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Editorial

Public health emergency caused by COVID19 has posed major challenge to 63 million educators and 290 million students in 184 nations. Long-term closing down of schools, colleges and universities has disrupted conventional academic activities due to pandemic of coronavirus and its ripple effect has been enhanced importance of internet-based teaching-learning so that physical distancing can be maintained. In this issue,

Compilation of policy update for national and state action has been provided by **Ms. Anjela Taneja.**

In her article based on first person experience intertwined with feminist scholarship**, Ms. Chanda Asani** gives an overview of roller coaster ride of women's studies in higher education institutions over last 40 years.

Dr. Meesala Suribabu's article profiles her research study of the peace perceptions of undergraduate students in Visakhapatnam.

Dr Rohini Sudhakar's article reflects her survey research on "Use of Smartphones by the Urban Youth for Accessing Social Media".

Case study of Shaishav, a child rights organisation in Bhavnagar is provided by **Prof. Vibhuti Patel** captures its inspiring and sustained activities amid multifaceted challenges.

Ms. Lavanya Shanbhogue has reviewed well known book titled, *Back to the Sources: A Study of Gandhi's Basic Education* by Henry Fagg published by National Book Trust, Delhi and widely circulated during 150th birth anniversary (1969-2019) of Mahatma Gandhi.

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 for seeing their article in print.

Prof. Vibhuti Patel   Prof. Veena Devasthali   Dr. Ratnabrabha Rajmane

NATIONAL AND STATE ACTIONS ON EDUCATION: POLICY UPDATE ON COVID-19

Ms. Anjela Taneja
Right to Education Forum, Delhi

Currently, most countries have temporarily closed educational institutions in an attempt to contain the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. School, colleges and universities are turning to online education that benefits only those who have internet connectivity, access to computers and smartphones.

According to UNESCO, 89.5% of the world's enrolled learners are now affected by lockdowns in 188 country-wide closures due to CORONAVIRUS pandemic.

A set of Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) of Government of India, guidelines for universities and schools have also been issued. New orders from MHRD have asked all higher and school education regulatory authorities to ask institutions to allow their staff to work from home till 31st March. Teachers have been asked to utilize this period for academic activities like creating online content, academic programmes or do research. The letter also asks institutions to allow students who are still in their hostels to be allowed to stay and take necessary precautions. The last date of applications from schools seeking affiliation have been extended by the CBSE.

MHRD has asked all states to ensure that eligible students either get their meals or a commensurate food security allowance as building immunity through proper diet is an important element in the fight against the disease. This follows the Supreme Court issuing notices to all state governments to explain how they would ensure the midday meals reach the vulnerable while schools stay shut. Assam, Kerala, West Bengal, Karnataka, AP, Haryana: order issued for teachers to

deliver midday meal ration and cooking cost to eligible students in 17 districts. Delhi exploring home-delivery of cooked meals.

Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) to promote all students in class 1 to 8 to the next class/grade. Students in class 9 and 11 will be promoted based on internal assessments of school including projects, periodic tests, term exams, etc. conducted so far. CBSE to conduct board exams only for 29 main subjects that are required for promotion and crucial for university admissions, says HRD minister. Chhattisgarh to promote students of Classes 1-8, 9, 11. Delhi announced all students from nursery to class 8th will be promoted to next class. Karnataka has cancelled exams for classes 7-9. Decision about 10th standard exams will be taken after 14 April - the day the 21-day lockdown is scheduled to end. West Bengal students of classes 1-8 will be directly promoted. Punjab to promote all students of primary and primary classes.

Director-General of National Testing Agency (NTA) has been advised to reschedule the registration deadline for several upcoming entrance examinations like ICAR Exam, JNUEE, UGC NET, CSIR NET, NCHM JEE, IGNOU PhD, Management Entrance exams and All India Ayush PG Entrance Test by a month. UPSC has postponed the NDA, NA examination 2020.The Consortium of National Law Universities has extended the last date to apply for the Common Law Admission Test (CLAT) 2020 till April 25, 2020.

Examinations in many states across the country have been postponed. There has been a halt on admissions in tertiary education institutions which would have a cascading effect on the 2020-21 academic calendar including delays in the declaration of results, holding further entrance examination and implication of admission process. NIOS exams have also been postponed. A run up of these decisions can be accessed here. In many instances there would be automatic promotion. Teachers' eligibility test has been postponed in Karnataka. The PISA field trial has been postponed to July. Fees waiver in private schools is a major challenge.

With several private schools moving to online teaching, children admitted under 12-1c, i.e. children from the socioeconomically marginalized families find themselves on the wrong side of the digital divide. In Ahmedabad, schools asked parents to pay the next year's fees by the first week of April; similar reports in other states. Uttarakhand has barred government and private schools from fee collection until after covid-19. So has HP. A ban on the payment of fees for the next year has been issued in Telangana which is allegedly being ignored by many schools.

Karnataka has asked schools to not begin the admission process after reports of private schools asking parents to pay fees for the coming financial year. Haryana has ordered that no fees would be charged until normal classes resume. Jharkhand has ordered schools to not charge tuition, bus fees till classes resume. J&K extends fees deposit date till April 30.

 Maharashtra asks private schools to be considerate while demanding fees for the ongoing and next academic year and not make payment mandatory. Chhattisgarh CM orders private schools to stop fees recovery during the shutdown.

Karnataka's education minister reiterates that private schools are not to harass parents to pay fees (including CBSE, ICSE and state board schools) and said that disaffiliation and other stringent measures under the epidemic act may be taken. Complaints of Low Fees Private Schools charging fees in Delhi. NSUI asked for fee waiver for students stuck in cities amid lockdown since classes are suspended.

Low Fees Private Schools' Association, NISA wrote to the PM, FM and HRD Minister asking the centre to not issue any orders pertaining to school fees waiver (instead asking the government to DBT the fees into parents account) and asking for reimbursement of the EWS provisions. Private schools in TN have asked for a tax waiver for school buses for three months.

 Applications for new private schools are down by 50% this year. Private schools in Rajasthan ordered not to cut teacher salaries during

the lockdown. Private schools' Association J&K offers help in fighting Covid-19- building, vehicles and trained manpower. Hostels and residential schools: MHRD has asked the states to keep schools with residential facilities open. UGC writes to VCs to provide healthcare and food to residents in hostels.Reports of students in residential facilities (Bihar), especially off campus finding obtaining food difficult amidst closure of all restaurants. Rahul Gandhi wrote to MHRD asking to ensure safety of students in hostels (Navodaya Vidyalaya) including providing health facilities.

One emerging story is the growth of ed-tech on the back of the epidemic, HRD Ministry has launched e-classes on Swayam Prabha DTH channels for students. UNICEF working with the government to provide alternative ways of learning for those enrolled in government schools. Private schools are reported to be switching to e-classes to complete syllabi. CISCE asks schools to take online classes. MHRD is said to be planning to launch a new academic session online in the first week of April, starting with CBSE-affiliated schools and expecting states to join later.

A good article in the wire questioning whether the move to online teaching in schools and universities is in the students' interest. Many universities and colleges (e.g. Jamia Milia Islamia (JMI) University, Shiv Nadar University and National Institute of Information Technology (NIIT) have switched to conducting classes online. There has been a range of private responses. BYJU, a learning App has announced it would offer its services free to students in the middle of the endemic. Early reports have emerged of potential philanthro-capitalism by private companies offering digital solutions.

Gujarat government's Education Department will broadcast lessons; nearly 1.5 lakh government primary teachers will reach out to all individual students and hand over worksheets, all 51 weekly tests, their answer sheets for Class III-VIII students. In Assam, teachers have been asked to take classes on WhatsApp using phone-based learning materials (including homework) and use free tools like Google Classroom. Delhi government to start classes in April using SMS, IVR and internet; parents to be sent one activity daily.

Performance to be given weightage in internal assessment and teachers to remain in touch with parents and students on phone. Online teaching for class 12 students. Chandigarh appears to be considering ways to start online teaching. Himachal Pradesh has launched digital classrooms including in government schools and shared a list of useful government apps for the same. In Delhi, a strategy for academic learning at home are being developed. Chhattisgarh mulls e-classes amid Covid-19 lockdown. The DEOs have been asked to register all the teachers of the district in different telegram groups and keep them active.

National Book Trust (NBT) publications free online. Physical education teachers in AP to assist police in combating spread. Delhi converts 11 schools into night shelters for migrants. Reported spike in queries to counsellors in Delhi-NCR from parents and children.

Some alternative uses schools are being put to include as quarantine centers (Punjab, Karnataka, Bihar, Maharashtra and the KVS) and Night shelters (Delhi). Questions of disinfection, safety, damage to school infrastructure as a result of the use of schools.

The union government said that it will reimburse 25% of the stipend amount given to 240,000 apprentices deployed in various industries and asked the companies to not cut their full stipend amount during the current lockdown period. Union Ministry of Tribal Affairs asked Eklavya Model schools to reschedule their holidays from March-May. The Supreme Court has taken *Suo Moto* cognizance of the condition of child protection homes across the country amid the coronavirus outbreak which has so far claimed 50 lives in India.

In this context, there is a need for social solidarity amid physical distance to contain deadly impact of coronavirus.
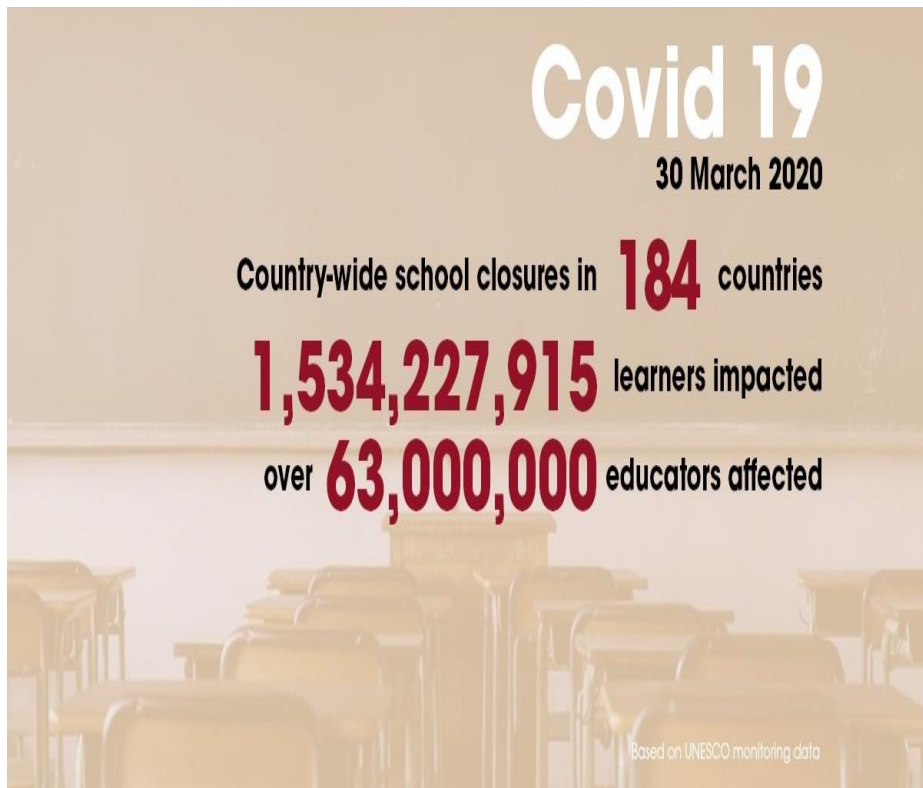
Source: UNESCO, March 2020.

WOMEN'S STUDIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION 2025: GROWTH, CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

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Women Writing in India, 600 BC to the Twentieth Century, edited by Susie Tharu and Lalita K, was first published in 1991 (Oxford Paperbacks, Eleventh impression 2009) in 2 volumes of translations from native Indian languages and few writings in English, almost two decades after UGC acknowledged Women's Studies to be introduced for higher education in 1974. Women's Studies in India: A Reader (Ed. John, Mary E. Penguin Books) a basic reader covering a few aspects of Women's Studies came into existence still later in 2008 taking almost ten years to see the light. The initial books introducing the perspective of Women's Studies though had come from Research Centre for Women's Studies (RCWS), SNDT Women's University, Mumbai and Centre for Women's Development Studies' (CWDS Delhi), Occasional Papers starting mid-80s.

Introduction

The impetus for Women's Studies was created by the Committee of Status of Women in India's Towards Equality Report 1974 giving the low status of women in all areas. This is a continuation of Indian History and Civilization being written in formal spaces with stress on status of women! This trend spills over in Higher Education in spite of 'Recasting Women' (eds. Kumkum Sangari & Sudesh Vaid, Zubaan, Delhi, 1989, Reprint 2010) where the essays are confined to the dominant Hindu community, largely north of India and deal mainly with middle classes (p.4). A seminar on Women & Culture organized by Indraprastha College, Delhi 26-28 November 1981 resulted in 'Women and Culture', RCWS, SNDT Women's University, 1985, 1994 (among many other of Gender Studies publications) did not change the trend either. Whether School of Women's Studies, Jadavpur University's 'Reading in Gender Series',

eds. Nirmala Banerjee, Samita Sen & Nandita Dhawan, 'Mapping The Field: Gender Relations in Contemporary India, Vol. 1 & 2' and eds. Kavita Panjabi and Paromita Chakravarti, 'Women Contesting Culture, Vol. 1 & 2' (Stree, Kolkata 2011, 2012) will have any effect on Higher Studies in 2025 or would it remain in the ghetto of Women's Studies Conferences is something we decide in National Seminars like the present one. When scholars like Sumit Sarkar and Tanika Sarkar shift to 'Women and Social Reform in Modern India' (2 Volume Set, Ranikhet: Permanent Black, 2011) there is silver lining for future of Women's Studies. With Jasbir Jain being translated by Tripti Jain for Hindi reading scholars and researchers, Naarivaad ke Deshaj Aadhaar, (Rawat, Jaipur 2014) the scope is widening. Whether the biggest challenge for Women's Studies making inroad in Higher Education in spite of UGC's acceptance and encouragement, is Indian value system, is to be perceived in future and analyze the rationale.

Naom Chomsky's 'Manufacturing Consent' is value laden by its very name. In the same way the books taken in the abstract speak volumes. Women's Studies scope is vast but for the paper I would not address economics and politics in spite of the fact that that economics is basis of change and Women's studies has made personal political. Taking that into consideration this paper will take its own course through Women Writing Nation (Women Writing in India 2009)!

The question that is raising its head as I start this paper is whether I have a right to state about the issue being addressed here when I would prefer to immerse myself in reading over and over again and continue to delve into the knowledge base unearthed by Women's Studies scholars. Women's Studies is not about writing papers in sanitized atmospheres but getting to know the world at its core to get at least a semblance of equality. There are few who would take up the cudgel to speak up for Women's Studies in higher education in 2025. Therefore, I am attempting this without fear as per Tagore's prayer *'Where the mind is without fear and head is held high, Where Knowledge is free….* (http://allpoetry.com/Where-The-Mind-Is-Without-Fear 10.11.15)

I have barely glanced through the books mentioned in the abstract, but I am not aiming for higher studies. My purpose is to get higher education interested in the work done by women's studies scholars and thus in Women's Studies as a discipline to make the perspective of Women's Studies more visible to construct a world where equality and justice prevails. At least so that women are not driven to take drastic measures like in 'Sultana's Dream' – *We shut our men indoors.* (Sultana's Dream was originally published in *The Indian Ladies' Magazine,* Madras, 1905, in English. *Sultana's dream; and Padmarag: two feminist utopias* by Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain; translated with an introduction by Barnita Bagchi. New Delhi (India): Penguin, 2005).

Soon after emergency was declared Prof J. P. Naik, then Secretary ICSSR called Dr. Vina Mazumdar to start women centric research, as it was not political enough to be questioned or stopped. The relevance would be registered later! Women's Studies is study of structures from the perspective of underprivileged and taught as a discipline in formal spaces (Patel, 2002). UGC acknowledged Women's Studies but since UGC is not abstract here I acknowledge *Dr. Madhuri Shah, then UGC Chairperson, who played a proactive role in 1981 by sending letters to all universities to incorporate Women's Studies in research* (Introduction, Women's Studies in India: A Reader, 2008). Before she became the Chairperson, UGC, while she was Vice Chancellor, SNDT Women's University, Dr. Neera Desai started the first Research Centre for Women's Studies (RCWS) in 1974. But it was only 1997, two decades later that RCWS could start the first certificate course in Women's Studies! This offered Indian perspective without political economy being included. Women's Studies with Third World perspective was taught in Institute for Women's Studies, Lahore. Just as English Literature that is taught formally is mostly written by those who did not study English Literature formally, the books on Women's Studies are written by people who did not study Women's Studies as a discipline! But *Imperial interest clearly underlay the fashioning of the literary curriculum – a fact that becomes all the more significant when we realize that English literature was taught in Indian Universities several years before it was in Britain* (p.10 *Women Writing in India,*

Volume II, The Twentieth Century, OUP 2009*; p.10 Footnote, p.27-8, Gauri Vishwanathan, The Beginnings of English Literary Study in India,* Oxford Literary Review 9, 1987, pp 2-26). The study of English Literature was a result of colonization by the British Empire. Had any other Empire been in power the literature of that empire would have taken a dominant position. Acceptance of Women's Studies by the University Grant Commission as a formal discipline was not the result of any rulers' demand. It was initiated as a continuum of Feminist scholars' and Committee of Status of Women in India (CSWI) members' anguish for *having remained blind to the worsening situation of majority untouched by the equality clauses. The illiterate, impoverished, over-burdened labouring women remained "invisible" to social researchers and government planners alike through three decades of independence* (Unable to quote the book as earlier I would write notes for my learning and not making papers)!

What made a work, 'Radhika Santwanam', (p.14 Footnote, *we have after combing through libraries in Hyderabad, Rajamundry, Vetapalem, Madras and Thanjavur located a copy each of the 1887, 1911 and 1952 editions. The palm-leaf manuscript is not available even in the famous Saraswati Mahal Library in Thanjavur.) that was unusual but relatively uncontroversial in its time so dangerous and unacceptable two decades later* (p.8 *Women Writing in India*, 2009)? *Equally important to our understanding of what made a work that was so well regarded in mid-eighteenth century unacceptable by early twentieth century is an appreciation of the new curriculum and ideological services literature itself was being pressed into* (p.10 *Women Writing in India*, 2009). *Only suitably selected and carefully taught English literary works, thought of as embodying a "secular Christianity," could be entrusted with the fine-grained transformation of thought, emotion, and ethical sensibility necessary if moral and political authority of the British was to be recognized, and a sense of public responsibility and honor to develop.* (Footnote, *The Beginnings of English Literary Study in India, 1987*; p.10 *Women Writing in India*, 2009)

I am tempted to reproduce the *'Introduction'* and the first chapter, *'Women Writing the Nation'* (*Women Writing in India*, Vol. II, 2009) verbatim even at the risk of exceeding the limitations of the required paper. Whatever I write, I am sure it has already been written, discussed and debated by Women's Studies researchers. Not all get formal education, in fact many are illiterate, thus stay outside the purview of constructions. Still the gendered constructions seep through various channels of patriarchy. *Gradually, as the new powers staked their claims over the land and over the minds of the people, not only individual works but whole literary traditions were delegitimated and marginalized* (p.11). *It is interesting that they excised not only the verses they considered sexually explicit or obscene but also the peetika, or colophon, in which the woman writer traced her female lineage and spoke with confidence, unusual for later times, about her achievements as an artist* (p.11). *Romila Thapar and others have pointed out that the past is very selectively drawn upon and that the historical experiences of religious groups are tendentiously interpreted when such imagined religious communities are shaped* (p.73). (Footnote, *Romila Thapar, "Imagined Religious Communities: Ancient History and the Modern Search for a Hindu Identity", Modern Asian Studies, 23:2, 1989, pp 209-231;* p.73). *The significance of this "moment"* (post-independence) *was writ even larger because the canons of most Indian literature was consolidated, and their curricula shaped (and charged with ethical responsibility for shaping the new citizen) in these years* (p.93). *As a mainstream Indian tradition was authoritatively enshrined, many other traditions including feminist ones, were delegitimated. Works such as Muddupalani's (ca. 1730-1790) 'Radhika Santwanam' (Appeasing Radhika) included in volume I of 'Women Writing in India', were totally forgotten* (p.93 *Women Writing in India*, 2009).

Through queries about *'Radhika Santwanam'* we can see the issues raised are connecting a vast span of period. History gets repeated where power structures are biased. The digging of past is essential to know the present. Civilization in Indian History is one of the few which is taught with reference to status of women! The Gargi and Maitreyi represent women of Golden period of India. That they

belonged to upper caste strata is not mentioned. The process of marginalizing the diversity of women in general and Indian women to be precise is an ongoing one.

Indian Constitution has socialized Indians, men and women, into being formally equals, but family socialization treats and boys and girls, men and women differentially. Problematic is the basic perception of equality *when the focus of narratives remains the middle-class protagonist and her moral awakening to social responsibility and therefore also to citizenship. The "other woman" – the prostitute, the working-class- is a figure cut to the measure of this middle class woman's requirement that is also, we must not forget, the requirement of the nation* (p.82 -3, *Women Writing in India*, 2009). It is difficult to step into other's shoes. When one set of women are different from other sets of women there are differences between class, caste, religion and nationality (Patel, 2009).

Sucharita Sharma's dissertation on 7-11-2015 was on 'Black Mother: Trauma and Transformation with Reference to Select Works of Toni

Morrison(https://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/handle/10603/70623). She made an excellent justification of mothers overcoming motherhood to become empowered women. Mothers, black or white are similar in similar background, but slavery is difficult to imagine unless experienced. Men possibly cannot experience what women do, nor can there be any parity between different hierarchies. When socialization of men and women, the basic unit of gender, is different from childhood, concepts of equality have several layers ingrained in Indian psyche. *There seemed no options for women if they were not to jeopardize the nationalist project but to accept this legal resolution (theoretical equality of men and women) that ignored all differences and effectively closed off gender as a political question for several years, as it conferred electoral "equality" on women* (p. 87-88).

K Saraswathi Amma, a courageous feminist author could argue in the early fifties in a radio talk entitled "Nan Oru Barthavayirunankkil" (If I had been a Husband) that no small part of the blame for oppression of women must be laid on women themselves (p.89 *Women*

Writing in India, 2009). It is education which creates unequal outlooks through socialization. *Valmiki's Ramayana teaches two new concepts, 'bharya-bharta' and 'pativrata'. The former emphasizes the dependence of a wife on her husband for material needs and security. The second idea demanded of a woman unswerving devotion, perfect obedience and uncomplaining submergence of her will to the will of her husband* (p.25-26, *Women and Culture*, 1994). Media, an important tool of patriarchy, till date uses these age-old concepts in opera after opera, entering homes without permission via the idiot box. Idealized glorification of 'uniform Indian womanhood' gets deeply embedded in Indian minds making it extremely difficult to question patriarchy. The need for Women's Studies is imperative to say the least.

Even if *Montagu Chelmsford's report of 1918 does not mention the demand of women's suffrage in 1917 by a delegation of women including Sarojini Naidu, Anni Besant, Dr. Joshi, Begum Hasrat Mohani and fourteen others* (p.84 Women Writing in India, 2009), the fact that it happened cannot be done away. These great grandmothers of empowered Indian Womanhood demanded voting rights as 'women' not as mothers, daughters or wives. They were not satisfied with voting rights they also wanted access to public space. This does not get reflected in formal history! They along-with four feet nothing grandmother, an epitome of empowerment, nudge me to search for confident women in narratives.

I found few examples of women in confident hues, away from patriarchal overtones, from nothing less than Mahabharat (Chaturvedi Badrinath, *The Women of Mahabharata*, Orient Blackswan, Hyderabad 2011). *Savitri in company of some elderly ministers commanded by the king to ensure her safety and comfort, sets out on her travels without any definite plan – but in the hope that she would somewhere during her long travels find a man she would love and marry*(p.56). Savitri's story is well known for bringing back her husband from Kingdom of death but few must be knowing that she married by her own selection from wandering. She stuck to her choice even after knowing that the man of her choice would die after a year. *Savitri living in the shadow of death for a year is not scared of death.*

She claims friendship refusing to listen she travels with Death (Yama) seeking life. She speaks about Dharma and receives from Yama Bhakti and brings back the dead husband Satyavan to life (p.64-65). Shakuntala comes to us via Kalidas after taking a trip abroad to Germany instead of a more confident Shakuntala directly from Mahabharat. *Vana-parva ch 206* (p13-18)! Uttara Disha says, *I am nobody's woman. I am free* (p.47). Shandili says, *'Whatever I am, and what I have achieved, is owing to my own conduct, which has in it no blemish. Don't degrade me again indeed, don't insult a woman.' Adi-parva, 68-74* (p.3)

Centre for Women's Studies ought not to be treated as illegitimate child of Higher Education. We owe Kunti putting her first child in the river, the sanctification of marriage and illegitimacy of humankind. Same Kunti teaches '*stree dharma*' to women making Draupadi stay with her husbands who stake and loose her on the board of dice. Janak and Ravana can stake parenthood (should I say! fatherhood) of Sita to make patriarchy complete but it took Prof. Nabaneeta Dev Sen to unearth the epic of Sita as an orphan (Alternative Interpretations of the Ramayana: Views from Below, CWDS 2001).

As far as History of India is concerned, we would not want to let go Mohenjadaro and Harappa even though it is physically situated at present in present Pakistan. Of we ought not to let go even Taxilla University, 4th Century BC when we are considering Nalanda University, 6th century BC, just because it is in Pakistan. When Census of India was done in 1901, we need to remember what the geography of India was. Today it is as relevant as it was when Women's Studies was initiated to keep in mind and question what world power structures would like everyone to think. Asok Mitra, a male social scientist (Ed. John, Mary, Women's Studies in India, 2008), showed us how to read the Census to see sex-ratios as collective women's health. In 1901 when Census was done Bengal included Bengal, Bangladesh and Orissa.

Even though UGC and ICSSR (through Prof J P Naik) were instrumental in initiating Women's Studies in Higher Education in late 70s, it is visible that invisibility of Women's Studies considering

India's vast panorama their continuous support is required. *Reserved seats for women, she (Dr. S. Muthulakshmi Reddy) argued, should not be thought of as a favor, or indeed as some vestigial form of undemocratic privilege. They were only a means by which the present inequalities under which women struggled could be acknowledged* (p.87 *Women Writing in India*). Women's Studies too ought not to be thought of an unjust demand of women. Women's Studies was started to assimilate with all disciplines and become interdisciplinary. As can be seen its scope is vast and widespread. Already so much has been done in various fields. So that the wheel does not get reinvented the work which is already done needs to be part of the formal sphere through Women's Studies Centres and courses specific to it. Spiritual Guru, Mashree, says that in the process of a tree growing strong in adverse situations needs protection. Then only it can give shade to all who want to rest under it. Considering the diversity and challenges of the vast scope of Indian landscape I am finding it difficult to give time limit for the protection of Women's Studies Centres.

Other than several certificate courses in Women's Studies though out the country, Masters in Women's Studies is taught in Mahatma Gandhi Antarrashtriya Hindi Vishwavidyalaya in Wardha to boys and girls. IGNOU has recently started a course through distance education in Masters in Women and Gender Studies (MAWGS). University of Pune has several courses offered by Savitribai Phule Centre for Women's Studies. Punjab University has Masters in Women's Studies. TISS offers courses in Women's Studies. Ambedkar University Delhi is offering PhD in Women's Studies. Even though these are few silver linings for Women's Studies there are immense areas which need to be addressed.

What we need is more Compulsory Foundation Courses for Women's Studies where undergraduate students get at least a glimpse of confidence to question and bring change towards equality. And learn what structures and hegemony is and what perspective of underprivileged and marginalized is. And they can see through, *subsuming the female into the category of human as a political act* (p.19 *Women Writing in India*). Vina Mazumdar's '*Memories of Rolling Stone*' ought to be included as text for English, so all students

get to know journey of a woman through changing times. Even though Dr. Mazumdar was an upper middle-class woman still for students aspiring for higher education, she is an inspiration of Indian woman par excellence.

As I end my paper I tend to delve into status of women and girls who have not had access to education lower or higher (Patel, 2010). Do they have right to speak about higher education now or in future, its growth and challenges? Any which way what I read or know, or those women decide to take it upon them, to comment on higher education what matters is that gatekeepers of education perceive the need for Women's Studies. Not just need, the fact that there is hardly any option left but to open doors to get to the other side to perceive inequality. I quote here from Women Writing Nation, "*We believe that a feminist literary history must map the play of forces in the imaginative worlds in which women wrote, and read their literary initiatives not as an endless repetition of present-day rebellions or dream of triumph, but as different attempts to engage with the force and conflict of multiple cross-cutting determinations of those worlds. Equally important, such a history should be able to read literary texts not merely as achieving aesthetic effects, but as addressing real tasks in a real world. We try, as we trace these histories, to show how each sculpted the imaginary contours of gender.*" (Tharu and Lalitha, 1991 p.70)

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A STUDY OF THE PEACE PERCEPTIONS OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN VISAKHAPATNAM

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ABSTRACT

The study aims to find out the peace perceptions of undergraduate students in Visakhapatnam district. The sample consists of 150 undergraduate students selected from various degree colleges in Visakhapatnam district. Peace perceptions in relations to marital status, academic stream, religion was selected as variables. The investigator adopted peace perceptions scale constructed and standardized by Dr. Gulay Bedir and Dr. Mehmet Arslan, Tokat was used in this study. It consists of 30 items on five-point Likert scale. The reliability of the tool was 0.76. The result found that marital status of undergraduate students makes a significant difference in their peace perceptions. Academic stream and religion of undergraduate students don't make significant difference in their peace perceptions.

Introduction

Peace is possible for life at all stages. An, it is up to man to choose his destiny or to suffer from the horrors of war. Today the mankind is at the crossroad where he must choose with courage, determination and imagination

- Ferderico Mayor.

Peace education may be defined as the process of acquiring the values, the knowledge and developing the attitudes, skills and behaviors to live in harmony with oneself, with others and with the

natural environment. Peace education is based on the principles of nonviolence, conflict resolution techniques, democracy, disarmament, gender equality, human rights, environmental responsibility, history, communication skills, coexistence, and international understanding and tolerance of diversity.

Concept of Peace

Peace and conflict studies are an academic field which identifies and analyses violent nonviolent behaviour, as well as the structural mechanisms attending violent and non-violent social conflicts. This is to better understand the processes leading to a more desirable human condition. Peace studies(ideology), is an interdisciplinary effort aiming at the prevention, de-escalation, and solution of conflicts. This contrasts with war studies (Polemology) directed at the efficient attainment of victory in conflicts. Disciplines involved may include political science, geography, economics, psychology, sociology, international relations, history, anthropology, religious studies and gender studies as well as a variety of other disciplines.

Need for the study

Peace perceptions are the Pedagogical works to create a world at peace. By peace, we mean more than the absence of violence (negative peace) Gultung. Peace in its most positive aspects embraces ideas of justice, global sustainability and the eradication of structures that promote insecurity: poverty, hunger, malnutrition and lack of access to resources. James page suggests peace awareness be thought of as 'encouraging a commitment to peace as a settled disposition and enhancing the confidence of the individual as an individual agent of peace; as informing the student on the consequences of war and social injustice; as informing the student on value of the peaceful and just social structures and working to uphold or develop such social structures; as encouraging the student to love the world and to imagine a peaceful future; and as caring for the student and encouraging the student to care for others. Due to this reason the researchers have been taken up this study for undergraduate students to study.

Statement of the problem:

The problem of the study is entitled of "A study of peace perceptions of undergraduate students in Visakhapatnam district".

Objectives of the study

The following of the objectives of the present study are

1. To study the levels of peace perceptions of undergraduate students.
2. To study the significant difference on the peace perceptions of undergraduate students in relation to the following variables.
   a) Marital status (Married/Unmarried)
   b) Academic stream (Arts/Science)
   c) Religion (Hindu/Non-Hindus)

Hypotheses of the Study

The following hypotheses have been formulated basing on the objectives.

1. Undergraduate students don't differ in their levels of peace perceptions.
2. Undergraduate students don't make a significant difference in their peace perceptions in relation to the following variables.
   a) Marital Status (Married / Unmarried)
   b) Academic stream (Arts/Science)
   c) Religion (Hindu/Non-Hindus)

Operational Definitions
Peace
Peace is a time without any fights or wars. In a larger sense, **peace** (or peacefulness) can mean a state of harmony, quiet or calm that is not disturbed by anything at all, like a still pond with no ripples.
Perception

Knowledge that something exists or understanding of a situation or subject at the present time based on information or experience.

Peace perceptions

Peace perceptions is holistic .It embraces the physical, emotional, intellectual and social growth of the children within a frame work deeply rooted in traditional human values .It is based on philosophy that teachers love, compassion, trust, fairness, co-operation and reverence for the human family and all life on our beautiful planet.
- Fran Schmidt and Alice Friedman (1998)

Undergraduate students: The students who are studying graduation course

Methodology of the Study
The present piece of research falls under the normative survey type of research.

Sample of the Study

The sample comprised of one hundred and fifty undergraduate students randomly selected from different Degree colleges located in Visakhapatnam District.

Tool Used for this study

The investigator adopted Peace Perceptions Scale developed and standardized by Dr. Gulay Bedir and Dr. Mehmet Arslan Tokat, TURKEY in the study. There are 31 items on five-point Likert scale of Always, often, sometimes, rarely and never. Item number 7 i.e., *"I don't bother ethnicity difference"* from the original scale was omitted, because ethnic groups don't exist in the area in which data collected. Therefore, this item was omitted from the original scale. Finally, the remaining 30 items with tool administered to sample.

Method of Scoring

The numerical value of 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 are assigned to responses *always, often, sometimes, rarely and never* respectively for positive statement and reversed in the case of negative statements. The score ranges from 30 to 150. The reliability of the tool was 0.76.

Statistical Techniques Used

The investigators have used the following statistical techniques for analysis of data i.e. mean, standard deviation, critical ratio.

Delimitation of the Study

1. The level of significance considered in the study is 0.05 and 0.01 level.
2. The sample is limited to one hundred and fifty (150) undergraduate students.
3. Geographically it is limited to District of Vishakhapatnam.

ANALYSIS OF DATA AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

TABLE No.1: PEACE PERCAPTIONS – MARITAL STATUS – C.R.

Variable	N	Mean	S.D.	D	D^{σ}	C.R
Married	20	119.57	11.53	5.80	2.86	2.03**
Unmarried	130	113.77	14.20			

**Significant at 0.05 level

From table 1, it is observed that the obtained C.R. value (2.03) is greater than table value 1.98 at 0.05 level. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. It is inferred that the marital status of undergraduate students makes a significant difference in their peace perceptions. The mean difference (5.08) is in favour of married undergraduate students. That is to say that the married undergraduate students possess high peace perceptions when compared to their unmarried counterparts.

TABLE No.2: PEACE PERCAPTIONS – ACADEMIC STREAM- C.R.

Variable	N	Mean	S.D.	D	D^{σ}	C.R
Arts	14	116.92	13.6	0.63	3.82	0.16*
Science	136	116.29	13.90			

*Not significant at 0.05 level

From table 2, it is observed that the obtained C. R. value (0.16) is less than table value 1.98 at 0.05 level. Hence, it is said that the null hypothesis is retained. Therefore, it is inferred that academic stream of undergraduate students don't make a significant difference in their peace perceptions.

TABLE No.3: PEACE PERCAPTIONS – RELIGION – C.R.

Variable	N	Mean	S.D.	D	D^{σ}	C.R.
Hindus	139	116.20	14.06	1.89	3.72	0.50*
Non-Hindus	011	118.09	11.69			

*Not significant at 0.05 level

From table 3, it is obtained C.R. value (0.50) is less than table value 1.98 at 0.05 level. Hence, it is said that the null hypothesis is retained. Therefore, it is inferred that the religion of graduate students doesn't make a significant difference in their peace perceptions.

Major findings of the study
1. Marital status of undergraduate students makes a significant difference in their peace perceptions.
2. Academic stream and religion of undergraduate students don't make significant difference in their peace perceptions.

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USE OF SMARTPHONES BY THE URBAN YOUTH FOR ACCESSING SOCIAL MEDIA

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Introduction

In the whole world the Indian market of mobile handset is the second largest. Day by day it is expected to grow. "There are about 450 million smartphone users as compared to 550 million feature phone users in India. About 40-45% of feature phone users own a device at less than Rs 1000. So, the cost of ownership, the lack in internet literacy and the rigidity that feature phones have is holding the users back from buying a smartphone," said Navkender Singh, Research Director, IDC India. (Economic Times;2019). India's growth in digital communication is growing with tremendous speed. Lerner (1958) states that any nation in the world, can achieve modernisation, provided it is willing to emulate the Western pattern of development. In the digital media, India is growing prominently.

The TERI (2016) statistic shows the smartphone penetration rate in India from 2014 to 2020 as share of mobile phone users. It was predicted that by 2022, 36 percent of mobile phone users in the country would use a smartphone, up from 26 percent in 2018.

Plethora of data service has been opened to all through mobile phones, especially smartphones. It has changed lives of urban and rural people, their personal identity, the way people relate to each other, to family, nearby relatives, and social relationships. Social media is used for social interaction. Through social media one can connect with others and can create, share or exchange information, photos and ideas in virtual communities and develop virtual networking. Due to social media there is noticeable innovation and newness in the mannerisms with which people react to pass traditions, caste and religion, culture, and the marketplace.

Telecom Regulatory Authority of India TRAI (2016) reported that, the total number of mobile users in India is 1,04,97,40,000. This is the second highest number in the world. Annual report of TRAI (2019) has a mention that there is a growth of wireless subscribers in the country. Due to easy availability of mobile phones at affordable price there has been an increase in the overall coverage in the country. Due to the introduction of 4G services amalgamated through mobile, internet and other digital modes of delivery there is a continuous growth of mobile users.

The study of youth using social media in the slum areas was a descriptive study where in youth were interviewed personally. The study was carried out in the month of December 2019 covered a total of 30 youths out of which 25 were males and 5 were females between the ages 15 to 25. Amongst whom, the 18-19-year-olds were frequent social media users.

The research question which guided the core of this study were:
1. How do youth residing in the slum areas get to access to social media?
2. Which means of social media they use the most?
3. What advantages and disadvantage they perceived while using smartphone?

It is interesting to know how Indians residing in the slum areas do contribute to this aspect. Facets of urban poverty: shows that by the year 2050, six billion people, two thirds of humanity will be living in towns and cities and as urban centres grow, the focus of local poverty will be moving to towns and cities, especially into the budding informal settlements, the slums of the developing world. Review of related studies suggests that there is a dearth of study on slum youth using social media. All the respondents reported that they know how to operate desktop computers and laptops but mostly they accessed social media through their smart phones as mobiles are portable and easier to access. Various social media platform used by youth included WhatsApp, Instagram, Telegram, Facebook, Twitter, Blogger, etc.

This study has revealed that almost 90% of youth have access to smartphones. Mostly preferring WhatsApp, Instagram and Facebook, in that order.

Due to this immoderate usage of social media at such a young age we can say that there is a mobile phone revolution. This revolution today is very silent buy may be exposed soon if we do not fulfil the needs of youth in time.

When asked what the disadvantages of social media were?
Very few could relate the use of social media to giving them health problem - display screens of smartphone can weaken their eyesight, adding to this, the electromagnetic radiations can cause serious health problems. Youth use smartphones more than desktop computers and laptops - not only because they are easier to access and carry - as they are cheaper to buy and maintain.

In the slums, one observes lots of smartphone stores, providing accessories, such as earphones, Subscriber Identification Module (SIM) cards, re-charge facilities, etc. Triggering a growth of local persons having more mobile businesses in these areas.

Most (80%) of the youth all still pursuing their education and very few (20%) were working. They were all working in private firms. One was working as a mono-rail assistant, and others were taking tuitions, or working as clerks and accountants. The educational level of these youths ranged from 11th standard to third year bachelor's degrees. Most of the respondents stayed in slum areas of Mumbai, namely, Ganesh Baag, Sevri and Indira Nagar, Vashinaka, Chembur were covered in the study. About 20% had more than one room in their households while others were living in just one room. Most of the youth did not share their smart phone with their relatives. But 10% informed that they do share their smartphones with their parents and siblings but have locked their social media profiles. And many of them said that given a chance they would not like to share their phones.
60% of the youth use mobiles of companies named Redmi/ Oppo, Mi and Moto, and 40% use Samsung mobiles.

When the youth were asked is this your first smartphone? Almost 65% concurred, 20% informed that it was their second,10% reported

that it was third phone, and 5% owned a second hand mobile. All said they used to share their first phone with their parents or siblings.

Approximately 80% of the respondents who were college going students knew their phone's specifications such as RAM and storage. The youth did not hesitate in revealing the cost of their mobile phones, which ranged from Rs. 5000 to Rs. 19000/-.

Mostly, their fathers purchased the mobile phone. Those who purchased the phone on their own were less than 10% and did so by working during college vacations or by doing part-time jobs. The families of youth having only one smartphone for all member of the family were less (10%) in number.

80% of the youth had purchased their mobile phone from a mobile store while 20% had purchased it online. Only the youth who had access to an online banking account of their father/brother could purchase their phones online.

When the youth were asked who taught them how to use a mobile phone almost all said that they learnt it on their own, intuitively. In fact, many of them were surprised by this question as they felt as if the researcher was asking something very irrelevant. One of the young girls said, "Oh you just learn functions of phone by operating it".
Further, when asked who helped them in learning some difficult functions of the smartphone? 99% of them said they learnt it on their own by trial and error and if they had any major problems, they took help of their parents or friends. But, mostly friends of youth helped them to learn. And that the youth were good at learning mobile functions through their own observations. Most of the youth reported that their parents paid for re-charging (adding credit) to their phones, and again only those youth who had access to online banking could re-charge their phone online else they did it through a nearby store. The amount of re-charge varied from Rs. 45 to Rs. 490/-for three months.

When the young respondents were asked, if they got the phone from their parents as soon, they asked them. Except 10% all said, "No" and

they had to wait from one month to a year to get a smartphone. The females reported that they got the phone once they were admitted to a bachelor's program. Around 20% of the respondents reported that they had purchased the phone on loan and the amount of Equated Monthly Instalment (EMI) was paid by their father. All the young boys and girls were happy with their current phones and expected that they will work with it as long as it is functioning properly. They think that one can use the mobile for at least two years and then they can exchange it for some better phone. When asked "Was your phone ever stolen?", except 10%, all others said "No", but someone from their family had such an experience and that they were very particular about the safety and security of their phone. In fact, they all need to have it near them all the time. All the respondents reported that they used their smartphones for social media, taking selfies and photos of their friends.

The youth informed that they used their smartphones for online shopping but not on a very large scale as the youth having an online banking account were very less (10%). They regularly checked Amazon, *Flipcart, Snapdeal, Myntra, Naika*, and *Alibaba* etc for online shopping. And if they wished to purchase something, they requested their friends to purchase the same. The most purchased items were clothes (60%) followed by mobile phones (20%), earphone/power bank (10%), and gifts (10%). As their place of residence was a slum area, most of them, instead of giving their own residential address for receiving the delivery gave the address of a friend, living in a chawl, or a flat.

It is worth noting that youth lost earphones many times, but they purchased new ones and continued using earphones. Many (55%) of them have two sets of earphones. Mostly boys use earphones to listen to music or for receiving calls. Boys did not like listening to music on the speaker. Some (45%) young girls said they use earphones for listening to music only while travelling by local train or by bus. However, at home they do not get much time to listen to music as they must keep themselves busy in helping their mother and other family members in household chores.

All young boys and girls use earphones for music, YouTube, and video calls. The number of youths using earphones for listening to educational discourse was very less (20%).

Following table will inform on for what do youth use mobile phone:

Sr. No.	Use of smartphone by youth	Percent (%)
1	Accessing YouTube	100
2	Watching movies	90
3	Communication	100
4	Texting	80
5	Fashion trends	70
6	Lifestyle of celebrities/ inspirational personality	70
7	E-learning	30
8	Learning Recipes	50
9	Sharing notes on WhatsApp	30
10	Video calling	100
11.	Google maps	20
12.	Listening to music	80
13.	Any other like documentary, films, etc	30
	*Multiple answers are involved	*

This explains that youth used their smartphones more for their entertainment than for personal academic development. None of them were having their personal blogs.

70% of the youth were on Facebook and some of them reported that presently they were inactive on Facebook because they are apprehensive about the security of their account. Almost all had used Facebook for uploading their photos and showing what they felt important through which they would get some recognition.

It is to be noted that all youth mainly used WhatsApp to text, post, share information, and forward messages or to check status of their known persons. The students of college used WhatsApp for educational purpose like for receiving presentations, notes etc. On an average, youth were on more than ten WhatsApp groups. They were

on WhatsApp group of their family, school friends, college friends, relatives of father's side, relatives of mother's side, etc.

Mostly all (90%) of them were on Instagram. They used Instagram to follow their favourite celebrities (90%) and inspirational persons (80%).

When the youth were asked if their mobile usage caused them to spend lesser time with family - 80% said 'Yes' while 20% of them said 'No'. Especially female respondents felt that due to the presence of smartphone in their life they could not spent time with their family members.

All the youth reported that in a day they used smartphone for more than 10 to 15 times. In fact, they reported seeing messages as soon as they received its notification. But this was not possible for those who were sharing their smartphone with other family members.

The youth, especially males, were very much into playing games on their android smartphones. Less than 10% of the respondents reported that they purchased it for playing games. But it is surprising that almost all said that at one point in their life they played a lot of games on their phones. The youth including boys and girls played PUBG, Tik-tok, Subway surfer, FIFA, Subway Surfer, Candy crush, Real racing, Call off duty, Clash Royal. However, those who were performing good in academics said that they played games on their smartphones only during vacations.

It is to be noted that (10%) of youth, said that they threatened family members for not giving them a mobile phone, or that they had failed in an examination due to an overuse of their smartphones.

When asked what problems did, they face while using smartphones, most of them said they did not face any problem with their handset but sometimes their phones crashed (hanged), camera did not open, or they had less connectivity. They informed that they were never a victim of cyber-crime by friends or peers. The youth who could not re-charge their phone with big amount used to text more than calling.

Gidden (2001) mentioned that the slums – housed a hard and precarious life but a sociable one. This was observed in this study as issues arose due to sharing the smartphone with other family members: usually time sharing of phone was a major concern with young boys and their mothers. 'Who will have phone while travelling was also one of the issues.' Quarrels did take place among those youth who had to share their smartphone with other family members. Such quarrels were related to why the password was changed, why some photos were posted on WhatsApp groups without the consent of others who were involved in the event, etc. Those who did not have to share their phone with others did have passwords for their phone. But it is to be noticed that many of them (40%) did not lock their smartphone and had given access to their other family members to see their phone data.

When the youth were asked, "Were you punished by teachers for using mobile?" very negligible percent (5%) reported that once when the phone was used in the classroom, the teacher had confiscated their phone and did not return it for a few days.

Most (90%) of the youth were happy with their present smartphones. But a few of them (10%) said that they would like to have Apple iphones' as it has good functions and high quality of camera.

Advantages of smartphones perceived by youth:
- Social media can be accessed across the globe
- It helps to access information instantly
- Get the recent news, e. newspapers, social media
- Free access to chatting, video calls, WhatsApp call, photo uploading & entertainment
- It helps in connecting with people especially friends, relatives and other relevant people
- e. learning which is a major source of learning can be accessed
- Connect to entrepreneurs, corporate people to gain valuable insights
- It helps students maintain contacts with classmates, and teachers
- Helps in seeking jobs

- Google maps helps in locating the place, road maps are easily available.

Disadvantages of smartphones perceived by youth:
- Youth are desensitized in maintaining personal relationships
- For accessing social media, one must know how to access it by registering for the same
- No face to face connection
- Youth get addicted to smartphone so many remain awake in the midnight leading to some health issues
- Cyber hackers commit fraud, like false or fake accounts, etc
- Youth can learn wrong things, refer to invalid data and use sources like Wikipedia, etc
- Users must face health problems like hearing problem, eye site problem, disturbance in metabolism, issues related to youth becoming aggressive, etc.

Conclusion

The study shows that youth have been constantly using smartphones. But those using it for E-learning were very less, creating a notion that offline pursuits need to take a front seat by creating new methods and techniques that will keep the youth engaged. Social media is not a playground but a chronic problem and as society may believe that the youth are living happily in the virtual world for more and more time, they are possibly becoming the heart of a silent digital revolution that may lead to greater pains than long-term gains. It is thus essential to create awareness among the youth to be cautious of the trap of opening links on social media, and not sharing personal profile information such as, their phone number, address, date of birth and not to click a box that wants to save their password.

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We assess the value of education in the same manner as we assess the value of land or of shares in the stock-exchange market. We want to provide only such education as would enable the student to earn more. We hardly give any thought to the improvement of the character of the educated. The girls, we say, do not have to earn; so why should they be educated? As long as such ideas persist there is no hope of our ever knowing the true value of education.

Mahatma Gandhi

SHAISHAV'S JOURNEY OF NON-FORMAL EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN IN BHAVNAGAR

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"We are guilty of many errors and many faults, but our worst crime is abandoning the children, neglecting the fountain of life. Many of the things we need can wait. The child cannot wait. Right now, is the time his/her bones are being formed, his/her blood is being made and his senses are being developed. To him/her we cannot answer 'Tomorrow.' His name is 'Today.'" –

Gabriella Mistral

This inspiring quotation sums up the guiding spirit of Shaishav, a voluntary organization initiated by Falgunbhai and Parulben, that strives towards abolition of child labour and catering to developmental needs of children with right based perspective. Shaishav was established in 1993 and both started preparatory work in Bhavnagar in 1994.

Philosophical Moorings, Ethos, Values and Ideological Underpinnings:

Shaishav, which means childhood in Gujarati and many other Indian languages, is a voluntary organisation committed to the rights of children. Its focus is on child labour and it believes that education is the main tool to keep children out of the work force. Shaishav's working area is Bhavnagar city and district, in the state of Gujarat, India. Shaishav's vision is based on the belief that a child is innocent and pure. S/he is a symbol of love, strength and happiness. S/he has endless capacity, deep sensitivity and free spirit. S/he is a source of life and creativity. A healthy child will grow up to be a healthy adult and a healthy adult lead to a healthy society. The children should be provided with an education which forms character and is

intellectually stimulating so that they can stand on their own feet, thus stretching their potential to the fullest. As a Child Right organisation, Shaishav is committed to work with state and society on behalf of and with children so that they are able enjoy their basic rights for dignified life and play an active role in realising them. Shaishav will strive to ensure that every child can be what she or he is… "A CHILD".

Bhavanagar City's pioneering Contribution for Children's education

Bhavnagar city and district are situated in South West Gujarat. At the time Shaishav was started, the population was about 400,000 (Census of India 1991). The population is now about 500,000 (Census of India 2001). The city was chosen mainly because, at that time, no organization in Saurashtra, the surrounding region, was consistently working on issues related to child labour. At the outset, no data existed on the number of child workers in Bhavnagar. The city was also once a centre of learning and home to some of the eminent educationists in the country.

Physical Features:

Bhavnagar district is situated in the south-east corner of the peninsular region of Gujarat known as "Kathiawar of Saurashtra". It lies between the parallels of latitude 200.59' and 220.16' and the meridians of longitude 710.23' and 720.18'. The length from north to south of this territory is about 151.7 kms. and from east to west about 108.6 kms. It is bounded in the north by Surendranagar and Ahmadabad districts and in the west by Rajkot and Amreli districts and in the south by the east by the Gulf of Kambhat. The area covered by the district is 9,981 Sq. kms. Area wise rank of this district is 6th among the districts of the state. Bhavnagar district forms a part of Kathiawar Peninsula and is subdivided into four sub micro regions, namely, Bhavnagar Coastal Plain, Palitana-Savarkundal Upland, Songadh Forested Plain and Keri, Kalubhar and Ghelo Plain based on topography, climate, geology, soils and natural vegetation.

Demographic Profile

 According to Census 2001, Bhavnagar district has a total population of 24.70 lakhs. The total number of households being 426001, the average family size works out to 579. Sex wise data show that the proportion of males in the total population is 51.6 per cent while that of females is 48.4 per cent. The resultant sex ratio works out to 937 women per 1000 men. The proportion of literates to total population is 66.2 per cent in the district. Literacy ratio is 78.0 percent in urban areas whereas is lower (58.7 per cent) in rural areas. The literacy rate of males is 72.9 per cent which is substantially higher than the female literacy rate (44.2 per cent). Challenges for education and social development are enormous in this context.

Poverty Ratio

In Bhavnagar district, out of the total 250991 rural families, according to BPL (census data, 62782 (25.01 per cent) families are found to be living below poverty line. Among the BPL families in rural areas, as can be seen from Table IV. 1 nearly 10.85 per cent belong to scheduled castes, only 2.09 per cent are tribal families while over 9.91 per cent women are classified as poor according to the BPL census definition. Surprisingly enough, the proportion of handicapped people identified as poor seems to be relatively larger (5.91 percent). Bhavnagar has a high proportion of child labour among the poverty groups.[i] According to 2001 The Census of India, 2001 Bhavnagar district had 31390 child-workers which is highly underestimated figure.

Historical Legacy of Child Education

A century ago, when Bhavnagar was not enjoying its right to freedom, Shree Gijubhai Badheka, Shree Harbhai Trivedi and last but not the least Shree Nanabhai Bhatt have given their priceless

contribution for motivating Primary Education, Secondary Education and Higher Secondary Education respectively.

Shaishav's Role Model, Gijubhai Badeka

Gijubhai (Girjasanker) who was the nucleus of child education in Gujarat and was affectionately called "The Children's Gandhi" was born on 15th November 1885 at Vala (Vallabhipur), Bhavnagar District. After completing his education at Bhavnagar, he left for East Africa and was there for a period of two years. Upon his return to India, Gijubhai worked for a business firm in Bombay but did not feel at ease and therefore decided to study Law. After qualifying, he started his own law practice at Surendranagar in Gujarat.

It was his contact with veteran educationalist, Shree Motibhai Amin of Baroda as well as reading the book "The Montessori System for Child Education" that marked a turning point in his life. He gave up his legal practice, went to Bhavnagar and became the true lawyer – championing the rights of children. He joined the Dakshinamurty Educational Institute and became its headmaster. In 1920 he started Dakshinamurty Balmandir, the first Balmandir in Saurastra. He became completely devoted to child welfare activities and studied child psychology and experimented with educational methods for teaching children. For the benefit of children, he wrote stories, songs, rhymes, riddles and life-sketches of famous people. He became known as the Brahma (creator) of children's literature in Gujarat due to the proliferation of such literature at this time and was awarded the Ranjitram Gold Medal by the Gujarati Sahitya Sabha in recognition of his tremendous contribution.

He revered children saying that "In this universe, a child is God's creation of miracle and innocence." He propagated child-education through the publication of "Shikshan Patrika" a monthly magazine he edited. He raised the profile of teachers by starting Teacher's Training Centres and Nutan Bal Shikshan Sangh. He also influenced domestic upbringing of children by propagating that "a child gets the best education in the happy, peaceful and harmonious homely atmosphere

and that parents therefore needed to be involved in all aspects of their children's education and welfare". His favourite saying of "learning through play" (Gammat saathe Gnan) has become motto of Shaishav.

As a result of his persistent efforts and hard work in revolutionising the entire child-education system over a nineteen-year period, his health suffered. He had no time to spare for the care of his own health and finally passed away on 23rd June 1939 at Harkishandas Hospital in Mumbai.

Gandhiji said of him "Who am I to write about him? His zeal and faith have always fascinated me. His mission will definitely prosper." Maria Montessori said, "I had no acquaintance of his. If I had, it would be better because he was a great lover of children. He never stopped at any adversity or odds for the sake of child welfare. Those who ruminate child-upliftment, will remember him for long."

Continuing this rich legacy:

Shaishav is proud of continuing the legacy of great personalities who dedicated their lives for universalisation of child education and carved their niche amongst multifaceted adversities. Their

Awe inspiring contribution is Shaishav's guiding spirit. The child-centred education that Shaishav strives for, according to the organisation's founders Falgun Sheth and Parul Sheth, is inspired by such principles as Gandhi's emphasis on self-reliance, Tagore's ideas of letting each child grow at its own pace, and Vivekananda's belief that social progress comes from character-building through the right kind of education.

J.V. Lakshmana Rao --- Chicago: Childhood is most blissful phase of human life. Children have very receptive mind of openness, untainted with any prejudices. They are always curious, and inquisitive, seeking knowledge through play as well as study. But poverty and ignorance of parents are robbing children of their simple pleasures of that blissful phase of life. This happens mindfully or unmindfully; intentionally or unintentionally and the children are engaged in a labor to support themselves as also support their families. Child labor is the worst curse on any society. Today's children are strength of

tomorrow's society. Pained by the rampant practice of child labor, a Gujarati couple – Falgun Sheth and Parul Sheth – embarked on a project to help children and motivate parents to send their off-springs to schools rather than sending them to work as domestic help, or engage them in farming, put them in petty repair shops, employ them in hazardous jobs, or even make them graze the cattle in the fields. With their background as social workers, Falgun Sheth and Parul Sheth launched a survey in a major slum – Kumbarwada-Gopal Society area – in Bhavnagar city of Gujarat. They identified 12,813 children working in 106 different occupations like diamond polishing, plastic industry, construction and domestic work. Of these, 37 percent were girls and 63 percent boys. As they, on an average, earned each less than Rs. 500 a month, many of them toiled more than eight to 12 hours a day. Some of the children were engaged in hazardous occupations dealing with recycling of plastic or labor-intensive construction work. Falgun Sheth and Parul Sheth, with an intention to wean these children from arduous work and make their parents send these tiny tots to schools, started a massive movement by forming a trust called Shaishav in July 1994. Having achieved a great deal of success in their mission, Falgun Sheth, as its managing trustee, and Parul Sheth as its trustee and executive director, are touring the US to spread word about their work and solicit help from Non-Resident Indians and community organizations for the various institutions they are running for the benefit of children. Giving details about the work at Shaishav to India Tribune, Parul Sheth says: "We believe a child is innocent and pure and a symbol of love, strength, and happiness. Children are the foundation of our future. They should be provided with education that molds their mind and character so that they can stand on their own feet and become good citizens. They should live free from any kind of exploitation or discrimination." She says that as a child rights and empowerment organization, Shaishav is committed to work in society on behalf of and with children so that they can enjoy their basic right of access to play and education. Shaishav believes that every child should have time to play and enjoy their joys of childhood. Every child should have equal opportunity for education to achieve her or his potential. And child labor and any type of child abuse, discrimination and exploitation should be

stopped, and society should work for the fulfillment of child rights. Shaishav, she says, has set goals to eradicate child labor from the area, make Bhavnagar a child rights sensitive city by ensuring active participation of the community and society, and empower children by providing a positive environment so that children can achieve their potential, build collective strength, and develop a positive attitude towards life and enjoy holistic development. Explaining how Shaishav has been working to achieve its objectives, Parul Sheth says that by their intensive efforts and motivating the parents, Shaishav within two years of its launching has been able to put through about 5,500 children in schools by 1996.

Now thousands of children are going to school and parents have also realized the benefits of education. "As we believe education is the most powerful means to eradicate child labor, we have taken education to children by opening community education centers nearer to their homes. These centers are intended to be a stopgap arrangement to motivate and prepare children to eventually enter formal schools," she says. Parul Sheth says that the community education centers are in low-income slum areas around Bhavnagar and provide non-formal education for non-school-going children, child laborers and first-generation learners aged between six and 14 years. The centers are run daily at the doorstep of the children to the timings that are suitable for them. Local community members, called *lokshikshak*s are trained to manage the centers in order to encourage community participation and ensure sustainability of the program.

These l*okshikshaks* use creative methods and materials to teach basic subjects and developmental activities, which include creation and topics such as creativity activities, values and life skills. There are no formal lectures, but the children are engaged in practical education. Basically, they are taught value education, unity, teamwork, cooperation, empathy, values of life, storytelling, letter-writing puppetry, films and sports. Balwadis are working for children of 3-6 years where Montessori-type of study with locally available low-cost improvised-educational aids are used. Once the children find the benefits of learning, and parents realize the necessity of education,

they, on their own, go to regular schools for achieving their academic qualification. The work of Shaishav involves community participation so the communities build collectives to take on responsibility for their own issues and take initiative to develop sustainable solutions. For that, *Baldost Manchs* (friends of children forums) are established. These *Baldost Manchs* are collectives of parents and local community leaders to help set up and run community education centers and Balwadis and link them to schools.

Shaishav also launched community mobile school program to provide quality teaching and improve the concept clarity in municipal schools and thereby increase retention rates. Children are trained in self-help, community living, and democratic values. They also form into groups called Bal Sena. The founding pillars of *Bal Sena* are equality and unity of all, regardless of such characteristics as gender, caste, class and religion. *Bal Sena* members represent all socio-economic levels and religious communities within the city, and this ensures that children of all strata of society are stakeholders in the collective efforts. The children run a bank called *Bachat* Bank. This bank encourages the children to cultivate the habit of savings and makes them feel independent and participating in decision-making. The children make regular deposits and withdraw money for their education, household, or other necessities. The bank has about 300 members with a total deposit of Rs. 105,000.

Shaishav runs a specially designed multipurpose mobile school to provide quality teaching and improve the concept of clarity in municipal schools and thereby increase retention rates. This school bus equipped with a library, games, a computer and audiovisual capacities offers joyful, child-centered participatory, and activity-based learning. The bus visits 20 municipal schools and reaches over 11,000 students every week. Parul Sheth says that the children of slow-learning or with learning difficulty are helped. With a view to help them continue their education, and commute between their homes and school, Shaishav runs a bus. Shaishav has program for adolescent girls to empower them and educate them on their rights. The program has three components - Kishori Mandal, Kishori Mela and Wen Li Do. Kishori Mandal is a forum for girls to discuss issues

relevant to them and find solutions. Kishori Mela is a fair that educates girls about the emotional, mental and physical changes that occur in girls and boys during puberty. Wen Li Do is an international women's personal safety and self-defense program that aims to equip females with the skills to protect their personal, physical, mental, and emotional safety.

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[i] **Raj Kumar Sen and Asis Dasgupta (Ed. s)** *Problems of Child Labour in India,* **Deep and Deep, 2003, xviii, 286 p, ISBN: 81-7629-426-8.**

BOOK REVIEW

Back to the Sources: A Study of Gandhi's Basic Education by Henry Fagg, Delhi: National Book Trust, 2020. Pages: 86, price: Rs. 45/-

Ms. Lavanya Shanbhogue Arvind,
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In 1937, the Wardha Education Conference was helmed by Mahatma Gandhi along with a group of "nationally minded educationists" to develop an education policy that was to become a radical alternative to the colonial state's vision for education. Gandhi had long rejected the domination of Western education that created a permanent divide between the elite colonial-educated Indians, and the illiterate majority. To him, education was a primary tool for consolidating and unifying the national consciousness, an instrument for nation building and reconstruction.

Based on the principles of Absolute Truth and Non-Violence, Gandhi espoused Basic Education that would bring about the harmonious progress of body, mind and soul. By placing emphasis on manual work, craft and tutoring in the mother tongue, Gandhi advocated the strengthening of India's villages by insisting that such Basic Education would transform village communities to become self-reliant and self-sufficient. Such a system was indeed propagated, but mainstream thought considers this approach to have "failed."

In the book *Back to the Sources: A Study of Gandhi's Basic Education* by academic and freelance writer Henry Fagg, the Gandhian ethos with respect to Basic Education is revisited, all the while interrogating whether this radical alternative maybe considered a failure. A succinct foreword written by veteran Congressman Madan Mohan Jha reveals Fagg's discontentment over the discourse surrounding Basic Education as a Gandhian device for bringing about the moral development of learners. Therefore, and in order to combat this lingering displeasure with existing literature, Fagg proceeds to return to the original sources – Gandhi's original writings in the

Harijan as well as other canonical writings such as *The Collected Works*. Through narrative and commentary, testimony and analysis, Fagg then probes Gandhi's revolutionary alternative to the imperial state's educational policy.

The book is organized into six chapters. Fagg begins by providing context about the political background in which Basic Education was conceived of and was to be implemented. The Government of India Acts of 1919 and 1935, the political opposition to the British Raj, the sentiments of Hindu revivalism helmed by nationalists such as Tilak, and the background in which the many issues of *Harijan* were published provides exposition to the events that would ensue. Fagg then delves directly into the articles published by Gandhi. What follows is a thematic inquiry of Gandhian thought. Here, he engages with Gandhian writings on Holism, the mind, body and spirit, manual training in the crafts, the mother tongue as envisioned by Gandhi as a medium of instruction in institutional spaces, the idea of self-support and higher education.

Fagg provides commentary and context to these varied themes and writes that "the present concern" is to allow "these texts to speak for themselves." To Gandhi, "Man is neither mere intellect, nor the gross animal body, nor the heart or soul alone," and "a true economics of education" maybe attained only if a there is a harmonious amalgamation of all three. Fagg writes of Gandhi's lament about the rampant neglect of this principle. The spiritual evolution of an individual is thus paramount. A child learning a craft will eventually contribute to his own self and moral development. Fagg revisits Gandhi's views on English education for, to Gandhi, such an education would be nothing more than a "burden which has maimed them [the English-educated citizens] mentally for life and made them strangers in their own land." Gandhi thus advocated for a compulsory mass education, a distant dream even today.

In Gandhi's writings English is identified as a class divider and even a cursory glance at ordinary, contemporary Indian life today reveals the status of English as an aspirational language and the language of upward mobility. Perhaps conspicuous by their absence in this section

are Gandhian writings on the education of the untouchables and his many correspondences with Dr. B. R. Ambedkar. Were caste-based occupations promoted as craft skills within the framework of Basic Education? What then would be the resulting view on the caste system?

Fagg devotes a chapter to all the factors influencing the formulation of Basic Education. These factors include the nationalist preoccupation to oppose the prevailing views on divisive colonial education. Such policies propagated by Macaulay through his Memorandum on Indian Education was based on the deemed inferiority of Hindu culture and life. The other factor was the burgeoning sentiment of the Indian Nationalist Movement based on the idea of swaraj, self-rule, self-governance and the call for independence. Fagg writes of Macaulay's vilification and the ensuing nationalist resentment against the Imperial regime.

In the chapter titled "Implications," Fagg investigates Gandhi's views on the modern state which he saw as an invention of Western civilization. For Gandhi, this sort of a state sought the coercion of its citizens and in turn was detrimental to human dignity. Instead, Gandhi proposed the "enlightened anarchy" under which citizens who are morally disciplined and socially responsible did not require any polity.

Fagg compares this notion to the Euclidian point, or a point that cannot be defined by previously defined objects. The proceedings of the Wardha Conference, the report of the Zakir Hussain Committee and the subsequent acceptance by the Congress of the tenets of the Basic Education are then presented in the following chapter.

It is in the final chapters that Fagg provides a complete assessment including the debates surrounding early criticism of the approach, the two models of national development, Nehru's planning committee and eventually a conclusion. Criticisms include "finding teachers who are artisans and artisans who are teachers [N.R Malkani]," the Muslim League's suspicion and dismissal of the scheme as a "Hindu ploy" and Tagore's caution that the approach could become reductive.

Fagg argues that what Gandhi sought was an inner moral transformation. Fagg concludes by questioning the very idea of success and failure. To Fagg, success is not always a wide-spread mass implementation, but the way Gandhian thought sustains despite misinterpretations and misgivings. Fagg argues that Gandhian ideas of moral potency and his perception of Truth has found of host of supporters and thus the undying nature of the idea is a success unto itself.

By rejecting material published through secondary sources and through ardent probing of primary sources and original writings, Fagg produces a renewed and nuanced engagement with the philosophies and tenets of Gandhi's Basic Education

Civilisation & Solidarity by Dr. *Ira* Robert *Byock*

In this civilisational crisis in response to global endemic of Coronavirus, this story narrated by **Dr. *Ira* Robert *Byock***, an American physician, author, and advocate for palliative care about an anthropologist Margarette Mead (see her picture with African families below) becomes our conscience-keeper. 'Years ago, anthropologist Margaret Mead was asked by a student what she considered to be the first sign of civilization in a culture. The student expected Mead to talk about fishhooks or clay pots or grinding stones. But no. Mead said, "The first sign of civilization in an ancient culture was a femur (thighbone) that had been broken and then healed. Mead explained that in the animal kingdom, if you break your leg, you die. You cannot run from danger, get to the river for a drink or hunt for food. You are meat for prowling beasts. No animal survives a broken leg long enough for the bone to heal. A broken femur that has healed is evidence that someone has taken time to stay with the one who fell, has bound up the wound, has carried the person to safety and has tended the person through recovery. Helping someone else through difficulty is where civilization starts, Mead said." We are at our best when we serve others. Be civilized.'