG 10 related to 'Reducing Inequalities',	August 28, 2017	New Delhi
14	National Seminar on SDGs and Integral Humanism	September 23–24, 2017	New Delhi
15	National Conclave on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	December 19-20, 2017	New Delhi
16	Consultations with States / Union Territories	December 3-7, 2018	NITI Aayog
17	National Workshop on Building Capacity for Localising SDGs	February 16-17, 2018	Bhubaneswar
18	Meeting with States/UTs	January 23 rd – February 13 th 2018	NITI Aayog
19	National Consultation on Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 1 'End Poverty in All its Forms Everywhere'	March 14, 2018	New Delhi

Identification of Indicators

NITI Aayog decided to estimate the progress at various levels through a single measurable index that would serve as an advocacy tool through which SDGs can be brought on the table for policy dialogue, formulation and implementation among the Central ministries and the States/Union Territories, within the framework of cooperative and competitive federalism and trigger action at the State level as well as national level. A major challenge in this regard was to identify a group of indicators capable of capturing the very essence of SDG goals and for which official data for all the States and UTs is adequately available. It was expected that all the identified indicators will provide a benchmark to help the country to measure its progress at national as well as the sub-national levels and also help in analyzing and identifying best practices and priority areas giving direction to country's developmental policies.

The task of identifying these indicators was primarily entrusted with the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI). The issue related with the development of national indicator framework was discussed as a central theme in the Conference of Central and State Statistical Organizations (COCSSO) held in November 2015 and thereafter the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation drafted the National Indicator Framework (NIF) in consultation with 38 Central Ministries/Departments and States and UTs. These indicators were based on the findings, suggestions and recommendations of SDG vertical on one hand while keeping in view the Principles for Indicator selection as recommended by the UN Statistical Commission in its 46th Session held in March 2015 on the other hand which stressed on the following points:

- The development of a robust and high-quality indicator framework is a technical process which requires time and needs to be conducted in stages, including the possibility of future refinements as knowledge evolves.
- Given the possibility of measurement and capacity constraints of Member States, the global indicator framework should contain only a limited number of indicators;
- Strike a balance between reducing the number of indicators and policy relevance; build on the experiences of the Millennium Development Goals; and take into account conceptual indicator frameworks that have already been developed.
- National Statistical Offices are to play the leading role in the development of the indicator framework to ensure national ownership.

It was also suggested by the UN Statistical Commission that the Indicators should flow naturally from goals and targets and be directly relevant to a sound and relevant monitoring system for the new development framework, the national statistical development strategies should govern the work on indicators and the cost-benefit of data collection for indicators needs to be carefully considered.

A team comprised of Dr. Asutosh Ojha (Deputy Director General), Mr. Omkar Prasad Ghosh (Deputy Director General), Ms. Avneet Kaur (Deputy Director), Mr. Shrikant Kale (Joint Director), Mr. Akhilesh Kumar (Joint Director), Mr. K.K.Srivastava (Joint Director, SSD) and Mr. Rakesh Mourya (SSD, CSO) all from the Ministry of Statistics and Program Implementation (MoSPI) provided guidance in the development of SDG Indicators.

Mapping of Central Ministries and Schemes vis-a-via SDG Goals

Mapping of the Centrally-sponsored schemes of Ministries and prime responsibility to be played by the Central Ministries vis-à-vis all the 17 SDG goals and 169 indicators constituting Sustainable Development Goals was another important challenge before NITI Aayog for which a draft Three-Year Action Agenda covering years 2017-18 to 2019-20 was prepared by the Development Monitoring and Evaluation Office (DMEO) of NITI Aayog and circulated to all the Ministries in order to fast track this agenda. The comments and assessment reports received from the Ministries about the roles being played by them were put on websites and then the States and Union territories were directed to map their Ministries and policies accordingly for achieving SDGs. Meetings regarding this were held with the Chief Secretaries and Planning Secretaries of the States. Six to seven States have shared their details on mapping of Ministries and policies on SDGs. Finally a mapping about the Centrally-sponsored schemes of Ministries in order to fix as to which ministry will focus on which goal and for which goal a particular ministry will have primary role to play was done by the NITI Aayog which tried to set up an institutional arrangement about mapping the work to be executed by each of the stakeholder.

SDGs National Indicator Framework Baseline Report, 2015-16

National Indicator Framework is a comprehensively designed indicator based data intensive monitoring tool. It has been precisely designed and developed for monitoring of SDGs at the national level and provides appropriate direction to the policy makers and the implementers of various schemes and programmes. The first Baseline Report 2015-16 on the National Indicator Framework which was released on March 1, 2019 has been developed by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) in consultation with Central Ministries/ Departments, States and other stakeholders, such as, UN Agencies and Civil Society for the purpose of monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and its associated targets and is comprised of a total of 306 national indicators for SDGs 1 to 16. For Goal 17, no National Indicators have been proposed as the Goal is for strengthening means of implementation and global partnership. However, keeping in view the role of advocacy the NITI Aayog has conducted numerous advocacy drives in collaboration with Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS). This Baseline Country Report will certainly serve as a valuable tool for policy making, planning, administrators, researchers and other stakeholders.

For Goal 4 of SDG which is a conglomeration of a total of 10 targets that collectively intends to “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” the National Indicator Framework (NIF) has developed a total of 20 National Indicators having national acceptability and capability of responding to national priorities and needs. These 20 indicators will help to gauge the progress made against only 8 out of the total 10 targets that come under the broader framework of “Quality Education”.

The National Indicators respective to the above 8 targets and their corresponding values highlighting the national state of affairs are as follows:

Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all		
S	National Indicator	Base Value
Target 4.1 : By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes		
1	4.1.1 : Net Enrolment Ratio in primary and upper primary education, 2015-16 (in percentage)	a) Primary : 87.30 b) Upper Primary : 74.70
2	4.1.2 : Adjusted Net Enrolment Ratio in primary, upper primary and secondary education, 2015-16 (in percentage)	a) Primary : 91.64 b) Upper Primary : 84.36 c) Secondary : 63.37
3	4.1.3 : Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher secondary education, 2015-16 (in percentage)	56.16
4	4.1.4 : Percentage of students in grade 3, 5, 8 and 10 achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in terms of nationally defined learning outcomes to be attained by pupils at the end of each of above grades, 2017-18 (in percentage)	a) Language (Class-3/5/8) : 90.29/85.55/82.82 b) Mathematics (Class-3/5/8) : 88.69/79.81/60.93
5	4.1.5 : Gross intake ratio to the last grade (primary, upper primary and secondary)	Not available
6	4.1.6 : Proportion of students enrolled in Grade 1 who reaches last grade or primary/upper primary/secondary levels	Not available
7	4.1.7 : Out of school ratio (primary, upper primary, elementary, secondary and higher secondary)	Not available
8	4.1.8 : Number of years (i) free and (ii) compulsory education guaranteed in legal frameworks, 2009 (in number)	a) Free : 8 Years b) Compulsory : 8 Years
Target 4.2 : By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education		
1	4.2.1 : Participation rate in organized learning one year before official primary entry, 2015-16 (in percentage)	34.08
2	4.2.2 : Gross early childhood education enrolment ratio	Not available
Target 4.3 : By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university		
1	4.3.1 : Participation rate of youth and adults in formal and non-formal education and training in the previous 12 months	Not Available
2	4.3.2 : Proportion of male-female enrolled in higher education, technical and vocational education, 2015-16 (in Ratio)	a) Higher- 0.92 b) Technical : Not Available c) Vocational : Not Available
3	4.3.3 : Gross enrolment ratio for tertiary education, 2015-16 (in percentage)	24.50
Target 4.4 : By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship		
1	4.4.1 : Proportion of computer literate adults	Not Available

Target 4.5 : By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations		
	4.5.1 : Enrolment ratio of children with disabilities, 2015-16 (in percentage)	a) Primary : 1.18 b) Upper Primary : 1.13 c) Elementary : 1.16 d) Secondary : 0.56 e) Higher Secondary : 0.25
	4.5.2 : Gender Parity indices for Primary/Secondary/Higher Secondary/Tertiary education, 2015-16 (in percentage)	a) Primary : 1.03 b) Secondary : 1.02 c) Higher Secondary : 1.01 d) Tertiary education : 0.93
Target 4.6 : By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy		
1	4.6.1 : Literacy rate of youth in the age group of 15-24 years, 2011-12 (in percentage)	86.10
Target 8 : Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all		
1	8.1 : Proportion of schools with access to: (a) electricity; (b) computers for pedagogical purposes; (c) adapted infrastructure and materials for students with disabilities/ disabled friendly ramp and toilets; (d) basic drinking water; (e) single-sex basic sanitation facilities; and (f) basic hand washing facilities (as per the WASH indicator definitions), 2015-16 (in percentage)	(a) Electricity : 62.81 (b) Computers for pedagogical purposes : 27.31 (c) Adapted infrastructure and materials for students with disabilities/ disabled friendly ramp and toilets : 81.99 (d) Basic drinking water : 96.81 (e) Single-sex basic sanitation facilities (Girl's only) : 97.52 (f) Basic hand washing facilities : 48.94
Target 10 : By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing States		
1	10.1 : Proportion of trained teachers, by education level (pre-primary, primary, upper primary, elementary, secondary and higher secondary education), 2015-16 (in percentage)	a) Pre-Primary : Not Available b) Primary : 75.49 c) Upper Primary : 78.18 d) Elementary : 79.15 e) Secondary : 78.52 f) Higher Secondary : 64.45
2	10.2 : Pupil/trained teacher ratio by education level, 2015-16 (in percentage)	(a) Pre-Primary : Not Available (b) Primary : 23 (c) Upper Primary - 27 (d) Elementary : N/A (e) Secondary : 27 (f) Higher Secondary : 37

SDGs National Indicator Framework Baseline Report, 2015-16, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI)

The remaining 2 targets, for which no indicators have been developed yet, are as follows:

Target 4.7 : By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development
National Indicator not yet evolved
Target 4.9 : By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries, for enrolment in higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programmes, in developed countries and other developing countries
National Indicator not yet evolved

It is understood that Target 4.6 of Goal 4 is precisely focused on adult and lifelong learning which says that “By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy”. The indicator identified to measure the progress on the count of target 4.6 under the Global Indicator Framework for the Sustainable Development Goals and Targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development desires that “proportion of population in a given age group would be achieving at least a fixed level of proficiency in functional literacy and numeracy skills, by sex.” However, India has redefined this target as well as the indicator for estimating the progress made in this regard. As per SDGs

National Indicator Framework Baseline Report, 2015-16 this target ensures to measure the literacy of youth population for both men and women for which it has identified only one indicator i.e. "Literacy rate of youth in the age group of 15-24 years (Indicator 4.6.1)".

Defined as the number of literate youths in age-group 15-24 years expressed as a percentage of total youth population in the age-group 15-24 years at the time of Census enumeration the value for this indicator is computed as:

$$\frac{\text{Number of literates in age group 15 – 24 years}}{\text{Youth population in age group 15 – 24 years}} \times 100$$

As of now the literacy rate of youth in the age group of 15-24 years has been calculated to be 81.80 percent for female, 90.10 percent for male and 86.10 percent for all. The SDG India Index: Baseline Report 2018 provides a detailed progress report on various selected SDG targets in India. In order to understand the importance given to Goal 4 in general and Target 4.6 in particular it becomes pertinent to unfold certain inferences that can be drawn out of this report.

SDG India Index: Baseline Report 2018 - Highlights

Conceptualized by NITI Aayog and *developed in collaboration with the Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation, Global Green Growth Institute and United Nations in India* the SDG India Index: Baseline Report 2018 is an aggregate measure that can be understood and used by everyone including policymakers, businesses, civil society and the general public. Constructed across 13 out of 17 SDGs (leaving out Goals 12, 13, 14 and 17) the SDG India Index tracks the progress of all the States and UTs on a set of 62 Priority Indicators selected on the basis of relevance to the SDG targets, guided by the National Indicator Framework, availability of data at national level for States and UTs from official statistical systems, consent from respective Ministries/Departments, ownership of data by the data source Ministries and sufficient data coverage, such that data for at least 50 percent of the States/UTs is available.

SDG India Index is intended to provide a holistic view on the social, economic and environmental status of the country and its States and UTs. Using this index, States can be monitored on a real-time basis. It also acts as a bridge between these mandates, aligning the SDGs with the Prime Minister's clarion call of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas', which embodies the five Ps of the global SDG movement – People, Planet, Prosperity, Partnership and Peace. The Index also highlights a great opportunity for the strengthening of collection and analysis of data in India, to monitor progress on the SDGs, as well as to inform policy planning. As with any new endeavour, it is expected that the SDG India Index will evolve over the coming years - indicators shall be refined, data collection and reporting processes shall be improved,

the potential for disaggregating data shall be explored and methodological improvements will be made.

The Index also highlights a great opportunity for the strengthening of collection and analysis of data in India, to monitor progress on the SDGs, as well as to inform policy planning. It is expected that the SDG India Index will evolve over the coming years - indicators shall be refined, data collection and reporting processes shall be improved, the potential for disaggregating data shall be explored and methodological improvements will be made for developing future strategies.

The score in the Baseline Report 2018 ranges between 0 and 100. If a State achieves a score of 100, it signifies that the State has achieved the national target set for 2030. On the other hand, if a State achieves a score of 0, it signifies that the State was the worst performer.

SDG India Index: Baseline Report 2018 - Some Inferences

For Goal 4 in General

Out of a total 20 indicators that have been identified under “SDGs National Indicator Framework Baseline Report, 2015-16” for reflecting comprehensive view on India’s performance towards providing quality education, only seven national level indicators have got a place in SDG India Index: Baseline Report 2018, which capture two out of the ten SDG targets for 2030 outlined under this Goal. These indicators have been selected based on availability of data at the national level and to ensure comparability across States and Union Territories (UTs). The table below shows these seven indicators, corresponding SDG targets, Present National Target Value, Present National Index Score and the respective values to be attained by the year 2030.

SDG Global Target	Indicator Selected for SDG India Index	Present National Target Value	National Target Value for 2030	Present National Index Score	SDG 4 National Index Score
4.1 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes	1. Adjusted Net Enrolment Ratio at Elementary (Class 1-8) and Secondary (Class 9-10) school	75.83	100	56	58
	2. Percentage correct responses on Learning Outcomes in Language, Mathematics and EVS for Class 5 students	54.69	67.89	50	
	3. Percentage correct responses on Learning Outcomes in Language, Mathematics, Science and Social Science for Class 8 students	44.58	57.17	45	
	4. Percentage of children in the age group of 6-13 who are out of school	2.97	0.28	54	
	5. Average Annual Drop-out rate at secondary level	17.06	10	68	
4.c By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing States	6. Percentage of school teachers professionally qualified	81.15	100	73	
	7. Percentage of elementary and secondary schools with Pupil Teacher Ratio less than/equal to 30	70.43	100	52	

In order to provide a comparative picture of the progress made by the States and UTs in the field of quality education, this report has further categorized them into four groups based on their cumulative Index Score and they are – Achiever (having Index Score 100), Front Runner (having Index Score 65-99), Performer (having Index Score 50-64) and Aspirant (having Index Score 0-49). The table below shows the comparative position of States and UTs based on their Index Score.

Sl.	States	SDG 4	Categorization based on Index Score	Rate of literacy as per census 2011
1	Bihar	36	Aspirants	61.8
2	Meghalaya	38		74.4
3	Arunachal Pradesh	44		65.4
4	Nagaland	45		79.6
5	Odisha	46		72.9
6	Sikkim	47		81.4
7	Madhya Pradesh	49		69.3
8	Jammu and Kashmir	51	Performer	67.2
9	West Bengal	51		76.3
10	Uttar Pradesh	53		67.7
11	Chhattisgarh	53		70.3
12	Assam	54		72.2
13	Mizoram	54		91.3
14	Tripura	56		87.2
15	Jharkhand	58		66.4
16	Punjab	63		75.8
17	Haryana	65		Front Runner
18	Manipur	65	79.2	
19	Telangana	66		
20	Gujarat	67	78.0	
21	Uttarakhand	68	78.8	
22	Goa	71	88.7	
23	Rajasthan	73	66.1	
24	Maharashtra	74	82.3	
25	Tamil Nadu	75	80.1	
26	Karnataka	76	75.4	
27	Andhra Pradesh	77	67.0	
28	Himachal Pradesh	82	82.8	
29	Kerala	87	94.0	
	India	58		73.0

	UTs	SDG 4	Categorization based on Index Score	Rate of literacy as per census 2011
1	Daman and Diu	46	Aspirants	87.1
2	Delhi	58	Performer	86.2
3	Lakshadweep	62		91.8
4	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	69	Front Runner	86.6
5	Pondicherry	69		85.8
6	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	77		76.2
7	Chandigarh	85		86.0
	Target	100		

For Adult and Lifelong Education in Particular

As explained earlier all the seven indicators based on which SDG India Index: Baseline Report 2018 has rated the national as well as sub-national performance pertain to only two targets and target 4.6 which broadly talks about adult and lifelong learning has been excluded here. Consequently it may be concluded that this report has no bearing on adult and lifelong learning.

The Index Score of the states and UTs if placed against their rate of literacy exhibits a clear mismatch. For example under the "Aspirants" category Madhya Pradesh with its general literacy rate 69.3 percent has a better Index Score of 49 than that of Sikkim (47) which has a far better rate of literacy as 81.4 percent. Similarly under the "Performer" category Mizoram has the Index Score of 54 with rate of literacy as high as 91.3 while Punjab has a high Index Score of 63 with comparatively a low rate of literacy of 75.8 percent. The "Front Runner" category too has a visible mismatch. In this category the Index Score of Goa is 71 where as its rate of literacy is as high as 88.7 on the other hand the Index Score of Andhra Pradesh is 77 with comparatively low rate of literacy of 67 percent only.

This mismatch may have occurred due to non factorization of the indicators pertaining to the target 4.6 highlighting the achievements on the count of adult and lifelong learning. Hence, effort should be made to rope in the value of all the indicators pertaining to Target 4.6 of Goal 4 so that the value calculated thereafter can shade adequate light on adult and lifelong learning component of education as well.

Conclusion

Adult and Lifelong Learning has always been considered as an important dimension of social empowerment and overall progress of the citizenship in India and anywhere else in the world. Almost all commissions constituted in India for educational improvement of the country have appreciated its role and have tried to include it in the policy statements of government in suitable words. SDG too have emphasized the role of literacy, adult education and lifelong learning in realizing the inclusive growth of one and all by the year 2030. But, there found to be some slackness in the field of literacy in the last one year after Saakshar Bharat Programme came to a close in March 2018. In the absence of a clear cut policy after Saakshar Bharat there is no definite direction for the departments and agencies concerned to take forward one of the important educational programmes to make the country not only literate but also the society a learning one. Unfortunately, most of the state governments also not implementing any literacy programme and the departments work in a truncated way for want of proper direction. Kerala State Literacy Mission Authority is the only institution which is found to be active by organizing equivalency programmes with the financial help from the state budget. Institutions specially created for literacy programme as support agencies like State Resource Centres and University

Departments of Adult Education have become more of orphan. The resource centres which have over the years developed into a well known training institutions and stock of knowledge to develop literacy materials do not even know what will be their future in the absence of not receiving grant from Govt. of India for the last one year and more and no intimation in writing about their future. Developing such institutional structure takes a long time but destroying it is faster. Before they become redundant urgent policy decision is needed regarding their use either for literacy programmes or to the field of education as training institutions. The treatment which adult and lifelong education has got during the preparation of SDG India Index: Baseline Report 2018 has further squeezed its importance. This inertia towards adult education and lifelong learning needs to be replaced by a renewed vigour so that all the targets comprising Goal 4 of SDG are achieved within the desired timeframe. It is also to mention here that the New Education Policy under preparation should also adequately reflect the need of adult and lifelong education for India with proper infrastructure from the national level to Gram Panchayat level and adequate financial allocation.

NITI Aayog is already in the process of preparing a 15-Year Vision document including a 7-year Strategy for ensuring overall growth and inclusive development of the nation with the active participation of States keeping the country's long-standing federal tradition in view. This Strategy document for India's 75th year of independence will cover the period 2017-18 to 2022-23 which will present goals for 2022-23 as well as a way forward on how to achieve them. The hope is that the NITI Aayog will assign due priority on adult education and lifelong learning in the same strategy document.

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Effect of “Guidance in Lesson Preparation and Presentation” on Practice Teaching and Academic Performance of Students

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Abstract

Teaching practice is integral to teacher training. To make teaching learning sound and effective, we must look into its various aspects like, Planning and organization of teaching learning activities, Classroom Environment, Psychology of the learner etc., very carefully and critically, so that they contribute in making teaching-learning inspirational and relevant. Experimental method was used by the researcher in order to study the effect of Guidance in Lesson Preparation and Presentation (GLPP) on Practice Teaching. The results of the study indicated that Guidance in Lesson Preparation and Presentation programme had more positive impact and reflection among student teachers in the development of confidence and improvement of interaction and conversation with students and that they were able to handle comfortably the question answer session and also able to complete the lesson in time. When the student teachers are well prepared and well rehearsed with well organized lesson plan containing all elements of teaching learning process, definitely a very effective and successful class room activity will be achieved.

Keywords: Teaching practice, Classroom environment, Learner psychology.

The most essential requirement for the accomplishment of successful and productive classroom teaching learning interaction is the teacher’s effectiveness. Teacher is considered to be the initiator, coordinator, counsellor, guide, mentor and director of the classroom interaction. There are some teachers who know more facts about their subject but are unsuccessful in communicating their thoughts, views, ideas, interpretations, discourses and feelings to the students. On the contrary, there are some teachers rated as average in terms of their educational or training background, yet they are properly equipped with skills to communicate effectively. These teachers make their teaching more effective and deliver clarity in expressing their thoughts, views, ideas, interpretations, discourses and feelings on every subject they teach and are able to use and adopt various effective teaching strategies, techniques and skills of teaching. It is now believed that teachers are not born but

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they are among the ordinary persons who can be made to be a successful and effective teacher by training.

It is a fact that the teaching practice is an integral part and very important component of teacher training. Therefore, in the internship programme practice teaching is contemplated to be the most vital episode in the development of student teachers as teachers by providing a context wherein they could merge theory and practice, form their own teaching and classroom management styles as well as cope with the demands of multi-tasking and yet able to provide one to one attention that the classroom demands. It is observed that the student teacher's love, enthusiasm, compassion, competence and experience in the actual teaching and learning environment are the ones that create an effective teacher.

Important aspects of teaching learning Activities

Teaching learning process is a means through which the teacher, the learner, the curriculum and other variables are organised in a systematic manner to attain pre-determined goals and objectives. The teaching learning activities include teacher, learners and their individual differences, the methods of teaching, the material to be taught, classroom conditions, teaching devices, questioning and answering, assignments, thinking, enjoying, practical skills, discussions and many others. Teaching cannot take place without learning. Moreover, learning is not only to gain knowledge but it is to understand and implement in its right spirit. It is therefore necessary that for making teaching learning sound and effective, we must look into its various aspects very carefully and critically, so that they contribute in making teaching-learning inspirational and relevant. It can be possible if during the practice teaching session of internship programme the student teachers are well trained in the following aspects of teaching learning activities:

- **Planning and organisation of teaching learning activities:** The core of effective teaching learning is thorough knowledge of the subject matter on the basis of which the teacher can think of a blue print and plan out various activities to be presented in the classroom. The teacher has to organise the subject matter keeping in mind the known to unknown aspect of psychology. Accordingly he/she can think of various strategies, teaching devices as per the needs and interest of students.
- **Classroom Environment:** Creating a healthy atmosphere and culture in the class room is one of the most important characteristics of a successful teacher. This can be created by taking utmost interest in students being empathetic, tolerant, loving, respectful, impartial and effective communicator of subject knowledge.
- **Psychology of learners:** For effectiveness of teaching, the learning theories play an important role. The basic idea of behaviourism is that learning consists of a change in behaviour due to the acquisition, reinforcement and application

of associations between stimuli from the environment and observable responses of the individual. In cognitive psychology, learning is understood as the acquisition of knowledge: the learner is an information-processor who absorbs information, undertakes cognitive operations on it, and stocks it in memory. According to Constructivism learners are not passive recipients of information, but they actively construct their knowledge in interaction with the environment and through the reorganization of their mental structures. Albert Bandura's social learning theory suggests that people learn within a social context, and that learning is facilitated through concepts such as modelling, observational learning and imitation. The view of Socio-constructivism is that cognition and learning are the interactions between the individual and a situation; knowledge is considered as situated and is a product of the activity, context and culture in which it is formed and utilized. For Experiential learning theories- learning is about meaningful experiences – in everyday life – that lead to a change in an individual's knowledge and behaviours. Thomas Sergiovanni reinforces the idea that learning is most effective when it takes place in communities. He argues that academic and social outcomes will improve only when classrooms become learning communities, and teaching becomes learner-centered. All the above learning theories have strong support for the active participation of the learners in the teaching learning process to make it effective. Hence, in the teaching learning process the teacher has to ensure the active involvement of students by making the classroom a learning community.

- **Communication or Interaction:** Proper communication between the teacher and students is the most important skills in teaching. If this relationship is well established, educational goals will be more easily realized with a high quality. Within the teaching profession, communication skills are applied in the teachers' classroom management, pedagogy and interaction with the class (Saunders and Mills, 1999).
- **Evaluation:** At every point of learning, evaluation is an attempt to discover the effectiveness of the learning situation in evoking the desired changes in students.

Need and Significance of the Study

In the research study "Becoming a teacher: student teachers' experiences and perceptions about teaching practice" by Susana Caires, Leandro Almeida and Diana Vieira, it was found that student teachers experienced stress, sense of weariness and vulnerability during practice teaching. It is also revealed that they have positive perceptions regarding their growing knowledge and skill, sense of efficacy, interaction, flexibility and spontaneity in their performance. In another study "The Development of Student Teachers' Interaction Skills through Video Interaction Guidance" Penny Forsyth argued that achieving and sustaining inter subjectivity is central and it is satisfying provided there is the presence of an effective teacher interaction. In the

research study of Edith Kiggundu and Samuel Nayimuli "Teaching practice: a make or break phase for student teachers" it was found that, despite the positive experiences during teaching practice, student teachers experienced challenges which affected their perception of the teaching profession. From all these studies it is evident that practice teaching has a great impact on teaching effectiveness and perception of teaching profession of student teachers.

In their article on policies that support professional development, Darling Hammond and McLaughlin (1995) write, "The vision of practice that underlies the nation's reform agenda requires most teachers to rethink their own practice, to construct new classroom roles and expectations about student outcomes, and to teach in ways they have never taught before." In the teacher training institutes all student teachers are given the same type of standard training -micro teaching followed by bridge lesson and ultimately the practice teaching. In the school itself the student teachers get the feedback of their lessons from the teacher educators. In spite of all this some of the student teachers are unable to produce and perform better in the actual classroom situation even if they have good content knowledge.

In the present study the researcher has made an attempt to investigate the effect of Guidance in Lesson Preparation and Presentation (GLPP) on practice teaching of student teachers and the achievement of their students. Under the seven days Guidance in Lesson Preparation and Presentation programme the student teachers learnt preparation of lesson plan, best practices of preparing flash cards containing specific teaching points, examples and questions of discussion, every day's rehearsal and practice of communication just before the actual teaching, dividing the whole class into small groups for question-answer (quiz) discussions, giving more scope to students for interaction, giving reinforcement to students, and reflection on their teaching through video recording after every presentation.

Statement of the problem

A study of the effect of Guidance in Lesson Preparation and Presentation (GLPP) on Practice Teaching and Academic Performance of Students

Objectives of the study

- 1) To study the effect of Guidance in Lesson Preparation and Presentation on practice teaching of student teachers.
- 2) To study the effect of Guidance in Lesson Preparation and Presentation on academic performance of students.

Hypotheses of the study

- 1) There is no significant difference between the effectiveness in practice teaching of student teachers given guidance through Guidance in Lesson Preparation

- and Presentation programme (GLPP) and student teachers given guidance through regular practice teaching lesson guidance programme.
- 2) There is no significant difference between the achievement of students taught by student teachers of Guidance in Lesson Preparation and Presentation Programme and students taught by the student teachers of regular practice teaching lesson guidance programme.

Operational Definitions of important terms

Guidance in Lesson Preparation and Presentation is a seven days programme for student teachers on lesson preparation and presentation conducted by the teacher educator in the school itself during the internship activity.

Academic Performance is the achievement scores of students obtained in tests conducted by the student teachers.

Practice teaching is B.Ed students' teaching practice in various schools during internship programme.

Methodology

Experimental method was used by the researcher in order to study the effect of Guidance in Lesson Preparation and Presentation (GLPP) on Practice Teaching.

The following methodology was adopted in the present study.

Sample

- Two divisions of standard seven students formed the sample of the study. Students of both the divisions were conducted pre-test and found that both were similar in their achievement. Keeping all other conditions equal- class room environment, previous academic performance, Division-A was taken as experimental group and Division-B as control group.
- Pre-test was done on the teaching effectiveness of ten number of student teachers and on the basis of their score five pairs were formed. These five pairs of student teachers were made two equal groups, one as experimental group and the other as control group.

Tools

- Teacher's effectiveness test was prepared by the investigator.
- Achievement test for both pre-test and post-test were prepared by the investigator.

Procedure

In the present study the design applied was pretest-posttest control group design. Ten student teachers were sent to school for internship activity. During the internship these student teachers did their practice teaching. After observing few lessons their teaching effectiveness was measured. On the basis of their teaching effectiveness scores five pairs were formed and two similar groups were made. One group of student teachers was taken as experimental group and the other one as control group. Then two divisions of seven standard students were equalised on the basis of performance in previous class tests, class room environment etc. One division (A) of students was taken as experimental group and the other division (B) as control group. Students of both the divisions were taught separately by the student teachers (Experimental and Control Group), pretested and their mean achievement scores were found to be equal. After two days the student teachers of experimental group were exposed to Guidance in Lesson Preparation and Presentation (GLPP) programme by the investigator for seven days. But the Control group student teachers were not exposed to such programme. After few days of practice teaching after exposure to Guidance in Lesson Preparation and Presentation programme post test was conducted on student teachers effectiveness and the achievement of students of both groups. T test was conducted to measure the significance of difference between the means.

Analysis and interpretation of data

Table-1 presents the result of 't' test analysis associated with the teacher effectiveness scores of student teachers before the exposure to Guidance in Lesson Preparation and Presentation programme.

Table-1: Pre-test scores of student teachers' teacher effectiveness

Groups	N	Mean	SD	df	t
Experimental Group	5	6.6	1.14	4	.63 Not Significant
Control Group	5	6.2	.83	4	

Not significant at .05 level

Table -1 shows that the teacher effectiveness mean scores of experimental group is 6.6 and that of control group is 6.2. The t value is .63. The table t value is 2.31. As the obtained t value is less than the table t value the difference between the means of experimental group and that of control group is not significant at .05 level. This result indicates no significant difference between the teacher effectiveness of experimental group and control group.

Table-2 Post-test scores of student teachers' teacher effectiveness

Groups	N	Mean	SD	DF	t
Experimental group	5	8.2	.44	4	3.21
Control Group	5	7	.7	4	Significant

Significant at .05 level

Table-2 shows that the teacher effectiveness mean score of experimental group is 8.2 and that of control group is 7. The obtained t value is 3.21. The table t value at .05 level of significance is 2.31. The result indicates that the table t value is less than the obtained t value. Therefore the difference found after the treatment between the experimental groups's teaching effectiveness and control group's teaching effectiveness is significant. The hypothesis 1 states that there is no significant difference between the teacher effectiveness in practice teaching of student teachers given guidance through Guidance in lesson preparation and presentation programme and student teachers given guidance through practice teaching lesson guidance programme. Hence this null hypothesis is rejected at 5% level of confidence. Therefore it can be concluded that the difference in teacher effectiveness between the experimental group and control group cannot be attributed to chance and presumably resulted from the experimental treatment of Guidance in Lesson Preparation and Presentation.

Table-3 Pre-test achievement scores of students

Groups	N	Mean	SD	DF	t
Experimental group	49	11.31	4.33	48	.82
Control Group	50	12.1	5.21	49	NS

Not significant at .05 level

Table-3 shows that the experimental group students' mean achievement score is 11.31 and that of the control group is 12.1. The obtained t value is .82. The table value of t at .05 level of significance is 1.98. The result indicates that the obtained t value is less than the table t value. Therefore the difference found in pre-test achievement scores of students is not significant at .05 level of significance. This result indicates no significant difference between the pre-test achievement scores of experimental group students and control group students.

Table-4 Post test achievement scores of students

Groups	N	Mean	SD	DF	t
Experimental group	49	16.73	2.18	48	11.3
Control group	50	10.9	2.89	49	Significant

Significant at .05 level

Table-4 shows that after the treatment the mean achievement score of experimental group students is 16.73 and that of the control group students is 10.9. The obtained t value is 11.3. The table value of t at .05 level of significance is 1.98. The result indicates that the table t value is less than the obtained t value. Therefore the difference found after the treatment between the achievement of students of experimental group and control group is significant. The hypothesis 2 states that there is no significant difference between the achievement of students taught by student teachers of Guidance in Lesson Preparation and Presentation Programme (experimental group) and students taught by the student teachers of practice teaching lesson guidance programme (control group). Hence the null hypothesis is rejected at 5% level of confidence. Therefore it can be concluded that the difference in students achievement of experimental group and that of the control group cannot be attributed to chance and presumably resulted from the experimental treatment of Guidance in Lesson Preparation and Presentation given to student teachers.

Discussion

From the above analysis it was found that the teacher effectiveness of student teachers exposed to Guidance in Lesson Preparation and Presentation programme was significantly higher than the student teachers (regular practice teaching lesson guidance) not exposed to Guidance in Lesson Preparation and Presentation programme. Again the students taught by the student teachers exposed to Guidance in Lesson Preparation and Presentation programme performed significantly better than the students taught by student teachers (of regular practice teaching lesson guidance) not exposed to Guidance in Lesson Preparation and Presentation programme. The results of the study indicated that Guidance in Lesson Preparation and Presentation programme has had more positive impact and reflection among student teachers in the development of confidence and improvement of interaction and conversation with students and that they handle comfortably the question answer session and also able to complete the lesson in time.

Conclusion

The study has revealed that Guidance in Lesson Preparation and Presentation programme (GLPP) can be helpful to student teachers in improving their effectiveness in practice teaching consequently benefiting the students in achieving good learning experiences. When the student teachers are well prepared and well rehearsed with well organised lesson plan containing all elements of teaching learning process, definitely a very effective and successful class room activity will be achieved.

Suggestions

- Student teachers should be properly guided to prepare the lesson containing all the elements (examples, particular questions, situations etc) of teaching learning process.

- Student teachers should be trained in various communication skill and interaction skill.
- Ensure that student teachers are practising their lesson presentation before taking actual class.
- Student teachers should be encouraged to involve the whole class in their teaching learning process.
- Student teachers should be well trained in questioning skills (conducting quiz and games).
- Through interaction and question answer session (game technique) student teacher can connect to students in a much better way.

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Role of University in Sustainable Development through Gandhian Approach

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Abstract

The UN Sustainable Development Goal 4 insists on ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promotion of lifelong learning opportunities for all. To achieve this all round effort is needed right from primary education to tertiary level. Fortunately, in India all the three sectors of education – primary, secondary and higher education are in mission mode which accelerates the speed of progress. However, as a nation, we owe a lot to Mahatma Gandhi for his values and vision with regard to education and development. He was of the firm view that village should be the centre focus of development and the man must be the centre point. All round development of the village can take place only the planned programmes are based on the needs of the village and meet the requirements of the villagers. This paper presents how the university which was once the ivory tower and served only for a few is now opened its gates for all can ensure inclusive and equitable quality education enshrined in the Sustainable Development Goal through Gandhian approach.

Keywords: Sustainable Development Goal, Quality education, Gandhian values and vision, Village development.

Sustainability is the most burning issue with which every one of us is related very closely. Sustainability means to sustain ability, both the ability of the environment to regenerate and the ability of people to retain control over their living conditions (Kuhn 1998). In the terms of the 1987 Brundtland Report, sustainability is “Meeting the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.” Sustainable development may be described as a process for improving the range of opportunities that will enable individual human beings and communities to achieve their aspirations and full potential over a sustained period of time, while maintaining the resilience of economic, social and environmental systems (Munasinghe 1994). The concept has evolved to encompass three major points of view: economic, social and environmental, as represented by the triangle.

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Why do we need sustainability?

1. 1972 - At the Stockholm Conference, the Club of Rome published a report as 'Limits to Growth'. It was an attempt to Clarian call to the world to remember and start thinking about the danger of depletion of resources and it would be a great thread to the humanity.
2. 1980 - The Brandt Commission published it's 'North - South; A Programme For Survival', placing the responsibility for human survival. It is a great opportunity God has given every one to live peacefully and co existentially. When leaders seemed more concerned with the cold war and ideological posturing than addressing the issues of global poverty, inequality, human rights and justice and depletion of natural resources.
3. 1987 - The present technology and social organizations, as well as the ability of the biosphere to absorb the effects of human activities, on resources. It gave the definition for the sustainable development for the first time clearly recognizing a suitable political, economic, social, technological, international and administrative and production system having coherence and capacity for self-correction.
4. 1992 - The Earth Summit at Rio de Janeiro produced a number of agreements including 'Climate Change', the 'Convention on Biological Diversity' and an agreement known as 'Agenda 21'. It created awareness that contemporary consumption patterns has led to degradation of environment.
5. 1997 - The Kyoto Protocol is adopted by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which attempted to make it legally binding to affect climate change in member countries, expecting reduction on greenhouse gas emissions by 5.2% by 2012 relative to 1990 level.
6. 2006 - 'The Living Planet' report says the lifestyle followed by the western societies disturbed the subtle balance of the planet earth.
7. 2007-08 - The Human Development Report 2007 - 08 indicates on the theme Fighting Climate Change: Human Solidarity in a Divided World noted "Climate change calls to question the enlightenment principle that human progress will make the future look better than the past".

Gandhian Sustainability Means

Mahatma Gandhi's way of living is the best example of sustainable development for the world. In Mahatma Gandhi's words, "Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's need but not any man's greed."

In Mahatma Gandhi's opinion, in any scheme of development, man should be at the centre. Man has to make use of natural resources judiciously. Otherwise, the ecological imbalance will disturb nature as well as environment.

Gandhi's ideas are also reflected in the total value of production, consumption, habits and political systems. It emphasizes more on moral responsibility of the individual at the personal, social, national and universal level.

Gandhi believed in Sarvodaya and therefore the welfare of all was the basis of his thinking; hence his community centered approach towards sustainability emphasized on 'betterment of human life' and 'ensuring fulfillment of basic needs of all human needs'. Welfare of the human beings being the ultimate goal by avoiding all sorts of exploitations, Gandhi felt that human dignity (Dignity of Labour) needs to be understood and established.

Gandhi pleaded for decentralization of power in society. He visualized 'Swaraj' at the individual level, 'Gram Samaj' at Local level and 'Sarvodaya' at global level. He believed that power resided in the people. A mutually interdependent cooperative working at the world level helps in making noble environment.

His trusteeship concept is for Sarvodaya. Every member of the society is the trustee of the wealth generated out of the collective efforts of all. Thus, it denies individual pursuit and collection of wealth and converts it into the wealth of all for a better society. He expected that the trusteeship will result into non-violent and non-exploitative socio-economic relations and development models based on production systems center around the preservation of nature.

His sustainable development is based on a holistic paradigm which lays stress on all round development of individual and society in relation with nature. This entire thinking was based upon the ethical vision in which the individual is at a central position. If inward change is achieved, outward change takes care of itself. A judicial shift from the consumer society to the Conserver Society seems to be the demand of modern age.

In Hind Swaraj 1909, he talked about the dangers of unplanned and reckless industrialization; the growth oriented theory must be replaced by theories of sustainable development that will not damage but will guarantee harmonious co-existence of man and the ecosystem. Sustainable development is an ideology, drawn at the global level, showing human beings are interrelated with the ecosphere. It is a movement as it suggests a way of life. It involves the active participation of all the members of society. Self-help, self-reliance, decentralization of industries and labour intensive technology; these are the qualitative goals of satisfying meaningful life.

Harmonious existence of mankind and nature presupposes an approach based on equity and justice and coexistence of all cultures and civilization. In 1911, Gandhi used the phrase, '**Economy of Nature**' which brings out the sensitivity and deeper understanding of human actions vis-a-vis ecology. In 1928, he wrote, "God forbid that India should even take to industrialization after the manner of the west. If the entire nation of 300 million took to similar economic exploitation, it would strip the world

bare like locusts.” This statement appears contemporary for a world struggling to survive against the unprecedented global warming and climate change.

Dandi Yatra of 1930

Gandhi followed an unprecedented method of asserting right of common man over natural resources, of which, salt is most basic and primary one. If we look at Dandi Yatra from the independence struggle point of view, this action along with his famous statement, ‘Earth has enough resources for everybody’s needs but not for anybody’s greed’ has eternal lasting impact on the minds of the world.

Energy Crisis

Greater use of coal, oil and gas has resulted into global warming. The increasing use of biodiesel and ethanol from corn and sugarcane is likely to result in food production shortage and greater water consumption. All this is due to mindless consumption of unsustainable natural resources. India is also subject to the vagaries of oil market and price volatility. Minimizing the wants is the way shown by Bapu. During Dandi March, somebody brought oranges for Bapu on Motorcycle. Bapu declined the offer of oranges, saying that when you can walk, avoid the motorcycle.

Water Problems

Water scarcity and polluted water are the two main problems today. Declining water table, declining water level and deforestation are the main issues to be handled at the government level. Gandhi was well aware about all such problems sixty years back. During the independence struggle at Kathiawar region in Gujarat, drought was experienced. Knowing that afforestation on a large scale can be an effective step to face water crisis, Gandhi asked for plantation of trees. At a prayer meeting in Delhi in 1947, he suggested that water harvesting has to be practiced for irrigational purposes to avoid famines and food shortages. Surprisingly the same was suggested by the M. S. Swaminathan committee in 2006. This means that Gandhi was much ahead of his time. The initiative taken in Germany to establish the Green party and pursue policies consistent with nature conservation clearly explains the relevance of Gandhi to the environmental sustainability movement. One of the founders of the party, Mrs. Patra Kelly admirably summed up the impact of the Mahatma. She said that ‘in particular area of our work we have been greatly inspired by our Mahatma Gandhi, i.e. in our belief that lifestyle and method of production, which relies on endless supply of raw material and which use those raw material lavishly also provide motive force for violent appropriation of raw materials from other parties. In contrast, responsible consumption of raw material as a part of ecologically oriented life style and economy reduces the risk that policies of violence will pursue’. This makes a case for pursuing policies consistent nature preservation.

Sustainable development is a synthesis of economic and ecological ideas-Socio-economical, political and ecological concepts are put together to solve environmental crises. At the ecological level, it is designed as a science dealing with systematic relation between plants and animals and their habitat and environment.

Sustainable development is not an ideology but also a movement and a vision. As an ideology it has drawn our attention to the global responsibility and indicated that human beings are interrelated with the ecosphere. As a movement, it suggests a way of life and calls for active participation of all members of society.

Action to be undertaken by Universities to save the nature through the community involvement

In globalization, everybody is after wealth creation and accumulation. But we need to change our approach towards wealth creation. We need a new economic order based on Gandhi's concept of containment of wants. Greed can lead to only destruction of the mother earth. We need to change our outlook and approach. Our attitude needs to be changed to accommodating everyone for making this earth a living place for all. We need to change the methods of creation of wealth through fairer means. Such means will not endanger nature. Let us remember that the ends do not justify the means.

Economic Philosophy based on human consideration can ensure a better world order. Gandhi emphasized that creation of wealth through fairer means and without endangering sustainable development has to be the basis of economic policy. Simple living and high thinking should be our philosophy of life. Gandhian ideas are spiritually orientated and have a holistic approach. It is inclusive in nature.

Let us understand that. Let us save the earth and the earth saves us. The human greed, persisting to draw more by exploiting more will deplete the resources. The day the resources vanish and the earth becomes a barren piece of planet, we will understand that we have been cruel to our children and future generation. We need to resist unsustainable practices. Only the required amount of food should be taken as food wastage results into generation of more methane.

Our lifestyle today is highly unsustainable. We travel in an air conditioned car and then walk to sweat out! We ask others to carry our bags and then sweat in the gym to burn our extra calories! If you can't change your fate, you change your attitude! We need to unlearn the bad practices. We need to practice, REDUCE, REUSE and RECYCLE. The carrying capacity of Earth is limited. We are putting disproportionate burden on it.

Adopt a simple and friendly environment approach. Good people do not need laws to tell them but they themselves are self-disciplined and so act wisely. In order

to save the energy and oil stocks, car pooling may be an easiest way to be adopted. Simple habits of water use with utmost care and caution can lead to saving of water. Non-conventional energy sources need to be harnessed much more. We, therefore, need to resolve and learn things as human beings. Our ability to do things is our wealth.

Change is inevitable but it is necessary to know, for what to change, to what extent to change and what could be the price to bring this change. Indiscriminate changes could bring in disastrous consequences. GDP and market index could at times be misleading and even meaningless, unless development is inclusive with gap between agriculture and industry, villages and cities being narrowed down to a minimum. Unless a level playing field is provided and the feelings and aspirations of all are taken care of, there cannot be lasting peace and happiness.

Government of India expects Higher Education Institutions to involve

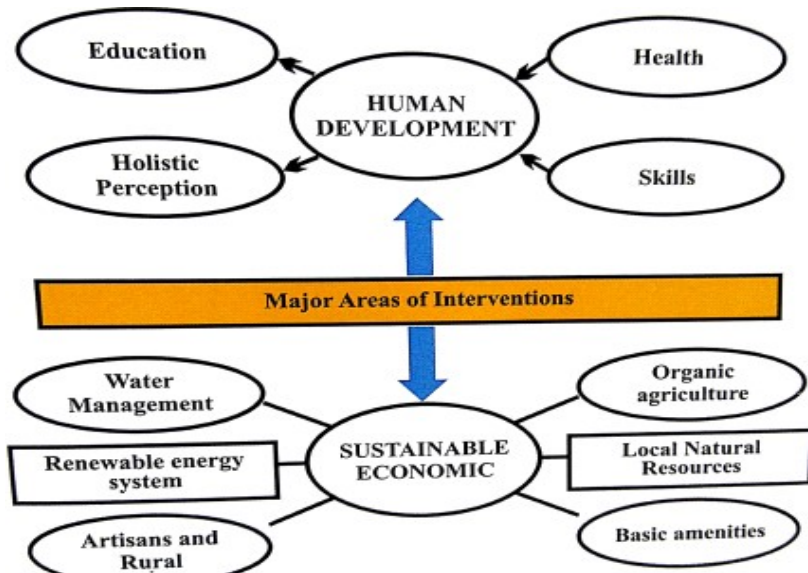
Unnat Bharat Abhiyan (UBA) is a flagship programme of the Ministry of Human Resource Development; with the intention of enrich Rural India. It aims to provide knowledge and transfer of technology for transformational changes in rural areas to upgrade the capabilities of both the public and private. To create a vibrant relationship between the society and higher Education Institutions through their faculty members and students, to carry out studies of living conditions in the adopted villages, access the local problems and needs, workout the possibilities of solving locally.

The higher education institutions are expected to work with district administration, local panchayats, NGOs and other stakeholders.

Major areas of Intervention for Human as well social Development

The first part comprises of four major important components to be imparted to the students in the campus. The university has to conduct various types of education starting from balwadi to Ph.D without any break so that the learning could have organic linkage and both vertical and horizontal mobility. More than the education skill development is the need of the hour the youth population is increasing rapidly in India so that the unemployment and unemployable will be reduced. Therefore, Government of India has come out with fantastic objectives to impart skill training under the "Skilling India".

Along with the skill, holistic health is also to be taken into considerations so that our youth force will have long standing happy life with good earnings. In order to keep good health the Department of sports, Government of India provides more avenues to the youth to participate in the sports. Apart from this the sports quota students are able to get job freely and easily.



The Second part of the chart explains the role of university's intervention strategy to help the rural areas in the following manners in order to have sustainable economic development:

- a. Organic agriculture
- b. Local Natural resources
- c. Basic amenities
- d. Rural artisans
- e. Renewable energy system
- f. Water management

Due the lack of rain the people in rural areas are struggling for water and there is acute water crisis. Everywhere bore wells are dogged for more than 1000 feet's. As a result the water levels are going down and down people are really unable to manage with the insufficient water. Where ever there are possibilities, the higher education institutions would commit and involve their staff and students along with their expertise to solve the local problems by adopting various strategies.

Conclusion

Time magazine in 2007 came out with 51 Global Warming Survival Guides. The 51st guide is sharing more and consuming less for the simplified life. We can learn to live simply so that others can simply live. Thus the sustainability will be possible only through Gandhian approach to adopt simple life and high thinking. Indian is

spearheading the new mission is known as Swachh Bharat cleaning and sanitation is very important for human being to live in peace and prosperity. Gandhi said Cleanliness is Godliness. Let us all take a pledge to make this country as a clean country.

In my opinion without damaging environment, any type of development should be done with social, moral and spiritual values. With full value development is called Sustainable development. New social ethics should be inculcated amongst the children both in school and at home, emphasizing concern for environment, personal growth and peaceful coexistence. Higher Education Institutions should follow the above Gandhian values to practice in a sustainable manner. Being the 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi the greater responsibility of Higher Education Institutions should involve and imbibe Gandhian principles to the students and the society through the ICT for the sustainable development.

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Air Pollution in Mumbai: Facts and Effects

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Abstract

Clean air is crucial for our survival on this planet. Unfortunately, we are cursed to breathe polluted air due to our own misdeeds. Consequently the air quality is deteriorating very fast, resulting in multiple health challenges. Microscopic pollutants in the air can penetrate respiratory and circulatory systems, damaging the lungs, heart and brain. It creates difficulty in breathing and results in coughing, irritation of eyes, asthma and heart related problems. The primary cause of air pollution (burning fossil fuels) is also a major contributor to climate change, which impacts people's health in different ways. The air quality of Mumbai, particularly during the month of December is always poor due to re-suspended dust and industries. Power plant, landfill open burning, vehicles, bakeries-crematoria, road side eateries, airport and railways ground operations etc. are the major culprit that magnifies this problem. Hence, it is high time for us to understand the responsibility to save the mankind and this beautiful planet-Earth. The sustainable air quality goals can be achieved by a continuous process of updating knowledge, taking action and review of the benefits accrued for which an integrated action plan is needed. This article highlights the reasons for rise in air pollution and recommends strategies to reduce the same.

Keywords: Air pollution, Impacts, Pollutants, PM, Diseases, Strategies, Mumbaikars.

Fresh and clean air is essential for the human beings to breathe properly for which clean and clear environment is necessary. In the last many years there is an increase in the environmental pollution due to many reasons and one of which is fast depletion of forest and less of rain to clear the pollutants in the air. Mega Cities and metro towns face acute environmental pollution due to massive demolition and constructions of buildings and large number of motor vehicles on the roads with no proper control on emissions. All these things compound the problem of breathing trouble/short of breathing due to which human beings suffer a lot and particularly young children and old people. Apart from this outbreak of vaccine-preventable diseases like measles and diphtheria, increasing drug-resistant pathogens, growing rate of

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obesity and physical inactivity also are more related to environmental pollution and climate change.

It is a fundamental human right to get a clean air. It is the responsibility of each citizen and the government to maintain clean and green environment. Nine out of ten people breathe polluted air every day. In 2019, air pollution is considered by World Health Organization (WHO) as the greatest environmental risk to health. Microscopic pollutants in the air can penetrate respiratory and circulatory systems, damaging the lungs, heart and brain killing 7 million people prematurely every year from diseases such as cancer, stroke, heart and lung disease. Around 90% of these deaths are in low- and middle-income countries due to high volumes of emissions from industry, transport and agriculture, as well as dirty cook stoves and fuels in homes.

The WHO report further states that burning fossil fuels are primary cause of air pollution, which also is a major contributor to climate change that impacts people's health in different ways. (WHO, 2019).

Mumbai – a Metropolitan City

Mumbai is a megacity. Mumbai is the capital of Maharashtra and the commercial capital of India. As per 2011 census, population of Mumbai was 12.44 million. Every day the population is increasing due to industrialization and migration. Mumbai is an economic hub, where everyone gets work to fend for oneself. The city is divided into two parts for administrative purpose namely Mumbai and Sub-urban area. Due to its geographic nature, it cannot expand horizontally, but only vertically. With its limited land, it is accommodating huge number of people by encroaching Arabian Sea and Mithi River, cutting trees and mangroves, which cause a permanent damage to the environment. All this has resulted into the emergence of air quality issues as one of the major concerns impacting the quality of life.

Clean environment and pure air is prerequisite to our health. Pollution is playing havoc with the health of people residing in Mumbai. Therefore, there is an urgent need to prepare an integrated action plan to be implemented to reduce the pollution in general, and air pollution in particular. The present paper highlights the reasons for rise in air pollution and recommends strategies to reduce the same.

Mumbai has various industries such as thermal power, oil refineries, pharmaceuticals, fertilizers, dyes and many other small industries- legal as well as illegal. In addition, many electrical and electronic industries are functioning in Mumbai, suburban and its adjacent areas. The Environmental Status Report states that there are about 7850 industries in Mumbai region, which can be classified as below (Kaur, 2017):

District	Categories	Large scale industries	Medium scale industries	Small scale industries	Total
Mumbai & Suburban	Red	97	14	898	1009
	Orange	21	26	2581	2628
	Green	3	15	4195	4213
Total		121	55	7674	7850

Studies show that air pollution in Mumbai is at highest level during the month of December. Mumbaikars are breathing polluted air which falls under the “poor to severe” category (The Energy and Research Institute (TERI), 2015). Air pollution is one of the most prominent issues of Mumbai. Unfortunately, it has not been taken so seriously. Hence, the life of Mumbaikars is in danger.

Status of air pollution in Mumbai on January 19, 2019

Air pollution data from World Health Organization	
PM ₁₀	117
PM _{2.5}	63
PM ₁₀ Pollution Level:	Very High

Source: <https://www.numbeo.com/pollution/in/Mumbai> assessed on jan 19, 2019

National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI) monitors air quality at three locations of Mumbai namely Kalbadevi, Parel and Worli, whereas Maharashtra Pollution Control Board (MPCB) has its monitoring centres at Sion, Mulund and Bandra. Their reports state that Mumbai air has more quantity of SO₂ and NO₂ than the prescribed norms given by World Health Organization (WHO).

Air pollution in Mumbai is worsening day by day, but the city is not paying proper attention. It is high time to come together and prepare an action plan and execute it. The Bruhan-Mumbai MahanagarPalika /BMC authorities, NGOs, representatives of citizens should come forward to solve this problem.

Pollutants contributing to air pollution

According to the National Air Monitoring Programme (NAMP), India, pollutants can be classified into four categories:

1. Sulphur Dioxide
2. Oxides of Nitrogen, including Nitrogen Dioxide
3. Suspended Particulate Matter (SPM)
4. Respirable Suspended Particulate Matter (RSPM/PM10)

What is PM?

Particulate Matter (PM) is the complex mixture of organic and inorganic matter, nitrogen compounds, sulphur compounds, PAHs, several heavy metals and radionuclides. According to NEERI, Particulate Matter (PM) is the sum of all solid and liquid particles suspended in air. Particles in the air are formed by either direct emission, for instance, when fuel is burnt and when dust is carried by wind or by indirect emissions, like when gaseous pollutants previously emitted to air turn into particulate matter.

As per the study, the majority of PM has been transmitted into the air in Mumbai through re-suspended dust and industries. Recently, a study conducted between 2005 and 2015 by National Ambient Air Monitoring Program (NAMP) with coordinated efforts from Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) or State Ambient Air Monitoring Program (SAMP), it was revealed that the increased levels of particulate matter concentration have been higher than the prescribed limits.

Major contribution of PM is from power plant, followed by unpaved road dust, paved road dust and landfill open burning. Power plants contribute 20.99%, whereas unpaved road dust contributes 17.76%. This is followed by paved road dust (11.80%), landfill open burning (10.84%), construction (8.54%), bakeries (5.80%) and stone crushers (5.20%). In addition, there are many illegal small scale industry operations, which contribute to Mumbai's air pollution. Further, vehicles, refuse burning, bakeries-crematoria, road side eateries, airport and railways ground operations etc. contribute to pollutants in the form of fine particles, which remain at ground level. They constitute higher fractions of toxics (NEERI, 2010).

Mr. Rakesh Kumar, Director, NEERI, Mumbai (2015), states that most of the pollution caused by vehicles is contributed by heavy vehicles, which run on diesel. When they are overloaded, the pressure on engine results in higher levels of emissions. He further says that the ill-effects of air pollution depend on individual's exposure to pollution at the ground level. For instance, while bakeries contribute 5.8% to the overall levels of PM in Mumbai and crematorium contribute 1.12%. This would be a lot higher for someone living near a bakery or crematorium. He recommends a need for multiple approaches to tackle air pollution in Mumbai.

According to WHO report, Mumbai's air pollution has increased drastically. Mumbai stands 4th in the list of the most polluted megacities of the world. It has risen up from last year's fifth rank. WHO highlighted that air pollution is mainly responsible for non-communicable diseases (NCDs) causing an estimated one-quarter (24%) of all adult deaths from heart disease, 25% from stroke, 43% from Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease and 29% from lung cancer (Borwankar, Nandi, 2018).

III-effects of Particulate Matter (PM)

PM_{2.5} particles are smaller in diameter (2.5microns), whereas PM₁₀ particles are 10 microns in diameter. PM_{2.5} particles are generated through open flames and diesel exhaust. They are more dangerous as they linger in the air for longer period. They are easily breathed and can reach deeper into the lungs and sometimes in bloodstreams, as compared to PM₁₀. This is one of the reasons why vehicular pollution needs our urgent attention. Poor enforcement for car exhausts leads to more particulates in the air. The smoke emitted through two and three wheelers and four wheelers lingers in the air and easily affects our lungs. It creates difficulty in breathing and results in coughing, irritation of eyes, asthma and heart related problems.

In many parts of slums in Mumbai, people still use kerosene stoves. There are many roadside small eateries, where kerosene stove is used for making tea, sandwiches and snacks. People use kaccha chullah for heating water to bathe, for which they use wood as a fuel. All of them generate PM_{2.5}.

Factors contributing to air pollution

Emission of smoke from vehicles

Vehicular pollution has grown at an alarming rate due to growing urbanisation in India, especially in metro cities like Mumbai. According to Maharashtra Pollution Control Board (MPCB), Sulphur Dioxide (SO₂), Nitrogen Oxide (NO₂), Carbon Monoxide (CO), Hydrocarbons (HC), Ammonia, Suspended Particulate Matter (SPM) and Respirable Suspended Particulate Matter are the common factors which cause air pollution. They are generated by transport/vehicles, fuel combustion, burning of residuals and fossils etc. Vehicles emit large quantity of Nitrogen Oxide, Hydrocarbons, Carbon Monoxide and also Sulphur Dioxide. They are very harmful for human beings as the emissions remain at the ground level. This affects the quality of the air.

Construction work

Construction work, in addition, creates lot of cement contaminated dust. Cement contains Silica (sand) and Chromium, which is cancerous for lungs. In Mumbai, the rampant construction work, redevelopment and demolition adds to air pollution. In addition, the solid waste is carried in open trucks. Roads are dug up very frequently by Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL), Bruhan-Mumbai Mahanagar Palika and Mahanagar Gas. It creates lot of dust and Suspended Particulate Matter (SPM), which contaminate air. In addition, it also creates a lot of trouble for road transport resulting in traffic snarls. Construction of bridges and metro leads to air pollution and worst traffic jams. For Metro construction, many old trees are felled, which further aggravates the problem of air pollution.

Open burning and fires

Another factor adding to Mumbai air pollution is open burning and frequent fires on dumping grounds/landfills. Burning of Solid Waste in open area is a common sight in Mumbai. In many slums, tyres are burnt, which create huge amount of smelly black smoke that contaminate the air. Leaves of trees and small branches, waste papers and clothes are burnt on streets. NEERI report states that open burning contributes 19% of air pollution as it emits CO, PM and HC on a large scale (Kaur, 2017). More than twice as much Particulate Matter is emitted by open burning. At many places in Mumbai, solid waste is thrown on the roads. Due to carelessness of some people, other citizens of Mumbai have to breathe the polluted air, as this solid waste emits pollutants (Methane and Hydrogen Sulphide).

Growth of vehicles in Mumbai (Sen, 2018)

Year	Total No. of Vehicles (in Lakhs)	Private cars (in Lakhs)	Two wheelers (in Lakhs)
1980-81	3.2	99200	1.76
1986-87	5.1	1.58	2.8
1990-91	5.8	1.8	3.2
1996-97	7.6	2.3	4.18
2000-01	10.29	3.65	5.5
	>first million		
2006-07	15.03	4.64	7.93
2007-08	16.04	4.92	8.59
2008-09	16.74	5.03	9.18
2009-10	17.67	5.14	9.8
2010-11	18.70	5.5	10.44
2011-12	20.28	6.21	11.31
	>second million		
2012-13	21.87	6.72	12.35
2013-14	23.32	7.23	13.29
2014-15	25.71	7.97	14.7
2015-16	28.19	8.5	15.96
2016-17	30.69	9.2	17.72
	>Third million		

***Includes all vehicles such as cars, two wheelers, taxis, autos, buses, school buses and trucks.**

The above table is self-explanatory. The vehicle number in Mumbai has increased tremendously. In 1980-81, there were only 3.2 lakh vehicles. It took two decades, to cross the lakh number (2000-01). But within a decade, the vehicle number crossed the second million (2011-12). Hereafter the growth was very fast. Within seven years we crossed the number of 30.69 lakhs. Currently more than 32 lakh vehicles are on the roads of Mumbai!! In the year 2016-17, everyday 685 vehicles were registered!! Currently the number has crossed 700 registrations per day.

This is due to easy EMIs for cars and two wheelers. Nationalized and private banks are promoting car loans. Many financial institutions are offering loans without any tedious paper work. It has become very easy to get loan for purchase of vehicles. Having a vehicle has also become a status symbol, and not a necessity. Vehicle producing companies are also promoting cars and two wheelers. In some families, each member has individual vehicle!! Every now and then, almost every year new models are introduced in the market. In each model some new features are added,

which attract/tempt consumers. Earning capacity of people has also increased. All these factors have led to the increase in the number of vehicles on the roads of Mumbai. Unfortunately, the width of roads of the Mumbai are same, rather they have reduced due to pavements on the road sides and vehicle parking on roads. This ultimately has increased the problem of pollution and traffic. Traffic congestions on the roads increase pollution, as vehicles emit more CO & NO₂. Vehicles burn more fuel for short distance and emit more toxic gases (NEERI, 2010).

In the late 2018, the number of app-based taxis such as 'Meru', 'Uber', 'Ola' and 'Cool-cabs' have increased. Additionally, the number of school buses and two wheelers has also increased. This is the basic reason for traffic snarls resulting in air pollution.

Many vehicles including BEST buses, State Transport buses (ST) and private cars/two and three wheelers, do not do maintenance (PUC) regularly. Many of them are of older make, which have hardly any emission control device installed on them. As a result, they bleed black smoke whenever they are on the roads. It becomes difficult for pedestrians to walk on footpaths as this smoke irritates eyes and results in immediate coughing. Poor governance is also responsible for increase in pollution as laws are not properly executed by RTO. Air pollution problem is becoming more serious because of political interference. Anti-pollution laws exist but they are not properly implemented.

Effects of air pollution

Breathing polluted air has adverse effects on the health of human beings. The contaminated air loaded with harmful gases and particles affect heart, lungs and digestive system. The Environment Status Report (2010) published by BMC states that increased amount of PM causes cancer. High levels of SO₂ and NO₂ causes chronic respiratory problems. Excess Sulphur Dioxide (SO₂) in the air can cause respiratory illness, breathing problems, reduce functioning of lungs, cardiovascular problems, etc. NO₂ also causes respiratory problems because it inflames the lining of the lungs. This results in cough, cold etc.

The biggest dumping ground in Mumbai for solid waste is at Deonar, which is closer to Govandi, Chembur, Ghatkopar, Mankhurd and Navi Mumbai. A recent study by the Environmental Pollution Research Centre (EPRC) found that about 10% of the population of Chembur suffers from bronchitis and respiratory distress caused by pollution. The study found that Sulphur dioxide levels have fallen in recent years, whereas nitrogen dioxide levels have risen.

Suspended Particulate Matter (SPM) has increased in Mumbai's air. This results in various respiratory diseases including bronchitis, asthma attacks, pneumonia, lung cancer and heart diseases. Young children are more prone to these diseases. Pregnant women if exposed to these particles give birth to children with disabilities,

lower IQ and premature deaths (International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) (Kaur, 2017).

High levels of toxic pollutants such as ammonia, lead, nickel and NO₂ too cause respiratory problems to human beings.

Recommendations

Mumbai before it becomes a “**gas chamber**”, we need to take strict steps to stop air pollution. Anti-pollution laws exist but are not properly enforced. In the year 2000, with the order of Hon’able High Court, Mumbai, Lal Committee was formulated, which has given recommendations to reduce the air pollution in Mumbai. Some of these recommendations still applicable are included here. Followings are some of the recommendations which will help to reduce air pollution, if implemented properly.

- All vehicles should use either CNG or LPG. It can be done in phased manner. It should begin from private cars, as the number of private cars is increasing rapidly then the public transport should be considered. Efforts should be taken to reduce fuel consumption per unit distance. This will reduce sulphur quantity from the air.
- Adulteration of fuel should be strictly avoided. Stringent operations should be done to find adulteration of fuel and severe punishments should be given.
- Synchronization of signals is a must. This will help to smooth traffic and reduce traffic jams.
- Vehicle parking on the roads, in front of shops should be strictly banned and un-complying cases should be heavily penalized. Strict and regular fines will reduce indiscriminate parking.
- Paid multi-storied parking should be made available at various places in Mumbai. This will again help to reduce traffic congestion.
- Parking charges and road taxes should be increased. No vehicle should be allowed to park on the road.
- BMC can introduce a Smartphone app and publish air monitoring data. It can also give information about various activities carried out in the city to reduce air pollution. They should include awareness creating activities such as street plays, *nukkad nataks*, poster exhibitions, slogans display, debates on air pollution and environmental issues. Mumbaikars should not only become recipients of information, but also be important information providers.
- The enhanced air quality can be communicated to the public via website, mobile devices and twitter. Local people should be able to link to this information to seek locally relevant information, supplemented by monitoring data.
- BMC needs to develop an extensive version of communication system to create public awareness. It should develop website to inform about the air quality information under a single portal. It should organize information campaigns to create awareness in children as well as adults regarding the

effects of air pollution. Media has a very significant role to play in creating awareness; hence it should be included at all the levels.

- Information collected through various air monitoring centres should be disseminated to public in an understandable form (language). Along with this, it should also provide health specific advice. For example, if PM10 in the air is very high, asthmatic people should be warned not to go out unless very urgent.
- BMC can have a separate web pages and mobile web pages dedicated to air forecasting. This programme will give the public an ambient air quality forecast for today, tomorrow and the day after. This could enable all citizens and particularly those in sensitised groups to plan in advance to take informed decision about their activities.
- BMC can publish ward-wise monthly air bulletins.
- Public transport should be promoted, by reducing its cost/charges. Its frequency and punctuality should be increased. Low cost, easily accessible, faster and comfortable travel qualities should be embedded in public transport policy.
- Public transport should be improved on a war foot basis. BEST can prepare an app, which can easily give information to commuters about the location and where about of buses. Separate lanes should be dedicated to BEST buses only.
- Traffic rules should be made more strict and synchronized, which will reduce congestion.. During peak hours, one way system could work better. Separate lanes can be dedicated to two, three and four wheelers.
- Traffic management should be improved. Vehicles emitting black smokes should be fined. This can be viewed through CCTV at each signal. (Effective methods of monitoring and improving prescribed emission norms should be strictly followed).
- Spot and surprise inspection of vehicles should be done and if found exiting emission of smoke, should be charged/penalized.
- BMC should improve the road conditions on a war level. By using modern technology, they can repair the roads. They should take guarantee from the contractors, who repair roads, for at least for five years.
- BMC can introduce rewards at ward level. The less polluted ward should be given this award (based on zero burning, number of awareness programmes executed, air quality report etc.)
- Older vehicles (may be above 15-20 years) should be scrapped. If some of them pass fitness and emission test, they can be allowed on a condition that they pay higher tax.
- Separate rules for construction work be prepared and implemented to reduce the dust.
- Contractors, leaving debris and other scrap material on roads, should be heavily punished. Large scale construction and demolition of buildings in the city create high quantity of dust. This contaminates air leading to health

impacts. These practices need adequate rules and compliance to reduce emissions.

- Mumbai should have more stations to record quality of air at almost in all wards. This will help to understand the quality of air in various areas, based on which actual action can be taken. It will also help to compare the data to know which area has worst air pollution. In other words, BMC should provide more comprehensive, localised air quality information linked to public health advice. This will help the local authorities and policy makers to identify and investigate local air quality issues. This will also help to frame national policy and local policies towards a future of cleaner air in the city.
- There should be coordination between MTNL, other private telephone companies, Mahanagar gas & BMC. Road digging should happen once in awhile by prior information to citizens (public announcement).
- BMC has sweepers who sweep the roads. At some places private contract is given for this purpose. All these sweepers should be well trained. Currently, while sweeping roads, lot of dust is raised in air. This creates problems for pedestrians. Latest technology could be used for sweeping purpose.
- Tax on private vehicles should be increased. Simultaneously carpooling should be promoted / encouraged.
- Henceforth January 2019 onwards, heavy taxes should be imposed on purchase of new vehicles. Like in Japan, those who want to purchase a new vehicle, have to prove that they have enough space for parking- both at residence as well as at work place. This will definitely reduce parking on roads.
- Awareness about ill-effects of air pollution should be created on a large scale. Actions taken by the BMC and other people should be given due publicity.
- Each and every media should announce air quality in the city. Issues related air quality should be discussed to encourage individual participation in improving air quality.
- Mumbaikars should be involved at all stages- right from preparation of action plan to implementation of it. Without their cooperation, no plan will be successful. Public awareness should be created by using various media – print, electronic, electric and social media. There should be continuous hammering of messages to stop air pollution. Cases, which break the laws, should be highlighted in media with the punishment given to them.
- Open burning of wood, tyres, and residues of tree and fires on dumping grounds should be stopped immediately. Laws should be strictly implemented.
- More trees should be planted in open areas and along the road sides, wherever it is possible. In other words, urban green areas need to be increased. This will help to fix carbon density.
- Monitoring of industries for air pollution norm compliance should be done on a regular basis.
- Industries should be encouraged to use renewable sources of energy.

Conclusion

Air pollution has emerged as an alarmingly serious problem worldwide, affecting the health of the people. Air pollution is damaging our ecosystem and thus destroying the plants and animal life. There is a dire need to prevent this to save our planet. Ironically, we are responsible for this. Our greed for materialistic wellbeing is responsible for this. The growth of Industry, agriculture, power plants, automobiles and other domestic sources have aggravated this problem. We need to take immediate action otherwise our future generations will never forgive us for our actions. It is high time for us to understand our responsibility to save mankind and this beautiful planet-Earth. The sustainable air quality goals can be achieved by a continuous process of updating knowledge, taking action and taking review of the benefits accrued. Let us all take a small step to save this world.

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Assessment of Entrepreneurial Traits and Induction of Achievement Motivation through Training among Women of Self-Help Groups for Development of Financial Literacy

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Abstract

India represents the fastest growing country in global economy. Half of the population in country is of women. Women are engaged in various income generating activities in unorganized sectors. Participation of women in the economy would enhance their economic well being, hence raising the economic potential of the country. Self Help Groups (SHGs) are considered as an innovative institution that foster empowerment of rural women. SHGs represent an approach which combines access to low-cost financial services along with a process of self management and development for the women members. The study looks at the entrepreneurial practices of women SHG members who are a part of the group in anticipation of their empowerment. Primary data was collected using socio- economic status scale and entrepreneurial talent scale. On the basis of the findings that revealed their limited knowledge about entrepreneurship, how to initiate it and the risk involved. 141 SHG members from different groups are selected for the study. The study presents about the acceptance of enterprise for their empowerment focusing on the role of SHG in women empowerment.

Keywords : Self-Help Groups, Women empowerment, Entrepreneurship, Vocational training, Rural Women

The greatest challenge for any democratic country is to provide equal status to women regarding social justice, education, and health facilities along with this, economic opportunities to promote better living standards and social progress. Women empowerment has become a burning issue all over the world, since last few decades. For the nation's economic development and social upliftment, a necessary condition is women empowerment. The word 'women empowerment' is first announced in

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2001 in India. According to census report, 2011, 82.14% literate people are male and only 65.46% female are literate, indicate the fact that educated society is dominated by male in India. Education is considered as an important factor for empowerment; hence emphasis on education is another factor which is important for better entrepreneurs.

Women empowerment and economic development are closely interrelated. While development itself will bring about women empowerment, empowering women will bring about changes in decision making, which will have a direct impact on development. Contrary to what is claimed by some of the more optimistic policymakers, it is, however, not clear that a one-time impulsion of women rights will spark a virtuous circle, with women empowerment and development mutually reinforcing each other and women eventually being equal partners in richer societies. On the one hand, economic development alone is insufficient to ensure significant progress in important dimensions of women's empowerment, in particular, significant progress in decision-making ability in the face of pervasive stereotypes against women's ability. On the other hand, women empowerment leads to improvement in some aspects of child welfare (health and nutrition, in particular), but at the expense of some others (education).

Review of Literature

There are studies available on different aspects of development of self help group women. Some studies dealt on methodological issues and some are based on empirical analysis. The researcher tried to review the following studies:

Narang, Uma (2012), stated in a study that SHGs have been identified as a way to alleviate poverty and women empowerment. And women empowerment aims at realizing their identities, power and potentiality in all spheres of lives. But the real empowerment is possible only when a woman has increased access to economic resources, more confidence and self motivation, more strength, more recognition and say in the family matters and more involvement through participation. Sahoo. Ansuman, (2013) emphasizes on the fact that it is necessary to empower the women more and more in social, cultural, economic, political and legal matters, for the interest of the family in particular and the nation in general. Das. Eli and D. Baishya (2015), finds in their study that micro finance through self-help group is helping the poor and upgrading women empowerment by making them financially strong. SHGs have increased their habit of savings and investment in some developmental activities. Nazir. Tabasum, Naheed Vaida and Mustaq Ahmed Dar (2012), reached to the fact that vocational training courses play a positive role in the empowerment of rural women. Women beneficiaries after going through vocational training programmes and adopting the recommended techniques became independent women and socially, economically, psychologically empowered. Dr. Dash. M. K. (2013), conducted a

study in Odisha emphasizing that woman empowerment is a two way process in which women empower and get empowered.

Methodology

Type of research: The study is based on descriptive type of research.

Sources of data: The study is based on primary data collected through a field survey in the study area. Data were collected with the help of standard scales on Socio economic status and entrepreneurial talent scale.

Area of sampling: The study was conducted in four villages of Bhathut Block in Gorakhpur district. Eleven Self Help Groups formed from three to four years before and running properly were randomly selected for the purpose of the study. 141 women members were included in the study.

Village	Budha Deeh		Ashrafghar		Amva				Tarculahai		
SHG	Laxmi	Parvati	Krishna	Radha	Ambedker	Durga	Shiv	Hariyali	Jai Ma Kali	Laxmi	Buddha
No. of members	12	12	11	11	13	16	15	12	12	12	13

Data analysis: The data collected is represented with the help of tabulation method.

Findings of the Study

The groups found in the region were dominated by the various communities under schedule caste. Some poor families of other backward caste were also included in the groups.

Table-1: Age group of Self-Help Group Members

S. No.	Age group (yrs)	No. of members	Percentage (%)
1	20-30	33	23.04
2	30-40	58	41.13
3	40-50	31	21.99
4	50-60	19	13.48
Total		141	100

Age is considered as an important variable of socio-economic status through which one can be empowered. Young age women show more interest in group formation and group activities.

Table-2: Type of Family of Self-Help Group Members

S. No.	Type of family	No. of members	Percentage (%)
1	Joint family	39	27.66
2	Nuclear family	102	72.34
Total		141	100

Majority of them were belong to nuclear families (72.34%) because of their not so well economic conditions, as soon as they get married the couple get separated from their parents. They earn their own livelihood and live as nuclear family.

Table-3: Literacy Status of Self-Help Group Members

S. No.	Literacy status	No. of members	Percentage (%)
1	Illiterate	59	41.84
2	Can sign only	56	39.71
3	Primary education	7	4.96
4	Secondary education	9	6.38
5	High school	7	4.96
6	Intermediate	3	2.13
Total		141	100

Literacy status was found very poor. The percentage of illiterate members was more but after joining the group many of them became able to do their signatures. Still 41.84% of them were still illiterate. Those who have formal education hold the responsible position in the group.

Table-4: Occupation of Self-Help Group Members

S. No.	Occupation	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Working as farm labor	10	7.09
2	Assisting in family farm work	39	27.66
3	Housewife	56	39.72
4	Other	36	25.53
Total		141	100

Most of the women members were housewives. Those who are working were involved in farm work and were also engaged in other activities (MANERGA card holders). Working members have seasonal engagements and were have lot of free time available.

Entrepreneurial traits were assessed on the basis of their risk taking, achievement motivation, leadership, self concept, capability for persuasion, attitude towards entrepreneurs and problem solving (using scale).

22% of them were found having above average level of entrepreneurial talent whereas 28% of them having average level of it (table: 5). Counseling sessions were made with the group members, discussing about the benefits of entrepreneurship and its scope.

Table-5: Entrepreneurial Talent

Level of Entrepreneurial Talent	Percentage (%)
Extremely high	-
High	1
Above average	21
Average	28
Below average	26
Low	20
Extremely low	4

Counselling regarding activities

The second face of the study was the counseling sessions about developing entrepreneurial traits among the women members. A four day long interaction cum training was planned and executed. The activities started with ice-breaking session. The individuals were introduced with their various sources of income. Majority of them were known with their definite sources of income. Next emphasis was laid on their monthly expenses. It was found that they were unknowingly expenses which they do not consider as their expenditure. Saving patterns except the SHG savings were very uncertain. The concept of savings was not in their priority list as they assume that their income is sufficient to fulfill their basic needs. The first day concludes with the concept of income, expenditure and savings.

The next day starts with the concept of time management techniques. Although most of them were housewives but all of them were having a lot of leisure time which they left as unproductive. The emphasis was laid on the use of leisure time by the women members whom they could easily manage with their household chores. As all of them were not having sound family financial status and all of them were belonging to similar background, they were exposed to understand the importance of team work. They were helped to know the special abilities that their team members have and the way they could utilize it.

Next day starts with the interaction about various possible income generating activities which were feasible at their level and abilities. The effective investment strategies of business were then explained in detail with their proper involvement. The session was concluded with the success stories of other SHGs in India.

Last day different groups were formed according to their area of interests. Training with the subject specialist was conducted. Training was imparted poultry, snacks

items and candle making. The items and materials required to initiate the activity was provided to the members.

Conclusion

The above study on rural SHG women in Gorakhpur district revealed the fact that self help group gives strength to the rural women to take bold decisions. The living condition doesn't seem to change but the attitude towards them experiences a definite growth. Majority of the group members belongs to Schedule cast community, having poor literacy state, and poor socio-economic status. Majority of them have average entrepreneurial traits. After joining the group, they become bold enough to express their own issues in front of others, experiencing socially more popular and develop self-reliance and self- confidence.

After having interaction cum training exposure, following points was concluded:

Their knowledge about entrepreneurship has increased, now they know basic information about risk involved in any business activities. They were ready to initiate any group activity as income generating one. Now they have some knowledge about marketing for their venture, confident about arrangement for financing low budget venture. Confidence level increased after receiving training and required materials for their venture.

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**Coping Mechanism of Parents
with Differently Able Children
With
Special Reference to Kolkata,
West Bengal**

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Abstract

The study deals with the effectiveness of different types of Coping Mechanism adopted by the Parents having differently able children in Kolkata, West Bengal. The conceptual framework of the study was based on Family System Theory (Seligman and Darling, 1997), Health Realisation Theory (Roger C. Mills and George Pransky, 1980) and Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory of Coping (1999). The Researcher adopted Proportional Stratified Simple Random Sampling in order to collect sample (N = 400, Fathers (N₁) = 200, Mothers (N₂) = 200) from the Parents with four types of differently able children (Visual Impairment, Intellectual Disability, Hearing Impaired and Autism). Single Parents with differently able children were excluded from the study. The study found that the most useful Coping Mechanisms of the Parents with differently able children were Active Avoidance, Seeking Relaxing Diversion, Seeking Social Support, Self-efficacy, Information seeking, Institution based Coping, Self-controlling, Positive Reappraisal, Seeking Alternative Reward and Distancing. On the other hand, Wishful Thinking, Escape Avoidance, Physical Recreation, Dwell on the Negative were listed as less useful Coping Mechanisms adopted by the Parents with Differently able children. Statistically significant gender difference was also found between Fathers and Mothers of the differently able children with respect to their Seeking Alternative Reward (p=.004), Seeking Relaxation Diversion (p=.005), Improved Relationship (p=.006), Self-efficacy (.006), Information Seeking (p=.007), Positive Reappraisal (p=.007), Positive Reframing (p=.007), Self-controlling (p=.008), and Restraint Coping (p = 0.009) at the 1% level. On the other hand, statistically significant difference was found between Fathers and Mothers with differently able children with reference to Logical Analysis (p=0.030), Transformation (p=0.038), Active Avoidance (p = 0.015), and Institution Based Coping (p=0.046) at the 5% level.

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Keywords

Disability, Coping Mechanism, Visual Impaired, Hearing Impaired, Intellectual Disability, Autism

Introduction

The Census 2001 has revealed that over 21 million people in India are suffering from one or the other kind of disability. This is equivalent to 2.1% of the population. Among the total disabled in the country, 12.6 million are males and 9.3 million are females. The disability rate (number of disabled per 100,000 populations) for the country as a whole works out to be 2130. This is 2,369 in the case of males and 1,874 in the case of females. Among the five types of disabilities on which data has been collected, disability in seeing at 48.5% emerges as the top category. Others in sequence are: In movement (27.9%), Mental (10.3%), In speech (7.5%), and In hearing (5.8%).

The disabled by sex follow a similar pattern except for that the proportion of disabled females is higher in the category of seeing and hearing. Across the country, the highest number of disabled has been reported from the state of Uttar Pradesh (3.6 million). Significant numbers of disabled have also been reported from the state like Bihar (1.9 million), West Bengal (1.8 million), Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra (1.6 million each). Tamil Nadu is the only state, which has a higher number of disabled females than males.

According to the National Health Survey, approximately 3 to 5% of the population of children are suffering from physical, intellectual and mental disabilities. Children with hearing and visual impairment form a major chunk among the disabled population. In the age group of 0-9, there are 7,22,074 children suffering from hearing impairment, 6,36,277 from visual impairment, 2,45,313 from speech impairment, 3,28,005 from movement disorder, 1,85,120 from Mental Retardation and another 3,45,95 from Mental illness. As per the information provided by the HRD Ministry (2013-14) 25,03,907 children with special needs were enrolled in schools. Besides 2,06,713 children with profound/severe ID with special needs were covered under home-based education.

The birth or diagnosis of a differently abled child in a family gives rise to a situational crisis. The problems of parents to deal with their differently able children thereafter become a great challenge. It results from an unanticipated, traumatic event beyond parents' control (Hoff 1978). They suffer from anxiety, emotional disturbances, physical & psychological stress and subsequently show depression symptoms. Depressive symptoms, stress and emotional pressure have been cited by WHO (2001) as having the highest disease burden of all health conditions among parents having disabled children, impairing their social and physical functioning. These in turn sometimes lead to suicide, parental separation, increased health care costs, morbidity, and mortality.

Coping Mechanism is primarily a psychological concept related to struggle with demands, conflicts and emotions. In other words coping is an action-orientated and intrapsychic effort to manage environments and internal demands, and conflicts among them, which tax or exceed a person's resources. It also includes defense mechanisms adopted by the individuals to cope with the stressful events of life. Webster (1977) suggested that the Parents having differently able children experience more crisis than other parents. The crisis can take the following three steps: Firstly, The change crisis: This crisis takes place immediately after the diagnosis of the disability in the child. The parents are full of expectation for the birth of a normal child, and when they are informed about the disability, all their dreams are ruined, causing the traumatic reactions.

This crisis is not a reaction to the handicap itself; rather, it is a reaction to the sudden change of reality. Secondly, The ideological crisis: The change crisis is comparatively short; however, after the parents have digested the news, they must confront this experience every day. This confrontation gives rise to strong emotional reactions, and therefore, leading to an ideological crisis for a longer period of time. Such characteristic reactions as guilt, shame, over protection, and grief appear at this stage. Thirdly, The reality crisis: This crisis is directly related to the objective difficult conditions of bringing up a child with disability. The parents with differently able children face numerous difficulties i.e. financial, social and care giving responsibilities that influence their ability to manage the problem. McDowell (1976) suggested that parents progress through six emotional stages upon discovering their child's disabilities: disbelief, guilt, rejection, shame, denial, and a feeling of helplessness. To overcome these problems, Parents with disabled children need to utilise effective coping mechanisms.

Conceptual Framework of the Study

The conceptual framework of the study is based on Family system theory (Seligman and Darling, 1997), Health Realisation Theory (Roger C. Mills and George Pransky, 1980) and Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory of Coping (1999). Family System Theory (FST) suggests that family is an emotional unit, so individuals can't be understood in isolation from one another, but rather as a part of their family. Health realization (HR) is a resiliency approach by which aParents with differently able child can cope up with highly stressful circumstances through their life experiences. This theory focuses on innate health and the role of Mind, Thought, and Consciousness in creating the clients' experience of life. On the other hand, Bandura in his Social Cognitive Theory (1999) proposes that individuals do not simply respond to environmental influences, but rather they actively seek and interpret information as appropriate for them in different situations. Individuals function as contributors to their own motivation, behaviour, and development within a network of reciprocally interacting influences.

Need and justification of the study

The need of this study was to explore the challenges parents experience and confront while caring for their disabled children. Therefore there is need for identifying the psychological, emotional, and social problems faced by these parents while living with disabled child in the family. Previous studies on the area of coping mechanisms of the parents have not been adequately explained by the researchers. The study intends to bring fresh insights into these phenomena's and offer appropriate intervention mechanisms.

Statement of the problem

The study is entitled as **“Coping Mechanism of Parents with Differently able Children with special reference to Kolkata, West Bengal”**

Objectives of the study

- (i) To explore the different types of coping mechanisms utilized by the parents with disabled children.
- (ii) To identify the gender differences in coping strategies of Parents, raising children with those selected disabilities.

Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1: Different types of Coping Mechanism of the Parents with differently able children significantly differ with respect to:

- (i) Marital years of the Parents
- (ii) Educational status of the Parents
- (iii) Birth order of the differently able children
- (iv) Monthly income of the Parents

Research Methodology

Population and Sample

The investigators selected greater Kolkata District of West Bengal as the geographical area for the survey. Single Parents and Orphan Children were excluded from the study as they constitute a separate group. The Total population comprised of 826 Parents (Father and Mother). For the purpose of the sample, the investigators adopted 'Proportional Stratified Random sampling method'. The total sample size was restricted to 400 Parents. (Parents with ID/MR children - 36, Parents with VI Children-HI: 46, Parents with HI children: 83, Parents with ASD children :35).

Tools used

The Researcher prepared a Questionnaire (29 sub scales, 102 items) in order to measure the coping mechanism of the Parents with differently able children. Correlation co-efficient (r_{xy}) was found to be + 0.816 with a Cronbach Alfa value of 0.71. It was very high and reliable for the coping mechanism scale of this study. Cliffs' consistency was calculated with the help of Minitab-17 version and Consistency Index Value (C) was found to be 0.64. Coping Mechanisms of the Parents with differently able children were classified here as suggested by Folkman and Lazarus (1988) and British Wikipedia. Coping Mechanism were classified under the four heads: Appraisal-focused, Problem-focused, Emotional-focused and Occupation-focused.

Analysis and Interpretation of data

Analysis and Interpretation of Objective No.1.

The Mean value of the total sample ($n=400$) indicates clearly the amount of Coping Mechanism utilised by the Parents having differently able children. SD values were also calculated to find out the spread of the distribution of the data over the Mean value.

Referring to Table-1, we can see that the Mean and SD values of the total sample for Appraisal-focused Coping were 8.2 and 3.9 respectively, indicating their effectiveness in controlling an unhealthy situation while dealing with a differently able child. In this case, Seeking Alternative Reward (11.4 ± 6.2) was found to be helpful for those Parents followed by self-blame, Dwell on the Negative, Passive Appraisal, and Worry.

Table 1: Mean & SD of Appraisal-focussed Coping Mechanism (Adaptive Cognitive) of the Parents with Disabled children

Appraisal-focussed Coping	Mean \pm SD
1. Dwell on the Negative	6.8 \pm 3.3
2. Self -blame	9.2 \pm 3.8
3. Seeking Alternative Reward	1.4 \pm .6.2
4. Worry	6.1 \pm 2.5
5. Passive Appraisal	6.5 \pm 3.8
Total	8.2\pm 3.9

Problem-focused Coping Mechanism is a mechanism to change and eliminate the source of the stress. Referring to Table-2, we can see that among the problem-focused coping style Parents with differently able children utilised Information Seeking (14.8 ± 6.5) the most, followed by Improve Relationship, Seeking Professional Help, Transformation, Logical Analysis, Restraint Coping, and Confrontation Coping The Total Mean and SD scores for Problem-focused Coping were 10.6 and 4.8 respectively, indicating its much effectiveness for the Parents with Differently able children rather than the Appraisal-focused coping.

Table 2: Mean and SD of Problem-focused Coping Mechanism (Adaptive Behaviour) of the Parents with Disabled Children

Problem focussed coping	Mean ± SD
1. Seek Professional help	10.6 ± 4.8
2. Improve Relationship	12.3±4.6
3. Logical Analysis	9.8±3.6
4. Conflict Resolution	10.4±5.6
5. Confrontive Coping	6.3±3.8
6. Transformation	10.2±6.4
7. Restraint coping	8.6±4.1
8. Information seeking	14.8±6.57
Total	10.6 ±4.8

Emotion-focused Coping Mechanism alleviates the distress by reducing or preventing the emotional components of a stress. Referring to Table-3, we can see that the total Mean and SD scores for Emotional-focused coping were 14.2 and 8.5 respectively. It indicates that Parents with differently able children utilised Emotional-focused coping more than Problem-focused and Adaptive Coping. Among the above mentioned twelve Emotional-focused Coping, Active Avoidance / Distraction and Disengagement (19.8±10.2) placed the highest rank, followed by Seeking Relaxation Diversion (18.6 ± 6.8), Seeing Social Support (16.5 ± 8.8), Self-efficacy (15.2 ± 4.8), Self-controlling (14.5 ± 9.9), Positive Reappraisal (13.6 ± 7.8), Distancing (12.6 ± 6.3), Positive Reframing (10.6 ± 6.5), and Tension Reduction (9.6 ±4.3).

Table 3: Mean and SD of the Emotional-focussed Coping Mechanism of the Parents with Disabled Children

Emotional-focused coping	Mean ±SD
1. Wishful Thinking	6.3±3.5
2. Tension Reduction	9.6±4.3
3. Positive Reappraisal	13.6±7.8
4. Perceived Control	9.4± 6.2
5. Distancing	12.6± 6.3
6. Self-efficacy	15.2±4.8
7. Self-controlling	14.5±9.9
8. Seek Relaxing Diversion	18.6±6.8
9. Positive Reframing	10.6 ±6.5
10. Seeking Social Support	16.5±8.8
11. Physical Recreation	5.6±2.3
12. Seeking Spiritual Support	8.9±7.5
13. Active Avoidance (Distraction &Disengagement)	19.8±10.2
14. Escape Avoidance	8.60 ± 5.6
Total	14.2 ± 8.5

With respect to Occupation and Institution based Coping Mechanism of the Parents with differently able children, the total Mean and SD scores were 10.2 and 5.4 respectively. As shown in Table 4, Institution based Coping was found to be more

effective (14.2 ± 6.8) than Work hard and Achieve (7.6 ± 3.2) for the Parents with Differently able children.

Table 4: Mean and SD of Occupation and Institution-based Coping Mechanism of the Parents with disabled children

Occupation and Institution based Coping	Mean \pm SD
1. Work hard and Achieve	7.6 \pm 3.2
2. Institution based Coping	14.2 \pm 6.8
Total	10.2 \pm 5.4

From Table 1 to 4, it was evident that Emotional-focused Coping played a significant role in parenting differently able children, followed by Occupation and Institutional based Coping, Problem-focused coping, and Appraisal-focused Coping.

Analysis and Interpretation of Objective No.2

To identify the gender difference in Coping Mechanism of the Parents with differently able children (Objective 2), the Researcher adopted R^2 , f-test, and p values.

Referring to Table-5 , we can see that among the Appraisal–focused coping, statistically significant difference between Fathers and Mothers of the Differently able children was observed with respect to Seeking Alternative Reward ($p=0.004$, at 1% level and Passive Appraisal ($p=0.063$, at 5 % level).

Table 5: Stepwise Mother-Father discrimination Analysis for Appraisal-focused Coping Variables on Ways of Coping (N=400)

Appraisal-focussed Coping	R^2	F	P
1. Dwell on the Negative	0.245	2.922	0.246
2. Self-blame	0.398	4.986	0.198
3. Seeking Alternative Reward	0.602	4.886	0.004***
4. Worry	0.320	4.202	0.298
5. Passive Appraisal	0.297	2.063	0.063**

As revealed in Table - 6, statistically significant difference was observed between Fathers and Mothers of the Differently able children with respect to Improve Relationship ($p=0.006$), Restraint Coping ($P=0.009$), and information Seeking ($p=0.007$) at 1% level. On the other hand, Logical Analysis ($p=0.030$), and Transformation ($p=0.038$) was found to be significant at 5 % level.

Table 6: Mother-Father discrimination Analysis for Problem-focused Coping Variables on Ways of Coping (N=400)

Problem focussed coping	R²	F	P
1. Seek Professional help	0.635	6.860	0.158
2. Improve Relationship	0.656	7.860	0.006***
3. Logical Analysis	0.548	5.976	0.030**
4. Conflict Resolution	0.438	3.290	0.160
5. Confrontive Coping	0.320	2.122	0.210
6. Transformation	0.548	6.566	0.038**
7. Restraint coping	0.758	7.688	0.009***
8. Information seeking	0.538	8.905	0.007***

As shown in Table-7, statistically significant difference was found between Fathers and Mothers of the differently able children with respect to Seek Relaxation Diversion ($p=0.005$), Self-efficacy ($p=0.006$), Positive Reappraisal (0.007), Positive Re framing ($p=0.007$), and Self-controlling ($p=0.008$) among the Emotion focused coping at 0.1% level. On the other hand, statistically significant difference was found between Fathers and Mothers with differently able children with reference to Active Avoidance ($p = 0.015$) at 5% level.

Table 7: Mother-Father discrimination Analysis for Emotion-focused Coping Variables on Ways of Coping (N=400)

Emotional-focused coping	R²	F	P
1. Wishful Thinking	0.248	3.450	0.320
2. Tension Reduction	0.445	3.980	0.329
3. Positive Reappraisal	0.604	6.340	0.007***
4. Perceived Control	0.340	4.350	0.320
5. Distancing	0.376	2.730	0.130
6. Self-efficacy	0.605	7.680	0.006***
7. Self-controlling	0.602	6.580	0.008***
8. Seek Relaxing Diversion	6.780	7.080	0.005***
9. Positive Reframing	0.320	6.588	0.007***
10. Seeking Social Support	4.300	2.980	2.398
11. Physical Recreation	0.340	2.140	3.345
12. Seeking Spiritual Support	0.540	4.650	0.106
13. Active Avoidance (Distraction &Disengagement)	0.458	4.560	0.015**
14. Escape Avoidance	0.328	4.688	0.380

As shown in Table-8, statically significant difference was found between Fathers and Mothers of the differently able children with respect to Institution Based Coping ($p=0.046$) only at 5% level.

Table 8: Stepwise Mother-Father discrimination Analysis for Occupation-focused Coping Variables on Ways of Coping (N=400)

Occupation and Institution based Coping	R2	F	P
1. Work hard and Achieve	0.340	2.345	0.234
2. Institution based Coping	0.238	3.240	0.046**

Hypothesis Testing

In order to verify the Hypothesis 1, the Researcher adopted Multiple Correlation.

Referring to Table-9, we can see that Self-blame ($r=.623$), Perceived Control ($r=.614$) and Institution based coping ($r=.610$) had substantial positive relationship with birth order of the differently able child in the family. On the other hand, Self-controlling ($r=.398$) and Working hard and Achieve ($r=.267$) had low positive relationship with the birth order of the differently able child in the family.

Table 9: Multiple Correlation of the birth order of the differently able children and different types of coping mechanism

1.Birth Order of the Disabled Children	1.Escape Avoidance	2.Dwell on the Negative	3.Self-blame	4.Seeking Alternative Reward
	-.016 .238	.138 .721	.623** -.324	-.123 .000
5.Worry		6.Passive Appraisal	7.Active Avoidance	8.Seek Professional help
	-.116 .454	-.118 .362	.186 .148	-.153 -.430
9.Improve Relationship		10.Logical Analysis	11.Conflict Resolution	12. Confrontive Coping
	.021 -.120	.116 .366	.078 .212	-0.197 .220
13.Transformation		14.Restraint coping	15.Information seeking	16.Wishful Thinking
	.082 -.323	-.120 .421	.122 .540	-.023 .420
17.Tension Reduction		18.Positive Reappraisal	19. Perceived Control	20.Distanceing
	.080 .526	.004 -.068	.614** -.130	.026 -.438
21. Self-efficacy		22. Self-controlling	23.Seek relaxing Diversion	24.Positive Reframing
	.114 .441	.398* .432	.032 -.240	-.430 .210
25.Social Action		26.Physical Recreation	27. Seeking Spiritual Help	28. Work Hard and Achieve
	.065 .340	-.082 .231	-.136 .331	.267* .360
29. Institution based Coping				
	.610** .760			

****Correlation is significant at the 1% level (2 tailed) * Correlation is significant at the 5% level (2 tailed)**

From Table-10, it was evident that Information Seeking ($r=.626$) and Logical Analysis ($r=.605$) had a 'substantial positive relationship' with the educational status of the Parents with Differently able children. On the other hand, Transformation ($r=.380$),

Positive Re framing ($r=.346$) and Institution based Coping ($r=.390$) had a 'low positive relationship' with the educational status of the Parents with differently able children.

Table 10: Correlation between educational statuses of the Parents with disabled children on different variables of Coping Mechanism

2.Educational Status of the Parents with Disabled Children	1.Escape Avoidance		2.Dwell on the Negative		3.Self –blame		4.Seeking Alternative Reward	
		-.216	.135	-.108	.621	.148	-.338	-.137
5.Worry			6.Passive Appraisal		7.Active Avoidance		8.Seek Professional help	
	-.216	.554	-.126	.000	.106	.000	.253	-.444
9.Improve Relationship			10.Logical Analysis		11.Conflict Resolution		12. Confrontive Coping	
	.022	.310	.605**	-.166	.278	.410	.197	.298
13.Transformation			14.Restraint coping		15.Information seeking		16.Wishful Thinking	
	.380*	.135	.220	.404	.626**	.544	122	.530
17.Tension Reduction			18.Positive Reappraisal		19.Perceived Control		20.Distanceing	
	-.020	.226	.238	.000	-.226	.594	.126	-.338
21. Self-efficacy			22.Self-controlling		23.Seek relaxing Diversion		24.Positive Reframing	
	-.230	.440	-.237	.458	.109	-.435	.346*	-.560
25.Social Action			26.Physical Recreation		27.Seeking Spiritual Help		28. Work Hard and Achieve	
	103	.430	-.029	.450	-.180	.308	.195	-.540
29.Institution based Coping								
	.390*	.690						

* Correlation is significant at the 5% level (2 tailed) ** Correlation is significant at the 1% level (2 tailed)

From Table-11 it was evident that Institution based coping ($r=.440$), and Working Hard and Achieve ($r=.490$) and Tension Reduction ($r=.420$) had a 'moderate positive relationship' with the marital years of the Parents. On the other hand, Conflict Resolution ($r=.378$), Information seeking ($r=.386$), Seeking Relaxation diversion ($r=.236$), and Wishful Thinking ($.387$) had a low positive correlation with the marital years of the Parents with differently able children.

Table 11: Correlation of Marital Years of the Parents with disabled children on different variables of Coping Mechanism

3.Marital years of the Parents with disabled Children	1.Escape Avoidance	2.Dwell on the Negative	3.Self –blame	4.Seeking Alternative Reward
		-.080 .135	-.028 .221	.068 -.288
5.Worry		6.Passive Appraisal	7.Active Avoidance	8.Seek Professional help
	-.216 .554	-.066 .160	.028 .205	.150 -.220
9.Improve Relationship		10.Logical Analysis	11.Conflict Resolution	12. Confrontive Coping
	.022 .310	-.022 .266	.378* .605	.102 .598
13.Transformation		14.Restraint coping	15.Information seeking	16.Wishful Thinking
	.022 .120	-.071 .290	.386* .340	.387* .530
17.Tension Reduction		18.Positive Reappraisal	19.Perceived Control	20.Distancing
	.420* .226	-.088 .224	.056 -.337	.270* .630
21. Self-efficacy		22.Self-controlling	23.Seek relaxing Diversion	24.Positive Reframing
	-.095 .530	.120 -.226	.236* -.206	.056 -.337
25.Social Action		26.Physical Recreation	27 Seeking Spiritual Help	28. Work Hard and Achieve
	.165 .220	-.029 .270	-.049 .227	.490* .106
29.Institution based Coping				
	.440* .000			

* Correlation is significant at the 5% level (2 tailed)

Referring to Table-12, it was found that only Information Seeking Coping ($r=.726$) had 'high positive relationship' with the monthly income of the Parents with differently able children. Logical Analysis, Institution based Coping, Working Hard and Achieve, Transformation, and Restraint Coping had moderate positive relationship with the monthly income of Parents. Besides, Conflict Resolution, Seeking Relaxation Diversion, and Positive Reframing had low positive relationship with the Parents with Differently able children.

Table 12: Correlation matrix on Monthly income of the Parents with disabled children and different variables of Coping Mechanism

4.Monthly Income of the Parents with Disabled Children	1.Escape Avoidance	2.Dwell on the Negative	3.Self –blame	4.Seeking Alternative Reward
		-.126 .335	-.066 .220	-.008 -.106
5.Worry		6.Passive Appraisal	7.Active Avoidance	8.Seek Professional help
	.108 .235	-.006 .320	-.107 .390	.106 .440
9.Improve Relationship		10.Logical Analysis	11.Conflict Resolution	12.Confrontive Coping
	.035 .210	.402* -.166	.296* .310	.029 .20
13.Transformation		14.Restraint coping	15.Information seeking	16.Wishful Thinking
	.480* -.000	.420 -.028	.726** -.144	-.102 .210
17.Tension Reduction		18.Positive Reappraisal	19.Perceived Control	20.Distancing
	-.070 .526	-.008 .260	-.106 .444	.126 -.556
21. Self-efficacy		22.Self-controlling	23.Seek relaxing Diversion	24.Positive Reframing
	-.108 .360	-.152 .288	.288* -.401	.344* -.760
25.Social Action		26.Physical Recreation	27 Seeking Spiritual Help	28. Work Hard and Achieve
	-.103 .220	-.009 .660	.494* -.332	.494* -.332
29.Institution based Coping				
	.440* .706			

*Correlation is significant at the 5% level (2 tailed) **Correlation is significant at the 1% level (2 tailed)

So the H_0 1 was partly accepted and statistically significant relationship was not found between all twenty nine (29) parameter of Coping Mechanism of the Parents with disabled children and four independent variables e.g. Marital years of the Parents, Educational status of the Parents, Birth order of the differently able children and Monthly income of the Parents with differently able children.

Major Findings and Discussion of the results

The findings of the study have significance correlation with Bowen's Family System Theory (1966, 1971) rather than Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory of Coping (1999). With respect to different types of Coping Mechanism of the Parents with differently able children, Emotional-focused Coping was of greater importance, followed by Occupational-focused, Problem-focused, and Appraisal-focused coping. Among the important Coping Mechanism of the Parents having differently able children, Active Avoidance / Distraction and Disengagement (19.82 ± 10.2), Seek Relaxing Diversion (18.6 ± 6.8), Seek Social Support (16.5 ± 8.8), Self-efficacy (15.2 ± 4.8), Information seeking (14.8 ± 6.5), Institution based Coping (14.2 ± 6.8) and Self-controlling (14.5 ± 9.9), Distancing (12.6 ± 6.3), Positive Reframing (10.6 ± 6.5), and Tension Reduction (9.6 ± 4.3) were greatly useful. On the other hand, Wishful Thinking, Escape Avoidance, Physical Recreation, Dwell on the Negative were listed as less useful coping utilized by the Parents with Differently able children. The findings corroborated with the studies conducted by Heaman (1995), Sandhya & Shetty (2015), Morya (2015) who found the significant roles of information seeking, seeking social support, improve relationship, seek relation diversion as coping mechanisms to deal with the stress of the Parents having differently able child in the family. Logical analysis was not found a highly significant Coping style for the Parents with differently able children in the study although it was recommended by Morya (2015) an effective coping mechanism for them.

With respect to gender differences in fathers and mothers of the differently able children, the study found statistically significant difference with respect to Seek Alternative Reward, Seek Relaxation Diversion, Self-efficacy, Improve Relationship, Positive Reappraisal, Positive Re framing, Self-controlling, and Restraint Coping at the 1 % level. On the other hand, statistically significant difference was also found between fathers and mothers of the differently able children with reference to Active Avoidance, Logical Analysis, Transformation, Institution based Coping, and Passive Appraisal at the 5% level.

With respect to the relationship between different types of coping Mechanism and Birth order of the Parents with differently able children, the study found substantial positive relationship towards Self-blame ($r=.623$) and Perceived Control ($r=.614$) and Institution based coping ($r=.610$). On the other hand, Self-controlling ($r=.398$) and Work hard and Achieve ($r=.267$) had low positive correlation with the birth order of the differently able child in the family.

With respect to the relationship between coping mechanism of the Parents with differently able children and their educational status, the study found that Information Seeking ($r=.626$) and Logical Analysis($r=.605$) had substantial positive relationship with the educational status of the Parents. On the other hand, Transformation ($r=.380$), Positive Reframing ($r=.346$) and Institution based Coping ($r=.390$) made 'low positive relationship' with the educational status of the Parents with differently able children.

With respect to the relationship between coping mechanism of the Parents with differently able children and their marital years, the study found that Institution based Coping ($r=.440$), Working hard and Achieve ($r=.490$) and Tension Reduction ($r=.420$) had 'moderate positive relationship' with the marital years of the Parents. Information seeking($r=.286$), Seeking Relaxation diversion, ($r=.236$), Wishful Thinking (.387) etc. had low positive relationship with the marital years of the Parents with Differently able children.

With respect to the relationship between coping mechanism of the Parents with differently able children and their monthly income, the study found that only Information Seeking Coping ($r=.726$) had high positive relationship with the monthly income of the Parents with differently able children. Logical Analysis, Institution based Coping, Work hard and Achieve, Transformation, Restraint Coping etc. had moderate positive relationship with the monthly income of Parents. Besides, Conflict Resolution, Seeking Relaxation Diversion, and Positive Re framing had low positive relationship with the Parents with differently able children. Moawad (2012) also found significant correlation between monthly income of the Parents and Positive Re framing, Information Seeking and Logical Analysis as coping mechanisms.

Suggestions

- (i) Parents with differently able children need to attend different Life Skill Programmes in order to adopt different strategies for Information seeking and seeking relaxation diversion.
- (ii) Parents with differently able children should be encouraged to establish a Parental Association in their locality so that they can actively share their experiences with special reference to using effective Coping strategies such as Active Avoidance / Distraction and Disengagement , Seek Relaxing Diversion, Seek Social Support, Self-efficacy, Information seeking, Institution based Coping and Self-controlling , Distancing, Positive Reframing, and Tension Reduction.
- (iii) Parents with differently able children need to be actively involved in different types of social activities in order to develop their family adaption and cohesion skills with other families.
- (iv) Government as well as NGOs should maintain an inclusive environment so that such type of Parents can easily get professional help with minimum cost.

- (v) As revealed in the study, Gender plays an important role in adopting Coping Mechanism among the Parents with differently able children. Therefore the practitioners should keep in mind the efficacy of gender differences in adopting Coping Strategies among the Parents with differently able children while guiding them.
- a) Mothers utilised Seeking Alternative Reward Coping more than their husbands while raising differently able children. So Mothers with differently able children should be encouraged to make new friends, and help the other parents with similar problems.
- b) Mothers with differently able children utilised Passive Appraisal Coping more rather than their husbands. So they should be encouraged to play a humorous episode in front of other parents and alter the goal of their vision.
- c) Mothers with differently able children utilised the Improve Relationship Coping more rather than their husbands. So they will be encouraged to spend more time with their husbands, friends and differently able children in order to control their mental pressure.
- d) Mother with differently able children utilised the Restraint Coping more rather than their husbands. So they will be encouraged to focus on the problem. They will also be encouraged to take the problem seriously and develop effective planning to tackle it.
- e) Fathers with disabled children utilised the Self-controlling Coping more rather than their wives. So they will be encouraged to control every work efficiently. They should come down enough to take an action. They should maintain enough control and autonomy to tackle a bad situation. Controlling over technology is also another important strategy to utilise the Self-controlling Coping while raising a child with disability.
- f) Fathers of the differently able children utilised the Logical Analysis Coping more rather than their spouses (Bandura, 1988). So they need to be encouraged to anticipate new demands that will be placed on them.
- g) As revealed in the study, Mothers of the differently able children utilised the Transformation Coping more rather than their husbands. So Mothers of the children with disabilities need to be encouraged to view the problem in a favourable light. They may participate in religious activities to overcome their daily hassles.

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Reflecting and Revisiting Youth in Society: Clash of Desires and Demands

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Abstract

Kerala – a state in India, known for the better performing state in terms of development and welfare to the people, still lacks clarity in dealing with its young people. This study is a hybrid research comprising a section which is purely qualitative in nature trying to capture testimonials of young people in Kerala, India, along with which a minor survey conducted. The study tries to capture and present the perception of young people, with special reference to unemployment, under-employments and the lack of opportunities for higher studies. Young people need a variety of experiences to develop to their full potential. Youth work provides them space and experience and thus resolving the clash between the desires and demands.

Keywords

Testimonials, Unemployment, Desires, Demands.

The Government of India officially defines youth as persons between the ages of 13 and 35 years and it also varies depending on the programme. Whereas the National Youth Policy 2012 (Draft) aims to cover the age-bracket of 16-30 years¹ increasing binder and investment to backing the provision of youth work services and there is an on-going debate on professionalization of youth work internationally. Youth work is relatively new profession where it helps young people learn about themselves, others and society, through informal educational activities which combine enjoyment, challenge and learning.

Emerging indication does suggest that youth work as part of the wider youth development sector has the potential to impact on the lives of young people (Young, 2005; Merton, et al., 2004²² Young, K. (2005). People with potential, not people with problems: An evaluation of voluntary sector projects working with disengaged young

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people. Leicester, England: National Youth Agency) and that operative youth work has the potential to increase benefits in the life of the young person and empower them and youth workers, work typically with young people. Their work seeks to promote young people's personal and social development and enable them to have a power of speech, inspire and space in their communities and society as a whole. There are lot of reasons, which hinders the growth of Youth work as a profession few among them are:

- Although social service professionals are providers of youth development services they seldom prioritize young people as their primary target group
- There is a delay in finalizing the professionalization process despite international evidence showing that this field is worthy to be designated as a profession (Hahn & Raley, 1998:393; Maunders, 2006:24). This indicates the importance of research on the dynamics of youth and other related issues
- Less research and qualitative understanding of problems and concerns of different sub sections of youth in India

Methodology

Touching on the need for the deliberations on the qualitative excerpts the study is a hybrid research comprising a section which is purely qualitative in nature trying to capture testimonials of young people in Kerala, India, along with which a minor survey has also been conducted. The perspectives of youth on unemployment, under-employment, lack of opportunities for higher studies and familial and financial, illiteracy. Focus groups were designed to include a youth centred participatory approach and were adapted as required in response to the objectives of study. A total of 298 young people took part in focus groups.

The questionnaire is designed with the help of the experts who been working with different sections of young people in Kerala. The questionnaire was also tested and validated.

Discussions

FGD participants were asked about their employment status and their perception about the current employment trend and challenges. According to Jackson (1999³³Jackson, T. (1999). Differences in psychosocial experiences of employed, unemployed, and student samples of young adults. *The Journal of Psychology*, 133(1), 49-60.) being a full time student is a potential alternative to employment in the time of young adulthood. FGD participants were therefore divided into three categories: full-time students, employed and unemployed. The below figure illustrated the major concerns of youth because of the unemployment.

The problem of youth unemployment is present in most states of India. The number of unemployed youth increased considerably for the past few years. The youth share of the total world unemployed now reaches 47 per cent (ILO- International Labour Office). Youth unemployment is a problem not only because of its high prevalence, but also because it can have serious long-term negative consequences. As per the words of young people from

Ernakulam the younger and older adults experience unemployment in different ways. Young people usually do not perceive such financial and role pressure as married middle-aged unemployed people, and unemployment can be therefore less stressful for younger than for older adults (comparatively).

Damaged Self Esteem

Isolating self from socialization

Diverting self to anti-

Getting a job is a must if you want to get married. And without job everything goes wrong in life ... but what to do ..where is those jobs which can satisfy all ??

- FGD participant Thodupuzha

On the other hand, finding a full-time job is important for the transition to adulthood, and unemployment can deteriorate the process of identity formation of young people (Hannan et al., 1997; Reine et al., 2004⁴).

Youth unemployment: 90% of respondents to the quantitative survey ranked this issue in their top three. Many young people that responded to survey and FGD reported a strong desire to work. However many expressed a sense of frustration at how difficult it was for them to enter the labour market - especially those that studied

This issue is important to me because work gives me and other young people a sense of purpose and security

Without employment, it is difficult for us to take the burden of our cost of living away from our parents and take responsibility for our

full time or had limited job experience. Beyond

a means to Income, young people looked at employment for a sense of identity and purpose.

Results of recent studies are contradictory. Reine et al. (2004) found that unemployment is more related to ill health and smoking behaviour in young people than in adults. On the other hand, Breslin and Mustard (2003⁵) reported worsening of mental health among older (31 to 55 years old) unemployed, while these associations were not found among younger people (18 to 30years). The present study focuses especially on young people and their subjective perception.

Alcohol and Drug abuse: 86% of quantitative survey respondents ranked this issue in their top three. Many young people that responded to qualitative FGD and survey showed a sense of pragmatism around the issue of alcohol drinking and drug abuse. They accepted that alcohol is a part of youth culture, but would like Government to

Many of my former friends have destroyed their lives through excessive drinking (and drug use). Not consuming alcohol is considered uncool in many circles and there is significant peer pressure on people to partake in it. There seems to be no simple solution.”

take steps to moderate the negative effects caused by young people drinking to excess

Unemployment among young people has been found to be associated with a number of negative health and personality consequences in many different countries. Kerala is not an exception, young minds are stressed about the financial status during their 20s.

We are sitting on a time bomb... it can explode anytime. We are stressed
- FGD participant from Thrissur

Let us have job oriented education

Promote self-employment

Joblessness can also damaged self-esteem among young people and increased the occurrence of mental distress. Studies also says that the unemployed youth reported more mental health problems than the employed Axelsson &

Ejlertsson, 2002¹). According to de Goede and Spruijt's (1996²) findings from the Netherlands, unemployment is related to poorer mental health, more thought of suicide and more psychological stress, but is not connected with physical health among young adults. As the historical and societal settings in which unemployment occurs are very important in interpreting findings (Winefield & Fryer, 1996³) there is a need for unemployment research in many parts of India.

Reservation based on caste system should be avoided and reservation must be based on family income.

-FGD Participant from Kasargod

Some integrated employment training programmes also must be given along with academics which will help them to tune into the interested area and find a suitable vocation after the course. Therefore our curriculum should be redesigned in such a way. If such programmes are not integrated with such provisions, vocation oriented training must be made during the final year.

- College students from Kozhikode

Today, young people, regardless of their qualifications or level of motivation, are continuing to find it difficult to move into the labour market. Young people require effective provision to ensure they remain engaged with the labour market and do not suffer from the 'wage scarring' commonly associated with long-term unemployment. It is crucial that opportunities are provided for young people to gain experience and confidence, rather than simply allowing them to become accustomed to inactivity and directing self towards antisocial behaviour. Vocational training routes provide young people with valuable opportunities to gain qualifications and receive appropriate training for specific jobs.

Youth specific employment programs

A lack of jobs was highlighted as a barrier to further education and employment by many young people. Transition to work programs are essential to assist young people to gain access to entry level jobs, to provide avenues to higher skilled jobs and to address complex needs for more disadvantaged young people.

Evidence has shown us that we need to work with the specific barriers faced by some young people alongside their employment needs. For young people with complex needs, greater investment and more tailored supports are needed. Kerala Government has already good number of schemes and programmes to address the issue. There is a danger that the most *at-risk* young people (drop outs, slums youth, under educated, youth with no professional education) will not be picked up by the proposed Transitions to Work service. There is a need for complementary programs to support these vulnerable young people in order to avoid the scarring effects of long-term unemployment. A program that targets the most disadvantaged young job seekers would be a welcome addition to the policy framework.

Clusters of youth and their specific problems

Slum youth; Unemployment and identity crisis is most critical among young people, Identity crisis As a result, some youth get lured into antisocial and risk taking behaviours leading to drug abuse and crime. As per the words of young people from Trivandrum;

- they find difficulty in associating “themselves” with the mainstream
- They perceive a self-possessed exclusion from the main stream
- Accessibility to quality education is limited

Transgender youth;

Young people needs to be heard, especially minorities tend to alienate self from the main stream. It is equally important to bring all section together for the social harmony. Young transgender are worried about;

- Identity in social front
- Equality in public- private sector employment
- Denial of higher education opportunities
- Multi sector exclusion

Tribal youth;

Tribal youth from Attappady and Wayanad districts are concerned about;

- Less education and employment opportunity
- Exploitation in name of research studies and documentaries
- Destruction of indigenous culture

IT (Information Technology) professional youth;
IT professional youth are concerned about;

- Work life and stress associated with
- Relationship issues
- Suicide tendency among colleagues

Conclusion

Concerns about youth are at the centre of many policy debates. The future well-being of the country depends on rising a new generation of skilled, competent, and responsible adults. The 2007 World Development Report contends that it has never been a better time to invest in young people living in developed and developing countries. Today's youth are tomorrow's workers, entrepreneurs, parents, active citizens and leaders. Demographic patterns with falling fertility promise to boost growth by raising the share of the population working and increasing

household savings. A window of opportunity exists for rich and poor nations to tap the potential of youth before the aging of societies closes it. One of the consequences of the emerging importance of youth and the new pattern of global trade that started at the beginning of the 1990s was the forging of a deliberate effort to motivate and inspire young citizens/people who are agents of change with the potential for taking a leading role in tackling development challenges for themselves, their families and the society.

Young people need a variety of experiences to develop to their full potential

All youth need an array of experiences to reduce risk-taking and promote both current well-being and successful transition into adulthood. Such experiences include opportunities to learn skills, to make a difference in their community, to interact with youth from multicultural backgrounds, to have experiences in leadership and shared decision making, etc. These experiences are important to all young people, regardless of socioeconomic status, or special needs.

Some young people have unmet needs and are particularly at risk of participating in problem behaviours

Young people who have the most severe unmet needs in their lives are particularly in jeopardy of participating in risk behaviours, such as dropping out of school, participating in violent behaviour, or using drugs and alcohol. Young people with the most severe unmet needs often live in very poor and high-risk neighbourhoods with few opportunities to get the critical experiences needed for positive development. Such youth have a substantial amount of free, unsupervised time during their nonschool hours. Other youth who are in special need of more programs include youth with disabilities of all kinds, youth from troubled family situations, and youth with special needs for places to find emotional support.

Despite these limitations, there is a broad base of knowledge about how development occurs that can and should be drawn on. Research demonstrates that certain features of the settings that adolescents experience make a tremendous difference, for good or for ill, in their lives. The exact implementation of these features, however, needs to vary across programs, with their diverse clientele and differing constraints and missions. Young people develop positive personal and social assets in settings that have the following features:

- Physical and psychological safety and security;
 - Structure that is developmentally appropriate, with clear expectations for behaviour as well as increasing opportunities to make decisions, to participate in governance and rule-making, and to take on leadership roles as one matures and gains more expertise;
 - Emotional and moral support;
-

- Opportunities for adolescents to experience supportive adult relationships;
 - Opportunities to learn how to form close, durable human relationships with peers that support and reinforce healthy behaviours;
 - Opportunities to feel a sense of belonging and being valued;
 - Opportunities to develop positive social values and norms;
 - Opportunities for skill building and mastery;
 - Opportunities to develop confidence in one's abilities to master one's environment (a sense of personal efficacy);
 - Opportunities to make a contribution to one's community and to develop a sense of mattering; and
 - Strong links between families, schools, and broader community resources.
- Since these features typically work together in synergistic ways, programs with more features are likely to provide better supports for young people's positive development.

Although all of these features are key to the success of adolescents and young people, specific settings may focus their priorities differently to meet the developmental needs of particular participants—for example, younger children need more adult-directed structure and supervision than older youth and the skills that one needs to learn in childhood are different from those that need to be learned in adolescence. Supportive, developmental settings, as a result, must be designed to be appropriate over time for different ages and to allow the setting to change in developmentally appropriate ways as participants mature. Positive development is also best supported by a wide variety of these experiences and opportunities in all of the settings in which adolescents live—the family, the school, the peer group, and the community. Still, exposure to such opportunities in community programs can compensate for lack of such opportunities in other settings.

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**Muslim Women and their Path
Breaking Travel towards
Awareness**

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Abstract

The notion of widespread illiteracy among Muslim Women as one of the major constraints towards their march to the path of awareness and empowerment is well accepted now. Sachar Committee's report regarding the plight of Muslims in India has only bolstered the same. This article is the outcome of the author's three decade long involvement in the spread of literacy among the women belong to minority and other marginalised communities which attempts to trace their travel through literacy. The article also quotes a number of examples of great Muslim ladies who faced and fought bravely against religious, social and traditional customs and rose to the zenith as great writers, artists and even social reformers.

Keywords

Minority communities, Muslim Women, Awareness, Literacy.

One day a friend of mine introduced me to his fellow research scholar and said "See, he is a Muslim but modern too". It was an aggression though in the guise of praise. The scholar understood but could not help it. He found himself lonely and surrounded by a society of the so called 'Modernity' which views a Muslim backward, dogmatist and misogynist. However, in reality it is complex and of multi-layer.

But what are the hard facts anyway? Let us take the cognizance of this datum that in Kerala, the gender ratio of boys and girls is 1000: 964 in the age group of 0-6 years. If we see the data in the age group of 6 years and above, it is 1000: 1084. In Tamil Nadu, the gender ratio is 1000 boys: 943 girls in the first group and for the second group it is 1000: 996. If we see the national average it is 1000 boys against 943 girls and the ratio for boys and girls in Muslim community is 1000: 951. Within the age group of 0-6 years, national average is 1000 boys: 918 girls, whereas the ratio of Muslim community in the same age group is 1000 boys: 943 girls. This indicates the fact that the so called traditionalist, misogynist and backward Muslim community is not much interested in reducing the birth of female child.

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Socio-Economic Status of Indian Muslims

The report of Justice Rajinder Sachchar Committee reveals a lot about the socio-economic status of the Indian Muslims. According to the same, at least 62.2% of Muslims in rural India do not possess any land, while the corresponding national figure is 43%. In the urban India, around 60% of the Muslim community remains outside the domain of school education. Graduate among Muslims is 3.1% in urban areas and the figure in the rural areas is only 0.8%.

In the rural area, 94.9% of Muslim families are deprived of free ration facility, 3.2% gets the benefits of subsidized loan and 1.9% reaps the benefits of food subsidy programmes of government. During the investigation, the committee found that in the fields of education and employment Muslims have increasingly falling behind the other communities. Though Muslims constitute 15% of the Indian population (2011 Census data), their representation is only 3% in the Indian Administrative Service, 1.8% in Indian Foreign Service and 4% in the Indian Police Service. The percentage of Muslims in government service is 5.4%. According to National Sample Survey Review of 2011-2012, data of 2001 shows that an average Muslim male and female significantly fallen behind their counterparts in other religion based communities. The picture is uniform in all the states. Literacy rate among the urban Muslims is 19% less than those of other communities. In 2001 among the 7.1 crore Muslims only 55% was literate whereas it was 64.5% for the 46.1 crore non-Muslims. Among 6.7 crore Muslim women only 41% was literate, whereas it was 46% among 43 crore non-Muslim women. In 2011 the national literacy rate was 73%, but the same was 68.5% for Muslims. The number of school going girls was 3% less than those of SC and STs. Only one Muslim girl out of 101 was a graduate while for non-Muslims it was one out of 37 girls. At the national level, presence of Muslims in high school was only 7.2%. In comparison to non-Muslims, 44% less Muslim students study at senior schools and their presence at college level was only 6.5%. Among the graduate Muslims only 16% complete their study at post graduate level. Thus, the said report has placed the socio-economic backwardness of the Muslim community on the platter.

The reports of Sachchar Committee and Justice Rangnath Mishra Commission have exposed the socio-economic status of Muslim community in India and their recommendations, balanced and effective, have paved the way for taking-up many facilitating steps towards the improvement of the community.

Status of Muslim Women

The world celebrates 8th March as 'International Woman's Day' every year. Yet, the day does not have any significance for the thousands of Muslim girls as many perhaps might not have even heard about it. On the one hand our country has been going on with many programmes on women's empowerment, yet a significant half of

the population on the other have remained deprived of most of the basic needs of life. Also while talking about Muslim women we find them minority among the minorities. A close look on them reveals that they struggle a even for the basic human rights like education, health, marriage, service and divorce. At the same time it is observed that over the time many old practices have been changed in Muslim society too but, it is too little in comparison to the corresponding status of women of other religious communities.

Educational Journey of Muslim Women - from home to schools

The history of travails of Muslim women to have their rights and education is a tortuous one. The impact of Modernity that began in the lives of Muslim women in the second half of 19th century certainly initiated great changes in the Muslim society of Bengal and the country at large. Regarding the education of women in their own society old die hard conservatism yielded before the new light. One part of Muslim society including the middle class began to concede that the society cannot march forward if their women remain illiterate. Even the Muslim women themselves started conceding that key to their emancipation is nothing but becoming literate and educated.

It was around 1850 when the great social reformer Jyotiba Phule inspired Savitribai Phule to establish an education centre solely for women the first response came from Usman Sheikh and his sister Fatima. Savitribai Phule and Fatima Sheikh gave the clarion call for women's education while facing stiff opposition from traditionalist social pressure groups. In 1919 Nurunnisa Khatun wrote an article "Education of Women" in the Journal "Sougat" where she said that Muslim girls must have provision to study at home till a separate school for them is established. It was also categorically stated in the article that Muslim women cannot march forward until they have modern education. Some 143 years ago, it was Commilla Girls School established by Faizunnisa Choudhurani (1834—1903) that played a very important role towards spreading education among women in Commilla district of the then East Bengal. Faizunnisa was a divorcee and mother of two children. In 1873 she established one English High School for Girls and also arranged hostel and stipend for the girls. Her contribution in the field of girl's education is unforgettable. While intellectuals like Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and Abdul Latif could not do anything concrete for women's education in the second half of the 19th century, yet a Muslim lady could take that wonderful stride. Thirty-eight years after the establishment of English High School for girls by Faizunnisa, Rokeya Sakhawat Hussain established Sakhawat Memorial School in 1911.

Begum Rokeya Sakhawat Hussain (1880—1932) could do something substantial in the domain of Muslim women's education even in the face of stiff opposition. Her efforts for modernization of education instead of traditional religious lessons for girls exposing the ignorance and lethargy lurking behind burkah system, struggle against traditional customs derived from patriarchal society and moving forward along the

road of modernization compelled her to face the opposition of superstitious religious heads or Mulla and Moulavis. She was not only a pioneer of education for Muslim women but also a progressive thinker and writer. In her novel "Dream of Sultana" she had drawn a mythical picture of a future society based on gender equality. In "Resident of a Seize", a collection of her 47 short stories she depicted the distress of Indian women. Two contemporary magazines — "Saugat" and "Begum" published from 20th July, 1947 at Calcutta played a significant role. Poet Sufia Kamal (b. 1911) was the first editor of "Begum". Her first collection of poems impressed Rabindranath Tagore immensely who encouraged her to write more. She joined Anjuman-e-Khawatin-e-Islam, a society for Muslim women established by Rokeya in 1916 where she became an ardent activist in anti-British movements as well as anti-riot programmes.

The magazine "Begum" became the voice of women in Bengal. Afterwards, the publication was shifted to Dhaka. Formation of "Begum Women Club" provided a common platform to women writers, political activists and cultural personalities with similar ethos. From this forum, women began to raise their voice seeking justice. They, like their counterparts from other religious communities began to demand their rightful share before the whole world. After sometime similar efforts began to occur in other parts of the country also. During the period of awakening of Muslim women in Bengal the name of one Faziltunnesa (1905—1975) came into the forefront. She wrote many stories and articles based on women's emancipation in journals like "Shikha" and "Saugat" regularly.

We must also know about a few more Muslim women who discarded many obstacles and stepped into social movements. For example, in the decade of 1930's All India Women's Conference resolved to defend the women's social and political rights. In 1930-31, when women were not permitted to attend the first Round Table Conference a few women, like Jahanara Shahanawaz, daughter of Muhammad Shafi, a pioneer of awakening of Muslim women in Lahore and Ms. Subramanyam of Madras jointly submitted a memorandum to Round Table Council. Amirunnisa, mother of Shahaanawaz was the founder of Anjuman-e- Khawatin-e-Islam in Lahore who played a very important role in women's movement. In 1935 British government passed an important legislation that extended right to franchise to 60 lakh women. The enactment of law for women's reservation in both provincial council and parliament also took place in the same year. Accordingly, 6 out of 150 seats in provincial council and 9 out of 250 seats in parliament were declared reserved for women. In 1946 there were 14 women during the session of parliament. Among them, Begum Aizaz Rasul (UP), Hasna Mehta (Bombay) and Shayesta Ikramullah (Bengal) were representing Muslim community. Them apart, Begum Kudsiya Ezaz Rasul (Punjab) forcefully opposed burkah and openly said her anguish in the public meetings.

During the 1936 election of joint legislative council she became a candidate in the face of persistent opposition of Ulemas and traditional dogmatist Muslims but she won by a huge margin. Came the decade of 1940 Sharifa Hameed Ali and

Kulsum Sayani in collaboration with progressive organizations fought for women's emancipation and education. In 1939, Sharifa Hameed was appointed member of women sub-committee of National Planning Committee. Kulsum was the main collaborator to Godavari Gokhle during her literacy campaign in Bombay. She launched a newspaper in Bombay with a view to make the non-literate women literate. Hazra Ahamed, an activist of All India Women's Conference joined the Communist Party in 1937 and became the editor of "Roshni" the organ of the women's body of the party. The contribution of Lady Abdul Qadir, Fatima Begum, M. Qureshi and the likes on the occasion of demanding the implementation of a bill enacted in favour of women and also working towards Hindu-Muslim unity was unforgettable.

Organizational Efforts

In 1966 Hameed Dalwai, the social reformer did a yeomen job and a historical effort to deliver constitutional justice to Muslim women. On 22nd March, 1970 he established Muslim Satyashodhak Mandal in Maharashtra. For the last 50 years Muslim Satyashodhak Mandal has been conducting a number of meetings, conferences, agitations and sit-in strikes in nook and corners of Maharashtra on various socio-economic and educational issues of common Muslim. In order to deliver legal rights to Muslim women a movement named 'Women under Muslim Law' has been going on in the international arena. Some fifty Muslim organizations are active in India too which include Muslim Women's Right Council, Hameed Dalwai Study Circle and Muslim Women Forum. Many Muslim countries have changed their statutes in favour of women's rights. In 1999, some activists in Mumbai formed Muslim Women's Rights network. Owing to its internal problem it took a lot of time to activate. In the meantime, BMMA or Bharatiya Muslim Mahila Andolan, a new organization came into being in 2005. This organization of 20,000 members focussed on reforms of conjugal rights and Muslim Personal Law Board. It had also shouldered the responsibility of making the Muslim women aware of their social, legal and political rights and simultaneously, working on tenacious issues like Burkha, polygamy, Halala and Triple Talaq. Another body, named Muslim Women's Forum was formed under the leadership of Saida Hameed. Throughout his life Dr. Asgar Ali Engineer, a well-known Islamic scholar, humanist and standard bearer of secularism had been fighting obsolete and regressive social customs. Having studied the Islamic Law reforms of various countries and interacting with other Islamic scholars he along with Institute of Islamic Studies and Bharatiya Muslim Mahila Andolan (BMMA) submitted an alternative provision to All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) which addressed the issues of Talaq-e-Biddat, Halala Nikah and polygamy from the angle of welfare of Muslim women. But it has not yielded any positive result till date.

That apart, many more organizations like All India Revolutionary Association of Women, All India Democratic Women's Organization and Indian Women's Federation are active on such issues. All of them have a common demand, i.e. the rights of Muslim women must be incorporated into that of Human Rights. These organizations

are determined to prove that Muslim women are no silent decorative dolls. They have their own voice, own dreams, own thoughts, desire and thinking power. Moreover, they are proud of their feelings and dreams. There are 6.50 crore (60.5 million) Muslim women in India, yet they have not emerged as a formidable united force. Widespread illiteracy might be one important cause for this. Gopal Singh Committee constituted in 1983 that categorised Muslims in India as a backward community for their socio-economic backwardness. According to government reports, Muslim women deprived of educational, legal, social and political rights have become marginalised in the country. Economic and social backwardness happen to be the major weakness of these women who follow the traditional way of living. These two are the real root cause of their illiteracy.

It is still difficult to find a proper match for the Muslim women endowed with higher education. Some regressive beliefs, such as co-education might lead the Muslim girls astray or religious teaching along with moral guidance for making a good house wife is the best alternative education have caused the marginalization of Muslim girls in the realm of education in India. This fact has come to light in the government backed study report. It has also revealed that studying until she reaches her teens is enough for a Muslim girl. This report prepared by the Ministry of Women & Child Development with a view to design a plan for the academic progress of Muslim women states that factors like limitation of learning age upto youth, paucity of women teachers, lack of adequate numbers of girls only schools, burkha system, opposition to secular curriculum, early marriage, the dogmatic and obstructionist attitude of the community are the common causes to push the Muslim women away from higher education. Also according to the study, among the Muslim kids of 6 to 13 years of age who do not attend schools the girls happen to be 45%. However, the situation in Rajasthan, Jharkhand, UP, Bihar and Odisha is really bad for the literacy level of Muslim girls. Situation is little better in the southern states, may be due to the impact of social reform movements and evolving large number of technical and commercial institutes. The fear in the Muslim community about difficulty in finding proper match for highly educated Muslim girls has also contributed in keeping their girls away from higher education. They also presume that only a handful of Muslim youth goes for higher education on account of abject poverty and discriminatory approach in government jobs. The study finds that only 12.5% among Muslims are in support of co-education. The proportion of working girls is also less in Muslim community. That apart, a presumption like Muslim girls require only religious education befitting for a girl aspiring to be a model devoted traditional housewife and hence, they do not need any secular or modern scientific education.

Gender inequality in literacy rate is another example. It is true that the average literacy rate of Muslims is lower than the national average. It does not mean that he is not willing to send his children to school. Rather report from some Muslim prevalent areas reveals paucity of adequate schools in that areas. Given the opportunity, Muslim parents are willing to send their children to school irrespective of any gender bias.

Even the 2011 Census data shows the comparatively lower gender gap among the Muslims. National Gender Gap in literacy is 16.2. It means among hundred literates, number of girls happens to be 16.2% less than the boys. On the contrary, the same gender gap among the Muslims happens to be 12.2%. Thus, in the realm of education, Muslim community appears to be less discriminatory between boys and girls.

In Maharashtra Hindus lag behind Muslims in Literacy

A day before presenting the budget for the year 2016-17, Economic Survey Report of 2015-16 was placed in Maharashtra Assembly. According to the report Muslim community has left the Hindus behind in literacy. It states that in Maharashtra Muslims were 11.5% of the total population of which 83.6% literate. However, the corresponding literacy rate among Hindus was 81.8%, though they constitute 79.8% of the state population. However, the Muslim literacy rate at national level was much lower (68.5%) than that of Maharashtra. Christians, a mere 1% of the state population have 92.3% literate people.

Awakening among Muslim Women

It was in 1986, when a Muslim woman Shahabano disturbed the placid and complacent mindsets by asking uncomfortable questions consequent to her petition seeking judicial adjudication of wrongs, the whole country was in turmoil. The society, full of hypocrisy and patriarchal attitude, did not accept this. It was the first spark that created some ambers burning slowly under the complacency of Muslim society at large. Recently, another lady Saira Bano, a victim of triple talaq also knocked at the doors of the Apex court. It was not an isolated incident. Now, there are thousands like this. Muslim women of India are facing such things in their day-to-day lives. However, they are raising their voice now against religious dogmatism and having opposed anti-women customs like triple talaq, Halala and polygamy. Now they seek equitable justice under the constitution of India. On the one hand Ulemas do not accept this and call it a violation of the dictum of Shariyat and on the other the Muslim Women assert that inhuman and unjust customs cannot be defended in the name of religious practices.

To conclude there are some proposals that which may eventually inspire the Muslim women to lend their voice to their own desires, dream and experience. It would also help them to share these with the women of other communities and unite them to fight for building a society based on equity and equality. The suggestions are:

- ◆ Let the Muslim Personal Laws be codified and the customs like unitary divorce (oral or otherwise), polygamy and Halala be abolished with immediate effect. Let the disputes regarding rights of Muslim women be resolved through judicial procedure.

- ◆ Let all the Indian citizens—irrespective of their gender, religion and creed—enjoy equal rights to have similar judicial procedures for doing away with any injustice inflicted upon them. Let a model Uniform Civil Code that conforms to the cannons of our Constitution be designed for open discussion and debate. It would certainly be in the interest of our secular and equality based society. Otherwise, the insecurity of Muslim women would grow.
- ◆ Let there be Family Court at district level and there be provisions— where the family court exists— that women may seek adjudication at divisional level.
- ◆ In order to improve the status of Indian Muslims, the recommendations from Justice Sachchar Committee, Justice Ranganath Mishra Commission and Dr. Mehmud-Ur-Rehaman Committee ought to be implemented in a rigorous and strict manner.
- ◆ Madrasa should have better infrastructural facilities. The modern, scientific and technical curriculum should be emphasized there. Both Din-e-Talim (religious education) and Duniabhi-Talim (worldly learning) should go there simultaneously.

It is the duty of humanism that one should help others to move from darkness of ignorance to the enlightenment or knowledge. Muslim women of India while facing poverty and illiteracy are becoming active in public life. The strong urge to learn and get educated have become quite visible and apparent among the Muslim women of both middle class (emerging since 80's) and lower stratum.

If they, in the 116th anniversary of International Women's Day have come to realise that the path of awakening and awareness run through that of literacy and education, then they are really marching towards empowerment in the real sense. Salute to Muslim Women for their courage and determination.

{This article in original was written in Hindi by the author and the present one is translated version by him.}

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Book Review

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National Consultation on Road to Sustainable Development Goals: National Health Programmes, ISBN: 978-81-937055-8-2 price Rs. 450/- pages 436 by Ms. Heaven Dahiya and published by Kumar Publishing House, Pitam Pura, New Delhi

In her recent publication entitled “National Health Programmes” Ms. Heaven Dahiya has successfully tried to present a comprehensive view of the ongoing health related policy, programmes and schemes being operational in the country. The book, classified into seven chapters provides a good deal of real time information about Major National Health Programmes, International and National Health Agencies, National Health Policies, National Health Acts, Legislation, National Health Committees and various Health Insurance Schemes. It covers thorough details of the policy developments that have happened in recent time’s alongwith a brief narrative on most of programmes and schemes operational in the health sector of the country.

It also carries systematic presentation of facts which is certainly going to help the readers practicing in the field of preventive health care and social medicine to develop a critical understanding about the public health delivery system of the government. Documentation of the latest syllabus for the Post Basic B.Sc Nursing Students as documented by Indian Nursing Council has made it an essential reading for Nursing Students, teachers of Community Medicine, and Medical Officers in health services. Apart from medical fraternity this book will also cater the need of health care functionaries, researchers as well as officials engaged with all sorts of health promotion activities.

Book Review

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Sarkar, Bhaskar. Introduction to World Religions. Atlantic Publishers & Distributors (P) Ltd., New Delhi, 2010, pp.i-ix+232, ISBN 978-81-269-1339-8, Price, Rs.495.

In the present context when the world is torn into turmoil between and among religions, the instant book review assumes great significance as it is about a book that depicts a panoramic, vivid picture of origin, growth, spread, extinction or survival of different religions including the politics and dynamics that historically centred around them. It dwells in detail about the beliefs, gods and goddesses and their keepers, religious scriptures, methods of worship, internal divisions or sects based on doctrines, ways and methods followed for conversion of people of other religions that inter alia determined the current status of different religions in the world. Divided into eleven chapters, it covered: Ancient Religions (Chapter 1), Religions of China (Chapter 2), Religions of Japan (Chapter 3), Religions of the Indian Subcontinent (Chapter 4), Zoroastrianism (Chapter 5), Judaism (Chapter 6), Christianity (Chapter 7), Islam (Chapter 8), Sikhism (Chapter 9), Inter Religion Conflicts (Chapter 10) and Intra Religion Conflicts (Chapter 11).

The “ancient religions” covered were said to be born in all the five continents more than three thousand years ago, and were practiced as “Animism”, “Paganism” and polytheism. Paganism is stated to have started in the form of “Animism” because the ancient man’s practices were different as he believed that: i) everything including the Sun, the stars, moon, fire, animals, plants, rocks, mountains, rivers, etc had a ‘soul’, an ‘anima’ or a ‘spirit’; ii) each ‘anima’ was powerful and could help or hurt man, depending on whether it was pleased or made angry with the actions of individuals and/or their tribes; and iii) the souls of the dead, the ‘ancestors’ deserved worship. Paganism recognized life after death and had the concept of heaven and hell. Accordingly, the ancient man’s practices were mostly superstitious: (a) wore amulets, talismans and charms to protect from enemies, natural calamities or diseases; (b) followed witchcraft, magic, spells, enchantments, divination and prayers; (c) deified animals, celestial bodies and forces of nature, gave them human or animal form, and made idols of different kinds; and (d) offered sacrifices and gifts to propitiate gods in the hope that they would protect him, bless him with happiness and good fortune, and grant him victories in battle, etc. However, as the civilization and cultures developed and the cultural exchange began, ‘the same’ deity became popular in different places but with different names and forms. Thus, the religions

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multiplied, gods became sophisticated and were portrayed as similar to human in their traits; and as a result polytheism got its roots deeper and widespread. Yet these religions did not preclude the belief in the omniscient, omnipresent and omnipotent supreme God. The author makes references to specific ancient religions across the world and states that Hinduism is the only polytheist religion that has survived the onslaught of Christianity and Islam, in spite of their zeal for converting the polytheists to their faith by persuasion, inducement or force (pp.1-19).

For thousands of years, Chinese believed in a host of deities in what is termed as Chinese folk religion, so to say paganism. But for the last three thousand years Taoism, Buddhism and Confucianism have dominated the religious space in China. In spite of the politically conflict-ridden Chinese history, the periods of religious persecution have been a few and far between. China being predominantly an atheist country, religion naturally took the back seat. Chinese believe in worshipping the ancestors. Interesting to note is that, China prohibited religious practice by its own people in public, but they are not persecuted for religious practices in their homes. Also, in deference to the world opinion, it permits the practice of Christianity and Islam, as it has a few million Christians and Muslims living in it. Further, there are no reports of existing temples, shrines and relics being destroyed (pp.20-35).

Shinto religion, described as the native religion of Japan, was also the state religion more than once, though it underwent transformation over time into four divisions. Notable aspect of Shinto religion is the worship of "Kami" or spirits which could be of places, things or ancestors. There were no idols of the spirits as they were conceived as formless, yet the idea of building temples for the "kami" arose after arrival of Buddhism. Though Buddhism and Taoism are reported to have arrived in Japan during Asuka period, Taoist belief was eventually amalgamated with Shinto and Buddhism. Shinto has co-existed with Buddhism for well over a millennium and people commonly practice Shinto in life, yet have a Buddhist funeral. Often the ritual practice of one religion has had its origin in the other. It is very interesting to note from a reported survey conducted in the mid-1970s, that out of the participants who claimed to be atheists one-third had a Buddhist or Shinto altar in their homes, and about one-quarter carried an amulet to gain protection by "kami" (pp.36-45). It thus presents true testimony to the prevailing religious blend, harmony and amalgamation that made Japan religiously a peaceful country in the world.

The main beliefs of Hinduism as highlighted are: the indestructibility of soul, the concept of rebirth or relief from rebirth (Moksha) as the final goal of the four goals of life, the practice of caste system with forbidden inter-caste marriage, prohibition of cow slaughter, and gods taking birth as "Avtars" or incarnations in human form to eliminate evils and reform society. Among its gods and symbols are: one formless and supreme God, "Ishwar", the sacred symbol "Aum" and its syllable representing the impersonal "Brahman", and the Trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. In addition, Hinduism claims 330 million gods and goddesses. Hindu religion does not have any

central organization. The scriptures include: (a) *the four Vedas*, (b) *108 Upanishads*; (c) *the theology of the Puranas*, and (d) *the Yuga Puranas*. The internal divisions include the Vaishnavism, Saivism and Bhakti movement. The temples are dedicated to one or more gods and are not for weekly or daily worship. Pujas or rituals are usually held at temples, at home or temporary structures called "Pandals" erected for the purpose. Bhakti cult allows ordinary individuals to worship gods of their choice in their own way. Most of the ceremonies and rituals are conducted by priests belonging to caste Brahmins, who are the keepers of gods, with monopoly over knowledge of the scriptures written in Sanskrit. The Brahmins ensured that no social event like birth, marriage, funeral service or puja (worship) could be performed in their absence. Of course, heresy was never an offence in Hinduism, unlike in other religions. It also highlights the long tradition of Hindus elevating their religious preachers to the status of saints or gods and the modern Hinduism. Hinduism never made any attempt to convert the people of other religions to it (pp.61-85).

Buddhism, founded by Gautama Buddha, is one of the oldest religions. The goal of Buddhism is the attainment of Nirvana or Salvation (escape from the suffering and cycle of rebirths) through eight fold path. Buddha was a rebel against the practices and rituals of Hinduism. For him, the gods, priests, scriptures, rituals, candles, incense and the caste system were meaningless. Yet, ironically, after his death, his followers had not only elevated him to the status of a god but also introduced many holy scriptures (Tripitakas, Vinaya Pitaka and Abhidharma Pitaka) and rules that made it a complex religion. Buddhist monks live a very austere life, dress in red or saffron robes, have shaved head and spend time studying scriptures in monasteries and praying to the gods. The ordinary Buddhists worship at temples or pagodas or monasteries or at homes as the case may be. Further, they created internal divisions, sects or schools such as Hinayana, Mahayana, Vajrayana, and more based on doctrines. Buddhist monks are the keepers of Buddhism. Buddhism, as it stands today, transformed and deviated a lot from the original practice of its founder. On the other hand, Hindus tried to assimilate Buddhism into its fold by declaring Buddha as 9th incarnation of Vishnu (pp.85-104).

Founded by Mahavira, Jainism too was developed as a rebellion against the Hindu way of life. It too has no gods, no priests and no caste system. It does not believe in an omnipotent supreme being, creator or manager. Though Jains do not believe in any gods or goddesses, they have temples dedicated to either Lord Rishabhadev, also called Adinath (the first Tirthankar) or other Tirthankars. The scriptures of Jainism include the "Agama", the teachings of Mahavira, the "Cheda-sutras", the rules of asceticism and the "Culika-sutras" or the texts concentrating on the nature of the mind and knowledge. The Jains belong to two major sects, Digambar and Shvetambar. Jainism believes in Karma and Rebirth and lays greater emphasis on the philosophy of Karma and on achieving release from rebirth (Moksha). Jains also believe that all living things like plants, animals, birds and insects have a "soul", and have respect for sanctity of life. The Jain monks carry a small broom to sweep all forms of life from their path and they wear masks over their mouth so that they do

not accidentally swallow flies or other insects. They have six rules for conducting their lives. Jainism is a non-invasive and non-violent religion. Jains do not eat, drink or travel after sunset, and rise before sunrise. Conversion to Jainism is entirely voluntary. The Jains agree that for a layman it is almost impossible to obtain “Jina” or “Moksha” (pp.104-109).

Zoroastrianism, one of the oldest religions of the world, flourished in Persia (Iran). It could not survive the onslaught of Islam and is almost extinct in the soil of its origin. It is interesting to note that Zoroastrians had a caste system very similar to that of the Aryans. Zoroastrianism was the first religion to teach clearly the doctrines of Heaven and Hell, the Day of Judgement, the future resurrection of the body, and life everlasting for the reunited soul and body. They believe in only one God, the Wise Lord, Ahura Mazda, the creator, and his two sons — Angara Mainya who represents “Good” and Ahriman who represents “Evil”. Those who choose to follow Angara Mainya and do good acts will go to heaven and those who choose to follow Ahriman and do evil acts will go to hell. Zoroastrians believe that there is a constant fight between Good and Evil, but at the end of final conflict, in the year 2,600 CE Good will triumph and there will be the “Day of Final Judgement”. Zoroastrians are divided between progressives and fundamentalists or conservatives. Faced with extinction, “Will they survive as a religious entity?” is the issue that the author raises, for the time only has its answer (pp.110-119).

Judaism is traced to the ancestors of Jews who were the wandering tribes of the Arabian desert. Jews believe that they are the chosen people of God and have special relationship with Him, which is governed by covenants or agreements between God and His people (the Jews). *The first one* was with Adam and Eve when God gave them the Garden of Eden. In return they were to look after his creation and not to eat from the Tree of Knowledge. They broke the covenant. *The second* was through Noah which was also broken by his progeny. Like that the Jews were said to have already broken five covenants and are expecting that a savior or “Messiah” will come to them with a new covenant yet. They believe in Heaven and Hell and a day of Judgement. The Jews have only one God but with many names. Their scripture is the Hebrew Bible. They believe that their God will fight for them and protect them against all others (pp.120-129).

Christianity, world’s largest religion today, emerged from a Jewish sect. Christians believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the son of God and not the God himself, and faith in him is the only path to salvation. They believe in the Prophecies in the Bible, in circumcision, baptism, resurrection, heaven and hell, end of the world, Day of Judgement, and the second coming of Christ. Christianity is a monotheistic religion and has only one God. The scriptures of Christianity include the old testament and the new testament. It has weathered numerous divisions and theological disputes and got divided into three main branches – the Roman Catholic Church, the Eastern Orthodox Church and the Protestant Church. Roman Catholic Church accepts the supreme authority of the Pope, with territorial units of “dioceses” headed by

Archbishops or Bishops and “parishes” headed by priests (pastors). Pope is elected by 138 Cardinals, who are all chosen by the Pope. Worship is mostly in Churches where services are carried out by priests or pastors. In fact, the relations between all these Churches have not always been cordial and thus suffer from conflicts. Of late, the Ten Commandments and other religious tenets which preach human values, morality, modesty, marital fidelity and ethics are being discarded as being archaic and repugnant to individual freedom. The Catholic Church which is very rigid in its practices and hierarchical in its organization is losing support at the fastest rate, particularly in Europe and, albeit in small numbers, to other religions like Hinduism and Buddhism which are not congregational and can be practiced at home in a personalized manner (pp.130-148).

Islam is the second largest religion, with followers in over 30 countries. The Islamic religion was founded by Prophet Mohammad who claimed that he was chosen by God to preach the absolute oneness of God, repentance, submission to God and a coming day of judgement. Islam has only one God, Allah. The main scriptures are the Quran and Hadith. Muslims pray to Allah three to five times a day, wherever they are. Friday prayers are held in Mosques. Muslims are divided into two main sects, *the Sunnis* and *the Shias* who accept the basic tenets laid down in the Quran. There are a few other sects of Muslims such as *Ismailis*, *Wahhabis*, *the Sufis*, *the Bahais*, *Barelvi* and *Deobandi* with their own beliefs and practices. The reviewer finds it interesting to note that all these sects have their origin in the internal conflicts of the followers of Islam in respect of the successor to Mohammad, later to the Caliph (elected or hereditary), and the office of Imam (hereditary but towards living heir or dead-elder), expected return of the hiding Imam Mahdi as the Messiah, the caretakers of the office of the Imam (“Ayatollahs” — Torch bearers of God) till his return, the predicted coming of further Messianic figure, Bahatullah’s claim as the second “Promised One” and continuing office of Imam without brake. The author inter alia throws light on Islamic Terrorist Movements against Christianity and other religions and also across the Islamic sects. As the author opines, with the militants having hijacked the religion, it is to be seen if Islam is going to emerge as a failed or a progressive religion (pp.149-175).

Sikhism, founded by Guru Nanak, is the youngest of the world’s religions. The Sikhs have a central religious authority known as the “Akal Takht” located at the Golden Temple at Amritsar. Its leaders are elected. Sikhs believe that all are sons and daughters of “Waheguru”, the Almighty; there is only one God who always existed, will exist forever, and is the same for all religions. Sikhs also believe in rebirth, karma and salvation. The main scripture is Guru Granth Sahib written in Gurmukhi script. Sikhism does not have a clergy class. However, they have readers (Granthis) and singers in their temples (Gurudwaras) who recite from their scripture, the Granth Sahib and sing devotional songs (Kirtans). Sikh worship consists of meditating upon God’s name through verbal repetition (japa), earning honestly and sharing ones wealth with the deserving. Based on doctrines, Sikhs are divided into three main sects, the “Khalsa Sikhs”, the “Nirankaris” and the “Namdharis”. Sikhs are easily recognized

by their long-coiled "turban" and the heavy beard. The important "Dos" and "Don'ts" that are presented as a set of beliefs and practices for Sikhs (pp.176-188) seemingly constitute itself as a more meaningful and practicable religion, in comparison with other religions.

Inter religion conflicts that happened between different religions — between Pagans and Christianity, between Christianity and Islam, between Christianity and Hinduism, between Islam and Buddhism, and between Hinduism and Buddhism — of the world all through the history are vividly presented (pp.189-203). The author remarks that the *"Conflict between religions is a natural fallout of the leaders of the religions seeking their political and temporal powers. In many cases, the real reason for conquering countries was to plunder, extract royalties and dominate the population of the conquered lands. The religious conversion of the vanquished people was considered to be incidental."* (p.202). *"The brutality of persecution of religious minorities matched the norms of the time. The slaughter of the Pagans and the horrific punishments meted out in the Inquests, though shocking by modern standards, were perhaps the accepted punishments of the time. The unfortunate thing is that religious tolerance is on the decline and the 'Jihad' or 'Crusade' mentality is on the increase. It is also not out of place to mention that Sikh religion has never persecuted any other religion."* (p.203).

Bitter and continuing conflicts within the Christianity and Islam, and those within Sikhism (that were rare and short run) also find due treatment in intra religion conflicts (pp.204-222). The author opines that the intra religion conflicts in Christianity and Islam which are the largest religions of the world are unfortunate and mind boggling. Irony is that the Catholics, the Orthodox, Anglicans and Protestants all accept Jesus and the Bible. But they have been at each others' throats since 1054. The brutality with which the sects fought each other has reduced with time. Yet, the conflict simmers in places like Northern Ireland. Similarly, Shias and Sunnis both accept Prophet Mohammad and the Quran. But since the death of the Prophet in 630, they too have been at each others' throat. The continuing hatred between the two sects and the brutality with which their conflicts are fought seem to get worse in future.

The "Epilogue" (pp.223-229) is full of critical reflections of the author about the current affairs of the religions. To quote, some are: "In most religions, God does not have a form. Abraham or Moses signed a covenant with God but they never described God. Jesus never claimed he was God. He claimed to be the son of God or the Messiah. He did not even write the Old or the New Testament. Popes and the heads of the various Churches have written doctrines in his name. Prophet Mohammad never claimed that he was God. He claimed that he was the last prophet. But the religious leaders of the different sects of Sunni Islam kept on elaborating on the Quran to suit the doctrines they want to be followed. Hindus have many gods and goddesses with different appearances and specializations. But the God Ishwar is without form. Buddha did not claim he was God, nor did Mahavir or Guru Nanak, the fountain-heads of Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism respectively." (pp.224-225).

“The priests and the faithful would have us believe that their God controls all that happens in the universe and that God can communicate with them. ... If Gods could communicate, why would Jesus and His Father not lay down the doctrine for the way of life and worship by Christians and combine the Churches. Similarly, why would Allah not lay down the doctrine for way of life and worship of Muslims and stop the bloodshed within his followers. This cannot happen because the religious institutions are sources of wealth and power, and the custodians of these places are unwilling to share the wealth and power that comes from being custodians of their religious institutions.” (p.225). The reviewer could clearly see through the characteristic roles played by the high priests in the name of God.

*“I believe in the power of God. I also believe that whatever happens in this world happens with His knowledge and by His grace. **But His ways are inscrutable. I do not understand why the young and the innocent die but the old and ailing live on. I do not understand why honesty is often rewarded with poverty and great suffering while dishonesty and corruption is mostly rewarded with wealth and power.**”* (p.226). It is rather a critical reflection on the role that the God is playing, if one really exists.

The author’s critical reflections on meaningless conflicts are: “The God of the Christians does not have a name. He is the Father of Christ and Father of the Christians. The God of Muslims is Allah the Great and Merciful. Ishwar is the monotheist Hindu God, who represents all the other gods. Buddhism, Jainism and traditional Chinese religions and Sikhism do not have any name for their Gods. So, do we fight for increasing the market share of our religion? Do we, the ordinary people, have any reason for falling into their machinations and keep fighting each other.” (p.229).

The author’s concluding words, “**Do we have the faith to believe that God exists, that he created our universe and governs our destiny and to accept that God is compassionate, merciful, a friend of the poor and the faithful;?**” (p.229), perhaps reflect his anguish, anger and astonishment.

To conclude, the book is, no doubt, a studious work with well organized and presented chapters. However, if the in-text references have been given in all the Chapters at all appropriate places, along with explicit end references, that would have added to the authenticity and due acknowledgment of the content. Had it been done so, the “Bibliography” would have got better meaning. On the whole, the hard-bound book with befitting, attractive cover and interesting content is a valuable addition to the literature of its kind. It is worth reading by all the religious denominations and equally well by the atheists for objective reflections and actions for paving the way towards building a heaven on earth, instead of waiting till death to reach it as afterlife.