



**QUEST IN EDUCATION**

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**QUEST IN EDUCATION**  
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**Email:** [questineducation@gmail.com](mailto:questineducation@gmail.com), [vibhuti.np@gmail.com](mailto:vibhuti.np@gmail.com)

## Editorial

**Happy new year!** In this issue of Quest in Education, we are bringing to you the insights and analysis of recent challenges faced in the education sector.

The first ever all India survey based on telephonic interviews imposed by COVID19 pandemic related 'social isolation', have brought to the fore grim reality of digital divide in **the fifteenth Annual Status of Education Report (ASER 2020 Wave 1)** by Ranajit Bhattacharyya.

**A Study of Secondary School Dropouts** highlights the multiple factors at the intersection of poverty and access to educational opportunities by Dr Rohini Sudhakar also suggests measures to stop the discontinuation of school education by large percentage of students by the time they reach secondary school level.

**Learning how to Question: Important skill for student teachers** by Ms. Farzana Khambatta deconstructs the taxonomy of questions, provides strategies for formulating effective questions, and explores practical considerations to enhance student engagement.

**The Need for Gender Awareness in Education** by Adv. Celin Mary Thomas makes a strong case in favour of gender sensitisation right from early childhood education and continued at all stages.

**Gender Development through Education** by Dr. Vandana Uttam Katare signifies the importance of reduction in gender gap in education by concerted efforts by the state.

Dr. Sunayana Kadle has provided an insightful **BOOK REVIEW** of *Engaging the Mahatma: Multiple Perspectives* edited by Dr. Mala Pandurang, Vidya Subramanian, Huda Sayyed, Jinal Baxi.

We request authors to send their original research-based articles and book reviews on issues concerning education. As Quest in Education publishes peer-reviewed articles, the authors should be ready to wait.

Due to current coronavirus crisis, the print edition of Quest in Education is interrupted & only an online edition is appearing since April 2020.

**Prof. Vibhuti Patel**  
**Editor**

**THE FIFTEENTH ANNUAL STATUS OF EDUCATION  
REPORT (ASER 2020 Wave 1)**

**Ranajit Bhattacharyya.,**  
Email: ranajit@asercentre.org

*ASER 2020-Wave 1 was released online on 28-10-2020 at an online event attended by people from around the world. This is the fifteenth annual report.*

Every year from 2005 to 2014, ASER has reported on the schooling status and the ability to do basic reading and arithmetic tasks for children in the 5-16 age group in rural India. After ten years of producing an annual report, in 2016, ASER switched to an alternate-year cycle where this “basic” ASER is conducted every other year (2016, 2018); and in alternate years ASER focuses on a different aspect of children’s schooling and learning. In 2017, ASER 'Beyond Basics' focused on the abilities, experiences, and aspirations of youth in the 14-18 age group. In 2019, ASER 'Early Years' examined key early language, early numeracy, cognitive, and socioemotional indicators for children age 4-8 years.

In 2020, the COVID-19 crisis interrupted this 15-year trajectory. But the urgent need to systematically examine the effects of the pandemic on schooling and learning opportunities of children across the country was apparent. Although a lot of digital content has been generated and transmitted to help children continue to learn, there is limited evidence on the extent to which this content is reaching children; whether they are engaging with it; and the impact it is having on their participation and learning.

ASER 2020 is the first ever phone based ASER survey. Conducted in September 2020, the sixth month of national school closures, the survey explores provision of and access to distance education mechanisms, materials and activities for children in rural India,

and the ways in which children and families are engaging with these remote learning alternatives from their homes.

ASER 2020 was conducted in 26 states and 4 Union Territories. It reached a total of 52,227 households and 59,251 children in the age group of 5-16 years, as well as teachers or head teachers from 8,963 government schools offering primary grades.

## **ASER 2020 FINDINGS:**

### **SCHOOL ENROLLMENT PATTERNS**

Changes in school enrollment can only be accurately measured once schools reopen and children are able to return to their classrooms. As compared to 2018, this interim measurement in ASER 2020 shows that:

- **At the all-India level, there is a small shift towards government schools.** As compared to data from ASER 2018, data from ASER 2020 (September 2020) show a small shift in enrollment from private to government schools, across all grades and among both girls and boys. The proportion of boys enrolled in government schools rose from 62.8% in 2018 to 66.4% in 2020. Similarly, the proportion of girls enrolled in government schools rose from 70% to 73% during the same period.
- **Many young children yet to get admission in school.** ASER 2020 shows that while the proportion of children not currently enrolled for the 2020-21 school year is higher than the equivalent figures for 2018, for most age groups these differences are small. Higher proportions of children not enrolled are visible mostly among the youngest children (age 6 and 7), possibly because they have not yet secured admission to school. This proportion is particularly large in Karnataka (11.3% 6- and 7-year-olds not enrolled in 2020), Telangana (14%), and Rajasthan (14.9%).

## HOUSEHOLD RESOURCES

While schools are closed, children rely mainly on the resources available at home to help them learn. These resources can consist of people who can help them to study (for example, educated parents); technology (TV, radio or smartphone); or materials (such as textbooks for the current grade).

- A relatively small proportion of students in school today are first generation school-goers. More than three out of four children have at least one parent who has completed primary school (Std V). More than a quarter have both parents who have studied beyond Std IX.
- Among enrolled children, more than 60% live in families with at least one smartphone. This proportion has increased enormously in the last two years, from 36.5% to 61.8% among enrolled children. The percentage point increase is similar in households of children enrolled in government and private schools. States that show an increase of more than 30 percentage points in the proportion of children whose families own a smartphone include Maharashtra, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, and Tripura.
- Whether acquired before or after school closures in March 2020, more than 80% children have textbooks for their current grade. This proportion is higher among students enrolled in government schools (84.1%) than in private schools (72.2%). Across states, the proportion of children with textbooks at home falls below 70% in only three states: Rajasthan (60.4%), Telangana (68.1%), and Andhra Pradesh (34.6%).

## **HOME SUPPORT FOR LEARNING**

ASER 2020 data shows that regardless of parents' education level, families invest significant effort in supporting children's learning.

- While schools are closed, almost three quarters of all children receive some form of learning support from family members. Notably, even among children whose neither parent has studied beyond primary school, family members do provide support. Older siblings play an important role in providing learning support to children in these households.

- Children in lower grades get more family support than in higher ones. Similarly, children with more educated parents receive more family support than those with less educated parents. For example, 54.8% of children whose parents had completed Std V or less received some form of family support, as compared to 89.4% of children whose parents had studied beyond Std IX.

- As children progress to higher grades, parents can provide less help. For example, 33% of mothers of young children in Std I-II were able to help their children, as opposed to 15% of mothers of children in Std IX and above. But for children in higher grades, support from elder siblings become steadily more important.

## **ACCESS TO LEARNING MATERIALS AND ACTIVITIES**

Governments and others have used a variety of mechanisms to share diverse learning materials with students during school closures. These include activities using traditional materials like textbooks or worksheets; online or recorded classes; and videos or other materials shared via phone or in person, among others. ASER 2020 asked whether households had accessed or received any such materials from children's schools in the week prior to the survey in September 2020.

- Overall, about one third of enrolled children had received some form of learning materials or activities from their teachers during the week preceding the survey. This proportion was higher in higher grades than in lower ones, and higher among students in private schools than in government schools.
- However, there are significant variations by state in children's receipt of learning materials or activities during the reference week. States where less than a quarter of all children had received any materials include Rajasthan (21.5%), Uttar Pradesh (21%), and Bihar (7.7%).
- Regardless of school type, WhatsApp was the most common medium through which activities and materials were received. However, this proportion was much higher among children in private schools (87.2%) than those in government schools (67.3%).
- On the other hand, of children who had received some materials, those in government schools were much more likely to have received materials via personal contact with a teacher (31.8%) than those in private schools (11.5%), either when the teacher visited the household or else when a household member visited the school.
- Among the roughly two-thirds of all households that reported not having received learning materials during the reference week, the majority said that the school had not sent any materials.

## **CHILDREN'S ENGAGEMENT WITH LEARNING MATERIALS AND ACTIVITIES**

Regular engagement with learning materials and activities is key to avoiding 'learning loss' due to prolonged absences from school. ASER 2020 asked whether children had done any type of learning activity during the previous week, regardless of whether the school had shared learning materials during that week.



- Although only a third of children had received materials from their teachers during the week preceding the survey, most children (70.2%) did do some sort of learning activity during that week. These activities were shared by diverse sources such as private tutors and family members themselves, in addition to or instead of what was received from schools.
- The major types of activities done involved textbooks (59.7%) and worksheets (35.3%). The proportion of children in government schools and private schools doing these activities was similar.
- However, one major difference visible by school type is that children in private schools were much more likely to have accessed online resources than those in government schools. For example, 28.7% of children enrolled in private schools had watched videos or other prerecorded content online, as compared to 18.3% of government school students.
- For about a third of all students, teachers had some form of personal contact with households during the reference week.

## **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

While some information is available about the measures that governments and others have put in place to ensure minimum disruptions to children’s education, no systematic, large scale information has been available about whether children are able to access and use these mechanisms. ASER 2020 provides data on these issues at both state and national levels. A set of learnings from these findings suggest the following overarching policy implications for the country:

**Fluid situation:** When schools re-open, it will be important to continue to monitor who goes back to school; as well as to understand whether there is learning loss as compared to previous years.

**Building on and strengthening family support:** Parents' increasing levels of education can be integrated into planning for learning improvement, as advocated by NEP. "Reaching parents at the right level" is essential to understand how they can help their children. Older siblings also play an important role.

**"Hybrid" learning:** Children are doing a variety of different activities at home. Effective ways of "hybrid" learning need to be developed, that combine traditional teaching-learning with newer ways of "reaching-learning".

**Impact of digital modes and content:** Many modes of providing digital content have been tried. To improve digital content and delivery for the future, an in-depth assessment of what works, how well it works, who it reaches, and who it excludes is needed.

**Mediating the "digital divide":** Expectedly, children from families who had low education and did not have resources like smartphones had less access to learning opportunities. But even among such households, there is evidence of effort: family members who try to help and schools who try to reach them. These children will need even more help than others when schools reopen.

## A STUDY OF SECONDARY SCHOOL DROPOUTS

**Dr Rohini Sudhakar,**

Associate Professor,  
SNDT Women's University, Mumbai

The purpose of this paper is to explore why school going children especially secondary school dropout from their schools and what needs to be done to ensure that every child will remain in the school and learn well.

### **Introduction**

In the world many countries have set targets to achieve secondary education level. The UNICEF data (2020) reveals that challenges to secondary school participation are greatest in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. Further, data reveals that that youngsters remain unqualified as they do not successfully complete secondary education. And this is a worldwide scenario. In western countries the reasons for youth dropping out of school differ. But even though various policies and programmes are in place still there remains the problem of school drop-outs. Across the OECD nearly one in three adults (31%) have only primary or lower secondary education<sup>1</sup> – a real disadvantage in terms of employment and life chances. 14% have only attained pre-primary or primary education and 17% lower secondary education (OECD [2005], Education briefly: OECD Indicators 2005, OECD, Paris, Indicator A1).

Education is a continuous man making process which helps us explore the mysteries of life and the universe. In ancient India education was the privilege of few. It was for the nobility and higher caste people. But, with the arrival of missionaries in British Raj, modern European Education came to India. Yet, even during British time Education was not for masses. It became universal following independence in 1947. Maulana Azad, first Education Minister of India took efforts at the central level to ensure that education reaches to all.

It is a known fact that any country's future depends on the quality of education it gives to its children and youth. As per Annual State of Education Report 2020, the proportion of boys enrolled in government schools has risen from 62.8% in 2018 to 66.4% in 2020, while for girls,

that number has gone up from 70% to 73% in the corresponding period. Patterns show a slight shift toward government schools, with private schools seeing a drop in enrolment in all age groups.

Problem of school dropout is a major hindrance for achieving Indian constitutional goal of universal education for all pupils up to the age of 14 years. Due to the issue of dropout and absenteeism of students, the system of education is being seriously challenged at all the levels of education, primary, secondary, and higher education.

Those who are school drop-outs do not only have educational fall out but it also generates immense trauma, feeling of being dejected. This reversal of human development promotes sometimes social drudgery, liability, and of course, juvenile delinquency in the worst possible case. Today's school drop-outs are tomorrow's unutilized and underutilized labourers. This paper is the result of secondary data analysis to examine the causes leading to students dropping out of schools in India.

### **How alarming is the dropout scenario:**

As per 2011 Census Secondary Education covers 88.5 children aged between 14-18. Extension of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan. As per Govt of India Human Resources Development (HRD), Ministry Data 2014-15, the Secondary School dropout rate is 17.86%.

The Annual States of Education Report (ASER): 2016 reveals that around 3.5% of children between the ages of 11 and 14 years, and 13.5% between the ages of 15 and 16 years were dropouts, while over 25% of children in grades I to VIII were absent from school on the day a team visited the school. According to a report by the Montreal-based UNESCO Institute for Statistics and Global Education Monitoring (2016), India has 47 million youth of secondary and higher secondary school-going age dropping out of school. The 47 million young men and women dropped out of school by the 10th standard.

The New Delhi-based Institute for Policy Research Studies (PRS) report shows that the enrolment in class 10 is 77 per cent, but enrolment in class 11 is only 52 per cent.

India Spend reported in July 2016 that the number of boys enrolled in higher education has increased 13 per cent and girls 21 per cent since 2012-13, Enrolment declined by about half between class 11 and 12 and

college, said the report, although university enrolment increased, in general, since 2008-09. "The dropout is much higher with girls," UNICEF representative to India, Louis-Georges Arsenault, said on the side-lines of a national seminar on India Human Development Report 2011.

An overall increase in gross enrolment ratio (GER is student enrolment as a proportion of the corresponding eligible age group each year) at almost every level of education in India confirms that the educational system has become more accessible. Upper primary and secondary schools' GERs saw a rise of 13 per cent and 17 per cent, respectively, in 2013-14 compared to 2007-08. According to the 2014 survey by the Ministry of Human Resource Development, despite this increase in GRE, six million children aged 6-13 are estimated to be still out of the school system. Most children drop out of school with Uttar Pradesh leading the ranking with 1.6 million out-of-school children, followed by Bihar and Rajasthan.

Economic times: 2020 has reported that while answering to a question in the ongoing budget session of Parliament Ramesh Pokhriya Nishank, the MHRD minister informed that the dropout rates of students in Class 9 & 10 have crossed almost a fifth of the total enrolment rate in 2017-18. The data shows that the dropout rate in secondary school in as many as 11 states was over 20 percent. The secondary school dropout rate in Assam was a third of the students and in Bihar, it was 32 percent.

"I have noticed (in Telangana) that the boys are enrolled in private schools where the lessons are given in English," said Shanta Sinha, former chairperson of the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights. "A lot of them are unable to cope with the English medium. On the other hand, the girls are sent to government schools where the classes are conducted in Telugu and the transition to secondary is easy because it continues in Telugu. We found that the retention for girls is much more than the boys because they have gone through education in their mother tongue."

A survey on "National Survey of Estimation of out-of-school children in age 6-13 in India" was commissioned by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (2014) and was conducted by Indian Market Research Bureau (IMRB). It was pointed out in the study report that children in rural areas drop out of school earlier than those in urban

areas. Most of the drop-outs in the said age group from the rural areas have completed education up to Class-II, while those from the urban areas have completed class V. The study (International Journal of Farm Sciences; 2012) investigates the factors influencing the school dropouts at the primary level in Jorhat district of Assam, India based on the responses of 120 dropouts selected through random sampling. The major factors influencing school dropouts were found to be household work, lack of parental guidance in studies, large family size, poor economic condition of the family, failure in examination, lack of time for study, punishment by teachers, lack of interest in studies, etc.

The New Education Policy (2020) approved by the Cabinet advocates restricting of curriculum. The curricular and pedagogical structure and the curricular framework for school education will therefore be guided by a 5+3+3+4 design, consisting of the Foundational Stage (in two parts, that is, 3 years of Anganwadi/pre-school + 2 years in primary school in Grades 1-2; both together covering ages 3-8), Preparatory Stage (Grades 3-5, covering ages 8-11), Middle Stage (Grades 6-8, covering ages 11-14), and Secondary Stage (Grades 9-12 in two phases, i.e., 9 and 10 in the first and 11 and 12 in the second, covering ages 14-18).

It has a mention of full Chapter 3 titled Reintegrating Dropouts and Ensuring Universal Access to Education. And that one of the objectives of the New Education Policy is to achieve access and participation in free and compulsory quality school education for all children in the age group of 3-18 years by 2030.

The New Education Policy mentions that numerous studies show that, in the current educational system, once students fall behind on foundational literacy and numeracy, they tend to maintain flat learning curves for years, perpetually unable to catch up. So many capable students have found themselves in this unfortunate black hole, unable to emerge. For many students, this has become a major reason for not attending school, or for dropping out altogether.

Many studies have mentioned that poverty is one of the main reasons for children dropping out of school. Due to poverty many bright students' dropouts and it leads to country losing on great young talent.

A report published by UNICEF (2003) focused that children lack the access and attendance to primary education. High opportunity costs are

often influential in the decision to attend school. For example, an estimated 121 million children of primary-school-age are being kept out of school to work in the fields or at home (UNICEF; 2020).

### **Why do children drop out of schools?**

The result of MHRD survey on dropout rate reveals that there is low retention of students in schools due to curriculum, pedagogy, teacher development, material development, education of children with special needs, leadership and management issues, gender issues in education, etc ( Digital Learning Network; 2015). As per the study titled ‘Factors influencing school dropouts at the primary level’ conducted by Baruah; 2012 in Assam of 120 dropouts selected through random sampling students dropped out due to their engagement in household work, lack of support in studies, lack of parents’ guidance, large family size, poor economic conditions, failure in examination, lack of time for study, punishment by teachers and lack of interest in studies, etc.

According to the New Education Policy, 2019, the causes of school dropouts include the following:

Socio-cultural and economic issues play a significant role in dropout rates. For example, some children and adolescents are not sent to secondary school because of harmful practices relating to early or child marriage, perceived roles of gender or caste, or child labour and pressure on children/adolescents to work and earn. Often the need to care for siblings prevents older children from attending school. In regions with poor hygienic conditions, lack of good sanitation and unhealthy food habits, unfortunately, make children prone to chronic illnesses, thereby preventing them from attending classes consistently or at all. There also remain serious issues of inadequate infrastructure and lack of safety. Many children, especially girls, drop out due to lack of working toilet facilities; others - particularly girls and children from various other Underrepresented Groups (URGs) - drop out due to problems with harassment and safety. Sometimes students’ bicycles are stolen while at school, and they are forced to drop out. Finally, some children and adolescents report dropping out, not because of any of the above reasons, but simply because they do not find school interesting or useful.

Hence, majors’ reasons for children dropping out of school include the following:

1. Poverty and socio-economic status of parents of students
2. Lack of parent support
3. Student absentee
4. Crime and truancy
5. Lack of interest in education
6. Low family education
7. Availability of schools
8. Accessibility: Accessibility issues include the following:
  - a. Distance from Home to school. If, a girl child, distance from school is important. While going to school, and returning from school the security of the child is a major concern, especially in rural areas and tribal and hilly terrains. Through some schemes, students do get the facility of bi-cycle yet the security of girls is a major concern.
  - b. Fees, cost of books
  - c. Travel cost
  - d. The opportunity cost is that if the child turns 10, poverty may force the parents to think if the child goes to school, the family is denied the child daily labour earnings. When a family is not financially secure, child's education is given low priority.
9. Gender issues
10. Migration of Families
11. Lack of School infrastructure like drinking water, toilet
12. Role of the Teacher: Teacher not paying attention to children's scholastic progress, teacher Chit-Chats with other colleagues, Teacher beats/ punishes etc.
13. When children finish primary school, most of their parents convince them to work in the fields or take up other jobs instead of continuing their studies.
14. Other factors include children kept at home to take care of the family and do domestic chores. Some students are involved in delinquent behaviour, drug, and alcohol, etc.

To sum, the reasons for students dropping out the school can fall into four groups:

1. Personal i.e., lack of interest in studies, etc
2. Family's socio-economic situation, Poor economic conditions, gender issues,
3. Academic reasons like scare of teacher, teacher remaining absent from the school, the distance of the school from home is far, lack of



infrastructure in the school, teachers not taking interest in the studies of children

4. Health like disability of student, malnutrition

**OECD report has suggested following ten measures to do away with school drop-out issue:**

1. Limit early tracking and streaming and postpone academic selection. 2. Manage school choice to contain the risks to equity. 3. In upper secondary education, provide attractive alternatives, remove dead ends and prevent dropout. 4. Offer second chances to gain from education. Practices 5. Identify and provide systematic help to those who fall behind at school and reduce year repetition. 6. Strengthen the links between school and home to help disadvantaged parents help their children to learn 7. Respond to diversity and provide for the successful inclusion of migrants and minorities within mainstream education. Resourcing 8. Provide strong education for all, giving priority to early childhood provision and basic schooling. 9. Direct resources to the students with the greatest needs, so that poorer communities have at least the same level of provision as those better-off and schools in difficulty are supported. 10. Set concrete targets for more equity, particularly related to low school attainment and dropouts.

**How to prevent secondary school children from dropping out of the school?**

The concept of mobile school bus already exists in some places like Chennai, Pune, Mumbai, and Bangalore similar Mobile school vans need to be there everywhere in the country especially in rural areas. Teaching and play activity may be done in the centre place like a garden or open space after the classes over the bus which is the mobile bus should send the children back to their parents some classes need to be conducted inside the vehicle itself where there is a provision for the blackboard. Lower class children need to be mentored by their seniors, elder siblings to ensure that and other family members to ensure that children will continue learning. Basic facilities are needed to be there in the school.

The schools need to provide good infrastructure with proper clean toilets with water facilities, else, students especially girls do not find it convenient to attend the schools.

As per Annual State of Education Report 2020 there due to COVID-19 there is there was a need to teach children on-line but, when efforts were made to find how many children had access ASER reported that among enrolled children, 61.8% live in families that own at least one smartphone which was merely 36.5% in 2018.

About 11% of families bought a new phone after the lockdown, of which 80% were smartphones.

WhatsApp is by far the most popular mode of transmitting learning materials to students, with 75% of students receiving input via this app.

It is projected that due to COVID-19 pandemic many parents will not be able to send their kids to schools and that there would be an increase in the number of school dropouts. Recently, Times of India has mentioned in its newspaper dated 18.11.2020 that they have started an innovative programme titled ‘ Keep Learning’ to help parents and teachers navigate the shift to online learning/teaching for kids and the changes in the education ecosystem due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In the NEP 2020 there is a mention that Open Schools will be expanded and strengthened for meeting the learning needs of young people in India who are not able to attend a physical school. NIOS and State Open Schools will offer the following programmes in addition to the present programmes: A, B and C levels that are equivalent to Grades 3, 5, and 8 of the formal school systems; secondary education programmes that are equivalent to Grades 10 and 12. SSA gives children free books and other learning material up to class VII but some needy students need such assistance to complete their secondary education.

Conclusion:

In India, the “free and compulsory” aspect of the Right to Education (RTE) Act 2009 must be enforced. Presently Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) of Government of India is ensuring that children would achieve primary education but, there is a need to ensure that it would also cover secondary education as education is a fundamental right and no one should be deprived of it. Mahatma Gandhi said that if the income of the family is less and that parents must educate only one child out of two then it should be the girl child instead of the boy. As he had said, “If you educate a man you educate an individual, but if you educate a woman you educate an entire family.” The attitude of parents, teachers and the society need to be changed to ensure that the children will attend

the school regularly. General People need to be aware that social change can be brought by educating children hence, children need to be encouraged to attend schools and people must ensure that all out efforts are put in place to ensure that no one will be school dropouts.

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## **LEARNING HOW TO QUESTION- IMPORTANT SKILL FOR STUDENT TEACHERS**

**Ms. Farzana Khambatta,**

Ph.D. Scholar

Department of Education, SNDT University, Mumbai

*Questions have long been used not only as a teaching tool but also to assess students' knowledge. Well-structured questions help in creating new insights, generate discussion, and promote exploration of subject matter. To develop the higher order thinking skills of students, it is necessary that teachers themselves understand what kind of questions need to be asked. Student-teachers are at the beginning of their teaching careers. It is important to train the student teachers so that when they start teaching, they are equipped to develop questions which require higher order thinking. Teacher training programs should help student teachers be aware of the importance of developing critical thinking skills as these skills are indispensable.*

*This paper attempts to summarize the taxonomy of questions, provides strategies for formulating effective questions, and explores practical considerations to enhance student engagement. These concepts can be applied in the classroom and in experiential learning environments.*

### **Introduction**

Questions enable the learner to negotiate meaning through interaction with others in meaningful, thought-provocative discussions. It helps in generating to new insights, discussion and promote exploration of subject matter. Effective questions asked in a psychologically safe learning environment support student learning by probing for understanding, stimulating critical thinking, and enhancing confidence. (Gose, 2009). Poor questions can stifle learning by creating confusion, intimidating students, and limiting creative thinking. (Chin, 2007)

Questions may be a regular part of a teacher's practice, however there is a big difference between using questions to check students for understanding and using questions to frame a teaching and learning inquiry (Grant, 2013).

Questions can be a powerful tool for those wishing to engage in ambitious teaching. (Grant & Gradwell, 2010). Ambitious teachers are ones who, (1) know their subject matter well and see within it the potential to enrich their students' lives; (2) know their students well, which includes understanding the kinds of lives their students lead, how these youngsters think about and perceive the world, and that they are far more capable than they and most others believe them to be; and (3) know how to create the necessary space for themselves and their students in environments. Ambitious teaching is more about how the teacher interacts with ideas, students and the school environment. Teaching by drawing upon one's own knowledge of the subject matter, students and then by formulating questions that the students can engage with is a challenge. When teachers design quality questions for instruction, students are more inclined to engage in metacognition, i.e., to think about their own thinking. Effective questions can be a means to engage students in the learning process and enable them to take charge of their own learning.

Several taxonomies are present to help educators formulate questions intended to elicit specific cognitive processes. The next section addresses these taxonomies.

### **Taxonomy of questions**

The basic structure for classifying questions are either convergent or divergent (McComas, Abraham, 2012). A classification described by Benjamin Bloom (1956) and modified by Anderson and Krathwohl (2000) addresses various levels of cognitive processes from recall of facts to processes that require critical thinking.

The use of Questioning Circles as designed by Christenbury and Kelly (1983) to classify or evaluate the level of questioning in the classroom is also helpful in enhancing teaching. Three intersecting circles: The Subject Matter, Personal Response, and External Environment or Reality Questions represent the most important questions and require the deepest thinking on the part of the students (Meyers, 2002). This approach does not follow a hierarchical approach but suggests interconnectedness.

Norman Webb's Depth of Knowledge (1997) centered on classifying tasks according to the difficulty of thinking required to complete the tasks with success. Constructing lessons, activities, and assessment utilizing Webb's Depth of Knowledge requires students to delve into the thinking process to deepen their learning.

Paul & Elder (2007) provided a taxonomy which can serve as a guideline to promote and develop reasoning and critical thinking skills. According to Paul and Elder (2009), for an individual to be a proficient thinker, he or she must be proficient in developing questions. Good questioning techniques need to be modeled for students to become skilled in both thinking and questioning.

The art of asking the right questions at the appropriate time is not innate. (Lorsch, 1982) Higher-order questions elicit deeper thinking; therefore, teachers are encouraged to ask questions in these domains. This does not mean that lower-order questions should not be asked. It is appropriate to ask questions to address all cognitive domains if the desired learning outcome is kept in mind and a good mix of questions is used during each teaching session. (Christenbury, 1983)

A taxonomy provides a framework for a variety of questions, and advocates what should be done to broaden them. However, the construction of a good question classification system does not guarantee that teachers will automatically ask good question. Student teachers need to be instructed in the use of the system before questioning techniques can be improved. Then again, a

good system makes its teaching much easier and thus increases the tendency to use it.

These taxonomies provide strategies which can be easily employed by student teachers for their classes. It is however important to understand that questioning skills need to be practiced over a period. Developing questions that begin with recall and working up to analysis, synthesis, and creation need careful planning.

The next session suggests strategies which can be used to formulate effective questions.

### **Strategies for formulating questions**

Observations of classroom-based instructors have repeatedly shown that lower-order questions are far more frequently used. (Sellappah, 1998). Perhaps teachers do not value higher-order questions and feel they are not effective, or perhaps a lack of formal training on how to formulate questions to stimulate learning is the root cause. (Brualdi, 1998)

The ability to ask and answer questions is central to learning. The use of questioning skills is essential for the systematic investigation in any area. Questions play a central role in the learning process and they need to be planned carefully.

There is evidence which suggests that teachers' low-level questions prompt low-level thinking and questioning by students (Albergaria-Almedia, 2010). Alternatively, Wolf (1987) claimed that "being asked and learning to pose strong questions might offer students a deeply held, internal blueprint for inquiry". This suggests that for students to become strong questioners, they benefit from strong teacher models.

Student teachers would immensely benefit from being trained in how to ask questions. Understanding how to implement the



various questioning techniques will help student teachers to develop the critical thinking and metacognitive skills of the students. By ensuring the questions being asked push students to reflect on what they already know and make deeper connections to the material will ensure better teaching learning experiences. The challenge is to develop questions that not only grab student attention, but also create space that explores meaningful and significant themes to help broaden a student's worldview.

Various question design strategies can be used by student teachers to plan their questions in a manner which engages the students to develop their thinking skills. The commonly used strategies are the Socratic questioning method, question circles and student generated questions.

Socratic Method of Questioning promotes open discussion through inquiry in which one viewpoint is compared to another. The content is taught through probing questions to stimulate original thought from the students. (Paul, Elder. 2008) Another strategy is the use of question circles that leads students from superficial responses to deeper discussions of the subject matter. (Christenbury, 1983). Originally conceptualized as a process to explore students' understanding of written texts, question circles can be easily adapted to discuss a wide range of learning materials (e.g., case studies, videos) or experiences (e.g., laboratory exercises, advanced practice experiences).

The Initiation-Response-Evaluation (IRE) model is most prevalent in classrooms (Cazden, 1988; Gall, 1984). With this model, the teacher takes responsibility for posing questions to students, who provide an answer, which is judged by the teacher before the next question is posed. However, when teachers take responsibility for questioning, they often model low-level questions. Albergaria-Almedia's (2010) study of teacher questioning concluded that the prevalence of low-level, fact-based questions.

Simply asking questions, especially if those questions are used to reinforce select interpretations, is not enough. Instead, teachers are encouraged to pose questions that challenge students to think deeply and allow students to construct their own meaning.

When student teachers plan their questions, it is important that there is space for questions which encourage discussion and assist learners to draw deeper connections and generate critical thinking in students.

The next section details practical considerations to be kept in mind to promote student participation and promote critical thinking.

### **Classroom considerations for use of questioning**

According to Jangira (1982), a question is the fountain of human civilization which is beautifully illustrated by the role it plays in the socialization of the child and his consequent emergence as a seeker and creator of knowledge. The effectiveness of questions, depends on the delivery process which includes speed with which a question is put, the voice-its pitch and tone, and the pause to allow the pupils to think.

These considerations include:

- Clarity- A student teacher needs to plan and execute the questions in a manner which is well phrased and is well phrased.
- Safety- Keeping in mind the classroom environment and ensuring psychological safety will help students to express their thoughts and opinions. (Brualdi, 1998). Positive reinforcement from the teacher along with behaviors such as maintaining eye contact, nodding, or asking a student to continue with additional clarifying remarks are all ways to encourage more participation
- Sequence- asking questions with a purpose to elicit meaningful responses and maintaining a balance between the type of questions from multiple cognitive domains and

levels will help students to be engaged with the content taught.

- Pause- pausing after asking a question and encouraging the students to take a few minutes of wait time before answering especially for higher order questions will encourage more student participation. However, the wait time depends on the nature and the complexity of the question asked. (Rowe, 1986). Depending on the nature and cognitive complexity of the question, a wait time of more than 20 seconds may be perceived as threatening and result in equally poor responses. (Nicholl, 2007)

### **Summary**

Teacher questions have been regarded as an important factor in teaching and student learning (Kim, 2015). Questioning would help challenge learners to critically think by asking them to demonstrate what they know, argue points of view and reflect on critical issues or personal values.

Understanding the taxonomy of questions and strategies may help student teachers to create a wider range of questions that not only stimulate the recall of important factual, conceptual, and procedural knowledge but also requires learners to analyze, evaluate, and create.

Questions are among the most powerful teaching tools and adopting best practices can significantly enhance the quality of instruction.

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## THE NEED FOR GENDER AWARENESS IN EDUCATION

**Adv. Celin Mary Thomas,**  
M.Sc., LL.B.  
Bangalore.

*Usually, we see that the society evolves and the law changes in accordance with it. Despite a path being laid down by the Constitution of India for gender equality, the movement for gender justice has a long way to go unless it finds its way into the existing structures of our society like electoral representation, equal opportunity in employment, healthcare and even education.*

### **Need for gender sensitive reforms in education**

It is imperative that all awareness need not be left to the media and social organizations, but certain deeply rooted sectors such as education and healthcare must also be proactively involved in the ever-changing Indian society. The education system in India itself needs reforms to accept students who are grappling with their gender identities, sexual preferences and orientation at different ages. Which means it is not just primary and secondary education that would need to be gender sensitized but also the higher education system. And it cannot just be left at sensitivity and awareness. There needs to mechanism to ingrain tolerance and acceptance of all kinds of people to eradicate any bias or neglect or discrimination that they are facing.

Unfortunately, all sensitization related to gender happens when a person joins the workforce wherein the company is entrusted with a job of carrying out workshops on sexual harassment at workplace which are mandated as per the POSH<sup>1</sup> Act 2013. So, besides as few moral stories heard in childhood at home and maybe some value education classes in primary school level, most

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<sup>1</sup> Protection of Women from Sexual Harassment at Workplace

students do not get any exposure or understanding of how to be gender sensitive and to conscious of the rights of people who ascribe to different orientations, preferences and beliefs with regards to their gender identity. Most of the gender-based education is imparted for students studying sociology, anthropology and social work. Thus, the awareness needed on gender is restricted to certain subjects that will leave a huge stream of students from science, other arts subjects and commerce completely unaware of the world out there. It is like living in a cocoon created by someone else and not knowing that there is another world of possibilities and opportunities out there.

The result of all this is inevitably discrimination and social ostracism which are experienced at every level and every aspect of their lives. One needs to understand that we can never be free if the other person is still grappling to simply survive and sustain. The women's rights movements have helped women in casting votes, getting education & even jobs. However, women still struggle to find a dignified space within the confines of their birth family and matrimonial homes. Gender based violence (GBV) is common and largely unaccounted for as it tends to leave women who are heavily dependent on others to fend for themselves. And hence they continue suffering silently either at home or even at their workplace.

The war for the members of LGBTQI movement is much larger although they have won the battle of decriminalization of Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code of 1860. They too must struggle to find their place and equal opportunities in terms of access to employment & education without violence and discrimination or nay kind of ostracism. And in this endeavor, education system can play a huge contributory role.



### **Ways in which education sector can contribute**

Clearly, there needs to be a way in which lessons are taught in a classroom. Which means that teacher training is important and gender-based awareness and importance and relevance of it is to be inculcated through their periodic trainings. A teacher at the primary and secondary education level plays a huge role in the formative years of a young mind of a student who are easily influenced by their teachers. So, the scope of awareness of gender program is not only limited to students but also to their teachers. This kind of awareness will be effective only by demonstration, we must all understand that the need for practicing what we preach should be not only be the philosophy but also the outcome of the program or training.

The teacher training modules can have specific modules that can be developed with the aide and support of organisations that have been actively engaged in imparting gender related awareness and fighting for their rights. The modules must touch upon the movements and their struggles, how teachers can help. There can be a module on communication which will help teachers impart education in a more gender sensitive manner. Communication is heavily dependent on the usage of language, if the education must be gender sensitive, then the usage of certain means and ways of addressing people also needs to change and evolve in accordance with it. Language can be used for creating awareness and at the same time it has been effectively used over a period to bully and even discriminate. The way language is used and misused and even used for abusing others is shocking, hence it is important to focus on the way how the communication happens not only when conducting gender sensitivity or awareness classes but also for other subjects.

Incidents in history only speak about men's contribution and rarely any attribution is given to any woman, which can be a good place to start in terms of modifying our syllabus that talks about women's contribution as well. Literature ancient, medieval and

anything prior to 19<sup>th</sup> century must be shared & studied in classrooms, however it must also encourage dialogue and approach that is inclusive of people with special needs, rights of women and even LGBTQI. Literature may showcase the impression of that era in which it was first published or released however it needs to be assessed from all possible perspectives to allow students to develop tolerance towards different ideas and prepare them to be able to embrace newer ideas.

The curriculum and syllabus of students learning various subjects must be engaging and must encourage them to embrace themselves and accept others for who they are rather than inspire unhealthy competition, bullying or ostracism. Schools and colleges can have specific workshops and seminars on gender sensitivity in academics to create awareness and bring behavioral change in students and faculty.

The curriculum on gender-based education can be two-fold, one including subjects that deal with it along with workshops and seminars that give practical scenario-based learning of situations in which discrimination, bias, ostracism and violence thrive and proliferate and how they affect the society as a whole and not just any specific gender or identity. And the other approach would be to engage and partner with successful partners that is social organisations and people leading rights-based movements to visit the academia and spread the word on gender sensitivity and gender-based violence. However, consistency in administering the program is imperative for its effectiveness.

There is a huge factor that such training programs must consider, that is the families of these students. Whatever training and awareness are imparted to students might not register fully as the systems in their family units might be doing the exact opposite. This factor needs to be considered while administering any awareness program to the young minds on gender education. There must be a mechanism in place for students and faculty members to address

such concerns that gender-based education might raise from their families and peer groups.

### **The norm and behavioural change**

When we learn something, which is exact opposite of what we have believed to be true all the time, it becomes difficult as concept to accept and embrace & more importantly to practice it. Generally, people might be hesitant to change also as the existing systems are benefitting them also. The norm at home and in the peer, groups is different and maybe most of them would want to fit in and might compromise a lot in the process. However, human beings react superbly to systems and structures and this what we need to capitalize on to ensure that gender related awareness and sensitivity is imparted systemically and consistently to the existing systems and structures in our society.

The training and awareness program must be structured and should inculcate a fine sense of worthiness in the beneficiary and the need not to fit in but to find a tribe that accepts you for who you are. Perhaps, this might sound philosophical however, one must know that most laws find their basis in jurisprudence that is heavily dependent on philosophy and the ever-evolving society.

Imparting education and the means of communication in a classroom must swiftly adapt to the ways of the society. So that when the students are out of the mainstream education, they are more than equipped to just make a living, they must be adept enough to make a life for themselves. It is important to inculcate dignity and worthiness and respect for rights of others, gender-based education can achieve all of this.

## GENDER DEVELOPMENT THROUGH EDUCATION

**Dr. Vandana Uttam Katare,**

Post-Doctoral Research Scholar

Dr. Ambedkar International Centre, Ministry of Social Justice  
and Empowerment, 15 Janpath, New Delhi

E-mail: - vandanaakataare2@gmail.com

*Education is the basic requirement and the 'Fundamental Right' of the citizens of a nation. Education plays an incredibly significant role in human being. While higher education is important, the primary and elementary education system serves as the base over which the super structure of the whole education system is built up. This paper tries to analyses the trends, role of education in gender development and interacting factor affecting the quantitative and qualitative aspects of education system in India in recent year with a special focus on women's education. It is observed that complete women literacy has not been achieved after 64 years of the independence of India. It is so harmful for healthy society and human beings. Substantial gender bias and completion of education is a major cause of concern. There are many laws, committees and conventions formed at national and international levels for improving the status of women in education and sustainable development. Unfortunately, implementation is slightly poor in the society. So, it is important and needs to be proper attention on beneficiaries and implementation of laws.*

### **Introduction**

The education of women and girls is significant connection to the many grass rooted challenges such as alleviation of poverty, inequality between men and women, women's health issues, infant mortality, inequality in income, work participation etc. These are the major obstacles in the path of women's all over development. Inequalities in education for girls and women are complex; women and girls face explicit barriers to entry to school,

for example, violence against women or prohibition of girls for going to school, while other problems are more systematic and less explicit, science, technology and engineering etc. education disparities are deep rooted not even in India but in Europe and North America. In some Western countries and more other developed and developing countries, women have surpassed men at many levels of education.

If we study the education status of women and girls of many countries in world, we understand that major part of women far away from their basic right of education. In the poorest countries of the world 50% of girls do not attend even secondary school. Illiteracy is a big obstacle in development of women and country. In India, the status of girls and women are improving but not so satisfactory. It is needed to be more attention on girl's and women's education in primary to higher education.

**Objectives: -**

1. To study the status of education of women in India.
2. To study the gender development through education.
3. To study signification of education for gender development.
4. To understand the major obstacles for achieving education to women.

**Hypothesis:-**

1. Traditional unwritten laws do not support to girl's and women's education.
2. Developmental opportunities are not equal provides to women as men counterparts.

### **Research Methodology**

The present study is based on the collection of data from secondary sources. Secondary data is obtained from various books, articles, reports, census, records, magazines, journals, government publication and website etc.

### **CONCEPTS**

**Gender:** - Gender refers to the roles and responsibilities of men and women that are created in our family, society and culture.

Gender refers to the socially constructed roles of and relation between men and women. Gender has a much wider canvass. It covers culture, gender equality and equity, gender mainstreaming, gender education, gender violence, women's empowerment and women's sustainable development and women's human rights etc. Each subject has its own independent value and study pattern.

**Education:** - Education is the process of facilitating learning or the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values, beliefs and habits.

**According to Socrates,** "Education means the bringing out of the ideas of universal validity which are latent in the mind of every man".

**According to John Dewey,** "Education is a process of living through, a continuous reconstruction of experiences".

**Literacy:** - Literacy refers to the ability to read and write at a level whereby individuals can effectively understand and use written communication in all media (print or electronic), including digital literacy.

### **Status of Women's Education**

Education or Literacy is one of the most important indicators of human development. The level of literacy is not the same

throughout the world. India is also in exception for this issue. If we talk about men and women, there is huge educational gap between men and women. There is low level of literacy in Asia and Africa. In this women's literacy rate is exceptionally low. Women's literacy levels appear to be good in developed and industrialized countries. The literacy rate of women is low in developing and underdeveloped countries.

### **Indian Scenario**

The spread of education in India started during the pre-independence period during the British rule. Jyotirao Phule, Savitribai Phule, Pandita Ramabai and many other social reformers were rewarded with education and started women's education. At that time male – female literacy rate was extremely low. In 1901, the total literacy rate was 5.35% and female literacy rate was extremely poor i.e., 0.60%. After independence of India the rate of literacy was gradually increased. In 1951 total literacy rate was 18.33 %. There was a huge difference in the literacy rate of men and women. Male literacy rate was 24.90% and female literacy rate was only 7.30% in 1951.

In the early days, women's education did not seem to increase rapidly for decades due to strong opposition from so – called patrons of religion. Even today, due to the huge influence of religion and culture on the people of India, women are not given enough attention so the level of education of women is always lower than that of men.

The male and female literacy levels in India can be seen from the following table:

**Male-Female Literacy Rate in India (1901 – 2011)**

Year	Literacy Rate (in %)		
	Male Literacy	Female Literacy	Total Literacy
1901	9.83	0.06	5.35
1911	10.56	1.05	5.92
1921	12.21	1.81	7.16
1931	15.59	2.93	9.50
1941	24.90	7.30	16.10
1951	27.16	8.86	18.33
1961	40.40	15.35	28.30
1971	45.96	21.97	34.45
1981	56.38	29.76	43.57
1991	64.13	39.29	52.21
2001	75.26	53.67	64.83
2011	82.14	65.46	74.04

Source: Census of India, 2011

The above table shows the increase female literacy in the post – independence period. The real improvement in the overall literacy rate in India can be seen in the decade 80s. Legislation and various initiative enacted by the states and central governments after the 1980s have seen an increase in male and female literacy rates. Due to launch the National Education Mission in 1991, overall literacy rate was improved from 50% to 52.21%. In the 1981 census, the male – female literacy rate gap was the highest at 26 %. This gap was then reduced up to 16.68% in 2011. Even though the gap seems to have narrowed, there is still a huge gap in male – female literacy rate in India.

In many states of India, the numbers of girls going to schools has increased since special concessions like Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Free concessions for girls and compulsory education, free lunch etc.



### **The Role of Education in Gender Development**

- ❖ Education is an immensely powerful instrument to drastically change in human being.
- ❖ Women's education helps to bring about positive change in many things.
- ❖ Education can drastically improve women's autonomy, human capital and self – respect.
- ❖ An education of women can bring change in the attribute of family members and society.
- ❖ It also helps in removing wrong – traditions such as early marriage, Dowry, avoid violence, harassment etc.
- ❖ Educated women not only tend to promote education of their girl children, but also can provide better guidance to all their children.
- ❖ Educated women can also help in the reduction of infant mortality rate and growth of the population.
- ❖ Educating an Indian woman creates a vital opportunity for the social and economic development of India.
- ❖ Education can help increase / improve women's decision-making ability.
- ❖ Education provides great confidence and make able to take proper decisions as well as play an important roles and responsibilities at various platform.
- ❖ Contributes in a positive way to the society and the nation at large.

### **Obstacles in Women's Education**

There are many problems and challenges face women in education sector. Some problems and challenges listed below:

- ❖ Negative approach towards woman.
- ❖ Huge responsibilities of children and family.
- ❖ Poverty is the root cause of many problems in India.
- ❖ The turban of religion and superstition.
- ❖ Early marriage.
- ❖ Inadequate education facilities at education places.
- ❖ Shortage of female teachers.

- ❖ Men do not value women's education.
- ❖ Not proper monitoring on government laws and facilities regarding women's education.

**Suggestions for enhancing women participation in primary and higher education**

- ❖ To change the traditional and narrowing attitude towards women's education.
- ❖ It is a need of the hour to ensure basic right to education to the women.
- ❖ Establish more primary and higher educational institutions in rural and tribal areas.
- ❖ Make skill – based higher education for better life and employability.
- ❖ Improve transport facilities for girls and women students.
- ❖ Provide financial assistant to girls and women in primary and higher educational institutions.
- ❖ Formulate proper laws and policies to check and prevent all types of harassment within and outside the institutions.
- ❖ Increase women representations in various decision-making bodies of higher educational institutions.
- ❖ Legal safeguards for the benefit of women should be properly enforced.
- ❖ Gender sensitization and social awareness are the only remedy.

**Conclusion**

Women cover half population in the world. Women are especially important part of the family and society. We can achieve many significant targets and achievements with the help of women. Educated women play a vital role in all types of developments. Country can improve the GDP when country use women's power, skills, talent and women's participation in workforce. Lack of education means lack of awareness. Illiterate women are not aware of their rights. Traditional unwritten laws and developmental opportunities are not providing equally to men and women, so

girls and women lag male counterparts in education sector as well as other sectors.

According to the Country Report of the government of India, “Empowerment means moving from a weak position to execute a power”. To encourage the education of women at all levels and for dilution of gender bias in providing knowledge and education, established schools, colleges and universities even exclusively for women in the country. In independent India women are facing many problems and discriminations by male counterpart. There are various solutions to the problems of women, but it will be useful when women come together organized and fight for it.

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**ENGAGING THE MAHATMA-MULTIPLE  
PERSPECTIVES**

**BOOK REVIEWED BY**

**Dr Sunayana Kadle**

Associate Professor

Gandhi Shikshan Bhavan's

Smt Surajba College of Education

Juhu North, Mumbai 400049

E-mail: sunayanakadle@yahoo.co.in

**Engaging with the Mahatma- Multiple Perspectives**

**Editors:** Dr. (Prof.) Mala Pandurang

Mrs. Vidya Subramanian

Ms. Huda Sayyed

Ms. Jinal Baxi

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Seva Mandal Education Society 's

Dr. Bhanuben Mahendra Nanavati College of Home Science

The book -**Engaging the Mahatma – Multiple Perspectives** gives full justice to its title. As the name suggests the book will give the readers a lot of information and surely help in understanding the Mahatma. This book has 104 pages and ISBN 978-93-5258-741-3 has been published by Seva Mandal Education Society 's Dr. Bhanuben Mahendra Nanavati College of Home Science to mark the conclusion of the sesquicentennial year of Mahatma Gandhi. It is a collection of essays on the continued significance of Gandhian values in the 21st Century. The book **Engaging with the Mahatma** is a collected interpretation of viewpoints. Engaging with the Mahatma is a collected rendition of perspectives. The collection brings forth insightful commentaries through creative writing and academic reflections, thus encompassing an elucidating journey that contemplates, revives and paves way for a novel dialogue with the enigmatic Mahatma.

The book begins with information about the Gandhian study centre, Dr. Bhanuben Mahendra Nanavati College of Home Science. The centre conducts a number of activities and programmes undertaken to promote Gandhian values and actions which are relevant even today. The information on all the activities of the centre is highlighted in detail. To mark the conclusion of the sesquicentennial year of Mahatma Gandhi the centre has forward a collection of essays on the continued relevance of Gandhian values in the 21st Century.

**This book is a collection of 8 articles written by various writers in this book. The analysis of each article is as follow;**

The first article **Sabhi Log Apne Jan**, written by **Dr. Ramdas Bhatkal**, a publishing executive, writer and musician, has highlighted the Gandhiji's thoughts on religion, mother tongue and castes. The author says that the most important point that he feels about the thought of Gandhiji is full faith in the concept of **Sabhi Log Apne Jan**, meaning that People whether they belong to different religions or faith are one. The essay highlights Gandhi's how the Mahatma view of religion **evolved** right from the age of 25, the very beginning of his career as a barrister in England. The article explains how Gandhiji's experiences with the people of different faiths and the exposure to religious texts of varied religions were instrumental in moulding his thoughts about religion. As a result, Gandhi came to the conclusion that all religions have a sound moral base. As it develops, some defects are also incorporated and thus no religion is perfect. This enabled him to conceptualise the foundational message that was common to all the religions, one that relies on morality. Later Bhatkal explains that it is this process of constant contemplation and study that aided Gandhi to reject the idea of conversion or reconversion as all religions have a strong moral base but may not be free from defects. Gandhiji examined his own religion Hinduism as well and decided to accept the good practices and reject the wrong ones like untouchability etc. Gandhi thus advocated equal respect for all religions – **'Sarva Dharma'**. Gandhi followed this approach in all aspects of life, instances of which can be noticed abundantly,

inspiring many great leaders all over the world. In this chapter Ramdas Bhatkal highlighted 3 main thoughts that influence the writer most. Sarva Dharma Sama Bhava, Sarva Bhasha Sama Bhava and Sarva Vansh Sama Bhava. **Unity in diversity helps everyone to stand together, Possibility are endless where unity in diversity exist, Diversity creates beauty and immense strength.**

The second article, **Gandhi in Central and Eastern Europe**, is written by Dr. Roxana-Elisabeta Marinescu, Associate Professor with the Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Romania. The writer in her article inspects the level to which Gandhi and his role in India's development are known and internalised in Central and Eastern Europe and secondly, analyses how his theories and principles - especially satyagraha and ahimsa - have been adopted in the post-1989 period in the fight for democratic freedom and active citizenship. The article points out that Gandhiji's presence in Central and Eastern Europe remains scarce; limited to erection of statues, emission of stamps, a book published here and there, some conferences, or singing his favourite bhajan in Gujarati by local artists. The cause of which the author draws from Madina Tlostanova's conceptualization of the —victimhood rivalry, i.e. euro centricity and bland racism of the post socialist reality towards the postcolonial space. The essay demonstrates the often-unrealized influences of the Gandhian thought of non-violent protests/ resistance against many of the systemic violence of state institutions that took place in Central and Eastern Europe which show the will of the people in these countries to protest non-violently. Similarity is also drawn from the author's own country, Romania, where on several instances people's non-violent protests have been met by institutionalised violence, a virtual record in terms of photographs and videos exist.

**Gandhi-of the earth, earthy**, which is the third article in the book has been written by Dr. Betty Govinden. The author has written an award-winning book 'Sister outsider'. Her article begins with the a few lines written by Gandhi **I deny being a visionary. I do**

**not accept the claim of saintliness. I am of the earth, earthy...** [Gandhi 1920]. The article written by Dr. Betty is based on a provocative biography of Gandhi- The South African Gandhi- Strecher-Bearer of Empire (2015). The author has quoted many of the instances about Gandhi as described in the biography by Desai and Vahed. —The author goes on to describe the main thoughts behind Desai and Vahed's book. The biography is opposite to those portrayed in other books on Gandhi. It is against the mythology or saintliness that has gathered around Gandhi, and of the subsequent heritage mythmaking 'by his acolytes, and they feel compelled, to present facts by describing events that took place and the role played by Gandhi . In the article Dr. Betty has presented writings and views of many other authors, with the various opinions on Gandhi that emerge in the book by viewing him through the prism of his renowned contemporary authors like John Langalibelle Dube. It questions into some of the major perceptions that one may be challenged with in their encounter with Gandhi through different anecdotes. The author stresses the importance of finding a common ground in order to carry on the work of building a better world where race is not a fundamental factor to accomplishments of goals.

The fourth article, **The Making of a Mahatma**, written by Dr. Preeti Shirodkar, Associate Professor, Communication and Soft Skills- MET IOM. Her article highlights the relevance of Gandhian values and the concept of Ahimsa. This article examines the 10 truths 'that Mahatma Gandhi embodied, that, if emulated and brought into practice, can add immense value to each one of our lives; Preeti shirodkar also discussed about an article in Shodhganga which tries to capture his impact in 3 stages-the during Gandhi period in which Gandhi was usually treated as demi-God, second stage after-Gandhi period which saw the beginning of critical reviewing of Gandhi and finally about Gandhi is being caricaturised. It is also discussed about Gandhi truth in everyone's life. Nicely portrayed about Gandhi was not born as saint since from his childhood. In the article "Sharasharmadaan" which has been written by Tanveer Jafri. Dr. Preeti also discussed that one person can make a difference as per

Gandhi principles and how Gandhi ji opposed various injustice through satyagraha or Ahimsa. Gandhiji's strategies to fight for India as a freedom fighter. Dr. Preeti has explained Gandhi ji as a person with clear vision and courage with well explained examples and it requires courage to admit mistakes and take a step back. One of the Gandhi quoted statement "My life My Message" which stands testimony to the fact that he practised what he preached. One important topic which is been discussed from the Gandhian principle is about unwillingness to defeat-which: It was not as if every move and strategy of Gandhiji was successful. In his life span of 78 years, Gandhiji worked consistently towards what he believed was right. More importantly, his experiences and experiments were varied. This focus both towards his objective and the lessons that he got while striding towards it, assimilating and drawing inspiration from them, made it possible for him to innovate and carry on. It has nicely elaborated about understanding the opponent before fighting it. It is well said in the article that, Gandhi has become in India and around the globe, a simplified version of what he was: a smiling saint. One may hate him, worship him or try to see him for what he was; however, one thing is certain one cannot ignore him but for he was beyond doubt a person, who created ripples not only during his time but for lifetime.

**The next article, Relevance and Significance of Gandhian Thoughts for Women in the Contemporary World** by Dr. Vibhuti Patel Professor, Advanced Centre for Women's Studies, School of Development Studies, TATA Institute of Social Sciences, in her article describes about the Gandhian perspectives on women and their everlasting contributions to a family, a nation and the world as a whole. "Relevance of Gandhian Legacy for the Contemporary Women's Movement" examines the importance and relevance of his views on issues that directly or indirectly impacts the status of women in India. The author explains how Gandhi's value system and principles can be credited to 'Ba' his mother and this has been quoted through the letter written by Gandhi from Wardha to Rajkumari Amrit Kaur. Later, it was his wife, Kasturba who emerges as a source of great inspiration to the



Mahatma. Dr. Vibhuti Patel in her article has quoted a number of incidents where Gandhi has shown high expectations from women and believed in their capacity.

As a firm opposer of gender-based discrimination Gandhi described woman as the embodiment of sacrifice and ahimsa. He thus strived for the empowerment of women and duly commending the role of women in all spheres of life. At the same time, he has expected women to be householders first and then other duties.

The article at the end concludes with a very powerful observation related to the situation in India as far as women are concerned. She has very well said-- India is far ahead in policies and legislation favouring women Yet men in the political structure refuse to acknowledge the relationships between social justice and gender justice. The increasing criminalization of politics and the use of vast sums of unaccounted money and ugly muscle power by caste and criminal gangs present an entire hostile environment for women who wish to pursue a political vocation. With both caste and gender groups perpetuating traditional and modern divisions and indigenous human resources being replaced by western technologies the mission of Gandhi and the dreams of women are yet to be fulfilled. Through this article, she shares knowledge, understanding and experience in that can enrich readers' lives in many ways. This article is a treat to read for all women.

The sixth article, **Why now? Hey Ram?** by Sridhar Rajeswaran is a reflective account of his view on the changing insights of Gandhi through the years. In the article, he begins with the influence of Gandhi in his family and his early acquaintance of the Mahatma as a schoolboy both at home and in the outside world. The writer describes his personal journey of understanding the diverse personality of Gandhi and the journey of Gandhi himself, the way he paved way through the condemnations of the innumerable people who were against his ideas. He later goes on to say that though people were against the Mahatma, they could not undermine his values and principles even in the time of movements which erupted as **Gandhi Must Fall 'movements**. He

also has compared the Mahatma with Jesus Christ as Gandhi too met with a very violent end of his life as Christ for the values of humanity. This article has a lot of historical events mentioned which take us through Gandhiji's journey too and his struggles and stand taken by him in his life. He goes on to write at the end on opinions of people on Gandhi .... *because they have different optics, with some looking through passively reflecting convex lenses, with some through active concave ones and some looking through dark glasses, and some looking through dark glasses, darkly. See through lenses that do away with one's own myopic vision and what we see clearly is not merely the man or a statue but a Mahatma.*

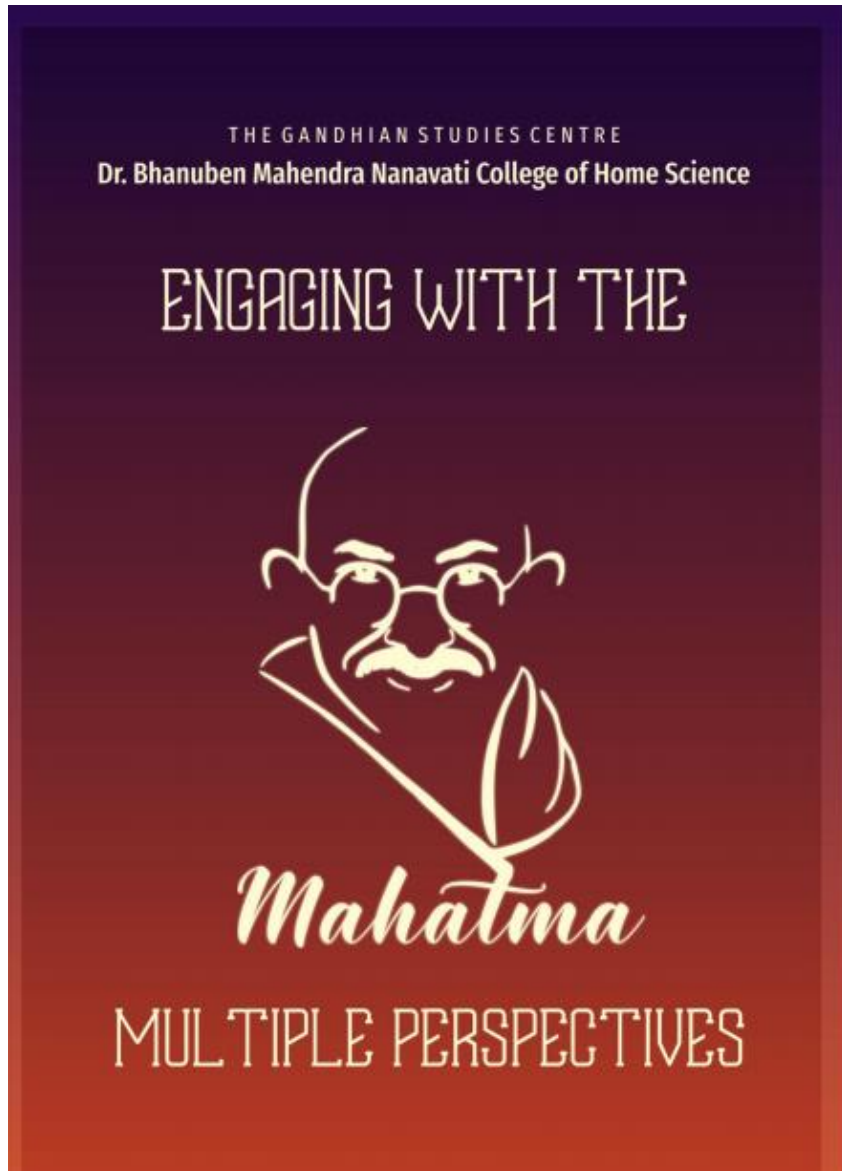
The seventh article **close to the Mahatma** written by Mr. Pheroze Nowrojee, a leading human rights lawyer, a poet, and a writer, born in Nairobi, who over many decades has been a significant part of the political and social activities for constitutional and social change in Kenya. His article is an account of Reverend Charles F. Andrews who had a close bond with Gandhi when he worked as a Satyagrahi in Kenya under the guidance of Gandhi. The article has been presented in the form of a story and the description of the events is such that the reader is taken back in time and can actually visualize the scenes there in the story. The story helps readers to understand and witness the historical contribution of Gandhian thoughts in the Kenyan environment.

The last article **Gandhi's Earth and Other Poems** by Dr. Betty Govinden is collection of poetry dealing with the underlying attributes of Gandhian thoughts, symbols and values. The author has adapted from the title of Wole Soyinka's poem, "Mandela's Earth". There are in all 14 short poems related to the themes - Ahimsa, satyagraha, peace, brotherhood, truth, patriotism, sarvodaya and spirituality. The poems are written with depth on the themes. The Sabarmati Ashram has been described beautifully through the poem. The thoughts about Ahimsa has been described as soul force which is a nice term. The poems related to swaraj are also very meaningful and motivating.

There are Collected Annotations Compiled by Ms. Huda Sayyed and Ms. Jinal Baxi. Collected annotations on various books that

are available at the centre and the library, especially pertaining to Mahatma Gandhi 's engagement with life, his experiences and his family are included for reference.

**In conclusion,** Every Indian knows about Gandhi who was a great leader. Every citizen has their own opinion of the Father of the Nation. All the 8 articles written offer the perfect opportunity to understand Gandhi. Every article in the book is unique due to the way it has been presented. The authors have put forth their point of view after an in-depth study of articles of books or stories written about Gandhiji. Anyone who reads the book will surely come to know more about Gandhi. There are certain stories in the article related to Gandhiji interaction with people. Besides this, we also get to know about writers who have written books on Gandhiji with differing views. A number of quotes poems stories and historical events have been presented through the articles. My sincere appreciation to all the authors. Reading through the pages made me revive the ideals of Gandhiji. The writing style of every article is discreet. You often turn to look at the cover page mulling whether this mild-looking dhoti clad figure who gave up salt for 10 years to wrangle against British rule would be so adventurous and such a determined person.

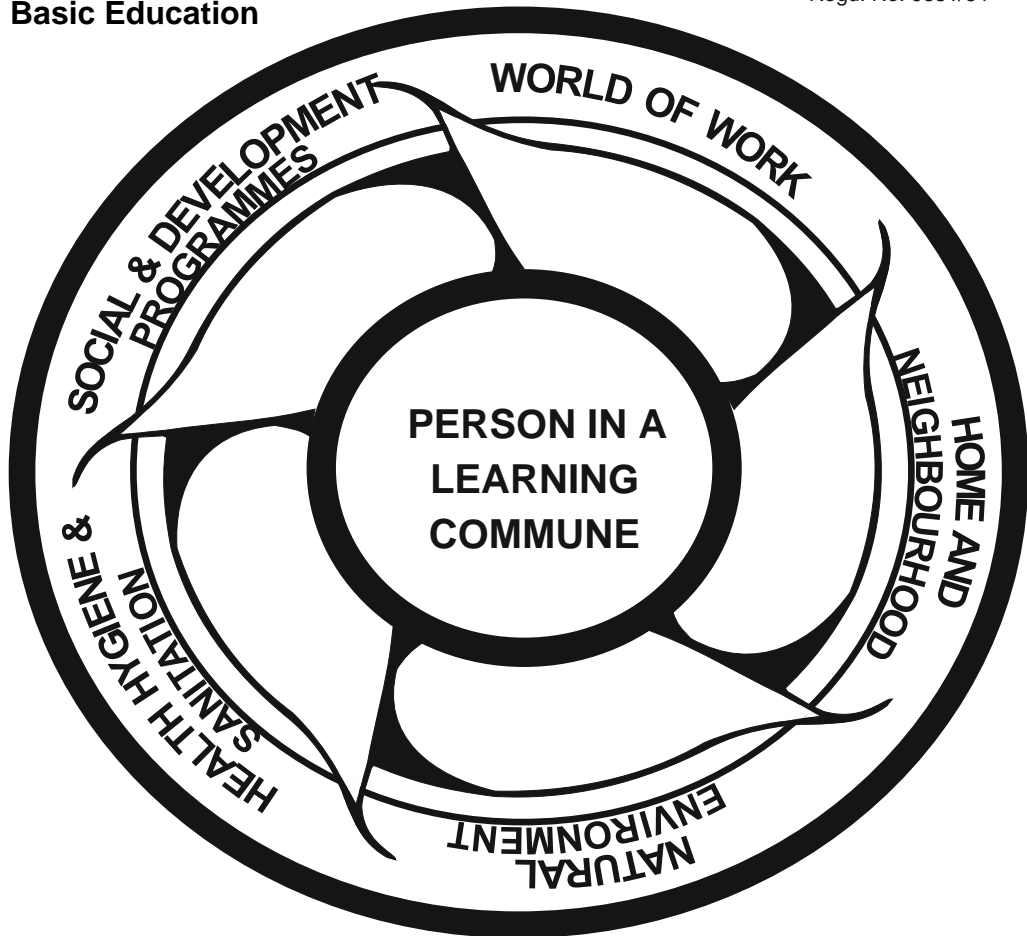


# GANDHI SHIKSHAN BHAVAN

Functional Education

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Development of well-integrate personality is possible if:

- a. Educational experiences and work experiences interweave, intersect and reinforce each other.
- b. Students and teachers participate actively in the community services such as adult education, promotion of better health, hygiene and sanitation etc.
- c. Curriculum provides for self-directed learning and
- d. Education concerns itself with the development of the human person.

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Ph. : (022) 26200589 Fax : (022) 26706277. E-mail : [questineducation@gmail.com](mailto:questineducation@gmail.com)